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ABSTRACTS

Cosmin POPA, *The Exhausted Superpower. The Soviet Union's Society and Economy (1945-1953)*

The Soviet victory in the war against Nazi Germany has proved to be the most difficult challenge for the system created by Lenin and consolidated by Stalin. Following the power vacuum left by the disappearance of the German power and the voluntary withdrawal of the West from Central and Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union became, almost automatically, the dominant power in the region. Although victorious and having more people under arms than all the other Allies combined, the Union was in a state of exhaustion similar to the defeated Germany. With its economy decomposed and a dramatic decrease of the active population, the Soviet leaders had to cope with a mass current claiming that it was time for a historic compromise between the power and the subjects. Stalin's response was to focus almost all the country's resources towards strengthening the international status, towards the modernization of the military power and the restoration of a political control similar to the one in the '30s. Contrary to the impression of economic and social dynamics, in post-war Soviet Union the effects of the technological gap and the system's bureaucratic degeneration were already being felt. The Soviet „investment” in its great power status was extremely expensive and the outcomes was uncertain outcomes due to the absence of a strategy destined to improve the status and the internal modernization. Having entered the nuclear era, the Soviet Union was still a country with a predominantly impoverished population, with large areas insufficiently absorbed and with an economy efficient only in the controlled statistical calculations; in a nutshell, the Soviet Union was a marginal superpower.

Cristina DIAC, *The RCP Central Committee in 1945. Group Biography*

The aim of this study is to highlight the extent to which the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee, elected in October 1945, was legitimate and its members representative of the type proposed to the Romanian society by politicians of the extreme left. Using the group biography method, the study concludes that the „portrait” of the 1945 CC members meets the ideological requirements; on the other hand, the profession, the political experience and years of imprisonment were strong points of the communist leadership as resulted from the 1945 National Conference.

Mioara ANTON, *The Propaganda of Enthusiasm. The Public Letters from Volunteer Correspondents. 1948-1965*

The public letters from volunteer correspondents published in „Scînteia” during Gheorghiu-Dej’s regime were in complete conformity with the goals of the Communist Party. This method, taken from Soviet practice, was fully used in this period to prove the solidarity and consensus between the rulers and ruled. According to official propaganda, the volunteer correspondents not only made known the achievements of the regime, but at the same time were the guardians of the party through their denunciation of enemies of the people who put in danger the building of socialism in Romania. The economic crises at the beginning of the 50’s forced the regime to adapt the content of these public letters, admitting the lack of goods on the market as well as their unsatisfactory quality. Therefore the propaganda apparatus fabricated through these public letters a presumed dialogue with society. As the regime strengthened its power, these public letters enabled it to shape the type of a *new man*: stakhanovist, at the fore in industry and agriculture, a man both inventor and ideologically committed.

Vladimir TISMĂNEANU, *Who was Petre Borilă? Between Familia of Comintern and Ceaușescu Family*

Petre Borilă (*Jordan Dragan Rusev*, 1906-1973) was a hard-core Stalinist, one of the most loyal and ardent partisans of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, secretary general of the Romanian Workers’ Party. Like other prominent Romanian communists (Constantin Doncea, Mihail Florescu, Valter Roman, Gheorghe Stoica), Borilă fought in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. During World War II he worked in Moscow as a Comintern *apparatchik*. Due to the fact that Gh. Gheorghiu Dej did not have any *Comintern credentials*, Petre Borilă became his close associate and a significant actor of the decision making process between 1948 and 1965. He accompanied Gheorghiu-Dej at the 20th CPSU Congress in February 1956. Between 1952 and 1965 he was a Politburo member. His political decline occurred after Nicolae Ceaușescu established his domination within the communist leadership, at the Ninth RCP Congress in July 1965. In spite of both families’ opposition, Valentin Ceaușescu, Nicolae’s and Elena’s eldest son, married Iordana, Borilă’s daughter. During his last years, Borilă disapproved Nicolae Ceaușescu’s unprecedented personal leadership and personality cult (Borilă sent a memorandum to RCP’s Central Committee expressing his dissatisfaction). However, in Petre Borilă’s eyes Joseph Stalin remained a hero and a political model.

Cristian VASILE, *Some Reflections Concerning the Inauguration of the Socialist Romania’s History Museum*

The aim of this paper is to shed more light on the representation of the past, bearing in mind the idea that especially national history museums and historical monuments are illustrative indicators of the (de)radicalization of the communist regime in Romania. Especially, in the mid 1960’s, one could foresee a negotiation process on the rewriting and representation of the past (the political power seemed available for listening experts, *i.e.* various historians and museum’s specialists). In 1965 – after Nicolae Ceaușescu took over the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party – the ideological sections of the RCP’s Central Committee gathered archaeologists, architects, art historians, and other experts in order to seek a better functioning both for Museums and the Department on the Historical Monuments. However, in 1969-70 N. Ceaușescu decided to urge the inauguration of the National Museum of History ignoring some

specialists' reservations concerning the location of the building. For still obscure reasons also the Museum's title was changed in *Socialist Romania's History Museum*.

At the end of the eighth decade N. Ceaușescu has adopted extreme political initiatives. Ceaușescu's plans for urban and territorial systematization brought the annihilation of the Department on the Historical Monuments in 1977. On the other hand, the Socialist Romania's History Museum has increasingly served Ceaușescu's personality cult.

Alina Ilinca, Liviu-Marius Bejenariu, *The Denunciation of the Cult of Personality. The Case of the „Petrescu – Eremia – Dușa Group”*

Stalin's death prompted the leadership of the Communist Parties to burst a broad debate on the cult of personality of the deceased dictator. This study aims to portray the discussions of a clandestine group of former militants in the outlaw epoch of the Romanian Worker Party. Encouraged by the „new course” promoted by Moscow, the participants to these discussions raised some issues related to the economic policy in the Party, to the selection and promotion of Party members, to the repression of some party members. The group members were sanctioned by the plenary of the Central Committee of the RWP of July 16-17, 1956. This was one of the episodes of the struggle for power within the Party, which ended with the victory of Gheorghiu-Dej, who attained the absolute political authority in the Party and State.

Simion GHEORGHIU, *The Romanian-American Economic Relations and the Most-Favored-Nation Clause*

Based on archival documents, this article illustrates the evolution of the commercial relationships between Romania and the United States, by highlighting the facts that have determined the gradual deterioration of it, from the granting of the Most-Favored-Nation Clause to the unilateral decision of the Communist Regime to give up this Clause. The article emphasizes the non-economic aspects of the issue (such as the respect for human rights, the respect for the right to emigrate) which triggered the deterioration of the bilateral relationships that started so favorably after the visit of Richard Nixon in Romania on 2-3 August 1969.

The United States used the Clause as an instrument of political influence within the relationship with Romania. Throughout the lifetime of this commercial policy, one can distinguish two phases: 1) during the Nixon and Ford Administrations the Clause has encouraged the distancing of Ceaușescu's Regime from Moscow; and 2) during the Carter and Reagan Administrations when USA used the Clause as a pressure instrument against Ceaușescu's Regime in order to make him respect the human rights.

The political goals aimed by the United States when using the Clause have been just partially achieved: Ceaușescu Regime has had to reduce, but only to a limited extent, its repressive policy, especially during the discussions held for the renewal of the Clause. However, in essence, the Regime remained faithful to the Stalinist model.

Radu TUDORANCEA, *The German Occupation in Romania during the First World War: Control Mechanisms, Image Vectors*

This study examines the most significant vectors and themes of the German propaganda during the First World War occupation of a significant part of Romanian territory, from state strategies to the various ways of disseminating information and persuasion: proclamations, press

advertising and posters. The analysis embraces propaganda mechanisms not only as a record of the war itself, but also as a part of an attempt (on behalf of the actors involved) to use propaganda as a distinctive instrument, largely exploited in order to shape or influence the population's perception (and the society as a whole). Of course, none of this would have been achieved without the tremendous help and expertise of an impressive apparatus of police and intelligence entities, which consistently backed the German administration during the occupation of the Romanian territory (1916-1918).

The study, which draws almost exclusively on comprehensive posters collection, archives documents and press periodicals related to the topic, reveals the consistent, rigorous and continuous German propaganda activities, in contrast with a certain scarcity and inconsistency, on the Romanian side.

Adrian VIȚĂLARU, *The Beginnings of Romanian Propaganda in Switzerland. The Activity of Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen*

The present study analyses the activity of Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen as the head of the Romanian Press Office in Bern, between March and September 1919. During that period he led this propaganda mechanism which was under the control of the Romanian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen has initiated a series of press campaigns and he has sought to develop the relations he had created in Switzerland between 1917 and 1918, when, on his own initiative, he published articles and papers legitimating the foreign policy assumed by the Romanian government, now exiled in Iași. Together with the employees of the Press Office (Ghiță Popp, Iosif Șchiopul, etc), he collaborated with old acquaintances, like E. Pittard, M. Muret, but as well with George D. Herron, an American figure closely linked to the activists of national movements in Central Europe and the Balkans. Due to the fact that he managed to publish favourable information about Romania both in Swiss and international press via news agencies in key moments (for instance, the Romanian occupation of Hungary), his activity was appreciated by Ionel Brătianu and Alexandru Vaida-Voevod. His successes at the Romanian Press Office in Bern consolidated his image as „heavy propagandist”, first propelling him in the Romanian political scene and then, in diplomacy.

Paul NISTOR, *The War of Ideas. Historians and the Propaganda for the Romanian Territories*

The territorial losses from the summer of 1940, the shift in alliances and the involvement in the war led to a radical change of propaganda strategies. Historical themes (such as the age of the Romanian civilization and the continuity in the lost provinces) were the center of the government's propaganda speech in Bucharest. Historians were called to support the work of national reconstruction and justify Romania's foreign policy. The Propaganda Ministry requested by special order the printing and translation of works (volumes of studies, monographs, synthesis) to support the Romanian claims. Thus, the main objectives were not only to inform the international public opinion but also to obtain a victory against the Hungarian media.

Bertrand VAYSSIÈRE, *Just before the Curtain Falls: Federalists and Eastern Europe on the threshold of the Cold War*

The aim of this paper is to analyse the vision that the European federalists had regarding Eastern Europe after the Second World War, and how this vision was influenced by the rising tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. Immediately after the war, the visions that were constructed in the resistance movements or the concentration camps were confronted with the reality of the international situation. Europe as a whole was extremely weakened, the Western part being under American influence and protection, while the Eastern part was dominated by the victorious Soviet Union which was feared but also respected for its efforts throughout the war. The formula of „Europe as a Third Force”, which was a neutralist one, was unable to withstand the changes brought by the rising tension between the two dominant superpowers. The Cold War had a negative influence upon the European construction, by shattering all visions and hopes previously developed, just two years after the end of the world war. The federalists had to gradually adapt to the new realities: they had to abandon their ambition of unifying the entire European continent after understanding that the East European countries were under Soviet control and unable to forge their own destiny; they had to accept an American aid which only two years before would have been seen as an interference; they had to abandon the idea of neutralism, claim the benefits of the American support and choose, during the critical period of 1947-48, a side in the conflict dividing the world, by adopting a latent anticommunist stance. What was most painful was that they had to see their vision of an „European” Europe being ruined, and their actions limited only to the western part of the continent.

Raul DENIZE, *The FRG's Foreign Policy and the Origins of Neue Ostpolitik*

The aim of this paper is to analyse the various forms which the foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany took after 1949 and present them in the context of the Cold War. During the Adenauer years, the main objective of west-german foreign policy was the integration in the western community of democratic states, while the eastern policy was a very rigid one. The Soviet Union was seen as a violent state, willing to negotiate only when faced with the threat of brute force. But beginning with the middle of the 60's the situation changed, and after 1969 it did so dramatically, with the introduction of the *Neue Ostpolitik* by Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr. The origins of the new eastern policy can be traced back to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and it had a major impact on the international arena.

Valentin SĂNDULESCU, *Notes on Right-Wing Extremist in Great Romania: Clarification regarding the Doctrinal and Political Practices*

The current research aims at presenting the relationship between two of the most important extreme right-wing movements in interwar Romania (The National-Christian Defense League, led by A.C. Cuza, and The Legion of the Archangel Michael, founded by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu in 1927) by looking at their interactions throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s. Thus, the paper is focused on underlining the emerging differences between Cuza and Codreanu in terms of doctrine and political practices that consisted of a growing radicalization of the Legion, through embracing a more violent, action-oriented and visibly fascist agenda.

Employing a variety of primary and secondary sources, one traces the difficult separation process that took place between Codreanu and Cuza's movement, a process that was still hesitant in 1927 but would develop in a fully-fledged revolt as years went by, and reached a political climax in the context of the 1933 elections. The analysis of doctrine elements that separated the

two movements is combined with a look at the political practices that accompanied these developments. The Legion of the Archangel Michael clearly emerged as a victor in this competition, becoming the most important extreme right-wing movement in interwar Romania, as proven by the outcome of the 1937 elections.

Mihaela STROE, *Constantin C. Giurescu under the Investigation of the Revision Committee for the University Teaching Staff (1940)*

The regime change after King Carol II's abdication brought about a series of modifications. Ion Antonescu formed an alliance with the Iron Guard and Romania was proclaimed a „national-legionary state”. The main aim of the new regime was a moral change, thus managing to rally support from the young intelligentsia, generally dissatisfied with the political elite of the time. The educational system was one of the fields affected by the new decisions. In its attempt to „purify” the Romanian education system, the new regime enacted the law that established a Revision Committee whose purpose was to verify the activity of the teaching staff from universities.

The aim of the article is to focus on a single inquiry, the one which revolves around the case of Constantin C. Giurescu. The analysis of these documents offers an opportunity to study the evolution of the relationship between former colleagues Petre P. Panaitescu, Chairman of the Revision Committee, and Constantin C. Giurescu. It is also relevant to observe the „cleansing” process endeavored by the new regime in one of the most prominent cases of the time.

Daniel CITIRIGĂ, *Romanian Historiographical and Cultural Perception regarding the Central Europe*

The way Romanian authors defined the concept of Central Europe has always been influenced by the debate of whether they belonged to this area or to the Balkans. Shortly after the collapse of the communist regime, subjects regarding concepts and political culture reappeared and the Romanian approach came into prominence through its dichotomous and antinomic character. While the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians have no doubts regarding their belonging to Central Europe, a part of Romanian writers, preoccupied by this topic, not only have doubts, but also bring arguments to why they are not a part of it. In this context it is easy to identify in the trends from the former Habsburg Empire a trace of personal vanity, in contrast to the „Balkanism” of the Old Kingdom.

Simion GHEORGHIU, *„We Have no Right to Allow any Breach of our Unity”. Choosing the General Secretary of the CC of CPSU in March 11, 1985*

The transcript of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU on March 11, 1985 which preceded the Central Committee Plenary held on the same day, clarifies the issue regarding Mikhail S. Gorbachev's candidature for the position of Secretary General. According to the transcript, the first to take the floor – after the short informing about the medical findings concerning the causes of death of Konstantin U. Chernenko made by the Health Minister, Evgeny I. Chazov – was Andrei A. Gromyko, who proposed M.S. Gorbachev's candidature for the position of Secretary General. By highlighting the main qualities that recommended him for this position, Gromyko said that the Politburo must demonstrate a complete unity, so as not to offer the world „the possibility to discover the smallest crack in our relationship”. The other speakers did no more than to express their agreement with A.A. Gromyko's proposal.