

## NOTES AND REVIEWS

**Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, *Balcanologie și politică în România secolului XX: Victor Papacostea în documente din arhivele Securității și din arhiva personală*, 328 pp.**

Based mainly on documents from the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives (CNSAS) and from the personal archive of historian Victor Papacostea, Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca looks at the political and scientific activity of the latter, with an accent laid on his surveillance by the Securitate after the Communists' takeover.

Victor Papacostea began his political activity with the founding of the Georgist Liberal Party by Gheorghe Brătianu. The splitting of the Liberals was mainly due to Gheorghe Brătianu's support to Carol II, who returned to Romania on 6 June 1930. On 7 June, the Executive Committee of the National Liberal Party (NLP) effected the exclusion of Gheorghe, as the Liberal leadership was unwilling to accept the Restoration. After the elections of 1937, the Georgist group repaired to the NLP. Papacostea pursued his political career and after 1937 became deputy of Caliacra. He was an opponent of far-left or -right ideologies and took part in the preparations for the 23 August 1944 Act as a NLP delegate. He was a sub-secretary at the Ministry of National Education (4 November 1944 - 6 March 1945) in the Sănătescu and Rădescu governments

Papacostea's political career placed him under scrutiny by the Securitate after the instauration of the communist regime. The Securitate also looked at his scientific activity, seeking to determine if Papacostea had ideas contrary to the Marxist ideology and what was the nature of his relations with various individuals in and out of the country. According to two informative notes by Major Dragoș Ițcuș, based on information provided by Barbu Râmnicianu, Papacostea's scientific ideas were in disagreement with Marxism: "The source points to this issue, as the conversation with Victor Papacostea showed that he is in a state of total political and ideological confusion, which can also be seen in the material written by Victor Papacostea in order to demonstrate the necessity for comparative Balkan studies," (pp. 23-24).

Informers as a rule were recruited among personal and family friends. The informers for Papacostea were Miron (Papacostea's legal consultant), Gheorghe Mihăiescu and Victor Marcel (old Liberals), Barbu Râmnicianu (whose mission was to determine whether Papacostea had an unfit attitude in the "Balcania" journal), Vergiliu (who watched over the papers published in

the journal), Băleanu (who informed on the family members), Iliescu Silvia Vasilica (who lived in the family's building), Călinescu, Costin Mironescu (a colleague of Papacostea's daughter), Nichifor, and Bianu (pp. 19-20).

The informative notes contributed by all the above would have had dire consequences, had the historian not died before they could work their way.

The book shows the negative influence of the political factor in the field of history, based on Victor Papacostea's case. The informative notes were employed by the Securitate for the historian's removal or arrest. The fact that they might be a concoction serving the interests of its author made no difference. What made difference was any opinion contrary to the Party's doctrine that Victor Papacostea might have as a scientist and as a private person as well.

Mihaela Stroe

**Ioana Diaconescu, *Scriitori în arhiva C.N.S.A.S.. Intelectuali urmăriți informativ, arestați, condamnați, ucisi în detenție (1946-1989) : studii însoțite de anexe selectate din arhivele CNSAS, București, Fundația Academia Civică, 2012, 424 pp.***

The book is the product of the author's 10-year research work at the archives of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (CNSAS). The difficulties met in the process were due to the fact that documents were missing from the files, they were incorrectly filed (not in chronological order), or had been removed before the files could be taken over by the CNSAS (p. 9).

The cases of writers Lucian Blaga, Constant Tonegaru, Vladimir Streinu, Vasile Voiculescu, Dinu Pillat, N. Steinhardt, Sandu Tudor, Alexandru Marcu, Mircea Vulcănescu, Ion Petrovici, Petre Țuțea, Petre Pandrea, Ernest Bernea, Nicolae Carandino, Ștefan Baciuc, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, A. E. Baconsky, Marin Preda, Alexandru Ivăsiuc, and Dan Deșliu are addressed.

The tenacity of the Securitate in finding means for the careful surveillance of its "targets" is shown. The author lists in her Introduction the methods employed by the Securitate to enlist informers, among which blackmail. Some of the informers belonged to the intimate circle of friends of the targeted subjects. Their main task was to record all the thoughts and opinions of the subject minutely.

Surveillance of the Romanian writers was a lengthy process, extending across Romania's borders. Mircea Eliade's began in 1947 and lasted for over 40 years, until his death.

Until the regime realized that it could improve its image if Eliade was persuaded to repair to the country, the Romanian scholar had “studies” made of his personality and activity. Starting with 1970, Eliade was employed to better the image of the Romanian communist regime abroad.

An informative note of 25 June 1947 pointed out to the propagandistic potential of the Romanian writer: “Beside his erudition, Mircea Eliade is also known for his meekness and for never taking anti-democratic stands. (...) I believe that Mircea Eliade himself is under the influence of the ridiculous lies circulating abroad about Romania, which no one cares to expose. Therefore, it would be possible to employ him only if he comes over and talks with the responsible factors in the country, after which he could be given an official position abroad, or the agreement of the Romanian government for his appointment as a professor at the Sorbonne,”(pp. 176-177). Eliade’s association with Ceaușescu’s regime could carry great benefits.

The informative notes speak of the propagandistic impact of prominent intellectuals, at home and abroad, if they were to be won over to the regime’s policies: “An instrument of propaganda and of cultural policy as well, proven infallible, is the ‘recuperation’ of cultural figures, of Romanians well-known in Europe and even at world level. I have three such in mind for the time being, each calling for a particular ‘address’ (Mircea Eliade, Alexandru Ciorănescu, and Vintilă Horia)”. Eliade’s surveillance was made by informers abroad, journalists, and officers under cover.

Despite all efforts by the regime, there was no reaction on the part of Eliade.

The regime also placed its hopes on winning over Emil Cioran and employed similar methods of persuasion. Cioran became aware that he was being turned into an instrument of propaganda and did not hesitate to show his displeasure: “Cioran Emil showed his displeasure at having been looked up and visited lately by many Romanian intellectuals and writers temporarily away from the country. (...) Concurrently, Cioran has declared that he cannot understand how they manage to find out his address and what their intentions actually are, when so insistently seeking to meet him,”(p. 203).

Based on the informative files on the Romanian writers, Diaconescu looks into the surveillance means and methods of the Securitate in the communist years, showing that its tentacles went well beyond the borders of Romania. One should note that it is a subjective analysis, and that the text is strewn with personal remarks, such as “Villainy has no limits. The sick minds of the organs... ” (p. 26), “The Securitate documents are toxic!” (p. 205). Beyond Ioana Diaconescu’s interpretations and reasoning, the purpose of the book, which is to inform on the abuses perpetrated by the Securitate against the Romanian writers, is well achieved.

Mihaela Stroe

**Vecinătăți și ziduri. Români și ruși (secolele XVI-XXI). Lucrările sesiunii a XVII-a a Comisiei mixte a istoricilor din România și Federația Rusă, Constanța, septembrie 2012, coord. Florin Anghel, Mioara Anton, Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2012.**

The book gathers the papers of the Seventeenth Session of the Mixed Commission of historians from Romania and from the Russian Federation held at Constanța in September 2012. Two major topics are addressed – *Crises in East and South-East Europe: Causes, Developments, and Consequences in the Eighteenth-Twentieth Centuries*, and *From the Medieval to the Contemporary Nation in East and South-East Europe* – in points of history, politics, international relations, as well as culture and society.

A first part addresses the negative or positive impact of crises on peoples. Based on various sources, the double nature of crises – destructive and constructive – is demonstrated. An analysis is made of crises in Wallachia at the end of the sixteenth century – beginning of the seventeenth century (Ovidiu Cristea, Ph.D.), Russia's expansion in the Balkans at the end of the eighteenth century as an expression of the "Greek project" (Ileana Căzan, Ph.D.), the changing of the south-west border of Russia after the Peace of Bucharest of 1812 (Vladislav I. Grosul, Ph.D.), the collaboration of the Russian and Romanian troops in the military campaign of the summer of 1916 (a study by Vasiliu B. Kaşirin, Ph.D., based on new information from the Russian archives), the Union of Bessarabia to Romania in 1918 from the point of view of French Diplomacy (Daniel Cîțirigă, Ph.D.), the Russian policy during the Yugoslav crisis of 1991-2001 (Konstantin Nikiforov, Ph.D.), the impact of the energy trade on the communist system in 1969-1989 (Cosmin Popa, Ph.D.), and the NATO-Russia Partnership (Marius Cojocaru, Ph.D.). Several of these studies make an analysis of the Romanian-Russian conflicts occurred in August 1968 (Aleksandr Stykalin, Ph.D.), during the negotiations of Warsaw (Florin Anghel, Ph.D.), during the Near East Crisis (Vasile Buga, Ph.D.), and between Ceaușescu and Gorbachev (Simion Gheorghiu, Ph.D.).

The second part of the book addresses the concept of nation, with all its facets. The research work covers a vast chronological segment and an extended geographical space (Russia, the Romanian Principalities, Dobruđa, the Kazan area, and Ukraine). The issues under consideration are the nations of Transylvania (Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ph.D.), the policy of the Russian government towards Kazan (Nadejda A. Soboleva, Ph.D.), the impact of the Church reform of Patriarch Nikon of Moscow, the policy of Prince Gheorghe Duca towards Russia and Ukraine at the end of the eighteenth century (Kirill A. Kogeakov, Ph.D.), the proto-national discourse in the Orthodox culture

(Oleg B. Nemenski, Ph.D.), the influence of Russian philosophy on Romanian culture in the inter-war period (Adriana Cîteia, Ph.D.), the policy of the communist party towards the national minorities (Mioara Anton, Ph.D.), the cultural and linguistic transformations undergone in a religious sect of the old rite in Dobrudja (Elena S. Uzeniova, Ph.D.), and the differences between the Romanian legend of “the old woman of March” and the versions in other south-east peoples (Natalia G. Golant, Ph.D.).

Collaboration between the Romanian and the Russian researchers resulted in a volume of studies putting forward new and objective interpretations of a number of concepts such as crisis, nation, and ethnicity. The interpretations are well-balanced, and the novel perspective is ensured by the diversity of sources and the ample approach.

Mihaela Stroe

**Mihail Dobre, *România la sfârșitul Războiului Rece: statut geopolitic și opțiuni de securitate*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2011, 453 p.**

Diplomat Mihail Dobre makes an analysis of the situation and position of Romania abroad in the post-communist period based on documents from the archives of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The book shows Romania’s attempts to secure a position in international politics after the fall of communism. In seeking an answer to the question of how the fall of communism affected the security of Europe and of the member states of the Warsaw Pact, Dobre begins by analyzing Romania’s position in the socialist camp during the Cold War. Until the fall of communism, the only alliance Romania belonged to was the Treaty of Warsaw. Dobre puts into light the sinuous course taken by Romania from loyalty to Moscow to the attempts of emancipation from the Soviet influence, especially after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Romania.

Dobre shows the limitations of Romania’s acts of dissidence within the Treaty of Warsaw: “Romania was perceived as having the lowest standard of living in Europe and one of the most Stalinist communist parties, and therefore, the rebellious stands of the Romanian party in the Treaty of Warsaw had become to Moscow a source of annoyance rather than an issue,” (p. 310).

In the 1980s Romania found herself isolated abroad. The Most Favored Nation Clause had been withdrawn from her by the Reagan Administration as a result of the loss of credibility of Ceaușescu’s regime in the West. Whereas in the eastern camp a period of transformations and reforms began, in Romania the 1980s were marked by Ceaușescu’s

preoccupation with paying back Romania's external debt and by soaring discontent among the population.

After showing Romania's position during the Cold War, Dobre makes a review of the significance of the year 1989 in Europe and of how the revolution was seen on the continent. The accent is laid once again on Romania and on the most important developments after the revolution of 1989, including the issue of the relations with the USSR after December 1989 – the treaty of 1991 which never came into effect because of the dismantling of the USSR –, the tensions between the Romanian and the Hungarian States and how the relation between the two evolved after 1989, etc.

In Dobre's opinion, 1991 was the year when Romania began to define her security policy. He continues by listing the Romanian State's options on international political stage after the fall of communism. After December 1989, says Dobre, Romania was in search for new directions in her external policy, so as to be able to assert herself in Europe: "After 1989, Romania showed an interest in new projects of cooperation with her neighbors and expressed her wish to join the Central-European and Triangular initiative of Višegrad. The Romanian political factors believed that the simultaneous presence of a country in several sub-regional structures is an important means to avoid the creation of new artificial subdivisions in Europe, after the ones generated by the Cold War had been overcome," (p. 282). At the end of 1992, Romania was seeking to pursue relations with Eastern and Western Europe, with the European Union, NATO, and UEO.

In conclusion, the Mihail Dobre makes a review of the main events in the external policy of Romania after December 1989 in the larger context of world politics.

Mihaela Stroe

**Mihaela Cristina Verzea, *Partidul - Stat: structuri politice (1948-1965)*, Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013, 478 pp.**

Mihaela Cristina Verzea makes an analysis of the Party-State relationship, in an attempt to show how the domination of the Party was exerted through the creation of structures subordinating State life. Verzea starts out from Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's statement in the enlarged Plenary Meeting of the CC of the RWP of 23-25 March 1956: "All organs and all workers in the State organs, whatever their position, must be under control by the Party organs and organizations,"(p. 1). Thus, the necessity of a vigilant control of the Party structures over the State life in Romania was clearly stated.

Verzea employed for her rigorous and objective analysis documents from the National Archives with reference to the Communist Party corroborated with an analysis of memoirs and press articles of the time. General material was employed together with material tackling specific social, economic, cultural, etc. aspects of the communist regime.

The book falls into three chapters, the first two looking at the structure of each power center – Party and State – and the third showing the operation of the system operated in the economic milieu. Each chapter includes a historiographical approach, a presentation of the general political framework, and the analysis of the issues involved.

The “import” of the Soviet system to Romania and its adjustment to the Romanian realities also falls within the scope of the analysis. Thus, the Soviet Army played the main part in exporting the communist system and introducing it to Romania. Nonetheless, says Verzea, until 1965 there was considerable change occurring due to the evolutions in the relation with the USSR. The embarking upon National-communism so as to win the Romanian society over to the regime changed nothing in the fundamentals of the communist system.

To understand the mechanism of the communist regime in Romania, Verzea begins by analyzing the Soviet Party-State based on specialized material from Romania and abroad. Subsequently, she makes a comparative presentation of the Party-State in the other member states of the Soviet Bloc. The Party structure is seen as displaying a pyramidal hierarchy made of the General Secretary, the Congress, the Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the Commission for Party Control, Directions/Departments (corresponding to the governmental bureaus), and the local party committees (p. 2).

Verzea makes an analysis of all the levels of the hierarchy of the political structures, including the local Party structures. The central organization was copied at the local level as well: the role of the General Secretary was played by the prime-secretary of the county/regional party committee, and the local party organs had the task to control the State institutions.

To the minute information on how the Party-State mechanism operated are added tables and charts which illustrate the administrative structure of the party organs.

The conclusion drawn by Verzea is that the collaboration among powers in the State, such as claimed by the communist authorities, was nothing but illusion. Periodic elections were organized by the regime in an effort to offer a democratic image of itself, with as a sole purpose the confirmation of the candidates of the Communist Party. Despite all appearances, the entire life of the State was subordinated to the Party. New

information will be added to the subject approached by Mihaela Cristina Verzea once the access to more archive funds is granted.

Mihaela Stroe

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