

UNDERSTANDING NATIONAL STALINISM:  
ROMANIAN COMMUNISM IN A HISTORICAL-COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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"My personal hobby is the building of socialism in Romania." Nicolae Ceausescu, August 1989

"There is no fortress the Bolsheviks cannot storm." With very few exceptions, this hyper-voluntaristic, overly self-confident statement of Stalin's would hardly be endorsed by contemporary Leninist leaders. The times of absolutist dogma and Messianic identification with an ultimate sense of history dictated by objective laws no less constraining than those of Newtonian physics are a thing of the past.

World communism has entered an age of global reformation with most of its long-held beliefs seen (and deplored) as so many superstitions. It is a time of self-criticism, when heresy has supplanted the revealed tenets and when it cannot be easily ascertained where the true party line lies and what it consists of. It is the triumph of diversity over monolithic orthodoxy, a process of ideological de-sacralization (Weber used the term Entzauberung). On the world's stage, we are witnessing a phenomenon which far exceeds Palmiro Togliatti's theory of polycentrism: a fundamental political and ideological revision, the de-structuring of that global social phenomenon called international communism. (I use the term "social phenomenon" in Gramsci's sense of a dynamic situation whose compelling objectivity is universally recognized: "objective means universally subjective.") Thus, in May 1990, the editorial board of the Prague-based World Marxist Review announced its decision to cease the publication of this relic of "socialist internationalism."

And yet, as irresistible as the winds of change may seem, not all Leninist parties and movements are ready to espouse the new philosophy. In this paper, I would like to examine the case of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) and its most recent leader. Until the violent upheaval of December 1989, the RCP epitomized adamant anti-reformism. Its complete collapse cannot be explained without reference to its obstinate refusal to engage in de-Stalinization.

One of the most vocal critics of Gorbachevism, Nicolae

Ceausescu emerged as the champion of an updated version of militant Stalinism. In a bizarre fashion, he seemed intent on reneging on his own advocacy of "creative Marxism" and single-mindedly returning to Stalin's catechistic definitions from the "Questions of Leninism." True, in 1968-69, Ceausescu condemned the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and seemed to encourage innovative Marxist trends. It was in that period that translations into Romanian of Antonio Gramsci, Roger Garaudy, Georg Lukacs, Herbert Marcuse, and Louis Althusser were authorized. Subsequently, however, Ceausescu renounced this orientation to embark on a path of radical re-Stalinization. In the late 1980s, as the Soviet Union launched dramatic reforms, he excoriated Gorbachevism as a most dangerous "right-wing deviation" within international communism, and proclaimed the need to reassert uniformity. Unlike Erich Honecker, Todor Zhivkov, and Milos Jakes, Ceausescu questioned the very impulse to rethink the Marxist-Leninist experience. The same individual who in 1974 had admitted the obsolescence of the notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat and seemed inclined to favor Eurocommunism was now calling for the reinforcement of repressive institutions and denouncing the transition to pluralism as the restoration of capitalism. It is the central hypothesis of this paper that in his opposition to Gorbachev's neo-Leninist, revisionist offensive, Ceausescu carried to an extreme the logic of national Stalinism.

#### NATIONAL COMMUNISM AND NATIONAL STALINISM

There is an important distinction between national communism and national Stalinism. The former appeared as a critical reaction to Soviet imperialism and rigid ideological orthodoxy. It was innovative, flexible, and tolerant of political relaxation. National communism encouraged intellectual creativity and theoretical imagination. Rejecting the Soviet tutelage, national communists generally favored revisionist (both moderate or radical) alternatives to the enshrined Stalinist model. The most important exponents of national communism were Josip Broz Tito, Imre Nagy, Alexander Dubcek, Palmiro Togliatti, Enrico Berlinguer, and Santiago Carrillo. For some time after his return to power in 1956, Wladyslaw Gomulka appeared as a proponent of this direction. By rejecting universal recipes and theoretical ossification, national communism was open-minded and progressive. It questioned the dogma of the dictatorship of the proletariat and stated that reform, including party reform, was inevitable. In its historically most developed variant, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, it became revolutionary and completely tore down the Stalinist institutional system.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, national Stalinism systematically opposed liberalization. Reactionary and self-enclosed, it valued autarky and exclusiveness. It adhered to a militaristic vision of both domestic and international settings. National Stalinism clung to

a number of presumably universal laws of socialist revolution and treated any "deviation" from these prescriptions as a betrayal of class principles. It frequently tempted political elites in countries where the pre-Stalinist radical left had been weak or totally non-existent and/or where the regime's legitimacy had been derived from an external source: Romania, Albania, North Korea, Czechoslovakia after 1968, and the German Democratic Republic.

In brief, national communism was the opposite of national Stalinism. While national communism promised regeneration, national Stalinism was a symptom of degeneration. National communism valued diversity and was potentially pluralistic. National Stalinism was self-centered and archaic, it valued uniformity and exploited tribalistic resentments and allegiances. In today's Yugoslavia, for instance, Slobodan Milosevic's line seems to favor a national Stalinist solution to the country's endemic crisis. At the opposite pole, Slovenia has embarked on a path of radical national communism. Hence, national Stalinism and national communism, despite their incompatibility, can "dialectically" coexist. The denouement of national communism may be a post-communist order. The goal of national Stalinism was the Leninist utopia. Of course, these are descriptions of two ideal types, and mixed situations have occurred more often than not, with Castroism and Maoism the most significant cases.

In introducing this dichotomy, I am aware of the risks of idealizing national communism as a "benign" alternative to the Stalinist model. And yet, historically, the transition to pluralism was stimulated by reformist initiatives from within the ruling elites. National communist options, although half-hearted and often inconsistent, can be considered "progressive" within the framework of one-party systems. Within the same political paradigm, national Stalinism appears as "reactionary." Once this paradigm is abolished and the free competition of political forces gathers momentum, the distinction between "socialism with a human face" and national Stalinism presents nothing more than historical interest.

This paper aims to offer a rational interpretation of Ceausescu's political doctrine and praxis as part and parcel of the Romanian communist tradition. Ceausescu did indeed imprint his differentia specifica on this tradition, modifying it at some critical points, but what is most important is that the principal features of Romania's Stalinist political culture were not decisively changed by Ceausescu. The apparent uniqueness and eccentricity of the Romanian experiment right until its violent demise in December 1989, together with its striking contrast to other communist regimes, should not obfuscate the preservation of values, attitudes, and options adopted at the party's founding congress in May 1921 and maintained ever since. To be sure, numerous additional attributes were developed and expanded

through the years, cleavages within the party's identity, fractures and turning points. But it is the leading assumption of this paper that in Romania the legacy of radical Stalinism was never thoroughly questioned--and could therefore not be abandoned. Unlike all the other communist parties in East-Central Europe (with the exception of the Albanian Labor Party<sup>2</sup>), the Romanian Communist Party at no time engaged in genuine de-Stalinization.

#### THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF ROMANIAN STALINISM

The definition of this culture used in this paper follows Robert C. Tucker's interpretation of the Bolshevik revolutionary culture. According to Tucker, "Lenin's Bolshevism was a complex of ideal and real culture patterns, that is, beliefs about proper political courses of action for a Marxist revolutionary party to follow [ideal patterns] and courses of action that were in fact regularly pursued [real patterns]."<sup>3</sup> The conflictual relationship between the Leninist ideal and real patterns, that is, the moral-romantic promises of Bolshevism versus its realpolitik, explain the major controversies of the 1920s, Stalin's ascent to power, and the defeat of his certainly more gifted rivals. At the same time, as Tucker emphasizes, Leninism was a composite culture, including often divergent positions: it encompassed a left-wing, democratic subculture as well as an authoritarian, potentially totalitarian one. Stalinism can therefore be defined as "a nationalistically and imperialistically wayward form of Bolshevism, a Bolshevism of the radical right."<sup>4</sup>

Let us examine the following hypothesis: in traditional agrarian societies,<sup>5</sup> revolutionary elites tend to embrace political strategies bound to emphasize the uniqueness and the particularisms of their movements and de-emphasize their universalistic-cosmopolitan dimensions. In these endeavors, especially when confronted with real or imagined threats, they tend to rediscover and refunctionalize the ideological arsenal of political formations situated at the other end of the political spectrum: hence, Stalin's pursuit of the paranoid-xenophobic delusions of the Black Hundreds or Ceausescu's use of the terminology, demonology, and iconology of the Romanian far right. National Stalinism appeared, therefore, as the continuation and perfection of a certain subculture within the Leninist revolutionary political culture, that is, the one rooted in historical anxiety, insecurity, marginality, archaic nostalgias, and mythological resentments. It was the outcome of a political and intellectual syncretism in that it unified a programmatically rationalist world view (scientific socialism) and a set of semi-mystical beliefs deeply embedded in the emotional infrastructure of national political cultures in underdeveloped (dependent) agrarian societies. National Stalinism, especially in the Romanian, North Korean, Cuban, and Albanian (under Enver Hoxha, and in somewhat subdued form under Ramiz Alia) varieties, was

thus a synthesis of flaming nationalist rhetoric and semi-religious leader worship. With their emphasis on tribal allegiances and obsessive fears of foreign interference, these regimes inherited and expanded the Stalinist totemist psychology. In the Romanian case, more than in those of other national Stalinist regimes, the role of the Greek orthodox tradition explained the nature and scope of the institutionalized rites. As Isaac Deutscher wrote, Stalinism "was produced by the impact of a Marxist revolution upon a semi-Asiatic society and the impact of that society upon the Marxist revolution."<sup>6</sup>

Since its appearance on the Romanian political scene, the RCP claimed to challenge the enduring characteristics of the prevailing national political culture. It pretended to be a completely different political actor, unencumbered by the corrupt heritage of the country's traditional elites. Advocating the interests of the industrial proletariat--the "Messiah-class of history," in Lukacs's words--and calling for world revolution, the party appeared to spearhead economic development and social equality.

The most important features of the Romanian national political culture have already been carefully examined and discussed in seminal works by Henry Roberts, Kenneth Jowitt, Daniel Chirot, Ghita Ionescu, and Michael Shafir. These scholars have creatively drawn from Romanian critics of the tortuous path of Romanian Westernization during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Suffice it to mention here the works of Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Titu Maiorescu, Stefan Zeletin, and Eugen Lovinescu. They share a view of Romania's pre-revolutionary political culture as dominated by a conflict between imported Western institutions and the agrarian-Balkan, pre-capitalist traditions. The polemic between Maiorescu and Gherea was centered precisely on the viability and persistence of democratic institutions. Both theorists, the former conservative but pro-Western, the latter a Marxist socialist (close to Georgy Plekhanov, Karl Kautsky, and Rosa Luxemburg), agreed, however, on the need to instill content into the empty democratic forms. For Gherea, Romania was plagued by a social question insoluble within the parameters of the capitalist system. An evolutionary Marxist, Gherea favored the development of a socialist movement anchored in the industrial working class. He linked the chances of the revolution's victory in the dependent countries of the East to its triumph in the developed West. Gherea's skepticism about the Bolshevik insurrectionary strategy of 1917 and his gradualist approach were later denounced by the communists as a pernicious, self-styled Romanian version of Menshevism.<sup>7</sup>

The evolution of the RCP during its clandestine period (1924-44) was consistently marked by the dramatic marginality of the left in Romania. Here, again, to refer simply to agrarian-populist nationalism is not enough. In Bulgaria, whose social

structure was in many respects similar to Romania's, or in Yugoslavia, the left had developed much more forceful traditions. In Romania the chronic debility of the left was determined in part by the absence of a transnational referent such as the Russian (sublimated Pan-Slavism) or the Austro-Hungarian revolutionary movements. The weakness of Romania's pre-Leninist left-wing radicalism explains to a great extent the failure of the communists to transcend the boundaries of their only partly self-imposed ghetto. In other words, the pre-Leninist leftist subculture bequeathed to its communist progeny many of its insular characteristics. It is no wonder, then, that the illegal RCP was dominated by Transylvanians and Bessarabians whose political radicalization had been facilitated by the local revolutionary traditions and patterns (strongly influenced, to be sure, by Hungarian, Russian, and Ukrainian left-wing activism).

The characteristic features of Romania's national political culture include the fragility of its democratic attitudes and institutions (the problem of their authenticity has long haunted the Romanian political mind); the moral versatility of its political class (Mihai Eminescu in his political prose bemoaned the incessant trafficking with principles, a practice widely deplored as a national disease,<sup>8</sup> but also the poporanist [narodnik, populist] criticism of the democratic facade and the discussions about the superiority of the village over the city, i.e., of the "community" over "civilization"); the insulation of its left which led it to narcissistic behavior, sectarianism, ignorance of national grievances, apocalyptic swings between long periods of torpor and short-lived ecstasies; a political class indulging in the mimetism of trends fashionable in the West; morally corrosive and all-encompassing corruption; a shocking discrepancy between le pays réel and le pays légal; and, as a corollary, an easy-going, frivolous, if not completely derogatory treatment of justice and legality (in the spirit of Raymond Poincaré's celebrated remark: "Nous sommes ici aux portes de l'Orient où tout est pris à la légère" [Here we are, at the gates to the Orient, where nothing is taken seriously], which became almost a self-mocking national slogan). Of course, constructive attempts were made to overcome this state of affairs. The National Peasant Party headed by Iuliu Maniu and the Liberals led by members of the Bratianu family appeared to be committed to safeguarding a constitutional state. The Social Democrats (C. Titel Petrescu, Serban Voinea), who were strongly opposed to authoritarianism, attempted to expand their base among industrial workers. But, on the whole, one may say that democracy was hardly a homegrown or profoundly implanted product in Romania. Its exogenous and precarious nature made it a key target for radical movements inspired by totalitarian creeds. The artificiality of the democratic institutions and the incapacity of the ruling elites to generate allegiance to what could hardly be described as a Rechtsstaat facilitated the task of the radical social movements that emerged in the aftermath of

World War I. The integrative concept which describes the overarching nature of Romania's dominant political culture is Byzantinism. It refers to the preference for resolving political problems by using pre- and/or anti-democratic methods; hostility to the transparency of the democratic process and a reliance on conspiracy, intrigue, and behind-the-scenes arrangements; clientelism; national self-indulgence and self-centeredness; and a chasm between the political elites and the masses, considered simply terrain for manipulative political games. As Ion Luca Caragiale, the great playwright and perhaps the nation's most lucid moralist, has shown in his writings, Romania was living under the sign of the pseudo.

In reaction to the widely recognized flaws of Romanian parliamentarism, both the radical left and the radical right advocated revolutionary violence. The "Men of the Archangel," as the members of the Iron Guard were called, accused the political class of incompetence and national betrayal, and put forward the ideal of the "spiritual revolution"<sup>9</sup>. An important document expressing this sense of malaise was "Manifestul Crinului Alb" (Manifesto of the white lily), written by a group of young intellectuals influenced by Oswald Spengler's historical pessimism--Der Untergang des Abendlandes was extremely popular in Romania--and by the anti-democratic, elitist philosophy of the Action Française. Its principal author, Petre Marcu-Bals studied law in Germany and witnessed the rise of National Socialism in the early 1930s, broke with the right, and under the pen name Petre Pandrea published one of the first and most provocative analyses of Hitlerism, Germania hitlerista, and defended communists in the political trials of the 1930s. Married to Lucretiu Patrascanu's sister, Pandrea was arrested and jailed after 1948, to be rehabilitated by Ceausescu in 1968. Toward the end of his life, he published a superb book on the sculptor Constantin Brancusi.

The rejection of non-Romanian institutions, the exaltation of the Byzantine-orthodox traditions (the Sophianic mythology; Nechifor Crainic's Nostalgia paradisului), and the advocacy of an authoritarian dictatorship based on the primacy of the ethnic principle (ethnocracy) were the bench marks of the rightist social philosophy. Add to this Mihail Manoilescu's fascination with fascist corporatism, Mircea Vulcanescu's and Constantin Noica's treatises on "the Romanian sentiment of being" and "the Romanian philosophical language" (sentimentul romanesc al fiintei and rostirea filosofica romaneasca), and Lucian Blaga's expressionist rejection of soulless Western forms and traditionalist celebration of the village as the sole repository of Romanian virtues (sufletul romanesc s-a nascut la sat [the Romanian soul was born in the village]), which, of course, was a rather imaginary village, as H.H. Stahl's sociological monographs so convincingly show. In Romania, the visions of the millennium were by no means restricted to the tiny communist minority. In

the 1930s, the Iron Guard skillfully used the political appeals of the "national-revolutionary" rhetoric.<sup>10</sup> A communist theorist, Patrascanu saw the fundamental cause of the mystical derailment of the Romanian ideology in the breakdown of old existential formulae; the superstitious, nebulous heritage of the rural culture; and, most important, the shapelessness and the vacillations of the ideological currents in Romania in turn determined by the overall crisis in Romanian society in the 1930s.

Under the immediate impact of the Bolshevik revolution, the Romanian left split in the early 1920s. Enthused with the chiliastic faith spread out by the Comintern, the "maximalists" broke with Gherea's followers and managed to form the RCP as a section of the Communist International in 1921. During the preliminary negotiations with Lenin and Rakovsky on the party's affiliation to the Comintern, the Romanians, led by Gheorghe Cristescu-Plapumaru, voiced strong reservations about Russia's claims on Bessarabia and the vassal status imposed by Moscow on the national parties. These misgivings notwithstanding, the RCP renounced its autonomy and was banned in 1924 as a result of its Comintern-imposed decision to endorse irredentist demands by rebellious pro-Soviet Bessarabian peasants (the Tatar-Bunar episode). Because of his opposition to this self-defeating adventurous platform, Cristescu was expelled from the party and joined a socialist group. His former communist comrades accused him of opportunism and, after 1944, slandered and persecuted him further. Cristescu's resistance to the Comintern's internationalist injunctions may have served as the rationale for Moscow's deep suspicions of ethnic Romanians in the top echelons of the RCP. As a matter of fact, from Cristescu's elimination in 1924 to Gheorghiu-Dej's emergence as the party's numero uno in the autumn of 1944, all RCP general secretaries were non-ethnic Romanians, some of them even ignorant of the Romanian language.

These episodes--some of which to this day remain quite obscure--need to be outlined because, surprising as it may sound, no satisfactory history of the RCP has been published either in Romania or abroad. Because it has been impossible to consult the RCP's archives, Western RCP historiography has limited itself to a conventional and often inaccurate treatment of the underground period. The RCP's history written by the communists themselves suffered from a number of biases linked to the changes in the party's official line. The inner dynamics of a political formation whose elite circulation was often decided on strictly subjective grounds, has been overlooked, while the self-serving Dej and Ceausescu versions have not been radically questioned. This is not to deny the value of some praiseworthy efforts (Ghita Ionescu remains by far the most impressive), but rather to indicate the need to engage in a thorough de-mystification which, in Althusser's words, would enable us to distinguish between phantoms and real characters. But, as the late Georges Haupt



wrote, there are plenty of other sources that can be used to foster the methodological relevance of such an undertaking: documents and biographies published in recent years in Romania, unpublished memoirs, interviews with survivors of the Comintern generation, interviews with activists of other communist parties, party documents published under Gheorghiu-Dej, and more. It is safe to say that today, in the aftermath of the December 1989 revolution, we have reached a moment when writing a political history of the RCP has become both imperative and possible.

From the very outset, by the simple fact that they agreed to the twenty-one mandatory Leninist conditions for acceptance into the Comintern, the RCP militants proclaimed their political and emotional identification with the Soviet Union, the "promised land" and the "motherland of the proletariat." Programmatically opposed to what they defined as "Great Romanian imperialism," the RCP could not compete with right-wing formations for mass recruitment. As in Poland and Hungary, the more Bolshevized the party, the more estranged it was from the nation it claimed to represent. Predetermined by its sectarianism, the party's alienation from the national working class resulted in its completely unbalanced ethnic composition. For most Romanians--assisted in this by their government's anti-Bolshevik propaganda--the RCP was the "party of the foreigners." It was only in the mid-1930s, in the Popular Front period, that the RCP realized how counterproductive its national policy had been. Furthermore, the party was plagued by factionalism, encouraged but not always caused by the Comintern's incessant interference in its internal affairs. It should be borne in mind that the RCP was subordinated to the Comintern's Balkan Bureau, headed by Bela Kun. Much of the intra-party strife was thus caused by Kun's conflict with Christian Rakovsky, once a prominent Romanian socialist, and in the 1920s one of Trotsky's closest associates. Many of the RCP's founding members refused to endorse the Comintern's vilification of Rakovsky following the defeat of the Unified Opposition within the CPSU(b) in 1927.

#### KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING ROMANIAN COMMUNISM

The RCP's political evolution has been the result of the interaction of national and international variables. The process of Bolshevization, which Isaac Deutscher aptly described as full-fledged Stalinization, in other words, the elimination of the few residual forms of dialogue and intra-party democracy, was imposed on the RCP, as on the Polish Communist Party, by the Comintern headquarters, most forcefully after the Fifth Comintern Congress (Moscow, 17 June-8 July 1924) with its ultra-leftist platform, especially on national and colonial questions. The principal purpose of the congress was to get rid of leaders of the Leninist generation and to promote subservient apparatchiks who would blindly execute the Comintern's decisions. In addition, in a fashion similar to the de-Luxemburgization of the Polish Communist Party,<sup>11</sup> in the Romanian case the matter consisted of

de-Rakovskyzation, that is, purging those historical personalities whose mind sets and ideological preferences were closer to the patriarch of the Romanian revolutionary socialism than to Stalinist orthodoxy. It was a cleansing of the pre-Stalinist memory, an exorcism of any and all critical temptation. This "purification," initially perpetrated by Romanian communists, was considered insufficient by the Comintern's Balkan Bureau. Kun and Bohumil Smeral, the two most prominent Comintern figures responsible for the region, as well as Dmitry Manuilsky, the Comintern's chief bureaucrat, engineered the elimination of the entire Old Guard of the RCP and the appointment of members of other communist parties to top positions in the RCP's hierarchy, including the office of general secretary (Vitaly Holostenko-Barbu, member of the Ukrainian Communist Party; Aleksander Stefanski-Gorn, member of the Polish Communist Party).

For invaluable information on these changes, a true historical gold mine is a book by Mircea Musat and Ion Ardeleanu.<sup>12</sup> Musat and Ardeleanu are well-connected official party historians. Musat worked in the CC's propaganda department and was reportedly one of Ceausescu's speech writers. Ardeleanu, who taught scientific socialism at the Bucharest Art Institute, was until the December revolution the acting director of the Museum of the History of the RCP. Their books incorporate an enormous amount of uniquely important documents, including lists of the clandestine Central Committees and Politbureaux, as well as long excerpts from political reports to congresses and plenums. The publication of their books was a step in the methodical campaign to disassociate Ceausescu from the internationalist excesses of the party's underground years, blame the non-Romanians for the party's anaemia and blunders, and consolidate the myth of the post-1965 RCP as a new party, a truly national formation. In this mythology, the interwar period as well as the Dej years of Soviet colonization were regrettable accidents de parcours. It was only with Ceausescu's rise to power and his ardent commitment to national values that the party resumed both the revolutionary and the patriotic traditions of pre-Leninist socialism. Another political function of this simultaneous myth-destroying and myth-creating operation was to diminish the authority of the RCP's Old Guard, a pressure group profoundly disaffected with Ceausescu's dictatorship. History was once again being manipulated for strictly personal purposes. To see the limits of the party historians' objectivity, it is enough to notice that both parts of the second volume of this massive undertaking of over 2,000 pages completely glossed over the name of Constantin Parvulescu, one of the RCP's founders, a member of the CC and a very active participant in the internal struggles of the 1920s and 30s.<sup>13</sup> Because of his public opposition to Ceausescu, after 1979 Parvulescu became a non-person in Romania. He was one of the six signatories of the March 1989 open letter of criticism of Ceausescu's leadership.

Within the Comintern, the Romanian communists suffered from the consequences of their national insignificance, and were treated in a patronizing, arrogant, and profoundly humiliating manner. The only RCP personalities to receive massive Comintern media coverage were Ana Pauker, Mihai Gheorghiu-Bujor (a semi-anarchist revolutionary who spent decades in Romanian jails), and the leaders of the 1933 Grivita railway workers' strike, Constantin Doncea, Dumitru Petrescu, and Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

Anti-Intellectualism and Conformity. The communist party showed very little interest in doctrinal debates. Its semi-official publications contented themselves with echoing the twists and turns of the Kremlin line, and condemned the Romanian political class for the country's economic predicament. This anti-intellectual strand remained a fundamental characteristic of the communist political culture in Romania until 1989. The case of Lucien Goldmann is illustrative of the party's unwillingness to tolerate Marxist creativity: the future independent French Marxist (genetic structuralist) and one of the world's most renowned scholars of Lukacs was expelled from the RCP in the 1930s for his alleged Trotskyism. Similarly, the publication in the late 1920s of Panait Istrati's disenchanted report on the USSR had no effect on Romania's communists. Istrati, acclaimed by Romain Rolland as the Balkan Maxim Gorky, was stigmatized as a renegade. The siren songs of heterodoxy were adamantly repudiated. This unbending opposition to theoretical experimentation and innovation was recognized in a significant confession-testimony written by Sorin Toma, the former editor-in-chief of the RCP daily Scinteia, a CC member from 1948 to 1960, who now lives in Israel. This document deserves separate discussion especially for its fascinating information about Gheorghiu-Dej and the anti-revisionist campaign of 1956, but here let us only outline Sorin Toma's theses: First, he attributes the disastrous Ceausescu course to the RCP's enthusiastic espousal of the Stalinist model of socialism, "the perverse outcome of an essentially counter-revolutionary, anti-democratic, and anti-socialist process." Second, he links the practice of the Ceausescu regime both to the communist and to the national political cultures: "Those who wish to understand how all these things can take place in Romania should think not only of the despotic and terrorist nature of the Ceausescu regime and not only of the past politics of the communist party (which, not accidentally, was one of the most obedient and conformist within the world communist movement). The roots of the current situation unfortunately lie much deeper. They must also be sought--without any preconceived ideas--in Romania's more distant political past: in the debility and the superficiality of its democratic traditions."<sup>14</sup>

Sectarianism and Ultracentralism. Relations with social democrats (SDP) were strained, often outright antagonistic: not

only did the RCP fully endorse the Comintern's suicidal "class against class" strategy, but it excelled in branding the SDP a "Trojan horse," a detachment of "police agents." The failure of several working class actions in the late 1920s was, of course, attributed to sabotage by the social democratic "traitors and capitulators." The exclusive logic of the besieged fortress, carried to the extreme by Stalin during the Great Purge, inspired the reflexive patterns of the RCP's elite during most of its underground period. It was later developed into a state doctrine used to justify the terror of the 1950s as well as Ceausescu's neo-totalitarian experiment. The party embraced and conserved an elitist-militaristic mentality: an exacerbated Leninist "democratic-centralist" philosophy was the rationale for the witch-hunts organized methodically and with regularity.<sup>15</sup> Especially after its Fifth Congress (Harkiv, December 1930), the RCP developed an increased sense of its predestined role in the implementation of a revolutionary scenario in Romania. At the Congress, the RCP adhered to the Stalinist interpretation of the Leninist developmental paradigm.<sup>16</sup> It emphasized the need to continue the fight against the oligarchy and to fulfill the requirements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution as a transitional stage toward the socialist revolution. Although this was an apparent renunciation of the eschatological claims of the previous decade, the deficit of political realism was still obvious in terms of proposals for concrete steps to be taken. The principles of uncompromising revolutionism and resolute rejection of the claim to national unity within Great Romania remained sacrosanct.<sup>17</sup>

By the late 1930s, the party's elite had undergone a major transformation. As already mentioned, most of the founding fathers had been politically emasculated during the crushing of the left-wing opposition in the CPSU (Marcel Pauker-Luximin, Alexandru Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Elena Filipovici, David Finkelstein-Fabian, Elek Köblös, Imre Aladar, Jenő Rozvany, and others). But their political unreliability was well known to the Soviet "organs": some of them had been Rakovsky's friends, and others had sided with Zinoviev and Bela Kun in the internecine struggles of the 1920s. They had participated in the first congresses of the Third International, and could easily bridge the enormous gap between late Leninism and mature Stalinism. Not surprisingly, they were physically liquidated during the Great Purge. With the annihilation of this revolutionary elite, the RCP was practically decapitated. Those who succeeded this revolutionary-idealistic generation were mere instruments of Stalin's designs, ready to perform any tactical somersault to satisfy the Soviets. The purge of the Old Guard served Stalin's scheme of having a fully controllable, perfectly docile, and infinitely loyal communist phalanx in Romania. After all, let us not forget that Romania was an important element of the cordón sanitaire, and that the Soviet Union had never accepted its post-World War I western borders. All potential sources of

critical ferment had therefore to be eliminated from the RCP. Stalin deliberately chose to keep the party as a peripheral, tightly knit, absolutely trustworthy formation, ready to carry out his plans at the right moment.

Why was the RCP allowed to continue its existence instead of being simply suppressed like the Polish Communist Party? First, because the RCP's elite had been less directly involved in the Bolshevik party's inner squabbles. Stalin's personal grudges, which mattered overwhelmingly in the destruction of the Polish exiled elite, were less pronounced with respect to the Romanian communists. Second, the RCP was the only formation which could continue to destabilize the Romanian government's control in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Third--although this remains a conjecture until the Comintern archives become available for historical investigation--it is probable that taking into account the very close links between Romanian and Bulgarian communists, Georgy Dimitrov, then the Comintern's chairman, staunchly opposed such a decision.

Factionalism and Tricentrism. In my study "The tragicomedy of Romanian Communism,"<sup>18</sup> I advanced the tricentric model as a peculiar Romanian structure of the Comintern years and a key to the understanding of the post-World War II intra-elite rivalries in the RCP. The RCP was kept under permanent control and pressure by the Moscow-stimulated competition between its three centers of authority and power: the home (underground) Central Committee; the exiled Bureau (Berlin, Vienna, Prague, then Moscow); and, especially after 1941, the "center of the prisons." The RCP leadership's fragmentation played into the hands of the Soviets who wanted to maintain the illegal RCP in a perfectly acquiescent and subservient position. It was precisely as an outcome of this struggle that Gheorghiu-Dej, the leader of the "center of the prisons," managed to oust Foris, leader of the home underground CC, and outmaneuver Ana Pauker of the Moscow Bureau in April 1944. Foris's elimination was certainly one of those surprise effects ensured by the breakdown of the lines of communication between Moscow and the national parties during the war.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the many enigmatic episodes during the RCP's wartime history, it seems clear that Moscow's emissaries Emil Bodnaras and Constantin Parvulescu decided to stake on the "center of the prisons" as the repository of the revolutionary credentials needed for the post-liberation struggle for power. To reassure Moscow that the anti-Foris coup had no anti-Soviet implications and to ingratiate themselves with Stalin, Dej and his fellow conspirators asked Ion Gheorghe Maurer, a communist lawyer released from the Tirgu-Jiu camp in 1943, to go to Moscow and inform the Kremlin of the situation within their party. Mobilized on the front in the Ukraine, Maurer failed to convince the local partisans that he, a Romanian officer, was a committed communist. He then returned to Romania and played a key role in organizing Gheorghiu-Dej's escape from the Tirgu-Jiu camp in

August 1944. Years later, Ana Pauker used the argument of Maurer's presence on the front to ruin his political career and undermine Dej's power. Following Pauker's demotion, Maurer played a major role in Romanian politics, serving as the country's prime minister in 1961-74.

Unlike Pauker, who was Jewish, and Luca or Foris, who were Hungarian, the Dejites embodied Stalin's ideal of the "healthy proletarian nucleus." It is also significant that Dej and his comrades Apostol, Ceausescu, and Draghici regarded the Soviet Union as the Mecca of the revolution, and no autonomist temptation occurred to them in the 1940s or 50s. Needless to say, for them the extermination of the émigrés during the Great Purge had been a godsend: it accelerated elite mobility and created the opportunity for previously peripheral elements to seize power within the party, which we should call the substitution of the center through the periphery. This explains Dej's and Ceausescu's bitter anti-Luximin outbursts during the December 1961 Plenum, aptly described by Ghita Ionescu as a "major exercise in diversion."<sup>20</sup>

Factionalism remained the party's dominant feature under Gheorghiu-Dej. The competition between the Muscovites and the home communists was motivated by the incompatibility of their two communist subcultures: the Moscow-oriented, internationalist group, with its own value system and order of priorities; and the domestic (national) group, with its own militant experience, including the awareness that when Pauker and Luca returned from Moscow, the RCP had already established its national image. The Muscovites adopted the same condescending fashion toward Dej as that in which they had been treated by the Comintern. They cooperated for some time, but the denouement of their uneasy alliance could not be postponed for long. In 1946, they worked together on the assassination of the former RCP general secretary Stefan Foris. Later, Pauker and Dej would combine their efforts to demote and eventually arrest Lucretiu Patrascanu, one of the most prominent communist personalities and a first-rate Marxist scholar. In this respect, it must be stressed that, in spite of the apparent RCP internal peace, show trials were being organized in Romania as well as in other satellites.<sup>21</sup> Under Dej, the permanent purge was the privileged methodology of elite mobilization and participation. The expulsion of the "deviators" (simultaneously branded "right" and "left") in May-June 1952 strengthened Dej's links with the Moscow center: the fate of the Pauker-Luca-Georgescu faction was decided by Dej's personal closeness to Mark Mitin, the editor-in-chief of the Cominform's journal For a Lasting Peace, for People's Democracy, a member of the CPSU CC, and one of the authors of Stalin's Short Biography.<sup>22</sup> It is noteworthy that after the June 1948 Resolution condemning the Yugoslav leadership, the Cominform's headquarters were transferred from Belgrade to Bucharest. This was an unequivocal signal of Stalin's confidence in the RCP

leadership. First Pavel Yudin, then Mark Mitin supervised the Romanian elite. Again, this was a unique case of direct Soviet involvement in the sanctum sanctorum of RCP politics. The relations between the RCP leadership and the Soviet proconsuls remain one of the least visited but most important elements for the interpretation of the Romanian semi-boycott of the "New Course" initiated by Stalin's heirs. In 1952, after Dej won out over Pauker, Semyon Kavtaradze, the Soviet ambassador to Bucharest and a close friend of Pauker's, was recalled to Moscow. From that moment on, the "home communists" could count on Stalin's benevolence. This was indeed the opposite of the purge pattern practiced in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and, to a certain extent, Czechoslovakia. Mark Mitin left Bucharest only after the official announcement of the Cominform's dissolution in 1956.

De-Stalinization and De-Satellization. Nineteen-fifty-six was the most difficult year for Dej. The Soviets increased pressure to remove him and replace him with someone less involved in the anti-Tito campaigns. But Dej managed to thwart Khrushchev's attempts to topple him and, especially after the Hungarian Revolution, proved to be a major asset to the Soviets. With unique astuteness, this "Balkan Machiavelli" (a term often used by RCP old-timers in reference to Dej's proverbial cynicism and political acumen) navigated through the stormy waters of de-Stalinization, averting any fatal accident. After the tempestuous events of 1956, the Soviets began to trust the Romanians so much that the arrested members of the Nagy government were deported to Snagov, a suburb of Bucharest, where they were interrogated by the Hungarian-speaking RCP veterans Valter Roman, Nicolae Goldberger, and Ladislau Vass. It was also a side effect of the Hungarian Revolution that Dej and Nicolae Ceausescu, who had recently been appointed secretary in charge of cadres, launched the process of elite ethnicization, or Romanianization. A new purge was unleashed in the name of the imperative to increase "revolutionary vigilance."

As Georges Haupt clearly pointed out in a path-breaking study published in 1968,<sup>23</sup> the primary origin of the Romanian-Soviet conflict was the RCP's opposition to Khrushchev's reforms. The Romanian leaders, committed to the repressive Stalinist pattern of social control, resented the liberalism associated with the "New Course." Nothing was more alien to them than the idea of allowing intellectual unrest to rock the boat of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The specter of anarchic, petty-bourgeois liberalism was therefore brandished to preempt such developments. Dej capitalized on Khrushchev's loss of authority (especially after 1960) to assert Romania's "special path," which was, in fact, a reassertion of the time-honored Stalinist strategy.

De-satellization proceeded at a very fast pace without, however, producing much in the way of de-Stalinization. Anti-

Russianism (disguised as anti-Sovietism) became a favorite propaganda device. When Dej died in March 1965, Ceausescu inherited not only his mantle, but also a political platform containing the potential for either Albanization (emphasis on Stalinist nationalism) or Yugoslavization (emphasis on anti-Stalinism within an authoritarian-paternalistic regime). After a short-lived and finally aborted relaxation (one of the issues which have not yet been fully assessed), Ceausescu chose the strategy of economic acceleration and increased political repression. Especially after 1971, under the impact of his fascination with Kim Il Sung's North Korea, he curtailed liberalization and reimposed rigid orthodoxy. On the basis of his newly tested consultative-mobilizational techniques, he engineered an ever-growing cult of his personality, later paralleled by a cult of his wife's. In the late 1970s, Romania appeared to be moving toward a political formula closer to Asiatic despotism (as described by Marx and Wittfogel) than to routinized bureaucratic authoritarianism in the Brezhnevite mold.

Gheorghiu-Dej won his supremacy with long years in prison, endless struggles, and the anti-Soviet challenge of April 1964. Within the party, he enjoyed genuine respect and was perceived as a traditional-legitimate leader. Ceausescu tried to overcome his political handicap, the lack of impressive revolutionary credentials, by manufacturing a compensatory charisma. Once again, the concept of the pseudo is indispensable: Ceausescu's cult failed to inspire more than biting ironies and an exasperation among those who were supposed to adore him. It was based on opportunistic simulation, mechanical gesticulation, and hollow rhetoric. The cult became the most important underpinning of Ceausescu's power. Orthodoxy was judged not by loyalty to the party but in the light of participation in the cultic pageants. This process coincided with the transition from the fundamentalist Leninist-Stalinist leadership structure revolving around the Dejite oligarchy, to a sui generis experiment in populist personalism. Ceausescu's inferiority complex--one of the sources of his increasingly exacting neurosis--was his secondary role in the major revolutionary breakthroughs of the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>24</sup> Unlike other Dejites, he had spent long years being assigned to junior positions. He resented the "barons," the former influential members of Dej's camarilla, and replaced them first with middle-aged members of the apparatus and later with a new generation whose political socialization had been dominated completely by his ideas and practices. The post-1965 assault on Dej's team and the compelling need to affirm his preeminence were expressions of a deep frustration accumulated during long decades of political heteronomy. Once in power, Ceausescu was ready to expand both his autonomy and, in his own way, his nation's. Although theoretically unsophisticated (a number of Romanian intellectuals experienced his reluctance to engage in any theoretical discussion of contemporary Marxism), Ceausescu, at least in his first years in power, displayed a keen



psychological (empirical) understanding of the need for renewal. At the same time, he insisted that the party's leading role should remain the cornerstone of Romanian socialism. But he redefined the nature of the party: breaking with the elitist vision so characteristic of Dej's prison mentality, Ceausescu favored an organicist-authoritarian philosophy according to which the party became a "vital center," an all-encompassing mass movement. Ceausescu's approach to history was marked by romanticism: true historicism, that is, the recognition of the social relativism of institutions and individuals, was denied on behalf of a self-styled national self-glorification, where real or imagined feudal and even tribal traditions were portrayed as the prelude to the rise of the modern revolutionary movement and the communist state. As a faithful child of the RCP political culture, Ceausescu developed the Stalinist transformist philosophy: on more than one occasion he called for the elimination from the Romanian language of the phrase nu se poate (it is impossible).<sup>25</sup> Unbridled voluntarism motivated and determined this mutationist approach to man and society. (Consider, in this context, his campaign to raze 7,000 villages or the incessant overhauling of the educational system in order to speed up the "advent of the New Man.")

#### CONCLUSION

Ceausescu's personality and actions cannot be fathomed without a profound understanding of the Romanian communist tradition. Borrowing from the national political culture a certain hostility to democratic forms, putting back into use the reactionary-tribalistic themes of far-right ideology, Romanian national Stalinism generated a syncretic philosophy of resistance to democratic change. It was an ethnocentric radicalism, obsessed with its uniqueness, rooted in an unmastered and unavowed inferiority complex. The origins of this situation should be sought in the party's problematic legitimacy, its unreconstructed cult of discipline, obedience, and centralism. And yet, as a result of social transformations and increasing pressure from below, the neo-Stalinist "primitive magic" was not capable of arousing mass support. Albeit less visible than in other communist states, the emerging civil society could not be forever ignored. Chaotic and panic-ridden, the regime's response to challenges coming from the party, the intelligentsia, and the working class showed that national Stalinism had completely exhausted its political and mythological potential.

#### POSTSCRIPT

For almost a quarter of a century Romania served as a fascinating case of a personal dictatorship of the national Stalinist brand. Even though the RCP was officially the ruling force in the country, the truth of the matter was that Nicolae Ceausescu and his clan had annihilated the party as a decision-making body. Under Ceausescu's predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Romanian communists succeeded in shunning de-Stalinization

and preserving Romania as a stronghold of communist orthodoxy. While Dej ruled as the chief executive officer of an oligarchy and knew how to ingratiate himself with the party bureaucracy, under Ceausescu power was exercised by a tiny coterie using the mechanisms of populist authoritarianism, symbolic manipulation, and naked terror. The party apparatus was slowly disenfranchised and eventually emasculated. Even political decay in the Soviet Union in the 1980s, especially the beginning of perestroika, led to the intensification of international pressures on Romania and contributed to the weakening of Ceausescu's power. Byzantine rites could no longer conceal the bankruptcy of the national Stalinist system. Romanians became disgusted with a regime whose underpinnings were corruption, repression, and poverty. In December 1989 the population launched an anti-communist rebellion and smashed the entire institutional edifice of state socialism. For several hours on 22 December 1989 a power vacuum came about, and it seemed that the country's leap into democracy would proceed smoothly. But then a counter-strike followed and violence became rampant. The anti-Ceausescu bureaucracy, the "second echelon," long frustrated by the president's vagaries, came to the fore and formed the National Salvation Front (NSF).

Claiming to be "the emanation of the revolution," the NSF pretended to lead the people's struggle against the dictator's supporters, and took many Romanians in with this legend. It announced, in its first public statement, its commitment to democratic principles, including the multiparty system and the imperative to hold free elections as soon as possible. It pledged to represent a decisive break with the abhorred communist regime. The Romanian Communist Party thus ostensibly disappeared without a trace from the country's political life. A new myth was thus manufactured by the Front, the umbrella movement dominated by neo-Leninist zealots whose real agenda was to rationalize rather than replace the communist system. The takeover took place in the shadow of bloody confrontations between the people in the streets and the security forces (Securitate). Well-versed in conspiracies, these apparatchiks orchestrated a colossal hoax and managed to posture as born-again democrats. What they represented, however, was a bastardized form of national communism: the NSF was a pseudo-form of a revolutionary breakthrough, an attempt on the part of the besieged bureaucracy to invent a new principle of legitimacy by renouncing the most compromised features of the system.

Romania's spontaneous plebeian revolution was thus abducted by a group of communist reformers whose main credentials consisted of their more or less outspoken opposition to Ceausescu's Stalinist policies. This group then appealed to the general Romanian populace, the silent masses, most of whom had been quiescent during the revolution and suspicious of the revolutionaries' "radicalizing and Westernizing tendencies," and were more than willing to receive the Front's statement about the

transition to pluralism with warm approval and without asking any questions. All concrete public discussion of the legacy of communism was skillfully avoided, and the NSF's leaders claimed that the RCP had passed away together with Ceausescu. At the same time, the Front's propaganda exploited the widespread apprehensions among Romanians of the dangers of the inevitable sweeping transition to a market economy. The NSF, therefore, very shrewdly created a rift between the students and intellectuals who had been at the forefront of the revolution by accusing them of pandering to "foreign" influences, on the one hand, and, the ill-informed and frightened majority of the populace, on the other.

Learning the democratic process is very difficult in a country with few democratic traditions. On 21 May 1990, Romanians were able to vote freely for the first time in more than fifty years. Instead of overwhelmingly defeating the neo-communist NSF, a large majority of voters gave the NSF the benefit of the doubt. The Front's rhetoric sounded familiar, and many were ready to trust its presidential candidate, Ion Iliescu, because he appeared to sit closest to their understanding of politics. Thus, it was an authoritarian temptation that motivated the decision of the majority to support the NSF. The opposition parties suffered a crushing defeat, and Iliescu triumphed with more than 85 percent of the national vote. The NSF candidates also obtained a majority of seats in the bicameral parliament.

And yet the NSF's victory does not mean the end of democratization in Romania. Neither does it imply its victory in the long term because the Front will be forced to meet the demands of an increasingly dissatisfied population in a country with limited economic resources. The dictator's fall signified the end of over four decades of brutal national Stalinism, but it has not led to the end of communism, and neither has it ushered in pluralism. What it has brought in, instead, is the Romanian version of national communism, dedicated to preserving the legacy of the party apparatus. The question that naturally arises is: How can a spontaneous revolution be saved from co-optation by those adept in Leninist techniques of manipulation?

Romania is different from the other countries of Eastern Europe because it has not undergone de-Stalinization. It has not passed through the process of moving from the absolute and totalitarian rule of one man to the (slightly less absolute) authoritarian rule of a communist Politburo, or, national communism. To Westerners, the distinction between these two forms of oppression may seem irrelevant, but it is enormous to people who live under it. A single absolute ruler, in the mold of Ceausescu, means rule unchecked and unmoderated in its arbitrariness, ignorance, and cruelty. A Politburo, even if it is made up of self-serving individuals, at least provides a

check against the worst depravities of any one of its members. Silviu Brucan, initially the chief ideologue of the NSF and a self-professed Leninist, expressed this precise dichotomy by regarding Iliescu's overwhelming triumph with some circumspection. Electoral slogans such as "When Iliescu comes, the sun rises," not only represent the Romanians' paternalistic predilections, but lead the party apparatchiks to fear a resurgence of national Stalinism from the national communism promoted by them. In this, the NSF is akin to those Gorbachevite-minded reform communists who are desperately trying to salvage the sinking ship of communism in Eastern Europe without abandoning it completely, and who have, as a result, been given short shrift by their electorates. The NSF still clings to the dream of national communism, of socialism with a human face. But as the Polish historian Adam Michnik recently pointed out, "there is no socialism with a human face, only totalitarianism with its teeth knocked in." Iliescu and his associates will not be able to govern without offering a social contract to the increasingly disaffected Romanians. It is thus likely that the government will try to broaden its political base and avoid the exclusive exercise of power. As the economic situation grows increasingly tense, the Front will be confronted with movements of despair and rage. In these circumstances, the NSF--or any party that might be its successor--will attempt to establish a populist authoritarian regime. Liberalization will subside and new laws will be enacted to secure the Front's supremacy.

New political parties will emerge in the near future. Instead of being oriented toward the past, they will articulate the political and social interests and aspirations of various categories of Romanian citizens. It will be their task to familiarize Romanians with democracy and to make them understand the virtues of freedom. The 1989 revolution represents the watershed between national Stalinism and national communism, not between communism and political pluralism. Between that revolution and the true achievement of pluralism lies the shadow of a people scared into submission by their long experience of totalitarianism.

It is likely that the NSF will split between partisans of limited reforms and those who advocate a decisive break with the institutions and habits of old. The awakening of civil society will contribute to the flourishing of grass-roots movements and groups whose role will be to exert continuous pressure on the government and to permit citizens to experience genuine political participation. The backbone of this emerging civic culture exists already: the hundreds of informal groups and associations that endorsed the March 1990 anti-communist "Proclamation of Timisoara" and formed a national alliance to pursue the goals codified in that document. But the trauma of the national Stalinist legacy and the political fallout of the revolution have left a lasting impact. The independent social forces will

eventually have to coordinate their actions in a broad democratic movement. In other words, the opposition is not limited to its current expressions. The existing political spectrum, especially the mandate for national communism, should be seen as provisional, the first step on Romania's road to freedom.

#### NOTES

1. See especially Ferenc Feher and Agnes Heller, Hungary 1956 Revisited: The Message of a Revolution - a Quarter of a Century After (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 157: "the Hungarian revolution and its programme remain on the general East European agenda, even if only as a regulative idea."

2. See Arshi Pipa's illuminating study of the political culture of Albanian communism in Tariq Ali, ed., The Stalinist Legacy (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1984), 435-64.

3. See the masterful study "The Breakdown of a Revolutionary Culture," in Robert C. Tucker, Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia (New York, Norton, 1987), 51-71. On Romanian political culture, see Michael Shafir, Romania: Political Stagnation and Simulated Change (Boulder, Colo., Lynne Rienner, 1985).

4. Ibid., p. 70.

5. See the discussion of status-oriented versus class-based social orders in Kenneth Jowitt, The Leninist Response to National Dependency (Berkeley, Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1978).

6. Isaac Deutscher, "Marxism and Primitive Magic," in Tariq Ali, ed., The Stalinist Legacy, 106-17.

7. See Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's anniversary speeches of May 1951 and May 1961.

8. See C. Radulescu-Motru, Cultura romana si politicianismul (Bucharest, 1904).

9. See Emil Cioran's vitriolic anti-parliamentary and anti-Western outbursts in his early essays "Schimbarea la fata a Romaniei" and "Pe culmile disperarii"; the whole proto-existentialist, lebensphilosophisch problematics of the young intellectual group associated with the philosopher Nae Ionescu's newspaper Cuvintul, whom George Calinescu called in his monumental Istoria literaturii romane (Bucharest, 1941), "generatia nelinistii si a existentei" (the Angst generation):

Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Mircea Vulcanescu, and Constantin Noica.

10. For the Romanian right and the conflict between Westernizers and traditionalists, see Keith Hitchins, "Gindirea: Nationalism in a Spiritual Guise," and Virgil Nemoianu, "Variable Sociopolitical Functions of Aesthetic Doctrine: Lovinescu vs. Western Aestheticism," in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940 (Berkeley, 1978); Eugen Weber, "Romania," in H. Rogger and E. Weber, ed., The European Right (Berkeley, 1966). For the Marxist interpretation, see Lucretiu Patrascanu, Curente si tendinte in filosofia romaneasca (Bucharest, 1971), especially his discussion of Nae Ionescu and Lucian Blaga, 111-38.

11. See Deutscher's discussion of this process in "The Tragedy of the Polish Communist Party" in Isaac Deutscher, Marxism, Wars and Revolutions (London, Verso, 1984), 91-127.

12. Romania dupa Marea Unire, 1918-1933, II, Partea a II-a (Bucharest, 1986), 1, 172 pp.

13. For Parvulescu, see Milorad Drashkovich and Branko Lazitch, Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 353.

14. A fragment of Sorin Toma's cri de coeur was broadcast by Radio Free Europe in the summer of 1989. I quote from the original full text as kindly put at my disposal by the author. To the best of my knowledge this is the first memoir-testimony written by a prominent member of both the interwar and post-revolutionary RCP elite. Its translation and publication with a proper introduction in a specialized journal (East European Politics and Societies or Survey) would be helpful to students of East Central European communism. In many respects, Toma's letter is comparable to the Teresa Toranska's interviews with former influential Polish communists, including Berman, Werfel, and Staszewski, published as Them (New York, Harper and Row, 1987).

15. For the Bolshevik transformation of socialism from the antithesis of militarism into an instrument of militarism, see Robert V. Daniels, "Lenin, Stalin, and the Military Model of Socialism," in his Is Russia Reformable? Change and Resistance from Stalin to Gorbachev (Boulder, Westview Press, 1988), 19-38.

16. See Kenneth Jowitt's excellent insights on the latter in his "Leninist Response."

17. See Elena Filipovici's "Political Report" and the theses adopted on that occasion in Musat and Ardeleanu, op. cit.

18. East European Politics and Society, Spring 1989.

19. For these "local initiatives" with long-term consequences, see Peter J. Stavrakis, Moscow and Greek Communism: 1944-1949 (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989).

20. Ghita Ionescu, Communism in Romania (London, Oxford University Press, 1964), 333.

21. See the pertinent chapters in George H. Hodos's excellent book, Show Trials (Boulder, Colo., Praeger Publishers, 1987).

22. For Mitin's long career within the Stalinist propaganda system, see his obituary signed by Yegor Ligachev, Aleksandr Yakovlev, and many others in Pravda, 21 January 1987.

23. Revue française de science politique, No. 4, 1968.

24. See J.F. Brown's acerbic passage on Ceausescu in his Eastern Europe and Communist Rule (Durham, Duke University Press, 1988), 276.

25. In this connection, see "Stalin and the Uses of Psychology," in Robert C. Tucker, The Soviet Political Mind (New York, Norton, 1971), especially his formulation that "politics as practiced by Stalin in the final years of his reign was the art of the impossible" (p. 172).