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Enacted “*Jus Valachicum*” in South Transylvania (14th-18th Centuries)

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Abstract: *Enacted “Jus Valachicum” in South Transylvania (14th-18th Centuries)*. The case studies presented in our approach analyse from the perspective of legal history several medieval and premodern historical documents. They reflect enactments of the *Jus Valachicum* in South Transylvania among the Romanians living on the Saxon Land, in Mărginimea Sibiului, and in its vicinity, in the citadel and Land of Făgăraş. Illustrations and prescriptions of enacted Romanian customary law are included in: the Romanian-Saxon peace convention of Cristian (13 January 1383); the protocol of the seat of Sălişte (16th-18th centuries); *Constitutio gremialis Sedis Szeliste* (1585); *Cartea ocolniță* from Răşinari (22 May 1488); *Transmissionales in causa Possessionis Resinar contra Liberam Regiamque Civitatem Cibiniensem* (1784); the *Jura* (Rights) of Răşinari (15th-18th centuries); the *Statutes of Făgăraş* (15 May 1508). These enactments of *Jus Valachicum* abolish the bias of a strictly oral, unwritten and unstructured Romanian customary law. They also confirm *de iure* the legal situation extant *de facto*, thus proving the long uninterrupted use of *Jus Valachicum* among the South-Transylvanian Romanians during the 14th-18th centuries.

Keywords: *Jus Valachicum*, enactments of Romanian customary law, South Transylvania, Mărginimea Sibiului, Țara Făgăraşului, 14th-18th centuries

Rezumat: *Codificări ale lui “Jus Valachicum” în sudul Transilvaniei (secolele XIV-XVIII)*. Studiile de caz prezentate în demersul nostru analizează din perspectiva istoriei dreptului câteva izvoare istorice medievale și premoderne. Acestea reflectă codificări ale lui *Jus Valachicum* în sudul Transilvaniei, la românii locuitori ai Pământului Săsesc, în Mărginimea Sibiului, și în vecinătatea acestuia, în cetatea și în Țara Făgăraşului. Ilustrările și prescripțiile acestor codificări ale legii cutumiare românești sunt cuprinse în: convenția de pace româno-

săsească de la Cristian (13 ianuarie 1383); protocolul scaunului de lege din Săliște (secolele XVI-XVIII); *Constitutio gremialis Sedis Szeliste* (1585); *Cartea ocolniță* din Rășinari (22 mai 1488); *Transmissionales in causa Possesionis Resinar contra Liberam Regiamque Civitatem Cibiniensem* (1784); *Jura* (drepturile) satului Rășinari (secolele XV-XVIII); *Statutele Făgărașului* (15 mai 1508). Exemplificarea codificărilor lui *Jus Valachicum* abolește ideea preconcepută a unui drept obișnuielnic românesc exclusiv oral, nescris și nestructurat. Totodată este confirmată *de iure* situația juridică existentă *de facto*, atestând astfel uzul îndelungat și neîntrerupt al lui *Jus Valachicum* la românii din sudul Transilvaniei de-a lungul secolelor XIV-XVIII.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Jus Valachicum*, codificări ale dreptului cutumiar românesc, sudul Transilvaniei, Mărginimea Sibiului, Țara Făgărașului, secolele XIV-XVIII

Initial considerations

Codifications of *Jus Valachicum* among South Transylvanian Romanians are, as a matter of fact, abundant in historical sources from Mărginimea Sibiului and Țara Făgărașului (14th-18th centuries). These Romanian lands (regions), lying at the foot of the Southern Carpathians¹, inhabited by the richest Romanian transhumant shepherds (*mărgineni*, *mocani*, *bârsani*), were situated inside or in vicinity of the Saxon Land (*Fundus Regius*), a territory granted to the Teutonic Order and Saxon colonists by King Andrew's Golden Bull (*Andreanum*, 1222).² Possibly influenced by the Transylvanian Saxons' propensity for regulations and enactments (which ensured them the transition from *usufructus* to *usurpatio* in their new homeland), the South Transylvanian Romanian inhabitants of the wealthy mountain villages soon learned to make full use of legal procedures, in order to preserve their customary laws and to regain their usurped mountains, boundaries and rights.

The following case studies reflect prescriptions and proper codifications of enacted Romanian customary law. They were provided with detailed analyses and critical comments from the perspective of legal history.

¹ *Carpații Meridionali* (Southern Carpathians) are the highest mountain group of the Romanian Carpathians, with the highest peaks in the Făgăraș Mountains (Moldoveanu, 2544 m, and Negoiu, 2535 m).

² On the Romanian historical and juridical heritage from Mărginimea Sibiului, see the latest monograph with critical edition of documents, *Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului (Rășinari, Săliște)*, coordinated by Ela Cosma, authors and editors Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, Marius Boromiz, Alexandru Bucur, Ela Cosma, Daniela Deteșan, Livia Magina, Tatiana Onilov, Vasile Rus, Victor C. Vizauer, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, 870 p.

The Romanian-Saxon peace convention of Cristian (13 January 1383)

Written in Latin language, it aimed to ensure the perpetual peace and tranquility (*statuimus pacis tranquillitate in perpetuum conservandos*) among the Saxon inhabitants of the Sibiu seat and the Romanians living in the highland pastoral villages situated between Tălmaciu (*Tolmacz*) in the east and Săliște (*Magna villa Walachikalis*) in the west.

The 6 articles which compose the peace convention of Cristian stipulated:

1. reconciliation by mutual annulment of the "pacification fines/taxes" (*emenda reconciliationis, onera emendationum*), that were to be paid by Saxons (for killing a man and a woman from Wallachia) and by the Romanians with their descendants (*Walachi suprascripti cum suis posteris nunc et in futurum*), for murders assigned to Vladimir and all his Romanians living beneath (and guarding) the citadel (*Fladmeros et omnes ceteri Walachi morantes sub castro*);

2. the Romanians made the promise never more to graze their sheep and cattle on pastures of the Saxon territory (*in territorio Theutunicorum*) without the Saxons' full approval;

3. the Romanians promised to serve as guards in all the high mountains (*assumpserunt ipsi Walachi custodiam servandam in omnibus alpibus*) stretching from Tălmaciu to Săliște;

4. they also accepted to be punished, being burned together with the killer or arsonist whom they would host or hide;

5. any one (Romanian or Saxon), who was proven by the sworn testimony of seven witnesses called "seven oaths" (*septem iuramenta*), that he had only threatened to set fire or had actually committed a theft, robbery, arson, was to be burned together with the perpetrator;

6. the Romanians made a commitment neither to handle nor to wear a bow (*nullus arcum regere vel portare*) unless required by necessity and utility (*nisi necessitas et utilitas requireret*), or else to be submitted to financial penalties and corporal punishments (*in rebus et corpore sit puniendus*).

Written on the advice of the Transylvanian bishop Goblin, the agreement was announced by the chiefs (*villici*) of the Saxon urban and rural communities from the entire seat of Sibiu, and it was elaborated in the presence of the Romanians living at the citadel (*ad castrum*) - led by mentioned Vladimir, around the city of Sibiu - led by knes Căndeș (*Kende Knez*), and in the mixed Romanian-Saxon village of Cisnădie (*Helta*), on the one hand, and on the other hand, in the presence of the Saxon judges and jurors from the seat and city of Sibiu.³

³ First published in Latin in *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. II. 1342-1390, editor Franz Zimmermann, Sibiu, Verlag bei Michaelis, 1897, p. 564-566, doc. 1170;

The document was made *coram iudicibus civibus iuratis senioribus et [ex] communitati civitatis et sedis Cybiniensis*, that is in front of the so-called “legal judges [and] city jurors”, who were elected from among the senators of the Sibiu city and seat community.

It is the earliest mention, in 1383, of these special Saxon legal inspectors, who were later called *iudices ordinarii sedis szelistiensis* (before 1618-1709). Two of them were always sent from Sibiu to supervise the filial law seat of Săliște.⁴

The peace agreement of Cristian (1383), barely mentioned by researchers⁵, is a mixed application in practice of both German and Romanian customary laws. Criminal procedures and ordeals from *Sachsenspiegel* (1220-1235)⁶, *Schwabenspiegel* (1275)⁷, *Ofner Recht* (14th-15th centuries)⁸ are found in articles 4-5, stipulating the perpetrators and accomplices’ death penalty by burning, as well as the sworn testimony of seven witnesses and the immediate burning of the individuals that were

Latin original republished and joined by Romanian translation in *Documenta Romaniae Historica. C. Transilvania*, vol. XVI. 1381-1385, editors Susana Andea, Lidia Gross, Adinel-Ciprian Dincă, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2014, p. 276-278, doc. 226. The original document, written on parchment, provided with three pendant seals of the nobleman (*nobilis virum*) Johann von Scharffenek, of the city mayor (*consul*) and of the seat (*sedis*) of Sibiu (*Cibinium*), is preserved at the National Archives in Sibiu.

⁴ Nicolae Iorga, *Sate și preoți din Ardeal*, București, Institutul de Arte Grafice Carol Göbl, 1902, p. 120.

⁵ Dirk Moldt, *Deutsche Stadtrechte im mittelalterlichen Siebenbürgen*, Köln/Weimar/Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 2009, p. 65-67, about the German influences on the convention of Cristian; *Istoria dreptului românesc*, vol. I, coordinated by Vladimir Hanga, scientific and technical editor Liviu P. Marcu, authors Gheorghe Cronț, Ioan Floca, Valentin Al. Georgescu, Nicolae Grigoraș, Vladimir Hanga, Alexandru Herlea, Liviu P. Marcu, Ioan Matei, Damaschin Mioc, Ovid Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, Petre Strihan, Valeriu Șotropa, Romulus Vulcănescu, București, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1980, p. 143, 155, about civil contraventions (theft, burglary, robbery) and the corresponding punishments stipulated by *Jus Valachicum*, as well as on its criminal law as a public law, with nonexistent ordeals (specific to the Barbarian customary laws).

⁶ *Sachsenspiegel* (Saxon Mirror), compiled between 1220-1235 by Eike von Repgow, is considered the oldest and most important book of laws of the German middle ages. Descriptive, not prescriptive, this code recorded but did not impose certain legal practices. It was metaphorically compared to a mirror, where the medieval man could distinguish between good and bad.

⁷ *Schwabenspiegel* (Swabians’ Mirror), inspired by *Sachsenspiegel*, is another book of laws written by a Franciscan monk from Augsburg around 1275.

⁸ *Ofner Stadrecht* (Town Law of Buda) was granted since the 14th century to the towns Košice/Kaschau (1347), Bartfeld (1370), Eperies (1374). It was considered the most comprising medieval (and even modern) legal source not only of Hungary’s capital city, but also of the other Hungarian free royal cities. This source is recorded in merely three manuscripts: the first from Bratislava (1430-1490, with an appendix from 1503), the second from Budapest (circa 1560), the third from Baia Mare, today preserved in Budapest (1488-1503). Even if the manuscript from Bratislava is the oldest extant document, it does not represent the primary source.

found guilty. By means of the example offered exactly by the Cristian convention, Dirk Moldt states and illustrates the use of the German town laws (*Deutsches Stadtrecht*) among the Saxons from the seat of Sibiu. The German researcher concludes that, at the beginning, the Transylvanian Romanians had lived according to their own laws, but then the Saxon colonists, getting in touch with the Wallachians, imposed them their German laws.⁹

Our applied case study infirms Moldt's conclusion, that overlooks and simply ignores the existence and practice of the Romanian customary law on the Saxon Land (*Fundus Regius*). In fact, the other four convention articles of 1383 reflect the *Jus Valachicum*. It was more lenient (than the German town law) in matters of criminal law: prescribing mere fines (*emenda*) for murder and cancelling them entirely in this case (article 1), yet stressing the privileges derived from the Romanians' occupations, as shepherds (article 2 on the pastures and grazing right) and mountain guards (article 3 on the military service, article 6 on the Romanians' right to arm themselves).

The document confirms as head of communities (*communitates*) the specific institutions of the Saxon *villicus* and Romanian *cnez/knes*, helped by jurors (*iurati*) and old men (*seniores*).

The protocol of the seat of Săliște (16th-18th centuries)

Since the 15th century, the "Great Romanian Village" of Săliște was the "spiritual capital" of Mărginimea Sibiului and the center of the filial seat of Săliște, which belonged to the Saxon seat of Sibiu (as part of the Saxon National University founded on the Saxon Land in 1486). The trials of first instance were filed in the regular seat of law from Săliște.

The National Archives in Sibiu preserve several volumes comprising the protocol of the Săliște seat (*Protocolum sedis Selistensis*).¹⁰ Registered since 1585, it was written in German with Romanian inserts (in German script), Latin and Hungarian inserts (in Latin script).

The protocol describes the activity of the two Saxon judicial inspectors (*iudices*), who limited the jurisdiction exerted by the Romanian village judge (*jude*) of Săliște, joined by the judges of the Romanian villages

⁹ Dirk Moldt, *op. cit.*, p. 65-67.

¹⁰ Nicolae Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 119-126; Ioan Moga, *Din trecutul economic și administrativ al Săliștei în secolul al XVI-XVIII-lea*, in Ioan Moga, *Scrieri istorice*, edited by Mihail Dan and Aurel Răduțiu, Cluj, Editura Dacia, p. 113-129; Livia Magina, *Lumea rurală transilvăneană la finalul secolului al XVI-lea, reflectată în protocolul de la Săliște*, in "Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului (Rășinari, Săliște)", coordinated by Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, p. 571-580.

belonging to the filial seat (Galeș, Vale, Sibiel, Cacova, Tilișca). Around 1500, in 1617 and 1649, the judge of Săliște was elected by the 44 old men (as each of the 4 administrative circumscriptions of Săliște sent 11 men). The *Burger* or *pârgari* were executive organs of the village judge and of the council composed of the old men. The *plăieși*, armed guards of the highland *plai*, led by their *vătafi*, formed a special institution created by the inhabitants from Mărginime (*mărgineni*) for the watch of the southern mountain border.¹¹

“Constitutio gremialis” of the law seat from Săliște (1585)

Constitutio gremialis Sedis Szeliste (1585), a statute included in the protocol of the Săliște, was discovered and analysed by Ioan Moga.¹² It comprises the following 10 articles:

1. as agreed by the two Saxon *iudices*, the seat of Săliște had to pay until each Christmas a sheep rent (*dare pentru oi*) of 100 florins;
2. the same stands for the swine tax (*dare pentru porci*) of 12 florins;
3. it was forbidden to the Romanian village judge (*jude sătesc*) - but allowed to the Saxon judges - to “take any oath” (*să nu primească nici un jurământ*) and to judge the more or less important thefts (*furturi*), otherwise he paid a fine of 1 silver mark;
4. he who filed a trial and missed the first appearance, would pay 25 dinars; the minor causes (of less than 1 florin) were judged for free in the first instance (in Săliște), but could not be submitted to the court of appeal, as second instance;
5. in all the external trials outside the filial seat of law, the villagers of Săliște could keep their old custom (*vechea datină*);
6. the decision of the mediator (*mijlocitor*), called by free will to reconcile both litigant parts, was immutable, above the law (*lege*) and the custom (*datină*);
7. the punishment for he who stole a girl and lived with her in concubinage without betrothal and wedding, was to be tied to the pole (*legare la stâlp*) and to pay a fine of 12 florins; the penalty for the judge hiding such a case was of 1 mark;
8. he who fished in a forbidden river of the reign (*râu domnesc*) or hid such a deed, had to pay 5 florins;

¹¹ The toponym *Mărginimea Sibiului* is derived from *margine* (Romanian), meaning the “margin” or “border” near Sibiu. *Mărgineni* were the inhabitants of the mountain border between Transylvania and Wallachia. Ioan Moga, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

¹² Ioan Moga, *op. cit.*, p. 117-118.

9. any sale was forbidden to anyone who wanted to move from the seat territory (belonging to the Saxon Land) to that of the (Hungarian) counties; if he moved, his estate (*moșia*) remained to the village judge, who sold it to the villager who assumed to pay the taxes;

10. whenever the two Saxon seat judges came to Săliște, each of the judges from the five belonging villages had to fetch them a cart of firewood.

Besides this *Constitutio gremialis*, Ioan Moga indicates for Săliște in Mărginimea Sibiului another *Statutum* (1691), elaborated by the Saxon *iudices*, in order to stop the flight of the Romanian inhabitants burdened with onerous rents.¹³

These enactments of *Jus Valachicum* show the interference, control and greedy exploitation exerted by the Saxon inspectors from Sibiu (as representatives of the seat and city Magistrate) upon the seat of law from Săliște in questions of local justice, administration and taxation (articles 3, 8, 10). However the local customs and institutions were acknowledged in the civil law prescriptions regarding marriage, succession, legal practice, ban on alienation of land by sale (articles 4-5, 7, 9). Interesting is the institution (mentioned in article 6) of the mediator (*mijlocitor*, in 16th century Săliște, later called *moderator*, in 18th century Rășinari), whose powers and role were quite similar to those of the mediator nowadays and whose decisions in economic questions of civil law were placed above both the official and the customary law. The Romanian shepherds of the Săliște seat preferred to pay the huge sheep rent (article 1) and the lower swine rent (article 2), than to lose their privileges as "honourable free men" (*providi libertini*) and to become *inquilini* (*jeleri*, tied to the ground) or, even worse, serfs (*iobagi, jobbagiones*).

It should be noticed that *Constitutio gremialis Sedis Szeliste* of 1585, enacting legal prescriptions regarding the Romanians living on the Saxon Land, was issued only two years after the codification in 1583 of *Iura Municipalia Universitatis Saxonum Transilvaniae* or *Eigenlandrecht der Siebenbürger Sachsen*¹⁴, which represented the very constitution of the Transylvanian Saxons, namely (as its title explained): *The Transylvanian Saxons' Proper Land Law*.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 121.

¹⁴ Friedrich Schuler von Libloy, *Statuta jurium municipalium Saxonum in Transsilvania. Eigenlandrecht der Siebenbürger Sachsen vom Jahre 1853 bearbeitet nach seiner legalen Ausbildung als Grundriß für akademische Vorlesungen, Sibiu, Verlag Josef Drotleff, 1853; Das Eigenlandrecht der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, edited by Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde, introduction by Adolf Laufs, glossary by Wolfgang Bühner, München, Meschendorfer Verlag, 1973. Fragments from *Iura Municipalia Univ. Saxonum Transilv.* in Constantin Spulber, *Latină juridică clasică și medievală. Texte alese din legi, formule, documente, scriitori, pentru uzul studenților în drept, Cernăuți, Tipografia Mitropolitul Silvestru, 1930, p. 153-155.*

The extract of the deed of donation from Rășinari (7 January 1383)

Rășinari, the greatest pastoral village in Mărginimea Sibiului and the fierce competitor of Săliște, had its own institutions and enactments of *Jus Valachicum*.

A special medieval legal document, actually containing two property documents from Rășinari, namely *cartea ocolniță*, that is a *book of the village boundaries* (1488), and an extract of a deed of donation (1383), was discovered at the National Archives in Sibiu.¹⁵ The paper containing the documents from 1488 and 1383 was an 18th century copy, compiled by the scribe Petru Cazan, priest in Rășinari and notary of the church synod. Old and new approaches identified more copies in circulation, even if the original documents have not been found up to the present moment.¹⁶

The *extract of the deed of donation* (7 January 1383) is a short authentic document written in old Romanian with Cyrillic script. Radu Vodă Negru (Voivode Radu the Black) of Wallachia (identified with Radu I, 1377-1383), herceg of the Land of Amlaș and Făgăraș, donated to the Saint Paraschiva Church, the oldest (wooden) ecclesiastical edifice in Rășinari, three estates (*moșii*), the fourth being given by his son Mircea Vodă Basarab (Voivode Mircea the Elder, 1386-1418).¹⁷

The book of the village boundaries from Rășinari (22 May 1488)

Cartea ocolniță or the *book of the village boundaries* (22 May 1488), also written in Romanian with Cyrillic script, reflected the period when, for the settlement of the conflict between the “small neighbours” from

¹⁵ Arhivele Naționale (National Archives) in Sibiu, Colecția de acte fasciculate, Seria V. Localități, no. 66, f. 1.

¹⁶ Nicolae Iorga, *Despre actele rășinărene*, in Nicolae Iorga, “Scrisori și inscripții ardeleni și maramureșene, I, București, Atelierele Grafice Socec & Comp., 1906, p. XXXII-XXXIV; Victor Păcală, *Monografia satului Rășinari*, Sibiu, Tipografia Arhidiecezană, 1925, p. 42-46; Ela Cosma, *The Bishops’ House in the Romanian Pastoral Village of Rășinari (Mărginimea Sibiului) and Its Hidden Treasures: Book of Boundaries & Deed of Donation (1488, 1383) and Transmissionales in Causa Possessionis Resinar contra Liberam Regiamque Civitatem Cibiniensem (1784)*, manuscript in evaluation process for “Eikón/Imago Scientific Journal”, vol. “*Imago, ius, religio*. Religious Images in Illustrated Legal Manuscripts and Printed Books (9th-20th centuries)”, editors Maria Alessandra Bilotta, Gianluca del Monaco, Madrid, 2023; Tatiana Onilov, *Documente din Rășinari. Copiile româno-chirilice de secol XVIII ale Cărții Ocolnița (1488) și a extrasului actului de danie (1383)*, in “*Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului*”, coordinated by Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, p. 269-284; Vasile Rus, *Documente din Rășinari (sec. XIV-XVIII). Traducerea în latină (după 1761) a cărții ocolniță (1488) și a extrasului actului de danie (1383)*, in “*Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului*”, coordinated by Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, p. 285-395.

¹⁷ See the Cyrillic and Latin transcriptions of the original document in Tatiana Onilov, *op. cit.*, p. 278, 282.

Rășinari and the "big neighbours" (*vecinii cei mari*) from Cisnădie, a revision of boundaries (*metalis reambulatio*) was carried out. This perambulation put an end to the territorial litigation, by regulating the boundaries which separated the two villages.

Under the rule of Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary (1458-1490), in 1488 *cartea ocolniță* was not made, but "remade" (*prefăcut*) and "renewed" (*preînnoit*), as a result of the exhortations and entreaties expressed by the "honourable 40 old men" (*cinștiți 40 de bătrâni*) forming "the seat of law" (*scaunul de lege*) from Rășinari.

The reason for the renewal of this *littera metales Valachales* (Romanian boundary letter) was for everybody "to know and to keep the margins of our boundaries of Rășinari" (*ca să se știe și să se păzască pe unde merg marginile hotarului nostru a[l] Rășinariului*), all around. The boundaries between Rășinari and Cisnădie were marked with earth risings or mounds (called *hialmuri*), following the border with Wallachia, that led to the peak Buceciu.

Apparently this mountain had belonged to the great herceg Radu Vodă Negru in the year 1232 (respectively 6740 from the making of the world). But the date 1232 connected with Radu Negru in *cartea ocolniță* preceded with 150 years the mentioned deed of donation made in 1383 by the real voivode Radu to the Saint Paraschiva Church. The disparity shows that, although both documents were copied on the same paper during the 18th century, they were not written at the same time, otherwise the two pieces of information concerning Radu Negru's regnal years had also been congruent.

The perambulation of 1488 continued on the ridge of the mountains Clăbucet, Neagoe Ivan or Negovanul Mare (Great Negovan) and Țicu Înalt (High Țicu), on the border with Wallachia, finally returning to the valley. The boundary lines of Rășinari, as described in the document, are confirmed by the Josephine map of 1781, *Mappa iconographica-topographica Pagi Liberi Resinar* (Iconographic Topographic Map of the Free Village of Rășinari), including the caption *Metalium explicatio* (Boundary Explanation).¹⁸

The document concluded that Rășinari's boundary enclosed the confines (*ocol*) of the village, defined as a "Romanian land" (*pământ rumânesc*), a free territory which "nobody can command" (*n-are nimeni a-l porunci*), insubordinate to any foreign jurisdiction and "paying obedience to no one" (*nimăruî înduplecat*). That is why, the Saxons from Cisnădie could make no claim for the earth and its fruits. The wealth of Rășinari's 30 mountains and several forests also included, aside from the clear mountain

¹⁸ Victor Păcală, *op. cit.*, p. 40-41.

water, the oak forests (for acorns), beech forests (for beechnuts) and hazel, needful for the feeding of swine on a large scale.

The last part of this medieval document (*eschatocol*) enumerated the names of the four priests who provided pastor services at Saint Paraschiva's "Upper Church" (*Biserica din sus*) and of the other two priests in Rășinari. The village judge held the office as *knes* (*cnez*) and *sindie*, too. Among the 40 so-called "good old men" (*oameni buni și bătrâni*), the document itemized 3+12 men, while the last mentioned was the church miller (*morarul bisericii*).

Cartea ocolniță is a monument of old Romanian language and a significant legal document defending the possessionary rights of a Romanian pastoral village from Mărginimea Sibiului. If one day the original document of the *book of boundaries* from Rășinari were found, then it would become the first *known* document written in Romanian language. It would precede the letter of 1521 by 33 years, addressed by Neacșu from Câmpulung to Hans Benckner, the city judge of Brașov.¹⁹

Yet, the lack of the original *book of boundaries* does not turn it into a fake. On the contrary, authenticity and veracity of the 15th century *cartea ocolniță* are suggested exactly by its recently discovered and analysed several variants, copies and Latin translations (Ela Cosma, Tatiana Onilov, Vasile Rus).²⁰

"Transmissionales" in the cause of the Romanian village of Rășinari against the Saxon city of Sibiu (1784)

Transmissionales in causa Possessionis Resinar contra Liberam Regiamque Civitatem Cibiniensem (1784), a volume of 1318 pages including the trial deeds of the village of Rășinari against the Sibiu Magistrate, preserved at the Bishops' House in Rășinari, is a legal mirror reflecting not only the juridical practice involved in the use of the Romanian consuetudinary law, but also the medieval and premodern legal history of Transylvania. Its comprehensive annexes contain all the documents (13th-18th centuries), that were significant for the history and possessory rights of Rășinari.

Transmissionales reveals the jurisdiction, levels, activity and powers of the courts on local, provincial and central level (18th century):

¹⁹ The latter is the oldest preserved original document in Romanian language.

²⁰ Ela Cosma, *Istoricul unei controverse. Cartea ocolniță din Rășinari (1488) și extrasul actului de danie (1383), originale pierdute și copii târzii sau falsuri de secol XVIII?*, in "Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului", coordinated by Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, p. 249-268; eadem, *The Bishops' House in the Romanian Pastoral Village of Rășinari (Mărginimea Sibiului) and Its Hidden Treasures*; Tatiana Onilov, *op. cit.*, p. 269-284; Vasile Rus, *op. cit.*, p. 285-395.

1. the court of first instance was the village judgement seat from Răşinari (*judicatus pagi Rasinar, judicatus pagensis, judecata sătească*), where the judgement was exerted, according to the Romanian customs (*Mores Valachicales*) and consuetudinary law (*Jus Valachicum*), by the judge (*Judex, jude*), the jurors (*Jurati, jurați*) and the council of 40 old men (*Quadragesima Seniorum Viratum, sfatul celor patruzeci de bătrâni*);

2. the court of the second instance, as the court of appeal, functioned in the Saxon Magistrate House from Sibiu, often represented by the mayor or consul of the Sibiu city (*consul Cibiniensis*) and seldom by the seat judge (*sedis judex, jude scăunal, Stuhlsrichter*) of the Sibiu seat;

3. unsolved legal documents were transmitted to the next stage, the third instance, that was the provincial *forum* of the Transylvanian Gubernium, also seated in Sibiu;

4. the fourth and last, and also the highest court of instance was the Supreme Court of Justice from Vienna, from where the decisions returned to Sibiu and Răşinari, in the form of *Remissionales*, as imperial ordinances and rescripts.²¹

Rights and privileges of Răşinari (15th-18th centuries)

The following *rights and privileges of Răşinari* were "granted to the community and inhabitants of this free imperial village situated on Saxon Land and in the Sibiu seat" (*ceu Communitatis Liberae Villae Regalis in Fundo Regio Sedeque Cibiniensi existentis et ejus Incolarum*), according to *Transmissionales*²²:

1. *Jus primae instantiae* (the right of the villagers to have a local court of first instance exerted by the judge from Răşinari, who was directly subordinated to the seat judge of Sibiu);

2. *Jus utendi boni* (the right to use the common assets and lands belonging to the community of Răşinari according to its village boundaries);

3. *Jus honorum* (the villagers' right to have their own local civil and ecclesiastical offices, services and tasks in public interest);

4. *Jus commerciorum* (their right to trade inside the village and at fairs);

²¹ Ela Cosma, *Din practicile juridice de la Răşinari: Jus Valachicum în două ascultări de martori (1738 și 1776-1777)*, in "Patrimoniul istorico-juridic românesc din Mărginimea Sibiului", coordinated by Ela Cosma, Cluj-Napoca/Gatineau, Argonaut/Symphologic Publishing, 2020, p. 80.

²² *Transmissionales in causa Possessionis Resinar contra Liberam Regiamque Civitatem Cibiniensem 1784*, manuscript volume, Răşinari, Church Museum in the Bishops's House, 1784, p. 56-60.

5. *Jus superiorem et inferiorem jurisdictionatum magistratum habendi* (Rășinari's right, in fact obligation, to consider the Sibiu Magistrate as superior jurisdiction and to have inferior jurisdiction);

6. *Jus localem parochialem ecclesiam cum scholis et coemeterio habendi* (the right for Rășinari to have its own parish church with confessional school and cemetery);

7. *Jus libertatis* (the right granted to the inhabitants of Rășinari to be free from any corvees and subjection to the landlord's power, *ab Dominica postate servitiisque liberi sunt*, their status being opposed, *contradistinguuntur*, to that of the *jobbagionis* and *inquilinis*);

8. *Jus civitatis* (the right awarded to the judge, jurors and 40 old men representing Rășinari, as well as the rest of the Romanian free villages extant on Saxon Land, to receive in their community foreigners, as fellow-citizens, *conciues*, enjoying personal freedom and willing to settle down, in order to have a stable dwelling, to practice shepherding and cattle herding, to pay the corresponding rents and taxes);

9. *Jus tribus* (the right of the Rășinari community to distribute the villagers in certain classes, and to establish mediators for regulating economic civil customs and activities, *morum actionumque civilium oeconomicarum Moderatores constituendi*);

10. *Jus tributorum* (the right to divide the sum previously allocated for the entire community's contributions to the community's contributors, according to their wealth and material possibilities);

11. *Jus census* (the right to give land on the village's common territory to those settlers paying the required tax, *census*);

12. *Jus magistratus* (the right of the inhabitants from Rășinari to freely choose from among themselves their judge - *Judicem seu Villicum*, jurors - *Juratos*, and 40 men - *40 Viratum*, whose elections were to be confirmed by the Sibiu Magistrate and who would take over the court trials judging injuries, losses, damages, and other economic affairs of the community);

13. *Jus fororum* (the right to organise one day per week a victual fair, *Annonaria*);

14. *Jus locales constitutiones morales et oeconomicales faciendi* (the right to make "local constitutions", as statutes and further legal documents, concerning the village boundaries and households);

15. *Jus divisionis*;

16. *Jus restitutionem petendi in integrum* (the right granted to the villagers from Rășinari to claim in justice the entire restitution, *restitutio in integrum*, of their ancient privileges which were usurped by the Saxon inhabitants, later arrived on the *Fundus Regius*);

17. *Jus privatum fisci* (the private fiscal right stipulating that the immovables owned by disabled individuals, *deficientes*, devolved upon the Rășinari community, and not upon the imperial treasury, *Fiscum*);

18. *Jus connubiorum* (the right to have a marriage office);

19. *Jus condendi testamenta* (the right to make authorised legal wills);

20. *Jus patriae potestatis* (the right of the father's unlimited power upon the person and property of his biological or adopted children);

21. *Jus ordinis et praecedentiae* (the right to establish ranks and primacy);

22. *Jus legitimum dominii* (the right to legal property);

23. *Jus gladii* (the right of the sword, granted to the free village, *Libera Villa*, of Rășinari by power of King Sigismund's decree no. 2 from the decrees' extract no. 99 apparently issued in 1404, *ut Libera Villa vi Decreti 2 Sigismundi iuxta annexum Extractum Decretorum anno 1404 emanatorum sub numero 99*).²³

In 1786 Rășinari was declared an imperial free village (*slobod sat crăiesc*) by Emperor Joseph II, who liberated the Romanian villagers from the false pretences of dominance claimed by the Saxon city of Sibiu. From now on, the inhabitants from Rășinari disclaimed and refuted any other landlord except for the prince of Transylvania, who was concomitantly the Austrian emperor himself.

The Statutes of Făgăraș (15 May 1508)

They were edited for the first time in 1885²⁴ and afterwards republished and commented. Lately they were reviewed by Victor Vizauer, who approached the elements of Romanian customary law in their contents.²⁵ Vizauer's dense study is accompanied by the critical edition of the Făgăraș statutes, including the first Romanian translation of the Latin text realised by Vasile Rus.

It should be mentioned that certain economic, social and historical features distinguished the *Jus Valachicum* of the Făgăraș Land (*Țara Făgărașului*) from that of Mărginimea Sibiului. In the first place, the Făgăraș

²³ See also Victor Păcală, *op. cit.*, p. 46-47; Vasile Rus, *op. cit.*, p. 285-395. I am grateful to Vasile Rus, who assumed the difficult mission to accurately translate into Romanian the baroque legal manuscript of *Transmissionales* (1784).

²⁴ *Magyarországi jogtörténeti emlékek. A magyar törvényhatóságok jogszabályainak gyűjteménye. I. Kötet. Az Erdélyi törvényhatóságok jogszabályai / Monumenta Hungariae juridico-historica. Corpus statutorum Hungariae municipalium. Tomus I. Statuta et constitutiones municipiorum Transsylvaniae ab antiquissimis temporibus usque ad finem seculi XVIII*, editors Kolozsvári Sándor, Ovári Kelemen, Budapest, Hungarian Academy of Science, 1885, p. 169-175.

²⁵ Victor Vizauer, *Elemente de "Ius Valachicum" în Statutele Făgărașului din 1508*, will appear in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barițiu" din Cluj-Napoca, "Series Historica", tome LXI, 2022.

Romanians (*făgărășeni*) weren't shepherds (like the *mărgineni*), but farmers and cartmen (*cărăuși*), while those living in the citadel of Făgăraș were craftsmen.²⁶ Their occupations were reflected by the prescriptions of this customary law.

Secondly, there was a more pronounced difference (recorded by the statutes) between the social categories of the Romanian peasants (*rustici*) and the boyars (*boieri*, *Boyarones*) from Făgăraș. The latter formed a military small nobility of Romanian origins with strong (even blood) ties across the Carpathians, in the Principality of Wallachia. Vizauer considers that the main motivation for King Matthias Corvinus to issue the *Statutes of Făgăraș* was to calm down the rebellious Romanians. After the death of the last Romanian lord of the Făgăraș citadel and land, boyar Udriște (1469), the inhabitants from Făgăraș (*făgărășeni*) had repeatedly rejected both royal and aristocratic rulers, causing so much trouble and damage to the Saxon patricians during their rebellions of 1471 and 1482, that the Hungarian king ordered the Romanians to be executed and even eradicated if they did not obey to the Transylvanian voivode sent by the king to suppress the revolt.²⁷

Thirdly, unlike Mărginimea Sibiului, the Făgăraș Land was ruled for a longer time period (circa 1350-1500) by the Wallachian voivodes, who included among their titles those of *dux de Fogaras* (Vlaicu, 1369) or "herceg of the Land of Amlaș and Făgăraș" (Radu I, circa 1377-1383; Mircea the Elder, 1386-1418). *Țara Făgărașului*, donated by the Hungarian kings to Wallachia's ruling princes in exchange for their vassal oath²⁸, became the pivot of the relations between the Romanians from Transylvania and those from the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and apparently (together with Brașov) the irradiation center of the so-called "old Romanian language" (16th century).

A third of the 35 articles²⁹ of the statutes from Făgăraș approach matters of criminal law. They include fines for murder (*homagium*, *in homagio hominis iudicialiter convicti fuerint*³⁰) and bloodshed (*effusione sanguinis*), in articles 1-2, 4-5. Death penalties were also used, for example

²⁶ Nicolae Iorga, *Sate și preoți din Ardeal*, p. 147-157.

²⁷ Victor Vizauer, *op. cit.*

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ The document has 38 paragraphs, namely an introductory paragraph (*protocol*) followed by 35 unnumbered articles and ended with 2 paragraphs of the *eschatocol*. For the sake of text criticism, I considered and counted paragraphs 2-36 of the Făgăraș statutes as articles 1-35.

³⁰ *Homagium* (Latin), 1. homage of the vassal to his feudal lord; 2. price/compensation paid for killing a man, equivalent to the German *Wergeld*; 3. fine, emend paid in order to redeem a man's head, murder, wounding, guilt, price that was often equal to that paid for murder. *Homicidium* is synonymous to *homagium* (in the senses 2-3). *Glosar de termeni și expresii din documentele latine privind istoria medie a României*, edited by the Collective of Medieval History from the Institute of History from Cluj, București, 1965, p. 84-85.

the decapitation or beheading (*capite priventur*), in cases of treason (article 3), housebreaking (article 32), rebellion and uprising (article 33). The perpetrators who were guilty of heresy, counterfeiting money, arson, incest and bestiality - so those who oppressed or violated their relatives up to the third degree of kinship, as well as animals (*consanguineos usque ad tertium gradum opprimentes vel violantes sive etiam cum brutis vel aliter qualitercumque haeretica pravitate se defoedentes sine misericordia*) - were burned at the stake (*ignis incendio comburantur*) (articles 16-17).

The *Statutes of Făgăraș* also included matters of civil law regarding property and fines to be paid for abusive occupation of the house, yard, garden, fields, cornfields, pastures (article 6), for restoration of dependencies (*pro restauratione pertinentiarum*) and for destruction of property (articles 7-8). Further money penalties were stipulated for insults, heavy words (*verba dehonestatoria*) and "redemption of the tongue" (*redemptiones linguae*), for slander, defamation, false declaration (articles 23-24, 26), for robbery, burglary (articles 27-28), for illegal sale of cattle and other goods (article 29), but also for perjury (article 30).

Detailed civil prescriptions described the binding fines to be paid when marriages were concluded after the maiden's abduction, either by mutual agreement or as a result of rape (articles 9-11), in cases of repudiation of the wife (articles 12-13) and adultery (article 14). The voluntary and consensual abduction of the virgin, either a peasant girl or a boyar girl, was usual in the Land of Făgăraș and in Mărginimea Sibiului (as in Săliște's *Constitutio gremialis*, 1585), but it was also a general Romanian custom. It survived until today, being known as "the stealing of the bride" (*furtul miresei*) during the wedding.

It should be noticed that the capital punishment and/or the financial penalties for the same crime and malpractice differed depending on the perpetrator's social class. The Romanian peasants (*Rustici Valachi/Walachi*) always paid the half or less of the fines imposed to the Romanian boyars (*Boyarones*). Special regulations for peasants are to be found in articles 2, 4, 6-8, 13-14, 19, 34. In article 31, for example, the *rustici*, called *coloni*³¹, were given the right of pannage, that is the *beneficium* of feeding their sows (*scrophis*) and swine with acorns (*glandinatio*).

On the other hand, the articles 1, 5, 12, 14-15 presented general prescriptions related to the boyars, while articles 18, 20-25 imposed to this social category of Romanian military noblemen from Făgăraș specific obligations and duties, like the saddled horse and the spear which the

³¹ *Colonus, coloni* (Latin), serf, serfs. *Colonus*, "serf peasant", in *Glosar de termeni și expresii din documentele latine privind istoria medie a României*, p. 32. But, in historical practice, neither the *coloni* identified themselves with the *iobaggiones*, nor the Romanian peasants from Făgăraș were serfs.

castellan was to receive from a boyar after his death (article 15), the fines to be paid for defiance of public authority, when a boyar summoned by subpoena disregarded the seal of the castellan (article 25), the compulsory two carts of firewood that a boyar had to fetch to the citadel of Făgăraș each Christmas and on the eve of the Saint Michael feast (article 18) etc.

Genuine solutions for the law of succession were found by the boyars interested to transmit their properties (lands) *in integrum* to their sole daughter or, in case of extant male heirs, to enforce the widespread daughter's quarter (*quarta filialis*)³² in order to endow their female heirs (article 21). Nevertheless, the surviving widow received only a third of the heirless boyar's movables, while the other two thirds were taken by the landlord, as a penalty for the wife's sterility (article 20).

Unique seems to be article 22 stipulating that: "If a boyar would wish to change his daughter into a male heir of his hereditary assets, at first he had to get a sealed certificate from his landlord and then from the jurors, thus such a heritage could be transmitted by succession to the [boyar's daughter in her capacity as a] male heir." (*Si quis filiam vel filias optans in rebus hereditariis prefacere heredem masculinum, extunc primum a Domino Terrestri et tandem a Iuratis habeat litteras efficaces sigillo munitas et sic tandem huiusmodi hereditates ad talem tanquam virum masculinum succedant*).³³

Final considerations

The importance of the enactments of *Jus Valachicum* is beyond doubt. They abolish the bias of a strictly oral, unwritten, indistinct and loose customary law, with an unknown and somehow mysterious trajectory in a vast time and space. As a matter of fact, codifications of *Jus Valachicum* were never a priority for scientific research, even if, as seen above, historical sources are extremely generous in this respect.

As regards the specific terminology, the Latin phrases *Jus Valachicum* (Romanian law) and *Mores Valachicales* (customs of the Wallachians/Romanians), which occur in legal documents of the 18th century from Mărginimea Sibiului, make a difference between the

³² The medieval daughter's quarter (*quarta filialis*) was spread in Transylvania, Hungary, Croatia. See Demir Karbić, *Hungarian and Croatian Customary Law: Some Contrasts and Comparisons*, in "Custom and Law in Central Europe", editor Martyn Rady, Center for European Legal Studies, Occasional Paper no. 6, Loughborough/Leics, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge, 2003, p. 45, and detailed in Maria Frînc, "*Quarta filialis*" și familia nobiliară de Geoagiu - un proces pentru moștenirea feminină la începutul secolului al XV-lea, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barițiu" din Cluj-Napoca. Series Historica", tome LVIII/Supplement, 2019, p. 229-240.

³³ See Victor Vizauer's study and Latin transcription, joined by Vasile Rus's translation into Romanian, in Victor Vizauer, *op. cit.*

customary law of the Romanians, the municipal constitution of the Saxons and the imperial constitution of the Habsburg Crown. On the Saxon Land (*Fundus Regius*), justice was exerted in Romanian language only by the village judgement seat assembled in the court of first instance, while the Saxon courts of second and third instance from Sibiu used Latin and German, just like the highest court of justice from Vienna.³⁴

Considered to be "a monument of old Romanian legislation" (Victor Vizauer), the *Statutes of Făgăraș* (1508) were especially and exclusively issued for the Romanian peasants (*Rusticis Walachis*) and boyars (*Boyarones*) from the land and citadel of Făgăraș. Yet the missing phrase *Jus Valachicum* was replaced by terms like *ius* (law, justice), *mos, mores* (custom, customs), *lex, leges* (law, laws), for example in the expression *Boyarones more et lege ipsorum* (the boyars' custom and their law).³⁵

The presented case studies demonstrate the existence and functionality of *Jus Valachicum* practiced by the South Transylvanian Romanians in Mărginimea Sibiului and in the Făgăraș Land between the 14th-18th centuries. The Romanian customary law is connected with the free and privileged social status of the Romanian shepherds (*oieri, ciobani*), armed guards (*plăieși*) on the Carpathian borders between Transylvania and Wallachia, and military small noblemen (*boieri*).

The Romanian institutions of customary law, as reflected in the enactments described above, were exerted by the village judge (called *cnez* in the middle ages, *jude* in premodern and modern history), jurors (*jurați*) and the "council of 40 good and old men" (*șfatul celor 40 de oameni buni și bătrâni*) in Rășinari (44 in Săliște), forming "the seat of law" (*scaunul de lege*) as court of first instance.

It is also worth to notice that the illustrated enactments of Romanian customary law confirm *de iure* the legal situation extant *de facto*, thus proving the long and uninterrupted use of *Jus Valachicum* among the Romanians from South Transylvania during the 14th-18th centuries.

³⁴ Ela Cosma, *Din practicile juridice de la Rășinari: "Jus Valachicum" în două ascultări de martori (1738 și 1776-1777)*, p. 473-523.

³⁵ Victor Vizauer, *op. cit.*

A.C. Cuza, German Antisemitism, and the Swastika¹

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La mine ideea-i săracă
A.C. Cuza²

Abstract: This case study of transnational antisemitism in the 1910s and 1920s argues that the Romanian antisemite A.C. Cuza (1857-1947) copied the swastika from the German antisemite Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945). It examines the evolution of Cuza's political antisemitism from the 1890s until 1923 and discusses the possible origins of Cuza's use of the swastika and his interpretations of the symbol. It highlights that Cuza used various foreign sources to produce vague and contradictory interpretations of the swastika, that he made no effort to give it a coherent racial meaning, and that he opportunistically but inconsistently tried to Christianise it. The study concludes that the swastika in his view became both a German and a Romanian ethnic symbol, performing the same antisemitic function in each context.

Keywords: Political antisemitism; student antisemitism; Romanian nationalism; transnationalism; League for National Christian Defence; Iron Guard

Rezumat: Acest studiu de caz de antisemitism transnațional în anii 1910-1920 susține teoria că A.C. Cuza (1857-1947) a copiat svastica de la antisemitul german Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945). Articolul examinează evoluția antisemitismului politic dezvoltat de Cuza

¹ I would like to thank Roland Clark, Lucy Coatman, Andrei Corbea-Hoișie, Andrei Cușco, Cristian Gașpar, Dumitru Lăcătușu, Susanne Lorenz, Valentin Piftor, Leonidas Rados, Udo Schulze, Dragoș Sdrobiș, and Uwe Steinhoff for their help.

² A.C. Cuza, "La mine...", *Convorbiri literare*, 1890, 619. The quotation translates approximately as: "In my [work], the idea is mediocre."

între anii 1890 și 1923 și discută posibilele origini ale utilizării svasticii de către Cuza și ale interpretărilor pe care le-a dat acestui simbol. Articolul subliniază că A.C. Cuza a folosit diverse surse străine pentru a produce interpretări vagi și contradictorii ale svasticii; că nu a făcut niciun efort pentru a-i da un conținut semantic rasial coerent și că, în mod oportunist și inconsistent, a încercat să o creștineze. Articolul concludă că, în viziunea lui Cuza, svastica a devenit un simbol etnic în același timp german și român, având aceeași funcție antisemită în fiecare dintre aceste contexte.

Cuvinte cheie: Antisemitism politic; antisemitism studențesc; naționalism român; transnaționalism; Liga Apărării Naționale Creștine; Garda de Fier

This case study of transnational antisemitism in the 1910s and 1920s argues that A.C. Cuza, probably Romania's most influential and baleful antisemite in the 1920s,³ copied the swastika from the German antisemites, and, more precisely, from a little-known member of that milieu, Heinrich Kraeger.

The transnational turn has transformed the study of antisemitism and fascism in recent years.⁴ Partly because the transnational nature of antisemitism was common knowledge even before that turn, new research on transnationalism has had a greater impact on fascism studies than on antisemitism studies. The main recent transnational study on antisemitism is Paul Hanebrink's *A Specter Haunting Europe*, which has the merit of taking Romanian antisemitism into account. However, Hanebrink focused on Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu and, despite the disciple-

³ A.C. Cuza appears in fascism and antisemitism studies, in particular in a series of excellent monographs focusing on the Romanian fascist leader Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu and his Legion of the Archangel Michael or Iron Guard: Stelian Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii împotriva violenței (Viața universitară ieșană interbelică)* (Iași: Junimea, 1977); Armin Heinen, *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael” in Rumänien: Soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation: Ein Beitrag zum Problem des internationalen Faschismus* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1986); Traian Sandu, *Un fascisme roumain: Histoire de la Garde de fer* (Paris: Perrin, 2014); Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitanului”* (București: Humanitas, 2017).

⁴ See, for instance: Robert Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War,” *Past & Present*, no. 200 (August 2008): 175-209; Federico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism: Ideology, Violence, and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919-1945* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2010); *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017); Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018).

master relationship between the latter and Cuza, he merely mentioned that “A.C. Cuza, one of the country’s most prominent far-right political theorists, taught law at Iași”.⁵ The only study that tackles Cuza’s direct ties to non-Romanian and international antisemitism is Roland Clark’s article “Both Form and Substance”.⁶ Clark provided a solid basis for the present study, which supplements Clark’s findings with Cuza’s correspondence preserved at the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. Some earlier studies already analysed the non-Romanian references in Cuza’s pamphlets. They pointed out the influence of Ernest Renan, Édouard Drumont, or Houston Stewart Chamberlain – whom Cuza asked in October 1902 “d’intervenir dans les débats”⁷ – but without discussing Cuza’s relations with his contemporaries.⁸ Historian Raul Cârstocea mentioned that Cuza established a Universal Antisemitic Alliance in 1895 – a claim for which I found no evidence⁹ – and that he

⁵ Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe*, 65.

⁶ Roland Clark, “Both Form and Substance: Romanians and Political Antisemitism in a European Context,” *Holocaust: Studii și cercetări*, no. 1 (2021): 41-68.

⁷ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 23/DXLVIII: Alexandru C. Cuza to Houston Stewart Chamberlain, 29 October 1902. In the letter, Cuza called the Romanians “les seuls qui n’ayons pas encore capitulé, en droit”. Chamberlain’s wife Anna responded in November 1902 that her husband was occupied with the fourth edition of *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* and that he would answer some days later. There is no letter by Chamberlain himself in Cuza’s preserved correspondence: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 6 (1)/DXLVI: Anna Chamberlain to Alexandru C. Cuza, 2 November 1902.

⁸ Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford, etc.: Pergamon Press, 1991), 24; see also: Lucian Butaru, “L’antisémitisme appliqué: Le cas A.C. Cuza,” *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai: Studia Europæa*, no. 2-3 (2005): 195-212; Lucian Butaru, “A.C. Cuza, était-il un raciste?” *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai: Studia Europæa*, no. 1 (2008): 41-54.

⁹ The idea that Nicolae Iorga and A.C. Cuza founded the Universal Antisemitic Alliance in 1895 stems from an undocumented paragraph in an introduction published in 2011. The source is probably a book by historian Carol Iancu, cited a bit earlier. Iancu did mention an “Antisemitic Alliance” established in 1895, whose founder was however a certain Nae Dumitrescu. Cârstocea did not refer to the 2011 introduction, but to a 2014 article which, based on archival evidence, stated merely that “priests played a prominent role [...] in the Universal Antisemitic Alliance (*Alliance Anti-sémitique Universelle*), an organization founded in 1895”: “Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919-1939): Studiu introductiv,” in *Antisemitismul universitar în România (1919-1939): Mărturii documentare*, ed. Lucian Nastasă (Cluj-Napoca: ISPMN, 2011), 24-25; Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie 1866-1919. De l’exclusion à l’émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions de l’Université de Provence, 1978), 222-225; Iulia Onac, “The Brusturoasa Uprising in Romania,” in *Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880-1918*, ed. Robert Nemes and Daniel Unowsky (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 88. For more details on the Antisemitic Alliance, see: Maria Mădălina Irimia, “Violența antisemită în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea: Pogromul de la Iași din 1899,” *Revista de istorie a ereilor din România*, no. 4-5 (2019-2020): 55-56.

participated in the international antisemitic congress in Budapest in 1925. However, Cârstocea did not provide any details on or make an in-depth analysis of Cuza's entanglements with non-Romanian and international antisemitism.¹⁰

Symbols have been a key element of both transnational antisemitism and fascism.¹¹ As stated by historian Hillel J. Kieval: "[...] antisemitism's power, it turns out, does not rest in the coherence of its ideas – which is not very strong – but in its own sense of urgency and in the emotions that it is able to produce in others. It is a language of symbols and allusions, which lends itself more fruitfully to symbolic, discourse analysis than to intellectual history. The ideas in themselves are not that interesting, but their social and cultural reverberations are."¹²

Cuza's adoption of the swastika shows how a vaguely defined antisemitic symbol could easily transcend national borders and nationalist discourses. Removed from its German nationalist context, the swastika became the symbol under which Cuza's Romanian nationalist supporters (often called "Cuzists") rallied to assault the Jews. However, Cuza himself did not develop a coherent definition of this symbol either. On the contrary, he concocted various racist interpretations of the swastika, combining ideas from a variety of non-Romanian and Romanian sources and adding his own thoughts. Having possibly forgotten the German origin of the antisemitic symbol, Cuza's – and Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's – supporters would later even claim primacy over Hitler's use of the swastika. Thus, in the process of transnational borrowing, the vague German nationalist signified of the swastika was replaced with a no less

¹⁰ Raul Cârstocea, „Native Fascists, Transnational Anti-Semites: The International Activity of Legionary Leader Ion I. Moța,” in *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017) 221-222.

¹¹ See, for instance: Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39* (New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2001), 2; 34; 146; 215; Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2003), 51; Adrian Lyttelton, “Concluding Remarks,” *Rethinking the Nature of Fascism: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. António Costa Pinto (Houndmills/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 272; Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, “Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe, 1918-1945,” in *Fascism without Borders*, 3; 15.

¹² Hillel J. Kieval, “Afterword: European Antisemitism – the Search for a Pattern,” in *Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880-1918*, ed. Robert Nemes and Daniel Unowsky (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014), 260. Kieval possibly relied on a similar idea by Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen regarding fascism: Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen, “Editorial,” *Faschismus in Italien und Deutschland: Studien zu Transfer und Vergleich*, ed. Sven Reichardt and Armin Nolzen (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005), 12.

fuzzy Romanian nationalist meaning. At the same time, the symbol kept its antisemitic function and had “social and cultural reverberations” similar to those generated within its original German context.

The article consists of two parts. The first one examines Cuza’s career as an antisemitic politician from 1892 until 1923. The second part discusses the possible origins of Cuza’s use of the swastika and his interpretations of the symbol. The first part is based on published materials, including Cuza’s journal *Apărarea Națională* [National Defence], and on archival sources, mainly from the Iași county archives. The second part largely relies on two document collections from the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. The first collection, “Arhiva A.C. Cuza,” includes draft articles, private papers, and a part of the incoming political correspondence. It is a well-known collection, which has been often used in studies relating to Cuza or his movement. The second collection, “Fondul A.C. Cuza,” consists of various letters sent or received by Cuza. While it is not unknown to researchers, it has been made little use of and most letters in German have been skipped. Most information in the second part is therefore completely new.

Cuza’s political career

Antisemitic violence marked the history of Romania from its beginning in 1859,¹³ antisemitism was used for political mobilisation already in the 1860s,¹⁴ and Jews were refused citizens’ rights in the first Romanian constitution of 1866.¹⁵ However, Romanian antisemitic political organisations emerged only in the 1880s and 1890s.¹⁶ Among them was the Romanian League against Alcoholism, established in 1897 in Iași. In May 1897, A.D. Xenopol, a professor of Romanian history at the local university,¹⁷ and Alexandru Constantin (A.C.) Cuza, a former MP, called

¹³ Constantin Ardeleanu, “‘Masacrul din Galați’ (aprilie 1859) – Un episod din istoria comunității evreiești de la Galați,” *Analele Universității „Dunărea de Jos” Galați: Seria 19: Istorie*, no. 7 (2008): 129-146; Onac, “The Brusturoasa Uprising,” 79-93; Irimia, “Violența antisemită,” 45-93.

¹⁴ Andreas Pfützner, “Die rumänisch-jüdische Frage: Europäische Perspektiven auf die Entstehung einer Anomalie (ca.1772-1870)” (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2021), introduction.

¹⁵ *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 142 (1 Iulie 1866): art. 7; see Pfützner, “Die rumänisch-jüdische Frage,” chapters 4 and 5.

¹⁶ Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie 1866-1919: De l’exclusion à l’émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Éditions de l’Université de Provence, 1978), 220-225; Roland Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers to Social Movement Protagonists: Antisemitic Activism in 1920s Romania,” *Studies on National Movements*, no. 4 (2019): 6.

¹⁷ *Anuarul Universității din Iași: Anul Scolar 1901-902* (Iași: Tipografia „Dacia” P. Ilescu & D. Grossu, 1903), 53.

upon the parties to support the League,¹⁸ and, on October 1, its programme was launched. The programme warned that Romanians would become extinct due to alcoholism and that “foreigners” would take their place.¹⁹ A brochure published by Cuza, the League’s secretary general, shows that “foreigners” meant “Jews”.²⁰

Who was A.C. Cuza? There are only three recent biographies on him. In 2007, Gabriel Asandului published *A.C. Cuza. Politică și cultură* [A.C. Cuza. Politics and Culture]. It was an attempt to rehabilitate Cuza as a person of his time, with his “good and bad sides”.²¹ Another biography by Corneliu Ciucanu, “A.C. Cuza și mișcările studentești din anii 1922-1923” [A.C. Cuza and the Student Movements in 1922-1923], which appeared in 2010, also trivialised Cuza’s antisemitism, partly echoing Cuza’s propaganda.²² In his *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza în politica românească* [A.C. Cuza’s Antisemitism in Romanian Politics] (2012), historian Horia Bozdoghină attempted to be impartial. However, he fell to some extent for Cuza’s propaganda, as he proceeded from the premise that Cuza and his movement had a coherent and original ideology, and as he largely failed to note how contradictory and derivative their ideas were.²³ Although factually not completely accurate, these biographies are nevertheless helpful for reconstructing the main aspects of Cuza’s life.

A.C. Cuza was born on November 8, 1857 O.S., in a boyar (noble) family in Iași.²⁴ He came into contact with German culture during his adolescence.²⁵ In Dresden, he attended – like several other Romanians – the Vitzthumsches Gymnasium (secondary school) in 1872/1873 and the

¹⁸ “Ligă contra alcoolismului,” *Tribuna* (Sibiu), 18/30 May 1897, 439.

¹⁹ *Programul Ligei Române în contra Alcoolismului* (Jassy: Tipografia Națională, 1897), 5.

²⁰ A.C. Cuza, *Ce-i Alcoolismul?* (Jassy: Tipografia Națională, 1897), 32-33.

²¹ Gabriel Asandului, *A.C. Cuza. Politică și cultură* (Iași: Fides, 2007), 7-8.

²² Corneliu Ciucanu, “A.C. Cuza și mișcările studentești din anii 1922-1923: Constituirea și activitatea Ligii Apărării Național-Creștine (1923-1930),” *Zargidava*, no. 9 (2010): 81-100.

²³ Horia Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza în politica românească* (București, Curtea Veche, 2012). A short biography of Cuza, which is based on Bozdoghină, is included in Iulia Onac, “In der rumänischen Antisemiten-Citadelle”: *Zur Entstehung des politischen Antisemitismus in Rumänien 1878-1914* (Berlin: Metropol, 2017), 104-105.

²⁴ Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Colecția „Stare Civilă oraș Iași” (no. 2252), mitrice orașul Iași, registre mitricale ale Parohiei Buna-Vestire, register no. 1/1846-1865, no. 240/1857. Cuza died on November 3, 1947, in Sibiu: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 449: death certificate, 5 November 1947.

²⁵ According to a pamphlet from 1939, Cuza had attended the French boarding school of Anton Frey (1808?-1898) from 1867. In an article from 1942, which was published in Cuza’s son’s newspaper, this became the boarding school of the German Anton Frey. In the context of the alliance between Romania and Germany, Cuza’s education in French was thus concealed: Grigore V. Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza: Extras din revista „Cuget Moldovenesc”* (Iași: Alexandru Țerek, 1939), 9; G. Bezviconi, “Legăturile familiale ale lui A.C. Cuza cu Basarabia. În loc de dedicație,” *Cetatea Moldovei*, no. 5 (1942): 144.

Gymnasium of the Krause'sches Institut in 1875/1876, 1876/1877, and 1877/1878, leaving during the winter term.²⁶ He made friends at the Institute, who were the opposite of professing German antisemites.²⁷ Cuza finished his studies obtaining two doctorates in Brussels, one in political and administrative sciences in 1882 and the other one in law, in 1884 or 1886.²⁸

²⁶ *Programm des Vitzthumschen Gymnasiums* (Dresden: E. Blochmann & Sohn, 1873), 97; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1876), 29; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1877), 28; *Jahres-Bericht des Krause'schen Instituts* (Dresden: Julius Reichel, 1878), 29; Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 9. "Julius Zachler," who was mentioned by Grigore V. Coban, was most probably Julius Zähler, who taught at the Vitzthumsches Gymnasium.

²⁷ Cuza had become friends with Flodoard von Biedermann (1858-1934), with whose family he had also stayed some time at Hohe Straße 23, and with Oscar Jolles, who was of Jewish descent. In November 1927, Biedermann, now an editor, disapproved of Cuza's antisemitism, as Cuza no longer regarded Jolles as a friend. Biedermann wrote: "As regards the personal aspect, I have to say that the great evil I have suffered in my life always came from my Christian Germanic fellows; I have experienced a lot of good and friendliness from Jews. Even if I acknowledge certain things that are proper to the Jewish being and detrimental to our nation, I therefore could never adhere to antisemitism out of respect for the many Jews whom I know and to whom I am even befriended. In my opinion, we can also fight off the harm without [antisemitism], harm of whose propagation in many cases our ethnic fellows are themselves responsible." For instance, Biedermann co-organised in November 1931 a bibliophilic evening in Berlin with the Jewish Soncino Society. In August 1934, Biedermann reiterated his position, adding: "However, I am of the opinion that every nation should keep its national matters pure of Jewish influence and therefore it was right that our government broke the overly exceeding influence of the Jewry on our public life." Despite this overall approval of the National Socialist government's action, Biedermann was critical of the means used and warned Cuza against imitating the German example: *Adreß- und Geschäfts-Handbuch der Königlichen Haupt- und Residenzstadt Dresden für das Jahr 1871* (Dresden: E. Blochmann u. Sohn, 1871), 25; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 37 (4)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 November 1927 (1st quotation); S 37 (5)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 4 January 1928; S 37 (22)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 3 August 1934 (2nd quotation); Regina Thiele, "...ich zog nun werbend durch Berlin': Der Nachlass Herrmann Meyer im Archiv des Jüdischen Museums Berlin," in *Soncino-Gesellschaft der Freunde des jüdischen Buches: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte*, ed. Karin Bürger, etc. (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014), 144. The detective work to discover Cuza's and his friend Biedermann's whereabouts in Dresden was kindly done by Uwe Steinhoff.

²⁸ Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 22; Laurențiu Vlad, "Les Roumains titulaires d'un doctorat à l'université libre de Bruxelles (1863/1884-1914)," in *Identitate, cultură și politică în sud-estul Europei: Două colocvii româno-bulgare* (Brăila: Istros, 2014), 150; 152. According to an undocumented claim by Iulia Onac, Cuza also studied in Berlin. However, Cuza appears nowhere in the student registers from 1877/1878 to 1886/1887: Onac, "In der rumänischen Antisemiten-Citadelle," 104; *Amtliches Verzeichniß des Personals und der Studirenden der königlichen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin* (Berlin: Gustav Schade (Otto Francke), 1877-1886).

From 1881, Cuza contributed to *Contemporanul* [The Contemporary], a journal established that year in Iași, publishing various poems, mostly variations on the theme of “memento mori,” as well as jokes.²⁹ In one poem, he referred to a “Jewish pub”³⁰ and, in another, he mentioned Judas’ betrayal and the crucifixion.³¹ However, these poems were not antisemitic.

There have been many discussions regarding Cuza’s poem “Mormîntul Mieu” [“My Tomb”], in which he professed his atheism.³² In 1939, a pamphlet claimed that *Contemporanul* was a socialist journal and that A.C. Cuza had published “humanist verses of social nature” in it.³³ The pamphlet quoted the relevant lines, calling them “verses that reveal a ferocious atheist, an aggressive critic, chloroformed with the Marxist doctrine.”³⁴ In 1956, right-wing author Pamfil Șeicaru quoted the same lines, with several variations and cutting Cuza’s final apostasy (“[...] for me, heaven was without God”). According to Șeicaru, Cuza had published them in the socialist journal *Dacia viitoare* [Future Dacia] (established in Paris in February 1883 and moved to Brussels during April 1883).³⁵ As many authors in *Dacia viitoare* used pseudonyms, it cannot be excluded that Cuza wrote in the paper. This would be interesting, as *Dacia viitoare* was against the discrimination of the Jews as a whole, making the difference between Jewish oppressors and oppressed (counting the Jewish pub owners among the former).³⁶ However, Cuza never published “My Tomb”

²⁹ A.C. Cuza, “O rugăminte: Epigramă,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 179-180; “A doua înviere,” *ibidem*, 244-246; “Lor...,” *ibidem*, 246-247; “Monologul unui calic,” *ibidem*, 282-285; “Respuns la întrebare,” *ibidem*, 316; “Nemîngierea,” *ibidem*, 513; “Monologul unui Cobzariu,” *ibidem*, 555-560; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 610; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 725-726; “Isus Nazarineanul,” *ibidem*, 841-842; “Părintelui Damaschin,” *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 115; “De ce?...,” *ibidem*, 302; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 303; “La Marea,” *Contemporanul*, *ibidem*, 303; “Vis,” *ibidem*, 412; “Domnișoarei S... N...” *ibidem*, 463; “Monologul lui Barbu lăutariul,” *ibidem*, 543-547; “Mormîntul Mieu,” *ibidem*, 688-689; “Monologul unui vagabond,” *Contemporanul*, 1883/1884, 251-254; “Și moartea sosi-va,” *Contemporanul*, 1884/1885, 36-37; “Dragעי mele,” *ibidem*, 305-306; “Luî Ștefan-Voda,” *ibidem*, 396; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 868-869; “Luî Damaschin,” *ibidem*, 933; “De cum naște...,” *Contemporanul*, 1886/1887, 5; “De sus,” *ibidem*, 206; “Mărioara,” *ibidem*, 309-310.

³⁰ “Monologul unui Cobzariu,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 559.

³¹ “Isus Nazarineanul,” *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 841-842.

³² A.C. Cuza, “Mormîntul Mieu,” *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 688-689.

³³ Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

³⁴ Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

³⁵ Pamfil Șeicaru, *Un junimist antisemit A.C. Cuza* (Madrid: “Carpații,” 1956), 7.

³⁶ Dinu, “Patriotism și socialism,” *Dacia viitoare*, 1 March 1883, 34; Dinu, “Dacia viitoare și evreii,” *Dacia viitoare*, 1 May 1883, 105-106.

in *Dacia viitoare*. The confusion probably stemmed from the fact that Cuza wrote his poem in March 1883 in Brussels.³⁷

Contrary to the interpretations of the 1939 pamphlet and Șeicaru's text, Cuza's atheist poem is not sufficient evidence that he was a socialist in the early 1880s. Bozdoghină suggested that the revolt expressed in his poems in *Contemporanul* hints at a socialist orientation.³⁸ Some of Cuza's poems, in particular four self-portraits of paupers (a beggar, a "țigane" kobza player, an elderly singer, and a vagrant³⁹) might give the impression that he felt for the needy. However, there is no definite clue as to his political ideas in these poems. The self-portrait of the kobza player even has conservative overtones as Cuza made him say: "This is the țigane fate [...] because we poverty-stricken people have many sins."⁴⁰ In general, Cuza's poems reflect his belief that the world was profoundly corrupt, of which he would later publicly accuse the Jews. Cuza's statements from the late 1880s show that he had some socialist sympathies, which his Romanian nationalism and xenophobia however overshadowed. I found no evidence that he thought otherwise in the early 1880s.

It is possible that Cuza's collaboration with *Contemporanul* impacted on his (later?) antisemitism. Indeed, he published alongside Vasile Conta, a "scientific" antisemite,⁴¹ and A.D. Xenopol, his future partner within the Romanian League against Alcoholism.

On 15/27 July 1884, Cuza launched an "independent" paper - or rather a political pamphlet - in Iași, *Ciomagul* [The Hammer].⁴² The anti-

³⁷ A.C. Cuza, "Mormîntul Mieu," *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 689. Bozdoghină did not verify any of these aspects. He based his claim that, "in 1882, A.C. Cuza had joined the socialist group led by V. Gh. Morțun and Constantin Mille, the redactors of the publication *Dacia viitoare*" on an undocumented statement with a slightly different meaning in Cristian Sandache, *Doctrina național-creștină în România* (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 7. He quoted the relevant lines of "My Tomb" from G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române dela origini până în prezent* (Bucharest: Fundația regală pentru literatură și artă, 1941), 482 (Bozdoghină used the reedition from 1982, p. 546). He did not take into account that the quotation was part of the chapter on *Contemporanul*, not *Dacia viitoare*: Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 22.

³⁸ Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 23.

³⁹ A.C. Cuza, "Monologul unui calic," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 282-285; "Monologul unui Cobzariu," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 555-560; "Monologul lui Barbu lăutariul," *Contemporanul*, 1882/1883, 543-547; "Monologul unui vagabond," *Contemporanul*, 1883/1884, 251-254.

⁴⁰ "Monologul unui Cobzariu," *Contemporanul*, 1881/1882, 558.

⁴¹ Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 14-15.

⁴² *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 13/25 July 1884, 1. Only one issue is known: *Publicațiile periodice românești: Tom. II* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1969), 131. The paper was apparently programmed to reappear in 1892: "Reviste, foi și țiare," *Familia* (Oradea), 29 December/10 January 1891, 625.

monarchist and pro-peasant foreword mentioned that “Judas sells [the nation] to the foreigners,”⁴³ denounced and threatened “the German immigrants” who allegedly aimed at exploiting the locals,⁴⁴ and predicted a rebellion of the Romanians against “the civilised immigrants from every corner of the world”.⁴⁵ In one of the articles, Cuza specifically targeted the Greeks and the Bulgarians.⁴⁶ While there were no antisemitic statements, Cuza revealed his general xenophobia.

From May 1885, Cuza’s poems appeared in *Convorbiri literare* [Literary Conversations],⁴⁷ the journal of the literary and political Junimea group. Cuza also participated in the activities of the group.⁴⁸ The 1939 pamphlet claimed that Cuza joined the group “after having left the socialist movement”.⁴⁹ According to Şeicaru, “under the influence of Junimea, A.C. Cuza underwent a radical change, his socialism being replaced with a nationalist conservatism”.⁵⁰ Cuza had already declared in 1884 that he had “nothing in common with the socialists”⁵¹ and described socialism as a mere beautiful theory in 1887.⁵² However, his statement in or shortly before 1889 that he was “a socialist as concerns the ideas, but a member of Junimea as regards the government”⁵³ suggests that he had not yet abandoned his left-wing ideas when joining the group. In any case, as we will see, he would start his national political career as a member of Junimea.

After 1886, no more poems by Cuza appeared in *Contemporanul*. In 1887, Cuza published a poetry collection, *Versuri* [Verses], reprinting

⁴³ “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 4.

⁴⁴ “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 20.

⁴⁵ “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 23.

⁴⁶ “Mezat şi Ciomăgeală,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 31.

⁴⁷ A.C. Cuza, “Ideal,” *Convorbiri literare*, 1885, 189.

⁴⁸ Iacob Negruzzi, *Amintiri din Junimea* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011), 241-242; 245-246.

⁴⁹ Coban, *Fenomenul A.C. Cuza*, 10.

⁵⁰ Şeicaru, *Un junimist antisemit*, 7.

⁵¹ “Publicului Cetitoriu,” *Ciomagul*, 15/27 July 1884, 14.

⁵² Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 – 11 April 1893. Bozdoghină’s commented on this source that “paradoxically, the future doyen of Romanian antisemitism criticised at that time the ideas of political extremism and proved to be an adept of cosmopolitanism”. This interpretation is due to a negligent reading of the source. Indeed, Cuza wrote: “The fraternisation of all the nations, cosmopolitanism is an idea born of noble human feelings, as is socialism. However, today, to renounce nationality by putting cosmopolitanism in practice would be as wise for a nation than for [unreadable] to put into practice socialism by abandoning of its own volition its means of subsistence.” As we will see, Cuza’s text was nationalist and protofascist: Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 23.

⁵³ Cuza, *Generația de la 48*, 67.

some of the poems from *Contemporanul*.⁵⁴ He donated his royalties to the poet Mihai Eminescu,⁵⁵ a virulent xenophobe⁵⁶ and antisemite,⁵⁷ whose antisemitic texts have had a huge influence since his death in 1889.⁵⁸

In *Versuri*, Cuza publicly renounced his atheism by cutting the atheist stanzas from the poem "My Tomb".⁵⁹ Although Cuza still remained critical of the Christian religion,⁶⁰ this was a first step towards his later apology of Christianity. He also made known his antisemitic worldview. In an act of revenge, he abused a lawyer who was a Jewish convert, insulting him and telling him that a Jew remained a Jew.⁶¹ In an epigram, he insinuated, without mentioning the Jews, that Iași would soon be completely Jewish.⁶² In another epigram, he referred to the "prose with sidelocks" of a "journalist and good Romanian".⁶³ In a third epigram, he accused liberal politicians of having Jewish feelings.⁶⁴

In a list of notes from 1887-1893, Cuza developed nationalist and protofascist ideas, including antisemitic statements and the project of an antisemitic "National Party" (the latter probably in or shortly before 1892).⁶⁵ In a pamphlet published in 1889, Cuza emphasised the necessity to eliminate the "foreigners" from the Romanian nation, without however mentioning the Jews explicitly.⁶⁶ It is possible that, as in 1884, Cuza targeted all non-Romanians, not only the Jews.

In November 1890, Cuza was elected a member of the local council of Iași.⁶⁷ In November 1891, he applied for the chair of political economy at the faculty of law in Iași, but the position was apparently filled with a

⁵⁴ A.C. Cuza, *Versuri* (Iași: Tipografia Națională, 1887).

⁵⁵ *Lupta*, 5 June 1887, 3; "Știri literare și artistice," *Familia* (Oradea), 13/25 December 1887, 598.

⁵⁶ See, for instance: M. Eminescu, "Doină," *Convorbiri literare*, 1 July 1883, 159-160.

⁵⁷ As Eminescu is viewed as the national poet of Romania, there has been an endless debate regarding his antisemitism, which is amply documented by the texts quoted in Teodor Al. Munteanu, "Eminescu și Evreii," *Convorbiri literare*, no. 6-9 (June-September 1939): 891-903.

⁵⁸ Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 10-11.

⁵⁹ Cuza, *Versuri*, 43.

⁶⁰ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 - 11 April 1893.

⁶¹ Cuza, *Versuri*, 98-99; 102.

⁶² Cuza, *Versuri*, 161.

⁶³ Cuza, *Versuri*, 165.

⁶⁴ Cuza, *Versuri*, 166.

⁶⁵ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, I, Mss. 9: political thoughts, 23 February 1887 - 11 April 1893.

⁶⁶ A.C. Cuza, *Generația de la 48 și era nouă* (Iași: Tipografia Națională, 1889), 46-49.

⁶⁷ *Raport asupra administrației comunei Iași de la 1 Ianuarie 1890 până la 31 Decembrie 1891* (Iași: H. Goldner, 1891), 11.

supply.⁶⁸ In January 1892, Cuza stood in the elections as a candidate of the conservative government party, Junimea group. Simultaneously, he was appointed by the government as a member of the acting administration of Iași. In February 1892, he was elected to the lower house,⁶⁹ apparently on a conservative, but not (explicitly) antisemitic platform.⁷⁰ This nonetheless marked the beginning of Cuza's career as an antisemitic politician on the national level. Thus, during the session of February 8/20, 1893, he claimed that everybody was against the Jews, that "the Romanians had been gradually expropriated by the Jews," that the "invasion of the Jews had started a long time ago," that the demographic evolution was in favour of the Jews, and that they controlled Bucharest economically. He called for the elimination of the Jews from the Romanian people and joked about drowning or hanging them.⁷¹ During the session of March 5/17, 1893, he referred to Ernest Renan's idea that the "Semitic race" was an "inferior race," called again for the removal of the Jews from the Romanian people, and discoursed on the incompatibility between the "higher" "Aryan race" and the "lower" "Semitic race" or the "Christians and Jews".⁷²

During the session of March 7/19, 1894, Cuza developed his replacement theory in a long and tedious speech, making alcoholism responsible for the decline of the "Christian" population. He argued that the Jews abstained from alcohol and, repeating a centuries-old Jewish stereotype,⁷³ insinuated that the Jewish pub owners intoxicated the Romanians with counterfeit alcohol. Among other things, he proposed a state alcohol monopoly, the restriction of free movement, and the strict enforcement of "the law that bans Jews from living in the countryside and selling alcoholic drinks in the rural communes".⁷⁴ The latter was probably a reference to the law promulgated on 28 March/9 April 1873, which was not an outright ban, but which restricted licences for alcohol sellers on the countryside to local electors (art. 8).⁷⁵

⁶⁸ *Lupta*, 2 November 1891, 3; *Lupta*, 10 November 1891, 3; *Lupta*, 10 December 1891, 3.

⁶⁹ *Lupta*, 10 January 1892, 3; "Mișcarea electorală," *Lupta*, 14 January 1892, 2; Constantin C. Bacalbașa, "Ce deosebire!" *Lupta*, 23 January 1892, 1.

⁷⁰ See the summary of Cuza's electoral speech, in which Jews are not mentioned: "Întruniri electorale," *Era Nouă*, 2 February 1892, 3.

⁷¹ *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 13 February 1893, 448-452.

⁷² *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 16 March 1893, 739-741; Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 26-27.

⁷³ Andrei Oișteanu, *Inventing the Jew. Antisemitic Stereotypes in Romanian and Other Central-East European Cultures* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 173-191.

⁷⁴ *Desbaterile Adunării Deputaților*, 19 March 1894, 1105-1121.

⁷⁵ *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 74 (1/13 April 1873), 1; see: Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, 198-199.

In December 1895, Cuza failed to be reelected.⁷⁶ Instead, he developed his antisemitic political image. As mentioned above, in 1897, he participated in the antisemitic Romanian League against Alcoholism. He also began to capitalise on student antisemitism in order to foster his political career. While some authors have assumed that student antisemitism was inexistent in Romania before the First World War,⁷⁷ antisemitic student violence was common in Iași much earlier. Already in 1877, the local consul of Austria-Hungary reported about a visit by the czar that “the academic youth, which distinguishes itself on every occasion by assaulting the Jews, also expressed its feeling this time by smashing the windows in several streets inhabited by Jews and by creating non negligible damage”.⁷⁸ Now, two decades later, in May 1899 and March 1900, Cuza defended the students who had participated in a pogrom in Iași.⁷⁹

In June 1900, Cuza stood in the elections as “the candidate of the antisemitic group” linked to the newspaper *Ecoul Moldovei* [Echo of Moldavia], whose slogan was “Romania to the Romanians”. His political programme was mainly antisemitic. Jews were to be barred from public offices, public companies, public land lease contracts, the army, the press, and professional schools; the law banning Jews from settling in the countryside was to be strictly applied; recently immigrated Jews were to be expelled; individual naturalisations of Jews – provided for by a constitutional modification of 1879 – were to be stopped; the shechita – the slaughtering of animals according to Jewish religious laws – was to be prohibited.⁸⁰ In March 1901, *Ecoul Moldovei* and Cuza – appointed a

⁷⁶ “Rezultatul alegerilor,” *Lupta*, 28 November 1895, 1; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 447: the president of the lower house, certificate, 1937.

⁷⁷ Raul Cârstocea, “Students Don the Green Shirt: The Roots of Romanian Fascism in the Antisemitic Student Movements of the 1920s,” in *Alma Mater Antisemitica: Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 und 1939*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, and Jana Starek (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 42.

⁷⁸ Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Casa Regala – Oficiale Vol I. (no. 725), folder 23/1877, 55-57: report by the consul of Austria-Hungary in Iași, 6 June 1877.

⁷⁹ Irimia, “Violența antisemită,” 70; 83. About the pogrom, see also: *Rapoarte diplomatice ruse din România (1899-1905): Дипломатические документы российских представителей в Румынии (1899-1905)*, ed. Flavius Solomon (București/Brăila: Editura Academiei Române/Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei „Carol I,” 2020), 146-150 (doc. 12): the Russian consul in Iași to the Russian minister plenipotentiary in Bucharest, 22 May/6 June 1899; Andrei Cușco, “Chestiunea evreiască în sursele diplomatice rusești și austro-ungare, 1899-1905,” *Volumul conferinței anuale a Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”* (forthcoming).

⁸⁰ “Candidatul grupului antisemit din jurul ‘Ecoului Moldovei’ este Cuza C. Alex.,” *Ecoul Moldovei*, 27 May 1899, 1.

month earlier professor at the University of Iași⁸¹ thanks to a plagiarism⁸² – split up as the newspaper disagreed with Cuza’s new electoral programme and allies.⁸³

Six years later, during the peasant revolt of February-April 1907, the Romanian statesmen, most of whom were great landowners, blamed the uprising on the “foreigners,” in particular the Jews.⁸⁴ Among the xenophobe and antisemitic agitators were Cuza and Nicolae Iorga, a professor of history at the University of Bucharest.⁸⁵ In June 1907, they stood together in the elections as “Nationalist Democratic candidates”.⁸⁶ From 1910, Iorga’s newspaper *Neamul Românesc* [The Romanian nation] bore the subtitle “Paper of the Nationalist Democrats”. In May 1910, a Nationalist Democratic programme was set up under Cuza and Iorga, which included explicitly antisemitic aims: “foreigners” were to be excluded from supply and public works contracts and removed from the countryside; Jews were to be ousted from the army.⁸⁷ From 1912, Cuza and Iorga repeatedly clashed. After Cuza’s group decided to support the government of Alexandru Averescu, Cuza expelled Iorga from the Nationalist Democratic Party in April 1920. Each of the two founders now claimed to be the party leader.⁸⁸ During the same period, Cuza served as an MP in

⁸¹ *Anuarul Universității din Iași*, 51.

⁸² Emanuel Socor, *O rușine universitară: Plagiatul D-lui A.C. Cuza* (București: Editura Revistei „Facla,” 1911). Cuza blamed the accusation of plagiarism on the Kabbalah. He sued Emanuel Socor, who had uncovered the plagiarism, for libel, but lost. In 1922, he was unable to deny the plagiarism: “Procesul Cuza-Socor: Ziua III-a,” *Universul*, 20 January 1912, 3; “Procesul Cuza-Socor: Ziua IV-a,” *Universul*, 21 January 1912, 4; “Verdictul în procesul Cuza-Socor,” *Universul*, 22 January 1912, 3; Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 193-194.

⁸³ “Atitudinea noastră,” *Ecoul Moldovei*, 15 March 1901, 1. Presumably, Cuza’s programme was the one published in the newspapers, which resembled his programme of 1899, but referred to “the foreigners” instead of the Jews: “Programul naționaliștilor din Iași,” *Răsăritul*, 17/30 March 1901, 3; “Alegerile în România,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 11/24 March 1901, 3.

⁸⁴ Irina Marin, *Peasant Violence and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 73-74; Irina Marin, “*Raubwirtschaft* and Colonisation: The Jewish Question and Land Tenure in Romania in 1907,” in *Modern Antisemitisms in the Peripheries: Europe and its Colonies 1880-1945*, ed. Raul Cârstocea and Éva Kovács (Vienna and Hamburg: New Academic Press, 2019), 435-436.

⁸⁵ *Anuarul Universității din București pe anul școlar 1896-1897* (București: Stabilimentul Grafic I. V. Socecă, 1897), 16. Regarding the agitation, see the issues of *Neamul Românesc* of 1907.

⁸⁶ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, V, Mss. 116: Alexandru C. Cuza, draft article, 1918 (probably).

⁸⁷ “Consfătuirea noastră,” *Neamul Românesc*, 27 April 1910, 802-816; *Calendarul „Neamului Românesc” pe anul 1910* (Vălenii-de-Munte: Tipografia Societății „Neamul Românesc,” 1909), 138-139; see also Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, 227-228; Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers,” 8-10.

⁸⁸ Nicolae Iorga, “Naționalismul-democrat și falsificațiile d-lui A.C. Cuza,” *Neamul Românesc*, 8 April 1920, 1; “Semnificația căderii d-lui A.C. Cuza,” *Patria*, 2 June 1920, 1; “Partidul Naționalist-Democrat din România este numai acela de sub șefia D-lui Profesor

February-April 1914, June 1914-April 1918, June-November 1918, November 1919-March 1920, and June 1920-January 1922.⁸⁹

Already planning the foundation of a National Christian Party⁹⁰ – despite his (former?) atheism – Cuza added the subtitle “National and Christian newspaper” to his paper *Unirea* [The Union] in May 1920. One of his articles shows that “Christian” meant in fact “antisemitic”. Cuza stated that “the Nationalist Democratic Party is a party that fights for the defence of [the] Romanian interests, in particular against those who are not Christians”. He quoted two verses from the Gospel (Matthew 6:19 and 6:24: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust” and “You cannot serve God and wealth.”), but only to lash out at the Jews.⁹¹ Cuza’s definition of “Christian” in opposition to “Jew” reflected that of the Austrian Christian Socials,⁹² with whom he had been in contact.⁹³ However, in Cuza’s case, there was no “positive” Christian content at all.

After the war, Cuza continued to build on student antisemitism. He profited from the antisemitic climate in foreign academia. Thus, when students in Karlsruhe, Germany, threatened to boycott the classes of a Jewish engineer if he was appointed at the local Technische Hochschule,⁹⁴ *Unirea* used the event to promote student strikes against the appointment of Jewish professors in Romania.⁹⁵

Cuza also exploited war-due changes in Romania’s universities. At the end of the war, Romania had been able to expand its territory and population. From 139,083 km² and about 7.8 million inhabitants in 1914, it

Universitar de Economia-Politică A.C. Cuza,” *Naționalistul*, 1 Octombrie 1922; Horia Florin Bozdoghină, “Relațiile politice dintre N. Iorga și A.C. Cuza (1900-1920),” *Transilvania*, no. 10 (2003): 69-74; Bozdoghină, *Antisemitismul lui A.C. Cuza*, 45-73.

⁸⁹ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, XII, acte 447: the president of the lower house, certificate, 1937.

⁹⁰ “Cel mai nou și – mai dorit partid!” *Unirea*, 17 March 1920, 1.

⁹¹ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, V, Mss. 103: Alexandru C. Cuza, draft article, 1920 or later.

⁹² Kurt Augustinus Huber, *Katholische Kirche und Kultur in Böhmen: Ausgewählte Abhandlungen* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005), 230.

⁹³ In 1894, Cuza had sent his pamphlets to Karl Lueger and received answers from the future mayor of Vienna. In June 1909, Bukovinian Christian Social Konstantin von Zoppa had solicited Cuza for articles for his Viennese paper *Die Judenfrage* [The Jewish Question]: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 27 (2)/DLVII: Karl Lueger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 26 May 1894; S 11/DLXVIII: Konstantin von Zoppa to Alexandru C. Cuza, 23 June 1909.

⁹⁴ “Studentischer Antisemitismus,” *Jüdische Rundschau*, 6 February 1920, 67.

⁹⁵ Probus, “Antisemitismul în Germania,” *Unirea*, 15 February 1920, 1.

had grown to 296,142 km² and about 16 million inhabitants in 1919,⁹⁶ among whom many non-Romanians.⁹⁷ In particular, important towns like Kolozsvár/Cluj, Transylvania, and Czernowitz/Cernăuți, Bukovina, had an overwhelmingly non-Romanian population,⁹⁸ Cernăuți being essentially a German-speaking Jewish cultural hub.⁹⁹

In Cluj and Cernăuți, Romania gained a Hungarian and a German university respectively. In May 1919, the University of Cluj was closed as the Hungarian professors refused to take the oath to the Romanian state, and preparations for its Romanianisation were made.¹⁰⁰ In June, the German-speaking professors of the University of Cernăuți were notified that they would be dismissed on September 1.¹⁰¹ On September 12, both universities were Romanianised by decree.¹⁰² As a consequence, not only

⁹⁶ *Anuarul statistic al României 1915-1916* (București: F. Göbl Fii, 1919), 16; *Anuarul statistic al României 1922* (București: F. Göbl Fii, 1923), 21-24.

⁹⁷ No detailed census was organised in Romania until 1930. For estimates, see *Minoritățile naționale din România 1918-1925* (București: Arhivele Statului din România, 1995), 8.

⁹⁸ According to the Hungarian and Austrian censuses of 1910, which the Romanian nationalists disputed, Kolozsvár had numbered 60,808 inhabitants, of whom only 7,562 had Romanian as their mother tongue, while Czernowitz had counted 85,446 Austrian citizens, of whom 13,425 used Romanian as “everyday language”: *A Magyar Szent Korona országainak 1910. évi népszámlálása: Ötödik rész* (Budapest: Pesti könyvnyomda részvénytársaság, 1916), 116-117; *Die Ergebnisse der Volkszählung vom 31. Dezember 1910 in den im Reichsrat vertretenen Königreichen und Ländern: 2. Heft des ersten Bandes* (Wien: kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1914), 50.

⁹⁹ In 1919, Cernăuți had almost 92,000 inhabitants. In 1925, an estimated 50,000-60,000 Jews lived here and there were 57 temples and synagogues: *Dicționarul Statistic al Bucovinei întocmit pe baza rezultatelor recensământului populației din 28 Februarie 1919* (București: Gutenberg, 1922), V; Державний Архів Чернівецької Облaсті, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1902, 1-2: list of the temples and synagogues of Cernăuți and number of worshippers, 1925; see also the studies by prof. Andrei Corbea-Hoișie and prof. Petro Rychlo, as well as Cristina Florea’s excellent PhD thesis: “City of Dreams, Land of Longing: Czernowitz and Bukovina at the Crossroads of Empires” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2016).

¹⁰⁰ “Universitatea din Cluj închisă: Profesorii unguri refuză jurământul,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 18 May 1919, 2; “Universitatea din Cluj,” *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 27 May 1919, 1; Sextil Pușcariu, “Raport,” in *Anuarul Universității din Cluj 1919-1920* (Cluj: Ardealul, 1921), 2.

¹⁰¹ “Entlassung der deutschen Universitätsprofessoren,” *Allgemeine Zeitung/Tagblatt*, 15 June 1919, 2. Professors concerned contacted the University of Vienna, which suggested that the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs take action on their behalf, which it apparently did. According to the University of Vienna, the Romanian Government demanded that the professors commit to give classes in Romanian, on pain of having their salaries suspended: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, AdR AAng BKA-AA NPA 293, 460: the rector of the University of Vienna to the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs, 1 July 1919; 459: the Austrian department of Foreign Affairs to the Austrian delegation in Saint-Germain, 2 July 1919.

¹⁰² *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 126 (23 September 1919): 7202 (no. 4091).

professors, but also students left.¹⁰³ While the share of Jewish students at the University of Cernăuți decreased in the early 1920s, it remained substantial¹⁰⁴ and Jews were still present at the University of Cluj.¹⁰⁵

Romanianising the Universities of Cluj and Cernăuți in order to do justice to the Romanian nation and to cancel the Hungarian and the Austrian past¹⁰⁶ implied that Romanian professors and students could

¹⁰³ See: Zoltán Pálffy, *National Controversy in the Transylvanian Academe: The Cluj/Kolozsvár University in the First Half of the Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2005); Nora Chelaru, "Românizarea Universității din Cernăuți și îmbogățirea bibliotecii universitare cu cărți de literatură germană (1919-1940)," in *Rumänisch-Deutsche Kulturbegegnungen 1918-1933*, ed. Daniela Vladu, Laura Laza and Ursula Wittstock (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2021). Personal connections and party loyalty governed new appointments. Thus, the University of Cernăuți was soon monopolised by the group connected to the Romanian nationalist newspaper *Glasul Bucovinei* [The Voice of Bukovina], founded in October 1918, and the resulting Democratic Party of the Union, established in September 1919. Contributors to the newspaper and/or members of the party who were appointed at the University were: Ion Nistor, Romulus Câdea, Vasile Grecu, Dimitrie Marmeliuc, and Alexie Procopovici. Despite his mediocrity, Câdea had a splendid career in Nistor's shadow: "Marea adunare constitutivă a partidului democrat al unirii," *Glasul Bucovinei*, 17 September 1919, 4; *Universitatea Ferdinand I din Cernăuți: Inaugurarea festivă a rectorului pentru anul de studii 1921/1922* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 7; *Universitatea Regele Ferdinand I din Cernăuți: Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1922-1923* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 10; "Das Prestige unserer Universität," *Vorwärts*, 10 March 1921, 2-3; "Ein würdiger Universitätslehrer," *Vorwärts*, 4 January 1923, 3; "Antisemitismul universitar," 44. In *Glasul Bucovinei*, Dimitrie Marmeliuc published eulogies to Ion Zelea-Codreanu and Nicolae Iorga. In an article about the latter, Marmeliuc also mentioned the "beautiful" Nationalist Democratic movement, which he however thought had become extinct ten years earlier: D. Marmeliuc, "Ion Zelea-Codreanu," *Glasul Bucovinei*, 29 November 1918, 1; D. Marmeliuc, "Dl. N. Iorga și politica viitorului," *Glasul Bucovinei*, 7 December 1918, 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ During the summer semester 1921, out of 1,271 students (arithmetic total), 532 were Jewish and 548 Orthodox (probably Romanians and Ukrainians); at the end of 1921/1922, out of 1,256, 465 Jewish and 622 Orthodox; during the winter semester 1922, out of 1,448, 483 Jewish and 753 Orthodox; during the summer semester 1923, out of 1,241, 387 Jewish and 685 Orthodox: *Inaugurarea festivă a rectorului pentru anul de studii 1921/1922 la 24 Octomvrie 1921* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 8-9; *Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1922-1923 la 24 Octomvrie 1922* (Cernăuți: Editura Universității, 1922), 11; *Inaugurarea solemnă a anului de studii 1923-1924 la 24 Octomvrie 1923* (Cernăuți, Editura Universității, 1923), 10. The totals in the yearbooks do not equal the arithmetic totals.

¹⁰⁵ At the University of Cluj, only the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature published relevant statistics in 1921/1922: during the winter semester 1921, out of 221 students, 22 were Jewish and 161 Romanian; during the summer semester 1922, out of 238, 20 Jewish and 166 Romanian: *Anuarul Universității din Cluj pe anul școlar 1921-22* (Cluj: Ardealul, 1923), 15.

¹⁰⁶ See, for instance, Ion Nistor's and P.P. Negulescu's speeches during the opening of the Romanian University of Cernăuți in October 1920, as well as Dimitrie Marmeliuc's commentary in *Glasul Bucovinei: Inaugurarea Universității Românești din Cernăuți 23-25 Octomvrie 1920* (Cernăuți: *Glasul Bucovinei*, 1922), 15-25; 28-34; "Inaugurarea universității," *Glasul Bucovinei*, 24 October 1920, 2.

“claim ethnic privilege”¹⁰⁷ to the detriment of the professors and students belonging to non-Romanian groups associated with that past, mainly Hungarians and Hungarian-speaking Jews in Cluj and German-speaking Jews in Cernăuți. Thus, one of Cuza’s disciples, Ion Moța, who created an antisemitic student movement in Cluj,¹⁰⁸ argued in December 1922 that the proportion of Jewish students at the Romanian universities (purportedly, 160 Jews and 40 Romanians in the first year of the Faculty of Medicine in Cluj),¹⁰⁹ as well as among the beneficiaries of Romanian fellowships was the reason for the movement.¹¹⁰

Another reason behind Romanian student antisemitism was aversion to communism. Romania had annexed Bessarabia, a territory which had experienced the Russian Revolution and had been heavily exposed to Bolshevik ideas. Romanian nationalists therefore suspected Bessarabian students who studied at Romanian universities of communism.¹¹¹ Among these students were numerous Jews. Historian Irina Livezeanu calculated that, “of the 4,062 Bessarabian students enrolled at Iași University from 1918 until 1930, only 1,306, or one-third, were ethnic Romanians” while “the 1,794 Jews represented 44.2 percent of the Bessarabian students”.¹¹² Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, the son of Cuza’s friend Io(a)n Zelea-Codreanu, and Cuza’s godchild,¹¹³ considered that one of the two student groups at the University of Iași in 1919 “was overwhelmed by the enormous mass of kike students who had come from Bessarabia and who were all agents and propagators of communism”.¹¹⁴ His reaction was to assault the Jewish students from Bessarabia.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ The expression was coined by Roland Clark: Roland Clark, “Claiming Ethnic Privilege: Aromanian Immigrants and Romanian Fascist Politics,” *Contemporary European History*, no. 1 (2015): 37-58.

¹⁰⁸ About Moța’s early activity, see: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 47 (2)/DLVIII: Ioan Moța to Alexandru C. Cuza, 12 October 1924.

¹⁰⁹ According to the rector, it were actually 108 Jews and 112 Romanians: Ana-Maria Stan, “The 1922-1923 Student Revolts at the University of Cluj, Romania: From Local Anti-Semitic Academic Protests to National Events,” in *Student Revolt, City, and Society in Europe: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Pieter Dhondt and Elizabethanne Boran (New York/London: Routledge, 2018), 288.

¹¹⁰ Ion I. Moța, “De vorbă cu conștiința: Cauza noastră e justă în ordinea morală și servește progresul social,” *Dacia Nouă*, 23 December 1922 quoted from Ion I. Moța, *Cranii de lemn: Articole 1922-1936* (Sibiu: “Totul pentru țară,” 1936), 14-15.

¹¹¹ “Focarul anarhiei dintre studenți,” *Unirea*, 3 March 1920, 1.

¹¹² Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 259.

¹¹³ Heinen: *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael,”* 132.

¹¹⁴ Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, *Pentru legionari: Vol. I* (București: Editura „Totul pentru țară,” 1936), 15.

¹¹⁵ Raul Cârstocea, “Anti-Semitism in Romania: Historical Legacies, Contemporary Challenges,” European Centre for Minority Issues Working Paper #81 (October 2014): 10.

As in 1899, Cuza protected the antisemitic bullies. Moreover, he used them to undermine the authority of the senate of the University of Iași. In autumn 1919, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu enrolled in the Faculty of Law, where Cuza was dean. In less than two years, he committed several offences. For instance, after having attended an anti-Bolshevik and antisemitic speech by Cuza, he and other students vandalised the editorial offices and the printing shop of the newspaper *Lumea*, whose editor was Jewish. He and other students also blocked the entrances to the University after the senate decided that no religious service would be held at the beginning of the new academic year 1920/1921.

On June 2, 1921, the senate decided to expel Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu as a consequence of his assaulting a journalist, who had found fault with his father. Immediately, Cuza, who was staying in Bucharest, sent a letter to protest the expulsion. He accused the senate of “cultivating cowardice, by deciding that the students do not have the right to reject insults and to defend themselves when attacked”. He also blamed the senate for “defending an anarchic press, written by foreigners or people who have become foreigners” – meaning Jews and Romanian leftists. Four days later, Cuza convened the faculty council and declared the senate’s decision void.

Disregarding the senate’s decision, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu stood in the elections for the committee of the Society of Law Students and was elected in November 1921, obtaining the most votes. Without the rector’s approbation, but with Cuza’s permission, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu organised the founding meeting of the Association of Christian (Romanian) Students in May 1922. In July, Cuza even submitted a list of law graduates which included Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, but the prorector decided that his diploma would be issued “after the final settlement of the question”.¹¹⁶ As we will see, Cuza gained in the short

¹¹⁶ Neagoe, *Triumful națiunii*, 90-120; see: Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 948, 5: the Student Centre Iași to the rector of the University of Iași, complaint against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, 31 May 1921 (see also 29-30); folder 976, 10 (= Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 106/DXLIX): Alexandru C. Cuza to the rector of the University of Iași, protest against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, Bucharest, 2 June 1921; folder 953, 79: Alexandru C. Cuza to the rector of the University of Iași, request for the transcript of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, 5 June 1921; 86-87: transcript of the law faculty council meeting, 6 June 1921; folder 978, 65-70: transcript of the senate meeting regarding the decision of the law faculty council, 8 June 1921; folder 948, 104: a student to the rector of the University of Iași, complaint against his cautioning for having protested against Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s expulsion, 28 June 1921; folder 963, 60: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu’s candidature to the committee of the Society of Law Students, November (?) 1921; 80-81: results of the elections of the committee of the Society of Law Students, 23 November 1921; 29: Corneliu Zelea-

term. In the long term, the boost to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's ego turned the latter into a dangerous competitor.

In January 1922, Cuza had founded the National Christian Union together with several friends, among whom doctor Nicolae Paulescu and Ion Zelea-Codreanu.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, his and Iorga's Nationalist Democratic Parties continued to coexist.¹¹⁸

According to the Union's programme, published a year later in 1923, Jews were to be expelled from Romania in the long term. In the short term, the constitutional article which provided only for individual naturalisations of Jews was to be upheld; the Jews were to be removed from the countryside and barred from the army, academic positions, public companies and offices, supply and public works contracts, etc.; Jewish pupils were to be sent to separate schools for Jews, and the proportion of Jewish students was to be limited (*numerus clausus*); Christians were to be favoured in commerce and industry.¹¹⁹

In April 1922, Cuza launched *Apărarea Națională* [National Defence], a journal aimed "to enlighten the Jewish question scientifically and to lead to its solution".¹²⁰ In other words, it bolstered crude antisemitic stereotypes¹²¹ and spread hatred against the Jews. Already in its first issue, it promoted student antisemitism. It reproduced a leaflet which had surfaced a month earlier in Cluj.¹²² Claiming that Jews led the University of Cluj, the leaflet called upon the "true students" to protest against "the Jewish terror" and to demand the *numerus clausus*.¹²³

Codreanu, complaint against his expulsion, December 1921; folder 1000 I, 15: transcript of the declarations of different students, including Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, regarding the founding meeting of the Association of Christian Romanian Students, 30 May 1922; folder 958, 51: the minister of Education to the rector of the University of Iași, opinion regarding Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's expulsion, 24 June 1922; folder 1000 I, 170: Alexandru C. Cuza to the prorector of the University of Iași, list of law graduates, 3 July 1922; the prorector of the University of Iași, decision, 5 July 1922; Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 15-16; 40-50; 60-63.

¹¹⁷ A.C. Cuza, "Uniunea națională Creștină," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 1; "Dezordinele antisemite la Cameră," *Adevărul*, 9 December 1922, 1.

¹¹⁸ For instance: "Guvernul Take Ionescu a căzut," *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 19 January 1922, 3.

¹¹⁹ "Programul Uniunii Naționale Creștine," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 January 1923, 30-31.

¹²⁰ A.C. Cuza, "Uniunea națională Creștină," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 3.

¹²¹ For instance, in 1923, Paulescu suggested in an item that a ritual murder had taken place in Bârlad: Dr. Paulescu, "Martirul Neamului," *Apărarea Națională*, 1 February 1923, 1.

¹²² "Izgató röpiratok a kolozsvári egyetemen," *Uj Kelet*, 16 March 1922, 1-2. The pamphlet is mentioned in: Attila Gidó, *Două decenii: Ereii din Cluj în perioada interbelică* (Cluj-Napoca: ISPMN, 2014), 139.

¹²³ "Tinerime universitară Română!" *Apărarea Națională*, 1 April 1922, 20.

At the end of 1922, antisemitic student protests, which the French chargé d'affaires attributed to Cuza's articles and speeches,¹²⁴ took place in each of the four universities of Romania. They were marked by physical violence against the Jews and the state authorities.¹²⁵ The idea of the *numerus clausus* was central to the protests. It was purportedly included in a draft petition by the students in Iași, which they discussed on December 9, 1922, with the students in Cluj, who were to debate it with the students in Bucharest.¹²⁶ On December 9, students from Iași also took part in a meeting in Cernăuți. They asked the Christian students in Cernăuți to advocate the *numerus clausus* too.¹²⁷ The final petition was apparently adopted on December 10 in Bucharest.¹²⁸

This was not an isolated event at this time in Europe. *Numerus clausus* debates were going on in many countries in 1919-1922,¹²⁹ for instance in neighbouring Hungary¹³⁰ and Poland.¹³¹ While Clark acknowledged that "by 1922 the phenomenon of violent student antisemitism had taken on clear transnational proportions,"¹³² he also

¹²⁴ Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale: Documents diplomatiques inédits (1919-1939)* (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 2006), 80 (doc. 5): the French chargé d'affaires in Bucharest, report, 18 December 1922.

¹²⁵ No full account of the events seems to exist. See: Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 268-270; Gidó, *Două decenii*, 139-141; Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 28-31.

¹²⁶ "Manifestațiile studentești din Cluj," *Patria*, 12 December 1922, 2; see: Dragoș Sdrobiș, *Limitele meritocrației într-o societate agrară: Șomajul intelectual și radicalizarea politică a tineretului în România interbelică* (Iași: Polirom, 2015), 241.

¹²⁷ "Die Studentenmanifestationen in Czernowitz," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 December 1922, 1.

¹²⁸ Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 28.

¹²⁹ Cârstocea, "Students Don the Green Shirt," 48-49; Clark, "Both Form and Substance," 48-49; see also: "The Jewish Question" and Higher Education in Central Europe and Beyond (1880-1945), ed. Michael L. Miller and Judith Szapor (forthcoming).

¹³⁰ Mária M. Kovács, "The Hungarian *numerus clausus*: ideology, apology and history, 1919-1945," in: "The *numerus clausus* in Hungary: Studies on the First Anti-Jewish Law and Academic Anti-Semitism in Modern Central Europe," ed. Victor Karady and Peter Tibor Nagy (Budapest: Pasts Inc. Centre for Historical Research, History Department of the Central European University, 2012), 28-30; see also the other articles in this volume, as well as those in *Hungarian Studies Review*, no. 1 (June 2021).

¹³¹ Izabela Mrzygłód, "Paragrafy dla narodu. Antysemitcka radykalizacja Koła Prawników Studentów Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w okresie II Rzeczypospolitej," in *Polityka. Między współpracą a odrzuceniem. Żydzi i Polacy w XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Zofia Trębacz (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2021), 79-80; see also: Grzegorz Krzywiec, "The Crusade for a Numerus Clausus 1922/1923: Preliminaries of Polish Fascism in the Central and Eastern European Context," in *Alma Mater Antisemitica: Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 und 1939*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, and Jana Starek (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 67-84.

¹³² Clark, "Both Form and Substance," 49.

concluded that “students talked about the student movement as a Europe-wide phenomenon, but outside of German-speaking Central Europe, it seems to have been poorly coordinated across borders”.¹³³ While the last statement calls for further research, it would thus seem that the student movement was transnational in the discourse, but less so from the perspective of personal connections.

In Iași, as early as October 24, 1922, antisemitic students had disrupted a play at the National Theatre because the cast included a Jewish actress.¹³⁴ Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu left two weeks later for Berlin.¹³⁵ He would only return after the temporary closure of the University of Cernăuți on December 27.¹³⁶ However, antisemitic incidents continued and the rector of the University of Iași, Traian Bratu,¹³⁷ finally resigned on December 6 upon acknowledging that the students sided with Cuza.¹³⁸ Thus, the dean had defeated the rector.

Despite being the doyen, Cuza refused to head the rectorate, leaving this charge to the prorector. As the acting rector, he would have had to take pragmatic decisions. As an opponent of the rectorate, he could continue demanding the impossible and remain the idol of the antisemitic students. During the first senate meeting without Bratu, Cuza thus embraced the students’ demands that Christians get Christian corpses and Jews Jewish cadavers for dissection and that the Jews be expelled from the university halls.¹³⁹ During another senate meeting on

¹³³ Roland Clark, “Terror and Antisemitic Student Violence in East-Central Europe, 1919-1923,” in *A Transnational History of Right-Wing Terrorism: Political Violence and the Far Right in Eastern and Western Europe since 1900*, ed. Johannes Dalfinger and Moritz Florin (London: Routledge, 2022), 74.

¹³⁴ *Antisemitismul universitar în România, 193-194* (doc. 38): the General Association of Jewish Students to the rector of the University of Iași, 1 November 1922; 195-196 (doc. 39): the police headquarters of Iași to the rector of the University of Iași, 9 November 1922; Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 172.

¹³⁵ *Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 2, 1: the special service of Siguranța to the director of the police and Siguranța, 7 November 1922.*

¹³⁶ “Der Studentenstreik auf der Czernowitzer Universität,” *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 December 1922, 1; Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 108.

¹³⁷ For a biography, see: Cristina Spinei, *Ipostaze ale vieții: Traian Bratu în scrisori și documente* (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, 2019).

¹³⁸ Neagoe, *Triumful rațiunii*, 179-199; see: Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 958, 71: the rector of the University of Iași, letter of resignation, 6 December 1922; folder 1001: the Ministry of Education to the rector of the University of Iași, acceptance of the resignation, 14 December 1922.

¹³⁹ Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 1006, 75-76: transcript of the senate meeting, 16 December 1922.

March 16, 1923, he even proposed that only Christian students be admitted to the final exams.¹⁴⁰

On March 4, 1923, Cuza founded the League for National Christian Defence (Liga Apărării Naționale Creștine, L.A.N.C.). According to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, it aimed at organising and directing the supporters of the antisemitic student movement and at politicising the rural population. Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu later suggested that the League had been his idea, claiming that “Professor Cuza was not sufficiently convinced of the need of the organisation”.¹⁴¹ However, as a veteran politician and founder of political groups, Cuza hardly needed Codreanu to see the advantage of giving a formal structure to the nation-wide student movement that he had inspired and to take “the struggle into the political arena”.¹⁴²

Cuza’s use of the swastika

The third issue of *Apărarea Națională*, published in May 1922, already bore the swastika. On March 4, 1923, just before Cuza was proclaimed president of the League for National Christian Defence in the foyer of the University of Iași (thus putting on show his victory over Bratu), a ceremony took place at the local Metropolitan church, during which the banner of the organisation was consecrated.¹⁴³ Allegedly, these flags, as approved by Cuza, were black, with a Romanian tricolour border. In the centre, they had a white circle with a swastika.¹⁴⁴ The by-law of the League established the swastika as its official sign (quoted below). The League’s banner (in 1925) consisted of the Romanian tricolour with a black swastika on the yellow stripe.¹⁴⁵ The swastika was thus visually Romanianised. The League’s regulation compelled its members to wear the swastika “in full view, so as to recognise each other as brothers”¹⁴⁶ and its newspapers sold lapel swastikas to this effect.¹⁴⁷ Already in 1922, Ion Zelea-Codreanu had ordered his daughter Iridenta to wear the “Aryan cross” at school in Huși, thereby creating a scandal which allowed the antisemites to portray themselves as the victims.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ Serviciul județean Iași al Arhivelor naționale, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași – Rectorat (no. 2224), folder 1006, 90: transcript of the senate meeting, 16 March 1923.

¹⁴¹ Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 114-116.

¹⁴² Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 271.

¹⁴³ “Întrunirea partidului naționalist creștin din Iași,” *Universul*, 7 March 1923, 2.

¹⁴⁴ Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 117.

¹⁴⁵ *Călăuza bunilor Români* (Cluj: Tipografia Națională, 1925), 29.

¹⁴⁶ *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 49.

¹⁴⁷ Clark, “From Elite Pamphleteers,” 25.

¹⁴⁸ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, Mss. 47: “a Christian priest,” “Crucea arică persecutată la Huși,” [1922]. Several pupils in Huși were involved in

When Cuza and Ion Zelea-Codreanu split up in 1927, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu founded a second antisemitic movement, the Legion of the Archangel Michael,¹⁴⁹ later also known as the Iron Guard. From August 1, 1927 (no. 1), to December 1, 1927 (no. 9), the paper of the new organisation, *Pământul Strămoșesc* [Ancestral Land], used the swastika on its front page, on top of the icon of the Archangel Michael. From December 15, 1927 (no. 10), the swastika was replaced temporarily with two crosses crosslet with the swastika in their centre. This was also the symbol of Georg de Pottere's contemporary Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund [Aryan Christian Cultural Association].¹⁵⁰ As de Pottere

antisemitic incidents, posting antisemitic signs and assaulting Jews. In December 1922, a 13-year old pupil, who put up a sign "Down with the kikes" and was consequently beaten by Jews, told the police that he "did not know that what was written on the paper would vex somebody". In fact, the word "kike" ("jidán"), which Ion Zelea-Codreanu, a local professor, had actively promoted, had been banned a month earlier by a school inspector as the local Jewish population considered it very offensive: Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Ministerul Instrucțiunii (no. 711), folder 431/1923, 28: statement of a pupil, December 1922; *Antisemitismul universitar în România*, 198-203 (doc. 42): a school inspector, report, 16 November 1922.

¹⁴⁹ Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 63-65.

¹⁵⁰ Born on July 1, 1875 in Ermeny, Banat, Hungary, and purportedly of Northern German origin, Georg de Pottere joined the Austro-Hungarian consular service in 1899. He served in Vienna, Sofia, Tangier, Mexico, and Moscow, where, in November 1918, he was detained three hours by the Soviets. The Soviet experience visibly impacted on his worldview. After the war, de Pottere was retired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 1919. In April 1919, he opted for the Austrian citizenship. He founded a monarchist Selbstschutz, Ostara, which was involved in February 1923 in a street fight during which a Social Democratic worker was killed. In 1925, he participated in the international antisemitic congress in Budapest and, in 1926, in an antisemitic congress in Switzerland. On February 28, 1926, five people – but de Pottere not among them – submitted the by-laws of the Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund to the Ministry of Interior, which approved them on March 10. According to these by-laws, the association sought to spread "the conscience and the knowledge of the Aryan and the Christian cultural heritage, to preserve the surviving cultural heritage, and to safeguard it from foreign and harmful influences". On May 10, 1926, de Pottere was elected as a board member. Three and a half years later, on November 9, 1929, the general assembly of the Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund unanimously decided to dissolve the association. Nonetheless, Pottere's efforts to create an antisemitic organisation continued. On November 8, 1936, de Pottere and his friend Edwin Cooper travelled to Switzerland. In Bern, they apparently attempted to open an account for a "board for the establishment of a Pan-Aryan Union". To that effect, they recruited a local antisemite, Boris Tödli, and used their pseudonyms Otto Farmer and Edward Planter. They seem to have intended to gain members for the Pan-Aryan Union in Switzerland, who would have paid their membership fee into the account. The Swiss authorities expelled de Pottere and Cooper on November 14. From his file in the Swiss Federal Archives, it results that, in 1938, de Pottere also arouse suspicions during a stay in Belgium and that, in 1939, he was in contact with the Institut für arisches Studium [Institute for Aryan Studies] in Chicago. According to historian Magnus Brechtken, de Pottere had attempted to gain access to the NSDAP already in 1927. In 1937, in

apparently supported Cuza,¹⁵¹ it is possible that the Legion's provisional symbol had a discrete origin. Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu might have been inspired by the crosses crosslet and swastikas on the ceiling of Saint-Laurent in Grenoble, which he had described to Cuza in December 1925.¹⁵² Later, under the National Legionary State, a German-language Legionary propaganda album claimed that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had used the swastika the first time as a political symbol in Europe,¹⁵³ thus suggesting that the symbol had an autochthonous origin and that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had adopted it before Hitler. Cuza's role was passed over in silence.

For the June 1931 elections, the Iron Guard adopted a grating-like fence as an "electoral sign," a geometric figure used in lieu of a party

the context of the tensions between German National Socialism and Austrofascism, de Pottere declared that he had known Hitler and Alfred Rosenberg years earlier, but that he opposed the National Socialist ideas. He depicted himself as an antisemite who wanted to instil antisemitism into the Austrian legitimist movement. A 1934 article in de Pottere's Swiss file shows that the National Socialists also dissociated themselves from de Pottere: "Gerichtssaal: Der Tod Birneckers," *Illustrierte Kronen-Zeitung*, 18 May 1923, 6-8; Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, AdR AAng BKA-AA NAR Fach 4 Serie N Pottere, Georg, de; AdR BKA BKA-Inneres, Signatur 15/16, 100.826/1926 (Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund); HHStA MdÄ AR F4-269-2 (Georg de Pottere); Swiss Federal Archives, E4320B#1970/25#13*; Magnus Brechtken, *„Madagaskar für die Juden“: Antisemitische Idee und politische Praxis 1885-1945* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), 43-44 (partly inaccurate). The Arisch-christlicher Kulturbund file listed in the records inventory of the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (1.3.2.119.A32.2703/1926) does not exist any more.

¹⁵¹ The preserved correspondence between de Pottere and Cuza suggests that the former supported the latter against the Legion of the Archangel Michael - despite also corresponding later with Cuza's renegade disciple Ion Moța. Cuza, Moța, and de Pottere probably met during the international antisemitic congress in Budapest in 1925. In 1926, Cuza and de Pottere (as Egon van Winghene) were both published in the antisemitic anthology *Die Weltfront. Eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen antisemitischer Führer aller Völker* [The World Front. An Anthology of Contributions by Antisemitic Leaders from All Nations] edited by Hans Krebs and Otto Prager. Interestingly, in 1932, Cuza gave de Pottere "des éclaircissements [...] au sujet de la Svastica," but no details are known: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 45/DLXVIII: Georg de Pottere ("Farmer") to Alexandru C. Cuza, Vienna, 10 November 1927; Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Cuza A.C. (no. 1139), folder 25, 45: Georg de Pottere to Alexandru C. Cuza, 27 August 1932; Ion I. Moța, *Correspondența cu „Serviciul Mondial” (1934-1936)* (Rome: Armatolii, 1954), 13-14: Ion Moța to Georg de Pottere, [August 1934?]; Andrei C. Ionescu, "Viața și moartea vitejească a lui Ion I. Moța," *Almanahul Cuvântul al Mișcării Legionare*, 1941, 141; Heinen, *Die Legion „Erzengel Michael,”* 327; see also: Serviciul județean Sibiu al Arhivelor naționale, Comunitatea germanilor din România (no. 348), A I, 4, 19: Alexandru C. Cuza to Fritz Fabritius, 10 October 1931.

¹⁵² Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 18, 196-197: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu to Alexandru C. Cuza, Grenoble, 20 December 1925.

¹⁵³ Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, CC al PCR Albume foto (no. unknown), folder AF 2815 (old reference), 8: Legionary album *Kampf und Sieg*.

emblem on the ballot paper.¹⁵⁴ It was clearly chosen as a mnemonic. Being advertised as “iron fence” (“Gardul de fer”),¹⁵⁵ it helped the voters remember that it stood for the “Iron Guard” (“Garda de f(i)er”).¹⁵⁶ It was possibly an abstraction of a certain type of Romanian wayside cross (“troiță”) or of the crosses crosslet used earlier. Several Iron Guard newspapers used the fence alongside the swastika.¹⁵⁷ While the swastika remained a symbol of the Iron Guard at least until September 1940,¹⁵⁸ the fence became the official symbol of the National Legionary State. For instance, the postage stamps of that period displayed exclusively the fence, sometimes in front of a Greek cross.

According to historian Bernard Mees, “when [Heinrich] Schliemann discovered symbols identical to Hindu swastikas among his much-publicized discoveries at Troy, swastikas became the symbols of an occidental Aryan identity,” in particular the symbol of the connection between “Indo-Germans” and Germans.¹⁵⁹ In the 1910s, the swastika had already made its appearance in the titles of German nationalist and antisemitic newspapers edited by the Saxon Heinrich Pudor: *Der eiserne Ring* (1915-1918), *Treu Deutsch* (1918), etc. However, in 1919, it was still little known to the general public in Germany and Austria.¹⁶⁰

That year, it began spreading as a symbol of German nationalism and antisemitism in both countries.¹⁶¹ In Hellerau near Dresden, a publishing house was rebaptised Hakenkreuz-Verlag [Swastika publisher] and started publishing a nationalist German calendar.¹⁶² In early 1920, Adolf Hitler mentioned the swastika among several “sacred

¹⁵⁴ See: *Garda de Fier. Ziar pentru alegeri al organizației care candidează cu numirea Gruparea Corneliu Z. Codreanu*, 20 mai 1931.

¹⁵⁵ Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 14, 365-366: electoral leaflets, 1931.

¹⁵⁶ I became aware of the play on words due to historian Grant T. Harward.

¹⁵⁷ See the titles of the newspapers *Garda Moldovei*, *Garda: Organul „Gârzei de Fier” Muscel*, *Garda Prahovei*, and *Garda de Fer: Organ oficial al Organizației Centrale din Basarabia*.

¹⁵⁸ See: “Un omagiu eroilor Moța și Marin,” *Porunca Vremii*, 12 March 1937; Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste* (München: self-published, 1981), 143; Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circular order No. 78/June 15, 1937; Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, CC al PCR Albume foto (no. unknown), folder AF 2815 (old reference), 96: Legionary album *Kampf und Sieg*.

¹⁵⁹ Bernard Mees, *The Science of the Swastika* (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2008), 59.

¹⁶⁰ E.g. “Allerlei Wissenswertes,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 28 July 1919, 15.

¹⁶¹ E.g. “Unterm Hakenkreuz,” *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 4 April 1920, 1; Karlheinz Weißmann, *Das Hakenkreuz: Symbol eines Jahrhunderts* (Steigra: Edition Antaios 2006), 90-91.

¹⁶² Justus H. Ulbricht, “Hellerau und Hakenkreuz: Völkische Kultur in einer deutschen Gartenstadt,” *Neues Archiv für sächsische Geschichte*, no. 89 (2018), 119.

signs of the Germanic people," of which one was to be rehabilitated.¹⁶³ The NSDAP chose the swastika, which was registered as the party emblem on September 9.¹⁶⁴

The left-wing and the Jewish press perceived Cuza's adoption of the swastika as a sign of his adherence to antisemitic pan-Germanism. In December 1922, the big left-leaning newspaper *Adevărul* wrote: "On the front pages of Mr A.C. Cuza's antisemitic publications, we find the famous 'Hackenkreuz' [sic], the cross with which the pan-Germans decorate themselves."¹⁶⁵ The same month, *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, the organ of the Jewish National Party in Bukovina and the Bukovinian Zionist organisation, both chaired by lawyer Mayer Ebner,¹⁶⁶ commented on a pamphlet of the National Christian Union:

According to §2 of this National Christian Union's by-law, its scope is 'to protect the Romanian people from being submerged everywhere by the Jews'. This does not impede Mr Cuza &co to use the swastika as a symbol of their fight, slavishly imitating the German spirit. The whole pamphlet breathes German spirit. Prof. A.C. Cuza's antisemitism is also a plagiarism of the antisemitic German literature. We repeat what we have said so often: The Romanian people is not antisemitic. Antisemitism is an import product, which is unfortunately not liable to customs. From France, one imports aromatic perfumes, from Germany – the opposite.¹⁶⁷

Ostjüdische Zeitung was rather benevolent, as Bukovinian Jews had experienced antisemitism from local Romanians and other ethnicities already before Bukovina's annexation to Romania in November 1918.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Rüdiger Sünner, *Schwarze Sonne. Entfesselung und Mißbrauch der Mythen in Nationalsozialismus und rechter Esoterik* (Freiburg, etc.: Herder/Spektrum, 1999), 118; 177.

¹⁶⁴ Hans-Günter Richardi, *Hitler und seine Hintermänner: Neue Fakten zur Frühgeschichte der NSDAP* (München: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1991), 284.

¹⁶⁵ "Antisemitismul internațional," *Adevărul*, 25 December 1922, 1.

¹⁶⁶ Elias Weinstein, "Juden im Pressewesen der Bukowina," in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina I*, ed. Hugo Gold (Tel-Aviv: Olamenu, 1958), 128.

¹⁶⁷ "'Uniunea națională creștină' (National-christliche Vereinigung): Antisemitische Hochflut," *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 29 December 1922, 1; similar: Mayer Ebner: "Zur Verständigung zwischen Rumänen und Juden," *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 28 May 1923, 2.

¹⁶⁸ Already before the war, antisemitism had existed in Bukovina, despite a working cohabitation between the Jews and the other ethnicities. It was used in the 1900s and the early 1910s by Ukrainians, Germans, and Romanians to gain political capital. During the war, Bukovinian Jews were exposed to ransom demands, pogroms, expulsions, and deportations by the Russian armed forces that occupied Czernowitz three times. The degree of involvement of the local population in these actions is unknown. A number of residents

However, *Adevărul* and *Ostjüdische Zeitung* were most probably right: in all likelihood, Cuza's use of the swastika did originate from his ties to German nationalists and antisemites.

Most probably, Cuza got into touch with German nationalists and antisemites via *Der Hammer* [The Hammer], an antisemitic paper founded in 1902 by Theodor Fritsch in Leipzig. In connection with the paper and its founder, different antisemitic organisations had emerged: local Hammer-Gemeinden [Hammer Communities] in 1905; the Deutsche Erneuerungs-Gemeinde [German Renewal Community] in 1908; the Deutscher Hammerbund [German Hammer Union], a Wotan lodge, and a Grand Lodge in 1911, which lodges became the secret Germanen Orden [Germanic Order] in 1912. Both the Hammerbund and the Germanen Orden proved little successful, numbering only a few hundred members in 1912-1913.¹⁶⁹

In September 1911, Cuza "had the luck to discover the 'Hammer'" and, on October 18, 1911, he sent a letter to Fritsch, which was printed in the paper. Cuza mentioned that, as a professor, he saw it as his "professional duty" to draw the students' attention to the Jewish "threat". He was convinced "that we have to stand united against the Jewish threat and that a union has to be established between the antisemites of all countries".¹⁷⁰

helped the Jews. For instance, the firefighters in Czernowitz hid the cult objects of the Jewish community. At the time when Austria definitively lost control of Bukovina and the imperial-royal governor of the Crownland handed over the power to the representatives of the Romanian and the Ukrainian nations on November 6, 1918, Jews were the victims of armed gangs attacks: "Unter eigener Flagge," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 June 1905, 1-2; "Der Forschmäusekrieg," *ibidem*, 14 January 1906, 1; "Antisemitische Lizitation," *ibidem*, 17 May 1908, 1; "Taktik," *ibidem*, 4 June 1908, 1; "Das Finale," *ibidem*, 5 May 1911, 1; Andrei Corbea-Hoişie, "'Wie die Juden Gewalt schreien': Aurel Onciul und die antisemitische Wende in der Bukowiner Öffentlichkeit nach 1907," *East Central Europe*, no. 39 (2012): 13-60; Державний Архів Чернівецької області, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1294, 2: the first cantor of the Jewish community to the board of the latter, 1918; Володимир Заполовський, *Буковина в останній війні австро-угорщини 1914-1918* (Чернівці: Золоті литаври, 2003), 47-48; 156-157; Peter Holquist, "The Role of Personality in the First (1914-1915) Russian Occupation of Galicia and Bukovina," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, etc. (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 52-73; Державний Архів Чернівецької області, фонд 325, опис 1, справ 1266, 1: the board of the Jewish community, circular order, June 19, 1918; "Ein offenes Wort," *Gemeinsame Kriegs-Ausgabe*, 14 November 1918.

¹⁶⁹ Reginald H. Phelps, "'Before Hitler came': Thule Society and Germanen Orden," *The Journal of Modern History*, no. 3 (September 1963): 247-250; Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and their Influence on Nazi Ideology* (London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2004), 125-129.

¹⁷⁰ A.C. Cuza, "Die Judennot in Rumänien," *Hammer*, 15 December 1911, 663.

On December 9, 1911, Cuza was contacted by Heinrich Kraeger (1870-1945), a professor at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf,¹⁷¹ who had possibly been involved in the creation of the antisemitic lodges¹⁷² and who participated in the meeting of May 1912 during which the Hammerbund and the Germanen Orden were officialised.¹⁷³ Writing on *Hammer* letter paper, Kraeger told Cuza that he had read his contribution “with the greatest interest”. He sent Cuza a pamphlet, asking for his opinion, and hoped that they could start a correspondence. He asked: “Are there already in your country *secret organisations of men of pure race?*”¹⁷⁴

Cuza responded immediately. On December 21, 1911, Kraeger already thanked him for his answer. Apparently, Cuza had largely approved of the pamphlet Kraeger had sent him. The latter wrote:

We thus are completely of one opinion, I believe, and I gladly seize the hand which you extend me for a holy war. A white International is needed, a white death which cleans up this rabble.¹⁷⁵

Kraeger also sent Cuza the by-law and programme of the antisemitic Deutsch-Völkischer Schriftstellerverband [Völkisch-German Authors' Association] (established in October 1910¹⁷⁶), “in which only authors and sponsors of non-Jewish blood gather for national understanding and work”. He mentioned that he acted on behalf of somebody else (“im Auftrage”), possibly the founder of the Association, Philipp Stauff. He suggested that Cuza join as a corresponding member and inquired about other candidates. He specified that the member list was not public and asked that Cuza treat the by-law and the programme confidentially and return them if he did not want to join. Thus, Kraeger made clear that the Association was a secret organisation. He proposed

¹⁷¹ Christoph auf der Horst, “Kraeger, Alexander August Heinrich,” in *Internationales Germanistenlexikon 1800-1950: Band 2*, ed. Christoph König (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 997-999.

¹⁷² According to historian Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, “in spring 1910, Philipp Stauff, a prominent völkisch journalist, mentioned in his correspondence [with Kraeger] the idea of an anti-Semitic lodge with the names of members kept secret to prevent enemy penetration”: Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots*, 127.

¹⁷³ Phelps, “Before Hitler came,” 248 footnote 14.

¹⁷⁴ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(1)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 9 December 1911 (emphasis in original).

¹⁷⁵ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(3)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 December 1911.

¹⁷⁶ See: Gregor Hufenreuter, *Philipp Stauff: Ideologe, Agitator und Organisator im völkischen Netzwerk des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs: Zur Geschichte des Deutschvölkischen Schriftstellerverbandes, des Germanen-Ordens und der Guido-von-List-Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt/Main, etc.: Peter Lang, 2011).

that Cuza create a similar group in Romania, as a precursor of a “non-Jewish union,” adding that this group would need to remain secret.¹⁷⁷ Visibly, Kraeger (or Stauff) included Cuza in his grand design of an antisemitic International after Cuza had showed interest in such an idea. At the same time, Kraeger followed a more immediate aim, as he expected Cuza to inform them whether Romanian authors whose texts were played in Germany were Romanian or Jewish.¹⁷⁸ Perhaps Kraeger was already thinking of a publication stigmatising Jewish authors, as his *Semi-Kürschner* (1913) would be.¹⁷⁹

The correspondence between Kraeger and Cuza most probably continued into the year 1913,¹⁸⁰ but ceased during the war. The next preserved letter of Kraeger on Cuza’s end dated from October 15, 1920. It was a response to a letter which Cuza had sent on September 16 and which included a message to racial hygienist Ludwig Plate.¹⁸¹

During the war, Kraeger had served as a volunteer and had been wounded. In 1917-1918, he had had “problems with the French occupation troops at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf”.¹⁸² During the winter 1918/1919, he had co-founded the Munich organisation of the German Socialist Party (Deutsch-Sozialistische Partei, DSP). Officially established in April 1919, this party would exist in parallel to the German Workers’ Party (Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei, DAP, later NSDAP).¹⁸³ Kraeger would join the NSDAP in 1922.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(3)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 21 December 1911.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷⁹ *Semi-Kürschner oder Literarisches Lexikon der Schriftsteller, Dichter, Bankiers, Geldleute, Ärzte, Schauspieler, Künstler, Musiker, Offiziere, Rechtsanwälte, Revolutionäre, Frauenrechtlerinnen, Sozialdemokraten usw. jüdischer Rasse und Versippung, die von 1813-1913 in Deutschland tätig oder bekannt waren*, ed. Philipp Stauff (Berlin: self-published, 1913). The earliest evidence of the idea to publish such an encyclopedia is a letter of Kraeger to Stauff, dated July 26, 1912: Gregor Hufenreuter, “... ein großes Verzeichnis mit eingestauten Verbrechern’: Zur Entstehung und Geschichte der antisemitischen Lexika *Semi-Kürschner* (1913) und *Sigilla Veri* (1929-1931),” *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, no. 15 (2006): 48 footnote 27.

¹⁸⁰ In a short note of July 1932, Kraeger reminded Cuza of their correspondence in 1913: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(unnumbered)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 12 July 1932.

¹⁸¹ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(4)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 15 October 1920.

¹⁸² Auf der Horst, “Kraeger,” 997.

¹⁸³ Detlev Rose, *Die Thule-Gesellschaft: Legende – Mythos – Wirklichkeit* (Tübingen: Grabert, 1994), 99.

¹⁸⁴ Wolfgang Höppner, “Kontinuität und Diskontinuität in der Berliner Germanistik,” in *Die Berliner Universität in der NS-Zeit: Band II: Fachbereiche und Fakultäten*, ed. Rüdiger von Bruch (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2005), 262.

Kraeger's letter to Cuza shows that the war had confirmed his antisemitic beliefs. After suggesting that Cuza participate in an "international Aryan meeting" in Hungary, Kraeger wrote that the Jews had pushed Germany into the war and the revolution, "but we must and we will rebel". He mentioned the "huge" production of antisemitic literature and promised to send some books. In return, he asked Cuza to write a pamphlet about the Jews in Romania for a new series, probably "Die Judenfrage im Ausland" [The Jewish Question Abroad], whose first volume *Die Judenfrage in England* [The Jewish Question in England] had been published that same year by the Deutschvölkische Verlagsanstalt [Völkisch-German Publishing Institute] in Hamburg. Kraeger also inquired about Romanian sponsors for a new edition of *Semi-Kürschner*. He finished his letter "with an Aryan salute" and affixed a golden swastika sticker.¹⁸⁵

The first edition of *Semi-Kürschner* bore the swastika. The newsletter of the Germanen Orden, *Allgemeine Ordens-Nachrichten* [General News of the Order], published from 1916, used a swastika combined with a thin four-pointed star, forming a design resembling a four-blade fan.¹⁸⁶ The Orden's paper, *Runen*, printed from 1918, did the same while displaying a simple square swastika in a circle in its opening article.¹⁸⁷ For Kraeger, the use of the swastika was therefore nothing new. Cuza might also have seen it on these or similar publications. However, this particular sticker might have drawn his attention. Indeed, Cuza was observant of such details. When his friend Flodoard von Biedermann sent him an envelope with a paper seal, he started asking where Biedermann had got it from.¹⁸⁸ Cuza's newspaper *Unirea* had not used the swastika until its shutdown in July 1920. It is therefore quite possible that Kraeger's golden swastika sticker gave Cuza the idea to adopt the swastika for his new paper *Apărarea Națională* and his new political movement.

In regards to the NSDAP as source of Cuza's use of the swastika, his followers would later claim that "Hitler had not even been born when Mr A.C. Cuza wore this sign and used it for propaganda".¹⁸⁹ This claim was absurd, as Hitler's birth in 1889 predated even the establishment of

¹⁸⁵ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 20(4)/DLVI: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 15 October 1920. One other letter of Kraeger is preserved. Sent from Dordrecht, Netherlands, in June 1921, it was an invitation to an antisemitic meeting in München in August: S 64/DLXIV: Heinrich Kraeger to Alexandru C. Cuza, 11 June 1921.

¹⁸⁶ Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots*, 129.

¹⁸⁷ "Zur Einführung," *Runen*, 21 January 1918, 1.

¹⁸⁸ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 37 (21)/DXLIV: envelop with paper seal; S 37 (22)/DXLIV: Flodoard von Biedermann to Alexandru C. Cuza, 3 August 1934.

¹⁸⁹ Sebastian Bornemisa, *Catechism național-creștin* (Cluj: Astra, 1936), 14.

the League against Alcoholism. It was obviously an attempt to present Cuza as the primordial antisemite. However, there is a hint that the swastika did not stem directly from the NSDAP. In a kind of early memoirs, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu claimed that he learned about Hitler in October 1922, when he went to a “worker who produced ‘swastikas’” in Berlin.¹⁹⁰ This would imply that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu was aware of the swastika as an antisemitic symbol before he knew of the NSDAP and that his milieu had not made the connection between the swastika and the NSDAP until then.

In 1920, Hitler had interpreted the swastika as a symbol of the sun.¹⁹¹ In the second part of *Mein Kampf* (1926), he declared that it embodied “the mission of the battle for the victory of the Aryans and, at the same time, the victory of the idea of constructive work, which has been and will be forever antisemitic”.¹⁹² By that time, the idea that the swastika was the sign of the Aryans had already spread in Germany, as shown for instance by Pudor’s *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes* [The Meaning of the Swastika], published in 1922 by the above-mentioned Hakenkreuz-Verlag.¹⁹³

In June 1922, Cuza explained the swastika to the readers of *Apărarea Națională*, some of whom were apparently not familiar with it. He called it “sign of salvation” (“semnul mântuirii”), mentioned its Sanskrit name, and referred to its unfathomable past. Passing quickly from the “Brahmanic Indians” to the “young Buddhists,” he linked it to the “solar cult,” and called it the “distinctive sign of the Aryan race”.¹⁹⁴

Kraeger’s letter of October 15, 1920, had made the connection between the swastika and the idea of an Aryan race. It is therefore likely that Cuza adopted it via Kraeger and/or his group. However, he probably also relied on Alfred Cort Haddon’s pages on the “fylfot” – the swastika – published in 1895,¹⁹⁵ of which a summary (in his wife’s

¹⁹⁰ Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, 70; see: Clark, “Both Form and Substance,” 50. In February 1923, a swastika producer from Berlin sent Cuza a sample of swastikas, as well as a price list. However, he must have been a different person from the one whom Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu had met, as he mentioned that he had “already read” about the latter: Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 69/DLXIV: A. Strumpf, Berlin, Salzwedeler Strasse 3, to Alexandru C. Cuza, 7 February 1923.

¹⁹¹ Sünner, *Schwarze Sonne*, 118.

¹⁹² Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Frz. Eher Nachf., 1940), 557.

¹⁹³ Heinrich Pudor, *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes* (Hellerau: Hakenkreuz-Verlag, [1922]).

¹⁹⁴ A.C. Cuza, “卐,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 June 1922, 1.

¹⁹⁵ See: Alfred C. Haddon, *Evolution in Art: As Illustrated by the Life-Histories of Designs* (London: Walter Scott, 1895), 213-214; 275-299.

handwriting) subsists among his personal documents.¹⁹⁶ In his 1922 article, Cuza also quoted a 50-year old study by Émile Burnouf, *Science des religions* [Science of religions] (1872),¹⁹⁷ which he had had in his library since 1902:¹⁹⁸ “Quand Jésus eût été mis à mort par les Juifs, ce vieux symbole aryen lui fut aisément appliqué, et le swastika [...] devint la croix hastée des modernes chrétiens.”¹⁹⁹

In the same article, Cuza claimed – in accordance with Haddon – that everywhere where Aryans had lived, the swastika could be found. He further quoted Nicolae Densușianu,²⁰⁰ a dilettantish historian who had invented a “Pelasgian” people and empire and who had asserted that the swastika existed throughout Europe, Asia and Northern Africa where the “Pelasgian race” had settled. In particular, Densușianu talked about a “cult of the swastika” in Roman Dacia and its continued use by the Romanian people.²⁰¹ Cuza spun the yarn further. He declared that the swastika was the symbol of the Romanians’ Aryan race, of their “spiritualist religion,” and of their connection to their soil. As such, the swastika stood for their resolve to keep their race pure, their religion unaltered, and their land undivided. It stood against the Jews.²⁰²

Reacting to attacks by cabinet minister Gheorghe G. Mârzescu, Cuza produced a second interpretation in November 1923. During the consecration of the church of Ungheni on October 21, Mârzescu had contrasted the Orthodox cross with the swastika. Cuza summarised his first article on the subject and quoted the by-law of the League for National Christian Defence: “The sign of the L.A.N.C. is the Aryan cross ‘swastika’, 卐, the ancient sign of our existence, the sign of the autochthonousness of the Romanian race on its soil, whose ruler it wants to remain.” Cuza claimed that the swastika and the Christian cross were closely related and that the latter had evolved from the former²⁰³ – an idea

¹⁹⁶ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VIII, Mss. 11: Maria Cuza, “Despre Crucea gammadă,” n.d.

¹⁹⁷ Cuza, “卐,” 1.

¹⁹⁸ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, X, Mss. 74: catalogue of Alexandru C. Cuza’s library, 1902 (with later additions).

¹⁹⁹ Émile Burnouf, *Science des religions* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, 1872), 257. Cuza quoted the 4th edition of 1885 (p. 188). He did not translate the expression “croix hastée,” but only the word “croix”.

²⁰⁰ Cuza, “卐,” 1.

²⁰¹ Nicolae Densușianu, *Dacia preistorica* (București: Carol Göbl, 1913), 659-660.

²⁰² Cuza, “卐,” 2.

²⁰³ A.C. Cuza, “Ce este ‘Svastica’: Răspuns unei calomnii,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 November 1923, 1-6; for the context, see: “Sfințirea unei biserici la Ungheni,” *Universul*, 24 October 1923, 3.

which he had already expressed on August 30, 1922, in a letter to Fritz Fabritius, the Transylvanian Saxon *völkisch* leader.²⁰⁴ The weakness of the argument suggests that Christianity meant little to Cuza, despite the name of his organisation.

A pseudo-theological treaty from 1925, in which Cuza claimed that the “true meaning of [Jesus’] teaching [was] the fight against Judaism”²⁰⁵ in line with emerging German ideas²⁰⁶, featured a photograph of a swastika with a crucifix in its centre. The words “One country, one religion, one people, one king” were printed in the spaces between the branches. As stated in the legend, it had been created “in order to commemorate the heroic battles of the students for Romanian culture in the years 1922-1925”. The lower left branch showed a group of students led by Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, who bore a flag asking: “Whose is this Romania?” On the upper left branch, the Unknown Hero pierced the “devil of the gold” with a cross (a possible reference to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*,²⁰⁷ which *Apărarea Națională* promoted²⁰⁸). He clutched a roll stating: “Romania to the Romanians”. On the upper right branch, an angel held “the great book of life, the Gospel,” opened at Matthew 15:26 (“It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”). Finally, the lower right branch showed the royal couple of Romania as “witnesses of this faith”.²⁰⁹

A short commentary by Cuza contained some new elements: the swastika was “the distinguishing sign of the Aryan race, in particular the Thracian branch, from which we descend, via the Dacians”. Cuza now mentioned a German book, Ludwig Wilser, *Das Hakenkreuz nach Ursprung, Vorkommen und Bedeutung* [The Origin, Presence, and Meaning

²⁰⁴ In the letter, Cuza called the swastika the “Aryan sign of salvation and altogether the first, ancient form of our Christian cross”: *Serviciul județean Sibiu al Arhivelor naționale, Comunitatea germanilor din România* (no. 348), A I, 4, 27: Alexandru C. Cuza to Fritz Fabritius, 30 August 1922.

²⁰⁵ A.C. Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus: Iudaismul și teologia creștină* (Iași: Editura „Ligii Apărării Naționale Creștine,” 1925), 17.

²⁰⁶ Pudor, *Der Sinn des Hakenkreuzes*, 23-25; Dirk Schuster, *Die Lehre vom „arischen” Christentum: Das wissenschaftliche Selbstverständnis im Eisenacher „Entjudungsinstitut”* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2017), 49-51.

²⁰⁷ Gold is a recurring theme in the *Protocols*, as is the serpent. See: Cesare G. De Michelis, *Il manoscritto inesistente: I „Protocolli dei savi di Sion”* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1998), 91-98.

²⁰⁸ “Marea descoperire,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 October 1923, 15-16; Verax, “Chestia protocoalelor,” *Apărarea Națională*, 15 December 1923, 8-11; “A apărut: Protocoalele Înțelepților Sionului,” *ibidem*, 19.

²⁰⁹ Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 34.

of the Swastika] (1922)²¹⁰ – which however claimed the swastika for the German world.²¹¹ Visibly obsessed with the sign, Cuza had discovered it “on monuments, national embroideries, Easter eggs, Church ornaments,” the pall of Maria of Mangup in Putna, and the church of the Three Hierarchs in Iași.²¹² He emphasised that the swastika was the sign of the Romanian ethnicity (“neam”) and the cross of its and the other Christians’ faith. He concluded: “Only together, the ‘swastika’ and the cross show our complete being – body and soul – [of] Aryans and Christians.”²¹³

Also published in 1925, a League pamphlet repeated these arguments. It associated a Romanian religious holiday, Foca, with the swastika, interpreting the festivity as the Aryan Vedic fire ritual preserved by the Romanian people “as a prodigious proof of its conservative spirit”. In fact, “Foca” derived from the Greek name Phocas and was unrelated to the Romanian word “foc” for “fire”. It did not matter to the author, probably Cuza himself, that the swastika played no role in the festivity.²¹⁴

The pamphlet also launched a superstition. It warned: “Beware the inverted sign 卍, which is the sign of defeat and doom.”²¹⁵

While it would seem that Cuza copied the swastika from the German nationalists in 1922, his first interpretation in 1922 relied on non-German literature. Maybe he did it by choice, to avoid to be connected to the country that had occupied Romania during the war – in which case he failed, as shown by the newspapers quoted above. Maybe he lacked German literature on the topic. Cuza had Burnouf’s study in his library since 1902, but he might have got hold of German interpretations of the swastika like Wilser’s book only after 1922. Cuza’s transnational syncretism shows that he did not care about his sources’ national(ist) contexts. Any reference was good enough to cobble together a meaning for his movement’s symbol. As he did it openly, it seems that his Romanian nationalist readers accepted any foreign content – as long as it

²¹⁰ Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 33.

²¹¹ Ludwig Wilser, *Das Hakenkreuz nach Ursprung, Vorkommen und Bedeutung* (Leipzig: Hammer-Verlag, Theod. Fritsch, 1922), 13.

²¹² Cuza’s disciple Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu also became obsessed with the swastika, writing to Cuza in December 1925 about the swastikas he had discovered in Grenoble: *Consiliul Național pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securității, fond Penal, folder P 011784, vol. 18, 196-197: Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu to Alexandru C. Cuza, Grenoble, 20 December 1925; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 24/DXLVIII: Alexandru C. Cuza to Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, 11 January 1926; see: Schmitt: *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, 96.*

²¹³ Cuza, *Învățătura lui Isus*, 34.

²¹⁴ *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 3-5.

²¹⁵ *Călăuza bunilor Români*, 5.

was antisemitic. However, in a country with a high illiteracy rate, many of his followers were probably unaware of his interpretations.

In the end, the antisemitic function of the swastika was all that mattered to Cuza. He made no effort to give the symbol a coherent racial meaning, mixing Aryans, "Pelasgians," Dacians, and Thracians. This mishmash reflected "the fortuitous nature of Cuza's racist arguments"²¹⁶ in general.

Cuza did not bother either to establish a consistent connection between the swastika and Christianity, first mentioning a historical link between the swastika and the cross and later declaring that these were two different signs. The visual combination of the swastika and the crucifix - later also adopted by the German Christians - allowed for the reinterpretation of the latter as a purely antisemitic symbol in the sense of Cuza's exegesis of the Gospel. However, it did not make the swastika more Christian. On the contrary, Cuza's attempts to Christianise the swastika resulted in the desacralisation of the cross. Similarly, religious formulas like "the blessing of the 'Swastika' be with you, so that we can achieve its ideals"²¹⁷ profaned the Christian faith.

Cuza's attempts to invest the swastika with a Christian meaning were doubtless opportunistic. While his performative Christianity owned him criticisms from German fellow antisemites,²¹⁸ it resonated with a population whose deep religiosity focused first and foremost on the form, and less on the content.²¹⁹ Regardless of his sacrileges, Cuza was popular even among priests, both Orthodox and Catholic,²²⁰ and it was purportedly a "Christian priest" who denounced the "persecution of the

²¹⁶ Butaru, "A.C. Cuza, était-il un raciste?," 45.

²¹⁷ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 98 (14)/DXLIX: Alexandru C. Cuza to "Zeze," 17 August 1925.

²¹⁸ Taking Cuza's profession of faith at face value, Pudor, from whom Cuza was ordering antisemitic publications, reprimanded him in October 1923: "However, I cannot approve that you want to be simultaneously völkisch and Christian. These are mutually exclusive and incompatible. [...] Christianity is not völkisch-Romanian, but international, and Paul and most of the others were Jews.": Biblioteca Academiei Române, Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 18 (1)/DLXII: Heinrich Pudor to Alexandru C. Cuza, 18 October 1923.

²¹⁹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, HHStA PA XVIII 13, 100-103: the Austro-Hungarian minister plenipotentiary, report n°45/pol, 20 February 1879; Roland Clark, *Sectarianism and Renewal in 1920s Romania: The Limits of Orthodoxy and Nation-Building* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 22.

²²⁰ Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 188; Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, acte 45: "A Bukovinian priest," "Antisemitismul poporului Sârbo-croat"; acte 46, 1-2: "A Bukovinian priest," "Într'o unică zi fața României cu desăvârșire schimbată"; Fondul A.C. Cuza, S 16 (5)/DLVII: Iosif Lipski SJ to Alexandru C. Cuza, 28 December 1924; etc.

Aryan cross in Huși” after the incident involving Ion Zelea-Codreanu’s daughter Iridenta.²²¹

Despite – or maybe because of – its vague meaning, the swastika soon became an identity marker of the Romanian antisemites. *Ostjüdische Zeitung* used the word “Hakenkreuz” [swastika] as a metonymy for the League for National Christian Defence and antisemitism in general. It even coined the term “Hakenkreuzler” [swastikards] to refer to the League’s members and other antisemites. The newspaper thus acknowledged the swastika’s transnational nature.

Cuza’s followers used the swastika as a trigger for antisemitic violence. Already in May 1923, *Ostjüdische Zeitung* had emphasised that certain flags bore the letters “M.J.” for “Moartea Jidanilor” [death to the kikes] beside the swastika.²²² In July 1925, the newspaper drew attention to a pamphlet by the League for National Christian Defence – published in 1924 by student leader Ion Sava – whose cover showed a Jew hanging from a swastika and an ocean of blood with a severed Jewish head.²²³ Jewish politician Wilhelm Filderman also sent a copy of the booklet to the Joint Foreign Committee of the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association, which forwarded it in September 1925 to the director of the Administrative Commissions and Minorities Questions of the League of Nations.²²⁴

In the end, antisemitic murder under the sign of the swastika materialised. In October 1923, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, Ion Moța, and other young men already planned to assassinate ministers and Jewish bankers. However, a sympathetic jury found them innocent – even after Moța had shot a student during the proceedings for having betrayed them.²²⁵ In October 1924, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu killed the head of police of Iași in an act of revenge – and was again acquitted by a jury.²²⁶ For the verdict, the jurors wore the swastika on their lapels.²²⁷

²²¹ Biblioteca Academiei Române, Arhiva A.C. Cuza, VII, Mss. 47: “a Christian priest,” “Crucea arică persecutată la Huși,” [1922].

²²² “Kultusgemeinde und Hakenkreuz,” *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 20 May 1923, 6.

²²³ Ion Sava, *Pericolul Satanei* ([București: 1924]).

²²⁴ United Nations Archives at Geneva, League of Nations Archives, R1699/41/46539/45705: Lucien Wolf to Erik Colban, 17 September 1925; Wilhelm Filderman, *Le mouvement antisémite en Roumanie*, September 1925.

²²⁵ Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 42-48.

²²⁶ Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 49-54.

²²⁷ Leontin Iliescu and N. Ciocârdia, “Procesul Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Achitarea,” *Universul*, 28 May 1925, 5.

Eventually, in November 1926, Nicolae Totu, a Romanian pupil from Iași who was connected to the League for National Christian Defence, murdered David Falik, a Jewish pupil in Cernăuți, who was accused of having assaulted a Romanian teacher.²²⁸ Totu's subsequent trial and acquittal in Câmpulung Moldovenesc was attended not only by Cuza (who defended Totu), Ion Zelea-Codreanu, and other League members, but also by over 100 students from Iași who wore tricolour rosettes and swastikas. In the same town, the newspaper of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's Association of Christian Students *Svastica Iașilor* [The Swastika of Iași] (established in December 1926) was handed out on the streets.²²⁹ Five years after its adoption, the foreign swastika had become fully functional as an antisemitic symbol in the Romanian context.

The case of Cuza's adoption of the swastika not only confirms that ideological consistency is of minor importance to antisemitism and that antisemitism is primarily symbol-based, as Kieval pointed out. It also shows that the nationalist discourse which usually underpinned antisemitism did not stop antisemites from transnational borrowing for local purposes. Their professed autochthonism did not preclude transnational plagiarisms. The idea of an antisemitic International did not prevent antisemites from appropriating foreign symbols exclusively for their ethnic community. Cuza's repeated references to the Aryan race implied supranational connections. However, it was his association of the swastika with the Romanian ethnicity, visually represented in the League's banner, that finally became entrenched among his followers. Thus the swastika existed simultaneously as a German and as a Romanian ethnic symbol, performing the same antisemitic function.

²²⁸ See: Lya Benjamin, "Paradigma Falik-Totu sau cum s-a transformat un fapt cotidian într-un caz de asasinat politic," *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, vol. II, (1997): 187-200; Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*, 79-87; Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*, 58-59.

²²⁹ "Nicolae Totu în fața Curții cu Jurați din Câmpulung (Bucovina)," *Adevărul*, 22 February 1927, 3.

The Future of Frozen Conflicts: Understanding the Evolution of Russia's Strategy in the Near Abroad and What is Next

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Abstract: Frozen conflicts and the near abroad are concepts that have defined Russia's security policy since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Firstly, in this paper, we will try to explain how the Kremlin sees its near abroad and how it defines it as part of its sphere of influence. Consequently, it describes its interventions and its inevitable clash with the West. Secondly, we want to frame frozen conflicts in two periods with defining characteristics. Each was marked by who held power in the Kremlin and Russia's economic and military situation at the time. In the end, we want to reflect on the impact of the war in Ukraine on the future of these two concepts. Obviously, the outcome will obviously influence Moscow's ability to project power in the near future and its use of frozen conflicts to achieve this.

Keywords: *frozen conflicts, near abroad, security policy, Ukraine, Russia*

Rezumat: Conflictele înghețate și străinătatea apropiată sunt două concepte care au definit politica de securitate a Rusiei după dizolvarea Uniunii Sovietice. În primul rând, vom încerca să explicăm cum percepe Kremlinul străinătatea apropiată și cum o definește ca parte din sfera sa de influență. Aceasta a ajuns să descrie intervențiile aici și inevitabila sa ciocnire cu Occidentul. În al doilea rând, dorim să încadrăm conflictele înghețate în două perioade cu caracteristici specifice. Fiecare a fost marcată de cine a deținut putere la Kremlin, precum și de situația economică și militară a Rusiei la momentul respective. La final dorim să reflectăm impactul războiului din Ucraina asupra celor două concept analizate. Este evident că rezultatul va influența abilitatea Moscovei de a-și proiecta puterea în străinătatea apropiată, precum și a folosirii conflictelor înghețate în acest scop.

Cuvinte cheie: *conflicte înghețate, străinătate apropiată, politică de securitate, Ucraina, Rusia*

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was stripped of a significant portion of its empire. Its status of great power was much reduced. The 1990s were a decade of political humiliation, military impotence, and economic struggles. However, given its sheer size, massive natural resources and long history, Russia still wanted to play an essential role in international relations.

In this context, a phenomenon or strategy emerged: *frozen conflicts*. The concept is not new or specific to the former Soviet space. However, it took a new shape and meaning here and became an instrument through which a weakened Russia could still project power in its former empire. In this paper, we will analyze frozen conflicts as a phenomenon evolving over two periods and how the war in Ukraine is changing the current interpretation.

The first part will define these two crucial concepts: near abroad and frozen conflicts. They are essential for a proper grasp of Russia's security policy after the Cold War. Secondly, we will present the two periods of frozen conflicts and their defining characteristics through exemplification. Each was the result of both who was president and Russia's situation at the time. Lastly, we will apply this interpretation model to the Ukrainian situation, and the ongoing war changed how frozen conflicts might evolve in the future.

I. Defining the Near Abroad

Russia is the largest country in the world. It is a fact built on a long history of conquering territories and reflects its continuous expansion, often justified through security reasons. Russia had few natural borders in the pre-modern period when it appeared on the world's political map. As a result, putting more land mass around its core allowed for depth defense. It was especially true concerning Europe, where the main threat lies. The strategy proved efficient during Napoleon's and Nazi Germany's invasions. Hence, at the core of Russian security thinking, the idea of buffer borders has always existed¹. What changes in time is the way it is framed by official discourse.

The Russian perspective can be best understood through the lens of offensive realism. For these specialists, the world is full of potential enemies, and the essence of their security policy is ensuring survival. International institutions are there for debates, but the equation focuses

¹ Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics*, London, Elliott & Thompson, 2019, p.7-8.

on the capabilities and preparedness of individual states². Thus, a buffer border allows them to keep enemies at a safe distance. We can also tie this into an issue of imperial prestige, an expression of might. In simple terms, great power is defined by the scope of its sphere of influence³. Putin's speeches reflect that he sees international relations as a Darwinian game in which only the strong survive⁴.

In the past decade, the idea of a sphere of influence has taken the shape of the idea of the near abroad. Influence in this space could be argued to be necessary to protect kin and national interest. It fits into revisionist thinking, and Putin's regime uses such arguments to justify many foreign policy actions. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a slew of newly independent countries appeared, fragmenting and complicating this space with new actors. It was an apparent blow to political prestige, but it also meant many Russians became minorities in foreign countries, and not all were friendly. It was a significant change of status; they were no longer the leading majority⁵.

The Near Abroad comprises the newly independent states that resulted from Soviet dissolution. We can group them based on their geographic position and the role this plays. Firstly, we have the Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Before 1989, around 1.7 million Russians lived here, but the number has since declined to 1 million. All three countries are part of the EU and NATO and are highly suspicious of their much larger neighbor. The Kremlin often used them as pressure points against the West⁶.

Secondly, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova are often seen as part of Greater Novorossiia⁷. Lukashenko is one of Europe's last dictators, and his survival depends on Putin's economic and military support. It has brought Belarus back into the fold⁸. Ukraine is a more difficult target, and its relationship with Russia has been one of love and hate. Moscow never

² John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York – London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001.

³ John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2014.

⁴ Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad: Putin, the West, and the Contest Over Ukraine and the Caucasus* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017, p.89.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 216.

⁶ <https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/baltic-states-targets-and-ivers-role-region-russian-strategy-0>, accessed at 25 of June 2022.

⁷ <https://www.fpri.org/article/2014/05/putins-greater-novorossiia-the-dismemberment-of-ukraine/>, accessed at 25 of June 2022

⁸ Piper Coes, "Examining Belarus' Growing Reliance on Russia", *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, October 8, 2021, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2021/10/examining-belarus-growing-reliance-on-russia/>, accessed on June 27 2022.

grew to fully accept an independent Ukraine and always attempted to influence its internal politics. We will further explore this later. Moldova was caught in between from the beginning, given its mixed population. Transnistria was one of the first examples of frozen conflicts, influencing much of internal politics over the past decades.

Another group of states is the 'five Stans': Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. These are Russia's gates towards Central Asia and the old Silk Road. All are dictatorships, and their relationship with Moscow depends on the economic situation. Kazakhstan is the richest, but its regime still relied on Russia to overcome the challenge of the 2022 Revolution⁹; the rest have an even greater economic dependency. The last on our list is the Caucasus, a region that was always difficult to control. There are three conflicts of interest here: the wars in Chechnya, Georgia (South Ossetia and Abkhazia), and Nagorno-Karabakh. The region plays the role of the gate to the Middle East, one of the places where Russian and Turkish interests might collide. It is also a key element to the total control of the Sea of Azov and the Caspian Sea. Another component is energy, given gas and oil deposits that have enriched Azerbaijan. Consequently, the Caucasus is regarded by Russia as essential to its national security¹⁰.

Developments in the past decades show that the near abroad is a disputed place. Gerard Toal identifies four main actors in this space after the dissolution of the Soviet Union: Russia, the new states, the West, and the separatists. Each would play a role concerning the other in a constantly shifting power game. Initially, Russia tried keeping a grip on its former empire by forming the Commonwealth of Independent States. However, the actors had different perspectives on how this new relationship should look. Ukraine and the Baltic states, in particular, were unwilling to give up any part of their newly gained independence¹¹. This would often lead to tense relations. Another issue was regarding former communist states in East-Central Europe. Most of them moved towards the prosperity of the European Union and the security of NATO integration.

Russia initially tolerated NATO enlargement behind the former Iron Curtain for two reasons. Firstly, there was hope for economic aid from the West. Secondly, its weakened state did not allow any real action or opposition. Antagonism grew further with NATO's involvement in

⁹ Yaroslav Trofimov, "Kazakhstan Unrest and Russia's Intervention Transform Ties With Moscow", in *The Wall Street Journal*, January 6, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/kazakhstan-unrest-and-russias-intervention-transform-ties-with-moscow-11641498408>, accessed on June 27, 2022.

¹⁰ R. Craig Nation, "Russia and the Caucasus", *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. XIV, No.2, Spring 2015, p.3-6.

¹¹ Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad...*, p.9, 65.

Yugoslavia against Serbia, a traditional ally of Russia¹². The failings of the 1990s would give rise to an ever-increasing nationalist discourse. The resurgence of the past decade came to fall on these arguments in the pursuit of aggressive revisionism.

The exercise of influence abroad came not only through military action. Vladimir Putin tried creating organizations that could act as alternatives to the West. The Collective Security Treaty Organization is supposed to be similar to NATO. However, Russia pretty much has commanded. Similarly, the Eurasian Union is the answer to the EU. It is an instrument to project hegemony in the post-Soviet space that subordinates economic interests¹³.

The near abroad is how Russia calls and defines its sphere of influence. It used to be part of its former empire. Thus, in its realist perspective, it has a historical right to exercise political power over it. Frozen conflicts, as we shall see, are one strategy through which it strives to achieve this, with varying degrees of success.

II. Frozen conflicts

II. 1. Main characteristics

Frozen conflicts describe wars without a clear political solution, and no diplomatic end has been reached¹⁴. The main phase of fighting is over, but there still are limited military clashes between the sides¹⁵. Since they remain committed to opposing objectives, the risk of escalation is still present. This usually occurs due to the international community's inability to impose the terms and conditions of a ceasefire.

In the Russian case, frozen conflicts take on a more complex meaning. They are a strategy or a means through which military presence and political influence can be maintained in the near abroad. In some cases, interventions under the guise of peacekeeping can give international legitimacy to the presence of troops. Some of the best examples are Transnistria, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. It can also take the shape of backing separatist groups, most obviously in Ukraine. In others, the Kremlin plays the role of supposed arbiter. It was the case in Nagorno-Karabakh, although it also offers the opportunity to pit the two

¹² Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia: From Civilized Divorce to Uncivil War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019, p.83.

¹³ Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.22; Luka Jukic, "How Russia Keeps Post-Soviet States in Its Orbit", *Palladium*, February 2019.

¹⁴ Kenneth Yalowitiz, Denis Corboj, William Courtney, "Hitting the Pause Button: The "Frozen Conflict" Dilemma in Ukraine", *The National Interest*, November 6, 2014.

¹⁵ Dan Dungaciu, Jakub M. Godzimirski, "Russia and frozen conflicts in the Black Sea Region", Norwegian Institute of International Affaris & New Strategy Center, 2020, p.4.

sides against each other. Whatever the context, the essential characteristic remains to block a diplomatic solution, thus maintaining a frozen conflict situation.

The Russian cases have several characteristics which make them distinct. Thomas D. Grant enumerates seven of them: 1. armed hostilities have taken place, parties which include a state and separatists in the state's territory; 2. a change in effective control of territory has resulted from the armed hostilities; 3. the state and the separatists are divided by lines of separation that have adequate stability; 4. adopted instruments have given the lines of separation some form of stability; 5. the separatists make a self-determination claim on which they base a putative state; 6. no state recognizes this; 7. a settlement process involving outside parties has been sporadic and inconclusive¹⁶.

Each of these can be used to describe the examples we will use to a certain extent. Another element that must be mentioned is that Russia can and has unfrozen some of these conflicts periodically or allowed for such a situation to occur. It is usually linked to the wish of sending a message to the West that this space is part of its sphere of influence. The level of escalation and intervention depends on the sides involved.

II.2 Periodization

We argue that frozen conflicts can be grouped into two main periods, each with distinctive traits. Alan Potockak and Miroslav Mares have identified two such generations as well. The first was during the late Soviet Union and the first half of Boris Yeltsin's presidency (1988-1994). The second one was during Vladimir Putin's and Dmitry Medvedev's presidencies, a period when "frozen conflicts became instruments of Russia's strategy in geopolitical confrontation." They link this to a form of historical revisionism¹⁷.

This interpretation is incomplete, as it leaves significant chronological gaps. We propose that the first period encompasses Boris Yeltsin's terms, and economic difficulties and military inability characterized the entire timeframe. Also, the First Chechen War took place during the second half of his first term, ending with the withdrawal of Russian troops. The Kremlin was incapable of decisive intervention, even if that was the intent. However, even if it could not win decisively,

¹⁶ Thomas D. Grant, "Frozen Conflicts and International Law", *Cornell International Law Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 3, 2017, p.390.

¹⁷ Alan Potocnak, Miroslav Mares, "Donbas Conflict: How Russia's Trojan Horse Failed and Forced Moscow to Alter Its Strategy", *Problems of Post-Communism*, May 16, 2022, DOI: 10.1080/10758216.2022.2066005, p.1.

the continuation of fighting could still serve Moscow's aim of projecting influence.

II. 3. The First Period

The situation in Transnistria is a showcase example of a frozen conflict. There the first tensions arose in the context of Soviet dissolution. Authorities in Moldova discussed the idea of independence. However, this region was ethnically diverse; the majority are Moldovans (a Romanian people), and Russians and Ukrainians represent a consistent minority. Most lived in Transnistria, the industrial heartland of the country. The new official language was going to be Romanian, the Cyrillic alphabet replaced with the Latin one, and the flag would bare a striking resemblance to that of Romania. Unsurprisingly, Russians were worried about their future status¹⁸.

In 1990, as a pre-emptive move, Transnistria proclaimed its independence while still part of the Soviet Union. This move was not recognized by either Mircea Snegur, president of Moldova, or Mikhail Gorbachev. Violence erupted in August 1991 when Moldova became independent, and Transnistrian forces launched attacks on police stations with help from Russian soldiers. This last part made it impossible for the newly established Moldovan Army to make any progress, but it did limit the escalation of violence. By July 1991, a ceasefire was signed. However, Transnistria refused to accept it as it failed to solve their problems. A security zone was established under Russian control¹⁹.

The following decades saw no progress in negotiations. The borders of Moldova remain disputed, keeping it unable to join any Western organization. It allows Russia to station troops in Transnistria (around 1500) under the guise of peacekeeping²⁰. There are few diplomatic solutions given the geographic position of the enclave between Moldova and a hostile Ukraine. Nevertheless, this also makes the separatists more dependent on Russian support.

Nagorno-Karabakh is another classic example of a frozen conflict with limited direct involvement from Moscow. However, where it still plays a crucial role for both sides. In a sense, we could argue that it perfectly illustrates the extent of cynicism in decision-making in the Kremlin. Also, it shows the dependency of former Soviet republics.

¹⁸ Robert H. Donaldson, Joseph L. Noguee, Vidya Nadkarni, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, Fifth Edition, New York - London, Routledge, 2015, p.164.

¹⁹ Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.159-164.

²⁰ Benjamin Potter, "Unrecognized Republic, Recognizable Consequences: Russian Troops in "Frozen" Transnistria", *Journal of Advanced Military Studies*, Special Issue on Strategic Culture, p. 169-170.

The province's the majority of the population is Armenian but legally is part of Azerbaijan, and the two countries fight for control over it. There is also an ethnic-religious component to the conflict, which is further made worse by the history of the Armenian Genocide. Furthermore, this aspect defines these states' relations with their larger neighbors²¹.

Rivalries between the groups were kept in check during the USSR. National identities were of little consequence since they were all primarily Soviets. Glasnost changed this and encouraged talks of independence²². During the late 1980s, there were repeated attempts from Nagorno-Karabakh Oblast to secede from Azerbaijan, but without any success. However, tensions and violence increased, and Soviet authorities withdrew. Pogroms started in Yerevan and Baku. It would lead to a full-scale war²³.

Russia underlined its responsibility and right to intervene²⁴. This was because they wanted to avert or discourage any involvement from Turkey or Iran. Finding a diplomatic solution was difficult due to the formation of paramilitary groups operating with increasing autonomy. It is a characteristic of Russia's strategy; they undermine state control over the territory and offer military and economic support to third-party actors. A ceasefire was signed on May 12, 1994²⁵. However, it failed to offer a solution, and Nagorno-Karabakh status remained disputed, allowing for renewed fighting. The most recent episode was in 2020, when Azerbaijan, benefiting from better equipment, forced a new peace accord on the Armenians²⁶.

Russia's relation to the region reflects its cynicism and willingness to manipulate both sides. On the one hand, it presents itself as the protector of Armenia, a position based on their shared Christian religion. In 2010 they signed a military accord that stretches to 2044 and should guarantee military security²⁷. On the other hand, Moscow sells weapons to Azerbaijan and maintains excellent economic ties, given the wealth of oil and gas in the Caspian Sea²⁸.

²¹ Dominic Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals*, New Haven - London, Yale University Press, 2001.

²² Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.200-201.

²³ James J. Coyle, *Russia's Border Wars and Frozen Conflicts*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 213.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p.201.

²⁵ Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.202, 217, 224.

²⁶ Gubad Ibadoglu, "Why Azerbaijan Won", *Institute for War & Peace Reporting*, November 17, 2020, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/why-azerbaijan-won>, accessed on June 15, 2022.

²⁷ Denis Dyomkin, "Russia extends military presence in Armenia", *Reuters*, August 20, 2010, <https://www.reuters.com/article/armenia-russia-idUSLDE67J0DX20100820>, accessed on June 19, 2022.

²⁸ Zaur Shiriyev, "Azerbaijan's Relations with Russia Closer by Default?", *Chatham House: The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, March 2019.

Georgia illustrates the periodization we have proposed in this paper. The conflict and the relationship with Russia can be seen through the lenses of the two periods, each with its particular impact. During the 1990s, we see the birth of another frozen conflict that the Kremlin both failed to solve but also managed to use to destabilize its smaller neighbor. Later, in the 2000s, as Georgia moved towards the West, the conflict was reignited, allowing for a clear message to be sent regarding the near abroad.

On March 31, 1991, the majority of Georgians voted in favor of independence while also showing interest in reclaiming the breakaway territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The relationship with Russia was ambiguous at best, and president Edvard Shevardnadze was not very popular with the Kremlin, although he promised to make his country part of the CIS. The ongoing conflict in the separatist provinces escalated, leading to over 250,000 refugees. In 1993 Boris Yeltsin intervened, trying to impose a short-lived ceasefire. It was only in May 1994 that the conflict finally ended, as Russia promised to send peacekeeping troops and offer economic aid to Georgia²⁹.

While the fighting stopped, the following decades saw Georgia move closer to the United States of America. The Kremlin would often accuse that they were harboring Chechen terrorists. Vladimir Putin gave Russian passports to people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia as part of an assertion of growing power. In November 2003, the Rose Revolution in Georgia would bring Mikhail Saakashvili to power³⁰. His discourse was based on moving towards the West and nationalism. This would mark a break towards the second phase of the frozen conflict, which we will discuss later.

The wars in Chechnya represent both the point of maximum humiliation for Russia and also the birthplace of Putin's strategy. What sets it apart is that it was not a former Soviet republic but a breakaway province. It changed the nature of the military intervention and the importance of the stakes.

Chechen dreams of independence were not entirely new, but Stalin's policies had almost completely curbed them for half a century³¹. However, in the context of Soviet dissolution, after the election of Djokar Dudaev, they made a bid for independence. The regime quickly descended

²⁹ Donald Rayfield, *Edge of Empires: A History of Georgia*, London, Reaktion Books, 2012, p. 382, 384--386.

³⁰ Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.195; Donald Rayfield, *Edge of Empires...*, p. 390-394.

³¹ Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, New York - London, Routledge, 2010, p. 226.

into anarchy due to infighting among the clans, which endangered a critical oil line crossing the region, prompting Russia to take action³².

In December 1994, the Kremlin sent 40,000 soldiers to re-establish order. The international community's reaction was ambivalent. They recognized Moscow's right to intervene but also condemned the brutality of the military operation³³. However, the troops were wholly unprepared and underequipped for their opposition level. The Chechens used their knowledge of the terrain and guerilla tactics to foil the intervention. By 1996, the capital, Grozny, was still in the hands of the separatists, but the region was in ruins. The assassination of Dudaev allowed for the signing of an armistice which left Chechnya legally still part of Russia, but in actuality, the Kremlin did not control the territory³⁴.

The first war showcases Russia's inability for decisive action, as it failed to re-establish any semblance of control. The state of the army and its tactics were deplorable and inefficient. It also left a frozen conflict that could risk destabilizing the entire Caucasus. It led to the rise of terrorism, which would shock the world in Moscow and Beslan.

II.4. The Second Period

As previously mentioned, the second period is characterized by Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev's presidential terms. An economic resurgence allowed for military spending. Strategies employed now are more aggressive, as Russia can lay a stronger claim on its near abroad. This was illustrated during the Second Chechen War, the 2008 war in Georgia, and the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin is also better suited to cooperate with specific figures, as is Ramzan Kadyrov.

The main issue during this period is Russia's clash with the West, which it feels is encroaching on its sphere of influence. Its security does not lie in international institutions but in asserting its rights as a great power. Consequently, EU and NATO expansion and promotion of liberal and democratic values soon became threats to its security.

The signs of this paradigm shift were visible from the Second Chechen War. In September 1999, residential buildings in Moscow and other cities exploded. The attacks were pinned on Chechen terrorists, allowing a relatively unknown Putin to promise revenge publicly. His popularity was sky-rocketed to over 60%. However, in an incident in Ryazan, three FSB officers were caught placing bombs in the basement of

³² Martin Sixsmith, *Rusia: Un mileniu de istorie*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2016, p.253; Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.239; Adam Jones, *Genocide*, p.227.

³³ Robert H. Donaldson, *The Foreign Policy of Russia...*, p.240.

³⁴ Adam Jones, *Genocide*, p.229; Martin Sixsmith, *Rusia...*, p.524.

a building. It was a situation that raised questions regarding the previous attacks³⁵.

The strategy employed now was far more brutal, cynical, and decisive. Objectives were to erode the morale of the Chechens by the use of intimidation and even ethnic cleansing. Men were the primary victim of decapitating military opposition³⁶. Anna Politkovskaya gathered accounts of kidnappings, disappearances, burnt houses, massacred families, and rapes. The capital, Grozny, was leveled by shelling, as Russian forces avoided guerilla warfare this time³⁷.

In 2003, the Kremlin had a puppet leader, Akhmat Kadyrov, who was killed in 2004 by Islamists. He was replaced by his son, Ramzan, who still rules Chechnya in exchange for Russian funding³⁸. His regime can be authoritarian and conservative, turning towards Sharia law, and opponents are arrested, kidnapped, or killed³⁹. It represents an example of a closed, frozen conflict, as the Kremlin could not allow an unstable situation to threaten territorial integrity.

Georgia moved closer to the West, primarily through its relationship with the United States. It hoped it could join NATO, thus gaining protection against its larger neighbor. It was completed by military spending, which went as high as \$1 billion per year. President Saakashvili's discourse also entertained elements of nationalism while eyeing Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a dangerous mix⁴⁰.

During this period, Russia began re-asserting its claims on the near abroad, warning the West against further encroaching on it. The stance was encouraged by events such as the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, and the 2005 failed revolution in Uzbekistan. This evolution represented a possible threat to the regime in the Kremlin and it was even seen as a Western ploy⁴¹.

In the months leading up to the 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, Russia underlined its opposition to the integration of Georgia and Ukraine. France and Germany wanted to re-assure the Kremlin that the message was received. However, Washington was more idealistic. In fact, during

³⁵ Martin Sixsmith, *Rusia...*, p.553.

³⁶ Adam Jones, *Genocide*, p.230.

³⁷ Anna Politkovskaia, *Doar Adevărul* [Only Truth], Bucharest, Meteor Press, 2010, passim.

³⁸ Martin Sixsmith, *Rusia...*, p.539.

³⁹ Benjamin Bidder, *Generația Putin: Să înțelegem noua Rusie* [Stalin Generation: Let's Understand New Russia], Bucharest, Humanitas, 2015, passim.

⁴⁰ Donald Rayfield, *Edge of Empires...*, p.390-394.

⁴¹ Alexander Cooley, "Whose Rules, Whose Sphere? Russian Governance and Influence in Post-Soviet States", *Task Force White Paper, Carnegie Endowment For International Peace*, June 30, 2017.

this period, Putin started arguing that Ukraine was not a real country⁴². Medvedev's election as president might have downplayed some of these concerns. Optimists saw this as a sign of a functioning democracy and not for what it was, a mere swap.

In August 2008, the situation in the Caucasus deteriorated. A police officer was injured, and three Georgian soldiers were killed in an incident blamed on the separatists. This prompted an invasion of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, the Russians were already there as peacekeepers and once they came under fire gave the Kremlin reason to reply. The fighting was short as the Georgian Army was wholly unprepared. The intervention of Frances's president, Nicholas Sarkzoy, convinced Moscow to stop its advance. In the end, Russia recognized the two territories and established permanent military bases. Relations between the two belligerents no longer exist at a formal diplomatic level⁴³.

The War in Georgia underlined the Kremlin's willingness to use military means to protect its near abroad. It hinted at a new way of seeing frozen conflicts. Decisive action was taken against a foreign country labeled as an agent of the West, as an enemy. However, it was of lesser importance since it is relatively geographically isolated and more minor. It means Russia can afford to tolerate hostile politicians in Georgia, and there is no real danger of an attack on its territory.

II.5. The Ukraine Phase in Frozen Conflicts

Events in Ukraine brought frozen conflicts into a new phase of geopolitics. There are several reasons for this transformation. Firstly, Ukraine has the largest population of the former Soviet republics, with around 44 million⁴⁴. Its economy is also relevant, while smaller in comparison to that of Kazakhstan⁴⁵. The disputed region of Donbas is rich in coal, making it wealthy. Also, it is the site of multiple metallurgic plants. Access to the Sea of Azov means it can easily export these products to other places at relatively low prices.

Given its proximity to Russia and the history of Soviet investments, many people living here were more Moscow-oriented. It further worsened the situation after 2014. Another aspect that must be mentioned is that the Donbas was the home of Ukraine's oligarchs, including Rinat Akhmetov. They played an essential role in forming the Party of Regions, supporters

⁴² Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, pp.161-169.

⁴³ Donald Rayfield, *Edge of Empires...*, p.390-394.

⁴⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=UA>, accessed on July 1, 2022

⁴⁵ <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/kaz/partner/ukr>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

of Viktor Yanukovich. However, their interests were more personal and aimed to maintain autonomy above all else⁴⁶.

Secondly, it is a matter of geography; Ukraine is a buffer between Russia and Europe, more precisely, the European Union and NATO. The long border these two countries share further underlines this argument's role in the Kremlin security policy. Also, Crimea plays a critical strategic role, as it is the home of the Black Sea Fleet. Without it, Russia would face significant difficulties projecting its regional power and deter competitors, including NATO and Turkey⁴⁷. Ukraine occupies a special place in the revisionist discourse regarding the near abroad.

The third reason concerns the historical ties between the two countries. These arguments are essential to the construction of the Kremlin's propaganda. Vladimir Putin has argued that Ukraine is not a real country but an invention of the post-Cold War era. This occurred as early as 2007 at a conference in Munich during a discussion with US president George W. Bush⁴⁸. It was a drawing of a red line that Russia would not allow the West to cross.

With the advent of a new frozen conflict in Donbas, Vladimir Putin introduced another revisionist idea. On April 17, 2014, he mentioned Novorossiia. This describes the territory conquered by Russia in the 18th Century by the Ottoman Empire. It includes about a third of Ukraine's territory, and occupying it would turn it into a landlocked country⁴⁹. The economic consequence would be beyond severe, as it would hinder grain exports. Putin argues that this territory was historically part of Russia, giving it to Ukraine. Thus, they have a right to reclaim it and correct a mistake made by the Bolsheviks⁵⁰.

In short, we can observe Russia pendulating between the cultural ties and similarities they share with Ukraine and invoking aggressive

⁴⁶ Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.130.

⁴⁷ Paul Stronski, "What Is Russia Doing in the Black Sea?", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, May 20, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/05/20/what-is-russia-doing-in-black-sea-pub-84549>, accessed on June 15, 2022; Also see Stephen J. Flanagan, Anika Binnendijk, Irina A. Chindea, Katherine Costello, Geoffrey Kirkwood, Dara Massicot, Clint Reach, *Russia, NATO, and Black Sea Security*, Santa Monica, Rand Corporation, 2020.

⁴⁸ Daniel Fried, Kurt Volker, "The Speech In Which Putin Told Us Who He Was", *Politico*, February 18, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/02/18/putin-speech-wake-up-call-post-cold-war-order-liberal-2007-00009918>, accessed on May 19, 2022.

⁴⁹ Adrian A. Basora, Aleksandr Fisher, "Putin's "Greater Novorossiia" – The Dismemberment of Ukraine", *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, May 2, 2014, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2014/05/putins-greater-novorossiia-the-dismemberment-of-ukraine/>, accessed on July 2, 2022.

⁵⁰ Matthew Burrows, Robert A. Manning, "Three possible futures for a frozen conflict in Ukraine", *New Atlanticist*, May 26, 2022, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/three-possible-futures-for-a-frozen-conflict-in-ukraine/> accessed on July 2, 2022.

revisionist ideas⁵¹. This constantly shifting of position hindered any negotiation of a diplomatic solution. Nevertheless, the Kremlin hardly seemed to wish for such an outcome. The oscillation allows for the justification of actions toward the Russian people, a mere propaganda ploy. It also ties in perfectly to the strategy used to maintain a state of frozen conflict.

The last reason on our list is the level of resistance against the invasion, which encouraged unprecedented international support, leaving Russia isolated. This ties in with the previous argument, as the clash between the two countries, has its origins in the 1990s. The situation led to war through the gradual accumulation of tensions and diverging interests.

III.1. Road to Confrontation

Ukraine's internal road to independence was relatively smooth, as its political elite and population supported the idea. Russia had little to say in this regard, as even its Commonwealth of Independent States idea would prove to be an utter failure. The first tensions between the two countries regarded the relationship they would have in the future. The Kremlin hoped it could convince Kiev to sign a Union Treaty, but they had differing perspectives on it. Yeltsin wanted political and economic integration. However, Ukraine's leaders would only agree to cooperate, and independence remained untouchable⁵².

Distrust between the two countries could be seen from the beginning. One issue was regarding nuclear weapons and who would inherit them. In reality, Ukraine lacked the know-how and resources to maintain such an arsenal and had no operational control. Hence, with support from Western countries, it agreed to give up these capabilities. However, the Budapest Memorandum simultaneously sought to obtain security assurances regarding territorial integrity⁵³.

Another point of contention was the Black Sea Fleet. They agreed to partition it with Russia paying compensation while it got a lease on the naval base in Sevastopol, which would have to be renewed periodically⁵⁴. This meant a certain level of insecurity for the Kremlin and the investments it could make in maintaining the base and the fleet.

The role of energy politics also characterized this relationship. Russia's status as an energy exporter turned Ukraine into one of its primary

⁵¹ Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad...*, p.235.

⁵² Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.29-35.

⁵³ Lawrence Freedman, *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019, p.101-102.

⁵⁴ Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.21, 82.

consumers. It generated a dependency that the Kremlin could use to pressure politicians in Kiev to stay in line. The oligarchs of Donbas could ill-afford such disruptions to their businesses, thus influencing decisions in their country. This strategy was aided by the fact that Ukraine was not the best payer, giving justification for reducing gas deliveries or even price changes. Russia also uses this approach in its interactions with friendly countries⁵⁵. In the cases of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, it takes the shape of allowing passage for their exports. It also 'weaponized' it against the West to limit the extent of recent economic sanctions.

The first major crisis came with the 2004 Orange Revolution. As we have already mentioned, it was seen by the Kremlin as Western meddling in the near abroad⁵⁶. It came on the back of liberal and democratic ideas, as Ukrainians took to the streets to contest fraud in the election. But, also, the ruling of the Supreme Court to annul the result of the second round marked another shift. Institutions could function in the service of the people despite corruption and Russian involvement. In the end, Moscow-backed Viktor Yanukovich lost to Viktor Yushchenko⁵⁷.

However, this victory would not deliver on its promise. Constant infighting among the reformists brought back Yanukovich as prime-minister between August 2006 and December 2007, before being replaced by Yulia Timoshenko. The problem was that very few things changed during this period. There was no radical change in and of the political system. The oligarchs had the resources to oppose it, which they did. Ukraine's approach toward the West was thus limited since it was far from the criteria of the European Union and NATO⁵⁸. Nevertheless, the genie was out of the bottle.

Viktor Yanukovich's victory against Yulia Timoshenko in the 2010 presidential elections was a blow to previously mentioned hopes. Despite accusations and suspicions of fraud, the result did not change this time⁵⁹. Corruption and authoritarianism would come to mark this new period. The new president's family and friends took control of many positions in the state. Also, Timoshenko became the target of multiple criminal cases, accused of abusing her power. On October 11, 2011, she was sentenced to prison and banned from participating in elections. The leader of the

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p.43

⁵⁶ Robert Orttung, Christopher Walker, "Putin's Frozen Conflicts", *Foreign Policy*, February 13, 2015.

⁵⁷ Serhii Plokhyy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*, Basic Books, New York, 2015, p.333-334.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 334-335.

⁵⁹ Nathaniel Copesey, Natalia Shapovalova, "The Ukrainian Presidential Election of 2010", *Representation*, Vol.46, No.2, 2010, passim.

opposition was thus removed from the political equation. This episode illustrates the decline of democratic institutions during this time⁶⁰. However, people still held hope that Ukraine might head towards Europe.

Yanukovich's close ties to Russia were shown in 2010 when he extended the lease on the Sevastopol naval base. It was due to expire in 2017, but now it would last until 2042. The deal was not one-sided, as Medvedev promised Ukraine would get a discount on its gas bill of around 30%⁶¹. This move illustrated a balancing policy often practiced by the country's previous presidents, between good relations with the West and not upsetting Russia⁶².

III.2. Revolution and Frozen Conflict

The situation in Ukraine escalated towards the end of November 2013 when people took to the streets. Events were sparked by the government's decision not to sign the long-awaited Association Agreement with the European Union. Instead, Yanukovich wanted to join Russia's version, The Eurasian Economic Union. This was even though the Rada had voted overwhelmingly for the former⁶³. Ukrainians began protesting against corruption, the oligarchs, and abuse of power, asking for the government's resignation.

Most were focused on the Maidan of Kiev, but it soon spread to other cities, especially in the Western part of the country. Instead of allowing people to cool down or promising partial reforms, Yanukovich tried to clamp down on the protests. Police tried assaulting the Maidan, but it failed. Introducing harsher legislation against such events and activities only mobilized people further. In January 2014, they moved to occupy government buildings. By 18-20 February, the clashes turned very violent, leading to the death of around 100 protesters and 18 police officers. This was the point when the Maidan became a revolution. On February 22, the Rada voted to remove Yanukovich. He subsequently fled to Sevastopol and then to Russia⁶⁴.

⁶⁰ ***, "Yulia Tymoshenko imprisonment 'politically motivated'", *The Guardian*, April 30, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/30/yulia-tymoshenko-jailing-politically-motivated>, accessed on July 1, 2022; Miriam Elder, "Yulia Tymoshenko jailed after 'political trial' that risks making Ukraine a pariah", *The Guardian*, October 11, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/11/yulia-tymoshenko-jailed-ukraine-pariah>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁶¹ Luke Harding, "Ukraine extends lease for Russia's Black Sea Fleet", in *The Guardian*, April 21, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/apr/21/ukraine-black-sea-fleet-russia>, accessed on July 2

⁶² Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.17.

⁶³ Lawrence Freedman, *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*, p.78, 89.

⁶⁴ Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.221-222.

The Kremlin did not waste time and quickly moved to secure its base in Crimea. Protests against the Maidan erupted here, and various groups removed the Ukrainian flag from government buildings. On February 27, 'little green men', not from Mars, occupied the region, quickly taking control. A new prime minister was imposed, Sergey Aksyonov, who would ask Russia for assistance. Later, on March 18, Crimea was formally incorporated⁶⁵. This move meant breaking the terms of the Budapest Memorandum, as Ukraine's territorial integrity was not respected. The Treaty reaffirmed these principles of Friendship and the Partition Treaty on the Status and Conditions of the Black Sea Fleet in 1997⁶⁶.

Eastern and Southern Ukraine saw a rising number of protests against the achievements of the Maidan. These parts of the country have a more significant portion of the Russian-speaking population, which complicates the situation. Again, like in the case of Crimea, suspicious groups encouraged the separatist tendencies of Donetsk and Luhansk. Success was somewhat limited. For example, attempts to take over government buildings in the country's second-largest city, Kharkiv, failed due to the efficient clamp down of authorities⁶⁷. However, in parts of Donbas, the events unfolded differently.

In April 2014, unmarked military units and former Ukrainian security forces took over government buildings in Donetsk. Next, the separatists tried taking over other essential cities in the region, such as Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, and Mariupol. The government did not stand idle and intervened in an attempt to re-take control over the contested parts of Donbas⁶⁸. In May 2014, Donetsk and Luhansk proclaimed the formation of the Confederation of Novorossyia⁶⁹. This tied in with Russian discourse about the region, which translates as the Federal State of New Russia. While the Kremlin denied any official involvement in the civil conflict, it was obvious that the separatists were receiving financial and military backing. There were reports of some Russian troops crossing the border, but Moscow would permanently deny such accusations⁷⁰.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 226-227.

⁶⁶ Spencer Kimball, "Bound by treaty: Russia, Ukraine and Crimea", in *Deutsche Welle*, March 11, 2014, <https://www.dw.com/en/bound-by-treaty-russia-ukraine-and-crimea/a-17487632>, accessed on July 2, 2022.

⁶⁷ Lawrence Freedman, *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*, p.94, 111; Paul D'Anieri, *Ukraine and Russia*, p.233-234.

⁶⁸ Lawrence Freedman, *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*, p.90-98.

⁶⁹ Andrei Kolesnikov, "Why the Kremlin Is Shutting Down the Novorossyia Project", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 29, 2015, <https://carnegiemoscow.org/commentary/60249>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁷⁰ ***, "Open-Source Sleuths Document Extensive Russian Shelling Of Ukraine In 2014", *RadioFreeEurope/Radio Liberty*, December 21, 2016, accessed on June 23, 2022.

International outcry poured after the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 on July 17, 2014. The investigation proved that it was hit by a surface-to-air missile fired from a Buk 9M83 system of Russian origin. The separatists initially blamed the Ukrainians since they also used this launcher. However, the international investigation concluded in May 2018 that the system originated from a Russian base in Kursk⁷¹. This event led to the West finally taking some action by imposing limited sanctions on the specific individual with close ties to the Kremlin and later banning some luxury exports⁷².

Negotiations between the sides proved to be very difficult, and several attempts at reaching a ceasefire failed. The first Minsk Agreement signed in September 2014 did not last, and very soon, fighting started again. In February 2015, a new set of accords were signed, called Minsk II. Theoretically, this ceasefire was in place until 2022, when the war with Russia started⁷³. However, in reality, the security zone established between the two sides was one of the most violent places in the world. Neither side respected the ceasefire with daily breaches. By this point, the civil war in Ukraine looked like a classic example of frozen conflict. Russia backed the separatists and impeded any diplomatic solution by proposing ideas that were unlikely to be accepted by the government in Kiev.

One of Moscow's proposals was that Donbas remain part of Ukraine but as a region with extended autonomy. This would have allowed it to maintain close ties with Russia in a legal context. Some authors argue that this was similar to a trojan horse strategy. It would have introduced a destabilizing factor in the country while also changing its structure from a centralized state into a federation. Such a transformation could allow for easier manipulation of Ukraine's internal affairs through indirect means since it would limit territorial control⁷⁴.

IV. A new phase in the conflict

Russia has a tradition of "heating-up" its frozen conflicts, either through indirect means (separatists) or direct intervention. In the case of Ukraine in 2022, it escalated from a limited confrontation to a full-blown war and an international crisis. But what did Russia hope to achieve? Or what does it still aim for in the current situation? What is certain is that

⁷¹ Shaun Walker, "MH17 downed by Russian military missile system, say investigators", *The Guardian*, May 24, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/24/mh17-downed-by-russian-military-missile-system-say-investigators>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁷² James Coyle, *Russia's Border Wars...*, p.67; Mark Galeotti, *The Vory: Russia's Super Mafia*, New Haven - London, Yale University Press, 2019, p.232.

⁷³ Thomas D. Grant, "Frozen Conflicts and International Law", p.408-409.

⁷⁴ Adam Potocnak, Miroslav Mares, "Donbas Conflict", p.3-5.

the idea of frozen conflicts is changing, and the way and extent of this are still unclear.

There are many indications that Vladimir Putin thought Ukraine would collapse quickly⁷⁵. We have little insight into the reasons for this rationale, and it could have been prompted by a failure of intelligence gathering or an overestimation of the Russian Army's capabilities. In any order, information shows that several officials were punished for this failure⁷⁶. What we can observe is that both the strategy and objectives have changed with the progression of the fighting. At this point, Russia seems to have abandoned offensives in the North and North-East, instead focusing on consolidating gains in the South and occupying the rest of Donbas⁷⁷. Of course, this might change again, but it is the realm of speculation.

The Kremlin wanted to send a message regarding its red line on the issue of the near abroad. However, it faced staunch opposition from Ukraine, and its resistance garnered unprecedented support and reactions of condemnation. Also, the level of violence has turned many Russian speakers against the invading force⁷⁸. Some of Moscow's allies might have been brought deeper into the fold, but this relationship is also more complicated. Kazakhstan's economy relies on gas exports, which go through an ever-more isolated Russia. Should this flow be interrupted or disrupted, civil unrest might arise again⁷⁹. Azerbaijan seems to be playing a double-faced game. On the one hand, it supplies gas to countries cut off by Russia, becoming an alternative for Europe. On the other hand, it tries to maintain good relations with Moscow⁸⁰.

Other frozen conflicts have not re-ignited in this context of chaos. The Armenians are still too weak to try and change the status quo in

⁷⁵ Liz Sly, "Nine ways Russia botched its invasion of Ukraine", *The Washington Post*, April 8, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/04/08/how-russia-botched-ukraine-invasion/>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁷⁶ Mike Glenn, "Putin fires top Russian generals amid difficult campaign in Ukraine", in *The Washington Times*, June 3, 2022, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/3/putin-fires-top-russian-generals-amid-difficult-ca/>, accessed on July 2, 2022.

⁷⁷ For more information and constant updates we followed: <https://www.understandingwar.org/publications>, accessed at 2 of July 2022

⁷⁸ Michal Bilewicz, "Even Russian-speaking Ukrainians don't want to be evacuated to Russia or Belarus", in *The Washington Post*, March 7, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/07/ukraine-russian-speakers/>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁷⁹ Sophia Nina Burna-Asefi, "The Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Implications for Kazakhstan's Energy Sector", in *The Diplomat*, May 27, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/the-russia-ukraine-conflict-implications-for-kazakhstans-energy-sector/>, accessed on July 2, 2022.

⁸⁰ Fuad Shahbazov, "Putin's War in Ukraine Is Putting Azerbaijan in a Bind", in *World Politics Review*, March 2, 2022, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/30367/the-ukraine-war-is-a-test-for-azerbaijan-russia-relations>, accessed on June 28, 2022.

Nagorno-Karabakh. Georgia has expressed a renewed wish to join NATO, although this would be nearly impossible to achieve. However, it has not pursued the issue nor contested the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia⁸¹. Ramzan Kadyrov has proven his loyalty to the Kremlin, even if his troops were not particularly efficient. Initial unrest in Transnistria has also mostly died out since the region remains isolated. Although, the overall situation has moved Moldova almost entirely towards the West⁸².

There are many scenarios regarding how the war in Ukraine might end and what the consequences could be. This paper will not try to explore them since they still leave too much to the speculative. However, we will try to explain the impact on existing 'frozen conflicts'. Firstly, if Russia comes out with its reputation and great power standing damaged, the situations presented in the above paragraph could change. The threat of intervention maintains the status quo, as the 2008 war in Georgia clearly illustrated. A certain level of instability might arise near abroad, and the red line is contested. It could also spark a weakening of dictatorial regimes in Central Asia and Chechnya if left without the financial backing of Moscow.

Secondly, Russia will face great difficulty in how it re-freezes the conflict. As it stands now, Ukraine is unwilling to give up territory or its claims to what has been occupied. However, pursuing military aid is unlikely to change, and it receives little offensive equipment⁸³. Politically nobody in Kiev will be willing to accept the losses. The conflict might freeze again due to fatigue on both sides. But even with such a narrow victory, the Kremlin has lost much of what made up its European near abroad. If Ukraine and Moldova manage to become part of the EU, Putin will have to contend with even more Western influence.

A significant shift in the perception of frozen conflicts is that of scope, as the one in Ukraine was always broader. The potential for escalation was more prominent here than in any other example. Ukraine is more extensive and has more resources than other contested parts (i.e., Georgia). Russia became directly involved early on, and in 2022 it decided to take decisive action and not rely on proxies. While it tried

⁸¹ ***, "Georgians back Ukraine, but their government is more hesitant", *The Economist*, April 23, 2022, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2022/04/23/georgians-back-ukraine-but-their-gove-rrnment-is-more-hesitant>, accessed on July 3, 2022.

⁸² <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220616IPR33216/grant-eu-candid-ate-status-to-ukraine-and-moldova-without-delay-meps-demand>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

⁸³ Denys Davydenko, Margaryta Khvostova, Olga Lymar, "How Western offensive weapons can help Ukraine defeat Russia", European Council of Foreign Relations, March 30, 2022, <https://ecfr.eu/article/how-western-offensive-weapons-can-help-ukraine-defeat-russia/>, accessed on July 1, 2022.

using historical justification, it failed to have the full support of Russian speakers. Also, its initial action pointed towards an attempt at violent regime change. This was an over-stretching of ambitions and capabilities to try and undo what happened in 2014.

Success would have ended the stalemate in Donbas, setting it apart from our other examples. Russia either was unable or did not wish to bring a conclusion to other frozen conflicts in the past. It seems to have wanted to assert its status as a great power over its near abroad. However, the outcome might lead to another more complicated frozen conflict and a blunt instead of a sharp geopolitical statement, leaving it more internationally isolated.

Conclusions

The war in Ukraine was meant to be a statement made by Russia regarding its sphere of influence. It wanted to re-assert the red line it would not allow the West to cross in what it saw as meddling in its near abroad. However, the situation turned out to be more complicated due to Ukraine's incredible resistance and the international community's reaction. The Kremlin has grown more isolated as it tries to use energy politics as a weapon against its perceived enemies. These events will impact how we frame frozen conflicts in geopolitics.

In this paper, we aimed to present frozen conflicts as a strategy that emerged in the former Soviet space in the years following its demise. Russia uses them to project power in the near abroad through destabilizing actions which in turn give it a reason to maintain military presence and political influence there. We propose that they can be analyzed in two main periods based on characteristics given by the presidents of Russia at that time. Thus, the first phase comprises Boris Yeltsin's terms in power. It was characterized by economic hardship, status decline, and military impotence. The Kremlin could not have decisive intervention in its near abroad, not on its own territory in Chechnya. The second phase is marked by the transformation brought forward by Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev's presidential terms. Aided by an economic resurgence based on selling energy, Russia has become much more aggressive in its tactics and ambitions. This was made visible in how it ended the war in Chechnya, its war against Georgia, and now in the invasion of Ukraine.

The ongoing war complicates how we see frozen conflicts as it is still uncertain how Russia will refreeze it, if it can even do this. The outcome will be vital as it influences the extent of the Kremlin's influence in the near abroad and its ability to sway other frozen conflicts. If the war

leads to a place of humiliation and depletion, there might be contestation from its 'friends' who might try to re-assert their own ambitions. This could lead to instability in certain regions, but it may lead to more democratization and the fall of authoritarian regimes in Central Asia.

Dawns in Abkhazia are still quiet: the forgotten roots of a post-Soviet frozen conflict

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Abstract: This article re-evaluates Abkhazia's frozen conflict in light of the region's shared history with the Soviet Union. The article's primary purpose is to re-examine the role of politicized identities in the emergence and maintenance of frozen conflicts. Since macro perspectives on the frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space might not be entirely relevant to understanding such a mechanism, Abkhazia's case study provides us the opportunity to substantiate the post-imperial legacy's intricacies. To achieve that, the region's Soviet history, intrinsically linked to Soviet Union's political configuration, has been scrutinized. The impact of the Soviet policies on Abkhazia's engineering for political purposes is tackled in conjunction with the region's ethnic identity.

Keywords: frozen conflicts, Abkhazia, nationalism, identities, the Soviet Union.

Rezumat: Articolul încearcă să reinterpreteze conflictul înghețat din Abkhazia în durată lungă a istoriei împărtășite în Uniunea Sovietică. Pentru aceasta va fi reexaminat rolul jucat de identitățile politizate/bolșevizate în crearea și menținerea conflictelor înghețate. Cum viziunile macro nu reușesc să explice pe deplin acest mecanism, prin acest studiu de caz dedicat Abkhaziei încercăm să explicăm moștenirile imperiale postsovietice în lumina dezvoltărilor istorice din perioada comunistă în care ingineriile politice au afectat și identitățile etnice.

Cuvinte cheie: conflicte înghețate, Abkhazia, naționalism, identități, Uniunea Sovietică.

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There are less than nine hundred kilometers between the war-ravaged city of Mariupol in South-Eastern Ukraine and Sukhumi, Abkhazia's capital. Except for their geographical proximity, both cities have to put up with their nearness to what we broadly term 'frozen conflicts'. The Soviet Union's disintegration – the most shattering collapse suffered by an empire not defeated in war¹– unleashed a conflict of identities among the Soviet multiethnic communities. Against the backdrop of the newly-emerging political entities, ethnic nationalism became highly politicized and escalated into interethnic clashes. These escalations and the eventual military outburst led to protracted and bitter disputes at the periphery of the ex-Soviet space, known as 'frozen conflicts'. However, as many specialists have noticed, these conflicts have never been 'frozen,' given their changing dynamics, nature, and even perspectives².

Despite their local particularities, all these territorial disputes emerged in small states or territorial units at the former Soviet Union's periphery. Beyond their political, economic, cultural, or geopolitical aspects, the frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space are characterized by common elements such as the defeat of the ex-titular nations by the so-called 'separatist' minorities; the damage of territorial integrity suffered by both former Union's republic and the irredentist territorial unit; ideologically, the replacement of communism with nationalism; a high number of displaced people (to a lesser degree in Transnistria).

Usually, these frozen conflicts are intrinsically studied and treated as a legacy of Soviet politics and history. The literature emphasized their geostrategic and geopolitical dimension, mainly their role in the state-building and -consolidation processes in both tsarist and Soviet periods and frozen conflicts came to the fore in the context of the new Ukraine-Russia War. Gauging the exact number of these post-Soviet disputes would be impossible due to inevitable volatility concerning the term and the fact that many of them are officially integrated as Russian territorial subjects. Apart from the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh – the first conflict to evolve into a 'frozen' one – the Caucasus is the scene of other four unsolved crises, such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Prigorodnyi raion (between North Ossetia and Ingushetia) and Chechnya. Dagestan could follow, considering

¹ Janusz Bugajski, *Cold Peace: Russia's New Imperialism*, Westport, Praeger, 2004, p. 1

² William H. Hill, The thawing of Russia's frozen conflicts, Russia Direct, 23 August 2015, pp.10-11, <https://russia-direct.org/catalog/product/russia-direct-brief-frozen-conflicts-post-soviet-space>, visited on 1 July 2022

the republic's high instability and the increasing religious extremism associated with international terrorist movements. Since many of these latent territorial conflicts have been incorporated into the Russian Federation, they add a new semantic perspective on the so called frozen conflicts..

A `frozen conflict` means an armed conflict during which the military clashes have been stalled or lessened while no agreement has been reached. Consequently, the `separatist` territorial unit's status remains undefined internationally. Terms used while referring to such entities became rather exonyms which vary depending on the source: `separatist states`,` `de facto states`,` `quasi-states`,` `self-proclaimed republics`,` `partially-recognized autonomous republics`,` etc.

In this article, I will reassess the frozen conflict in Abkhazia as a case study of the center-periphery relationship. Abkhazia's case is defined by a series of identity and geopolitical elements that allow, on the one hand, to analyze how identities can be officially instrumentalized and exploited and how these politicized identities can react under altering circumstances. On the other hand, the role of political geography can be studied as another factor in reshaping approaches to ethnic and national identities in an area with overwhelmingly multiethnic societies. It has been argued, however, that multiethnic societies with a "world as exhibit" view carry the risk of freezing "ethnicity into categories while ignoring what is really significant, namely, a history of institutionalization that gives rise to organizational expression and systems of political patronage."³

Frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space are inherently bound to nationalism and ethnic identities (or various types of identity, as in Transnistria⁴, for example). When dealing with these concepts, Vladimir Kolossov stressed that communities called nations are social constructs highly related to political elites` efforts and the political institutions they create⁵.

³ John O'Loughlin, Vladimir Kolossov, Jean Radvanyi, "The Caucasus in a Time of Conflict. Demographic Transition, and Economic Change", *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 2007, 48(2):135-156, 135.

⁴ See: Valeria Chelaru, "Deconstructing the Case of Transnistria's Conflict: Identities and Representations", *Moldavian Journal of International Law and International Relations*, 2020, Vol.15, Issue 2, pp.74-87; Idem, "The `true` Moldovans of Transnistria: A Case Study of Identity Fabrication in the First Years of the USSR (1924-1940)", *Anuarul Laboratorului pentru Analiza Conflictului Transnistrean*, Vol. V, No. 1 / 2021, pp.35-53; Idem, *Competing identities in the ex-Soviet space: the Republic of Moldova's identity crisis in light of its frozen conflict in Transnistria*, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «George Barițiu» din Cluj-Napoca. Series Historica*, LIX, 2020, Supliment, 2, pp.235-248.

⁵ Vladimir Kolossov, "Ethnic and political identities and territorialities in the post-Soviet states", *GeoJournal*, 1999, 48,2; p. 71

Moreover, in the former Soviet space, identities have been fluid and characterized by rapid dynamics as a natural response to a collapsing sociopolitical reality and the need to face it strategically. My approach to identity brings out the `constructivist` paradigm by re-evaluating the frozen conflict in Abkhazia. Contrary to the `primordialist` perspective, – which “has undertaken to show how individuals who think of themselves as autonomous agents are in fact entirely determined in their choices, whether ethnic, political, cultural, aesthetic or even sartorial”⁶– describing (social) identities as primordially given, David Laitin remarks that “identities are not inherited like skin color [...] but constructed like an art object”⁷.

Such a frame of reference is close to Dmitri Gorenburg's perspective on the state's authority as an external force “to deliberately shape ethnic identity”⁸.

The aim of the article is thus to re-examine the role of politicized identities in the emergence and maintenance of the frozen conflicts. Since the article's main focus relies on conflict's roots rather than conflict's development, the analysis of Georgia-Abkhazia military clashes exceeds the scope of my investigation. In this paper, I will scrutinize the region's Soviet history, which is intrinsically linked to Soviet Union's political configuration. The latter's impact on Abkhazia's engineering for political purposes will be tackled in conjunction with the region's ethnic identity. Ultimately, since a macro perspective on the frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space might not be entirely relevant to understanding such a mechanism, Abkhazia's case study provides the opportunity to substantiate the intricacies of a post-imperial legacy. Having introduced the article's theoretical preliminaries, I tackle Abkhazia's Soviet history in four chapters divided according to the country's defining periods. The establishment of the Soviet state and its first tumultuous years; the Stalinist period in Abkhazia, and the subsequent stage between post-Stalinism and the Soviet Union's disintegration.

Abkhazia's incorporation into the Russian Empire in 1810 was a cumbersome event. A vassal region to the Ottoman Empire, Abkhazia's cultural linkage with its Georgian neighbors dated back more than one thousand years. According to a shared theory, the Abkhaz people belong

⁶ Luc Ferry, *A Brief History of Thought: A philosophical guide to living*, Edinburgh, Canongate Books Ltd., 2019, p.201.

⁷ David D., Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1998, p. 11

⁸ Dmitri Gorenburg, “Identity change in Bashkortostan: Tatars into Bashkirs and back”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, May 1999, Volume 22, Number 3, p. 555

to a distinct ethnic group related to the North Caucasus's Circassian tribes: the Kabardians, the Shapsug, and the Ubykh⁹.

In addition, they developed strong linguistic and cultural affinities with the so-called 'Mountain peoples' – the Ossetians, the Nakh group (the Chechen and Ingush) and the Dagestani¹⁰.

Strong interconnectivity between the Abkhazians and their multiethnic neighbors flourished economically, politically, and culturally. When Tsarist Russia strived to annex the region, it had to put up with a strong pro-Turkish camp among Abkhazians. Russia's fragile reputation in Transcaucasia was largely affected by its inability to conquer the Mountain People in the Northeastern Caucasus. Since religion and culture inevitably placed Abkhazians closer to the Ottoman Porte and against Russia, the aspect played a tremendous role in the context of numerous Russian-Turkish wars in the nineteenth century. Russia launched a devastating campaign to subjugate the region against the Circassians, Ubykh, and Abkhazians. In 1864 the Principality of Abkhazia was abolished, and the whole area was renamed Sukhum Military District, under direct administration of the Russian Empire.¹¹

Abkhazia and the Soviet engineering

After February 1917, in the wake of Imperial Russia's disintegration, Abkhazia became the battleground between the Bolshevik and the Whites' armed forces. The Menshevik militaries from the newly-founded Democratic Republic of Georgia supported the latter. In the spring of 1918, Abkhazia was incorporated into Georgia through a repressive process against the region's national movement and civil population; in March 1919, Abkhazia received the status of an autonomous region inside Georgia. According to Georgia's Constitution (1921), Abkhazia (the Sukhum Region), Muslim Georgia (the Batumi Region), and Zagatala (Zagatal'skiy Raion) were recognized as

⁹ Viacheslav Chirikba, *The Origin of Akkhazian People*, on-line: <https://abkhazworld.com/a/w/abkhazians/who-are-they/1117-the-origin-of-the-abkhazian-people-by-viacheslav-chirikba>, visited on 30 June 2022; Nikolai I. Marr, *O yazyke I istorii Abhazov*, Moskva-Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1938, p. 135

¹⁰ Georgy Derluguian, *Abkhazia: A Broken Paradise*, on-line: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315797385_Abkhazia_A_Broken_Paradise, visited on 2 July 2022, p. 67.

¹¹ For an extended account of the topic, see: Valeria Chelaru, "Abkhazia between the Past and the Future: Loyalties and Strategies in a Post-Imperial Context", *Moldavian Journal of International Law and International Relations*, 2017, Vol.12, Issue 3, pp.427-441.

“inseparable parts of the Republic of Georgia” and benefitted from “autonomous government in local affairs.”¹²

In the context of the Russian Civil War, in March 1921, the Red Army overthrew Georgia's Menshevik government and proclaimed Abkhazia as Soviet Republic on a par with Georgia.

In July 1921 Joseph Stalin made his first visit to Georgia as People's Commissar for Nationalities. Despite Lenin's advice to manage gently local nationalistic aspirations, Stalin and Sergo Ordzhonikidze¹³ were inclined to apply radical measures. To temper Georgia's nationalism, a compromise was reached in March 1922 when Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were integrated into a common economic union named the Transcaucasian Federation. The abolition of Georgia's independence triggered strong reactions inside the party, and many Georgian members resigned. After the Soviet Union's foundation in December 1922 - which included the Transcaucasian Federation - the disputes were intensified by the debate on how to organize the new state and the role of Transcaucasia's various nationalities in this process. Lenin outrightly rejected Stalin's and Ordzhonikidze's plan of a centralizing project to counteract interethnic violence and economic fragmentation. The dispute triggered the so-called ‘Georgian Affair,’ through which Lenin tried to block Stalin's political ascension¹⁴.

In his pre-revolutionary theorizations, Lenin underestimated to a certain degree the importance of the nationalities concerning the future Soviet state's engineering. After the tsarist empire's fall, the national revendications among the newly emerging nations stressed the necessity of concessions, which implied administrative units along ethnic lines. Lenin had to accommodate its multiethnic groups through assimilation policies to save the new Bolshevik state. Since completely decentralized approaches threatened to destabilize the Union, Lenin's solution was to create federal structures “national in form, yet socialist in content”¹⁵

In line with this mechanism which comprised four layers of politico-administrative, ethnic, and regional units, national policy on the

¹² Sergey Markedonov, “Abkhazia: Historical context”, in Islam Tekushev, Sergey Markedonov, Kirill Shevchenko, *Abkhazia: Between the Past and the Future*, Praga, Medium Orient, 2013, pp.22-3

¹³ Ordzhonikidze (Sergo by his revolutionary name) was a founding member of the Bolshevik Party in 1903 and the leader of the Transcaucasia's Committee for Nationalities (1922-1926). He was Stalin's ally against Lenin in the nationalities` issue. See: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *On Stalin's Team. The Years of living dangerously in Soviet Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015; Simone Sebag Montefiore, *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar*, London: Phoenix, 2003.

¹⁴ Thomas de Waal, *The Caucasus: An Introduction*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p.73.

¹⁵Ian Bremmer, “Reassessing Soviet National Theory”, in: Ian Bremmer, Ray Taras, *Nation and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 9-10.

official level was to implement a uniform discourse. Due to a series of factors, such as geographical position or demography, nationalities were organized in a hierarchical system¹⁶. On top of this Soviet pyramid - with the official right to secede - ranked fifteen union republics (SSR) represented by the top nationalities. They were followed by twenty autonomous republics (ASSR) as part of the union republics and directly subordinated to them. Eight autonomous regions (AO) and ten autonomous districts (AOK) had the lowest statuses.

Due to this political structure, in December 1922, Abkhazia's status was lowered to a contractual republic within Soviet Georgia, becoming part of the Transcaucasian Federation. Georgia's new Constitution, adopted in 1922, read that Soviet Georgia included Adjara ASSR, South Ossetia AO, and Abkhazia SSR. Regardless of the considerable autonomy granted to Abkhazia, the Transcaucasian Territorial Committee of the Bolshevik Party annulled the document, which stressed Abkhazia's contractual relationship with Georgia. The paper would later become Abkhazia's first Constitution and a strong underpinning for Abkhazians' secession struggle

The first Soviet years in Abkhazia (1921-1936)

Lenin's ideology, which guided the first years of Soviet Russia, pointed out the need to combat the country's significant `deviations` - `the Great Russian chauvinism` and `the local bourgeois nationalism.` Accordingly, the authoritarian tendencies of ethnic Russians would be counteracted, while the rest of the Soviet nationalities were educated in the spirit of common citizenship with their Russian counterparts¹⁷.

Eager to comply with Lenin's theories, the Bolshevik leadership adopted a new political line in which the non-Russian nations became Kremlin's favorites. Soviet Russia's early years were defined by particular care for its multiethnic legacy; in the 1920s, the non-Russians amply benefitted in terms of language, culture, and their ethnic representatives' access to political apparatus. With the growing role of the Soviet state's political structures, the nationalities issue became a political resource for Moscow's leaders and the local nomenklatura, represented by the

¹⁶ Bruno Coppieters, "War and Secession: A moral analysis of the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict" in: Bruno Coppieters and Richard Sakwa, *Contextualizing Secession, Normative Studies in a Comparative Perspective*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 187

¹⁷ Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States. An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, London, Methuen&Ltd., 1977, p. 312.

national elites. The strategies created to integrate the alienated ethnic groups, and to fortify citizens' belonging to an organic Soviet entity born out of a single social class, characterized the center-periphery relationship during the 1920s and the 1930s. Since such resources were ideologically loaded and the Soviet state's hierarchies were based on access to power sources, the federal structures' political status sparked interethnic animosities and competition.

Abkhazia's first Soviet decade, when it was led by its local leader, Nestor Lakoba, (1921-1936), is still difficult to define. Contrary to Georgia's bleak memory of Sovietization, Abkhazia's approach is more nuanced, complex, and positive. According to local scholars, the region enjoyed a period of prosperity and interethnic harmony until Lakoba died in 1936¹⁸.

Despite the Soviet Union's dreadful hardship of the time, Abkhazia managed to benefit from relative autonomy and register some cultural and economic progress, which strengthened its national identity. On the other side, it also widened the Abkhazian-Georgian cleavage. While fortifying the ethnic element, the Soviet nationalities policy contributed to informal ties – based on patronage and clientelism – in the multiethnic areas; at the same time, these policies stressed ethnic differences and brought about identity wars.

At the end of 1920s, when *korenizatsia*¹⁹ was in full swing, Lakoba managed to increase the number of ethnic Abkhazians in local political structures. Since local cadres were in high demand due to indigenization, their number soared from 10 to 28.3 percent between 1923 and 1929²⁰.

Moreover, Lakoba exploited his relationships with prominent leaders in the central party apparatus – including Stalin and Ordzhonikidze – to channel significant funds into the 'Soviet Riviera' and to open Abkhazia's path to industrial progress. In 1926, coal mining began in Tkvarcheli region. At the end of the 1920's, small power plants developed in Gudauta, Ochamchira, and Gali regions followed in 1930 by large-scale power stations in Sukhumi and Tkvarcheli.

¹⁸ Kirill Shevchenko, "The Struggle for the National State: Abkhazia in the context of post-Soviet state-building processes", in: Islam Tekushev, Sergey Markedonov, Kirill Shevchenko, *Abkhazia*, p. 11-12.

¹⁹ *Korenizatsia* or indigenization, was a pragmatic policy through which the Soviet state ensured its consolidation over the ex-political subjects of the Russian Empire. The etymology of the word is related to *koren* (root). It was characterized by the center's support for local language and culture, ethnic identities, and autochthonous leaders to accommodate the various ethnic groups inside the new Soviet state and party apparatus

²⁰ Timothy Blauvelt, "Abkhazia: Patronage and Power in the Stalin Era", *Nationalities Paper*, 35:2, London: Routledge, 2007, p. 208.

Abkhazia's preferential status and Lakoba's informal network significantly impacted on region's collectivization. Until 1931 they postponed the socialist transformation of agriculture using various tactics and subterfuges. Climate particularities, the backward agricultural methods and underdeveloped technology, and even the absence of the kulaks were used to justify this policy. When the central nomenclature sanctioned Abkhazia's reluctance, the procedures were more lenient than those in the North Caucasus or other USSR areas. In February 1931, massive protests against collectivization and forced alphabetization took place in Gudauta district, and despite Moscow's intervention, collectivization was not introduced until Lakoba's death. According to the Soviet figures, collectivization in the USSR reached 50.7 percent in 1931 and 61.5 percent in 1932; by contrast, in Abkhazia it registered only 34.1 percent in 1934²¹.

Since Abkhazia's new political status influenced the protests in Gudauta, the Georgian-Abkhazian animosities escalated. Abkhazia became an autonomous republic inside Georgia due to an austerity program meant to reduce the local bureaucracy. However, Moscow's initial project targeted only the autonomous regions – such as Adjara and South Ossetia – and Abkhazia's status was downgraded due to Georgian leadership's upper hand on local leaders²².

Abkhazia's demotion overlapped the Gudauta's uprisings; therefore, most Abkhazian historians are inclined to see it as Lakoba's negotiated price for the republic's failed collectivization. Although no documents can certify these theories, the resolution of the 'Gudauta's incident' coincided with the decision to decrease Abkhazia's political status. Considering local cadres' ample influence among the autochthonous ethnic groups, and particularly Lakoba's popularity among Abkhazians, Kremlin's concern for interethnic unrest seemed to be highly likely. Despite the republic's subordination to Tbilisi's leadership, until 1936, the region enjoyed preferential treatment during Lakoba's administration; Abkhazia's leader managed to evade the collectivization and Stalinist purges but also maintain the privileged position of Abkhazia's nobility.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 213

²² 'Prilozhenie k Pis'mu Predstavitelei Abkhazskoi Intelligentsii Prezidiumu XIX Vsesoiuznoi Konferentsii KPSS (1988g.)', on-line: <http://abkhazia.narod.ru/Glava1-2.htm>, visited on 5 July 2022.

Stalin's terror in Abkhazia (1936-1953)

In December 1936, in the context of Lavrentiy Beria's ascension to power, Lakoba was poisoned and discredited as the Soviet state's enemy. Radical changes ended the Abkhazians' sheltered life, and anti-Georgian feelings increased when ethnic Abkhazians faced Georgian leadership's authoritative role in the region. Much in tone with the show trials in Moscow, a wave of purges unfolded in Abkhazia and exacerbated the anti-Georgian animosities. Between 1937 and 1938, Abkhazia's political and cultural superior cadres were decimated. Elites' purges simultaneously hit the civil population. Between July 1937 and October 1938, at least 2.186 people were arrested on political grounds; 754 were shot. A similar fate had the victims of the show trials in Sukhumi in October-November 1937, accused of espionage and treason²³.

The physical consequences of those policies had a destabilizing demographic effect on the region and represented a new identity drama for the Abkhazians, similar to *mukhadzhirstvo* in tsarist times²⁴. Since ethnic Abkhazians were mostly the subjects of persecution and ostracization, a radical shift in political representativity followed. Local political elite's disproportion became one of region's characteristic until 1952, when 80 percent of the total 228 senior positions in the party and leadership apparatus belonged to ethnic Georgians; the remaining positions were divided between the Abkhazians (34), Russians (7) and Armenians (3)²⁵.

The anti-Abkhazian repressive measures took a much more complex form since they followed Stalin's general line concerning minorities' issues. After the empire's disintegration, Stalin proposed to solve the national question in the Caucasus by rallying "the backward peoples and nationalities to the common course of superior culture."²⁶

Since the Abkhazians were perceived as underdeveloped and lacking in cultural values, they were inferior to Georgians and were subordinated to

²³ Stephen D. Shenfield, *The Stalin-Beria Terror in Abkhazia, 1936-1953*, <https://abkhazworld.com/aw/abkhazia/history/499-stalin-beria-terror-in-abkhazia-1936-53-by-stephenshenfield.html>, visited on 9 July 2022.

²⁴ *Mukhadzhirstvo* occurred in the late XIXth century during the Russian Empire's expansion. It was a process of Abkhazians' banishment from their homeland and the emergence of the Abkhazian diaspora. According to Thornike Gordadze, it represented "the first tragic classification which differentiated the two ethnic groups of the region - the Abkhaz and the Georgians," see: Ivlian Haindrava, *Perceptions of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict before August 2008*, in: Archil Gegeshidze and Ivlian Haindrava, *Transformation of the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict: rethinking the paradigm*, <https://www.c-r.org/resource/transformation-georgian%E2%80%933abkhaz-conflict-rethinking-paradigm-georgian-perspective>, visited on 4 July 2022

²⁵ Stephen D. Shenfield, *The Stalin-Beria Terror in Abkhazia*.

²⁶ *Prilozhenie k Pis'mu Predstavitelei Abkhazskoi Intelligentsii*.

the latter. The Georgians boasted an ample stratum of educated elites along with the Armenian people. At the end of the nineteenth century, they were the bearers of modern nationalism on the Russian Empire's territory and displayed solid political activism based on socialism²⁷.

The role of Georgia's new communist elites in the Soviet state's party apparatus consolidated Georgians' sense of superiority even compared to ethnic Russians; these opportunities for identity affirmation also affected the Abkhazian-Georgian relationship. Abkhazians' instruction under Georgia's guidance was part of a large-scale project to forge a new Soviet nation, seen as a stable community, historically constituted on common language, territory, and economic life; its common culture and psychological mindset were seen as intrinsically linked²⁸.

A process of cultural uniformity – manifested by what Stalin perceived as policies of nations' rapprochement (*sblizhenie*) and merging (*slyianie*) – would allow the project's implementation. In line with Stalin's cultural policy, the Abkhazians faced an intense process of Georgianization carried out by Lavrentiy Beria. With the official aim to improve the Soviet fertile lands' exploitation, massive groups of Mingrelians and Svans were forced to move to Abkhazia. According to an explanatory note, the relocation of ethnic Georgians to Abkhazia was necessary based on the region's lack of workers²⁹.

By 1939 dense networks of Georgian housing were erected next to Abkhazian settlements in Gudauta and Ochamchira – the only districts with a compact Abkhazian population. At the end of 1939, ethnic Abkhazians accounted for 18 percent of Abkhazia's total population³⁰.

However, the reality in Abkhazia, at least in geographical terms, was strikingly different compared to the Soviet official propaganda. Dominated by a mountainous landscape, Abkhazia's arable lands have always been scarce. To accomplish Moscow's agricultural program in Soviet Georgia, in 1949, the Turkish and Greek minorities inhabiting Abkhazia were deported to Central Asia; Abkhazia was repopulated with a new wave of ethnic Georgians. The remaining Abkhazians were also doomed to deportation; nevertheless, confidence in the success of assimilation made the Abkhazians' relocation unnecessary³¹.

²⁷ Hugh Seton-Watson, *op.cit.*, p. 315.

²⁸ Iosif. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National Question*, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm#s1>, visited on 9 July 2022

²⁹ Ivlian Haindrava, *Perceptions of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict*, p.8

³⁰ Thomas de Waal, *op.cit.*, p. 151

³¹ Stephen D. Shenfield, *The Stalin-Beria Terror in Abkhazia*.

In the middle of the 1940s, authorities carried out new attacks on local traditions, language, history, and culture. The toponyms' Georgianization (Sukhum became Sukhumi) was followed by eliminating the Abkhaz language from education and public use. Between 1945 and 1946, Abkhazian schools were shut down, and pupils were forced to attend Georgian schools. Since most students did not speak Georgian and the Abkhazian language was banned, deep generation's traumas would amplify the resentment over the Georgian neighbors. Moreover, the Latin alphabet, in which Abkhazian language had been written during *korenizatsia*, was replaced with the Georgian script. By 1940, the politicization of the academic sphere was overwhelming; the Georgian historian Pavle Ingorovka's theory concerning Georgian descent of the Abkhazians became the most illustrative example of identity fabrication and history's falsification.

As Georgian-Abkhaz animosities intensified, the measures to suppress the Abkhazian identity gave way to a new post-Stalinist discourse concerned with Tbilisi's deliberate contribution to Abkhazia's repressive policies. According to the party's archives, the Georgian nomenclaturists' actions were based on the center's directives, and Abkhazia's Georgianization was part of a broader policy concerning Georgia's ethnic groups. However, the various factors which had deepened interethnic hostility due to Georgia and Abkhazia's common history within imperial Russia and the Soviet Union contributed to Georgia's enthusiasm when using authority over Abkhazians. Many of the Kremlin's policies were either taken to extremes or inefficiently exploited when concessions could have been made. The issue of the Abkhazian language is among such examples. When announcing the decision to suspend ethnic groups' education in their native languages, Moscow's authorities did not mean languages' complete elimination from the school curriculum. The removal of the Abkhazian language as a curricular subject and means of study was a decision of the local bureaucratic apparatus; for most Abkhazians, it was proof of Georgians' deliberate persecution.

From post-Stalinism to the USSR's demise (1953-1991)

The interethnic competition, driven by power resources' exploitation, defined the Abkhazian-Georgian relationship even after the political relaxation that followed the dismissal of Beria, Stalin's death, and Khrushchev's 'thaw.' Since Khrushchev's speech and policies aimed to gain the broadest popular audience, the non-Russian ethnic groups became the new Soviet leader's target. The relaxation regarding Soviet nationalities was also felt in the Abkhazian-Georgian relationship, although a viable

interethnic dialogue was far from being reached. Moreover, Khrushchev's measures to restore interethnic relations as a counter-reaction to Stalinist discriminatory policies produced a phenomenon similar to korenizatsia in the 1920's. While designed as a compensatory strategy, the new political program aimed to counteract the imbalance of power between the Union's ethnic groups. Accordingly, in the mid-1950s, a quota system introduced in Abkhazia meant increasing the titular nation's representation in the leading positions. Consequently, by allowing the access of the titular countries to the state's superior structures, Khrushchev ushered in the Abkhazians in the best position in the 'nomenklatura' to the detriment of the other ethnic groups; that is to say, the Abkhazians' promotion to key-positions translated into their monopoly on most profitable sectors³².

It is important to bear in mind Abkhazia's profile and overall potential in exploiting the informal profits which characterized the bureaucratic networks and newly emerging social classes. Along with members of nomenklatura, the growth of consumerist proletariat, – including various specialists and professionals – whose needs differed from those of the actual peasantry, played a significant role³³.

Abkhazia's development as a holiday destination began in 1900. Between 1930 and 1950, due to considerable effort, the area became a subtropical oasis and Moscow leaders' favorite refuge. Stalin's and later Khrushchev's examples to own dachas in Abkhazia consolidated the tradition among the Soviet political and intellectual elites, such as the members of Writer's Union, or representatives of "Pravda" newspaper. Large investments in property, the influx of capital and the new lifestyle adopted during a period of Soviet prosperity between 1950 and 1980, significantly changed Abkhazia's value and status³⁴.

The drastic changes in post-Stalinist Abkhazia produced sociopolitical and identity asymmetries. Moreover, the new approach on nationalities distinctly lodged in the collective Georgian consciousness a sense of discrimination against the Abkhazians. Most importantly, while Abkhazians enjoyed evident benefits, – apart from political representation, they rejected Pavle Ingorovka's theories and switched to the Cyrillic script – the Georgian-Abkhazian differences rekindled the old hatreds. The striking disproportion between ethnic Abkhazian cadres and their demographic percentage became alarming because it threatened

³²Ivlian Haindrava, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³³Georgi Derluguian, "The Sovereign Bureaucracy in Russia's Modernization", in: Piotr Dutkiewicz and Dmitri Trenin, *Russia the challenges of transformation*, New York, University Press, 2011, pp. 77-78.

³⁴*Ibidem*, p. 66

interethnic equilibrium. At the same time, it became a significant force in the Abkhazians' process of national consciousness. Due to various policies that had successively affected the region's demographic balance, the Abkhazians' anxieties resurfaced and reinforced their anti-Georgian phobia. Between 1897 and 1959, the number of ethnic Georgian in Abkhazia increased six-fold; ethnic Armenians registered a ten-fold increase, while the number of Russians soared to a seventeen-fold growth. During Khrushchev's administration, a new wave of ethnic Russians and Armenians settled in the region. Whereas they numerically equaled or even exceeded the Abkhazians, the Georgians became Abkhazia's largest ethnic group. The new demographic reality and local Soviet policies became irreconcilable. During Leonid Brezhnev's period, ethnic Abkhazians were still a minority group yet possessed 67 per cent in Abkhazia's top echelons of power³⁵.

For the Georgians, that was evidence of abuse and bias against them; such frustrations naturally permeated throughout the Georgian society and fuelled the Georgian-Abkhazian hostility. To counteract the Georgian discontent, Soviet officials would rely on bureaucratic constraints, a general method embraced by the USSR in 1954 to combat nationalism. Despite such coercions, Georgia's civil society – bolstered by an assertive and eclectic intelligentsia – articulated strong protests against Moscow. In light of the milder political climate that followed post-Stalinist years, negotiations with Tbilisi were dealt with care. From 1956 the Kremlin became preoccupied with Georgia's sociopolitical unrest and combined various strategies to co-opt the nonconformists with repressive measures against local intelligentsia. Despite Moscow's cultural and economic efforts in the region, Georgians' dissatisfaction with the political center remained steadfast³⁶.

At the same time, since its incorporation into Soviet Georgia, the revision of its political status became Abkhazia's priority. In 1931, 1957, 1967, and 1977, representatives of the Abkhaz national intelligentsia pleaded for the split with Georgia and requested the status of a Soviet republic. In 1989 ethnic Georgians constituted 45.7 per cent of Abkhazia's total population, while the Abkhazians accounted for 14.6 per cent³⁷.

Since throughout a century, the Abkhazians became their homeland's minority group, while the Georgians became more

³⁵ Serghei Markedonov, *De facto obrazovaniya postsovetskogo prostranstvo: dvadstat' let gosudarstvennogo stroitel'stvo*, Yerevan, Institut Kavkaza, 2012, p. 53.

³⁶Georgi Derluguian, *The Sovereign Bureaucracy in Russia's Modernization*, p.73.

³⁷ Ivlian Haindrava, *Perceptions of the Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict before 2008*, p.9.

numerous, an identity obsession permeated Abkhazians' collective consciousness. Owing to their sense of superiority and domineering position backed by Moscow's policies, the Georgians would refuse to accept the Abkhazians as a distinct ethnic group³⁸. Against the backdrop of the multiple traumas suffered throughout the shared history with the Georgians, the fear of being 'swallowed' by their neighbors, became Abkhazians' greatest anxiety.

In the context of the Soviet political liberalization in the 1980s the Georgian-Abkhaz animosities took the form of reciprocal incrimination. Georgia's struggle for ethnopolitical self-determination and the growth of Abkhazians' demographic vulnerabilities escalated the interethnic strife. Moreover, Tbilisi's nationalistic discourse, claiming Georgia's lost status in 1921, was Abkhazia's new threat since approximately two thousand Abkhazians lived in the AO Adjara, on Georgia's territory. The preservation of territorial integrity, along with economic and political independence seemed to be Abkhazia's last resort option; however, without Moscow's backing such desideratum was in vain.

Throughout the post-Stalinist period, a strong alliance was forged between Sukhumi and the Kremlin. It derived mainly from region's sociopolitical stability, which was ensured by the so-called 'ethnic machinery' - by allowing the Abkhazians' disproportionate access to resources, informal ties of patronage thrived on preserving the local power³⁹.

At the same time, it became an Abkhazian habit to address complains to Moscow concerning Abkhazia-Georgia relationship. In March 1989 a petition conceived in Likhni by Abkhazia's political and intellectual elites stood out against such previous documents. Regardless of its orthodox Leninist tone concerning the Soviet nationalities issue, the request represented the joint effort of Abkhazia's Popular Front, 'Aidgilara', which managed to bridge the gap between the national discourse and public sphere. The Georgians in Abkhazia stressed the discriminatory

³⁸ The Georgians' lofty attitude towards the Abkhaz had been constantly exercised throughout their shared history within the Russian Empire. Moreover, the geographical proximity and the strong cultural and economic bonds added to the issue. The Georgian Bolshevik Akaki Mgeladze, Abkhazia's leader between 1943-1951 stressed Stalin's opinion on Abkhaz's origins: "They [the Abkhaz] are closer to Georgians than Svans, but it doesn't occur to anyone that Svans are not Georgians. Everyone who knows his or her history well ought to understand that Abkhazia was always part of Georgia. The customs and beliefs of the Abkhaz don't differ from the customs of western Georgians." See: Thomas de Waal. Op. cit., p. 151.

³⁹ Georgi M. Derluguian, "The tale of two resorts: Abkhazia and Ajaria before and since the Soviet Collapse", online: <http://georgica.tsu.edu.ge/files/06-History/Soviet%20Era/Derluguian-d.u.pdf>, p. 262, visited on 7 July 2017

distributions of region's key positions; most importantly, they felt deprived of the region's most profitable sectors on the Soviet market – the tea, tobacco, wine, and citruses industries – which ethnic Abkhazians monopolized. Consequently, Tbilisi distrusted the Abkhaz-Moscow relationship, since it reminded Abkhazia's patronage networks; in light of the new political atmosphere, Abkhazia's national movement was seen as a hindrance to Georgia's national aspiration⁴⁰.

In the general context of political liberalization, Abkhazians' assertiveness accelerated the crystallization of Georgia's national movement. Along with new emerging answers to ideological reorientation, the old patterns of categorization readapted to sociopolitical change. Consequently, the 'Abkhazian separatism' was perceived by Georgians as synchronization with or part of Moscow's new machinations⁴¹.

In light of Georgia's increasing nationalism, dissociating imperial Russia's from the Soviet Union's aggressive policies in the region became but an illusion. Historical facts – such as the abolition of the Kingdom of Georgia in the nineteenth century and the Bolshevik invasion, followed by the suppression of Georgia's independence in 1921 – were reminded as highly illustrative examples.

In July 1989, the tense dialogue between the two ethnic groups gave way to violent clashes. The decision to divide the University in Sukhumi and Abkhazia's request to independently join the USSR brought about unprecedented protests in Georgia. Moreover, the anti-Abkhazian feelings exploded not only in Georgia proper, but also on the Abkhazian territory, where anti-communist and anti-Abkhaz slogans were simultaneously voiced. The Kremlin's intervention on nine August 1989 to stifle one of the biggest demonstrations in the region's history, reached the climax of Georgians' phobia of the Russians; in Georgia's nationalists' eyes, the Soviet militaries became foreign occupation forces⁴².

Moscow's armed actions in Tbilisi marked a turning point. Not only due to their brutality imprinted in Georgians' collective consciousness but also to the final delegitimization of the Soviet Union's Communist Party. In addition, Moscow's role in managing the exacerbation of interethnic animosities widened the conflict's gap and anticipated the transformation of conflict's three participants into radicalized political actors. Georgia's subsequent political atmosphere would be characterized by a moderate

⁴⁰ Christoph Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars. Rebellion. Ethnic Conflict and Nationhood in the Caucasus*. New York, New York University Press, 2007, pp.120-121

⁴¹ Serghei Markedonov, *De facto obrazovania postsovetского prostranstvo*, pp. 56-57

⁴² Vicken Cheterian, *op.cit*, p.204.

stance's complete eradication and opposition leaders' radical demands. The aversion to compromise and the distrust of the authorities produced a fragmented and rigid national movement, incapable of creating a strong National Front. Moreover, radicalization became commonplace in Georgia's political sphere; following the events in April, for the country's leadership, it was not difficult to align the public opinion to the new political discourse. The nationalistic rhetoric paved the way for the emergence of the 'Mkhendroni' paramilitary group (The Horse Riders), led by the playwright and racketeer Jaba Ioseliani.

Exhausted by concessions to solve the Georgian crisis, Moscow's leadership tried to reinvigorate Tbilisi's power apparatus, but it only unleashed a new stream of demands. To cooperate and appease, further compromises were made by the central authorities. The national movements' leaders, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, and Georgiy Chanturia were released from prison; in August 1989 the Georgian language became the SSR Georgia's official language and provoked loud protests in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Further requests of Givi Gumbaridze from Moscow's Central Committee concerning Georgia's more extensive political autonomy acquired an astounding national success. In March 1990, Georgia's Supreme Soviet annulled all country's post-1921 treaties, recognized the opposition parties, and declared Georgia's independence while condemning its illegal annexation by the Soviet Union.

However, the most significant consequence of the radicalization was the emergence of an uncompromising interethnic stance. In 25 August 1990, the Abkhaz's faction in Abkhazia's Supreme Soviet formulated a Declaration of sovereignty which was rejected by their Georgian counterparts. The split of Abkhazia's Supreme Soviet was followed by severe interethnic rifts manifested during the referendums in March 1991, which had to conclude the Soviet Union's preservation and Georgia's independence. In light of the new political climate, when liberalization and Soviet power's weakening gave way to identity expression, the Georgian and Abkhazian national interests – though identical in content – clashed. Both political entities aspired to protect their identity space while struggling with a traumatic past based on a shared history. Against the backdrop of the Soviet collapse, Abkhazia's independence movement and the region's fondness for the Soviet status-quo were blamed by Tbilisi as separatist actions; at the same time, Abkhazia's aspirations of self-determination were proportional to Georgia's struggle for national emancipation and country's retreat from the USSR. Moreover, Abkhazians' pro-Moscow orientations were based on identity protection considerations,

in the same way, as Georgians sought to regain independence from Moscow and consolidate their state. Abkhazia and Georgia used the same discourse to incriminate each other for disloyalty and separatism, and both perceived the Kremlin as the conflict's ultimate authority.

The last attempt at interethnic cooperation was Zviad Gamsakhurdia's renouncement of extremist discourses⁴³ in his efforts to approach Abkhazia's national leader, Vladislav Ardzimba. The project of a new Abkhaz parliament, – in which the Abkhazians were to occupy 28 and the Georgians 26 seats, out of a 65 total – was nipped in the bud by the USSR's collapse and the intransigence of the two ethno-political camps. At the beginning of 1992, the domestic turmoil and political secessionism between Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Eduard Shevardnadze influenced the dispute in Abkhazia. The Georgia-Abkhazia War started on August 1992 with the Georgian Army's entry in Abkhazia.

Conclusions

Despite the savage and brutal nature of tsarist Russia's imperialistic sprawl, the Soviet dawn over the multiethnic Caucasus has left a more powerful imprint. The Soviet Union's political structures impacted differently than its predecessor since the empire had constantly been conquering and hegemonizing the autochthonous peoples. During seventy years, Soviet Russia had altered its socio-political fabric; these changes had a resounding echo at its periphery. The revolutionary transformations of the new state opened an unprecedented path for the Caucasus's multiethnic cauldron. Regardless of Moscow's centralizing policies which stifled the region's short-term independence, the Soviet rapid changes took over through simultaneous processes of modernization, indigenization, terrorization, Russification, and identities' breeding. Compared to the previous regime, whose policies had been more even, the Caucasus's Soviet history was marked by radically different phases. As Thomas de Waal has put it, "it is tempting, but misleading to see the seventy-year Soviet experiment as just a second Russian imperial project. [...] Modernization meant the destruction of old traditions and emancipation for women, and technological progress. Policy toward the nationalities veered from implementing a liberal `affirmative action empire,' which gave opportunities to non-Russian nations, to genocide. While some small ethnic

⁴³ Zviad Gamsakhurdia's rhetoric, as leader of Georgia's national movement (1980-1990), and later as the country's president, had been characterized by virulent xenophobia against Georgia's ethnic groups. See: Sergey Markedonov, *Zemlia i volia Zviada Gamsakhurdia*, on-line: <http://politcom.ru/4379.html>, visited on 10 July 2022; Thomas de Waal, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

groups benefitted hugely from `nativization` programs, others were subject to deportation and mass terror."⁴⁴

Needless to say, Abkhazia's evolution inside the Soviet Union was deeply marked by its belonging. Its identity had undergone an intricate process and resurfaced in the context of the dismantling Soviet system. Moreover, the Soviet Union's failed attempt to harmonize its highly centralized policies with interethnic relations, took its toll when the country collapsed; it became a thorny issue which outlived the USSR and displayed grave incompatibility with the new post-Soviet status quo.

Ever since the Soviet Union's disintegration, Abkhazia's sociopolitical evolution has remained intrinsically linked with the former centre of power. When in August 2008, Georgia attempted to recapture South Ossetia, – which had also fought a war against Georgia in the 1990s – Moscow poured troops in, ousting Georgian forces from South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Currently, Moscow recognizes both as independent states and maintains a significant military presence in both regions. Russia's efforts to retain its historical `rights` in the former Soviet space by counteracting the United States or European Union's influence in these countries have made scholars still perceive Russia as a great imperial power. Until recently, the Kremlin's attempts to initiate a restoration project in the `near abroad` were scrutinized through the prism of the means. However, with the war in Ukraine, old paradigms have gone into the debate; at the same time, the issue of post-Soviet frozen conflicts has become both alarming and puzzling.

Nevertheless, H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse has put forward a much more nuanced picture regarding Russia's relationship with the frozen conflicts. Her approach derives from Celeste Wallander's findings, according to which Russia is but an authoritarian state based on centralization, control, and the rule of an elite who feels they are in the right not to account to society. This type of trans-imperialism is closer to Russia's evolution given the contemporary international realities; the country's survival would have been at stake had Moscow stuck with its imperial system dating back to the nineteenth century.⁴⁵

Since the logic of the trans-imperial relationships is that of patrimonial authoritarianism, the patron-client relationship is the best description of Moscow's dialogue with its former periphery. Moreover, it describes Russia's historical ties with frozen conflict's areas in the best illustrative way.

⁴⁴ Thomas de Waal, *The Caucasus: An Introduction*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 71

⁴⁵ H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, *U.R.S.S a murit, tr aiasc a Rusia!*, [USSR is Dead, Long Live Russia !], Bucureşti: Artemis, 2010, p.99

Central Europe as a regional security (sub)complex in the interwar period

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Abstract. This article proposes the use of a tool for analyzing the evolution of the balance of power in interwar Central Europe, taking over the theory of the regional security complex formulated by the Copenhagen School.

This study starts from the premise that in from 1921 to 1938, it can be affirmed that the ephemeral existence of a central European security complex was distinct from the classical security complex of Europe.

Next, the analysis criteria specific to the regional security complex and the diplomatic developments that created the Central European security complex are presented.

Keywords: Central Europe, the interwar balance of powers, Regional Security Complex, regional alliances, Locarno Agreements

Rezumat. Acest articol propune utilizarea unui instrument de analiză a evoluției echilibrului de putere în Europa Centrală interbelică, preluând teoria complexului regional de securitate formulată de Școala de la Copenhaga. Acest studiu pleacă de la premisa că în perioada 1921-1938 se poate afirma existența efemeră a unui complex de securitate central european distinct de complexul clasic de securitate al Europei. În continuare, sunt prezentate criteriile de analiză specifice complexului regional de securitate și evoluțiile diplomatice care au creionat complexul Central European de securitate.

Cuvinte cheie: Europa Centrală echilibrul interbelic de putere, complex regional de securitate, alianțe regionale, Acordurile de la Locarno

Introduction

Central Europe sparked a myriad of debates on ideas and projects after the First World War. For several decades, this region had been an example of the manifestation of the balance of power in the international system. The disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the withdrawal of the Russian and Ottoman Empires from this area created a vacuum that worried Western European leaders. One can see a growing literature on the issue of Central Europe.

An aspect that remains debatable from the perspective of geopolitical analysis refers to the actors that make up Central Europe. In recent work, Otilia Dhand stated that “Central Europe is not a place. It is an idea. But an idea of what?”¹. The boundaries of this region were often arbitrarily delimited and are often contested by the very actors who are included within them. Starting from this conceptual confusion, it isn't easy to establish a methodology for analysing the region's security. The analyses that study the interwar decades of the first part of the 20th century are even more confusing.

This article aims to introduce a new methodological analysis perspective from security studies into this debate. Much more precisely, this paper will use the Regional Security Complex Theory to observe to what extent we can consider Central Europe as a distinctly regional security complex.

Literature Review

Historiography on Central Europe in the interwar period was continuously developed based on the research of diplomatic archives and the presentation of various perspectives of analysis and interpretation. In general, these studies were focused on one of the following aspects:

- Combating the defeated states' revisionism towards the treaty system concluded after the First World War.
- Collective security and projects to maintain the post-war territorial status quo.
- Regional alliances (such as the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact).

In 1981, the Polish historian Piotr Wandycz, from Yale University, published a rather extensive study about the Little Entente². His critical analysis of the historiography of this subject opened up the opportunity for a broader debate on how to analyse the impact of the Little Entente on

¹ Otilia Dhand. *The Idea of Central Europe: Geopolitics, Culture and Regional Identity*, I. B. Tauris & Company, 2018, p. 1.

² Piotr Wandycz, “The Little Entente: Sixty Years Later”. *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 59, no. 4: 548-564, 1981.

the balance of power in Europe. The Little Entente is perceived as a cause of the failure of French diplomacy in interwar Central Europe.

Instead, Dragan Bakić³ analyses “the British brokering of Central Europe and Balkan Locarno”, which represents an extension of the analysis in the South-Eastern part of the continent, where the Balkan Pact manifested itself. The context of the analysis was created by the Locarno Agreements (October 1925), which caused a solid diplomatic awareness for the Central European states that the balance of power must be thought of first at the regional level, and then at the European level.

The Western powers were concerned with achieving stability in Central Europe, and, in their view, this goal was only possible through a central European agreement. Therefore, British and French diplomacy was concerned that states such as Hungary, Austria, and Poland would not be bypassed in the process of achieving various regional alliances⁴.

Even though the French presence in the region was predominantly diplomatic, it prevented the penetration of other powers that would have liked to run regional projects, such as that of Benito Mussolini on the Danubian-Balkan Pact.

However, the perspective of a new analysis of Central Europe through the lens of the Theory of the Regional Security Complex, developed by the Copenhagen School, stems from the need to delimit, at least methodologically and theoretically, the security developments on the continent after the signing of the Locarno Agreements. What is specific to this theory refers to the object of analysis “the region” as an essential piece of geopolitics and security.

However, this paper uses RSCT based on some of the statements that Buzan and Waever made about the Balkans. In the opinion of the two authors, the period 1700-1945 coincides with the existence of a single European security complex torn in two in the Cold War.

It might be considered whether the Balkans should be defined as a subcomplex within the European RSC or as a case of overlay. The interpretation of overlay would stress that the area's (then not a subregion, but a region external to Europe) internal dynamics are

³ Dragan Bakić. 'Must Will Peace': The British Brokering of 'Central European' and 'Balkan Locarno', 1925-9. *Journal of Contemporary History*. SAGE, Vol. 48, No 1, January 2013, pp. 24-56.

⁴ See Dragan Bakić, *op. cit.*; Bakić, Dragan. *Britain and Interwar Danubian Europe: Foreign Policy and Security Challenges, 1919-1936*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018. Piotr Wandycz, *op. cit.*; Piotr Wandycz, *Polish diplomacy: 1914-1945 ; aims and achievements ; a lecture in English and Polish*. Together with a bibliographical essay on works dealing with recent Polish diplomatic history. London: Orbis, 1988; Cienciala, Anna M., and Titus Komarnicki. *From Versailles to Locarno: Keys to Polish Foreign Policy, 1919-25*. Lawrence, Kan: University Press of Kansas, 1984

repressed by external powers—the Balkans is forced into peace against its will. If overlay was removed, the subregion would return to war. That is undoubtedly true at the moment. On the other hand, the Balkans seems to be on a track that will eventually transform it into an integral part of Europe— not a part without problems but with the more 'normal' East Central European problems. Therefore, the Balkans' medium-term position is a subcomplex, not overlaid. Long-term, it might merge into Europe without 'sub.'⁵

This article hypothesizes that between 1921-1938 Central Europe had many characteristics of a distinct security complex. What Buzan and Waever call the Balkan security sub-complex should be given a more general name considering the actors involved. The period 1921-1938 must be seen separately from what was before 1919 and after 1945. Interwar Central Europe does not have the characteristics of post-Cold War Central Europe. **The network of interactions knotted during the almost two interwar decades was more extensive than the one depicted by Buzan and Waever. At the same time, the securitization objectives in this area were distinct from those of the rest of the continent.**

On the other hand, unlike the interpretation assumed by Buzan and Waever, this article also takes into account Rothschild's representation of what Central and Eastern Europe means: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and the Baltic states⁶. Rothschild's geopolitical representation is the closest expression of the interwar interdependencies in Central Europe. However, from the perspective of the analysis of the security complex, this paper will also integrate Germany, Austria and Russia. It is not about a geographical inclusion of Russia in Central Europe, but about the consideration of Russian interests in this area.

Historiographically speaking, the concept of Central Europe includes distinct meanings. In 1903, Joseph Partsch presented a Central Europe with Germany as its core: this region “consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, belongs to the sphere of German civilization”⁷. This perspective was contradicted at the Paris Conference (1919). However, Mackinder presented the hypothesis of the creation of

⁵ Buzan, Barry and Ole Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 378.

⁶ Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the two world wars*, University of Washington Press, 1992, p. 2

⁷ Joseph Partsch, *Central Europe*, London: Heinemann, 1903, p. 142.

the Middle Tier in Central Europe, having as its object of reference the scenario of a possible German-Russian alliance⁸.

Emmanuel de Martonne gave another perspective of what Central Europe meant in the interwar period in 1931. According to him, Central Europe included: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Switzerland. De Martonne took into account the variables of human and physical geography to delineate this region, but he ignored the social, cultural, and economic variables that create a regional complex⁹.

More recently, the work of the Hungarian historian Ádám Magda has defined Central Europe by including several states: Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia¹⁰. What this work highlights is precisely a regional security complex in which the elements of the securitization mechanism represented by the Little Entente are observed. Referring to Georges Clemenceau, the author pointed out that "From the start, the French Prime Minister integrated the settlement of the situation in Central Europe into the interplay of international interest networks and treated it with an approach that favoured France's security policy."¹¹ Ádám sees the rationale for this security policy in that, through the Bolshevik revolution, France lost a traditional ally that was Tsarist Russia. As Hungary could not be a credible actor because of its German orientation, French diplomacy turned to Czechoslovakia and Romania¹².

Interwar Central Europe's analysis must be freed from geographical determinism¹³ and approached through cultural and geopolitical conjunction. If we look at the cultural dimension, we can see the German influences extending beyond the Balkans. Considering the geopolitical dimension, we see the confrontation of German, Russian and Italian interests with British and French interference.

⁸ Harold J. Mackinder, *Democratic ideals and reality. A study in the politics of reconstruction*, New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1919.

⁹ Emm. De Martonne, *Europe Centrale, Première partie: généralités et l'Allemagne*. In P. Vidal de la Blanche et L. Gallois (ed. by), *Géographie universelle*, Tome IVe, Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1930. Emm. De Martonne, *Europe Centrale, Deuxième partie: Suisse – Autriche – Hongrie Tchecoslovaquie – Pologne – Roumanie*. In P. Vidal de la Blanche et L. Gallois (ed. by), *Géographie universelle*, Tome IVe, Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1931

¹⁰ Ádám, Magda. *The Versailles System and Central Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p.49.

¹² *Ibidem*, p.50.

¹³ See Anita Sengupta *Heartlands of Eurasia: The Geopolitics of Political Space*. Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2009.

The approach that the great powers had after 1919 regarding Central Europe emanated from their fear of leaving this area under German domination as a sphere of influence. What these great powers lacked was a common strategy. Their involvement was built on selfish calculation and mutual jealousy between the British and the French. On the other hand, their geostrategic impotence also stemmed from an incomplete Covenant on which a League of Nations was built that lacked the dimension of international sanctions¹⁴.

The concept of the *security complex* was pencilled by Barry Buzan¹⁵ and was then taken up, developed and updated together with other colleagues such as Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde¹⁶. Perhaps one of the most comprehensive approaches to RSCT is that of 2003 when Buzan and Waever analyse “Regions and powers” as structuring of international security. RSC theory is part of the conceptual triangle of the Copenhagen School, along with *securitization* and *security sectors*. Other authors have also used this analysis matrix to study different regions¹⁷. Some other authors have added to the RSCT other variables such as institutions, identity, and interests to respond more effectively to the dynamics of international security¹⁸. Naturally, critical perspectives on this theory, seen by some as being limiting¹⁹ or as addressing certain variables too briefly²⁰, have also been elaborated in the literature

¹⁴ David Mitrany, *The Problem of International Sanctions*. London: H. Milford, 1925.

¹⁵ The author initially defined security complex “as a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.” Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*. Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983, p. 106.

¹⁶ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Jaap de Wilde, *Security. A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner, 1998.

¹⁷ See for example: Zenel Garcia, Power Cycles and Security Complexes: Evolution of the East Asian Supercomplex, In *Asian Politics & Policy*, 2017, Vol. 8(4), pp. 538-558. Barney Walsh, Revisiting Regional Security Complex Theory in Africa: Museveni’s Uganda and Regional Security in East Africa. In *African Security*, 2020, Vol. 33(4), pp. 300-324.

¹⁸ Richard J. Kilroy, Abelardo Rodriguez, and Todd Hataley. “Security Inequalities in North America: Reassessing Regional Security Complex Theory”. *Journal of Strategic Security*. 10, no. 4, 2017, p. 1-28.

¹⁹ Lemke, D., Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security. *Perspectives on Politics*, 2005, vol. 3(1), pp. 197-198.

²⁰ See Petr Zelinka, Kritika teorie bezpečnostního komplexu z hlediska přístupu síťových aktérů [A Critical Examination of the Theory of Security Complex from the Network Approach Perspective]. In *MEZINÁRODNÍ VZTAHY* 4/2008, pp. 52-74, who calls into question the usefulness of the RSCT for the analysis of the involvement of non-state actors in the formulation of the security environment.

This article uses the RSCT as a tool, rather than a framework of analysis, to provide a new perspective on the debate on interactions between state actors in interwar Central Europe.

The regional security complex and sub-complex

The basic principle of RSC theory states that “a constellation is produced from the bottom up, connecting actor to actor. But, as in the case of the analysis of RSC Balkans²¹, powers outside the region forced the Balkans into the European security complex created at Versailles in 1919-20. The treaty system of 1919-20 linked Central Europe and the Balkans to RSC Europe. Nevertheless, this study starts from the premise that Locarno laid the seeds for the fusion of two regional security (sub)complexes.

1. Barry Buzan and Ole Waever define the security “subcomplex” as it takes over one of the theoretical characteristics of the complex: “security interdependence is relatively more intense inside it than across its boundaries²². In other words, the security interaction is inward-oriented.

What we can include in the Balkan security (sub)complex are Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and Hungary. The foundation of this regional (sub)complex was laid by the Peace of Bucharest (1913), and its sharpening came after Locarno. At the same time, it can be emphasized that there is a balance of power between Bulgaria (supported by Germany) and the rest of the states.

According to Buzan and Waever, “the first decades of the twentieth century are of special interest because in this period the Balkans looks most like a separate RSC, equipped with its own ‘Balkan’ wars’ [...] The interwar years exhibited much the same semi-independence as the post-Cold War period. A local balance-of-power system was in operation, but in the interwar period, this connected to broader European dynamics.”²³

This argument is not solid because “the wider European dynamics” did not amount to fundamental security interdependence. The securitization projection that the Locarno Accords created had as its object of reference only the western borders of Germany, and the eastern part remained unsecuritized. The bilateral agreements subsequently concluded by France with Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia did not

²¹ Buzan and Waever, *op. cit.* pp. 377-396.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 378.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 381.

constitute an accurate and valid system of security guarantees. For example, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Poland concluded their agreements that did not originate from common principles that could have been established through the previous bilateral treaties.

As far as the Balkans is concerned, the infiltration of the great Western powers did not necessarily provide the premises for integrating the Balkan states into "wider European dynamics."

As for the Balkans, Buzan and Waever reveal two "conflict constellations"²⁴: one of Serbs, Croats and Bosnians and another around Macedonia. In this sub-complex, both authors consider that Romania, Hungary, and Turkey are "more or less involved at different points of time".

2. Here the second characteristic of the subcomplex is discussed: anarchy or even the absence of a hierarchy. However, the authors fail to establish *polarity* and *amity/enmity* patterns *accurately*. The weak link in the argumentation of Buzan and Waever is their attempt to establish a similarity between two historical stages for the same region. However, what that study tries to bring up is that interwar developments must be analysed and interpreted independently of post-Cold War evolution.

Relative to the Security constellation, this is a concept developed by Barry Buzan and his colleagues²⁵. In the definition itself, assumed by the authors, the security constellation represents "the whole pattern formed by the interplay of the four levels: domestic, regional, interregional, global."²⁶

The four levels must be interrelated:

(a) The domestic level of analysis shall focus on the particular vulnerabilities of states in the region. Here we can include the labels previously created by Barry Buzan of "weak states" and "strong states"²⁷. The characteristics of these actors will be those that will highlight the security fears, threats, and vulnerabilities of a state.

(b) The regional level refers to the relations between the states in the region.

(c) The next level of analysis concerns how the region interacts with the other neighbouring regions. This analysis is relevant as long as

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 382.

²⁵ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Jaap de Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 210-212.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 491

²⁷ Barry Buzan, *People, states and fear: an agenda for international security in the post-Cold War era*, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, p. 100. The distinction that Buzan makes is between "strong states" whose threats are from outside, and "weak states" that are threatened from inside.

the complex does not include global powers, and the neighbouring complex has a global power with a unidirectional interest in the analysed complex.

(d) The last level of analysis focuses on the role of global powers in the region.

According to Buzan and Waever, "all four levels of a security constellation are simultaneously in play"²⁸. It is therefore not particularly relevant which level is dominant. Buzan and Waever state that "subcomplexes are not necessary features of RSCs, but they are not uncommon either, especially where the number of states in an RSC is relatively large."²⁹

An additional feature of RSCs would be that they are "durable structures with an important geographical component";³⁰ as such, an RSC has "both internal structures and external boundaries that can be used to monitor continuity and change and to distinguish significant change from less important events."³¹ To be more specific, the authors point out that four variables are embedded in the "essential structure" of an RSC:

- (a) boundary – that differentiates from other RSC.
- (b) anarchic structure – the existence of several autonomous units.
- (c) polarity – the existence of a distribution of power between units.
- (d) social construction – the existence of a pattern of amity and enmity between units.

Now it remains to be decided whether, following the Locarno Agreements, Central Europe and South-Eastern Europe can be considered as (a) two regional security complexes; (b) two regional security subcomplexes, (c) a single regional security subcomplex, or (d) two fully integrated parts into the European Security Complex.

The historical evolution of Central and South-Eastern Europe, combined with the discursive perceptions of actors outside the region, is empirical proof of the first variable: *boundary*. What connected them was the question of the *status quo* created by the Versailles arrangement. The diplomatic interactions between them had precisely this purpose. Maybe this is why the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact were created.

On the other hand, for each of the constellations, the elements of the *anarchic structure* can be identified: the autonomy of these actors being the reason for their interactions. The fear of returning to a pre-war status

²⁸ Buzan and Waever, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

²⁹ *Ibidem*

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

³¹ *Ibidem*

quo justified the resistance to the federal and union projects suggested by some of the great powers.

The Central European states wanted to preserve their sovereignty.

Regarding the third variable in the definition of an RSC, *polarity* remains the controversial aspect of this argument.

The concept was taken from the neorealists. The seeds of distribution of power between the units of these constellations can be found, but two factors limit the duration of their manifestation:

1. Some actors became autonomous in distinct stages: Poland (1918), Bulgaria (1908), Czechoslovakia (1918), Yugoslavia (1918), Romania (1878), and Greece (1832).
2. 1945 is the time of the dissolution of these constellations and their absorption by the USSR.

Proceeding with the description of a subcomplex, “social construction” represents the hard core of the argument. It is precisely the patterns of amity and enmity that recommend defining them at least as regional security sub-complexes.

All the competition between the actors involved in RSC Central Europe can be explained through the prism of *amity v. enmity*.

An important aspect to consider is the size of the historical frame. RSC theory can be transposed into historical analysis, keeping only the framework of interpretation provided by the military and political sectors.

The dynamics of an RSC can reveal three possible developments:

1. Maintaining the status quo, which translates into the absence of dynamism.
2. Internal transformation – changes within the boundary, meaning changes in the anarchic structure, polarity, or amity/enmity pattern.
3. External transformation – changing the boundary by changing the membership of an RSC.

Regarding the types of security complexes, Buzan and Waever consider the axis of polarity comprising the variations “conflict formation”, “security regime,” and “security community”³². The same polarity issue leads the two authors to distinguish between standard RSC and centered RSC.

³² *Ibidem*, pp. 53-61.

The characteristics of a standard RSC are its Westphalian aspect, a security agenda dominated by military and political issues, anarchic structure, and a polarity defined by regional powers (unipolar towards multipolar).

Regarding a centered RSC, three possible forms can be outlined:

1. Type I – Unipolar RSC that has great power at its center (such as Russia at the core of the Commonwealth of Independent States)
2. Type II – Unipolar RSC has great power at its core (such as the United States in North America).
3. Type III – A region integrated by institutions (as in the case of the European Union).

RSC as a perspective for the analysis of interwar Central Europe

Contrary to what Buzan and Waever claimed, the period 1919-1939 cannot be analysed as a continuation of the period 1700-1914. The interwar decades were a break in the historical evolution of the international system. From the point of view of the history of the international system, this was a stage of experimentation with a new type of interaction between states. Little of the pre-1914 and post-1945 characteristics are to be found in the two decades.

The concept most often used in European interwar political discourse was “collective security” which can be circumscribed to an integrated European security complex. Hence the hypothesis of the two security (sub)complexes that had an ephemeral existence:

- (a) RSC – Western Europe
- (b) RSC – Central Europe.

The signing of the Locarno Agreements (1925) is a fascinating utterance of selfish diplomacy. This event can be considered a milestone in defining the European security complex. Central and South-Eastern European states have noticed this nuance.

Therefore, drawing the boundary of the two (sub)complexes in the vicinity of RSC-Europa becomes relatively simpler. First, Austria and Hungary are not in the RSC defined by Locarno. The two states were perceived as direct threats to the status quo of Central and South-Eastern Europe. At the same time, Soviet Russia remained more of a threat to Central Europe and Baltic Europe and less to Southeastern Europe.

Second, the nomination of other actors within the two complexes is facilitated by two variables: (a) the perception of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria, Italy, and Turkey as threats to the status quo and (b) the systems of alliances created between these actors. The two

variables correspond to the two variables described by RSCT: anarchic structure and polarity.

In the case of Central Europe, we are dealing with a standard RSC of the Westphalian type. There was no great power projecting its power into adjacent regions. The actors of this regional (sub)complex aim to maintain the status quo created by the Peace of Versailles, which the great Western powers cannot maintain in the eastern part of the continent. However, the status quo seems to be able to be maintained through alliances such as the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact.

An essential aspect of the affirmation of a (sub)security complex in Central Europe is revealed by the volatility of the “boundary” variable when referring to the composition of the European security complex. It can be said that the Versailles system tried to create a centralized security complex of type III, that is, a region integrated through institutions. However, treaty diplomacy's chaotic and selfish succession makes it almost impossible to define and delimit the European security complex.

Germany, together with Italy, found the strategic opportunity to increase penetration in the region through economic and political actions³³. Germany became actively involved in Eastern Europe and can be considered, since the mid-1930s, an insulator, that is, an actor present in two or more neighbouring regional security complexes.

Relative to France, it manifested itself, in most of the two interwar decades, as a great European power interested in maintaining the continental order established by the Versailles-Paris treaties (1919-1920). For this reason, the Quai d'Orsay had initially promoted various formulas of regional blocs to compensate for the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and to avoid the transformation of this space into one of competition between the victorious and defeated states.

The moment when Germany began explicitly expressing its economic interest in the eastern part of the continent also represented the blurring of the boundary variable and the return to the light of the European security complex. The Munich Conference (1938) formally ended the two (sub)security complexes. From this moment, the European security complex was reactivated. Practically, the chronology of these security (sub)complexes can be defined as 1921 (1925) - 1938. Its beginning remains debatable because we can consider two triggering moments: 1921 (the establishment of the Little Entente) and 1925 (the signing of the Locarno Agreements).

³³ Ádám Magda, *op.cit.*, p. xvi.

Born as a Czechoslovak-Yugoslav-Romanian alliance system, the Little Entente was initially defined "...to be a force representing democracy versus reaction"³⁴. Even though this alliance was "more apparent than real"³⁵, it is the expression of a regional approach to security issues on the European agenda. Observed as a long shadow of Masaryk's First World War project of some United States of Eastern Europe, the Little Entente expresses a regional security concept away from the influence of the great powers.

The establishment of a Balkan Entente did not enjoy the same smooth journey as the Little Entente. As a synthesis, Lukasik believes that the Balkan Arrangement "represented yet another attempt to introduce a measure of security into a region whose reputation for volatility has always been proverbial"³⁶. The logic of such an entente originated from the actors' desire to eliminate the weakness of this region and to strengthen it in order to face external threats. The same fears were identified as in the case of the Little Entente: (a) the danger of treaty revision; (b) the danger of dynastic restorations that may bring with them claims for a return to the ante-war status quo.

Having approximately the same sources of threat, the actors of the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact can be considered as part of the same regional security (sub)complex. Of course, quite a few security interactions between Poland and Bulgaria can be identified during this period. However, both belonged to the same (sub)complex because of the security constellation created after Locarno.

Final Remarks

This article aimed to introduce the theory of the regional security complex as a means of developing the historical analysis of interwar Central Europe. Of course, this area can be analysed from the perspective of bilateral or multilateral diplomatic relations or the perspective of the anarchy of the international system and the balance of power. However, the RSCC can be used as a tool to observe in depth the impact that some security agreements had on the evolution of interwar European security.

The perception of Central Europe as possible regional security (sub)complex facilitates the debate about the diplomacy of the 1930s that paved the way to the outbreak of the Second World War. The argumentation

³⁴ Piotr Wandycz, *op. cit.*, 1981, p. 553.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ Sebastian H. Lukasik, "The Balkan Entente: A Reassessment of an Aspect of Balkan Diplomacy in the Interwar Period", *The Journal of Modern Hellenism*, 1998, vol.15, p. 67.

for developing this method of analysis can be enriched with more profound historiographic interventions that can attest to the relevance of the security relations between the states that were left out of the Locarno Agreements.

This article is a preliminary study of Central Europe using RSCT as an analysis tool. In the conception of this paper, what favoured the ephemeral manifestation of the two regional security (sub)complexes are: the weakening of Germany in European diplomacy in the 1920s, the security fears of post-1919 France, the lack of British involvement in military cooperation, and politics, favouring the economic and societal sector, which were not predominant in the interwar decades for the definition of an RSC, "British brokering", the attempts of British diplomacy to promote, in Central and South-Eastern Europe, a "similar settlement" such as the Agreements of in Locarno, since 1925.³⁷

Finally, another essential aspect that deserves to be emphasized is that when referring to Central Europe from the RSCT perspective, it is essential to eliminate geographical determinism and focus on defining the security constellation that helps to delimit the Central European boundary as accurately as possible.

³⁷ Dragan Bakić, *op. cit.*, 2013, pp. 24-56.

The last decade metamorphoses of Türkiye`s foreign policy agenda: is its future on the scaffold?

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Abstract: Türkiye as newly shaped state with its proclamation as a republic in the 20th century had at its beginnings embraced many values of the Western world, including some in matters of foreign policy actions. But its geographical position gave it not only a great advantage, but also a great challenge: that of shaping its identity and constantly ensuring its protection on two continents. Constantly held back from making high-impact geopolitical decisions, Türkiye has been forced several times in its recent history to decide its position. Its decision to be part of NATO, to continue the process of secularization and the intention to be part of the E.U were such moments, but the events in the Middle East and its complicated relationship with Russia turned it out of its way. The past years showed us a divided Turkey, increasingly isolated and which seems to put its future on the scaffold, and the present work aims to identify and exemplify such moments.

Keywords: Turkey, foreign policy, dilemma, NATO, EU, Russia, Middle East

Rezumat: Turcia ca identitate statală a secolului al XX-lea odată cu proclamarea sa ca republică începuse să îmbrățișeze valori ale lumii vestice, inclusiv în materie de acțiuni de politică externă. Însă poziția sa geografică i-a oferit nu doar un mare avantaj, ci și o mare provocare: aceea de a-și contura identitatea și de a-și asigura constant protecția pe două continente. Constant reținută în a lua decizii geopolitice de mare impact, Turcia a fost determinată de câteva ori în istoria sa recentă să își decidă poziția. Decizia sa de a fi parte din NATO, de a continua procesul de laicizare și intenția de a fi parte din U.E au fost astfel de momente, însă evenimentele din Orientul Mijlociu și relația sa complicată cu Rusia au întors-o din drum.

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Ultimii ani ne arată o Turcie divizată, tot mai izolată și care pare că își pune viitorul pe eșafod, iar lucrarea de față își propune să radiografeze și exemplifice astfel de momente.

Cuvinte cheie: Turcia, politică externă, dilemă, NATO, UE, Rusia, Orientul Mijlociu

Introduction

The process of identification, classification, and analysis of the main purposes and interests on the foreign policy agenda of a certain state is first of all, dependent on the establishment of analysis` directions, on the tools used, the temporal classification and on the identification of the main decision-makers. Of course, it is of great importance to understand how their behavior influences a certain geopolitical space. In addition to this idea, we consider applicable the argument of Kenneth Waltz and neorealist theories that puts forward the view that the foreign policy of a state is the reflection of its internal policy, the argument being that it is not the states themselves that act but the people in their composition.¹

This paper attempts to create a framework for understanding the tendencies of Turkish recent foreign policy and to bring to attention a brief process of analysis by deconstructing the foreign policy agenda of the Republic of Türkiye (officially renamed and internationally recognized as Türkiye²) during the recent past with the year 2012 as a reference starting point. Given the fact that the current Republic of Türkiye has under its jurisdiction a vast territory, spread over two continents, we consider necessary to propose the identification of its actions, interests, and objectives both in the European and in the Asian space. Thus, in the first part of this paper we will focus on the foreign policy promoted towards the neighboring states. Also, we will pay attention to the objectives that Turkey has in the Black Sea region, given the wide opening to it.

¹ See for instance Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War. A Theoretical Analysis*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2001.

² Turkey made efforts in December 2021 to convince international audience and officials to internationally recognize the name of the country Türkiye instead of Turkey. The official explanation was that this rebranding was needed to express better the values, goods, and Turkish cultural traits. An article published by Anadolu Ajansı entitled *How is the 'Turkey brand' developed?* explained that this change has first of all economic and historical reasons reminding of the greatness of Constantinople and all national goods.

(<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/turkiye-markasi-nasil-gelistirilir/2446924>). However, critics have argued that this decision was just to distract the public attention from the real economic issues of the country.

Another aim of this paper is to observe Türkiye as an actor on the international stage interacting with other state actors (its neighbors) or non-state actors as a component part of some organizations, in the present case, we will refer to the behavior within the Organization North Atlantic Treaty and its attitude towards the European Union. Moreover, we will have a look upon Türkiye's objectives and behavior towards the Russian Federation – one of the actors with which it has had a vast set of oscillating interactions. Finally, we will try to conclude with a present-day vision based on its recent foreign policy activity.

In order to explore these aspects, we will briefly identify the main political actors in the Turkish decision-making process and establish the time frame we will focus our attention on: the period 2012-2017 marked Abdullah Gül's presidential term (August 28, 2007 – August 28, 2014) with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as prime minister (2003-2014), who will succeed him as president starting from August 28, 2014-until now. During his term Ahmet Davutoğlu was appointed prime minister (28 August 2014 – 24 May 2016), followed by Binali Yıldırım. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not experience drastic changes during the period in question, its portfolio being alternately held by Ahmet Davutoğlu (2009-2015), Feridun Sinirlioğlu (August 28, 2015 – November 24, 2015) and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (August 29, 2014 – present).

We consider necessary to point out some conceptual clarifications that we will refer to during this paper. First of all, we will use the concept of "interest" based on Joshua Goldstein's classification model: the interests of a state in a region are negotiable, non-negotiable, declared and real (which are usually undeclared), and these can be material, economic, political or cultural.³ We will also refer to the concepts of "political realism" (in E.H.Carr and Hans Morgenthau's understanding political realism mostly discusses about the sovereign state – in its Westphalian sense – and its security with its implications and on the balance of power⁴),

³ Joshua Goldstein, Jon C.Pevhouse, *International Relations* London, Pearson Longman, 2007, p. 124.

⁴ In of E.H.Carr's vision, the state is the main actor of the international scene and the main element that matters is the territory. Carr also supports the view that on the international stage the right of the states that prove to be the strongest matters. Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, London, Harper Perennial, 1964. Complementary, Morgenthau's contribution is distinguished by theorizing the six principles governing international relations: politics is governed by objective laws, the definition of interest in terms of power, power is the control of man by man, political realism does not identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with an universal morality, political realism maintains the autonomy of

“liberalism” and “Neo-Ottomanism” (*Yeni Osmanlılık*). To some extent we will refer to liberalism in its understanding of international relations meaning that it suggests that the power of a state is given by its capacity and economic resources, the behavior of states reflects the nature of their interests and the main actor on the political stage is the civil society which in Turkish case could be characterized as apathetic.⁵

Last but not least, we will bring to attention the “Neo-Ottomanism” traits and examples in the past years` Turkish foreign policy agenda. *Yeni Osmanlılık* is not a new perspective of discourse and action, as a matter of fact it appeared in 1980s⁶, in the context of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus and the rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Some main ideas and notions that are the core of Neo-Ottomanism are anchored in the Ottoman past and its internal structure and foreign policy aims. More specific, one reference is the 16th century associated with the reign of Sultan Suleiman I (Süleyman) who promoted an expansionist policy, adopted social reforms, and carried out an internal cultural policy, building numerous mosques and grandiose palaces.

Abdullah Gül and the politics of the “new Turkey”

In an article published in 2012, Ibrahim Kalin (the chief foreign policy advisor to then prime minister R.T. Erdoğan) noted: “[...] in an age of simultaneous globalization and regionalization, Turkey has begun a process of soul-searching; in keeping with this, it initiated a process of reform in such critical areas as domestic politics, judicial reform, minority issues, national security, and economic development, all of which have eventually transformed foreign policy”.⁷ In his attempt to define on one hand, and to justify on the other, the new course of Turkish foreign policy, Ibrahim Kalin talked about “the new sense of history and geography as a strategic asset”⁸ (which Ahmet Davutoğlu attempted to conceptualize several years before) and, identified three principles that guide the new Turkish foreign policy agenda: political and economic justice, the balance

the political sphere. Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 7th ed., New York, McGraw-Hill Education, 2005.

⁵ Of course, the concept is much more complex, and the theoretical works are numerous; but we mention a few referential ones: John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, London, Parker, Son, & Bourn, 2014; John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1988.

⁶ David Barchard, *Turkey and the West*, London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1985.

⁷ Ibrahim Kalin, “Turkish foreign policy: Framework, values, and mechanisms”, *International Journal*, Vol. 67, 1, *Charting the new Turkish foreign policy* (Winter 2011-12), 9.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

between freedom and security, and the third one aims at economic development used as a tool to strengthen bilateral relations.⁹

According to his article, the first principle justifies, for example, the approach to Palestine – the idea that Turkey is the promoter of geopolitical justice (if we can name it like that); the second principle rather justifies internal political gestures aimed at state interference in all social levels, and, in particular, keeps under observation the activity of minorities (with reference to the Kurdish one), and the third one, emphasizes (in this case not so much) the trade with the EU as well as the economic relations with Russia, Iran and Iraq.¹⁰

In Ankara's official discourse, the implementation of these principles will be achieved through instruments such as: the involvement of all political actors, the support of democratization processes, the expansion of economic integration and the strengthening of intercultural relations and interpersonal communication¹¹, basically elements of "soft power" that Ahmet Davutoğlu detailed in his 2001 paper and speeches.

We chose to begin this paper with some brief references to Ibrahim Kalin's article from 2011-2012 because, from our point of view, it subsumes, on one hand, Türkiye's new foreign policy directions not only during the terms of Presidents Gül and Erdoğan and, on the other hand, underlines the change in Turkish self-perception: an identity metamorphosis that it is also translated into its foreign policy, as we will see.

The 2012-2022 period represented for the Turkish political environment the mandates of two presidents who, although both founding members of the same party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) and collaborators or successors of the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, imposed guidelines on the Republic of Turkey of foreign policy with almost diametrically opposed emphases and impacts. The two visions we are analyzing were influenced, shaped, or perhaps influenced the way the ministers managed foreign policy portfolios: Ahmet Davutoğlu (2009-2014) and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (2015 – present).

We will not propose an approach guided by the idiosyncratic variable (personality and psychology of the individual) proposed by the pre-theory of James N. Rosenau¹², as we consider that the decision-making process depends on many more internal and external factors,

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 14.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p.16.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

¹² See James N. Rosenau, *The Study of World Politics*, vol. 1, London, Routledge, 2005, and the original article of J.N. Rosenau, "A Pre-Theory Revisited: World Politics in an Era of Cascading Interdependence" *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 28, 3 (1984), pp. 245-305.

however, we believe that for the outline of an analysis complete, some mentions regarding the professional career of the leaders/decision-makers in question are necessary.

Abdullah Gül's background is in economic studies acquired at the University of Istanbul and in London, he has worked as a lecturer for several universities in Türkiye and worked for the Islamic Development Bank in Saudi Arabia. Gül was the leader of the AKP from 2001 to 2007 and he is considered one of the party's strongest voices since its founding. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who was the former mayor of Istanbul (1994-1998), has a strong Islamist and traditionalist education, continued with studies in the administrative field, at the current Marmara University. In 1999, following the recitation of a poem by the supporter of the pan-Turkish movement, Ziya Gökalp, Erdoğan was arrested for ten months and forced to resign as mayor. He carried out his main political activity within the AKP, holding the position of prime minister, and finally, in the 2014 election, he became the twelfth president of Turkey.

Ahmet Davutoğlu is known not so much for the mandate of the Prime Minister, as the holder of the temporary portfolio of Foreign Affairs and for the leadership of the AKP (2014-2016) especially for his contribution to shaping and theorizing a new foreign policy agenda of Turkey. A graduate of a German-specific high school and then of the economics and political science department of Boğaziçi University, he ends up teaching international relations in Istanbul for three years. Fluent in English, German, Arabic and Malay, Davutoğlu publishes a series of articles and studies that will be used as guidelines for the foreign policy agenda.

The last decade of Turkish foreign policy was marked by a set of ideas and concepts theorized by Ahmet Davutoğlu in the early 2000s which, as we saw in the article quoted above, were continued, and resumed in 2012 and will be reinterpreted in 2017, as we shall see. Ahmet Davutoğlu proposes an at least interesting concept: *stratejik derinlik* (strategic depth)¹³. It has four principles: good neighborliness policy, securing borders, implementing an active, dynamic foreign policy doubled by an increasing regional economic interdependence and, lastly, promoting multiculturalism.

Although these ideas have liberal vocations, the way in which they are exemplified and applied have a rather realistic orientation: if during the Cold War, Türkiye was a state on the periphery, in recent decades it has become a state of strategic importance, given the fact that, according to Davutoğlu, it is positioned in a key area between two

¹³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, Istanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2001.

continents and its roots are in an imperial past and cultural heritage.¹⁴ In addition, he added that the role and the value of a state on the international stage is given by its geostrategic position. From this point of view, in Davutoğlu's view, Türkiye has an important position. To a certain extent, his concept refers to the Ottoman Empire's past by bringing the references to the empire's relations with the Middle East, the Balkans, and Central Asia into the present.¹⁵

At a first glance, Abdullah Gül's mandate could be described as a promoter of the "good neighborly policy". In support of this statement, we mention the fact that he was the first Turkish president to visit Armenia and the relationship with Greece was no longer placed in an antagonistic position, the dispute related to the Cyprus issue was smoothed over (not completely settled).

Apart from this, Gül supported Türkiye's orientation towards European integration, being one of the supporters of the idea that Turkey is European through the democratic values to which it subscribes. In an interview on 14 April 2012, asked if Türkiye considered itself a European country, Gül argued:

"...if we consider European history as a Christian club, then Turkey is not part of that history, of course. Instead, if we consider Europe with all its historical, economic, geographical, and political traits, then Turkey is definitely part of it. In addition, despite the fact that Europe has gone through a major economic crisis in the last two years, Turkey has paid great attention to the Maastricht criteria. Our banking system is operating in a healthy manner. Our economy has grown by over 8.5% annually in the last two years. Turkey is getting closer to European values and deserves closer ties with the EU."¹⁶

A year later, Gül maintained his position, the difference was that he increasingly introduced in his statements other geopolitical and economic

¹⁴ Gilles Bertrand, "Turkish Diplomacy since 2003: Transition from Realpolitik to a Liberal Foreign Policy?", *Perspectives*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Special Issue: *The Changing Role of Diplomacy in the 21st Century*, 2013.

¹⁵ Angel Rabasa, F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, California, RAND Corporation, 2008.

¹⁶ The interview was offered by Abdullah Gül's during a visit to the Netherlands on April 14, 2012, for the daily newspaper *De Volkskrant* conducted by Arjen Van Der Ziel, "Islamofobia'nin Yükselmesi Son Derece Tehlikeli", published on former Turkish president's website, <http://www.abdullahgul.gen.tr/mulakatlar/360/83952/de-volkskrant.html>.

goals outside the European continent, using the card of the good neighbor and pointed out the need for regional economic interdependence:

“...Turkey is a bridge between Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Caucasus and each of our neighboring countries has a different form of government and a different administrative style. In Turkey, we have a vast majority of Muslim population, democracy, human rights, market economy, which makes us unique in this area. From a geographical and geopolitical perspective, Turkey belongs to this region, and we have historical ties with all our neighbors. But in terms of values, we are with the West. If we think about the future, it is almost a mathematical fact that the economic and balance of power in the world will tilt towards Asia. So, politics must incline towards that direction too.”¹⁷

The Balkan space was not left under the radar during Gül’s terms, which tried to mediate the conflicts in the Balkans, organizing meetings between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and Croatia; he was the defender of the Muslims in Bosnia and Albania, actions that were also intended to outline Türkiye’s image as a good mediator and to attract the support of the Balkan states in its process towards European integration.¹⁸

In what concerns the Middle East, Türkiye wants to assert itself as a democratic model for the Arab states, and to apply the second principle of its new strategy (the implementation of an active foreign policy), and this fact could be observed especially in the context of the Arab Spring. Türkiye during Abdullah Gül’s mandate played the role of a discreet mediator in Syria, and tried to convince Bashar al-Assad regime to make a change and allow the organization of free elections, but without supporting external intervention:

“Syria is now at a dead end, so change is inevitable. [...] But we don’t believe the right way to create change is through external intervention. The people must make that change. Civil war is not something that anyone would want to see happen. Everything must be done to prevent it. It is very dangerous.”¹⁹

¹⁷ “Turkey’s Moment. A Conversation With Abdullah Gul”, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 2. no. 1 January/February Issue, 2013, 2-7.

¹⁸ See Mustafa Türkeş, “Decomposing Neo-Ottoman Hegemony”, in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 2016, pp. 191-216.

¹⁹ Abdullah Gül’s interview for *The Guardian* November 21, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/21/turkish-president-syria-abdullah-gul>.

Given the fact that, prior to the events in Syria, both Gül and Erdoğan had close ties to Assad family, Türkiye's position could not be firm against the violent intervention of the regime's forces against the rebels either. Furthermore, as Mustafa Türkeş argues, Ankara "had to back away from the liberal-inspired strategy of zero problems with its neighbors, preferring instead to provide political protection to Syria's Sunni communities."²⁰ Even so, the situation became much more complicated for Turkey in 2012 when Assad withdrew his military forces from northern Syria, from the border with Türkiye, leaving the area under the control of the Kurds in that area.

Türkiye's relations with Iran have been within the parameters of a good economic collaboration for many decades, the vulnerable point being the ties between the two with Israel. The conflicts in Gaza Strip area that started in 2008 and worsened in 2014 fragmented Turkish diplomatic ties with Israel and brought them closer to Iran. To maintain at least a semblance of good neighborliness, Türkiye and Israel signed an agreement to normalize relations (June 28, 2016) whereby Israel offered \$20 million in compensation to Turkish families affected by the Gaza attacks and included a possible resumption of the gas pipeline talks - which have drawn Iranian discontentment. However, the outlined situation between Türkiye-Iran-Israel is not only limited to economic, military, and diplomatic aspects, but also has ethnic and religious considerations: Iran supports the Assad regime, being made up of Alawites (Shia), while AKP members support the opposition from Syria, being mostly Sunni.

Neo-Ottomanism: The Middle East plan B and the abandonment of Europe?

Since assuming the presidency in 2014, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan seemed to be moving further and further away from the Europeanization process started by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and later supported by Abdullah Gül. This distancing can be observed, on the one hand, at the declarative level, on the other hand, from the foreign policy gestures, not few in number, from the last years. If Türkiye at the beginning of the 2000s seemed to have made efforts towards a diplomatic path with clear goals, promoting democratic values and discovering its identity features in Europe as well, thus rallying more and more to the European community expansion process, starting from 2014, these efforts were increasingly transferred to the Middle East, Türkiye rediscovering its roots in the area.

²⁰ Mustafa Türkeş, "Decomposing Neo-Ottoman Hegemony", p. 13.

The analyzes of the last years place this reorientation in the broad sphere of the neo-Ottoman current which, although it appeared in the 1980s, leaves a strong mark on Turkish domestic and foreign policy in the current mandate of President Erdoğan.

From a geopolitical and geostrategic point of view, there can be identified three main directions of manifestation of Neo-Ottomanism: the European reunification of the Balkans (the Turkish government was trying to obtain Balkan support for integration into the EU), the second one aims at the energy road to the Caucasus (the Oil Pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline), and the third direction is directed towards the New East and is marked by worsening relations with Israel and the problems with Iran.²¹ If we put aside for the moment the first two directions, it is easy to see under these conditions that Türkiye's objective is to become a status-quo power in the Islamic world, and for this "it will use all the tools at its disposal to create vectors in the three directions: the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East."²²

In Gilles Bertrand's opinion, the biggest foreign policy direction's weakness during the term of President Erdoğan is a much too closeness to the authoritarian regimes that rule the countries of the Muslim world. In these contexts, the leadership in Ankara has had to moderate its increasingly vocal position pro-governments Bashar Al-Assad, Mohamed Morsi, Muammar Gaddafi and reposition itself very hesitantly, on the side of the Western international community.²³

As for Syria, like Iran, it pursued a dual policy: it supported Kurdish attempts to destabilize Türkiye in the 1980s, but in the 2000s they had a common goal of preventing the rise of Kurdish minority nationalism in their territories.

Even today, Iran's nuclear ambitions are causing anxiety in Ankara for the simple reason that it would create an imbalance of power in the Persian Gulf, which would cause Türkiye to counterbalance and arm itself, or, less expensively, to join the United States and Israel, transposing the scenario into a situation of the *security dilemma type*²⁴.

On a different note, we draw attention to the change in Türkiye's position in the conflict between Israel and Palestine: although for a long time Israel was a source of armaments for Türkiye, in the 2000s, Erdoğan

²¹ Nicolae Țibrigan, *Revirimentul Turciei: între panturcism și neo-otomanism* [Turkey Sudden Change: between Panturcism and noe-otomanism], <http://geopolitics.ro/revirimentul-turciei-intre-panturcism-si-neo-otomanism/>

²² *Ibidem*

²³ Gilles Bertrand, *Turkish Diplomacy since 2003*: 77.

²⁴ See Robert Jervis, „Cooperation «Under the Security Dilemma»“, *World Politics*, vol. 30, 2, (1978), pp. 171-172.

reoriented Türkiye's position in favor of Palestine, even organizing a series of meetings with Palestinian representatives without consulting the United States or Israel.

If we have a look at Turkish experts' official statements the discourses the policy is that, although, the diplomatic relations with Iran are not quite good, the energetic cooperation between the two should not be affected:

"The energy trade can bring politically different points into agreement. This is what we have experienced with Russia. We have different positions in Syria but there is now much more dialogue. Turkey and Iran will see the economic advantages and they might put aside political differences. I see this taking place. Look at the Astana talks on Syria"²⁵.

There is worth to be mentioned in the context of this new ideologic guidelines of policy the fact that during the past years were opened several Turkish embassies throughout Asia and were sponsored new mosques building in America, Russia, Romania, Germany, Cuba, Kosovo, Japan, etc. For example, in 2000 a mosque was inaugurated in Tokyo²⁶, in September 2015, after a long period of renovations sponsored by the Turkish government, one of the largest mosques in Europe was reopened in Moscow. In the same year, a mosque was inaugurated in Greece, and in 2016, negotiations were held with the Cuban state (February 11, 2016)²⁷, with the Romanian state (negotiations started in 2015²⁸), and in March the only mosque with two United States minarets in Maryland²⁹.

²⁵ Gürkan Kumbaroğlu, the head of Turkish Association for Energy Economics, *Hürriyet*, June 10, 2017, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/iran-israel-promise-turkeys-next-big-energy-potential-1115305>.

²⁶ See <http://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/35578/president-erdogan-visits-tokyo-mosque-and-turkish-culture-center.html>.

²⁷ Daren Butler, *Turkey's Erdogan proposes building mosque in Cuba*, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-cuba-mosque-idUSKBN0LG1E220150212>.

The same information was reported by the Turkish press as well: *Hürriyet Daily News*, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-presents-cuba-mosque-project-to-castro.aspx?pageID=238&nID=78254&NewsCatID=338>

²⁸ See *Agerpres*, <http://www.agerpres.ro/externe/2015/06/25/turcia-va-construi-la-bucuresti-omoschee-cu-o-capacitate-de-2-000-de-persoane-daily-sabah-05-23-39>.

²⁹ *Victoria Jones*, *Turkish President to Attend Grand Opening of Maryland Mosque*, <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/Turkish-President-to-Visit-Maryland-Islamic-Center-373769191.html>

Türkiye, Black Sea and Russia – what about NATO?

The Black Sea region was long disputed between the Ottoman Empire, the Tsarist Empire, and other European powers, but the changes of its status were mostly during the 19th and 20th centuries (for instance, the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829, the Treaty of Paris from 1856 which succeeded the Crimean War, the Versailles treaty system after the First World War – the Treaty of Sevres, the Treaty of Lausanne from 1923, the Montreux Convention from 1936). On this last part, the discussion will center on the Straits and their geostrategic importance for Türkiye and not only. Bosphorus connects the Black Sea with the Marmara Sea and Dardanelles connects the latter with the Aegean Sea, the two separating Europe from Asia. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits have the status of international waterways, but from an economic and political point of view these are subordinated to the Turkish government³⁰.

The Montreux Convention allowed free access for commercial shipping, but military vessels were restricted; in addition, it contained the prohibition of the access of ships of non-riparian states to the Black Sea for more than 21 days, their tonnage must not exceed 15,000 tons, and their number was limited to a maximum of nine³¹. The moment of signing of this Convention represented a major cooling point in the relations of the Soviet Union and Türkiye although, the Turkish state was one of the fewest non-communist states with which the Soviets had had the closest ties at that moment.³² This statute was revised on July 1, 1994 with new provisions, by the decision of the Ankara Government, following the Nassia oil tanker incident. Speed, ship sizes and Türkiye's permission to close the straits in case of fire, sports or environmental actions were restricted.³³

So, geography was simultaneously a blessing and a challenge for Türkiye: on one side, it was the economic advantage and the possibility to be an active actor at Black Sea region, but on the other hand it faced the clash of interests in this space with the historical competitor, Russia. The beginning of the Cold War forced Türkiye to abandon the avoidance and neutral discourse and to choose in 1952 to join the North Atlantic Treaty

³⁰ See C. G. Fenwick, *The New Status of the Dardanelles*, „The American Journal of International Law”, Vol. 30, 4 (October 1936), 701-706 and Paul Gogeanu, *Strâmtoarele Mării Negre de-a lungul istoriei* [Black Sea Straits during History], București, Editura Politică, 1966.

³¹ See *The Convention of Montreux*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/ii-convention-relating-to-the-regime-of-the-straits.en.mfa>

³² Walter Z. Laqueur, *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East*, New York, Federick A.Praeger Inc. Publishers, 1956, p. 207.

³³ Hugo Caminos, Vincent P. Gogliati-Bantz, *The Legal Regime of Straits. Contemporary Challenges and Solutions*, London, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Organization³⁴. The presence of military headquarters on Turkish territory made clear for the Cold War dispute that Türkiye was willing to become a pillar of Western security on the southeastern flank. This aspect worsened diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc until the fall of communism³⁵. As a matter of fact, the 1990s seemed to have improved the relations of Türkiye with the former communist European countries, especially economically.

Yet, the 2000s had so far many challenges by placing Türkiye between its role in NATO, its strategic position at the Black Sea region and Russian Federation. For instance, the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 was a dilemma for Ankara government as Türkiye could not rally to Russian interests and trajectories because of its NATO membership and because of the Tatar minority in the territories under Russian influence, but it also could not adopt a firm negative position because of its dependence on Russian gas (in this case the Blue Stream gas pipeline).

As a reaction, Russia blamed Türkiye to have favored United States by breaching the Montreux Convention in July 2014 when the American frigate USS Taylor exceeded the maximum length of stay in the Black Sea by 11 days³⁶, yet, Russia had an advantageous status, transporting weapons to Syria through these channels. This episode was outrun and Ankara's government baffled the international community with its increasing dialogue with Moscow. For example, on March 2019 during a joint press conference of foreign ministers Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Serghei Lavrov in Antalya, Çavuşoğlu declared:

„We are not only developing our bilateral relations with Russia, but also strengthening our cooperation on regional issues. We confer with Russia not only about Syria and certain countries, but also in many areas, including Central Asia and the Balkans. The purpose of these consultations and the purpose of cooperation is the stability and development of the region, and we will continue these consultations in the coming period.”³⁷

³⁴ Melvyn P. Leffler, „Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952” in *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (1985), pp. 807-825.

³⁵ See Nilü Goren, *The NATO/US-Turkey-Russia Strategic Triangle: Challenges Ahead*, Center for International & Security Studies, U. Maryland: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep17001>

³⁶ Viorica Marin, „Expert rus: Rusia și Turcia ar trebui să negocieze închiderea strâmtorilor Bosfor și Dardanele pentru navele militare ale statelor non-riverane Mării Negre”, *Adevărul*, August 7, 2014, http://adevarul.ro/international/rusia/expert-rus-rusia-turcia-trebuie-negocieze-inchidere-a-stramtorilor-bosfor-dardanele-navele-militare-statelor-non-riverane-marii-negre-1_53e38ecb0d133766a816b58a/index.html, accessed on 20 May 2022.

³⁷ <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/sayin-bakanimizin-rusya-federasyonu-disisleri-bakani-ile-ortak-basin-toplantisi.tr.mfa>, accessed on 15 May 2022.

Another important example is the 2022 Russian unforeseen invasions of Ukraine when Türkiye found itself again caught in the middle and pressured to face the decision to close the Straits to Russian warships³⁸. Its next step was to attempt to play the mediator role in this complex situation. On March 10, took place Türkiye-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Foreign Ministers Meeting initiated by Ankara government in Antalya on the occasion of Antalya Diplomacy Forum under the theme of “Spotlight on Mediation in a Changing Peace Landscape.”³⁹ On March 16, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu had a meeting with S. Lavrov in Moscow, followed the next day by a visit to Ukraine and a meeting with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba, yet with any results.

We chose the topic of Straits as a focus in this reference on recent Turkish foreign policy activity as we consider them a reference point of Türkiye’s foreign agenda direction. In 2011 the world, even the Turkish public opinion, was skeptical when the leadership in Ankara announced the start of a project called “Kanal İstanbul Projesi” (Istanbul Canal Project) to be completed in 2023⁴⁰. It is designed to be parallel to the Bosphorus and should completely take over the traffic of goods on the Bosphorus⁴¹. Planned to measure 45 kilometers long, 400 meters wide and 25 meters deep is an artificial shipping canal that burdens Turkish economy, jeopardizes the areas` environment and divides Turkish public opinion. Yet, it is less probable to be completed and inaugurated in 2023.

If completed, Turkey aims to redirect a good part of the oil tankers that pass through the Bosphorus and an important amount of the oil transport from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Georgia to the Mediterranean Sea to the big oil tankers of the world. The project does not seem, but it is an ambitious one, considering that it aims not only to build a canal parallel to the Bosphorus, but also to build a new city of almost three million inhabitants near Istanbul, and the investment would be around 30 billion dollars, as some estimate. We purposely mentioned this project here as another indicator of Türkiye’s actions to distance itself to European and Western community and its will to have an independent and monopolistic

³⁸ James Kraska, “Can Turkey Legally Close Its Straits to Russian Warships? It’s Complicated.” in *Foreign Policy*: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/03/01/turkey-black-sea-straits-russia-ships-ukraine-war/>, accessed on 19 May 2022

³⁹ <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-rusya-ukrayna-uclu-disisleri-bakanlari-toplantisi--10-mart-2022.en.mfa>, accessed on 19 May 2022

⁴⁰ Daniela Popescu, “The Straits – Between Geopolitical Best Card and Bone of Contention in the Turkish-Russian Relations. Kanal İstanbul Projesi” in *Romanian Journal of History and International Studies*, vol.5,1, (2018), pp. 233-243.

⁴¹ R. T. Erdoğan, „Karadeniz ile Marmara Denizi arasına ‘Kanal İstanbul’ yapıyoruz”, April 27, 2011, http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/Forms/_Article/pg_Article.aspx?Id=32d07aaf-7097-4459-9f0b-bf9f79c20fd1, accessed on 15 May 2022

foreign policy, to be an energy knot between Central Asia, the Middle East and the Black Sea.⁴²

Conclusions

The scenarios of the first decade of the 2000s Turkish foreign policy bet, almost guaranteed, that Türkiye will not turn its back on the West, nor will it abandon the project of joining the European Union, no matter how close the relations with the Middle East have become. However, the unpredictable nature of the actors on the international stage, especially of the decision-making factors that govern them, once again demonstrates the complexity of foreign policies.

Western states were confident that Türkiye could become a stable bridge to the Arab world, yet the last years proved that Türkiye is rediscovering the Middle East, but this time not as a promoter of Western values, as Atatürk had planned (and to a good extent of the last decade, Abdullah Gül as well), but the heiress of a dead Empire and as the bearer of Islamic roots and traditions.

A decade ago, analysts characterized Turkish foreign policy as „a mixture of liberalism and neo-Ottomanism“⁴³ but it had been proven that any form of liberalism was excluded from the power equation, the internal agenda is daily scheduled by an authoritarian regime, strongly impregnated with Islamism and traditionalism, and the foreign policy agenda reshaped and its new form is fractured from Europe. Türkiye's foreign policy towards European Union became increasingly incisive (for example, near the German elections, Erdoğan asked German citizens of Turkish origin to vote against the main parties) and, in an interview for BBC News in 2017 Erdoğan stated that:

“...if the EU bluntly says that it will not be able to accept Turkey in the EU, this will be comforting to us. Then we will initiate our plan B and C. The European Union is not indispensable for us. Turkey is able to stand on its own feet. When I was in my first term as prime minister, Turkey was being described as a country which has accomplished a silence revolution, but now, the same EU not only does not invite us to the leader summits anymore, but they are also waste our time. This is the situation right now. The majority

⁴² Christian Keller, „Kanal Istanbul: Pipedream or Politics?“, *Institut Français des relations internationales*, July 27, 2011, (<http://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/christiankellerfinal.pdf>) accessed on 19 May 2022

⁴³ Gilles Bertrand, *Turkish Diplomacy since 2003*, p. 79.

of my people don't want the EU anymore, they don't think the EU's approach is sincere"⁴⁴.

It is predictable that the plan B Erdoğan refers to was the Middle East, but even in this area the situation is not a comfortable one for Türkiye, and the president seems to know part of the risks of such a decision since he also mentions a plan C, which does not seem to be clearly identified. But how predictable and reliable can this space be? Let us not forget that in Syria the Assad regime is still in power or Abdel Fattah al-Sisi `Egypt. Neither Saudi Arabia nor Hamas are reliable partners. Iran does not convey that it would stop giving up its nuclear ambitions and the relationship with Israel is not a flourishing one. Above all, the Kurdish issue seems to be increasingly pressuring Ankara.⁴⁵

Five years later after this confident statement of Erdoğan, he takes advantage of the Ukrainian crisis after the Russian invasion and asked the EU officials to resume the EU adherence discussions for Türkiye. Moreover, taking into account the declining Turkish economy, Erdoğan calls on European Union to show "the same sensitivity for Türkiye's membership as for Ukraine".⁴⁶

To sum up, based on the above-mentioned aspects several issues remain complicated to predict: if Türkiye wants to impose its own geopolitical justice, what will its status as a NATO member would look like? Would Türkiye sacrifice its security umbrella for better relations with Middle East and Russia? Erdoğan` Türkiye declares that it can survive without European integration, and through its actions it seems that it chooses the path of self-isolation from the European continent, yet, under these conditions, what will this mean for the immigrant's aspects, and which would be the costs for Türkiye's economy and security? These remain some multi-faceted dilemmas and for sure are not the only ones, but for the purpose of this article we attempted at exemplifying the pushes the most Türkiye on a scaffold. What we know is that the international system is a competitive one and the states will tend to acquire similar features to those they are in competition with and, on a last note, history proved us that states and their leaders have the tendencies to follow their own interest at the expense of the common interest and most of the times this is an expression of foreign policy agendas as well.

⁴⁴ Interview for *BBC News*, July 12, 2017: <http://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-40577220/president-erdogan-tells-the-bbc-most-turkish-people-don-t-want-the-eu-anymore>.

⁴⁵ Semih Idiz, "Events in the Middle East force realism on Erdogan", *Al Monitor*, September 12, 2017, <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/09/turkey-events-in-middle-east-for-ce-erdogan-realism.html>.

⁴⁶ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/enlargement/turkey/>

The United Nations Secretariat during the Terms of Kurt Waldheim

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Abstract: *The United Nations Secretary-General is one of the most important figures on the international scene, as he is the main administrator of the biggest organization whose purpose is to preserve international peace and security. Given the importance of the United Nations, the Secretary-General holds an important role in offering a direction of the organization, a direction which can differ from one Secretary to another. The Secretary's view over the UN has an influence over the Secretariat as well, the body being shaped in accordance with the administrator's view.*

During the Cold War, especially, this position was very challenging as the Secretary had to both follow his prerogatives as they were stated in the UN Charter and given by the UN bodies but to also juggle the interests of the two superpowers. In this context, he needed to have a smart approach to the international crises and make the UN relevant in the challenges of international order.

The present paper's purpose is to analyse the Secretariat of the UN and the role of the Secretary-General in handling the international crises of the Cold War, with a case study on the term of Kurt Waldheim, who was the head of the UN from 1972 to 1981. The focus will be placed on the way the UN body is working, how each Secretary until Waldheim had an influence over the shape of the Secretariat, what was the life of Kurt Waldheim, how he was named the head of the UN, and what were the main actions taken by him during his terms.

Keywords: *The United Nations, UN Secretary-General, UN Secretariat, Kurt Waldheim.*

Rezumat: Secretarul General al ONU este una dintre cele mai importante figuri de pe scena internațională, fiind administrator celei mai mari organizații, al cărei scop este de a menține pacea și securitatea

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internațională. Având în vedere importanța Organizației Națiunilor Unite, Secretarul General are un rol important în oferirea unei direcții organizației, o direcție care poate diferi de la un Secretar la altul. Punctul de vedere al Secretarului asupra ONU are, de asemenea, o influență asupra Secretariatului, organismul fiind modelat în conformitate cu punctul de vedere al administratorului său.

În timpul Războiului Rece, această poziție a fost una foarte dificilă, deoarece Secretarul a trebuit să-și urmeze prerogativele, așa cum au fost enunțate în Carta ONU și date de organisme ONU, dar și să jongleze cu interesele celor două superputeri. În acest context, el a trebuit să aibă o abordare inteligentă asupra crizelor internaționale și să facă ONU relevantă în provocările adresate ordinii internaționale. Scopul articolului de față este de a analiza Secretariatul ONU și rolul Secretarului General în gestionarea crizelor internaționale ale Războiului Rece, cu un studiu de caz pe mandatul lui Kurt Waldheim, care a fost administratorul ONU din 1972 până în 1981. Accentul va fi pus pe modul în care funcționează organismul ONU, modul în care fiecare secretar până la Waldheim a avut o influență asupra formei secretariatului, care a fost viața lui Kurt Waldheim, cum a fost numit șeful ONU și care au fost principalele acțiuni întreprinse de el în timpul celor două mandate.

Cuvinte cheie: *Organizația Națiunilor Unite, Secretarul-General al ONU, Secretariatul ONU, Kurt Waldheim*

Introduction

Secretary-General of the United Nations is considered the highest position a career diplomat can aspire to achieve during his lifetime. It is a crucial function that compresses several responsibilities, such as those of “diplomat, lawyer, civil servant, and chief executive”.¹

It was considered, in time, one of the most challenging jobs in the world but also a rewarding one because it offers the holder a critical tribune to speak on the issues affecting humanity and even to contribute to decisions in the direction of solving them.

Since the establishment of the U.N., the Secretary-General has been seen - according to the provision of its Charter - as its primary administrative head who, through his leadership, should give direction to the international organization. Despite the inscribed leadership of the Secretary-General, the beginning of the Cold War affected the provision. Thus, he became obsolete, and the U.N. was used by the superpowers, the United States, and the Soviet Union, for their interest. In this context, all the

¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/the-role-of-the-secretary-general> (accessed 12 July 2022).

Secretary-General could do was to take a passive stance on international issues. In this respect, in the early years of its establishment, the organization came to be in control of the Western powers, the most notorious example being the Western intervention in the Korean War following a set of U.N. resolutions.

Despite these events, the U.N. Secretaries-General sought to seize the prerogatives of the UN Charter to expand their portfolio. The leadership of Trygve Lie (1945-1953), U Thant (1961-1971), and, above all, Dag Hammarskjöld (1953-1961) made the Secretary-General an essential actor on the international scene. If under the mandate of the former, the Secretariat developed from an administrative point of view, the U.N. peacekeeping mechanisms were laid under the latter's mandate, which allowed the organization to intervene in conflicts between states to protect world peace. U Thant's mandate was a continuation of Hammarskjöld, who took over his predecessor's portfolios on the go and directed the organization's attention to economic and social issues when the international context did not allow it.

The end of U Thant's mandate and his refusal to continue leading the organization led to a race to take over the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations, eventually with two possible elections, that of Finnish Max Jakobson or Austrian Kurt Waldheim. Both diplomats were exponents of the two neutral stances during the Cold War, the so-called Finlandization represented by Jakobson, and Austrian neutrality represented by Waldheim. In the end, after an important period of campaigns on both sides, the second was proposed by the Security Council for office. The General Assembly confirmed it in December 1970.

Kurt Waldheim's arrival at the U.N. took place at a time of relative quietness between superpowers, that of the *Détente* between the two blocs when the economic, technological, and functionalist lines were accommodated for each benefit. However, the crises of the 1970s put on the international agenda the importance of the U.N., and Kurt Waldheim's mandates witnessed several important events, such as the Yom Kippur War, the end of the Vietnam War, and the 1970's economic crisis, the beginning of the Lebanese crisis. In this tense context, Kurt Waldheim's leadership sought to fulfill the mandates offered by the Security Council and to take an independent position to impose its vision on resolving crises.

This article aims to examine the UN Secretariat-General and, in particular, Kurt Waldheim's two terms as Secretary-General. In this respect, in the first part, we will analyze the prerogatives of this function under the UN Charter and review the evolution of the body before Waldheim's mandate. In the second part, we will present Waldheim's life, including that of his Nazi past, and we will look at how he got to the head of the U.N.

through a combination of memoir analysis and fact check. Subsequently, we will touch upon his main achievements of his mandates. Finally, the main conclusions reached by the article and future possibilities for analysis of the subject will be presented.

1. The long road to efficiency: the position of Secretary-General from the UN Charter to active actions

The Secretariat-General of the United Nations is the sixth principal body responsible for bureaucratic and administrative matters relating to the functioning of the international organization.²

According to the UN Charter, the duties and functions to be performed by the Secretariat are contained in Chapter XV, Articles 97 to 101.³ Thus, under Rule 97, the Secretariat is composed of the Secretary-General and the members of his team that the structure would need. The Security Council recommends the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, and the General Assembly will vote for his inauguration. Moreover, the same article states that the Secretary-General is the 'administrative head of the organization'.

Article 98 provides for the duties of the Secretary-General, namely, to exercise this function in other U.N. bodies such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. A special duty of the Secretary is to submit a general report on the organisation's work at the end of each year. A final report was presented by the current Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, at the 76th U.N. General Assembly.⁴

Article 99 is of particular importance to the functioning of the U.N. as an international actor because it empowers the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Security Council any issue that could affect international peace and security. As has been demonstrated over time, this article was invoked by the U.N. Secretary-General during the Cold War to force superpowers to discuss crises that could affect global stability.⁵ Moreover, the article was of particular importance for the peacekeeping mechanism.⁶ If we are to follow the theory of constructivism, this article

² Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations. Volume 1: United Nations*, The Gale Group, 2004, p. 46.

³ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed 29 May 2022).

⁴ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3940328?ln=en> (accessed 29 May 2022).

⁵ A concrete example in this sense is the use of Article 99 by Dag Hammarskjöld in regards to the Congo crisis of 1960. See Norrie MacQueen, *The United Nations, Peace Operations and the Cold War*, Routledge, London, p. 52.

⁶ Leon Gordenker, *The U.N. Secretary General and the Maintenance of Peace*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1967.

was important because it set out a way in which the U.N. could self-examine issues that threatened global security and urged Council member states to discuss the issue.

Further, the first paragraph of Article 100 of the Charter stipulated that the Secretary-General and his team should not be influenced or instructed by the organization's member states and should refrain from any action that would jeopardize their status as representatives of the international organization. Moreover, the following paragraph provided that the Member States should refrain from such actions. All this comes as an attempt to prevent the monopolization and manipulation of the international organization in pursuing the interests of a state or group of states. Although this was stipulated in the Charter, the practice of the early years of the Cold War showed that the organization partially served the interests of Western powers, mainly if we refer to the authorization of American intervention on the Korean peninsula in 1950.

The last article directly referring to the Secretariat's functioning and the Secretary-General's functions is article 101, composed of three paragraphs. The first of these refers to the fact that the Secretary-General's team is determined by him, with the agreement of the General Assembly. The second one required that a part of the Secretary's team be made mandatory integrated within the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and, based on the needs, the other U.N. bodies. The third paragraph provided the bases on which recruitments within the Secretariat were to be made. Thus, the chosen team had to ensure "the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity" in their service performance. Also of particular importance was the principle based on which the team was to be recruited, given the geographical representation of the Member States.

Since the UN Charter did not specify the duration of the Secretary-General's term of office or how the Security Council elects him, the first General Assembly in 1946 voted on these matters. In this regard, it has been concluded that the Security Council will decide in private and secretly vote on the future Secretary-General of the United Nations, given that the position must not be subject to public debate. The 1946 General Assembly also stipulated that the Secretary-General was elected for five years with the possibility of re-election. The five permanent members of the U.N. also agreed that the Secretary-General should not be a citizen of their state.⁷

Since its establishment and until now, the Secretariat has undergone several changes to enable it to function well and manage the

⁷ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations. Volume 1: United Nations*, The Gale Group, 2004, p. 46.

problems facing humanity. As of July 2021, this U.N. body consisted of 28 departments and offices specializing in a number of issues, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), and many others.⁸ In his work, the current U.N. Secretary-General is assisted by no less than 44 people, who perform the functions of: Deputy Secretary General, Amina J. Mohammed, head of Cabinet (Earle Courtenay Rattray), Under-Secretary-General on various issues such as Politics (Volker Türk), Economic and Social Affairs (Liu Zhenmin), Peace Operations (Jean-Pierre François Renaud Lacroix) and others.⁹

Based on the Charter, this continuous change of Secretariat was requested by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Thus, during the Cold War, there were reforms of the Secretariat in 1947, 1953-56; 1964-66; 1974-77, and 1985-86,¹⁰ so reforms by each Secretary-General: Trygve Lie, Dag Hammarskjöld, U Thant, Kurt Waldheim, and Javier Perez de Cuellar. Therefore, it can be estimated that each had a different view of what the Secretariat and his team should look like, but what remained constant is that each of the four emphasized the importance of the body as the main arm of the organization. Eloquent in this regard is Dag Hammarskjöld's opinion: '*...The U.N. is what the nation states make of it, but within the limits set by the action and cooperation of governments, much depends on what the Secretariat does.*' Continuing the argument, Hammarskjöld believed the Secretariat had the opportunity to have creativity, to come up with ideas and initiatives in the performance of its functions, but also to influence the positions and actions of the states by presenting factual data¹¹ for these reasons he was considered a visionary of this body. From this idea, we can also draw the intentions that the Secretary-General had regarding the functioning of the Secretariat. Given the importance of Hammarskjöld for putting the peacekeeping mechanism into operation, we can only point out that he succeeded in fulfilling what he declared in the sense that he implemented the mechanism and is active today.

As regards the importance of the Secretary-General, over time, his role has been ever-expanding, especially since the articles of the Charter were ambiguous and did not give him an extensive initial range of action. Nevertheless, it was precisely on this lack of policy coherence that the Secretaries-General were able to develop their role in the early years of the Cold War, mainly based on Article 98, which allowed them to perform

⁸ https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/un_system_chart.pdf (accessed 29 May 2022).

⁹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/senior-management-group> (accessed 29 May 2022).

¹⁰ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.46.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 49.

“other functions as they will be indebted to him by these bodies (the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council).”¹² Given the article, we can argue that the Secretary-General has succeeded in convincing the other U.N. bodies, indirectly the member states – because they vote to take action to increase its prerogatives.

Among the actions to extend the role of the Secretary-General was the inclusion of the aspect of the management of peacekeeping operations. It happened first during the Cold War, when the Security Council, through the operations mandates, offered the Secretary the opportunity to manage the activity of the missions. Later evolved formally, after the Cold War, with the creation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 1992,¹³ today in the form of the Department of Peace Operations.¹⁴ As a result, the role played by the U.N. Secretary-General in international crises has depended heavily on his ability to maneuver other bodies to give it greater importance or not, mainly the Security Council. This premise was to be naturally assumed, because it was this body that proposed the investment of the Secretary-General by the General Assembly, and thus, he should have been assured of their cooperation. However, the Secretary-General had to juggle the positions and visions of the members of the Council as well as the provisions of the Charter to exercise his mandate.¹⁵ During the Cold War, but also after, it mattered a lot to maintain a close relationship with the permanent members of the Security Council to support him in his actions. Revealing in this regard is the vision of Javier Perez de Cuellar (1982-1991), who said that the Secretaries-General should avoid two extremes in the exercise of their mandate: an overly free interpretation of the UN Charter leading to succumbing, vanity, and incoherence; an overly strict interpretation of the Charter and its articles leading to modesty, to a sense of self-sufficiency and desire to avoid controversy.¹⁶ Thus, according to his suggestions, the Secretary-General was to be a well-balanced man, with great patience, who, through his “good offices” would seek a settlement of the parties to the conflict.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 50.

¹³ https://www.globalgovernance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GGI-Factsheet-History-of-UN-Peacekeeping_October2012.pdf (accessed 29 May 2022).

¹⁴ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/departement-of-peace-operations> (accessed 29 May 2022).

¹⁵ There was only one case in which the Secretary-General, in the person of Boutros Boutros Ghali, was no longer supported for another mandate by a member state, in this case the United States. For more details, see <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/boutros-ghali-refuses-to-with-draw-as-us-casts-its-veto-on-second-term-1.107964>

¹⁶ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.50.

The above explained the legal framework within which the Secretaries-General may carry out the functions assigned to them—mentioning the articles of the Charter and the Secretariat's developments over time aimed at presenting how this expansion took place. In the following, we will focus on the evolutionary internships of the Secretariat in the years prior to Kurt Waldheim's mandate.

2. The evolution of the Secretariat and the role of the Secretary-General until Kurt Waldheim (1945-1970)

The first Secretary-General of the United Nations was Trygve Lie, elected by the Security Council, and especially by the two superpowers. He was not a very well-known figure, and was proposed in the context that the position of President of the General Assembly was considered to be more important.¹⁷ Although it was thought that he would assume a passive mandate, Lie took positions as early as 1946 on the issues facing the international scene, as was the case with the Greek Civil War, recommending the formation of a team to investigate the border problems of Greece. During his tenure, Lie sought to overcome the organisation's blocks caused by the polarisation of the system, promoting the U.N. as a means of cooperation between the two camps. Lie's statements and actions regarding international crises - such as the one in Iran - and his struggle to offer the Secretary-General the chance to make his position known in the General Assembly and in the Security Council have led to the establishment of the norms and powers of communication of this entity. Edward Newman argues that Lie's actions made the U.N. Secretariat an actor on the international scene, thanks to his public statements about international crises, thus becoming a world-renowned entity rather than an opaque entity in the shadows as the League of Nations Secretariat used to be. These strong positions on international crises, and especially the situation of the war in Korea, prompted members of the Security Council, to strongly criticize the Secretary-General, who had to resign as head of the body in 1953.¹⁸ In order to seek a more passive and less influential administrator of the organisation, members of the Council agreed to elect the Swedish Dag Hammarskjöld as head of the organisation. Despite expectations, he turned out to be the person who further strengthened the functions of the Secretary-General, as will be shown.

The first serious reform of the Secretariat took place during the time of Hammarskjöld, who campaigned to extend the prerogatives of the U.N.

¹⁷ Leon Gordenker, *The U.N. Secretary-General and Secretariat*, Routledge, London, 2010, p. 11.

¹⁸ Edward Newman, *The U.N. Secretary-General from the Cold War to the New Era*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1998, pp. 37-39.

body. In the investment in his second term of office, Hammarskjold presented to the General Assembly his vision for the Secretary-General to make use of the organisation's entire mechanism and its "good offices" to have a more decisive involvement in the crises to the international peace and security. He also argued that in the event of a void of authority in the management of world peace caused by the lack of application of the Charter and traditional diplomacy, the Secretary-General is responsible for filling this void without being influenced by anyone in this regard.¹⁹ In interpreting this, we can argue Hammarskjold's intention to give a more decisive role to the Secretary in the management of peace and security when the U.N. mechanism does not work. Given Dag Hammarskjold's subsequent actions, such as forcing the U.N. intervention in Lebanon in 1958,²⁰ we can understand his desire and motivation to prevent the loss of human lives and the stubbornness with which he fought for the ideals of peace.²¹

During Dag Hammarskjold's term of office, the Secretariat has come to see several relevant changes to its functioning, reforms that have made both this body and the prerogatives of the Secretary-General more critical in the direction of the mission with which the organization was entrusted. Assuming the mandate from Trygve Lie in 1953, after his resignation, which sought in his senior years to lay the groundwork for the selection of Secretariat members and the funding of this U.N. body, Hammarskjold wanted to extend the prerogatives in several directions.²²

Following the follow-up to the U.N.'s *economic and social role*, the organization under Dag Hammarskjold has come to have several institutions that have taken a role in this sphere, primarily due to the need to develop mechanisms to support the new U.N. member states. Thus, prior to Hammarskjold's mandate, institutions such as the **Expanded Program of Technical Assistance** (1950) were inaugurated. This program would be extended by establishing a **Special Technical Support Fund** (1958). Later, new institutions were installed, such as the **Technical**

¹⁹ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.50., p. 53.

²⁰ For more details on this U.N. intervention and the authorization of the peacekeeping mission, see Alan James, *Peacekeeping in International Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1990 pp. 284-289.

²¹ In the biography dedicated to Dag Hammarskjold by Roger Lipsey, the author analyses the feelings and thoughts of the Secretary-General when he was forced to make some of the most important decisions on world security based on Hammarskjold's notes in *Markings* (Dag Hammarskjold, *Markings*, Knopf, 1964). His research made Dag Hammarskjold's person all the more mythical to the international postwar system as he was dedicated to the Stoicism philosophies and practices of medieval philosophers. For more details see Roger Lipsey, *Hammarskjold: A life*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2013,

²² Charles Winchmore, "The Secretariat: Retrospect and Prospect", in *International Organization*, vol. 19, nr. 3 (June 1965), p. 623.

Assistance Board, The Bureau of Technical Assistance Operations, and Office of Special Fund Operations. Also in 1958, Hammarskjold persuaded the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly to introduce an **OPEX programme** whereby U.N. experts would be appointed to administrative rather than technical positions.²³ All this had implications for the functioning of the Secretariat, which, being equipped with these institutions, went beyond the drafting of research and materials, to the operationalization of a development integration plan.²⁴

As regards the extension of prerogatives to the *military area* of the Secretariat, well defined by the Charter in Chapter VII, Charles Winchmore pointed out that in addition to the development of the peacekeeping mechanism, there was also a **United Nations Field Service** dealing with this sphere. Thus, this service was established in 1949 at the request of the Secretary-General based on Article 97, who in turn had responded to the request of the U.N. Mediator in Palestine for sending a group of 50 soldiers to assist observers in the implementation of the 1948 Armistices. The Special Committee of the General Assembly agreed to this request, and during that time, the United Nations Field Service was of particular importance for the authorization of new peacekeeping operations.²⁵

Dag Hammarskjold's mandate helped to play an influential role in *political issues* affecting international relations. Due to the organization's structure, which does not provide direct communication and intermediation between the delegations of the Member States, the Secretariat and the Secretary-General, through its "good offices", have become intermediaries for communication and consultations between delegations. From these positions, Andrew Cordier argued, the Secretary-General had the opportunity to take some positions on the political issues facing the international scene and, through intermediation, to decide with the delegates the approaches to be taken by the U.N. On this basis, the Secretary-General was included in policy formulations on international issues, thus becoming truly the "administrative head of the organization".²⁶ During his term of office, Hammarskjold sought to increase the prerogatives of this post. It succeeded by taking a direction on the role that the Secretariat should play and disseminating these prerogatives to his

²³ Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations. Volume I: The Years of Western Domination, 1945 – 1955*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 1982, p. 357.

²⁴ Charles Winchmore, "The Secretariat: Retrospect and Prospect", pp. 629-631.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 632-633.

²⁶ Andrew Cordier, "The Role of the Secretary-General" in Richard N. Swift (ed.), *Annual Review of United Nations Affairs, 1960-1961*, Oceana Publications, New York, 1962, pp. 1-14, *apud* Charles Winchmore, *op. cit.*, p. 635.

subordinates. He also created three central departments, including Political Relations with the Security Council and other offices on other issues. He is also the one who created the post of Sub-Secretary of Special Political Affairs, being adopted and implemented in June 1961. Based on these premises, Hammarskjöld had the opportunity to involve the body in a multitude of international issues.²⁷ Evan Luard argued that, in addition to Dag Hammarskjöld's qualities and the ability to develop the Secretariat and the prerogatives of the Secretary-General, he also enjoyed the support of U.N. member states. In this respect, given the tenacity with which it carried out the problems assigned to him during his term of office, there was the expression 'Leave it to Dag', and thus many of the States agreed that the Secretary-General should take a more critical role in international matters than he was generally assigned by the UN Charter.²⁸

Despite Hammarskjöld's developed visions of the role this U.N. body was supposed to play, some of them failed to be implemented because the Secretary-General ended tragically in a plane crash in September 1961,²⁹ being followed at the head of the U.N. by U Thant (1961-1971). U Thant election as head of the UN was not without serious discussions between the superpowers, especially concerning the Soviet proposal to change this body.³⁰ Appointed provisionally in November 1961, U Thant assured the permanent members that he would consult with his Sub-Secretaries on his future actions and in carrying out the mandates provided by the Security Council and the General Assembly. Finally, he chose a total of eight advisors who had or assumed the mandate of Sub-Secretary Generals, each of the three groups present in the organisation at the time, the two camps and the non-aligned.³¹

²⁷ Edward Newman, *The U.N. Secretary-General from the Cold War to the New Era*, pp. 39-49.

²⁸ Evan Luard, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

²⁹ Concerning the death of Dag Hammarskjöld, there is a whole mystery. According to the report of the U.N. Special Committee on investigating the causes of death of the Secretary-General, three scenarios were presented: aircraft failure, pilot error or intentional downing of the aeroplane either from the ground or from the air by another aeroplane. To this day the exact cause of Dag Hammarskjöld's death has not been established. For more details on this controversial episode see Susan Williams, *Who killed Hammarskjöld? The U.N., the Cold War and White Supremacy in Africa*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014.

³⁰ At the 1960 General Assembly, Nikita Khrushchev proposed that the position of the Secretary-General be assumed by a troika to make representatives of the three groups present in the U.N. at the time: the Western group, the socialist group, and the non-aligned group. The proposal did not pass, and as a result, U Thant was elected on the basis of the consensus of members of the Security Council. For more about the discussions between the death of Dag Hammarskjöld and the election of the new Secretary-General see Norrie MacQueen, *Peacekeeping and the International System*, Routledge, London, 2006, pp. 86-89

³¹ Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations. Volume II: The Age of Decolonization, 1955 - 1965*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 1989, pp. 207 - 212.

During his tenure, U Thant continued what Dag Hammarskjold had begun and, on the basis already laid, the new Secretary-General assumed the U.N.'s involvement in several international issues without making any material changes to the body. Thus, he authorised peacekeeping operations in West New Guinea (1962), Yemen (1963), Cyprus (1964), the Dominican Republic (1965) and Bangladesh (1965). He also involved the U.N. in other matters, even without informing the Council or the General Assembly about his actions, such as the mission in Sabah and Sarawak (1963).³² During his second term, U Thant had to witness international events of particular importance, such as the outbreak of the 6-Day War, the Vietnam War, and the Soviet Union's intervention in Czechoslovakia. However, his influence over them were close to none. As a result, in the face of these international crises, the Secretary-General has not had the same openness as the Security Council to authorize and manage peacekeeping operations. In the case of the 6-Day War, this was no longer possible because Gamal Abdel Nasser withdrew his agreement to allow the UNEF to remain in Egypt, while for the other two international crises, both the United States and the Soviet Union did not agree that their interests would be debated within the U.N. As a result, a discrepancy in support from members of the Security Council regarding the management of international crises can be observed. Edward Newman argued that this was due to the degrading importance of the organisation at the international level, but also to the fact that U Thant's mandates were restricted in comparison with Hammarskjold. These resulted in that the Secretary-General did not make the same contribution to the international crises as his predecessor. Instead, U Thant directed his mandate to other areas, such as those of economic and social problems, which he considered possible to have more disastrous impacts than political problems.³³

The start of Hammarskjold's extensive powers continued during the first years of U Thant's term, but after 1965 the so-called "Latent Period" described by Harry Wiseman³⁴ occurred. During this period, there was a downward trend, whereby the Secretary-General's services were not used so much. He had to continue working in other areas, such as the economic and social zone, or manage the already authorized peace operations.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 215.

³³ Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-52.

³⁴ Harry Wiseman, *The United Nations and international peacekeeping: a comparative analysis*, in "United Nations Institute for Training and Research", 1987, apud A.B. Fetherstone, *Towards a Theory of U.N. Peacekeeping*, Palgrave MacMillan, Londra, 1994, p. 16.

Although he had the support of members of the Security Council, U Thant decided to end his term of office at the end of 1971 on illness, and elections would be held for his office. Taking advantage of the fact that he was Austria's permanent representative to the UN, Kurt Waldheim took the opportunity. He ran for the position, succeeded in being elected, and took office in 1972.

3. Kurt Waldheim and his tenure as U.N. Secretary General (1972-1981)

Kurt Waldheim was the fourth Secretary-General of the United Nations. He took office in 1972 after U Thant completed his second term and refused to continue as head of the organization. In the following, we will present the life, person, and overall work of Kurt Waldheim at the head of the Secretariat. These would be done in order to have an overview of what he has done during his terms in of office, followed by an examination of his actions during the international crises.

Kurt Waldheim was born on 21 December 1918 in Sankt Andra-Wordern,³⁵ near Vienna, to the family of an Austrian of Czech origin who had changed his name from Waclawik to Waldheim,³⁶ the latter being a Catholic, inspector of Roman Catholic schools and a socialist Christian activist.³⁷ Waldheim's life and **birth location are important** for the type of personality and leadership he adopted, in the sense that they later influenced his perceptions of what should happen to problems affecting the world. Waldheim was born in an Austria in search of its own identity after renouncing its monarchy in World War I. In addition to economic, political and social problems, the Austrian state at that time also faced the assertion of extreme movements that further shook the interwar establishment. Thus, Vienna witnessed the affirmation of the Nazi party and a nationalist militia, Heimwehr, of a turbulent political period since the end of the parliamentary regime in 1933, an attempted coup by the Nazis, the assassination of Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dolfuss, the national debate on the future of Austria alongside Germany or Anschluss, and the German intervention in 1938.³⁸ As a result, the events that Waldheim witnessed during this period were some of the motivations for pursuing a career in diplomacy and politics, as he confessed: *'If I were to analyze the reasons, I am convinced that the main motivation for pursuing a career in*

³⁵ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 5 June 2022).

³⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 5 June 2022).

³⁷ https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim (accessed 5 June 2022).

³⁸ For more details see David Clay Large, *Between Two Fires: Europe's Path in the 1930s*, W.W. Norton & Company, London 1991, pp. 59-101 and Julius Braunthal, *The Tragedy of Austria*, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1948, available at <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.203942/page/n5/mode/2up> (accessed 5 June 2022).

diplomacy and politics was given by the circumstances and events of the era in which I reached maturity'.³⁹ This quote is of particular importance because it shows the interest Waldheim had in pursuing a career in both spheres. Therefore, we can assume that his argument for having a high-ranking career was to prevent the scenarios of the interwar period from happening again and to prevent the suffering of innocent people.

In this context, the young Waldheim attended formal studies in Austria until 1936, when he decided to do military service, enrolled in the cavalry, and left the army shortly after. The next few years were tense and, like the first years of his life, decisive for his future. In 1937 he enrolled at the University of Vienna, where he studied law and the Consular Academy, but attended only one year because, in 1938, the Nazis came to power in Austria. Because of his father actions, who campaigned against the rise of the Nazis and who was forcibly retired in 1938, Waldheim was forced to give up on his studies. Taking advantage of the emerging context and probably believing that no other solution exists to fulfill his ambitions, Waldheim enrolled in the National Socialist Student League and later enlisted in the Wehrmacht. Because he aligned with Nazism, Waldheim had the opportunity to return to Vienna, where he completed his consular program, and was subsequently sent on a reconnaissance mission to France in 1940. With the start of Operation Barbarossa in June 1941, Waldheim was displaced on the Eastern Front. After few months in this part of the war, he suffered an injury at his right leg after a grenade exploded next to him and was forced to be withdrawn for medical reasons.⁴⁰

In his memoirs, Waldheim's view on his military service in the German army proved to be an excruciating one, forced to do it, the explosion of a grenade close to him and the wound to his leg being the way out of the front.⁴¹ In his memoirs, Waldheim recounts how he made a formal request to allow him to return to Vienna and continue his law and consular studies in order to obtain his master's degree.⁴²

However, the episode Waldheim recounts in his memoirs turns out to be false, given that subsequent analyses of his Nazi past showed that he was not allowed to return to Vienna but continued his work on the front, this time in the Balkans. Archival research has shown that Waldheim was assigned to the Balkan E Army where he became an intelligence officer and

³⁹ Kurt Waldheim, *In the Eye of the Storm*, Adler&Adler Publisher, Bethesda, 1986, p. 12.

⁴⁰ Michael T. Kuchinsky, "An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim" in Kent J. Kille (ed.), *The U.N. Secretary-General and Moral Authority. Ethics and Religion in International Leadership*, Georgetown University Press, Washington D.C., 2007, pp. 187-193.

⁴¹ Details on his memoirs from the frontline in Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 18.

translator and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Meanwhile, he had the opportunity to return to Vienna and finish his doctoral studies.⁴³

Later, after becoming President of Austria in 1986, accusations of his Nazi activity surfaced and tarnished his international image at the time. Thus, an extensive on research on his life was carried out. The results proved that between 1941 and 1945 Waldheim was displaced in the Balkans under the command of General Löhr. Here, he was close and knew about the atrocities that had been practiced by his commander, who ordered more than 40,000 Jews from Thessaloniki to be deported to Auschwitz but had no direct involvement in committing them. Different from his commander, who was sentenced and executed in 1947 following the Nuremberg trial, Waldheim managed to surrender to the British in 1945 in southern Austria at Carinthia. He confessed to the British that he fled from the command of General Löhr, who headed the D corps of the Wehrmacht at the time and was not trialed for his Nazi actions.⁴⁴

After surrendering to Allied forces, Waldheim entered the Austrian diplomatic corps in 1945. As regards to the beginnings of his diplomatic career, he confessed that:

'I was still young enough to want to help to create a world in which oppression and injustice and all the corresponding social ills would no longer be tolerated, one in which my country might regain an honorable place and play a useful role again'.⁴⁵

As a result, after a while in the Vienna Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he came to work at the Austrian Embassy in Paris between 1948 and 1951. Then, from 1951 to 1955, he became the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff department in Vienna. Waldheim later led Austria's delegation to the United Nations in 1955 to serve as Vienna's ambassador to Canada between 1956 and 1960. From 1964 to 1968 and 1970-1971 he was the permanent representative of Austria to the U.N., and from 1968 to 1970 he occupied the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

His political ambitions led Waldheim to run for president of the Austrian Republic in 1971, but he lost the election. Returning to New York as Austria's Permanent Representative to the U.N., he continued his ambitions to hold even higher positions and thus began to consider the idea of serving as Secretary-General of the U.N., who was expected to be

⁴³ James Daniel Ryan, *The United Nations Under Kurt Waldheim, 1972-1981*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, MD, USA, 2001, pp. 10-12.

⁴⁴ https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim (accessed 6 June 2022).

⁴⁵ Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, p. 21

released following U Thant's withdrawal. Although he was initially not directly interested in this position, in his memoirs he stated that "for any diplomat of the world, the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations is the highest goal of a diplomatic career".⁴⁶ Thus, he began his efforts to gain support for his candidacy, also launching a book on Austria's foreign policy and how its example can "show the way for new approaches towards the goal that we all pursue: international peace, justice, and prosperity".⁴⁷

In the race for the position of Secretary-General of the U.N. was There was also Max Jakobson of Finland, but unlike Kurt Waldheim, he took a different approach to this position. He favored broader prerogatives for the Secretary-General, and his interventionist attitude reminded him of Hammarskjöld. Waldheim, instead, preferred a cooler, moderate approach by which the Secretary-General would have a manager role to manage crises based on those transmitted to him by the Security Council. This was also due to Waldheim's ambition to climb the hierarchical ladder in diplomacy and politics and not to disturb his eventual electors. In his race for the U.N. leadership, he courted the Great Powers, as well as smaller states, out of the need to ensure that he would be elected, this process was also based on the relations he established when he was Austria's Permanent Representative to the UN.⁴⁸ Finally, after sustained efforts by himself and the government of Vienna, Kurt Waldheim was elected Secretary-General by the Security Council and the General Assembly in December 1971 and assumed office in January 1972.⁴⁹

After two terms as the head of the UN, Waldheim was eager to go for a third term, and four of the five permanent members of the Council agreed to this continuation of the mandate. This was especially to the fact that his managerial style did not pose any problem to the interests of the superpowers. Despite this openness and prospects for Waldheim to become the first Secretary-General with three mandates, the People's Republic of China opposed Waldheim's re-election as the head of the U.N., possibly out of the desire to elect a person at the head of the U.N. from among third-world states.⁵⁰

Left without an office in New York, Kurt Waldheim returned to Vienna and ran for Austria's presidency on 8 June 1986. Despite this

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

⁴⁷ Kurt Waldheim, *The Austrian Example*, Verlag Fritz Molden, Vienna, 1971, p. 205 *apud* Michael T. Kuchinsky, „An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim”, p. 196.

⁴⁸ Kurt Waldheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38.

⁴⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 6 June 2022).

⁵⁰ Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p. 125

reputable success, weeks before the election, a weekly newspaper, *Profil*, released an article detailing that there were omissions about Waldheim's actions between 1938 and 1945 and that his memoirs in his autobiography (*In the Eye of the Storm*) about the actions after the injury on the Eastern Front were false. As a result, a panel of historical experts was formed to investigate Waldheim's actions in the Balkans and concluded that he knew about the crimes committed by the Nazis but did not participate in their commission. Despite this result, he was still isolated on the international scene after the *Waldheim Affair*. He did not visit any European state or the United States, where a ban on his entry into the U.S. was imposed. It is argued that Waldheim's international isolation has been pursued as a result of his actions as Secretary-General to favor second and third-world states at the expense of superpowers.⁵¹ Despite these arguments, we can take the view that the measures taken against Waldheim were more because he lied in memoirs about his actions and thus tarnished the image of the Secretary-General's portfolio, the communities decimated by the Nazis, Jews and Serbs, Austria and, including, the conception of a modern Europe.⁵² Following a gray mandate in 1992, Waldheim refused to run for president of Austria and retired, later dying in 2007 at the age of 88.

4. Kurt Waldheim's managerial style

In a persistent analysis of the mandates of several Secretaries-General, Kent Kille made a series of typologies labeling how they headed their mandates. He stopped at the mandates of Dag Hammarskjold, Kurt Waldheim, and Kofi Annan. If, in Dag Hammarskjold's case, Kille described him as a visionary, given the specific way he led the organization and his idealism on multilateral diplomacy, Kurt Waldheim was seen as a manager, while Kofi Annan as a strategist.

Kent Kille's analysis is helpful in this research because it gives us a paradigm through which we can better understand Kurt Waldheim's mandate as Secretary-General. Thus, he fits into the standards specific to the managerial style because the actions during his term of office and his work were characteristic of a manager, as many of those who knew him catalogued him. Kille divided Waldheim's work into several categories. Regarding the **agenda setting**, Waldheim fits into the organizational pattern because he did not want to present contradictory ideas or opinions in his reports, maintaining a non-critical discourse; concerning *finance*, he sought to manage expenditure without causing additional costs; he did not

⁵¹ https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Kurt_Waldheim#Education_and_Family (accessed 6 June 2022).

⁵² Michael T. Kuchinsky, "An Ethical Enigma: Another Look at Kurt Waldheim", p. 195.

seek to restructure the Secretariat (as Hammarskjold tried) fundamentally, but made some changes at the head of the body in order to carry out its mandate. With regard to the *recruitment of staff for the Secretariat*, Waldheim agreed to increase it to allow each Member state to have representatives in the body. Related to the political positions adopted by Waldheim, he partially pursued the ideal route of the type of manager. This was done by *being present in meetings* (Article 98). He differed from the ideal pattern, however, because he appealed to Article 99 when he considered it necessary, an example being the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis. He also took *strategic positions* on certain international issues, but followed the positions of states, especially superpowers, and did not try to influence too much.

Waldheim's managerial style was also felt in the **peaceful resolution of conflicts**. Thus, different from the pattern, he initiated *several independent* actions in this regard, but did not leave the assigned mandate and tried to take actions accepted by all the Security Council member states. Regarding *the mandated* actions, Kurt Waldheim made the entire Secretariat mechanism available to the U.N. to carry out the assigned mandates, so he fits perfectly into the organizational pattern in this area. Concerning authorized peacekeeping missions, Kille thought that Waldheim had not been involved in defining the mandate of operations and that he had sought to fulfill the mandate provided.⁵³ Here, however, we can argue that although Waldheim did not get involved in this part, he nevertheless played an essential role in the way in which he viewed the operation, as will be shown later, having the opportunity to present his view over the form of the mission.

As will be shown in the following lines, Kent Kille's argument about Waldheim's managerial style may be supported by Waldheim's actions during his two terms and his involvement in various international episodes, but he had occasions where he assigned a more visionist role, bearing, however, the limits imposed by the Security Council.

5. First mandate as U.N. Secretary-General (1972-1976)

Upon assuming his office, Kurt Waldheim "felt that there is a need for a new air at this level" and made a series of changes to the Secretariat. After the death of Ralph Bunche, Nobel Peace Prize winner for the actions and management of crises in the Middle East, Waldheim replaced him with the British Brian Urquhart. The latter was equally relevant to the U.N. during the Cold War and the peacekeeping mechanism, working close to Dag Hammarskjold in authorising operations during his term of office.

⁵³ Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, pp. 123-153.

Waldheim also brought Canadian George Davidson as Under Secretary-General for Administration and Management. As Under Secretary-General for Business with the General Assembly, Waldheim appointed Bradford Morse and later William Buffum.⁵⁴

In the first year of his term, Waldheim recalls that he focused heavily on establishing links with the new Chinese delegation, the People's Republic of China, and assisted them in their early moments within the organisation.⁵⁵ He also visited mainland China in August of the same year, where he met with several senior representatives of the Communist Party of Peking, all to show the support of the UN to the Chinese.⁵⁶ Aside from the Chinese issue, in March 1972, Waldheim dealt with situations affecting the regional stability of Africa and made a series of visits in South Africa and Namibia to manage the Namibian crisis.⁵⁷ Despite the given mandate, the context of the region and the interests of the superpowers did not allow the U.N. to play an important role in managing the situation,⁵⁸ and so Waldheim's visit was only of a protocol to fulfil the mandate given by the Security Council.⁵⁹ As Kille argued, he assumed a limited role in his actions and relied, prior to the action, on receiving a mandate to do so.⁶⁰

In 1972 Waldheim visited the island of Cyprus and the *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus* to try to find a solution to the conflict between the Greek and Turkish communities.⁶¹ Despite Waldheim's involvement in the Cypriot crisis, the situation was not possible to be resolved. The Secretary-General had to find a series of compromises to limit the escalation of conflicts. Although he visited the island in 1972 and tried to find a compromise in 1974 following the coup d'état in Athens, which brought a military junta to the head of the Greek state, Turkey intervened on the island on 20 July, citing the 1960 Treaty of Warranty allowing such intervention. In this tense context, Waldheim sought to contain the conflict and obtained an armistice on July 22, which he sought to strengthen by calling for the UNFICYP contributing states to supplement with troops. In his managerial style, Waldheim asked the Council for directives to manage the situation in

⁵⁴ Kurt Waldheim, *In the Eye of the Storm*, pp. 47-51.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 51.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 52-53.

⁵⁷ For a detailed analysis on the Namibian crisis and the U.N. intervention at the end of 1980s see Norrie MacQueen, *United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa Since 1960*, Routledge, New York, 2014, pp. 106-122.

⁵⁸ Edward Newman, *op.cit.*, p. 60.

⁵⁹ U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/309(1972), February 1972, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/309\(1972\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/309(1972)) (accessed 7 June 2022).

⁶⁰ Kent J. Kille, *From Manager to Visionary*, p. 146.

⁶¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 9 June 2022).

Cyprus. However, the Soviet Union opposed a resolution extending the prerogatives of the operation and the Secretary-General. Faced with these bottlenecks, however, Waldheim played an important role and provided management of the situation, managing the situation on the ground and ending a series of local ceasefires between the fighting parties, a concrete example being the situation of UNFICYP troops at Nicosia airport. Finally, the situation was stabilized when in 1975, it was declared the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, recognized only by Turkey, and when the peacekeeping operation stabilized on the demarcation line between the two territories.⁶²

The most essential involvement during his first term was in the Middle East regarding the situation arising from the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War in October 1973. In this tense context, Waldheim tried to take a role in managing the situation but followed his characteristic managerial style, through which he pursued the mandates offered by the Security Council. In this context, the Secretary-General mobilized observers from operations already authorized to oversee the provisional truce between the parties. Resolution 340⁶³ instructed the Secretary-General to devise a plan to organize the future peacekeeping operation to be mobilized in the area. Taking the opportunity, Waldheim had the opportunity to outline his vision of the form of UNEF II and, on 26 October 1973, gave a report outlining the main features of the operation.⁶⁴ His report was of particular importance for the peacekeeping mechanism as it contained some aspects that underpinned the future authorised missions, such as: the need of support from the Security Council; the cooperation of the parties involved with the mission; and the mission to function as an integrated military unit. On the basis of Waldheim's report, the Council adopted Resolution 341 of 27 October 1973 authorizing the disposition of the *United Nations Emergency Force II*,⁶⁵ which operated until 1978, when it was withdrawn following the conclusion of the Camp David Agreements.

Through these actions, Waldheim fulfilled the mandates the Security Council gave, but also made an important contribution to carrying out the authorised operations in the Middle East and peacekeeping as a whole. In addition to this contribution, between 1973 and 1974, Waldheim

⁶² Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-58.

⁶³ U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/340(1973), 25 October 1973 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/340\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/340(1973)) (accessed 8 June 2022).

⁶⁴ U.N. Security Council Document S/11052, 26 October 1973, available at <https://undocs.org/S/11052> (accessed 8 June 2022).

⁶⁵ U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/341(1973), 27 October 1973 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/341\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/341(1973)) (accessed 8 June 2022).

made a series of visits to the region to the capitals of the parties involved, such as the August 1973 tour to Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt and Jordan. Subsequently, in June 1974, he continued his visits to Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Jordan and Egypt, and in November 1974 he visited Syria, Israel and Egypt in order to perfect the authorization of the peacekeeping operations on the territory of these states.⁶⁶

6. Second mandate as U.N. Secretary-General (1977-1981)

In December 1976 the Security Council and the General Assembly agreed to extend Kurt Waldheim's term as head of the international organization, despite opposition from third-world states.⁶⁷ Upon assuming his second term, Waldheim expressed his opinion on the Great Powers to renounce the spheres of influence and assume the fulfillment of the obligations of the UN Charter⁶⁸ related to the keeping of peace and the development of a prosperous world for all the citizens of the world.

The second mandate as Secretary-General of the United Nations witnessed a return to a tense situation at the international level. Thus, Kurt Waldheim sought to manage the situation in Lebanon that began in 1978, when Israel intervened in that state to attack the positions of the Free Palestine Organisation, which was re-established in the country. Following the Israeli intervention in March 1978, the Security Council adopted Resolution 425, asking the Secretary-General to come up with a 24-hour report on the implementation of the resolution.⁶⁹ To everyone's surprise, Waldheim was able to come up almost immediately with a report⁷⁰ on the implementation of the resolution.⁷¹ As a result of the rapidity with which the Secretariat moved, the Security Council adopted Resolution 426 authorizing the *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon*, which was tasked with overseeing the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, re-establishing international peace and security, and ensuring the resettlement of Lebanese government control in the region.⁷² Edward Newman pointed out that the resolution had many slippages and that the mandate was unclear. However, it was the merit of Waldheim and Urquhart because

⁶⁶ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/kurt-waldheim> (accessed 8 June 2022).

⁶⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kurt-Waldheim> (accessed 8 June 2022).

⁶⁸ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

⁶⁹ U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/425(1978), 19 March 1978, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/425\(1978\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/425(1978)) (accessed 9 June 2022).

⁷⁰ U.N. Security Council Document S/12611, 19 March 1978, available at <https://undocs.org/S/12611> (accessed 9 June 2022).

⁷¹ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

⁷² U.N. Security Council Resolution S/RES/426(1978) 19 March 1978, available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/426\(1978\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/426(1978)) (accessed 9 June 2022).

they were able to come up with a solution to manage the situation and carry out the mandate,⁷³ albeit with many difficulties, as proof that the operation is still active in the region today.

After this episode, Waldheim became involved in other international crises, this time without much success as in the Middle East. He made many visits to the Indo-Chinese region as the Vietnam War caused a wave of refugees and held a meeting in Geneva in June 1979 to help solve the problems. Also in May 1979, Waldheim continued its agenda in Cyprus and held a high-level meeting to restore inter-municipal discussions on the island's future, but they subsequently failed. The end of 1979 represented several challenges for the U.N. and the international scene. In this respect, the 1979 American hostage crisis in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan took place. With regard to these situations, Waldheim sought to manage the situations and try to resolve them,⁷⁴ even invoking Article 99 for the crisis in Iran, but did not succeed in doing so, especially as the interests of the two superpowers were involved.

Finally, Kurt Waldheim was forced to end his U.N. mandates at the end of 1981 because he did not receive support from China to extend the mandate for another five years. He was succeeded by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar from Peru, who later served as Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General in Afghanistan.

Conclusions

The purpose of this article was to analyse the role of the Secretary-General of the U.N., focusing on Kurt Waldheim's mandates, and to present his major decisions regarding the international crises he faced during his holding of that portfolio. The text sought to observe how Kurt Waldheim applied the managerial leadership style in his actions to juggle between inciting superpowers and implementing his vision. Although criticized by many for his conciliatory stance on superpowers, Waldheim's mandates have been crowned with several successes, including the resolution of the Middle East conflict between Israel and Egypt. Moreover, his contribution to the peacekeeping mechanism made peacekeeping work more effectively during his term, as evidence of the success of UNEF II and the operation in Syria that prevented the resurgence of conflicts between Damascus and Jerusalem. Therefore, given his style, Kurt Waldheim was analyzed from two perspectives. A positive one was esteemed by the caution and the managerial way he collaborated with the superpowers to manage international crises and the safety and predictability she offered to

⁷³ Edward Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁷⁴ Timothy L. Gall (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

the role of Secretary-General. Moreover, on the other hand, a negative, critical one accused Waldheim of a lack of initiative and inspiration in managing crises during his mandates.

Besides these conclusions, the subject matter analysis could be expanded and continued by comparing Kurt Waldheim's mandate with that of his predecessors or even his successor, Javier Perez de Cuellar. This could be done in order to assess to which degree his mandate was typical for a manager and if there were moments when he assumed to roles of visionary, to say so, or of a strategist.

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Marietta Sadova: Fascist Identities and Political Compromise in Communist Romania

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Abstract: After a brief period of liberalization in 1956, cultural politics in communist Romania went through an ideological radicalization between 1958 and the early 1960s, which led to intimidation campaigns, arrests, trials, and condemnations of several groups of interwar intellectuals. Director and actress Marietta Sadova was convicted in the 'Noica-Pillat' trial in March 1960. This paper aims to unravel the complex interaction between culture and politics through a qualitative analysis of Marietta Sadova's case study. The focus will be on the Securitate's surveillance, coercion methods, and narrative construction on one hand and the artist's surviving fascist identity, compromises made to survive, and the validity of cultural niches of existence on the other. The theoretical and methodological apparatus is built on new historiographical approaches to communist repression, including the ability of the secret police to construct and politically instrumentalize guilt narratives. The results suggest that the interaction between the interwar intellectuals and the communist authorities was neither unidirectional nor unitary but multi-layered and mutually depended on negotiations and concessions, as well as on the secret police agents' newly acquired methods of creating and repressing 'hostile' social networks.

Keywords: *communism, cultural politics, fascism, Marietta Sadova, repression, theatre*

Rezumat: După o scurtă perioadă de liberalizare în 1956, politicile culturale din România comunistă au intrat într-o perioadă de radicalizare între 1958 și începutul anilor 1960, care au dus la campanii de intimidare, arestări, procese și condamnări politice ale diferitelor grupuri de intelectuali socializați în perioada interbelică. Marietta Sadova, director și actor de teatru, a fost condamnată în procesul lotului „Noica-Pillat” în martie 1960. Articolul urmărește interacțiunea

complexă dintre cultură și politică în România anilor 1950 prin intermediul unei analize calitative asupra studiului de caz al Mariettei Sadova. Analiza se concentrează, pe de-o parte, pe tehnicile de supraveghere ale Securității, metodele coercitive aplicate și construcția narativă a vinovăției, iar pe de altă parte se operează o deconstrucție a identității fasciste reziduale, a compromisurilor realizate și a validității conceptului de nișe culturale ale existenței. Aparatul teoretic și metodologic se fundamentează pe baza unor abordări istoriografice moderne ale represiunii comuniste, accentuând capacitatea poliției secrete de a construi și instrumentaliza narațiuni ale vinovăției. Rezultatele studiului relevă faptul că interacțiunea dintre intelectualii interbelici și autoritățile comuniste nu a fost nici unitară, nici unidirecțională, ci poate fi definită mai degrabă ca multistratificată și dependentă reciproc de negocieri și concesiuni, precum și de noile metode ale agenților Securității de a inventa și ulterior reprimă rețele sociale „ostile”.

Cuvinte-cheie: comunism, politici culturale, fascism, Marietta Sadova, represiune, teatru

Introduction

The Romanian communist regime was broadly divided into the Stalinist rule of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1947-1965) and the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989). The Gheorghiu-Dej regime was engaged in violent repression against entire social categories such as 'chiaburi' (*kulaks*), political opponents, intellectuals, resistance groups, and opinion leaders, resulting in tens of thousands of citizens killed, tortured, imprisoned, forcibly deported, or abusively deprived of their property for invented political crimes¹. After political prisons and forced labour camps were closed in 1964, the regime changed its repressive strategies to subtler coercion methods in order to co-opt and control dissidents and intellectuals by employing symbolic, ideological, and material means and by trying to convince them to make concessions or develop politically neutral survival strategies². Even if these two coercive methods seem different, they were complementary regarding the political aim they pursued, as the present study aims to unravel. Marietta Sadova holds an essential position in the cultural history of interwar and communist Romania, whose professional career frequently interfered with politics due to her profession as a director

¹ Lavinia Stan, 'Women as anti-communist dissidents' in Florentina Andreescu, Michael Shapiro (ed.), *Genre and the (Post)Communist Woman*, Routledge, 2014, p. 84.

² *Ibidem*, p. 84.

and actress. In communism, the theatre was a habitual practice for propaganda purposes and functioned based on a strictly supervised repertoire³. As a result, her sinuous path opens a new perspective on the relation between theatre performance and the secret police, as well as on well-researched concepts of 'resistance,' 'compromise' and 'victimhood'.

The present research tries to offer an answer to the question of cultural repression and political collaboration during the communist regime in Romania, starting from the premise that, between 1947-1989, even if the *cultural* and *political* fields were distinct, they were intertwined by mutual ideological intrusions and various social networks' conflicting interests. The intellectuals, especially the former fascists, democrats, social-democrats or apolitical, had different strategies to overcome their compromising political past and preserve their cultural status at the intersection of culture and politics while being targeted by the surveillance web of the Securitate.

The focus will be on an in-depth qualitative analysis of a case study of Marietta Sadova using her surveillance file from the CNSAS (National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives) archives. We will try to deconstruct the narrative of her conviction from 1960 and relieve her biography from ideological clichés and constraints. The novelty of the method is reflected in the analysis combining two perspectives on victimhood: the Securitate's bureaucratic and ideological view perspective through the CNSAS files, reports, and agents' annotations, and the victim's perspective from the notes written by informant cellmates during her arrest and interrogation. The synthesis of the two sources determined the final verdict delivered by the Securitate officers to the justice court. As for the historiographical debate around 'repression,' the analysis proposes a new perspective on its rationale, focusing on the newly acquired methods of the Securitate cadres from the USSR secret agents of constructing and later repressing social networks of 'hostile elements' rather than pursue separate individuals. It resulted from the training taken in the mid-1950s in the USSR by the Romanian secret police cadres. The approach comes as an addition to the classical historiographical perspective that considers the Romanian repression from the late 50s the mere result of the Hungarian revolution in 1956, neglecting the method-related transformations within the work of the Securitate officers.

The analysis of these complementary facets of the communist repression against an interwar theatre director and actress determines the structure of the study. Firstly, her attempt to find a 'cultural niche of

³ Monica Gheț, *Moments in the Destiny of Romanian Culture in Communism – Theater and Film*, in *Philobiblon, Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities*, vol. 8-9, 2003, p. 312.

existence'⁴ through theatre to carry out her cultural activity without much intrusion of the communist ideological directives are examined. Secondly, the focus is on Sadova's failure to pursue an apolitical form of cultural activity without interfering with the state's ideological constraints, eventually leading to her imprisonment. She was part of a grander surveillance program of the Securitate, which was responsible for convicting hundreds of intellectuals in political trials based on obscure and retroactive faults. The recurrent element addressed throughout the research is the communist authorities' strategy to instrumentalize past and present political allegiances to construct the 'intellectual enemy' narrative at the intersection of past fascist engagement and alleged present anti-communist attitudes. From a micro-social perspective, the targeted intellectuals knew they had to carefully navigate these conflicting identities to survive the all-seeing gaze of the Securitate's informant networks.

In contrast, from a macro-social perspective, one could not have anticipated the repression methodically constructed around their specific social category. However, the conclusions suggest that even if the intellectuals avoided exposing their grievances towards the communist regime, the condemnation depended only on the will of the Securitate officers, not on the intellectuals' caution when meeting possible compromising social contacts. Given the nature of this equivocal conclusion, one limit of the study is the randomness of repression, and the incomprehensible choice of the Securitate for one targeted individual over another, as oral directives and behind-closed-doors plans are non-quantifiable units of analysis due to the lack of sources at our disposal.

Theatre and the Iron Guard

Marietta Sadova was born on July 22, 1897 in Sibiu and went to Bucharest to study at the Conservatory of Dramatic Arts and pursue a theatrical career. She was an actress and theatre director under several regimes while coordinating the National Theatre and the 'Constantin

⁴ The concept of 'cultural niches of existence' was developed by Gabriel Andreescu in *Existența prin cultură. Represiune, colaboraționism și rezistență intelectuală sub regimul comunist*, [The Existence through Culture. Repression, collaborationism and intellectual resistance during Communist Regime], Humanitas, Bucharest, 2015. He provides an incipient theoretical and methodological framework, defining a 'cultural niche of existence' as a path of one intellectual's artistic affirmation, being a form of partial independence from the totalitarian power, which gives him meaning of his own life in a suffocating cultural field. In short, in order to create, the intellectual had to exist, and in order to exist, he had to be allowed to exist. Existing without working was a sentence to poverty and marginalization, while working required several compromises. The 'cultural niches of existence' gives us an innovative perspective on how certain intellectuals found a niche where the compromise between personal cultural standards and the interference of communist censorship was accepted as reasonable.

Nottara' Theatre in Bucharest. According to some research, Sadova was part of the second generation of Romanian artists and theoreticians who affirmed themselves between 1945-1947, alongside Ion Olteanu, Val Mugur, Petru Comarnescu, Alice Voinescu, Aurora Nasta, Mihai Popescu, Aura Buzescu, Ion Finișteanu⁵.

Sadova married poet, playwright, and novelist Ion Marin Sadoveanu in 1919, when she was 22. After their marriage, the couple pursued doctoral studies in Paris and returned to Romania in 1921. In the early 30s, Sadoveanu served as general director of Bucharest's theatre and opera and was appointed as undersecretary of state at the Ministry of Arts. The couple divorced in 1928 as Marietta carried on a clandestine love affair with Haig Acterian, a seven-years younger actor from Bulandra-Manolescu-Maximilian-Storin theatre company. Haig Acterian graduated from the Bucharest Conservatory and became the director of the National Theatre in 1940. He was the brother of lawyer Arșavir Acterian and director Jeni Acterian, the author of the famous *Diary of a Hard-to-Please Girl*. Due to her relationship with Haig, Marietta eventually joined the group Criterion Association, which gathered prominent cultural personalities such as Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, Mihail Sebastian, Mircea Vulcănescu, Arșavir Acterian, Petru Comarnescu and others. Marietta Sadova and Haig Acterian formed one of the most important and famous 'legionary couples' within the circle of nationalist intellectuals, and central figures in Bucharest's cultural elites⁶.

Marietta Sadova was both a talented actress and director and a controversial person regarding her political allegiances. She became a convinced activist for the Iron Guard in the late 1930s and enlisted in 1934 due to her anti-Semitic and radical Orthodox views. In the early 1940s, her actions revealed a combative, nationalist, and zealous religious person who used the National Theatre as a propaganda tool in recruiting young students for the looming victory of the Legion. According to Bejan, Sadova viewed herself as a 'bridge between her elite cultural community of theatre and film and the Legionary Movement,' directing her activity toward attracting people for the legionary cause⁷. Reports also noted that Sadova actively participated in the Legionary Rebellion in January 1941⁸.

⁵ Monica Gheț, *op.cit.*, p. 312. The list was inspired by actress Sorana Coroamă Stanca, a close friend of Marietta Sadova

⁶ Anca Diana Axinia, *Women and Politics in the Romanian Legionary Movement*, PhD thesis, European University Institute, Florence, January 13 2022, p. 130

⁷ Cristina A. Bejan, *Intellectuals and Fascism in Interwar Romania. The Criterion Association*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 234

⁸ Archives of the Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (from now on ACNSAS), Informative Fund, File 209489, vol. 1, f. 114

The ongoing struggle for the ideals of the Iron Guard even after its defeat in 1941 has combined with Sadova's need for cultural survival under the communist regime. Haig Acterian was arrested and condemned to 12 years in prison, and due to his wife's efforts, he was sent by young King Michael to fight against Bolsheviks on the Eastern Front. Haig disappeared on the front in 1943, most likely being killed during the battles in the Kuban. However, Sadova never gave up on trying to reach her husband and continued to hold regular meetings with former Legionaries. She organized to aid and raise money for the arrested Legionaries and their family members while also drawing up a 'black list' of actors who did not sympathize with the Iron Guard, including the director of the 'Constantin Nottara' Theatre, Chiril Economu⁹. All these pro-Guardian initiatives strengthened the hatred of Sadova's colleagues against her, which later paved the way for various accusations directed toward her shady past in informant notes. The Securitate began collecting information concerning her political past allegiance and her alleged anti-communist remarks to instrumentalize Sadova's repression.

Like many other intellectuals, Marietta Sadova's survival depended on doubling her attitude toward the regime: she pursued her ideals in private while publicly manifesting approval for the communist regime. Her communist conversion was part of the survival tactic which allowed her to follow a theatre career without alarming the authorities about her fascist past. However, the Securitate followed her professional

⁹ During the 1950s, Chiril Economou was a vicious opponent of Marietta Sadova in the world of theatre, writing informant notes to the Securitate in order to discredit her. In a note from 1959, Economou described Sadova as 'third-hand actress' and a 'fleece brought to power by the legionaries' (ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File 209489, vol. I, f. 89). He claimed that since she was the coordinator of the National Theater, 'she had the ambition to succeed, defaming and challenging any talent that was beginning to assert himself or that was in full assertion. Marietta's portrait was clearly unfavourably constructed, being described as a talented but very cunning director, her career being linked to her ability to manipulate theatre directors and political elites to reach leadership positions. There were other details the Securitate was considering, such as actress Corina Constantinescu's religious wedding (Marietta Sadova's friend, former legionnaire) in the theatre hall, to whom Marietta presumably offered a 200,000 lei donation, while 'the monthly salary of the undersigned was 5,000 lei per month at that time. The note aimed to slander Sadova's legitimacy to hold leadership positions: 'Sadova remained a legionnaire through ideas and feelings' (ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File 209489, ff. 89-92). Even if the Securitate dismissed Economou's statements as 'unfounded' during the investigations, his notes were included in the 1960 trial sentence as it follows: 'The defendant [Marietta Sadova] also revealed her chauvinist-legionary feelings in the Nottara Theater, slandering the regime's achievements as reflected from the statements of witnesses Chiril Economou, Ludovic Antal and Stroescu Nela' (Mihai Giugariu (coord.), *Prigoana. Documente ale procesului C. Noica, C. Pillat, S. Lăzărescu și alții* [Persecution: Documents of the trial of C. Noica, C., Pillat, S. Lăzărescu and others], Ed. Vremea, Bucharest, 2010, p. 478.

and private life, suspecting that her allegiance to the regime was a curtain for hiding her unbroken legionary identity. On the other hand, Sadova quickly became a renowned actress and director under the socialist order. She has been decorated with the Order of Labour class II by Decree no. 59/1951 and distinguished as Hermit Master of Art by Decree no. 424/1953. In 1954, she was honoured with the State Prize by Decree no. 459/1954. Even if an unpublished decree would later withdrew these distinctions from 1960, when the actress faced imprisonment, they reflect the complex and often ambiguous transformations old intellectuals underwent in the new socialist regime.

Constructing the political file

As Marietta Sadova was part of the 'Noica-Pillat trial' from 1960, her surveillance file was constructed on numerous insults and accusations contained in informant notes while surrounded by hostile colleagues at the theatre who sought to discredit her to fulfil personal ambitions. The insults and attempts to discredit her ranged from professional envy, accusations of lesbianism, favouring the legionnaires, or even suffering from mental disorders. Her file was mainly built on other actors' and artists' notes, which aimed to remove her as director of the 'Constantin Nottara' Theatre or to acquire several professional advantages: leading roles in plays, more money, or better-paid positions.

Marietta Sadova's fascist past emerged when numerous notes highlighted her political orientation from the interwar period, especially her active participation in the Legionary Rebellion from January 1941. The film begins with a Siguranță report from March 20, 1941, where Marietta Sadova was portrayed as a 'legionary fanatic' alongside her husband, Haig Acterian, and other artists¹⁰. The report's main concern was finding 17 rifles hidden in a lodge following a Siguranță search from March 16, 1941. The non-legionary artists were dissatisfied with the authorities for not taking action against the actors who wore the green uniform and took part in the rebellion. They accused the legionary artists of maintaining a climate of terror at the National Theatre.

Ultimately, the accusations in the report were aimed at Sadova's political stance: she insulted general Ion Antonescu, maintained a hostile atmosphere against the regime, encouraged legionary students to continue the political struggle, waited for the fall of the government, and believed in the revival of the Iron Guard. The report concluded that Marietta Sadova was 'extremely dangerous for supporting the legionnaires' morale in their

¹⁰ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File 209489, vol. I, f. 114

action against the current regime¹¹. The conspiracy scenarios about the existence of a secret 'Legionary Staff' continued five years away from the previous note. In an informative note from May 27, 1946, Sadova was related to a series of legionary sympathizers from the National Theatre, including Corina Constantinescu (actress), Mihai Constantinescu (violinist), and Ilinca Constantinescu (student). The report seeks to 'expose' an incipient Iron Guardian network gravitating around Marietta Sadova. Beyond the strongly ideologized language, the note reflects a state of tension within the artists of the National Theatre from Bucharest, which led to an internal struggle for power during the 1950s.

The Romanian Theatre Company at the 1956 International Dramatic Festival

In 1956, the National Theatre of Bucharest participated in Paris's third International Dramatic Festival. The importance of this event was emphasized in different studies, which showed how politics, national contexts, and individual experiences interweaved as a result of political interactions beyond the Iron Curtain¹². Even if the event has been scholarly recounted from a national and international perspective, our analysis focuses on Marietta Sadova's interaction with her former Criterionist friends as part of the communist leader's strategy to lure exiled intellectuals back to Romania.

In 1956, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev called for peaceful coexistence and de-Stalinization, resulting in increased circulation of ideas and interactions between Eastern and Western cultural institutions despite their ideological division. The favourable international context after the death of Stalin in 1953 facilitated the emergence of cultural openness to the West. The International Theatre Institute founded the International Dramatic Festival in France in 1954, later becoming the Theatre of Nations. In 1955, Romania was invited to participate at the Third International Dramatic Festival and accepted the French Ministry of Culture's invitation

¹¹ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File 209489, vol. I, f. 133.

¹² Viviana Iacob, *Scenes of Cold War Diplomacy: Romania and the International Theatre Institute, 1956-1969*, East Central Europe, 45 (2018), p. 185. The issue has been analysed in several articles and studies: Cristian Vasile, 'Communist Romania's Cultural Cold War, 1947-1960', *Revista Arhivelor*, no. 2, pp. 134-150; Vladimir Tismăneanu, Cristian Vasile, 'Turneul Teatrului Național la Paris din 1956: Secția de Relații Externe, exilul și raporturile culturale româno-franceze', *Studii și materiale de istorie contemporană*, vol. 8, 2009, pp. 193-206; Cristian Vasile, *Politicile culturale comuniste în timpul regimului Gheorghiu-Dej* [Communist during Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej regime] Cultural Policies Ed. Humanitas, Bucharest, 2011; Stelian Tănase, *Anatomia mistificării 1944-1989. Procesul Noica-Pilat* [Anatomy of Mystification. Noica-Pilat Trial], Ed. Humanitas, București, 1997.

in February 1956¹³. The National Theatre Company staged two plays at the Sarah Bertrand Theatre: *The Last Hour* by Jewish playwright Mihail Sebastian, directed by Mony Ghelerter, and *The Lost Letter* by Ion Luca Caragiale, directed by Sică Alexandrescu¹⁴.

The Romanian delegation comprised 75 individuals accompanied by state official Paul Cornea and director of the National Theatre Vasile Moldoveanu. The delegation included Maria Filotti, director Marietta Sadova, actor Radu Beligan, and critic Margareta Bărbuță¹⁵. The group was accompanied by the ideologue supervisor of the Propaganda and Culture Direction, Pavel Câmpeanu, under the direct subordination of Ghizela Vass, coordinator of the Foreign Relation Department of the Communist Party's Central Committee. There was no interdiction on whom Romanian artists should or should not contact in Paris, as they were encouraged to freely network as part of the official strategy for penetrating and instrumentalizing the Romanian exile in favour of the communist regime from Bucharest¹⁶. Marietta Sadova was the perfect fit for a networking strategy in Paris due to her past friendship with philosopher Emil Cioran, historian of religion Mircea Eliade, and playwright Eugene Ionesco; while being praised, rewarded, and recognized in Romania as a loyal socialist realist director.

Marietta Sadova was under close surveillance from July 8, 1954, when the Securitate opened a 'verification file' on her name. The authorities kept an eye on her activity while using her theatrical talent in the service of the regime when needed. This opportunity emerged in 1956, when, as Sadova stated in her testimony during the 1959 arrest, before leaving for Paris, she was called by Minister of Culture Constanța Crăciun, who urged her to 'talk to everyone in Paris, to receive all those who want to see her, not to give the impression that she is timid, reserved or that certain conduct was imposed on her from Bucharest'¹⁷. The Romanian delegation followed the official instructions and, as a result, interviews, press conferences, and correspondence titled the evolution of the Romanian company as a success. For the first time after the establishment of the communist regime in Romania, exiled intellectuals who were present in the audience were not classified as 'fascists', 'traitors', or 'fugitives', epithets previously used for portraying them in communist propaganda newspapers. The authorities reversed their

¹³ Stelian Tănase, *Anatomia mistificării 1944-1989. Procesul Noica-Pillat*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 1997, p. 65.

¹⁴ Viviana Iacob, *op.cit.*, p. 189.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 190.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 189.

¹⁷ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 13.

reaction to emphasize the appreciation of Romanians migrants for the company's performance. The success was quickly instrumentalized by the propaganda newspaper *Scînteia* on July 4, 1956: 'When leaving the theatre, Romanian actors were expected by a large audience, which included many Romanians of all ages and all beliefs - some of them living in Paris, others coming from London, Brussels or further¹⁸.

While in Paris for three weeks, Marietta Sadova met Mircea Eliade and Emil Cioran. The directives received from Constanța Crăciun were to invite them to Romania and assure them of the good intentions of the communist regime. Mircea Eliade was sceptical of the regime's spontaneous benevolence towards intellectuals, considering the brutal repression they endured several years ago. He stated that, no matter how well the communist regime from Bucharest wants to 'sell' its image, he knows that the situation in Romanian People's Republic is 'terrible'. Eliade continued to believe that the communist regime would eventually fall soon. He complained about the poor quality of publications in Romania, accused writers of collaboration with the regime, and denounced the intervention of the party in literature and scientific activity, which weakened cultural creation. At their next meeting, Eliade offered Sadova several copies of his latest works, including *The Forbidden Forest* (1955), *Images et symbols* (1952), and *Le Mythe de l'Eternel Retour* (1949), and asked her to distribute them to his friends in Bucharest¹⁹.

A few days later, Marietta Sadova met with her younger Criterionist friend Emil Cioran. Like Eliade, Cioran was not convinced by the communist condescension and stated that the Soviet Union 'tends to subjugate the whole of Europe'²⁰. Upon leaving, Emil Cioran offered her ten copies of his newly published book *La tentation d'exister* (1956), which he asked to be distributed to Constantin Noica, Petre Țuțea, and other familiar friends. The meeting with Eugene Ionesco did not occur, given that he had left Paris at that time. One should consider that Marietta Sadova provided these conversations during her arrest and investigation in 1959. The information encountered in the Securitate archives should be questioned as the minutes of interrogations were manipulated by the Securitate agents and officers according to the political end they pursued - in Sadova's case, the conviction in a show trial. However, multiple sources - such as memoirs, letters, and acquaintances' testimonies - even if they do not recall meeting Sadova in 1956 for unknown reasons, still

¹⁸ *Scînteia* newspaper from July 4, 1956.

¹⁹ Mihai Giugariu (coord.), *Prigoana...*, p. 139.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 140

confirm the hostile attitude of Eliade, Cioran, or Ionesco towards the communist regime and their lack of desire to return to the country.

When the theatre company returned to Romania, Marietta Sadova left a copy of Cioran's book at Minister's Constanța Crăciun antechamber as a subtle gesture of her mission's success. Several meetings followed between Sadova and Crăciun to clarify the official and unofficial aspects of the Parisian tour. This action corresponded to a mutual agreement or a gesture of 'delicacy'²¹, as Sadova called it. In 1956, Marietta Sadova was neither denounced nor blamed for bringing Eliade and Cioran books back to the country. Her actions went unnoticed and were overlooked by the Securitate agents due to their insignificant consequences at that time. However, the books began circulating among various groups of targeted or investigated intellectuals. The Securitate turned its gaze to Sadova as the primary provider of forbidden literature from the West.

Romania's participation in the third edition of the International Dramatic Festival in Paris was considered a stunning success in terms of cultural diplomacy. Communist authorities carefully planned the details of the tour. Critic Paul Cornea claimed that the idea of an international tour belonged to the Theatre Department of the Ministry of Culture. The Propaganda Section gave a favourable verdict, which was attached to the party's Central Committee²². The purpose of the communist authorities was to impress the Western audience and seduce the exiled Romanian intellectuals who eventually attended the performance. The 'charming operation' of the Romanian theatre company was an instance of East-West rapprochement and an ideological probing through cultural diplomacy. However, as Iacob suggests, the memoirs published by the delegation members recount the Paris tour much more as a story of artistic success rather than the first East-West encounter, concluding that the 1956 Parisian tour did not reach all the expected political results²³. In 1957 and 1958, Romania did not participate in the Theatre Nations due to the ideological radicalization of cultural politics between 1958 and the early 1960s. The artists were subjected to intimidation campaigns, arrests, trials, and condemnations²⁴. The Securitate placed Sadova under close surveillance and began collecting details on her from different informants. Sadova's harmless gesture of bringing her interwar friends' books in Romania offered the Securitate the basis of her conviction four years later. The regime's failed attempt to pursue cultural liberalization

²¹ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 13.

²² Cristian Vasile, *Politicile culturale comuniste în timpul regimului Gheorghiu-Dej*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucharest, 2011, p. 215.

²³ Viviana Iacob, *op.cit.*, p. 190.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 191.

and its return to ideological intransigence reflect the ever-changing relationship between the artistic community and the political imperatives of the communist elites.

Under surveillance, 1958-1959

The ideological radicalization pursued by the communist authorities began in 1958. The Securitate cadres were sent for further training in the USSR to acquire new methods of identifying and constructing the 'enemy of the people' through bureaucratic techniques. After receiving the training, the Securitate agents began following different patterns when surveilling suspected individuals, emphasizing social networks more and less ideological hermeneutics²⁵. Marietta Sadova's file was mainly built on three narrative layers: the 'legionary' narrative, which branched out into the 'hostile relations' narrative, and the 'hostile books' narrative. However, the interest of the Securitate agents was to establish a network of people who read and discussed the forbidden books of Mircea Eliade and Emil Cioran rather than carefully making the ideological hermeneutics of their content. Ideology was an instrument in the service of surveillance, intimidating and repressing undesirable social groups.

In 1958, Marietta Sadova was under observation of the 3rd Direction of the Securitate. She was surrounded by agents and informants who provided notes on her work, everyday conversations, and private life. Most informant notes are reminiscent of her Iron Guard support from the interwar period; thus, using the 'legionary' narrative would have been a good opportunity for young aspirants to discredit Sadova's professional status and chase higher positions in theatre. On March 22, 1958, agent 'George' wrote that Sadova 'still performs legionary demagoguery today, only choosing nationalist plays (*Viforul*, *Apus de Soare*) and favoring the former legionary actors (Toma Dumitriu, Alexandru Demetriad)' ²⁶. A note from agent 'Gălăţeanu', dated on October 10, 1958, stated that Marietta Sadova had visited former legionnaire Mihai Polihroniade's mother to bring her 'news from emigrant writer Mircea Eliade' ²⁷. In November 1958, agent 'Bucovineanu' re-opened the topic of the Legionary Rebellion from January 1941, writing: 'Mrs. Marietta Sadova and Haig Acterian, carrying pistols, were the most ardent in their speeches and incitements to rebellion'²⁸.

²⁵ For a case study on the Securitate repressive methods after 1956 see Anisescu Cristina, Silviu B. Moldovan (ed.), *Pseudomemoriile unui general de Securitate* [Pseudo-Memoirs of an Securitate General] Humanitas, Bucharest, 2007.

²⁶ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 134.

²⁷ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 131.

²⁸ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 132.

Regarding her 'hostile social relations, the Securitate agents became increasingly interested in both Sadova's request for the release of former legionary Petre Țuțea and her relations at the theatre. Petre Țuțea was sent to prison in 1957 under the pretext of organizing a fascist subversive party. Sadova drew up a request, signed by numerous cultural personalities of that time, to facilitate Țuțea's release, which was later addressed to the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly²⁹. Regarding her relations at the theatre, the CNSAS files indicate her controversial personality through documents that offer multiple and often contrary takes on her professional interactions. She was both appreciated and hated simultaneously, which confirms that her colleagues' attitudes depended on the distribution of roles during certain plays. When Sadova, according to her theatrical vision as a director, offered an important role to an actor to the detriment of another, the latter would eventually end up discrediting her in notes sent to the Securitate agents. In 1958, Sadova staged 'Viforul' by B. Ștefănescu Delavrancea at the Cluj National Theatre, which sparked a controversy surrounding the distribution of roles in favour of her older friends, while the younger actors felt rejected and denounced her. She decided to change the perspective of the main character, Ștefăniță Vodă, and no longer portray him as a scoundrel but as a victim of boyar Luca Arbore. The artistic readjustment implied a different cast distribution which caused a scandal³⁰. As a result, *Viforul* was removed from the theatre program and censored due to its 'unorthodox' ideological approach. On May 19, 1959, informant 'Carpathians' (actor Marin Aurelian), who was part of the disadvantaged group, provided a detailed, informative note on the situation:

'The fact that Marietta Sadova is a notorious legionnaire is well-known in the art world across the country. Once in Cluj, Marietta Sadova was overwhelmed by the hostile group, which sought to create a myth around her. She was constantly accompanied and invited by V. Dumitriu, Sandu Rădulescu, Ion Tilvan. The distribution of these plays was inspired and imposed on Marietta Sadova by a group of hostile elements against her artistic opinion. Marietta Sadova, although she was

²⁹ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 129. According to agent 'Stefan Dragomirescu', the petition was signed by Victor Eftimiu, Geo Bogza, Marietta Sadova, Ștefănescu-Goangă, Aurel Duteanu and others. Ștefănescu-Goangă even asked Zaharia Stancu to sign the memorandum, but the latter refused.

³⁰ Vera Molea, *Marietta Sadova sau arta de a trăi prin teatru* [Marietta Sadova or the Art of Living through Theatre] Bucharest Metropolitan Library, 2013, p. 159.

convinced in certain situations that in specific roles, the most suitable elements of the group were not recommended, she still accepted the motto - to help those of ours'³¹.

In reality, Sadova's decision to cast actor Constantin Anatol in the leading role of Ștefăniță Vodă aroused the revolt of actor Marin Aurelian, who 'was very indignant that Mrs. Sadova gave a Jew to play the role of Ștefăniță'³². This detail is worth noting considering Sadova's past anti-Semitic bursts, which indicates that she overcame the 'legionary' clichés in favour of individual artistic talent regardless of ethnicity or religion. Moreover, the note is of great importance for understanding the struggle for power and benefits within cultural institutions in communist Romania. The new generation of younger artists was eager to rise in the hierarchy of power and receive distributions in essential roles, so they used the Securitate institution to pursue their professional interests while discrediting other artists using past political allegiances longer valid in 1958.

Constructing the enemy of the people

The event that triggered the Securitate's suspicion of Sadova was the arrest of philosopher Constantin Noica on December 11, 1958. After several interrogations, Noica mentioned Marietta Sadova as the person who brought the forbidden books to Romania, a detail that allowed the Securitate to construct a broader social network with suspected individuals. Multiplying the subjects based on a standard narrative facilitated the inclusion of several intellectuals with different career paths and unrelated destinies in fewer group trials, thus making the extensive repression more efficient.

During the December 13, 1958, Constantin Noica admitted that he received Cioran's book *La tentation d'exister* and Eliade's *The forbidden forest* from Marietta Sadova, who brought them directly from France. In order to clarify the situation, Noica was interrogated again on this matter on December 15, 1958, stating that 'in 1956, through Maria Sadova, an artist who was in Paris, on the occasion of a tour I illegally received a book from Cioran called *La tentation d'exister*'³³. After Noica received the book, he passed it on for reading to his friends from Câmpulung (Alexandru Paleologu, Iacob Noica) and from Bucharest (Mihail Neculce, Mihail Șora, Mihai Rădulescu, Paul Dumitriu, Nicu Steinhardt, Șerban Cioculescu, Beatrice Strelisker). On the same day, the Securitate opened a surveillance

³¹ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 199.

³² ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 18.

³³ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 110

file on Marietta Sadova's name to further investigate three directions concerning her activity: the legionary membership and participation in the January 1941 rebellion; Sadova's friendship with 'hostile elements' at the Constantin Nottara theatre and the Parisian theatre tour from 1956, when she 'brought some books with fascist legionary ideological content' and established connection with former legionaries³⁴. The semantic change of terms related to exiled intellectuals from neutral attributes in 1956 to 'legionary', 'reactionary', and 'hostile' enemies in 1959 reflects the Soviet-inspired grid of analysis acquired by Securitate agents towards cultural activities that have always existed in society but were now interpreted under a different ideological approach.

The agents began intercepting correspondence, listening to the phone, placing more informants around Sadova, and searching for extended lists of contacts. After collecting information for three months, between December 1958 and March 1959, a note (*nota de stadiu*) concluded that Sadova was a fierce enemy of our popular democratic regime, which seeks to fight against it in every way. She is surrounded only by elements with a dubious past and present hostile activity against our democratic order, which she helps morally and materially through her possibilities as a National Theatre director³⁵. The information received required cross-checking from different sources, which determined the Securitate to install *tehnică operativă* (microphones and phone tapes) at Sadova's apartment in April 1959³⁶. The actress realized agents were following her footsteps when one of the maids was summoned to the Securitate for interrogation concerning Sadova's activity. As a result, she decided to destroy some 'compromising' materials to avoid any further problems³⁷, starting with those of Petre Țuțea and continuing with the books of Emil Cioran and Mircea Eliade. Not only were the writings in her possession problematic, but also the ones she gave to others. At the moment of Sadova's arrest, no books with Cioran or Eliade's signature were found at her home. However, the copies circulated in Constantin Noica's groups at Câmpulung and Bucharest were confiscated by investigators, and the tracks eventually returned to Marietta Sadova.

The arrest

Before the arrest, the Securitate began to cross-examine all the information received from informants and dismissed unfounded allegations. The agents tried to confirm Sadova's past fascist activity through different

³⁴ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 203

³⁵ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 206

³⁶ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 101.

³⁷ Mihai Giugariu, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

sources but had no alternative testimonies nor additional archives to confirm the events. As a result, a report of Major Simon Jack from July 6, 1959, concludes that 'the informative notes and the anonymous notifications obtained by the former *Siguranță*, do not confirm that Marieta Sadova was recruited in the legionary organization and that she carried out the activity in the legionary nest. There is also no evidence that he played a role in the rebellion and fired a pistol'³⁸. The second allegation that Sadova has promoted hostile elements in the theatre was dismissed because informants - Chiril Economou and Ludovic Antal - had several professional conflicts with Sadova in the past. Their allegations were rejected and considered mere speculation³⁹.

However, Major Simon Jack found a potential compromising track in her activity: Constantin Noica and the forbidden books. Insisting on the connection between Constantin Noica and Marietta Sadova facilitated her inclusion in the narrative of the future trial of the arrested philosopher. The most conclusive evidence for sending Sadova to criminal court was Noica's statement during the December 1958 interrogation, which indicated Sadova was the one who brought the books of Emil Cioran and Mircea Eliade to Romania. The 'forbidden books' narrative was the most effective in instrumentalizing her arrest and conviction.

On September 22, 1959, the 8th Direction conveyed to the 3rd Direction that Sadova's arrest was agreed based on 'bringing books written by Romanian fugitives from abroad and disseminating them among the legionaries'⁴⁰. As a result, Marietta Sadova was arrested on October 15, 1959, under the pretext of disseminating anti-communist propaganda. Reading books had no real impact on the regime's stability, but the agents intended to link Sadova to other targeted individuals, whose destinies would eventually converge in a common trial. The evidence against her was her intention to introduce 'foreign ideas' in the country through literary cenacles [*cenacluri*], in which intellectuals discussed the contents of the novels⁴¹. Although this was only an ideological pretext for the repressive strategy of the state, the analysis of the CNSAS files emphasizes the will of the Securitate to annihilate interwar social networks.

³⁸ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 1, f. 106

³⁹ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 1, f. 108

⁴⁰ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 1, f. 71

⁴¹ Bejan, *op.cit.*, p. 269

Investigation and trial

Marietta Sadova's investigation can be analysed on multiple interactions between her and the Securitate officers: offensive and defensive strategies, conflicting narratives, concession on both sides, and finally constructing the main accusations – the fascist past, western propaganda, and hostile social relations.

Her interaction with the Securitate investigators was not ideal, but there is no evidence of physical violence or unbearable psychological pressure. This is both due to the professional position that Sadova had in the cultural-artistic life of the Romanian People's Republic and to her 'second-degree guilt' in the framework of the Noica-Pillat trial while also being one of the oldest convicts of the group. Sadova was 62 years old in 1959. During the arrest, she shared the cell with Natalia Bădulescu, a cell informant who wrote detailed reports about their private discussions between December 1959 and February 1960. Bădulescu's stance towards Sadova was neutral, as she tried accurately reproducing all the details from their conversations. These types of sources give us the victim's perspective from the inside. However, caution is required due to this information's manipulative potential. One should consider that Marietta may have known Natalia was an informant for the Securitate and eventually prompted her to write ideas supporting the Soviet Union, while Bădulescu was arguing in favour of Sadova's innocence by appealing to her artistic work in the service of the communist regime from Romania.

The investigation was constructed as a moralizing rebuke rather than a terrorizing pressure. Sadova complained that the investigator 'always makes her insincere, telling her to put aside theatrical gestures and demagoguery and reveal her legionary activity'⁴². Sadova soon became disappointed that she was not investigated by a communicative and understandable agent⁴³. In January 1960, she was also investigated on charges of lesbianism, which 'upsets and infuriates her because she is accused of things that are downright offensive and untrue'⁴⁴. A note from February 23, 1960, mentions that Sadova 'came from the investigation crying and emotionally affected' after a tense conversation with an investigator, possibly Simon Jack. He told her that she had made mistakes under the influence of 'various malicious people, and that she discredited some party members by generalizing their attitude as belonging to the whole system, without realizing that these are only isolated cases. The

⁴² ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 11.

⁴³ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 64.

⁴⁴ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 68

party line is different⁴⁵. The pedagogical and moralizing type of the investigation may indicate Sadova's possible subsequent rehabilitation after spending several years in prison.

The investigation was built up to fit the narrative of the Noica-Pillat group that was being formed at that moment and was later comprised of 25 intellectuals arrested between December 1958 and February 1960. The ties between Marietta Sadova and Constantin Noica were not as close as the investigation tried to frame them. They only met once in the summer of 1957, during one of Noica's visits to Bucharest, when she lent him Eliade's novel, *The Forbidden Forest*. There were no further meetings during literary circles or other joint activities, which shows that Sadova was a stranger to the group in which she was to be artificially included. The books were thus instrumentalized to connect disparate individuals and unknown intermediaries to insinuate the existence of a broader dissident cultural group.

Sadova's sympathy for the Iron Guard was well known since the interwar period. However, nearly 20 years later, the Securitate had difficulty proving her active implication in the Legionary Rebellion. In this case, the investigators decided to equate her past fascist sympathy with an alleged present 'hostile activity within a 'reactionary' social network of intellectuals. The accusation does not reflect nor try to understand the complex personality of the widow director, who dedicated her time to helping loyal friends from theatre and taking care of other ex-legionaries' widows as she was. As a counter-offensive strategy to the Securitate's accusation, Sadova has constructed a legitimizing narrative to diminish her fascist commitment and possibly lower the sentence. As part of a self-referential narrative, Sadova admitted she sympathized with the Iron Guard but claimed to have detached herself at the time of the assassination of Nicolae Iorga and Virgil Madgearu, and 'now she has all the sympathy for the communist regime'⁴⁶. She attributed the adherence to the Legion to Corneliu Zelea Codreanu's charming personality. She manifested her despise for Horia Sima as a man with 'an adventurous, cabotage nature, who pursued a personal ambition'⁴⁷. Carefully constructing the innocent image of her fascist past, Sadova proceeds to link the legionary' acts of charity to her present loyalty for friends 'by virtue of Christianity and in memory of her husband Haig'. After Haig went missing on the eastern front, Sadova resigned herself and took refuge in the theatre, 'which

⁴⁵ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 64

⁴⁶ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 10.

⁴⁷ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 29

became the strongest stimulant, like a narcotic.' However, her story avoided referencing the Legionary Rebellion, the conflicts at the National Theatre, imprisonment, or anti-Semitism.

As stated before, the main accusation that emerged while investigating Sadova's activity was bringing the books of Mircea Eliade and Emil Cioran to Romania. The forbidden books' track had a compromising rationale for Marietta Sadova due to her interwar social network instrumentalized by the Securitate officers. Sadova was part of the Criterion group from the interwar period, where she met Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Mihai Polihroniade, Mircea Vulcănescu, Haig Acterian, Constantin Noica, intellectuals who later supported the Iron Guard. Together, they often organized 'legionary meetings' to discuss fascist political and ideological issues and 'established to raise legionary aid'⁴⁸. After the establishment of the communist regime, Sadova remained faithful to her friendships and eventually met Mircea Eliade and Emil Cioran in 1956 during the National Theatre's participation at the International Dramatic Festival in Paris. Then, the investigators established who read the ten copies of Emil Cioran's *La tentation d'exister*: Petre Țuțea, Noica Constantin, Acterian Arșavir, Penculescu George, Terianu Nicolae, Rares Maria, Cioculescu Radu and Balau Nicolae. However, the investigation does not refer to other readers such as Bucur Țincu, Petre Pandrea, Emil Botta, Nicolae Baltag, Coca Casasovici⁴⁹, who somehow remained outside the trial. The books circulated from one person to another without Sadova's knowledge, including inside philosopher Constantin Noica's entourage at Câmpulung. As an 'official' conclusion, the investigators inserted the bottom-page phrase: 'This is the counter-revolutionary activity that I carried out'⁵⁰.

One could not fail to notice that the interrogatories' minutes were written by the Securitate investigator and only signed by the victim, who was coerced to agree with the statements even if they contained lies and distortions. References to the 'legionary meetings' aimed to criminalize the literary circles [*cenacluri*] Sadova and others occasionally attended during the 1950s. The communist authorities prohibited these meetings due to their privacy, which was beyond the control of the secret police, and their capacity to conserve and promote an alternative cultural discourse. Surprisingly enough, the minutes only mention once, and maybe by mistake, the informal 'mission' Sadova received from officials Constanța

⁴⁸ Giugariu, *op. cit.*, p. 137

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 140.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

Crăciun and Pavel Câmpeanu. Defending her actions as part of the Minister of Culture's plan to attract foreign intellectuals back to Romania was no longer valid; thus, the justification for meeting Eliade and Cioran became irrelevant.

Moreover, for the personal record, Sadova considered the accusation of distributing 'hostile' books in Romania unfounded. She recalls only reading Cioran's book once and bursting into indignation on 'how this anarchist makes fun of the Romanian people in such a way'⁵¹. The theatre director, whose world-view was determined by nationalist ideas, violently reacted to Cioran's anti-Romanian remarks in his philosophy book. Another note stated that Sadova characterized Cioran as a fanatic and an anarchist who wants to be original in this pessimistic context'⁵². She even supported the famous state-coordinated response of Radu Popescu, who officially denounced Cioran's ideas in *the Gazeta Literară* newspaper. Popescu received Cioran's book from Sadova⁵³. Contrary to the Securitate's perspective, Sadova was able to maintain her friendship with Cioran while viciously rejecting his philosophical thought.

As a result, Sadova's main accusation was constructed from various details concerning her cultural activity from the past. Most of her actions were innocent. Her past fascist commitment was no longer actual, but the Securitate decided to instrumentalize an insignificant action of her past - the 'forbidden books' narrative - to link suspicious intellectuals and form an artificial 'fascist group'. The narrative of the interwar past has been anachronistically equated with the 1956 international events as a starting point to justify the continuation of fascist allegiances, thus creating a convergent accusation for 25 'reactionary' intellectuals.

Conclusion

Arrested on October 15, 1959, accused of fascist activity for distributing 'western propaganda' among intellectuals in Romania, director Marietta Sadova was sentenced to eight years in prison and five years of civic degradation for 'crime of conspiracy against the social order based on article 209 from the Criminal Code. During the 'Noica-Pillat' trial, that started on February 24, 1960, Sadova recalled '*she said everything she had in mind, that she was very sorry for everything she did, she regrets that after so many beautiful achievements created with all the joy and enthusiasm, she has to end her [career] life so badly*'⁵⁴. The conviction, she argued, was a great

⁵¹ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 9.

⁵² ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 64.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

'misfortune' because she ends her career in such an unpleasant way after dedicating her 'whole life' to the theatre. Under the communist regime, she worked for 15 years in the theatre world, claiming that 'she raised the theatre in Cluj and the Nottara theatre to a remarkable level, staged ten plays and made many films'⁵⁵. Marietta Sadova was pardoned in 1964 and reintegrated into cultural life, continuing her career as an actress and theatre director. She later became a university professor at the Institute of Theatre and Cinematography in Bucharest. She had notable roles in *The Profession of Mrs. Warren* by George Bernard Shaw and *The Undead* by Henrik Ibsen while also directing Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* at the Bulandra Theatre in 1969 *Răzvan și Vidra* by Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu. After several years, Sadova described herself as a survivalist, 'a Transylvanian woman who does not let herself be easily defeated'⁵⁶, highlighting that she staged over 40 shows from 1964 to 1972. The Securitate continued to supervise the convicted intellectuals even after their release from prison. In an informative note from 1972, Sadova had a private discussion with some close friends about her conviction in 1960, recalling:

'The only accusation they charged me with was that I brought a book by Emil Cioran from Paris. Moreover, I hadn't even read it... When I found out what slander, what insults this man could bring to the Romanian people, I, who always loved my country and my nation, threw away his scribbles... How could anyone have imagined I would share the ideas of this wretched man? That I would also popularize them? But I had friends who knew how to slander me'⁵⁷.

Marietta Sadova could not have known that her conviction had no real connection to Cioran's ideas from the book, being only a pretext to facilitate the repression of a group around a common narrative. Sadova's coping mechanism with all the unfortunate events of her life - Haig's disappearance, her brother's death, and the political imprisonment - was taking refuge in theatre as a 'cultural niche of existence. The theatre career niche helped her relieve her trauma and also provided an escape from an oppressive and intrusive political regime. Later in her life, she argued that theatre was the only useful thing in an illusory reality, offering the possibility of an inner escape from the limitations of being: 'The theatre and

⁵⁵ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 2, f. 9.

⁵⁶ ACNSAS, Informative fund, file 209489, vol. 4, f. 90.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

the ideal are like the flight of an eagle, while life and reality are like the flight of a bat - one lifts you, the other fumbles'⁵⁸.

Theatre, as part of the broader framework of the cultural field alongside literature, philosophy, poetry, arts, history, and others, became a 'cultural refuge' for intellectuals who tried to lower the communist regime's ideological intrusion in their profession while fulfilling their cultural ideal despite the authorities' suspicion towards their controversial past.

In conclusion, the case study of Marietta Sadova's career path and her ambiguous relationship with her compromising political past emphasized the shortcomings of a unitary explanation model for understanding the interactions between power and cultural groups in the socialist cultural field. During the communist regime in Romania, many intellectuals, due to their cultural prestige and symbolic status, have had the opportunity to negotiate principles, ideas, publications, and professional choices, with and under the close supervision of the secret police. Based on this evidence, the 'cultural resistance' cannot be understood as a monolithic concept throughout communism; resistance went through a metamorphosis from cultural solidarity in the 1940s and 1950s to a gradual adaptation to the official ideological requirements of the national orientation of the regime after 1964. As a result, resistance and political collaboration are rather cumulative and fluid principles whose variables depend on internal political developments, personal experiences, professional motivations, individual or group psychological typologies, and the pattern of socialization accepted and promoted by the communist regime in order to acquire the maximum control of the society.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 92.

Party Education and Cadre Schools in Communist Romania. Some Preliminary Considerations

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Abstract: The present lines raise the question of the necessity of a thorough study of a largely ignored chapter in the history of Romanian communism, namely the system of party education and cadre schools. If in a first phase, in Romanian post-socialist historiography, the orientation towards the research of the extremes of the system, of terror and repression has prevailed, nowadays it is at least as necessary to understand the mechanisms by which the communist system was perpetuated and regenerated. Party schools were more than mere instruments of indoctrination, manipulation and propaganda, they represented key institutions that fully contributed to the construction of the system itself.

Keywords: political education, party schools, cadres, Romanian Communist Party

Rezumat: Materialul de față ridică problema necesității studierii unui capitol mai puțin cunoscut din istoria comunismului românesc, anume sistemul învățământului de partid și al școlilor sale de cadre. Dacă într-o primă fază, în istoriografia românească post-socialistă a predominat orientarea către cercetarea extremelor sistemului, a terorii și represiunii, în prezent este cel puțin la fel de necesară înțelegerea mecanismelor prin care sistemul comunist s-a perpetuat și regenerat. Școlile de partid au fost mai mult decât simple instrumente de indoctrinare, manipulare și propagandă, ele reprezentând niște instituții-cheie care au contribuit din plin la însăși construcția sistemului.

Cuvinte-cheie: învățământ politic, școli de partid, cadre, Partidul Comunist Român

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In Romanian post-socialist historiography there has always been a tendency to underestimate the significance and importance of cadre schools and party education in general. Party education was rather perceived as a constitutive element of the field of indoctrination of communist party members with a prefabricated propaganda “not intended to create new values, but to transfer doctrine from the relatively limited circles who possessed it to the wider population who did not”¹. In other words, this parallel, independent political educational system was conceived from the very beginning in the form of an institutional network designed to politically socialize², in a time marked by an extensive and radical social and political revolution, a new elite capable of administering the party and build-up the new socialist society³.

The party schools have been, therefore, not only simple instruments for disseminating political values or the dogmas of the Marxist-Leninist ideology in an indifferent or even hostile popular mass, but rather a veritable set of institutions for the political training of adults and capable of forging a new ethos and a revolutionary consciousness⁴, without which the radical project of transforming the society was doomed to failure. In the end, by assuming the Marxist-Leninist worldview, the whole system of party education was managed to form and transmit a new way of thinking and understanding the world. It was a way of thinking that started from the premise that any question has only one correct answer, derived from the proper application of the only “true” theory, capable of correctly interpret and fundamentally change the world⁵. Last but not least, during the overcoming of the stage of

¹ Christopher Read, *Culture and Power in Revolutionary Russia. The Intelligentsia and the Transition from Tsarism to Communism*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1990, p. 139.

² David Brandenberger, *Propaganda State in Crisis. Soviet Ideology, Indoctrination and Terror under Stalin, 1927-1941*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2011, p. 13.

³ Michael David-Fox, *Revolution of the Mind. Higher Learning among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1929*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 19.

⁴ Ellen Propper Mickiewicz, *Soviet Political Schools. The Communist Party Adult Instruction System*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1967, p. 2.

⁵ Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State. Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 122-133.

“revolutionary breakthrough”⁶ of Romanian society by the Romanian Workers Party (RWP) at the beginning of the 1950s, during the 1960s and 1970s, due to what Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu has called an “academizing”⁷ process, they gradually transformed themselves from institutions intended for the political-ideological training and/or perfecting the cadres so necessary for the command and execution apparatus of the party during those first years, into true entities for training, promotion, management and reproduction of a new, privileged “state nobility” which was the communist *nomenklatura*.

The idea of organizing a party education system that would overlap or duplicate the traditional education system has raised from the very beginning a series of problems of a particularly complex theoretical and practical nature. From a theoretical point of view, in Marxist-Leninist logic, the policy of establishing special institutions intended to shape a new political elite of proletarian origin through a process of selection and upward social mobilization, a process encouraged and financed by the party-state, could simply not be justified, because Leninist theorists rejected from the start the very idea of the need for an *elite*: in Lenin’s view, all party and state institutions were to become “schools of communism”⁸ where people, in mass, would learn to manage the economy, society, politics and public affairs. In Leninist terms, the “dictatorship of the proletariat” was perceived as a necessary and transitory historical stage on the way to building a classless society, the purpose of the proletariat in this phase being to exercise leadership directly, as a class in itself, in order to abolish the exploiting classes and to establish communism⁹, and not to replace the dominance of the old elite or bourgeois bureaucracy with a newly created, proletarian one. Towards the middle of the last century, however, it was already clear that this is exactly how things

⁶ Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development. The Case of Romania, 1944–1965*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1971, pp. 210–221.

⁷ Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, *Intelectualii în câmpul puterii. Morfologii și traiectorii sociale [Intellectuals in the Field of Power. Morphologies and Social Trajectories]*, Iași, Ed. Polirom, 2007, p. 15.

⁸ Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power. The Revolution from Above, 1928–1941*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1990, pp. 30–31.

⁹ David Priestland, *Stalinism and the Politics of Mobilization. Ideas, Power and Terror in Inter-war Russia*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 18–20.

had happened, very “logically”¹⁰ according to Moshe Lewin, during the 1930s in the USSR (the phenomenon of bureaucratic degeneration was analyzed and vehemently criticized by Lev Trotsky¹¹, especially in his writings after 1935), and so they would happen in the newly established popular democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, but in a faster pace and almost simultaneously. As a result, this problem was simply ignored or camouflaged under the rhetoric of the need to continuously “strengthen” the ranks of the party from an ideological and political point of view, that is, to “raise” new cadres loyal to the regime.

On the other hand, from a practical point of view, the social discrimination that granted priority access to party education to citizens of proletarian, worker and peasant extraction¹², automatically generated not only a drop in educational standards – given the extremely precarious level of intellectual training of students – but also concrete difficulties of a logistical nature regarding the organization of party schools especially at the local levels: the premises for the courses were often unsuitable, the lecturers called to give courses were overwhelmingly only vaguely trained from a political point of view, the materials of study were either missing or simply just not understood by students so that the political education lesson was reduced to “processing” some articles from the party press, the accommodation spaces were insufficient, etc. All these “lacks”, according to the language of the time, although apparently constituted as many brakes on the way to the rapid formation of a new political elite devoted to the regime, paradoxically have helped the party to create opportunities¹³ for a wide category of citizens and to carry out an accelerated social and political promotion of the most loyal workers and peasants, direct

¹⁰ Lewis H. Siegelbaum and Ronald Grigor Suny (eds.), *Making Workers Soviet. Power, Class and Identity*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1994, p. 382.

¹¹ Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism. Its Origin, Growth and Dissolution, Volume III, The Breakdown*, (translated from the Polish by P.S. Falla), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, pp. 191-194.

¹² Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, *Intellectualii...*, p. 84.

¹³ Vadim Volkov, “The concept of *kul'turnost'*. Notes on the Stalinist civilizing process”, in Sheila Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Stalinism. New directions*, London and New York, Routledge, 2000, pp. 216-217.

beneficiaries of the system¹⁴. As Peter Kenez has pointed out, this reality was both a source of strength for the system, allowing its perpetuation and ensuring its reproduction, and – in the long run – one of weakness¹⁵, since the clash between the reality of the emergence of a corrupt bureaucracy and the initial egalitarian ideals of the Bolshevik Revolution ended up haunting Stalin's successors for a long time not only in the USSR, but also in the other countries that emulated the Soviet model¹⁶.

In post-socialist Romanian historiography, the victims of terror and repression of the communist regime institutionalized in 1948, *i.e.* the old intellectual, political and economic elites destructured and later destroyed in prisons, have benefited a special attention and a thorough investigation. On the other hand, the new communist elite, the administrative bureaucracy, the “new ruling class” (to quote the title of Milovan Djilas' book) or the party *nomenklatura* was described in very general terms, *in corpore*, usually with derogatory accents, rather than a fluid social body, mobile both horizontally and vertically, generated and reproduced permanently by the party education system through the political socialization carried out in cadre schools.

What makes the Romanian case singular is the weakness that characterized the Communist Party in the years between the two world wars: regardless of whether on August 23, 1944 the Romanian Communist Party has had more or less than 1000 members (some internal documents of the party advance even the figure of “about 700”¹⁷, the State Security records suggest¹⁸ a number between 796 and 918, and more recent research suggests that “there were definitely more than a thousand”¹⁹) it is certain that, throughout the

¹⁴ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front. Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1992, p. 150.

¹⁵ Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State...*, p. 128.

¹⁶ George W. Breslauer, *The Rise and Demise of World Communism*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2021, p. 90.

¹⁷ Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker. The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001, p. 74.

¹⁸ Dinu C. Giurescu, “Partidul Comunist Român” [Romanian Communist Party], în *Istoria Românilor* [History of Romanians], vol. X, București, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2013, p. 505.

¹⁹ Adrian Cioroianu, “Au fost mai mult de o mie, sau despre ce înseamnă a privi și cealaltă parte a baricadei” [“They Were More than One Thousand, or About What Does It Mean to Look From the Other Side of the Barricade?”], în Adrian Cioroianu (editor), *A fost odată ca niciodată. Partidul*

interwar period, the party was deprived not only of a concrete social basis and genuine popular support, but was almost completely absent, except for some socialist ideas that it propagated in the 1930s in some anti-fascist intellectual circles, from the great debates of ideas that had animated the political and cultural life of the time.

This weakness and lack of real influence of the party in Romanian politics in the period between the two world wars, as well as the almost insurmountable difficulties encountered in the institutionalization process of its power in the years following the moment of August 23, 1944, derives from a triple marginality that characterized the illegal activity of the party: after its ban in 1924, following the disturbances in Tatar-Bunar, but also because, accepting Lenin's 21 conditions, it had chosen from the very beginning "not the integration into the system, but specifically its destruction"²⁰, the party was located not only on the periphery of the international communist movement (1) and on the periphery of the Romanian political system (2), but also – extremely serious for a party that claimed to represent the interests of the broadest popular masses – on the periphery of the political Left in Greater Romania (3), having almost no political impact among the working class – itself a quasi-minority²¹ of the country's population: "pretending to speak on behalf of the working class, the Romanian Communist Party was only a spokesperson for theses and directives formulated outside Romania and found, most of the time, in flagrant contrast with political common sense and the evident interests of the party"²².

Additionally, the elite of this almost insignificant radical party, deeply Bolshevized and Sovietized²³, incoherent, insular in

Comunist Român, 1921-2021. Pentru o istorie dezinhăbată a „viitorului luminos” [Once Upon a Time. The Romanian Communist Party, 1921-2021. For an Uninhibited History of the "Bright Future"], Iași, Ed. Polirom, 2021, pp. 15-30.

²⁰ Stelian Tănase, *Elite și societate. Guvernarea Gheorghiu-Dej, 1948-1965*, [Elites and Society. The Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej Governance, 1948-1965], București, Ed. Humanitas, 1998, p. 26.

²¹ Lucian Boia, *Strania istorie a comunismului românesc (și nefericitele ei consecințe)*, [The Strange History of Romanian Communism (and its Unhappy Consequences)], București, Ed. Humanitas, 2016, p. 14.

²² Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism pentru eternitate. O istorie politică a comunismului românesc*, [Stalinism for all Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism], Iași, Ed. Polirom, 2005, p. 118.

²³ Stephen White, John Gardner, George Schöpflin, *Communist Political Systems*, (2nd edition), New York, Macmillan, 1987, p. 56.

relation to its host-society²⁴ and isolated from the other socialist party, was a disjointed one, ground by internal rivalries and endless factional struggles²⁵, a split elite between “local undergrounders”, “Muscovites”, and those in prisons. Completely subjected to the Kremlin, it resembled with other elites of all the parties “installed in power by Soviet leverage”²⁶. This underground elite, which lived and was formed in clandestineness, exile, prisons or, after 1943, in prison camps, was the one that assumed all power in the state with the moment of the proclamation of the Romanian People's Republic on December 30, 1947.

On the other hand, the party's rank-and-file members, sympathizers, conspirators and so-called “road companions” constituted what political scientist Vladimir Tismăneanu has identified as a “messianic sect” in the interwar Romanian political landscape. Party discipline, centralism, dogmatism, sectarianism, clandestineness, the Stalinist obsession of the “Trojan horse”, the enemy sneaked inside and the “clandestine machinations”²⁷ undertaken by him, doubled by consuming feelings of insecurity, mistrust and mutual suspicion – what Alain Besançon once called “the feeling of permanent siege” – constituted the formative matrix for the mass of party members that took over political power in Romania after the end of the Second World War due to the international context, and not due to an authentic internal revolutionary process²⁸.

²⁴ Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development...*, pp. 131–148.

²⁵ Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker...*, pp. 70–74; see also Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's statement from “Stenograma ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua de 29 noiembrie 1961” [“Transcript of the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party from November 29, 1961”], edited by Liviu Pleșa, Elis Neagoe-Pleșa, in *Dosarul Ana Pauker [The Ana Pauker File]*, vol. 1, București, Ed. Nemira, 2006, p. 92, and also the intervention of Alexandru Drăghici at the same party session.

²⁶ Joseph Rothschild, Nancy M. Wingfield, *Return to Diversity. A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II*, (3rd edition), New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 132.

²⁷ Gábor Tamás Rittersporn, “The Omnipresent Conspiracy: On the Soviet Imagery of Politics and Social Relations in the 1930s”, în J. Arch Getty and Roberta T. Manning (eds.), *Stalinist Terror. New Perspectives*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 108.

²⁸ To quote the famous illegal Communist Party member (and later political prisoner) Belu Zilber, “those in Bucharest only existed just because Stalin decided so”; Romanian real socialism has represented, in Zilbers' view, nothing more than the consequence of the Soviet “conquest”; see Belu Zilber, *Actor în procesul Pătrășcanu: Prima versiune a memoriilor lui Belu Zilber [Actor in the Pătrășcanu Trial. The First Version of Belu Zilber's Memoirs]*, București, Ed. Humanitas, 1997, p. 33.

After 1945, these people, completely unfamiliar with the functioning of the institutions of a democratic state, who lacked both the vision and the skills or knowledge necessary to ensure the functioning of the central and local administration, started the most ambitious and radical revolutionary social and political project in postwar Romanian history, fundamentally changing both the “social order” and the “state order”²⁹. Belu Zilber’s observations are revealing from this point of view:

“what could a few men do, whose only occupation was to hold a conspiratorial meeting, to learn pamphlets by heart, once at the head of a European state, when thousands of problems were crowding for solution? First they filled the country with meetings, then proceeded to build the monolithic party. That much they knew, that much they did. The rest followed the formula: «we do as our Soviet comrades»”³⁰.

Being probably aware of the precariousness of the political culture of the members of the party he led – many of them being communists with the name only³¹, given that from August 1944 to January 1948 the number of party members increased from 1000 to almost 800,000³² – Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej emphasized as early as 1945, during the first national conference of the PCR, the imperative necessity in terms of “lifting the political level of the cadres and the entire party”³³, for this purpose being needed both “1. The

²⁹ These explicit formulas are mentioned as such by the Constitution of the Romanian Peoples’ Republic from 1952.

³⁰ Belu Zilber, *Actor în procesul Pătrășcanu...*, p. 34.

³¹ In his memoirs written in 1974, communist veteran Gheorghe Vasilichi has appreciated that “these hundreds of thousands of new party members were not yet and could not be called communists, because a communist is not made in one day or overnight. Just being in the party and through studying Marxist-Leninist theory for a long time, and also through gaining great work experience one can be called a communist”; see Gheorghe Vasilichi, *Memorii [Memoirs]*, volume II (manuscript) – Arhivele Naționale ale României [Romanian National Archives] – Serviciul Arhive Naționale Istorice Centrale [Service of National Historical Central Archives] (A.N.R. – S.A.N.I.C.), Fond Institutul de Studii Istorice și Social-Politice [Fund of the Institute of Historical and Socio-Political Studies] – XVII, Dosar nr. 60, f. 4.

³² Mihnea Berindei, Dorin Dobrințu, Armand Goșu (editori), *Istoria comunismului din România. Documente. Perioada Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1945-1965) [History of Communism in Romania. Documents. The Gheorghe-Gheorghiu-Dej Period (1945-1965)]*, București, Ed. Humanitas, 2009, p. 565.

³³ Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, “Raportul politic al Comitetului Central la Conferința Națională a Partidului Comunist Român” [The political report of the Central Committee at the National

reorganization of the entire party education [...] based on the thorough study of Marxism-Leninism" as well as "2 Reorganization of the party university for a period of 6 months, with a permanent auditorium", and "3. Organization of cadre schools in addition to regional ones, also with a permanent auditorium"³⁴.

In fact, between 1945-1947 the organization and functioning of party education at the local levels has had a rather fluid, improvised and non-unitary character than an organized and systematic one, similar in fact to the very organization of the institutional structures of a political party that was then in full process of aggregation (at that time this process was called "party building"³⁵). At the founding congress of the Romanian Workers Party from February 21-23, 1948, the same Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej emphasized again the importance of political and ideological education for the formation of the party's basic cadres: "due attention must be paid to party education in order to raise honest and verified, at the same time solidly prepared from an ideological point of view"³⁶. As time has demonstrated, cadre formation has proven to be more complex and arduous than the initial hopes and expectations expressed by party leaders, a fact which was later officially acknowledged³⁷.

Conference of the Romanian Communist Party], în Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări* [Articles and Speeches], București, Ed. Partidului Muncitoresc Român, 1951, pp. 71-72.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ Regarding this issue, the same Gheorghe Vasilichi remarked in 1974 that, after 1945, "we had inherited a poorly developed country, destroyed by war and isolated on an international scale, with a small number of communists able to lead, with no experience in the art of leadership of the state, or even of a Communist Party, grown enormously in a short time, with powerful enemies [...] Communists and in general sons of the working class, being the poor class, did not have the opportunity during the bourgeois regime to learn to run industrial and commercial enterprises, banking institutions, or the state in general, as the sons of capitalists and landlords did – and yet they took power and began to rule by learning and learn by ruling. They have also taught others, but they have also learned from others and that is their strength. They learned – as they say – in the heat of battle, on the go." – A.N.R. – S.A.N.I.C., Fond Institutul de Studii Istorice și Social-Politice [Fund of the Institute of Historical and Socio-Political Studies] – XVII, Dosar nr. 60, ff. 7-8.

³⁶ *Congresul PMR, 21-23 februarie 1948* [The Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party, 21-23 February 1948], București, Editura P.M.R., 1951, p. 95.

³⁷ *Rezoluții și hotărâri ale Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român volumul II 1951-1953* [Resolutions and Decisions of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party volume II 1951-1953], București, Ed. pentru literatură politică, 1954, pp. 437-438.

At the same time, at the central level, with the political influence of the party elite far exceeding its organizational capacity³⁸, on March 21, 1945, the Workers' University of the Romanian Communist Party was established³⁹, following the Soviet model of the "Sverdlov" Communist University (later renamed after the name of one of the founders of the Romanian Social-Democratic Party who defended the cause of the revolted peasants in 1907 - "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Higher Party School), as a higher education institution. In 1950 the duration of studies was one year; until 1956 the admission of students was strictly based on the recommendations developed at the level of the regional party committees and the evaluation of the personnel file⁴⁰.

In parallel, based on a decision of the Central Committee of the party, the Central School of Lecturers was established in October 1948 (renamed in July 1949 as the "A.A. Zhdanov" Higher School of Social Sciences⁴¹), "with the aim of training cadres necessary for the party to fight on the ideological front"⁴². According to the provisions

³⁸ Gabriel Asandului, „Școlile de cadre ale PCR din teritoriu în primii ani postbelici (1945-1948)” [Romanian Communist Party's Local Cadre Schools in the First Postwar Years (1945-1948)], în Sorin Radu (coord.), *Învățământul de partid și școlile de cadre în România comunistă. Context național și regional* [Party Education and Cadre Schools in Communist Romania. National and Regional Context], Iași, Ed. Universității „A.I. Cuza”, 2014, p. 48.

³⁹ Gabriel Asandului, “Învățământul de partid în România comunistă. De la Universitatea Muncitorească la Școala Superioară de Partid „Ștefan Gheorghiu” (1945-1966)” [„Party Education in Communist Romania. From the Workers' University to the «Ștefan Gheorghiu» Higher Party School (1945-1966)”, în *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”* [Yearbook of the “A.D. Xenopol” History Institute], Iași, nr. 49, 2012, pp. 189-204.

⁴⁰ Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, “Reorganizarea P.M.R.-ului după modelul P.C.(b.) al U.R.S.S. și crearea nomenclaturii C.C. al P.M.R. în Republica Populară Română (1949-1954)” [“The Reorganization of the R.W.P. according to the Model of the C.P.(b) of the U.S.S.R. and the Creation of the Nomenclature of the C.C. of R.W.P. in the Romanian People's Republic (1949-1954)”, în *Totalitarism și rezistență, teroare și represiiune în România comunistă* [Totalitarianism and Resistance, Terror and Repression in Communist Romania], coord. Gheorghe Onișoru, București, Ed. C.N.S.A.S., 2001, p. 247.

⁴¹ Gabriel Asandului, “Party Studies in Communist Romania. The Superior School of Social Sciences «Andrei Aleksandrovici Zhdanov» 1948-1958”, în *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „George Barițiu” din Cluj-Napoca, Series Historica* [Yearbook of the “George Barițiu” History Institute from Cluj-Napoca, Series Historica], no. LII, 2013, pp. 145-163.

⁴² “Hotărârea Biroului Politic al C.C. al P.M.R. privind transformarea școlii de lectori «A.A. Zhdanov» într-o școală superioară de științe sociale cu durată de 2 ani (Iulie 1949)” [“The decision of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of R.W.P. regarding the transformation of the «A.A. Zhdanov» school of lecturers into a 2-year higher school of social sciences (July 1949)”, în *Rezoluții și hotărâri ale Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român, 1948-1950* [Resolutions

of the above-mentioned decision, the recruitment of students for the "A.A. Zhdanov" Higher School of Social Sciences was to be carried out from "the ranks of party activists with ideological and cultural training, preferably graduates of party schools"⁴³. On the occasion of the transformation into a Higher School of Social Sciences in 1949, the duration of studies increased from 6 months to 2 years, and then in 1954 it was extended to 4 years. Also since 1954, both the graduates of the "A.A. Zhdanov" school and those of "Ștefan Gheorghiu" received the title of candidate in sciences (the Soviet equivalent of the scientific title of PhD), being assimilated with the graduates of traditional higher education institutions.

According to the political scientist Vladimir Tismăneanu, the difference between the two educational institutions was a structural one: if the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" school had been created with the aim of educating and training a new generation of young communists capable of administering the party and the state, representing a veritable "nursery" of cadres for the party, the main objective of the "A.A. Zhdanov" school was to train activists and propagandists for the party ideological apparatus, this institution representing an instrument of ideological training and regimentation for those who had not experienced either the war, nor the underground party life⁴⁴.

In the summer of 1958, based on decision no. 558 of August 26 of the Central Committee Secretariat of the Romanian Workers Party, the two higher education party institutions were merged, at the central level remaining to function, until 1989, only the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Party School (since 1966 the Academy), which organized three-year courses (bachelor level), four-year courses (postgraduate, later doctorate), but also two-year courses for journalists, or one-year courses for agitators and propagandists.

These two higher party schools unified in 1958 have represented, from the beginning of their existence, the upper level of organized party education in Communist Romania. In their complementarity, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the

and Decisions of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party, 1948-1950], București, Ed. Partidului Muncitoresc Român, 1951, p. 124.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism pentru eternitate...*, p. 148.

proclamation of the Peoples' Republic, on December 30, 1949, the so-called evening Universities of Marxism-Leninism were inaugurated. Having a duration of studies of one and a half years, these universities were placed under the Central Committees' authority, being organized next to the party committees in the cities of Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș, their purpose being to raise the "political level and ideologically of the basic cadres of the party apparatus, of the leading cadres of the state apparatus, of the administrative tops of the state enterprises, of the mass organizations"⁴⁵, without their so-called "removal from production".

On a hierarchical lower level than these party institutions of higher education were placed the secondary party schools, with a duration of 3 or 6 months, which operated alongside the county (later) regional party committees in the main cities of Romania: Bucharest, Cluj, Timișoara, Iași, Craiova, Galați, Constanta, Brașov, Ploiesti and Târgu-Mureș (in Hungarian language). Secondary party education also included, apart from these 11 secondary schools, the 3-month party courses that operated in addition to 28 county committees, respectively the study circles of the history of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of the Soviet Union, staggered over two years and open both to those who had already graduated from party schools and wanted to complete their political-ideological training, and to those who, on the contrary, were preparing to be admitted.

The first step, the elementary one, of party education was intended for simple party members and aimed at their acquisition of the "party line", *i.e.* their political literacy under the guidance of a propagandist, based on reading and discussing of some topics published in the "Scântea" newspaper, within current political circles or evening party courses (in villages), respectively evening party courses in factories.

Starting with the year 1950-1951, the two higher party schools "Ștefan Gheorghiu" and "A.A. Zhdanov", the 5 evening universities of Marxism-Leninism, as well as the 11 party secondary schools began their courses on September 15, at the same time with the beginning of the school year, and included, at all levels, from

⁴⁵ Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, *Reorganizarea P.M.R.-ului după modelul P.C.(b) al U.R.S.S...*, p. 247.

elementary to higher, a number of 249,125 registered students, all of them being party members⁴⁶.

In the current stage of research, it is extremely difficult to appreciate how many graduates the system of party schools has produced during the entire Communist rule in Romania. Who were they, what was their professional and political trajectory after graduation, how did they change their careers after 1989 are open questions to this day. What we do know for sure is the fact that, for instance, during the first 25 years of its existence, the Medium Party School from Timișoara has formed a number of 6941 “cadres with responsible jobs in party organs and organizations, mass and social organizations, from economic, industrial and agricultural units, comrades who work with enthusiasm, dedication and selflessness for the implementation of party policy”⁴⁷.

By analyzing the case of this school, whose archive has become accessible for study, one may draw relevant conclusions regarding not only the entire national system of party education and its network of cadre schools but, more important, to the ways into which power had been exercised by political elites throughout communist rule. For sure, the policy-making process knew a very high degree of personalisation especially during late Gheorghiu-Dej era, and thus the party elite (or nomenklatura) was not involved into the decision-making process, but fact is that this elite had been entrusted to apply and control the ways into which policies formulated “from above” were being implemented: from this perspective, as Florin Abraham has noted, the party elite appears to be a *de facto* power-holder in both party and society⁴⁸.

Secondly, by studying internal documents created by Party Schools during their existence, it becomes more and more clear the fact that the Communist Party’s main function vis-a-vis peasants and workers, once set in power, and especially during those first

⁴⁶ *Ibidem.*, p. 245.

⁴⁷ Arhivele Naționale ale României – Serviciul Județean Timiș, Fond Școala Interjudețeană de Partid Timișoara [Romanian National Archives – Timiș County Service, Fund of the Medium Party School Timișoara], Dosar nr. 149/1973, f. 12.

⁴⁸ Florin Abraham, “Învățământul de partid și elitele regimului comunist din România. Pentru o agendă a cercetării” [“Party Education and the Elites of the Communist Regime in Romania. For a Research Agenda”], în Sorin Radu (coord.), *Învățământul de partid...*, p. 18.

years, “was to offer the opportunity for upward mobility (a process not recognized in Marxist theory)”⁴⁹. Indeed, in a very short time stretch, party schools have managed to create a loyal party and state bureaucracy, who owed everything to the Communist Party. Many of them were coming from social or ethnic categories previously excluded from public life.

“What used to be a paucity of sources has become an embarrassment of riches”⁵⁰ J. Arch Getty once wrote in regard to archival sources. Indeed, the archive of the Medium Party School from Timișoara contains a wealth of extremely diverse documents, indispensable for the analysis not only of its history and activity, but also for the party’s cohort of beneficiaries and for the understanding of how actually the new elite has been created: of the greatest importance, from this point of view, are the students’ personal record files, autobiographies, characterizations, recommendations, course syllabi, the detailed lists of both students and lecturers (including their age, gender, social origin, level of study, etc.), various reports and accounts written by the schools’ management regarding day-to-day activities, and so on. These documents provide the necessary basis of understanding of the personnel dynamics, political trajectories followed by the schools’ graduates (at least 3 of them have become ministers in the early 1980s) and the ways into which personal relations between them have shaped the local/regional networks of power inside the Romanian Communist Party.

Last but not least, the evaluation of the courses taught at the Medium Party School from Timișoara may offer important clues regarding the type of knowledge and skills the party leaders considered necessary for the graduates to achieve and develop. On a deeper level, one can decode even the political core-values learned by the schools’ graduates and the extent to which the party has managed to create a faithful, obedient cohort of activists.

⁴⁹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2022, p. 6.

⁵⁰ J. Arch Getty, Oleg. V Naumov, *The Road to Terror. Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, p. xi.

The resident and non-resident medical studentships in the medical education of Cluj County in the first Communist Age

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Abstract: This article presents the two forms of perfection of students in the medical higher education of Cluj County, the resident and non-resident medical studentships which were introduced in the Faculty of Medicine from Cluj in the interwar period continuing with certain interruptions in the first Communist Age. The article illustrates how the position of intern and extern physician could be filled in, in medicine. The social mark was the one that differentiated the medical examination in the Communist Age from the one from the interwar period. The social mark represented the social community activity of the student regarding the involvement of the student in various cultural and sanitary activities or voluntary work. The weight of this social mark was equal to the other specialized subjects from the examination. Under this social mark the Communist regime could mask the sanctioning of the political past and the poor political orientation of the students.

Key words: resident medical studentship, non-resident medical studentship, medical higher education, medical education in Cluj county, professional training and perfection, students, Communism.

Rezumat: Internatul și externatul în învățământul medical clujean în prima epocă comunistă. Acest articol prezintă cele două forme de perfecționare a studenților din învățământul superior medical clujean: internatul și externatul, care au fost introduse la Facultatea de Medicină din Cluj în perioada interbelică continuând cu unele întreruperi și în prima epocă comunistă. Articolul ilustrează modul în care se putea ocupa funcția de intern și extern în medicină. Nota

socială era cea care diferenția examenul din perioada comunistă de cel din perioada interbelică. Nota socială reprezenta activitatea social-obștească a studentului privind implicarea studentului în diverse activități culturale, sanitare sau de muncă voluntară. Ponderele acestor note sociale era egală cu celelalte materii de specialitate din examen. Sub această notă socială, regimul comunist putea masca sancționarea trecutului politic și slaba orientare politică a studenților.

Cuvinte cheie: internat, externat, învățământ superior medical, învățământ medical clujean, perfecționări profesionale, studenți, comunism.

The resident and non-resident medical studentships in medicine were two forms of training of medical students, by the French model and were introduced in our country for the first time in the medical university education in the capital, by the Romanian physician of French origin, Carol Davila. He had been invited in 1853 by Barbu Știrbei, the Lord of Țara Românească, to organize the sanitary service of the army.¹ Carol Davila got involved in the organization of Romanian medical and pharmaceutical education, but also in the foundation of the scientific societies: “Medical Society”, “Red Cross Society” and “Society of natural sciences” and the medical magazines, “Monitorul medical” and “Gazeta medicală”.

Non-resident medical studentship

In the clinics from Cluj, the non-resident medical studentship was introduced for the first time by the decision of the Council of Clinics on 17.03.1927. The period of non-resident medical studentship was one year. The selection of externs was made by a competition. The externs were employees paid from the funds of the university clinics, and they performed three rotations of three months each according to the subjects chosen at the beginning of internship. During this period the non-resident medical studentship was carried out in the following clinics: medical, surgical, dermatological, obstetrics and gynaecology, dental, urological, infantile, ophthalmological, neurological, Otho-rhino-laryngological, radiological and at the morgue of clinics.²

In 1942 the resident and non-resident medical studentships were reorganized, these two forms of training of students worked until 1951,

¹ Benone Duțescu, Maria Beuran, Mircea Beuran, *Internatul în medicină și farmacie: parte din ființa medicinei românești* [Resident studentship in medicine and pharmacy: part of the Romanian medicine], (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2020), 27-28.

² Ion Baci, *Institutul de Medicină și Farmacie Cluj* [Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj], (Timișoara: Întreprinderea Poligrafică Banatul, 1967), 234.

when by decision of the Ministry of Health no. 114346/21.VI.1951 ceased since July 1st the hiring of interns by competition and the remuneration of externs. In I.M.F. Cluj followed a period of six years of suspension of these two forms of professional training. In 1957 they came back to the organization and functioning of non-resident medical studentship as form of theoretical and practical training of students in medicine and pharmacy, decided by: H.C.M. no. 1003/1957; H.C.M. nr.1365/1957; H.C.M. no. 845/1957 and Decree no. 264/1957.³

By this form of education, the interns and externs had the opportunity to enrich their professional knowledge, learning first of all how to do a full and correct anamnesis. The observation sheets drawn up by externs and interns were checked by assistants and read during the visit of the professor. The medical education at the bed of patient was intensified by participation of externs and interns in the methods of clinical examination of patients, but also in the realization of medical acts.⁴ For example, in the Second World War, when a part of the medical staff was mobilized on the front, the interns and externs from Medical Clinic I fulfilled the role of on-duty physician for the clinic, giving first aid in various illnesses.⁵

If until 1942 the non-resident medical studentship was one year, in 1957 the duration of non-resident medical studentship was extended to two years. The non-resident medical studentship took place after the graduation of the third year of study, practically the years IV and V were dedicated to non-resident medical studentship. In the competition could participate the graduates who did not have overdue exams, but the places were limited. The positions of extern in medicine were filled in only based on competition. The competition took place in the autumn of each year, in the medical and pharmaceutical institutes from: Bucharest, Iași, Cluj, Timișoara and Târgu-Mureș. The number of extern positions was set by the Ministry of Health for each university centre. The Regulations of 1957 issued by the Ministry of Health and Social Provisions, set out a period of non-resident medical studentship of two years. The non-resident medical studentship started on January 1st, each year. The externs performed four internships of 6 months each in the specialized services at choice, mentioned at the beginning of non-resident medical studentship. The number of places, themes and date of examination were published 90 days earlier in the brochure "Muncitorul

³*Ibidem.*

⁴ Gr. Gherman, "Internii și externii" ["Interns and Externs"], în: *Cinci ani la Sibiu un an la Cluj. Orientări și regulamente de activitate*, (Cluj: Tipografia "Casa Românească", 1947), 85.

⁵*Ibidem*, 86.

sanitar” but also in the offices of medical-pharmaceutical institutions. During the internships, the extern students received a monthly salary of Lei 400.⁶

The students from the faculties of general medicine and paediatrics who graduated at least 3 years of faculty could participate in the extern physician competition. The file of candidate for the extern physician competition had to contain:

- a) An “enrolment application”;
- b) Detailed autobiography and a completed student record;
- c) Certificate (proof) which shows that he/she is graduate of 3rd year of medicine;
- d) Report of social and professional activity checked by the institute rector's office;
- e) Health Certificate accompanied by a pulmonary radioscopic report.”⁷

The medical-pharmaceutical institutions checked the documents of candidates and enrolled those who fulfilled the necessary conditions. The marking was between 1 and 20 points. The minimum graduation mark was 10 points, the maximum graduation mark was 20 points and the minimum mark of admission for non-resident medical studentship was 15 points.

The extern physician competition in 1957 consisted of 2 written tests with a duration of three hours, one test in anatomy and the other test in medical-surgical propaedeutics. The admission mark was the arithmetic average mark of the two exams, which was completed by the mark for social activity, all 3 marks had equal weight.⁸

The Regulations for the extern physician examination specified that the professional and social activity test consisted of “investigation and marking” by the whole commission of the professional and social activity report submitted by the candidate. Each member of the commission marked the candidate with a mark from 1 to 20. If there were equal average marks at admission, the candidates were differentiated depending on the mark for professional and social activity. If at the social test, the candidates had the same marks, they took into account the mark from the written test. If in this case, there was a tie, for selection of the successful candidate, they proceeded by drawing lots.⁹

⁶ Serviciul Județean a Arhivelor Naționale Cluj (from now on S.J.A.N.C), Fond: Facultatea de Medicină și Farmacie, Prorektorat didactic, *Internat și externat* [Resident and non-resident medical studentships], dos. 374/1957-1958, p. 15; 25.

⁷*Ibidem*, p. 26.

⁸*Ibidem*, p. 27.

⁹*Ibidem*, p. 29.

Following the extern physician competition in 1957, in I.M.F Cluj a number of 46 places were filled in, and three remained unoccupied. From the point of view of social origin, the admitted candidates had the following social origin: 9 workers, one poor peasant, 5 middle peasants, and 31 clerks.¹⁰

In 1964 the extern internship was introduced in outpatient clinic, and it was carried out in internal medicine offices from policlinics (cardiology, dietetics, gastro-enterology), urban sanitary districts and at the Regional Rescue Station. The extern internship in the sanitary anti-epidemics subjects (communal hygiene, school hygiene, food, work hygiene) was carried out in urban and rural sanitary districts, schools and enterprise dispensaries.¹¹

In the summer of year 1964 they tried to do a new reorganization of the medical education by generalization of extern internship which meant internships for students without the existence of a competition for the filling in of an extern position. The consequence of these decisions was noted immediately by the increase in the number of extern students in hospitals compared to the low number of guides, lack of obligation to participate in guards, etc. If the non-resident medical studentship included in 1964 all the students of the faculty of medicine, the number of places for resident medical studentship was quite limited, offering the opportunity for a reduced number of students to train as interns.¹²

The clinical internships in the major subjects are: internal medicine, surgery, gynaecology and paediatrics, they substituted the courses, the students were helped by the practical activity at the bed of patient, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for a good professional qualification.¹³ The extern students received a monthly salary from the state, were enrolled in a trade union, did not have holidays, but they had the right to an annual leave of two weeks.

Resident medical studentship

The resident medical studentship in medicine was a European model which worked in Europe since 1732, the places were filled in by competition. Following the European model, our country introduced the

¹⁰*Ibidem*, p. 7.

¹¹ Ion Baciu, *Institutul de Medicină și Farmacie Cluj* [Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj], Timișoara, Întreprinderea Poligrafică Banatul, 1967, p. 236.

¹²Mihail Mihailide, "Internatul în Medicină...acum istorie" ["Resident Studentship in Medicine... now history"], în: *Viața medicală*, 31 iulie 2020; <https://www.viata-medicala.ro/aparitii-editoriale/internatul-in-medicina-acum-istorie-17923> (accessed August 2021).

¹³Iftimie Nesfântu, "Cum era odată externatul și internatul" ["How the non-resident and resident medical studentships used to be"], în: *Viața medicală*, 21 noiembrie 2013; <https://www.viata-medicala.ro/interviuri/cum-era-odata-externatul-si-internatul-7766> (accessed August 2021).

resident medical studentship in medicine. The first regulations regarding the intern competition in our country were issued in March 1860, and the competition took place one month later. On 13.11.1929 the Council of Clinics decided to introduce the resident medical studentship in the Faculty of Medicine from Cluj. This intern theoretical and practical perfection of students and young physicians functioned until 1951, when it was suspended by a ministerial decision. Six years followed when the intern position was not put out to competition, later they reintroduced the intern position in the autumn of year 1957. The main reason of interrupting this qualification was due to the implementation of the Soviet model in the Romanian medical education. Another cause could be the inevitable strife among students who attended the two forms of training and the students who did not have the opportunity to attend these forms of study, because of the limited number of places.¹⁴

Based on the directives of P.M.R. and of the Council of Ministers in 1957, the Ministry of Health announced the re-foundation of resident and non-resident medical studentships in medicine by competition. Those who were eligible for this position were the graduates of faculty and the students of 6th year, who had the extern internship completed. In order to improve the training of students in medicine and pharmacy, the Rector of IMF Cluj announced all the interested clinics that since January 1st, 1958 the positions of interns and externs in medicine were founded (department of general medicine and paediatrics), and the positions of interns in pharmacy were created.¹⁵

The difference between the two positions, extern and intern, was quite high, if we reflect on the work schedule of interns. The externs carried out their activities in the clinic until noon, then they left the hospital. The interns practically lived in the hospital. The interns left the hospital only when they had courses or for different cultural events. For cultural events, they had to get their permission to leave the hospital. The interns were much more involved in the medical act compared to externs, they participated sometimes alone in the guard service in clinic in certain important holidays over the year, the planning of guards was made, of course, with the approval of the head of clinic.¹⁶

¹⁴ Florea Marin, *Școala medicală clujeană. Continuatorii* [Medical School of Cluj. Continuers], Vol. IV, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2002, p. 339.

¹⁵ S.J.A.N.C, Fond: Facultatea de Medicină și Farmacie, Prorectorat didactic, *Internat și externat* [Resident and non-resident medical studentships], dos. 374/1957-1958, p. 15.

¹⁶ Iftimie Nesfântu, „Cum era odată externatul și internatul” [“How the non-resident and resident medical studentships used to be”], în: *Viața medicală*, 21 noiembrie 2013; <https://www.viata-medicala.ro/interviuri/cum-era-odata-externatul-si-internatul-7766> (accessed August 2021).

The resident medical studentship had a period of 3 years, while there were 6 internships of 6 months each in different services, in the order mentioned by the intern in the commitment. The intern internship started on the first of January of each year. In 1957 interns were remunerated with a salary of Lei 500 every month, for the period when they were students and Lei 600 every month after the graduation of the faculty, but without benefiting from scholarship. Apart from this remuneration, the interns had free meals and free accommodation in the clinic.¹⁷ If the hospital could not grant these facilities, the intern student had right to a hostel. The full intern internship was assimilated with the internship set out by Decision C.M. no. 2415/953.¹⁸ According to regulations, the intern was obliged to live in the hospital, except for the married couples. Those who lived in the hospital were prohibited from hosting strangers in the room. Also, during the intern internship, they did not have the right to occupy any other position.¹⁹

The intern competition was organized by the five medical-pharmaceutical institutes from the country. The necessary information about the number of positions put out for competition by the Ministry of Health, the conditions for participation and themes were published in the brochure "Muncitorul sanitar"(Sanitary Worker) and at the offices of the medical-pharmaceutical institutes at least 90 days earlier. The enrolment file of the candidate had to contain: an enrolment application, detailed autobiography and a completed student record, a certificate issued by the rector's office which showed that he/she was in the last extern internship with competition and social and professional activity report checked by the Rector of the institute.²⁰

The tests for the intern competition in medicine were:

- a) "written test from anatomy and physiology, with a subject from anatomy and physiology (duration: 4 hours and marking up to 20 points);
- b) Written test from internal and surgical pathology with one subject of internal medicine and one subject of surgery (duration: 4 hours, marking up to 20 points)
- c) A practical test (marking up to 20 points);
- d) A professional and social activity test (marking up to 20 points)."²¹

¹⁷ S.J.A.N.C, Fond: Facultatea de Medicină și Farmacie, Prorectorat didactic, *Internat și externat* [Resident and non-resident medical studentships], dos. 374/1957-1958, p. 15.

¹⁸*Ibidem*, p. 32.

¹⁹*Ibidem*, p. 37.

²⁰*Ibidem*, p. 32.

²¹*Ibidem*, p. 34.

The average mark of written tests below the mark 15 was eliminatory. Candidates were declared successful in competition in the decreasing order of average mark and within the limit of places, and the minimum average mark for graduation of competition was 15 points.²² The professional and social activity test consisted of the analysis and evaluation by the commission of the professional and social activity report submitted by the candidate at enrolment in competition, report checked by the rector of the Institute.²³

For the practical test of exam, the commission selected a number of patients with medical or surgical conditions which they examined and for which they set the diagnosis. The practical test consisted of examination of a patient, elaboration of observation sheet, and after a time for thinking, the candidate had to expose before the commission the clinical case he/she examined. For this test, the candidate was given 20 minutes for examination, 20 minutes for meditation and 15 minutes for exposure. For the elimination of any suspicions, for the practical examination safety measures were taken. The candidates who worked in the last month in the hospital where they were to take the practical test, were tested in the practical test in another hospital.²⁴

In order to complete the series of interns, in 1957 by derogation from article 7 of the Regulations for organization of intern examination, the students, graduates of year IV, who passed all examinations until the competition date were admitted for the intern competition in medicine. By derogation from these Regulations, the graduates of year V could be enrolled in the intern competition, and the duration of intern studentship for them was two years. In 1958 by derogation from Article 7 of Regulations regarding the occupation by competition of the positions of interns in medicine, the externs who had only one year of extern internship could be admitted.²⁵

In December 1957, in I.M.F. Cluj a number of 49 places for externs and 24 places for interns were put out to competition. The Ministry of Health and Social Provisions by the Staff and Education Division, decided that the remaining places which will be temporarily filled in, respectively 27 places of externs and 11 places of interns, would not be displayed for competition, but proposals would be made by the Institute management

²²*Ibidem.*

²³*Ibidem*, p. 36.

²⁴*Ibidem*, p. 46.

²⁵*Ibidem*, p. 38.

and the mass organizations for their occupation.²⁶ They did not specify expressly the organizations, but it is understood that they were the political party organizations. The 24 places put out to competition for interns were distributed as follows: 12 places for the students of year V, with a duration of three years and other 12 places for the students of year VI with a duration of two years.²⁷ Most of the students enrolled in the extern and intern competitions were members of U.T.M. The candidates declared successful in the intern competition of that year had the following social origin: one worker, 3 poor peasants, one middle peasant, 18 clerks and one candidate from other social strata.²⁸

After the performance of intern internship, the best graduates were recommended to be recruited for the higher education to fill in a Junior Teaching Assistant position. These recommendations made by the Institute were discussed with the local party bodies, then were forwarded to the General Division of Staff and Perfection of Personnel in the Ministry of Education. The intern graduates could fill in vacancies from the sanitary network as secondary physician or a position of intern researcher in research institutes.²⁹

A document of 1964 reflected the influence of political party in the distribution of candidates graduates of resident medical studentship, in the higher medical education of Cluj County. The social origin of boyar, but also the label put to her father who was a former Iron-Guardist, did not allow the graduate Elvira Axente, to fill in a position of teaching assistant in higher education. For a correct documentation, the I.M.F. Cluj requested the Popular Council of the district Vatra Dornei to present the material situation of the graduate Axente. In the answer received from the Popular Council, it showed that her father owned a pub in the commune Dona Candrei. This situation was discussed with the local party bodies, and they agreed that Elvira Axente could not be proposed for higher education. This document was preserved because of the petition that the graduate forwarded to the Ministry of Education and the correspondence between the ministry and the institute, but this case cannot be classified as an

²⁶*Ibidem*, p. 32.

²⁷*Ibidem*, p. 16.

²⁸*Ibidem*, p. 7.

²⁹Arhiva Universității de Medicină și Farmacie "Iuliu Hațieganu" (Arhiva U.M.F. "Iuliu Hațieganu"), Serviciul personal, *Numiri și promovări în funcțiuni* [Appointments and promotions in positions], dos. 41/1959-1961, 2-8.; Ion Baci, *Institutul de Medicină și Farmacie Cluj* [Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj], Timișoara, Întreprinderea Poligrafică Banatul, 1967, 235.

isolated one. In another order of ideas, this document helps us understand better the criteria for selection of teaching staff in higher education.³⁰

If we analyse the criteria for admission to resident medical studentship since 1957, we can say that the social mark indirectly represented a criterion for selection in the graduation of university medical education, considering that this mark represented an equal weight to the other marks in competition, and in case of equal average marks, the first criterion for differentiation was the social mark. Under this social mark, they could mask the sanctioning of political past or the poor political orientation of the candidate.

In 1971 there was a reorganization of the resident medical studentship consisting of diversification of specialties. The resident medical studentship started from the 6th year of faculty and extended for a period of 3 years. After the completion of resident medical studentship, the graduates could enrol for the second internship. For this period, the file of the candidate from the resident medical studentship, apart from the passage of admission tests with a very good average mark, had to contain the political approval and a mark for social community activity.³¹

In 1959 they reintroduced the examination for the attestation of qualification of primary physician and specialist physician, examination which had been suspended in 1948. For the attestation of specialist physician, the candidates had to have worked in the specialty for which they competed and have a length of service of at least 8 years, and for the primary physician the length of service in profession was 10 years. The examination for specialist physician set out a written test, a practical test and a theoretical test. The final mark represented the arithmetic mean of the three tests to which the social mark was added. There were in that period a few physicians, former political convicted persons, who could not participate in examination, because they were not given the minimum mark necessary for social activity.³² Also, in 1959 the teaching staff who were to take the examination of primary or specialist physician, were downgraded in the social mark, because they had a private medical office, were not party members and those with political membership were

³⁰Arhiva U.M.F. "Iuliu Hațieganu", Serviciul personal. *Corespondență cu Ministerul Învățământului* [Correspondance with the Ministry of Education], dos. 22/1964-1965, 3.

³¹Mihail Mihailide, "Internatul în Medicină...acum istorie" ["Resident Studentship in Medicine... now history"], în: *Viața Medicală*, 31 iulie 2020; <https://www.viata-medicala.ro/aparitii-editoriale/internatul-in-medicina-acum-istorie-17923> (accessed August 2021).

³²Florea Marin, *Școala medicală clujeană. Continuatorii* [Medical School of Cluj. Continuator], Vol. IV, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2002, 340-341.

downgraded for non-involvement in political activity and trade union activity.³³

Conclusions

The two forms of professional training by filling in the position of extern and intern in medicine, benefited from a quite limited number of students, first of all because for a period of 6 years no competitions were organized for these positions, and secondly, because of the limited number of places put out to competition. The resident medical studentship represented a "pipeline" from which the young teaching staff came. After the finalization of resident medical studentship, the best graduates were recommended for higher education provided that they had "a sound social origin". The social mark introduced in the admission examination for resident and non-resident medical studentships was a means by which the Communist regime influenced the selection of the future teaching staff. Under the social mark the students could be sanctioned for their political past, for the passive activity in U.T.M. organization and for insufficient participation in the social community activity.

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Book Reviews

Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need To Know About Global Politics*, Elliott & Thompson, London, 2015; *The Power of Geography: Ten Maps that Reveal the Future of Our World*, Elliott & Thompson, London, 2021.

The war in Ukraine and the rise of China's influence are reshaping geopolitics. Our world is changing and we are trying to understand these phenomena with the aid of a variety of lenses. One approach puts an emphasis on the role of geography and its influence on policy and decision-making. Tim Marshall attempted to explain and teach about our world through his two well-known books: *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need To Know About Global Politics* and *The Power of Geography: Ten Maps that Reveal the Future of Our World*. It is also an exercise in trying to remind readers some of the basics, namely, understanding history and international relations by looking at maps.

Tim Marshall is a British journalist focusing on issues of foreign affairs, international diplomacy, and geopolitics. His career spreads over many years, which he spent working for the BBC and more recently as the Foreign Affairs Editor and Diplomacy Editor of Sky News. His activity includes reporting on events in war-torn countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. Apart from the two books on review here, he also wrote: *Worth Dying For: The Power & Politics Of Flags* (2016) and *Divided: Why We're Living in an Age of Walls* (2018)¹.

The past decade saw the publication of several popular books which aimed to explain current affairs through history. *Prisoners of Geography* and *The Power of Geography* are part of this trend from which they borrow, at least partially. One notable example is Niall Ferguson's *Civilization* (2011)², which proposes the idea of 'five killer apps' which contributed to the rise of the West. In the same period, Ian Morris contributed with his *Why the West Rules – For Now* (2010)³, which sought to answer very much the same questions. More recently, we have *Rivers of Power* (2020)⁴ by Laurence C. Smith which illustrates the impact of nature

¹ <https://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Tim-Marshall/523742523>, accessed on June 30, 2022; <https://www.waterstones.com/author/tim-marshall/92481>, accessed on June 30, 2022.

² Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (London: Penguin), 2011.

³ Ian Morris, *Why the West Rules – For Now: The Patterns of History and what they reveal about the Future* (London: Profile Books), 2010.

⁴ Laurence C. Smith, *Rivers of Power: How a Natural Force Raised Kingdoms, Destroyed Civilizations, and Shapes Our World* (New York, Boston, London: Little, Brown Spark), 2020.

on patterns of human civilization. They represent an attempt at explaining present-day geopolitics with help from historical interpretation.

Prisoners of Geography was an obvious success with the readers. This was mostly due to its accessible format and easy-to-follow argumentation. The book did not aim to up-end or revolutionize global studies. It mostly follows important countries which would be of obvious interest to the reader: Russia, China, USA, Western Europe, or the Middle East. In the follow-up, *The Power of Geography*, the focus shifts on smaller case studies: Iran, Australia, Saudi Arabia, the Sahel, or Ethiopia. In a sense, this choice broadens the scope proposed by the first book. As a consequence, it is also more thought provoking as fewer readers might think of issues such as water wars in Africa. The sequel definitely has a bleaker undertone running through it.

Both books follow a simple structure of ten chapters, each focusing on a country or part of the world. Marshall begins by describing the geography of the area. This lays the ground for his arguments of how this influenced its historical evolution. He does this very well in several examples. Marshall illustrates Russia's need for expansion in order to secure its center in the Moscow region. The description of Iran is also very well done, as he explains why its civilization survived for so long. This also underlines its specificities and its current geopolitical situation. Another well written chapter is that on China. Here he mostly manages to highlight Beijing's current ambitions and strategies of projecting power.

Marshall clearly focuses on the current situation as a result of geographical conditions. Countries have evolved under these pressures which influence their political and strategic thinking. In a certain sense we could argue that he is influenced by realism. His depiction of the world does show countries more as individual actors striving for power in order to ensure security. This is also where most criticism stems from. He does not necessarily ignore other factors such as sociological or economic ones, but they end-up playing a secondary role. However, we should keep in mind two aspects.

Firstly, at least in Russia's case, the invasion of 2022 proves there is truth to spatial determinism in some cases. Secondly, for Marshall geography is not only a major theme, but it is also a narrative device. It allows for an easy introduction and facilitates jumping from case to case in books which are mostly meant as educational instruments. In this regard, we can find similarities of style of two of Norman Davies' books, *Vanished Kingdoms*⁵ and his most recent *Beneath Another Sky*⁶. He uses similar writing

⁵ Norman Davies, *Vanished Kingdoms: The Rise and Fall of States and Nations* (London: Penguin), 2012.

devices which allow him to travel around the world while telling individual stories of places within a broader narrative. Although, stylistically, there is a broad gap between the two authors, Marshall's being more simplistic given that he targets a less specialized audience.

With *Prisoners of Geography* and *The Power of Geography* Tim Marshall proposes that we once again look at the role of geography in geopolitics. While, indeed it is not the sole influencing factor for decision makers and historical phenomena, it will always play a certain role. Used as a narrative device, this approach can help create a useful introduction for a less specialized audience. However, it does show its limitations if the reader is more familiar with international affairs and history. They are part of a decade-old wave of writers trying to explain why the world looks as it does and should be seen as such.

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⁶ Norman Davies, *Beneath Another Sky: A Global Journey into History* (London: Penguin), 2017.

Julia Boyd, Angelika Patel, *A Village in the Third Reich. How Ordinary Lives Were Transformed by the Rise of Fascism*, Elliott & Thompson Publishers, London, 2022

A Village in the Third Reich. How Ordinary Lives Were Transformed by the Rise of Fascism was published in May 2022 at Elliot & Thompson Publishers. Julia Boyd is a best-selling author with other works such as *Travelers in the Third Reich: The Rise of Fascism through the Eyes of Everyday People* (2017) or *A Dance with the Dragon: The Vanished World of Peking's Foreign Colony* (2012). Angelika Patel is a historian who wrote studies such as *A Village in the Mirror of its Time: Oberstdorf 1918-1952*.

The present work is spread over 505 pages which in turn encapsulate 23 chapters. The two authors try to present the influence and actions of Hitler's regime over its people by analyzing how the regime manifested in a mountain village from the Bavarian Alps, Oberstdorf.

On one hand, this book comes as a continuation of the subject Julia Boyd confronted in her previous book, *Travelers in the Third Reich*, where her goal was to present how the Nazi rose to power from the perspective of German citizens: politicians, students, diplomats, communists and so on. Angelika Patel's contribution to this volume comes as a specialist on the region of Oberstdorf. They base their work on archive material, letters, interviews and memoirs. We have similar examples of papers in which historians use a microscopic approach in order to show the bigger pictures. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie in *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (1975) shows us how daily-life was in medieval times by analyzing the inquisition records of Jacques Fournier, Bishop of Pamiers and future Pope Benedict XII. In a similar manner, Stephen Kotkin explains Soviet society using the city of Magnitogorsk. With the help of archives and interviews, Kotkin manages to create a vivid image of the Soviet Union in his book, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (1995).

Oberstdorf is a village that lies in Swabia, a part of Bavaria, in the most Southern part of Germany, like numerous maps at the beginning of the book show us. It was an isolated village even before tourism started flourishing thanks to the mountains which allowed enthusiasts to ski starting with the end of the 19th century. No trade route, no other industry made people visit Oberstdorf. The residents used to survive on substitute farming, production of cheese and exploiting small deposits of iron ore, we are told in the introduction. But even in such circumstances, the villagers have always been passionate about keeping track of their history. Their archives became a very consistent source from which the authors were able to extract this book, managing to reveal the German society during the

Third Reich at an intimate level. We are told however that Oberstdorf, like all cities and villages during those times, was a unique case. Not all that happened there took place everywhere else and vice-versa. But as Hitler's regime spread with "German discipline" all over the country, its consistency in how it affected the German citizens allows this study to speak for the general population.

Painting the image of Nazi Germany through the eyes of an isolated village happens from the beginning of the study. We learn how after the First World War, just like everywhere else in Germany, hyperinflation affected the residents' day-to-day lives. Oberstdorf responded to this by investing in its ski resort, becoming a tourist attraction. This is why in the late '20s the NSDAP did not manage to find any "friends" in the village, the villagers being more focused on the reconstruction of their lives.

This changed of course together with the failures of the Weimar Republic and with the financial crisis of 1929-1933. Germany felt the repercussions of these even in its most remote places. This is when the villagers of Oberstdorf started to look at National Socialism like it had the potential of a better alternative or at least like it was "a lesser evil". The propaganda of the brown shirts was not very appreciated by the villagers, as they were aggressive and loud - the total opposite of the peaceful mountain life of Oberstdorf. On the other hand, however, Hitler managed to charm them like he did the rest of the country. His charisma and "vision" for the future won Oberstdorf. Soon, the National Socialist German Workers' Party won the elections of 1933. Little did they know that it was going to be the last multi-party election until 1946.

The book shows us how the loyalty towards Hitler was strong enough not to waver for a long time even in spite of the actions of their first Nazi mayor. The new administration, as per the rules of the regime, immediately started to monopolize the private lives of their citizens, to control them to the smallest detail.

Even though not abiding the Nazi sent many to the "protective custody" of the Dachau camp, many villagers remained steadfast in their trust for Hitler. They dismissed the most gruesome parts of the Reich either by ignoring it or by just considering them rumors launched by the Western propaganda. Such an example was Theodor Weissenberger, who was murdered just because he was blind. As per the "racial hygiene" that Hitler set in motion in 1939, his *imperfection* was deemed unfit for the regime in order to make the state stronger. At only nineteen he was taken to die in a gas chamber like so many other children with disabilities.

But if some people ignored the facts, we cannot generalize. The book shows us how many villagers came to understand what Hitler and his party were actually doing. The disapproval however decreased for a time, at least as long as the Germans were winning the war. After the balance changed, more and more of Oberstdorf came to disapprove of the regime. Even more so as relatives of the villagers started dying on the front.

The authors give us a tridimensional image of the years of war with the help of some unpublished diaries of a lieutenant and a sergeant who served alongside Oberstdorf's soldiers in Poland, France and the U.S.S.R. They relate the other side of the coin but, of course, in Oberstdorf there was no peace either.

The village itself was in a state of turmoil, Patel and Boyd tell us. Dachau sub-camps, foreign labor camps, a training camp for the *Waffen-SS* and a Nazi stronghold were all located on the periphery of the village. Moreover, Oberstdorf's population doubled from the number of refugees who came there trying to escape the fire.

Both authors manage to present us an objective view for multiple reasons. For example, we get to read of one mayor who, despite having his political allegiance to the Nazi party, proved himself to be a decent human being by protecting some Jewish residents of the village or by helping others who got on "the bad side" of the Reich. He was not the only one. Just the same though, there were some villagers who kept their loyalty to Hitler until the end.

Additionally, the book does not fail to talk about some of the most recurring subjects that come to mind when the Nazis are mentioned. It has chapters going over the Arian racism or over the attitude of the regime towards religion. Confessions and religions like Jehovah's Witnesses were not tolerated, but Christian belief in itself was too strongly rooted in the Germans' lives. Therefore, the Nazis tried to mold the church in the face of National Socialism.

The image of post-war Oberstdorf is just as impressive as the rest of the text. In spite of the difficulties of the new administration who had to reestablish democracy and deal with their predecessors' culpability, many Germans concentrated more on their own lives. Houses ruined, families astray - before being able to concentrate on the bigger picture, everyone had to deal with their own lives and troubles.

There are multiple ways in which the portrait of Oberstdorf is completed. First of all, we are given maps and also multiple pictures depicting Oberstdorf's life. We have portraits of the villagers together with a brochure of the ski resort and an image of the most famous hotel in the village. Pictures of the life during the Nazi regime are there too - parades,

military men, Nazi officials holding speeches and so on. Just the same, we are given a short biography of each Oberstdorf villager, a detail that offers more life to the entire story.

The bibliography is a vast one and together with an exhaustive index, historians are offered the tools necessary for easily using this book as a reference in their own research. But even so, the language is not difficult to understand. The authors chose to relate the facts like narrating a story. In accordance, the book is a great read for both scholars and those passionate about totalitarian history.

As a conclusion, Boyd and Patel create a very vivid image of a small village, managing to better our understanding of how and why the German population responded to the regime – some supported it, some tried to resist and some just tried to hold on to their daily lives.

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Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ed. Black Inc, Columbia, 2022, 256 p.

The shortest History of the Soviet Union, written by Sheila Fitzpatrick, was published in the year of 2022, at the Black Inc. Books publishing house. The author is an illustrious historian of Austrian origins, whose main subjects of research include the history of the Soviet Union and of modern Russia. She is the leader of the revisionist school of history, applying in her works the perspective of *history from below*. She is also a Professor at the Australian Catholic University of Melbourne, Honorary Professor at Sidney University and Merituous Professor at Chicago University.

The present work integrates 256 pages and is divided in seven chapters that present the history of the Soviet Union, starting with how it was founded after the First World War and until its fall, in 1991.

Sheila Fitzpatrick's approach is born from numerous years of experience in the research of the Soviet Union. She intended and managed to create a well-structured synthesis of the history of the U.S.S.R., allowing both young historians and amateurs to enrich their knowledge on the subject. We must mention however that this book comes in the context of a larger series planned by the publishing house of Black Inc., which focuses on such succinct, short works. Professor Fitzpatrick's book comes as the sixth in the series. We can also mention that a short text on the history of today's Russia comes at a great time, taking into consideration the Russian aggression in Ukraine, in 2022.

Right from the introductory chapter, the author suggests a scientific approach. She intends through this book to deny the existence of an inevitability of events, inevitability many would take for granted. To be more precise, even though the work is titled as *the shortest history*, it is intended to help understand how all events are random, impossible to truly predict – death, pandemics, natural hazards etc. can all generate a major change in human history, an applicable thesis on the history of the Soviet Union as well.

Like this, we reach the exposition of the soviet tragicomedy. It is the story of those who dedicated themselves to subjugating nature and economy to the human species, at least theoretically. The Bolsheviki were the most surprised by their own rise to power in October 1917, as according to Marxist theory the Russian society was not ready for a communist state. Marx's theory of historical materialism states that societies pass through six stages: primitive communism, slave society, feudalism, capitalism, socialism and finally a global and stateless communism. Russia did not even reach capitalism.

Moreover, Sheila Fitzpatrick starts from the double question *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?*⁷. She sets aside the second part of the question, but she does not intend to offer a typical philosophical or political science answer for the first part either. Her approach is that of a Historical Anthropologist, like she herself declares. That is why she tries to show us how instead of a textbook socialism, the Soviet Union was witness to a more realist Socialism, adapted to historical events, *a really existing socialism*. Of course, what followed Socialism was often disputed in historiography. The Soviet Union left behind a complex situation that exceeded the simple division of states and nation of Eastern Europe. Like Katherine Verdery exemplifies in her article from 1994, *Beyond the Nation in Eastern Europe*, the situation created by the U.S.S.R. on such a vast territory was a transcendence of the ethnic and national *statu quo*, each nation now having more profound connections to each other. This state was even more accentuated when it comes to examples such as Romania-Moldova or Ukraine-Russia, where the time spent under the same flag offers both parts arguments for and against reunification.

Getting back to our subject, Fitzpatrick tries in the beginning to succinctly decode the Bolshevik and later Socialist mentality which in theory argued how the new state was different than the Tsarist Empire, but in reality, was more similar than not. This irony is revealed to us in the best way possible by the author – through dark humor jokes told in the times long past of the Soviet era. An example from the pages of the book is *What is the difference between capitalism and socialism? / Capitalism is the exploitation of man by man, and socialism is its replacement by its opposite*⁸. This type of irony is present throughout the entire text, an element that makes its perusal so much more pleasant.

An important aspect of this work is the time in which it was published. Shortly after the start of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict of 2022 Fitzpatrick brings the public this book, allowing a clearer understanding of the long-term origins of the event and of the two states' relation. Two nations, with two different people and cultures, differences between them existed from before 1917 and they materialized even then, through the actions of the Ukrainian peasant army of Nestor Makhno, who fought against both the Whites and the Reds.

The book continues in the same spirit with an overview of the first five-year plan of Stalin, with the hunger that followed and with a theory forwarded by the nowadays Ukrainian government – they argue how Stalin planned specifically the killing of Ukrainians in those years. The

⁷ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Black Inc, Columbia, 2022, p. 11

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 10

event is called *Holodomor* and it is perceived as an important step in the identity separation of Ukrain from the Core of U.S.S.R.⁹. Even though Fitzpatrick argues that similar events took place in other regions such as Kazakhstan, she seems to support the theory in which the killing of Ukrainians was intended by Stalin. There are opposing views in historiography, such as Stephen Kotkin. In his second volume of Stalin's biography, *Stalin: Volume II: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941* (2017), he brings forward the argument that because such events took place in more than one region, it cannot be said that Stalin targeted Ukrainians on purpose.

This is only one case of many in the book where the Historical-Anthropological perspective of the revisionist school is visible. Even though the reduced dimension of the book determines Fitzpatrick to focus on the *history from above* of the leaders of the Soviet Union and of the main historical events, she does capture the social history that gravitates said events too.

The book goes over the creation of U.S.S.R., over the epochs of Lenin, Stalin, of the Second World War and of the fall of the Soviet Union. In the end, as a form of conclusions, she offers an even shorter account of the events that took place in Russia, in the last three decades.

What proves that the book is not destined necessarily to experienced scholars of this field, but to those who wish to step for the first time on the territory of soviet history is the list of papers and books meant for further reading. At its beginning, Fitzpatrick declares that she does not offer the entire bibliography used for this work. We can perceive this as an intention to help the neophytes of this field to begin their own journey in the research of soviet history.

The ample portrait of the U.S.S.R. is completed in the mind of the reader by a plethora of images, photographs, portraits, caricatures and so on, with the purpose of offering more colour to the soviet landscape the book offers. With this in mind, Fitzpatrick enlarges our understanding of the soviet leaders by offering us some of their quotes and sayings, proportionally spread over the entirety of the seven chapters. For example, we are presented Trotsky's opinion vis-à-vis his colleague, Stalin, describing him as a *cruel man, a creature of bureaucracy*. Useful for inexperienced historians and amateurs is the use of artistic works that add to the image we are presented. Such an example is the mentioning of the 2017 movie *The Death of Stalin*, directed by Armando Iannucci, where the tragicomedy of his death is ironically depicted.

Taking all of these into consideration, it is my opinion that the present book portrays itself as a key of understanding not only of soviet

⁹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ed. Black Inc, Columbia, 2022, p. 75

history, but also of the mentality and vision of Professor Sheila Fitzpatrick on the subjects previously mentioned. A life of work dedicated to this field of research allowed her to differentiate this paper from similar texts, as she manages to attract readers by using an accessible language and a succinct way of giving the facts. By also giving enough unique details and aspects about the subject at hand she makes this a truly enjoyable lecture. Last but not least the present Russian-Ukrainian altercation comes as an additional reason to read Fitzpatrick's synthesis in order to gain a clearer understanding.

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Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Library. A Dictator and His Books*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2022, 260 p.

Stalin's interest in reading books, the respect and care he offered them can be remarked in one event from the ruler's family life. When his two sons were studying from an old History textbook and the wind blew some of the fragile pages away, their father was supposed to have told them to go and get them back. Later he also supposedly taught them how to repair the volume, fixing its book spine. Eventually, after the book was whole again, Stalin told them: 'You did good. Now you know how to treat books'¹⁰.

The book *Stalin's Library. A Dictator and His Books*, written by Geoffrey Roberts, was published for the first time in the year of 2022 at Yale University Press. The author is a British historian and Professor at College Cork University. He is specialized in the history of the Soviet Union and some of his works include *Stalin's General: The life of Georgy Zhukov* (2012) or *The Soviet Union and the Origins of the Second World War* (1995). Some of his ideas come as innovative, but are also difficult to digest for the scientific community and the public. For example, he forwarded the idea that the Soviet Union and Stalin represented an important part in the process of saving liberal democracy together with the communist system, from the danger of Nazism. Also, sentencing the terror and the brutality of the system, Roberts declared that Moscow was responsible for some of the most important achievements of humanity too.

Stalin's Library. A Dictator and His Books is comprised of 260 pages and it is divided in four main chapters, found between an introduction and a chapter that contains the author's conclusions. The core of the work concentrates on the so-called *Pometki*, which were the annotations done by Stalin himself on numerous non-fiction books, in which he lets us see his views, be it positive or negative. A similar approach was taken by Ambrus Miskolczy in 2003 with his work *Hitler's Library*, where he tries to enter the Fuhrer's mind through his books.

Roberts' book in particular comes as a successor to other research done by both himself and other historians, which create a complex biography of the former totalitarian leader. Such a numerous amount of books that recount Stalin's life exist that Roberts's account on the subject might seem superfluous. Among other papers we especially mention Stephen Kotkin's two published volumes that together achieve a biography of Stalin from his birth to the year of 1941. The last chapter of

¹⁰ Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Library. A Dictator and His Books*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2022, p. 9

his life is supposed to be covered by a third and final volume. *Stalin: Volume I: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928* (2014) and *Stalin: Volume II: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941* (2017) come as one of the most profound analyses of Stalin's life we have so far. We can also look at Oleg V. Khlevniuk's book *Stalin. New Biography of a Dictator* (2015) in which the author tries to fight any pseudo-scientific theories that defend the former dictator. An account of the controversies regarding Stalin is minutely described in *Revisioning Stalin and Stalinism. Complexities, Contradictions and Controversies*, edited by James Ryan and Susan Grant (2021). In them we can see a glimpse of what Roberts is trying to show us through his own book, that of another face of the dictator – that of the avid reader, the rigid intellectual who comes as a mirror-image of what the general perception of the public deems Stalin to be.

The author has started his research in the soviet Soviet archives since 1996, but only 2010 was the moment when his passion for the remainings of Stalin's library came to be born. He was already familiar with Stalin's style of annotating thanks to his previous research.

The scientific aspects of Roberts's methodology is announced right from the introduction. Here he manifests his intention of exploring both the intellectual life of the dictator and his biography as they can be seen from the lenses represented by the books he owned and wrote upon.

The premise from which the author starts is that he can offer readers a new perspective on the life of the soviet Soviet ruler, analyzing this remaining collection of books that survived Stalin's death and even more so, his annotations. Forcing the reader to glance over how, like any other individual, Stalin *evolved*, grew during his life -from living in a workers' family in Georgia, with abusive parents, to a Catholic Seminary student whose life was surrounded by the effects of the process of forced russification around him and not form new opinions, views, values from his various experiences. Like such, Roberts wishes that, through his text, we can come to see Stalin in a more eloquent manner. This is why he argues that part of the answer to the question *Who was Stalin?* can be understood through the *Pometki*.

The methodology is qualitative. The analysis covers the notes and documents of Stalin, such as the list that contained the titles of all the books in the library. Stalin owned a vast amount of books and Roberts used them to offer as large a vision as possible over his life.

Most people probably do not know about Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin is the fact that he was a bibliophile, a book lover. Even though he did not enter any university, choosing the life of an active politician, he managed to gather during his life more than 25 000 volumes of poetry,

novels and more importantly, works of non-fiction varying from Marxist theory to philosophy and especially history. After his death however, the Soviet Union went through the process of destalinization, in which Khrushchev tried to separate himself from the decisions and deeds of his predecessor. Such as this, the library of Stalin was for the most part lost, many of the volumes taken by others or destroyed.

The novelty of Roberts's vision over Stalin is revealed from the first chapter. Here, he begins his analysis over Stalin's love for books, by showing a general image of his intellectual life. But even taking all of this into consideration, an argument that can be perceived as litigious, difficult to digest is that Stalin was not a psychopath, but actually he actually had a high level of emotional intelligence. Moreover, Roberts motivates the cruelty of his actions as targeting solely "enemies of the revolution". The reason for which he saw enemies in so many innocent people would have come from his too strong empathy, which made him see only the worst in people, raising his paranoia to the extremes. Apart from few other such remarks, his objectivity is remarkable, going over how many authors are subjective due to their limited access to resources. Thanks to his diligence and amplitude of his scientific methods, Roberts offers a critical interpretation of Stalin's life.

The numerous pages that create the "main character's" biography in this paper always gravitate towards the focus of this book, namely the collection saved from Stalin's library and the books on which he did his annotations. Books had a central role in Stalin's life.

Roberts manages to steadily show how books gave and consolidated ideas to the dictator, both at an ideologically-marxist level and at a general knowledge one. His favorite authors seem to have been the Marxist fathers: Marx, Lenin, but he was interested even in his rival's works, especially Trotski. The annotations we can see in these books, Stalin's activity as a librarian in his own library and even his activity as editor of his own autobiography, offers Roberts the possibility of concluding that even though Stalin was not the most profound or subtle thinker, that even though he was not the most original one either, he was however for certain an intellectual.

Worthy of praise is the diligence the author had in completing the puzzle of over 25 000 pieces that Stalin's library represented. After the death of the dictator, the library was dismantled and most of the books were lost or at least spread over numerous other private libraries -such as the library of Stalin's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Molotov. Roberts manages to find small pieces of this library and maybe a very interesting aspect of the book we are discussing is that it shows documents such as the

list of subjects on which Stalin organized his library. He wanted the volumes to be arranged based on 32 subjects, from philosophy to memoirs. He also desired the Marxist-Leninist authors to be classified separately.

Concerning the fiction Stalin used to read, we do not have as much information, the majority of them being lost once he passed away. This was mostly because they had no annotations from the owner and as such, they weren't deemed as relevant for being archived.

On the other hand, we are offered a series of photographs. Alongside the portraits of Stalin together with his youngest two children, Vasily and Svetlana, or that of his second wife, Nadejda Alliluyeva, we are presented the portrait of Lenin and Stalin's main librarian, Shushanika Manuchar'yants. Most of the photographs are done to the documents, such as the classification of books for Stalin's library, written by hand by the ruler or the annotations he did in works such as *Terrorism and Communism* by Karl Kautsky.

These *Pometki* come in various colours we are told, each colour representing the opinion of Stalin. This reminds us of another Stalinist leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the leader of the Romanian Popular Republic.

Most of the time, if Stalin did not agree to what was written, he would write sarcastic comments such as 'ha, ha', but if he agreed, he would concisely write 'yes, yes', 'good', 'agreed' etc. Roberts does underline the fact that Stalin might have been aware of the fact that his annotations could be analyzed *post mortem* and exaggerate as such.

Stalin's Library addresses a specialized public, but also amateur readers, as the language used, the semantics and sentencing are all done in an accessible manner. For the moment, the book only exists in English.

Following the read-through of this work, we can highlight some conclusions. The library of Stalin, of which he took a lot of care, offers us a novel perspective, a macroscopic image of the ruler's inner self and conceptions. Regarding Roberts's research, he manages to bring in focus a new approach over a very much debated subject, attracting readers of experience, but also who are just curious to know more about the life of Joseph V. Stalin.

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Radu Vădeanu, *Catalogul absenților. Condamnări politice ale Tribunalului Militar Cluj între anii 1956-1964*, Cluj-Napoca, Mega, 2022, 589 p.

One of the most famous quotes attributed to Joseph Stalin, although initially enounced in 1932 by German journalist and writer Kurt Tucholsky, says: “The death of one man is a tragedy. The deaths of millions are a statistic”. Regardless of its real or fictional author, the cynic statement refers to the horrors of totalitarian repression that was able to dehumanize the tragedy of millions of human losses. By indexing depersonalized destinies in never-ending lists of names, codes, or aliases, totalitarian authorities collapsed all the emotion, suffering, and tribulation of life stories under one cold and empty unit of analysis: *numbers*. However, one author decided to bring the statistics back to life to understand victimhood and state repression in the late 1950s and early 1960s in communist Romania. *Catalogul absenților (The Absentees' Catalogue)* is Radu Vădeanu's most recent book, published in 2022 at Mega Publishing House from Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The oxymoron contained in the title reflects the sole purpose of the author's endeavour: indexing the absentees of history who were persecuted, accused, and then imprisoned for fictitious guilts under various accusatory narratives constructed by the Securitate, prosecutor's office, and Military Courts.

The *Catalogue* has been divided into three main chapters that address, in this order: the judicial system as an instrument of repression during the communist regime; the typologies of political convictions based on the case study of the Military Court in Cluj-Napoca between 1956-1964; and, last but not least, the third part that contains approximately 50 pages of names inserted in an extended table (name, sentence number, and detention years are specified). The 2222 names mentioned in the table are a great way of understanding the assignment of history studies – that of turning cold and distant names into living human beings – and for that, one should consider reading the third chapter first and then proceed to the introduction.

The book's objective, stated from the beginning, is to achieve a re-memorialization of repression through an extensive identification of the victims, the reason behind their conviction, and their penitentiary itinerary based on the political sentences given by the Cluj Military Court between 1956-1964. The author aims to create a general profile of convictions in court, developed by extracting information from the fund of accusations supported by the indictment conclusions. Re-memorializing the portraits of repressed individuals and groups implies a systematic deconstruction of several layers of ideological narratives created by communist authorities,

starting from the suspicions signalled in informative notes and ending with the main object of the accusation in the military court. In this regard, due to limited space and research possibilities, the present book only insists on the latter issue, emphasizing the motivational structure that was the basis of the criminal court file, as well as the conclusions of the prosecutor's office for the so-called 'enemies of the people.

Vadeanu's objective was to systematically compose a typological framework of the victims of the communist regime using a quantitative method of analysis through which he sequentially approached a limited sample of 2,879 sentences (approximately 12% of sentences from U.M. 02405 Pitesti Military Archives) subjected to judicial abuse. Information-wise, the study fills a historiographical gap in the political sentences the Cluj Military Court gave using the indictment conclusions of the military prosecutor's office. The quantitative paradigm emphasizes the multiple contexts of the groups that are taken into account, which helps the researchers point out the aspects shared and differences among various cases using an academic bird's-eye view. One example of taxonomy used by the author is built around different repressive categories based on the Criminal Code from 1948, such as opinion crime, political identity, religious identity, anti-Communist organizations, border crossing, possession and distribution of prohibited publications, omission of denunciation and other political sentences (p. 140). In this regard, the analysis follows the trail of communist repressive institutions. It operates at the linguistic level of the official ideology, using communist terminology while explaining its real functional meaning (pp. 508-520).

The researcher's merit is to clarify the rationale behind the second wave of internal repression between 1956-1964 using archival data. Although the argument does not necessarily imply a radical or overarching notion of originality, it successfully adds new data to the existing historiography. It amplifies the debate around the patterns of repression on a moral, normative, and theoretical basis. As so, the novelty comes neither from the method used nor from the systematic analysis of raw numbers and names but from the *data* itself. Due to Vadeanu's consistent effort to dig up the past from an unresearched archive, hundreds of destinies and life stories are now part of the academic debates. When referring to research questions, the scholar divides them into two main topics: who and why? Quite surprising at first sight due to their simplicity, the two topics branch into other related questions which address specific issues concerning the typologies of convictions, the trial procedure, the factual basis of the enounced accusations, what was the role of military courts in the broader framework of political repression and most importantly, why

did military courts convict civil persons? All the answers were to be gradually unfolded as the argumentation diachronically progressed from a general presentation of the institutional structure of repression to hundreds of broadly addressed particular sentences.

Another strong point in the argument is the emphasis on the preventive character of the late repression at the end of the fifth decade of the 20th century. The author reveals the state's concern in giving credibility to the act of justice, thus instrumentalizing justice to gain legitimacy and discourage anti-Communist opposition. Moreover, the rationale of the second wave of repression is presented as a political strategy to exclude undesirable individuals who were refractory to the socialist model of the *new man*. This particular context is essential in understanding that international events from the 1950s – such as the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 – generated reactions among the population, which were expressed both publicly and privately. Thus, the “opinion crime” is a symptom of this supposed type of discursive resistance used by most people as a natural reaction to the state propaganda and control promoted by the communist authorities.

One can argue that a limit of the *Catalogue* is its safe approach to the topic only using classical biography of Romanian scholars who, many of them, analyse the communist regime from the standpoint of the so-called *totalitarian model*, disregarding the variations, cracks, and incoherencies of the communist establishment in its institutional entanglement. However, the aim of Vadeanu's book was to revive a part of the absentees of history using raw statistics and to give the victims a chance to tell their story through the judicial sentences that hid abuses and human rights violations of a standard analytical method is conceivable. This aspect is strengthened by the fact that the quantitative method usually relies on existing paradigms rather than creating new theories. As so, achieving an index of victims using the methods of the *revisionist school* is improbable due to its propensity for cultural and social approaches rather than the statistically analyse of state terror, which has traditionally been the appanage of the *totalitarian school of thought*. Moreover, another limit is the sole focus on motivations that triggered the political trial while neglecting any other information contained in the personal file. An overview of all the accusations found in the surveillance file of a targeted person would have enriched the understanding of repression. However, it would have expanded the research size to the extent that it would have become inaccessible for most readers.

We can conclude that the analytical dimension of the *Catalogue* is based on solid research, vast archival material, and a clear understanding of the communist establishment. The work does not aim to bring new

historiographic perspectives, challenge concepts and symbols widely accepted among contemporary historians, or heroize repressed individuals by constructing legitimizing narratives using multi-layered sources. It aims to reveal patterns of repression and ideological categories that hid the human destinies, the unknown faces, and the life stories of people who opposed, in one form or another, a political order that refused their existence in society. The *Catalogue* is a valuable historiographical addition to communist repression studies, continuing the research direction initiated by Corneliu Pintilescu's work which addressed the 1948-1956 timespan of the Cluj Military Court's activity¹¹, meaning that scholars now have the whole picture of the first and the second wave of the political subjugation of society during the communist regime in Romania at their disposal.

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¹¹ Corneliu Pintilescu, *Mecanisme judiciare ale represiunii politice în România comunistă. Studiu de caz: Tribunalul Militar Cluj, 1948-1956*, coord. prof. univ. dr. Gheorghe Cipăianu, Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, later published as *Justiția militară și represiune politică în România comunistă: (1948-1956). Studiu de caz: activitatea Tribunalului Militar Cluj*, Cluj University Press, Cluj-Napoca, 2012.

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BOOK REVIEWS