

New Europe College Regional Program

2003-2004

2004-2005



STILYAN DEYANOV
GERGANA GEORGIEVA

SVETLANA DIMITROVA
MUSTAFA FIŞNE
DIMITAR GRIGOROV
HAJRUDIN HROMADŽIĆ
MIGLENA IVANOVA
ANGEL NIKOLOV
ORLİN SABEV (ORHAN SALİH)
MALAMIR SPASOV
ALEXANDER VEZENKOV

Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

Copyright – New Europe College

ISSN 1584-0298

New Europe College

Str. Plantelor 21

023971 Bucharest

Romania

www.nec.ro; e-mail: nec@nec.ro

tel. (+40-21) 327.00.35; fax (+40-21) 327.07.74



DIMITAR GRIGOROV

Born in 1976, in Sofia, Bulgaria

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of History, “St Kliment Ohridski” University, Sofia

Dissertation: *The Cult of Personality on the Balkans after the
Second World War: Tito and Ceausescu*

Assistant Professor, Department of Balkan History, “St Kliment Ohridski”
University, Sofia

Editor of the historical e-journal *Anamnesis* (www.anamnesis.info)

Articles on the cult of personality in the Balkan socialist states after the Second
World War

TITO AND CEAUSESCU: FROM IDOLS TO SCAPEGOATS (AND BACK AGAIN?)

Why Tito and Ceausescu? To many people this comparison would sound meaningless. Tito seems to have been much more the success story of Eastern European socialism. “His” Yugoslavia was a socialist country in which rock and heavy metal records, jeans and “Western” fashion could be found; “American” movies were shown, and the people were allowed to travel and work abroad (from the mid-1960s onwards).¹

What about Ceausescu? Is he a success story? Or is he more an actor in a B-movie horror story, as not a few would say? “His” Romania of the 1980s provided an example to the people of other socialist countries that showed that their life was actually not all that bad (“Well, we have some problems, but look what’s happening there!”) Unbelievable stories were heard of children at stations asking for chewing gum and cigarettes, though regrettably these sad tales were often covered by jokes about Romania which substituted the older “Albanian theme”, and most anecdotes were quite inane – “Do you know in what country the fastest animal lives?” “In Romania, of course. Otherwise it would have been eaten immediately!”²

But the task of my research is not to evaluate or compare the Yugoslav and Romanian systems, or to emphasize the personal qualities of the otherwise somewhat unorthodox Yugoslav communist leader and those of the “bad guy” Ceausescu (though, of course, these should be taken into account). Instead, I intend to consider them as symbols, because, as symbols, they not only represented the types of socialism found in their respective countries, but also represented socialism in the Balkans as a whole. As a symbol of the past in Romania, Ceausescu is used to repudiate or justify socialism, for the purposes of legitimating or defaming within political or intellectual power games, to mention just a few of his contemporary functions.³ In the case of the former Yugoslavia, it is worth citing the Yugoslav sociologist Todor Kuljic, who, not without a trace of

irony, wrote: "Tell me what you think about Tito and I'll tell you who are you."⁴ By embodying socialism in the Balkans, Tito and Ceausescu attracted a great deal of attention in Western Europe and the USA throughout their lifetimes. Both continue to play a role in general perceptions of the region in the West: in terms of the quantity of western publications dedicated to Balkan communist leaders, Tito and Ceausescu come out on top, followed at some distance by the two other prominent contemporary symbols of this peninsula's socialist past, Enver Hoxha and Todor Zhivkov. Last but not necessarily least, it is interesting to note that Microsoft Office's spelling and grammar tool recognizes the names of Tito and Ceausescu, together with Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Mao, but rejects Dej, Zhivkov and Hoxha.⁵

The symbolic meaning of the party and state leaders in question here is related to two seemingly contradictory but in reality rather similar processes, which were and continue to be important to the public perceptions of both leaders: the processes of *idolizing* and *scapegoating*. I will concentrate on these two important phenomena.

It may appear a little strange that both the comparatively liberal (albeit undemocratic) socialist system in Yugoslavia and the condemned regime in Romania were in fact home to the strongest of personality cults and phenomena of idolization. Perhaps the main reason this occurred was the relatively independent foreign policy adopted by Tito after his split with Stalin in 1948 and that of Ceausescu, in particular after 1968, when he stood up against the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. Viewed from a wider Balkan perspective, it is possible to conclude that higher levels of idolization existed in countries which acted more independently of the Soviet Union (compared with countries that remained loyal followers of Moscow). Alongside Yugoslavia and Romania we can also add Albania, which cut its ties with the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1960s and left the Warsaw Treaty in 1968, enabling the Albanian strongman Hoxha to present himself as the unique owner and interpreter of communist principles and the true successor to Marx, Lenin and Stalin. The group of states that remained loyal to the Soviet Union in fact only included the potentially notorious example of Bulgaria. One of the many moves in this direction saw the preservation of the cult surrounding the Soviet Union and that surrounding George Dimitrov, Bulgaria's first communist leader, who died in 1949 and was not viewed as being responsible for the Stalinist terror of the early 1950s. The blame for this was attributed to his heir, Valko Chervenkov, thus creating an attitude

towards the country's leaders which had similarities with that in the USSR: Dimitrov enjoyed a postmortem cult, as with Lenin; Chervenkov was condemned as a Stalinist; and Zhivkov's image varied depending on the changing Soviet context (his was represented variously as a mixture of a Bulgarian Khrushchev, Bulgarian Brezhnev and, in the end, in front of audiences at least, he acted as a Bulgarian Gorbachov).⁶

Otherwise, however, despite relatively independent foreign policies, the Tito and Ceausescu cults followed closely the events unfolding in the USSR. After Khrushchev's speech in 1956, all promotion of the Tito personality was held back, a process which continued into the 1960s, a decade characterized by relaxation and moderate reforms in all the countries of Eastern Europe, with the exception of Albania. Tito was against the intervention in Czechoslovakia, but after 1968 the process of his idolization increased and in the 1970s reached its climax. This was also the case with the USSR and the Brezhnev cult. In the end, the Tito cult disappeared along with the collapse of the socialist system in Europe.

Likewise, the personality cult in Romania gained strength in the 1970s, going on to reach its climax in the 1980s at a time when the Soviet Union was experimenting with *perestroika*. However, the idolizing of the leader in Romania came to an abrupt end with the collapse of the Soviet-dominated socialist system in Eastern Europe.

In Yugoslavia and, especially, in Romania, images of the leaders' wives were important elements in the personality cult. Tito's wife, Jovanka Budisavlevic, a Serbian peasant-woman from the district of Lika in southeastern Croatia, always wore a wide smile, even at funerals⁷ and added more glamour⁸ to the stylization of the leader, albeit with a certain amount of kitsch to boot. Jovanka Broz had never held high-level party or state positions and her image lacked independence and was subordinated to that of Tito. Most likely, the marriage of a Croat to a woman from the Serbian minority (which had been treated severely by Ante Pavelic's Croatian Ustasa regime) contained a significant message as part of the ideology of Yugoslavism that played such an important role in Tito's Yugoslavia. In terms of class ideology, the matrimonial union of a man who represented the working classes with a peasant-woman could probably, with a certain stretch of the imagination, also be viewed as a symbolic act.⁹

In Romania, the leader's wife, Elena Ceausescu, enjoyed a far more independent position; indeed, from the end of the 1970s up until the very end of the regime, she was the most influential person in the country

after her husband. In contrast to Jovanka Broz, Elena Ceausescu wasn't just the first lady; she also held leading positions in the party and state apparatus.¹⁰ Romanian socialist propaganda created her powerful cult – emphasizing her abilities as a stateswoman, researcher and scientific organizer¹¹ – though she still remained an omnipresent element in the idolizing of the leader designed to strengthen his position.¹² On the whole, the result was unfavorable; however, it is possible that there existed the hidden intention of promoting Elena Ceausescu in order to transfer negative perceptions from the leader to his wife. Though it is rather hard to prove, this function of her cult was and still is successful, and her image remains darker than that of Ceausescu, with some (or most) of his policy blunders being explained in terms of her “poisonous” influence.

After 1989, “the year of miracles”, the inevitable process of scapegoating began. Both the Yugoslav and the Romanian leader were part of this phenomenon, of which there was a long-standing tradition in Eastern Europe and, of course, the Balkans, as part of this region. When studying the history of Eastern Europe in the 20th century, we frequently come across a basic stereotype: among liberals and conservatives, communists and fascists, nationalists and cosmopolitans, when trying to explain the defeats, losses, failures, sufferings of their respective nations over the course of centuries, there is a tendency to blame influential personalities, smaller or larger social groups, or even non-personal factors (such as ideologies and traditions). The result is nearly always the same: a scapegoat.

Scapegoating also forms part of the legitimization pattern in the region, where the present is always searching for justification in the past.¹³ Scapegoating also contains a message which is easy to receive and understand by popular audiences, since in most cases it is impossible to find a single explanation. The scapegoat is a way out of the dilemma and is a process that is strongly connected with the sense of guilt possessed by the new or slightly new political establishment as well as by society as a whole.¹⁴

In this way, in the former Yugoslavia Tito became a symbol of anti-liberalism, anti-nationalism, bolshevism, autocracy, totalitarianism,¹⁵ excessive luxury and an immoral lifestyle.¹⁶ He was accused of being a Communist spy;¹⁷ Serbians named him an evil Croat, Croats a servant of Great-Serbian chauvinism. His lifestyle was condemned, books about his women were published, and there were discussions as to how many animals he had killed. And, not least, it was said of him: “Well, you

know his father was... a Jew..." "No, his father wasn't a Jew, but he was a Jew because actually this wasn't Tito, who was a Croat but had died... it's not important when... so the Russians found his counterpart, who was a Jew," "Yes, he was, but instead of the Russians it was the Austrians..." and so forth.¹⁸ For the most part, however, Tito was cast in the light of the break-up of Yugoslavia. He was blamed for the collapse of Yugoslavia, or was used as a weapon when accusing the new political elite over the disintegration, or accused of other political abuses.

In Romania, on the other hand, the scapegoating of Ceausescu took on a more extreme form than in the former Yugoslav federation and the avalanche of negativism was comparable to the level of extreme praise expressed during his lifetime.¹⁹ As in Yugoslavia, the previous extraordinary level of glorification in Romania also became one of the reasons for the later vehement condemnation. The main reason, however, was poor economic performance due to party and state policies, which, having been the leader, was seen as Ceausescu's responsibility. Thus "the Genius of the Carpathians"²⁰ became "the awful dictator"²¹ or "Caligula", and while Romania during Ceausescu's rule had been depicted as a kind of *Ceausescu land*, her identity had been restored upon being freed from the tyrant.

Idolization

The idolization process of both leaders has two major ingredients: communist ideology and traditional political culture. Without underestimating the former, the later ingredient seems to me to be more important or at least more interesting.

A few words concerning the image of the supposedly ideal ruler in the Balkans are nonetheless necessary. In the Yugoslav case, the traditional context is important in understanding the nature of the Tito personality cult, since after 1945 there had been a fast stream of peasant revolutionary elements entering state power who proved incapable of freeing themselves from their old mentality for quite some time. According to certain statistics, in the decades following World War Two, some 7 million peasants moved to the cities, a considerable number of which found employment in the army, security services, police, and in various positions in the party and state apparatus.²² This meant that any successful personality cult of the leader would only be possible by taking in account the virtues that the

verbal and written tradition of a given region bestows upon an imaginary ideal ruler. In this respect Tito's personality cult adopted one exceptionally important element, inherited from the Balkan liberation tradition: the pre-existing cult of heroes.²³ Tito often referred to the 16th-century Croatian peasant leader Matia Gubec²⁴ as well as to Lenin. The mixed Broz cult did not forget the traditional values and mentality based on the ideal qualities of mythical heroes and rulers that still existed in the people's consciousness. The image of the ideal Balkan ruler includes the concept of the liberator, the soldier and the honest common man of the people. If the ruler is brave and righteous it is only natural that he be all powerful as well.²⁵ From a psychological point of view, the Tito cult provided the peasantry with a substitute for God, King and Father.²⁶ Owing to this traditional culture, during the first years in the development of the personality cult Tito became the godfather to thousands of children in Yugoslavia (to every 10th and later of every 7th child in the family).

To link the Yugoslavian case with that of Romania, it is worth mentioning here that Nicolae Ceausescu also received invitations to take part in *botez*²⁷ as a guest or godfather, as well as other kinds of traditional family celebrations.²⁸ As in the case of Tito, the Ceausescu cult was influenced to an even higher degree by the tradition of glorifying heroes of the past. Most of these were of royal origin, and in this respect some representations of the Romanian leader differ from those of his Yugoslav counterpart, who had been pressed to act as a multinational leader and was much more limited in terms of exploiting the past which was already divided between the various Yugoslav "nations and nationalities". As the communist leader of a national state, Ceausescu seized the opportunity to associate himself with the Romanian pantheon which had been created by nationalists in the nineteenth century and which, almost without exception, contained princely figures. The predominant criteria that the ideal prince should meet involved a Romanian national sense, European values, and the effective exercising of authority.²⁹ Trajan was the most important symbolic figure, followed by the "double image" of Stephen the Great and Michael the Brave, the tragic end to whose life placed him among the ranks of Romanian martyrs. These were followed by Mircea the Old, Vlad Tsepes and Ioan Voda the Terrible.³⁰ From modern times the principle names were those of Tudor Vladimirescu and Alexander Ioan Cuza.³¹ The privileged position of warrior heroes, martyrs, founders, liberators and freedom fighters is undisputable.³² Consequently, and without underestimating the differences and details in both cases, the

popular image of the ideal ruler in both countries clearly had a lot of common.

To a certain extent, these stereotypes had already begun to feature among the propaganda images of Yugoslav and Romanian rulers during the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The influence of Yugoslavia and Greater Romania as monarchies can not be ignored, if only because a considerable part of the populations of socialist Yugoslavia and Romania, both party officials and ordinary people, spent their childhood during these times.

To illustrate the Yugoslav case, we will now look at Nicola Petrovic-Njegos, the Montenegrin Prince and King after 1910. Though he wasn't in fact a Yugoslav monarch, he held aspirations to become a Serbian king with the intention of uniting the Yugoslav people, as expressed by a complaisant poet in 1910:

On your head leader of the courageous knights
Like the sun the crown of king is bright,
The dawn of fraternity will light
The Union of Yugoslavs,
Brave King of Serbs show pride,
Serbians salute his might.³³

Combined with the king's future ambitions, this quotation shows two very important images of the ideal Balkan ruler: that of the brave soldier and the unifier. Traditional Montenegrin society saw him as an omnipresent and almighty master. He could achieve what the administration was not able to. "Stay close to me and the troubles will pass you by" the omnipotent "Master" would recommend.³⁴ The people asked their ruler for almost everything. Some begged for a "little grain for we shall perish from hunger", others sought orders and medals or land, while one, a mountaineer, asked the king to buy him oxen. All this reinforced the idea that the "Master" was above all the laws and institutions.³⁵ Above him there stood only God. Or maybe not even God was above him, for a certain tribal captain, confident in the Master's exclusive abilities, reported in Cetinje³⁶ that thanks to God and the King the long awaited rain had fallen at last.³⁷ Of course a man who could produce rain would have a knowledge of music, as in the fitting example where the "Master" tells Bishop Mitrofan that the church choir isn't singing well: the bishop is in no doubt as to Nicola's hearing and warns the choir tutor not to let such a thing happen again.³⁸

So it looks like Nicola's position as undisputed leader, his way of governing and behavior, and the mentality of the majority of his subjects coexisted peacefully.³⁹ Indeed, it is true that socialist Yugoslavia wasn't Montenegro. However, I consider the people's attitudes and perceptions of Nicola I as a useful example for the origins of the Tito cult, not least because after the Second World War thousands of mountaineers moved from *Crna Gora* to the Yugoslav capital and a good many of them took up positions within the state and party apparatus.⁴⁰

The Serbian and first Yugoslav king, Peter I Karageorgevic, was in a much weaker position than his Montenegrin father-in-law, due to the influence of the military, which brought him to power, and his advance age. Still, his image contained many of the features of the supposed ideal ruler. He was perceived as the nation's father. Ordinary people called him *Cika Pera* (Uncle Pete) and as such he was perceived by the people as a good man. Peter was also supposed to have had a rebellious character because of the unclear nature of his participation in the Bosnian uprising. This rebellious experience was widely exploited. The monarch also respected historical tradition and attempted to associate himself with Serbia's medieval rulers. Like the old Serbian kings, Peter Karageorgevic was anointed and crowned at a solemn ceremony on 26 September 1903 in Zica.⁴¹ To foreign audiences, however, Peter played the role of the democrat and republican. This double language was in fact not only targeted at foreign audiences. Representations of the King abroad, interviews, and newspapers articles about him, together with positive authoritative opinions, were popularized widely in Serbia (this technique is later to be practiced by Tito as well). For example, in a conversation with the American journalist Marshal, Peter I announced that he was "a president with a crown" and "the only king in Europe elected by the people",⁴² and afterwards this statement was also communicated to the Serbian audience. Although there are reasons to doubt Peter's rather impulsive elder son, Prince George, who in 1909 was forced to abdicate his rights to the throne after a bet involving the death of his servant, Stepan Kovacevic, I nonetheless consider what he wrote about his father worthy of quotation; he said: "He is a democrat, as Pasic is Gladstone."⁴³

The real personality cult was created around his heir, Alexander Karageorgevic. Alexander was the first Balkan monarch to establish a dictatorship that stimulated the propagation of his image. During his rule emphasis was placed on three basic elements of the mythological idea

of the monarch: as supreme leader and statesman, as a soldier and military commander, and as a man of the people.⁴⁴ In the words of a contemporary,

King Alexander was the paragon of a soldier with his looks and his soul. He always wore a military uniform, not those brilliant military parade ones which are the typical attire of monarchs, but rather an old worn out uniform which he regularly dispatched to be cleaned and mended.⁴⁵

The king had strong charisma, gained from his participation during the Balkan Wars and First World War, and was thus compared to legendary Kosovo heroes and represented as a defender and savior. The martyr ingredient came soon with the king's violent death in 1934. For example, the vast majority of the content announcing Alexander's tragic end was published in the Yugoslav press through an extra edition of the *Narodna Otbrana* (National Defense) journal during the days of mourning after Tito's death. As a martyr, Alexander's postmortem cult aimed to strengthen the position of the dynasty and his young heir, king Peter II. The latter also was the subject of particular worship on the eve of the Second World War, and just before the onset of the war in Yugoslavia a form of Tito's famous baton rally was held in honor of the king.

Idolizing kings also had its commercial side. There was much selling of posters, calendars and postcards of the rulers showing their various propaganda faces, for the most part in tune with the heroic tradition. In 1934, for example, *Narodna Otbrana* featured a poster that was for sale at an affordable price depicting Peter II as a leader from the Yugoslavian liberation tradition, the background of which contains an image of the tomb-chapel of the legendary Montenegrin prince, warrior and poet Peter II Njegos.

It was not only VIPs with royal blood that became the subject of praise. At the end of 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, Nicola Pasic, the famous Serbian politician and leader of the Radical Party, was also glorified. He became a true symbol, an incarnation of this Serbian, later Yugoslavian, political organization. The myth displayed him as man of the people, naming him *Baja*.⁴⁶ As a prominent radical, he had gone into exile after the so-called Timok uprising of 1883, which afforded him a certain amount of charisma, an important issue for a Balkan rebel leader. Some of the slogans paying tribute to the *eternal Baja* were almost identical to those used later by the Communists – for example, “Pasic belongs to us, we belong to Pasic” and “We are Tito's, Tito is

ours". The conclusion of one of Pasic's opponents that "the Radical Party is Pasic and Pasic is the Radical Party" can be linked to the "Tito-Partija" axiom. Gradually, Pasic's image transformed into myth thus creating an irrational attitude of the population towards him. He appeared as a kind of amulet, without whose presence nothing could be accomplished.⁴⁷

Similarly strong patterns of glorification of the monarchs and certain distinguished political leaders also developed in Romania. The real personality of Carol – a true sovereign and arbiter in political struggles for around half a century – favored the emergence of a myth, which happened during his lifetime.⁴⁸ The decisive position of the monarch is evident in Dimitrie Sturdza's letter to the king of 20 September/1 October 1893 in which this prominent politician "dared" to propose a name that would be suitable for the eagerly awaited child of Ferdinand and Marie. Let me cite the instructive finale to this document:

Thus, I dare to express the desire that the new children of the Romanian dynasty should carry the names Carol or Elisabeth – it is simple and without other connotations and I am sure that this would be well received by the whole country.

I submit this suggestions with most profound respect to Your Majesty and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, You, who have the first and last say in the matters which concern the position and future of the country.

I am

With most profound respect

Your Majesty's

Most obedient, most devoted

Servant,

Dimitrie Sturdza⁴⁹

As in Yugoslavia, in Romania posters played a part in promoting the ruler. An educational poster from around 1900 presented "the four pillars of the Romanian people" along with other heroes of Wallachian History: Trajan, Decebal, Cuza and Carol I.

The apogee of praise for Carol during his lifetime came in 1906 on the occasion of celebrations of 40 years since his accession to the throne. Two figures stood out clearly from among the other Romanian heroes: Emperor Trajan and Carol I himself.⁵⁰ In his work *From the History of Romania*, published in 1908, the prominent historian Dimitrie Onciul organized the past in terms of rulers, from Trajan to Cuza and Carol I.⁵¹ According to the author, Carol's reign marked the beginning of "a new

era in the development of the Romanian State". D. Onciul attributed to the king the role of initiator in all the great developments of modern Romania. The great naturalist Grigore Antipa depicted Carol as "careful and unparalleled in thrift," good, fair, mild, understanding, an educator for the people, wise worthy, a subtle diplomat, a brave soldier, a skillful strategist, "a man of vast culture and great consideration", "one of the wisest and most listened-to sovereigns of the day", a "giant", by whose "powerful personality" the scholar feels completely "dominated".⁵² Carol I also enjoyed a kind of postmortem cult. In 1933, *Poșta Română* issued a postage stamp commemorating his mythologized landing in Severin on 8 May 1866. The Monarch was depicted greeting a mixed crowd that saluted him. The centenary of his birth in 1939 was made into a national event, marked with festivals, conferences, volumes of evocation or documentation, philatelic issues, and, not least, the erection of a majestic monument, the work of Ivan Mestrovic, in front of the Royal Palace.⁵³ The purpose of this "life after death" edition of the late king was in fact to strengthen and enforce the development of Carol II's personality cult in much the same manner as the postmortem glorification of Alexander was exploited in Yugoslavia.

Carol's successor, Ferdinand, was the victorious king in the battle to make the Romanian people whole, the king who gave land to the peasants and introduced universal suffrage. The pictures of the reception of the King in Bucharest on 1 December 1918, the day of Unification with Transylvania, present the ruler as a symbol of victory, as war leader and unifier.⁵⁴ Part of the celebrations took part in front of the Michael the Brave statue, highlighting the connection between that "Great Unifier" and the new one.⁵⁵ Just as with Carol I, Ferdinand was also a *founder*. The coronation of 1922 was symbolic of a new foundation, but also of the explicit integration of Ferdinand into the long line of makers of Romanian history. Even the choice of location for the ceremony, Alba Iulia, again directly recalled the great deed of Michael the Brave. Meanwhile Bucharest was the scene of a historical procession of enormous proportions featuring Trajan and Decebal, Dragos Voda and Radu Negru, Mircea the Old and Alexander the Good, Stephen the Great and Vlad Tsepes, Michael the Brave, Matei Besarab and Vasile Lupu, Cantemir and Brancoveanu, Horea, Closca and Crisan, Tudor Vladimirescu, Avram Iancu, Cuza and, of course, Carol I. The event expressed the full identification of the dynasty with the destiny of the Romanian nation.⁵⁶

Carol II was also the subject of a cult. The king himself wanted to create a *new Romania*. He was the king of youth and the peasants, and the king of culture. In this case, regardless of how much of this plan was actually achieved, we find a coordinated propaganda effort, as illustrated by the poetry exalting his virtues and his mission. On the 8th anniversary of his accession to the throne, one dutiful newspaper announced that “the miracle has happened”, “after eight years, a new country”, in which the new country was described as “the work of regeneration” by the king and the multitude of “royal foundations” that were on the road to transforming Romanian society. The image of Carol II was that of the modern king, always in the midst of the people, with a personal combination of majesty and populist familiarity.⁵⁷ These popular representations can be compared to some of those concerning Alexander and especially to those of the Bulgarian king Boris III, who established dictatorship in 1934.⁵⁸

Cezar Petrescu’s book *The Three Kings* (1934), though clearly written for educational purposes and aimed at villagers, synthesized the triple royal myth in its highest and purest form.⁵⁹ The Romanian triad of Carol I, Ferdinand I and Carol II, was clearly very similar to the aforementioned Yugoslav triad of Peter I, Alexander I and Peter II. (For the sake of comparison, this wasn’t the case in Bulgaria, where Boris couldn’t use the first Bulgarian Prince, Alexander Battenberg, who came from another dynasty, and his reliance on his father, Ferdinand, who was scapegoated after the First World War, did not prove to be a wise decision.)

Petrescu placed the coming of Carol I under the sign of cosmic miracle. The landing of Carol II, on his return by air from exile in France, was expressed in metaphor as a “descent from the heavens”. Carol I was “the maker of the Kingdom”; Ferdinand “the maker of Greater Romania”; and Carol II “the maker of Eternal Romania” (besides being “the father of the villages and the workers of the land” and “the king of culture”).⁶⁰ Of course, the idea of his being “the king of culture” was quite important and explains why it was printed in 1936⁶¹ and why, four years later, in the year of his demonization, Carol had his speeches published.⁶²

There was another myth of liberal origin that described the attempt to create a cult surrounding the prominent party leaders of the Bratianu family. These idealized representations are comparable to those of Pasic in Serbia and the King’s Yugoslavia. As with the kings, symbolic connotations are highlighted strongly. Ion C. Bratianu was born in 1821, the year of Vladimirescu’s revolution, which marked him out historically

for the mission of completing the process of change which had then begun. Nor was Ionel Bratianu born in an ordinary year; he was born in the key year of 1864, when great reforms were afoot, and on the very day that the rural law was promulgated.⁶³ The Bratianu family was also perceived as the incarnation of the Liberal Party, just as the Serbian Radical Party had been equated with Pasic. Nevertheless, we can underline an important difference here: in Romania the party was equated with the family tradition, while in Yugoslavia it was symbolized by a single, all-powerful leader.

Interwar Romania also saw the idealization of Queen Mary, the only woman in Romania to have been elevated to the status of myth. It was the First World War that led to this phenomenon. The Queen was presented as a savior, a “mother of the wounded”, “the living consciousness of Romanian Unity, the symbol of confidence in final victory”. It was in this way that, during the aforementioned 1 December 1918 celebrations, she rode alongside her husband, while dressed in military uniform, to the prolonged applause of the people.⁶⁴ Her death in 1938 provoked displays of sincere grief and gratitude, going far beyond the official ceremonial framework. To mark the occasion, Aron Cotrus wrote the poem “Lady Marie” in which the Queen appears as a providential figure coming from far-off shores to infuse the Romanian nation with a new force. Nevertheless, according to L. Boia, Romania still “lacks a great feminine myth.”⁶⁵ I dare to think that Elena Ceausescu filled the gap. Myths could also be negative, but, when considering the interwar period in isolation, I believe Queen Mary was the most promoted feminine image in the Balkans. Yugoslavia could not boast of such an example, and this could possibly help explain the weaker propaganda surrounding Jovanka Broz, when compared with the “academic engineer”.

A unique example of personality cult building and hero idolization is given by the Iron Guard in Romania. It is hard to find any such phenomenon in Yugoslavia or anywhere else in Southeastern Europe, with only Dimitrije Ljotic’s *Zbor* movement having anything in common with its ideology,⁶⁶ though it did not enjoy the Legion’s mass support and Ljotic did not share Corneliu Zelea Codreanu’s charisma. It is interesting that the Legionary Movement often preferred those who had suffered defeats to those whose martyrdom had helped perpetuate a great idea.⁶⁷ It is for this reason that the defeated Decebal – seen by the Legionaries as victorious in perpetuating the Dacian spirit – is preferred to Trajan. The essence of national history and Romanian spirituality was expressed either through

the triad involving Horea, Eminescu and the Captain, or through the succession from Zamolxis, Stephen the Great and Eminescu through to the Captain. Small wonder, then, that Codreanu enjoyed a glorious “Life after Death”. In 1939, Aron Cotrus, who had praised Queen Marie, compared the dead leader to a prophet:

Through the flood that overflows and shatters,
Like a horn sound though the air
Over and over the vast
O, Captain, your holly prophet’s voice.⁶⁸

At times even the old national heroes seemed insignificant in comparison with the holy *Capitanul*. Above him in both Romanian and world history came only Christ:

The Captain took on bodily form in order to change man himself, to spiritualize him, to liberate him as far as is possible from the chains of matter. From Jesus Christ to the Captain, no other such transformation had been attempted. The Captain was the direct continuation of the crucified of Golgotha.⁶⁹

In 1940, Emil Cioran equated him with the Divine: “The Captain was a Master installed in the Absolute [...] [He] Went beyond the Romanian limits.”⁷⁰ Mass meetings also praised the martyr. In 1940, after the establishment of the Legionary State, the stylized image of *Capitanul* Corneliu Codreanu began to accompany all Iron Guard manifestations. This was yet another expression of the short-lived postmortem cult of the deceased founder of the organization. The slogan used to show the eternity of the leader was that of a military style roll call: “Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: present!”⁷¹ As a product of modern European developments, as a leader of the third mass radical National-Socialist movement in Europe, Codreanu showed that the best way to win support was through adaptation to tradition, whether religious or national.

These examples of adaptations to the real conditions in one form or another, whether consciously or unconsciously, were also used in the representations of the future Yugoslav and Romanian communist leaders. Seen in this light, neither of the two countries’ experience was unique within the framework of socialism. Nevertheless, I consider it necessary at this point to clarify more precisely that this political order was not a

literary continuation of the traditions of “Eastern despots” and that the Southeastern European socialist countries were not mere copies of the Balkan authoritarian tradition. Socialism was a different system, with its own way of functioning, decision making, and ideology. The socialist state was much more powerful and omnipresent than its predecessors. Indeed, if we look at the painting by B. Kustodiev entitled *Bolshevik*, we see the new man, giant in his proportions, carrying the red flag, stamping on the old world, devastating traditional symbols. In reality, of course, most Bolsheviks were rather ordinary in size. However, given the conditions in those countries where it took root, socialism was to be constructed not using Marxist theory – obscure in the eyes of the common man – but through acts of will and power,⁷² and, as a consequence, the cult of the great history makers was adapted to fit the bill. In a first phase, princes were replaced by the great rebel leaders and revolutionaries like Spartacus and Robespierre. After the dictatorship of the proletariat came the dictatorship of the leader, the providential figure found central place in the communist system. And since every leader needs precursors to announce and legitimize himself through, the communist pantheon was enriched with figures that had little in common with Marxism.⁷³ Thus it came as no surprise when the Russian philosopher Nicolay Berdyaev concluded that Lenin combined the features of the revolutionaries Chernishevski,⁷⁴ Nechaev,⁷⁵ Tkachov,⁷⁶ and Zhelyabov⁷⁷ with those of the great Moscow princes of Peter the Great and the despotic statesmen. In 1918, through tyrannical means, Lenin was able to stop the chaotic disintegration of Russia. This led Berdyaev to compare him to Peter I.⁷⁸ Following this pattern, Isaac Deutcher observes that the Stalin cult was a mixture of the revolutionary and the traditional. Depending on the changing political situation, Stalin could resemble “the iron tsar” Nikolai I, Peter the Great (as with Lenin), Alexander I, and Ivan the Terrible.⁷⁹

This means nothing is unique in the cases we are considering. But if the pattern is universal, the variety and intensity of its action depend on historical context,⁸⁰ as we will now see when we look at the way this model operated on Yugoslavian soil.

Tito’s idolization developed in three main stages: 1) the cult of military leader and statesman, backed by the charisma of Stalin in the period 1941-1949; 2) his own charisma and cult as a party and state leader in the period 1949-1980; 3) an ideological and state cult following his death in the period 1980-1990.⁸¹

During the first stage Tito obtained the important character of the courageous military hero due to the bloody events in Yugoslavia under the German, Italian, Bulgarian and Hungarian occupation and the intense ethnic and civil war. In the traditional framework, like that of the legendary Kosovo martyrs of King Peter and Alexander Karageorgevic, Tito remained to fight with his people, in striking and – of course, due to the partisan propaganda – exaggerated contrast to King Peter II, who had fled to London. The result was that in 1945 a lot of ordinary people, with no notion of scientific Marxism-Leninism, shouted the slogan, “We don’t want the King, we want Tito”,⁸² some even saying they were in favor of “Tito and God.” Thus, the cult of the communist leader had somehow been constructed against the King and the royal idea, though the engineers of his personality cult still exploited the traditional monarchical feelings of the population. These strong traditional feelings were evident even among those defined as atheist partisans, the following verse being a good example:

On our caps there is a star
And versus God we fight
But not against the Christ
For communist he was.⁸³

Tito’s military charisma was supported by the famous marshal title he had received earlier in 1943. Later, in the 1940s, owing to disputes over the so-called Trieste question, his military image was strengthened and it became normal for Broz to display his marshal uniforms in front of audiences. The Army became a supporter of Tito and of Yugoslavia, a promoter of the personality cult, and a producer of the future material for “Yugonostalgia”.

Using his undisputed popularity as a hero, liberator, and savior, party propaganda, already in this initial period, was able to create what was to become Eastern Europe’s strongest popularity cult, overshadowed only by that of Stalin. There were towns in every Yugoslav republic bearing the leader’s name: the Montenegrin capital Podgorica became Titograd, Uzice in Serbia was renamed Titovo Uzice, the Macedonian town of Veles added the same adjective –Titov – to its name, and Croatia was home to Titova Korenica.

The Soviet example here is clear. However, another instrument of mass mobilization that I mentioned earlier with pre-war origins was

unique: that of Tito's Baton, which first took place in 1945. It is a little-known fact that over the period of its existence more than 20,000 batons bearing birthday wishes to Tito were "carried". There were two kinds of batons: local and primary. The latter involved the six batons of the republics as well around a dozen others whose bearers varied and were chosen depending on the political climate of the time. Until 1965, Tito would receive these batons personally from their final bearers, while local batons were presented to the representatives of the authorities at their destinations and were then forwarded to the depot in Belgrade. The purpose of communication by means of a baton was to create a direct, almost physical connection between the citizens of the various regions of Yugoslavia and, in the same way, for them to establish a connection with Comrade Tito. Unlike a scepter borne by a king or a religious leader, untouchable by all others, the baton drew its symbolic political value precisely from the touch of as many hands as possible. Every third Yugoslav citizen took part in carrying the baton. This event, according to the official propaganda, represented the brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav "nations and nationalities" and was "a wonderful example of the people's love and devotion, as well as the character and life-work" of Tito.⁸⁴

As early as the period of 1941-1948, the population began sending various gifts as an expression of their love and respect for the leader. This phenomenon was partly organized by the system, but was also the result of initiatives representing true popular admiration. The Museum of Yugoslav History contains many such gifts received by Tito that are rooted in the traditional culture of the village. They include handkerchiefs, tablecloths, pillows, pillowcases, socks, slippers, shoes, hats and other similar handicrafts. These gifts came from village women and carpenters, and other "ordinary folk", including those to whose children Tito was godfather. Gifts of this kind had a political value because of their modesty and simplicity, which gave the impression of really being "from the heart". One of the earliest gifts from the people was a bottle containing a small, probably gesso bust of Marshal Tito.⁸⁵ Just as alcohol can hold together different people around the table, so Tito's image held together the different "nations and nationalities".

Thus the initial stage in Tito's idolization succeeded in constructing most of the basic elements that go into a leader's personality cult. The conflict with Stalin in 1948, marking the second and longest stage of idolizing, and the increase in external danger, only helped to accelerate the process of glorification. Josip Broz had freed himself from the shadow

of his ex-patron, Stalin. This did not happen immediately, however. In 1948 and well into 1949, Yugoslav communists continued to worship “the father of the people”, but after the condemnation of the Second Cominform Resolution of 1949 more space became available for Tito’s own cult. His heroic image was strengthened and the historical “No” provided the material for new praise. This was presented as the continuation of Tito’s deeds as guardian of Yugoslav independence, since in 1941 he said “No” to the Germans and in 1948 he said “No” again to Soviet *bureaucratic imperialism*. Broz also was presented as a true follower of Lenin and opposed to Moscow’s revisionism. After the introduction of the so-called self-management system, Broz became the real inventor and defender of the true rights of the working classes, which were obviously not being respected in the USSR.

The “historic” 20th Congress of the CPSU increased Tito’s prestige; however, Yugoslav communists were careful enough to follow the events in the socialist “camp” and as a consequence the CC’s Propaganda Commission issued instructions to reduce the number of Tito portraits and images in public places, most of all in bars, which in reality placed restrictions on the expressions of popular adoration towards Broz. In 1957, Tito’s Baton became the Youth Baton and Tito’s birthday, May 25, was celebrated as Youth Day. In fact, the Youth Day rallies were even more pompous and sparkling than their predecessors, which can be seen in recordings of the Youth Day celebrations in 1962 and 1968. Quite remarkable in this respect was the 1968 “We Are All Tito’s Signature” composition made in the JNA stadium by participants in the rally. Not without irony, the Slovenian, Rasko Mocnik, said:

“Josip Broz’s art was TITO. The logo of logos, graffiti inscribed in the sides of the mountains and carried in the hearts of the people, the sonorous incarnation of a mass psychology, an assault on the heavens (‘Tito-party’), symphonic snobbery [...], top of the pops (‘Having Tito as our Marshal’), and, ultimately the forerunner of a neo-folk song (‘There goes Tito, through Romania’). [It is] a name that would fit as well to a folk song (‘Comrade Tito Our Blue Violet’) as to top-level world politics (‘Tito-Nasser-Nehru’),⁸⁶ and so on”.

Indeed the previously illegal name of Tito, like those of Lenin and Stalin, became the most legitimate of signs and was appropriate for all kinds of propaganda messages.

By the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s Tito was no longer a plebeian, partisan leader and an anti-Stalin rebel; he had become an experienced statesman, traveling the world with large delegations. This element was strengthened by the myth of the inventor and leader of the Non-Alignment movement, particularly after the proclaimed first Non-Aligned conference in Belgrade was incorporated into the process of idolizing the leader. Marshal uniforms were balanced by stylish official suits. This may also have been the time when Tito enjoyed mass support, which was lasting and heart-felt. The everyday attitude of the majority of people was a mixture of curiosity, half-cordiality, admiration and surprise towards the image of brilliant elegance of their leader, who, at the same time, was one of the people. Pictures showing the dictator together with world famous writers, philosophers and actors – for example, the 1964 image of Tito together with Kirk Douglas stuck onto a stuffed brown teddy bear – were exploited by Yugoslav propaganda in order to increase the leader's popularity, while television spread this image to the urban population. Such glittery representations lived together peacefully with ideology and traditional perceptions. For example, a letter to Tito from a Yugoslav village in 1963 starts with an excellent example of the cohabitation of Marxism-Leninism and monarchism, using as it does the following opening address: "Dear Lord Comrade Tito". Such letters were full of spelling mistakes and therefore hardly likely to be the product of officials. Similarly, in one expression of adoration and devotion, a lady from Croatia declares her profound sympathy for the leader and an amateur poem, dedicated to Tito, is inserted at the end of the text. Though the content may suggest that some of the senders were mentally unstable, it must also be remembered that Tito received around 4,000 letters each day from Yugoslavs alone.

It was, however, during the 1970s that the Tito cult was to reach its peak. His many faces were armed and thrown in together into a highly consistent propaganda campaign, including the extraordinary boy who had a difficult childhood, the brave young man and his adventures as a Russian prisoner of war, the ardent communist activist in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the courageous organizer, the leader of the Communist Party who fought against Hitler and Stalin, the promoter of self-management, the leader of the Non-Aligned movement, and so on. Ideology was again mixed with glossy images of world VIPs, including Hollywood stars, as in the photograph of Jovanka and Josip Broz with Elisabeth Taylor and Richard Burton taken in Brioni in 1973. Burton himself played Tito in the film *The*

Battle of Sutjeska. Even John Lennon wrote a letter and sent a gift of some seeds to be planted in the Yugoslav leader's garden in Brioni. In reality, however, some of the Tito propaganda representations were slightly out of date, as in the warrior hero representation and that of his possessing eternal youth despite his age.

The year of 1977 marked the climax in Tito's idolization: the 85th anniversary of Tito's birthday and 40th anniversary of his leadership of the Communist Party. This year might well be called Titoviada, and indeed most of the other national and local holidays were celebrated as part of the great Tito anniversaries. On 25 May, the newspapers simultaneously issued almost identical articles and pictures representing the leader's historical meaning, and entire editions were dedicated to him. But the things were not as schizophrenic as some would suggest. The Tito cult was a kind of superstructure in a society that had the opportunity of showing other much longer-lasting but still highly esteemed faces. The Croatian newspaper *Nedelna Dalmacija* (Sunday Dalmatia), for example, though it might be obliged to dedicate its title page to the leader, could show a naked girl described as Swedish on its back page.

The 1977 Youth Rally was also one of the most glorious shows ever and the model of the baton in that year was much more expensive than the first wooden one. Speaking with the distance of time, the Croatian film director Igor Markovic has said:

Many totally distorted things were usual and normal. For instance, the notorious manifestation of communist infatuation, the custom of carrying the baton for the Birthday of the Greatest Son of our Nations and Nationalities.

... during the television broadcast of this event, my whole family would gather in front of the television and, without being forced to do so by either the communist party or the secret police, we would watch the choreography from beginning to end as well as the satisfied Comrade Tito watching it all... and I should point out that I grew up in a decidedly non-political family...⁸⁷

The first part of the above quotation represents today's resignation towards the overly excessive idolization of the past, while the second part offers a view from the time when the Youth Rally was also a show and not just an example of an event that promoted the personality cult.

Obviously, the final stage of Tito's idolization was the postmortem cult that went on for almost ten years and was reminiscent of the Lenin postmortem cult. Some party groups began to use this stage of the cult by pretending they were the true Tito followers, and a certain part of the population viewed Josip Broz as à guardian of Yugoslavian unity.⁸⁸ The party and the state formulated an official evaluation in a statement on the occasion of the leader's death:

For almost a century Tito was a fighter for the interests and historical goals of the working class and all those who toiled for the noblest ideals of our nations and nationalities. Tito is our dearest friend. For seven decades he was a burning force in the workers' movement. For seven decades he strengthened the ranks of Yugoslav communists. For more than four decades he was exercising in most honorable way the most responsible functions of the part. He was a heroic leader of the National Liberation Struggle and Socialist Revolution. For more than four centuries he was at the head of our socialist state and raised our country and our struggle for new human society to the heights of world history, acting and winning the recognition as our greatest historical figure.⁸⁹

When the announcement of his death was made, everything stopped, even football games. Images from the game between *Hajduk* (Split) and *Crvena Zvezda* are now legendary – players from both teams lay on the ground crying. The images had another symbolic meaning as well: *Zvezda* was from Serbia and *Hajduc* from Croatia. Once again, all the newspapers were dedicated to Josip Broz. Thousands gathered for Tito's last reception in *Brotherhood and Unity Square*⁹⁰ in front of Belgrade's main railway station. During days of deep mourning, Tito's pictures were everywhere, even to be seen between the goods people in other socialist countries dreamed of in the window displays of Belgrade's shops. Tito's funeral was attended by some of the most prominent world leaders, a recognition that also became part of the cult.

The following years saw annual commemorations of Tito's death and Youth Day rallies of giant proportions, including Tito's representation in polystyrene form in the JNA stadium in May 1983 and the massive print production dedicated to the leader – all of which showed that the Tito cult continued to be all-embracing and supported the notion that, owing to the system of the Collective Presidency in Yugoslavia, Tito was still President and in charge. But there were also some signs suggesting future changes, as evident in the following quotation:

Someone made an interesting remark about Slobodan Milosevic being the first to realize that Josip Broz was really dead and gone to his grave and begin to act accordingly: first in the inter-party power struggle, and after Gazimestan [...] Milosevic was the first politician in realpolitik terms who realized that Tito would not return from the grave and punish his disobedient successors, while on the broader social scene, it was *Laibach* that was first to grasp that Tito was dead and that everyone was behaving as if no one else knew it.

This quotation shows that there were two powers in post-Tito Yugoslavian society that could act as eventual destroyers of the Josip Broz cult: nationalism and youth. To nationalists the Tito cult was an obstacle to obtaining and holding onto power in the different republics, while for the westernized urban rock and roll youth Tito's cult was something meaningless. A contemporary wrote in an article called *Young and Eternal* (*Vreme*, 4 March 2004): "And it should be clear to us when the comrades replaced the editor of the *Polet* student magazine because he gave equal coverage to the deaths of Lennon⁹¹ and Tito." The Poster Scandal of 1987 was a reaction of the Youth protest. It was an expression of the dark sense of humor of the Slovenian art group, IRWIN, which used a Richard Klein Nazi poster for the last Youth Day in 1987. The leadership of Slovenia's Youth approved the poster and the generals liked it in particular, but the trick was discovered by some Belgrade's journalists.⁹² In fact, Tito's Baton or the Youth Baton, was run for the last time in the same year, 1987. It was to be changed by the relics of saints and poets. Among these were the relics of Prince Lazar, which left Ravanica in June 1989 to arrive in Gračanica on June 28 of the same year, the six hundredth anniversary of the battle of Kosovo Field.⁹³ It is interesting, if not surprising, that the same team engaged in the 1985 and 1986 rallies was to organize the show on Gazimestan.⁹⁴ Milosevic himself was to become object of a kind of personality cult and new poems were composed in the style of those dedicated to the late Broz.⁹⁵

The last pictures of Broz in the non-party editions commemorating the great events in May – his death and his birthday (the succession of events was also significant with commemoration of Tito preceding celebration of his birthday) – were published in 1989. For instance the image of Tito on the title page of *Student* magazine in 1989 is still positive, but the picture with the red heart leaves something of a sad impression. A few months later, all official idolization of the leader was ruined by the collapse of the Soviet "camp". Thus the "non-aligned" Yugoslavia and one of her

main features – the cult of Josip Broz – proved to be “aligned” to the events concerning the Eastern European socialist system. Still, the rejection of Tito was not as extreme as that of his Romanian counterpart at the end of the same year.

The evolution of Ceausescu’s idolization, in my view, went through three main stages: 1) the strengthening of his position as leader of the party and the state, as part of the so-called collective leadership during the period 1965-1967; 2) the creation of his own charisma as a defender and savior of Romanian independence against the “Russian” threat, founder of the new humane socialism and prominent Marxist-Leninist thinker, veteran of the Romanian communist movement and continuator of the Romanian historical tradition, and man of the people in the period 1968-1977; 3) the acceleration of the omnipresent personality cult that included the personality cult surrounding his wife, with stress on his family, especially his son Nicu, in order to achieve patriamonalization of the party and state leadership, in the period 1978-1989.⁹⁶

Ceausescu was not the leader of a successful revolution, as had been Tito, and as such lacked the essential hero charisma.⁹⁷ In the first stage, Ceausescu played the role of first among equals. The picture depicting the leadership that appeared in *Scînteia* on the occasion of the Ninth Congress showed in the centre an old party member surrounded by Ceausescu and Ion Gheorghe Maurer,⁹⁸ thereby emphasizing the collective spirit of the Party.⁹⁹ In 1967, however, Ceausescu became President of the State Council and references to him became more and more frequent. In December, Maurer stressed Ceausescu’s “personal role” in every reform and change.¹⁰⁰ The message was cached and in the autumn of 1967 a first quotation from a speech by the Party leader – that delivered to the party conference (6-8 December 1967) – appeared in *Magazin Istoric*, which had been established at the beginning of the same year.¹⁰¹

In the spirit of this initial period, Ceausescu permitted relative freedom to artists. The leader used a new strategy to gain popularity and legitimacy: meetings with the so-called strategic groups, including artists, scientists, military people, and representatives of the church.¹⁰² In 1966, in the publication on the Romanian plastic artists, *Arta*, only one quotation from the leader was featured. In following years, the Secretary-General was represented by a single picture only, in a group representation of the leader together with the leadership of an exhibition dedicated to 1877.

In my view, the year of 1968 was crucial to Ceausescu's popularity and the growth of his personality cult. In April he eliminated the ex-Minister of Internal Affairs, Alexander Draghici, and soon after denounced Dej and rehabilitated Stefan Foris and Lucretiu Patrascanu, and in doing so he acquired the charisma of the just leader that undoes the wrongs of the past. A far more important event took place in August, when he became a national hero guarding the country's sacred independence against the Soviets: by resisting the Warsaw Treaty intervention in Czechoslovakia Ceausescu became the authentic national leader.¹⁰³ Just as the conflict with Stalin in 1948 enforced Tito's position and his personality, so in Romania the real or imagined "Russian threat" created the opportunity for future idolization of the leader – and neither in the high-level party gatherings, nor even in the rallies held around the country to raise national spirit and promote the new hero, could the origins of the future praise be traced; rather, they were to be found in letters expressing clear popular support.¹⁰⁴ The 10th Congress only served to legitimize this reality and cause the final demise of collective leadership. Every speaker felt obliged to begin and end his speech with remarks that praised the leader. The past was scarcely mentioned.¹⁰⁵

Going with the wind, in September 1968 and using bold print, *Magazin Istoric* published a quotation from Nicolae Ceausescu dedicated to 1848. The quotation was separated from the main text¹⁰⁶ – Ceausescu's thoughts were also soon to appear on the cover, as well as on back cover in the November issue of the historical review. The quotation was dedicated to the unification of Transylvania with the *Regat*.¹⁰⁷ In the following year, 1969, the popular edition allocated some space to an article by Ilie Ceausescu.¹⁰⁸

Nonetheless, Ceausescu's image was not omnipresent. In 1971, *Arta* magazine only published a picture of the dictator being greeted by the party conference.¹⁰⁹ In fact, up until 1973, Ceausescu showed an impressive level of realism towards the artistic circles.¹¹⁰ During that year, he kindly instructed the plastic artists to concentrate their skills on the main events to come in the following year: the 30th anniversary of 23 August 1944, and the conference in Helsinki.¹¹¹

On the whole, however, 1973, which included the celebration of the leader's 55th anniversary, was the highest point in the development of the Ceausescu cult up to that time. *Magazin Istoric* duly dedicated ten pages to the event and the February issue began with an article entitled "Nicolae Ceausescu: His 55th Anniversary and Four Decades of

Revolutionary Activity". The content was divided into three parts: "The Times of a Country and its People," "Man and Epoch" and "Thoughts on Socialist Romania and Her Leader." The content was enriched by illustrations. Ceausescu's picture covered a whole page in the form of a portrait. This single large image was then covered by various smaller pictures representing Ceausescu's different faces, including that of *Conducatorul* with cap meeting workers (this picture was combined with another image of Ceausescu's performance at a rally). The pictures were explained with a single caption: "Permanent dialog, direct communication from heart to heart unites *Conducatorul* with party, people and country".

Another set of photos was accompanied by the following words:

25 January 1973, the Square of the Republic and the sound of *horă*,¹¹² comrade Nicolae Ceausescu and comrade Elena Ceausescu seen among workers from the capital; Flowers and warm greetings are offered by the workers [to the leaders]; August 23, University Hall, Bucharest: honorary doctorate is conferred on Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu.¹¹³

The last part of the tribute came from various people concerning the historical role of the leader in the form of the thoughts of different representatives from within the historical hierarchy. The quotations were also chosen to represent as many of the faces pertaining to Ceausescu's general image as possible. The academic Petre Constantinescu-Iasi's small contribution is entitled "Four decades in the communist movement", while to a 4th-year student Ceausescu is "forever young"; an interwar veteran historian and one-time prisoner under the communists pays his homage under the title "To the Great Patriot" and a university professor from the Hungarian minority considered Ceausescu a "Prominent Creator of Marxism-Leninism"; yet another heavy-weight historian and academic stresses the providential birth of the jubilee hero with the words "Born in the historical year of 1918", while the Director of the Institute for Historical and Social Sciences to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party clearly chose a slogan through which to express his feelings, with "Ceausescu: heroism, Romania: communism", and a much younger, 2nd-year student in politically correct terms expresses his "Gratitude for the care of his parents."¹¹⁴

The first issue of *Omagiu* also appeared in 1973 and was dedicated to his trips around the country, highlighting his stamina, courage and generosity. His image also had a puritanical aspect in that he defended

party ethics while also revealing those who violated it. As part of his puritan side, *Omagiu* promoted the harmony of his family life.¹¹⁵

Consequently, the outlines of what is called Ceausesism, which appeared in the period 1968-1973, is a strain of national communism best defined as political, economic and cultural Stalinism combined with interwar right-wing nationalistic rhetoric.¹¹⁶ It is sometimes wrongly related to Titoism as another variation of national communism. While it is true that in terms of the personality cult there were many common features, the Yugoslav system was in fact anti-nationalistic and suppressed all “chauvinisms”, be they of a “Greater Serbian”, “Greater Croatian” or “Macedonian” (“Greater Bulgarian”) nature. And if Titoism’s main source of legitimacy was resistance, then for Ceausescu it was the Romanian historical state tradition.

New heights in the idolization process were reached in March 1974, when Ceausescu became president. *Scînteia* described the event as follows:

March 28, 1974, will remain engraved in the history of the homeland, in the consciousness of our people. On this memorable day, fulfilling the will of the entire nation, the Grand National Assembly... proclaimed Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu President... This most brilliant son of the Romanian nation, the leader who crowns a succession of great statesman of our lineage, is the first President...¹¹⁷

The ceremony was relayed by the Romanian radio and television services. In November 1974, at the eleventh party congress, it was proposed that he become President for life (as with Tito in SFRY), but the leader himself refused the honor. In *Scînteia* (29 November 1974) he was compared to “Julius Caesar, Alexander of Macedonia, Pericles, Cromwell, Napoleon, Peter the Great, and Lincoln.”¹¹⁸

Not surprisingly, in 1974 Ceausescu appeared for the first time on the cover of *Arta* magazine. He was soon followed by his wife in a carving by the sculptor Oscar Han.¹¹⁹ The magazine then began running large features on the leader using a standard set of images. According to Adrian Cioroianu, from 1974 onwards Ceausescu representations in propaganda as the visual expression of his personality cult can be termed videology – that is, ideology that is eager to express itself in a single portrait.¹²⁰ However, here I propose that the term is more suited to the 1980s, when real Ceausescu videology was transmitted on Romanian television.

A new stage in Ceausescu's idolization took shape in 1978. One of the reasons for this was the need to strengthen his personal position, which had been shaken by the disastrous earthquake in 1977 and the effects of the gradually deteriorating economic conditions. A 60th birthday and 45 years of "uninterrupted revolutionary activity" were fully exploited to this end.¹²¹ The formula was almost identical to that employed at Tito's anniversaries the previous year; however, instead of an 85th birthday, Ceausescu was only celebrating his 60th and, what's more, 45 years of brave deeds were more than 40 years at the head of the party, as in Tito's case. Ceausescu's biography was seen as a distilled version of 20th-century Romanian development and life, as a repetition in miniature of the recent changes in the country: "Ceausescu was born a PEASANT... He became a WORKER... He learned, learned tirelessly, he is an INTELLECTUAL... The triple nature: peasant, worker, intellectual; this is what seems to us to be the 'key' that 'deciphers' Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu's great personality."¹²²

In the same year Ceausescu again employed the useful Soviet threat and in November he left the Warsaw Treaty meetings, having earlier publicly voiced his criticism of the USSR. On his return he took steps to create an image out of the crisis situation: a meeting of the PEC, meetings with workers, peasants, and intellectuals. A special CC plenum was also held, followed by a joint meeting of the CC, National Council of the Socialist Unity Front, and the MAN. *Scînteia* printed dozens of letters expressing popular support for Ceausescu and his decisions.¹²³ Clearly Moscow was always near to hand when the Romanian dictator needed to boost his popularity.

The following years were marked by a process of steadily growing idolization. Ceausescu became a "new Balcescu." He gave back to Romania her "usurped history" – a cliché already found in many popular letters of support from 1968; his date of birth fell between the October 1917 Revolution and the December 1918 events in Romania,¹²⁴ combining Lenin with the national symbol of Unification, which, when taken to the extreme, has an anti-Russian meaning. The contemporary and notorious Corneliu Vadim Tudor published a poem entitled "Nicolae Ceausescu" which proved to be an example of flattery mixed with anti-Soviet messages.¹²⁵ In addition to all the praise, sixteen volumes of Ceausescu's speeches were published in Romania, thereby raising the leader to the heights of the classics of Marxism-Leninism.¹²⁶

At the end of the 1970s, a new and important element was added to the Ceausescu cult by artists in the country: the image of the *ctitor*. This religious term with archaic overtones has associations with the boyars and medieval princes. Promoting this image became part of the zeal for restriction in Romania during the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, in 1979, the increasingly conformist magazine *Arta* depicted the first couple, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, in a triptych at a ceremony to lay the foundations at a building site.¹²⁷

The level of idolization became unbearable in the 1980s. Ceausescu's 62nd birthday was celebrated with a degree of pomp previously only accorded to celebrations held every five years, which considerably enhanced the personality cult.¹²⁸ The feasts began on 6 January 1980, when party propagandists exploited the occasion of Elena Ceausescu's birthday to praise the leader through a parallel personality cult for his wife. The leader's wife was described as "a daughter among the most important daughters of this people, a symbolic image of the citizen-woman, the patriot-woman, the scientist-woman, the mother-woman..."¹²⁹ In 1980, on the eve of his birthday, Ceausescu was proclaimed by *Săptămîna* (issue 477, 25 January 1980) as "our lay god, the heart of the party and the nation."¹³⁰

However, the most remarkable phenomenon in 1980 was the massive orientation towards antiquity, involving an appeal to the Dacian kings. The celebration of 2,050 years since the establishment of the Romanian state served to highlight a striking similarity between Ceausescu and Burebista. As Lucian Boia puts it, "We may note the successive avatars of the 'simplified' pantheon of the Romanians: Trajan and Carol I around 1900, Balcescu and Gheorgiu-Dej in the 1950s, and Burebista and Ceausescu in 1980."¹³¹

During the anniversary of the 1965 PCP Congress in 1982, the Ceausescu cult reached new heights. The year was full of celebrations. The feasts started with Elena Ceausescu's birthday, then Nicolae's birthday, followed by the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Youth League. This was followed by the 8th anniversary of Ceausescu's election as President of Romania.¹³² The propaganda did not miss the opportunity to announce the declaration of Ceausescu as "1981's man of the year" by an Indian organization.¹³³ The intensity of the festive calendar led Lunacharskiy to the conclusion that "every true people's democracy seeks the people's feast... In order to sense themselves the masses should manifest themselves externally and this is only possible when, as

Robespierre says, they on their own have become a show for themselves."¹³⁴ Had Romanians really become participants in their own show, or were they acting in someone else's?

The last years of Ceausescu's rule saw the continuous growth of the cult amid worsening economic conditions and deteriorating living standards. Despite the harsh conditions, new materials were constantly issued in honor of the dictator, including five records by *Electre-record Music* entitled *The Party, Ceausescu, and the Future*, comprising 48 pieces of music and poetry dedicated to Ceausescu; and movies were produced in praise of the leader, such as the 1983 "documentary" feature film *Omagiu*, which was shown on television, and the "poetic documentary" *The Homeland's Hero of Heroes*.¹³⁵ *Viata Militara* called Ceausescu a demigod and *Romania Literara* attributed "god's heart to him".¹³⁶ Corneliu Vadim Tudor wrote that the Ceausescu "tribune... from summer balcony of August proclaimed our eternal independence [...] would forever remain in the Romanian national Pantheon."¹³⁷ He also called Ceausescu a "peace hero... at the vanguard of the world pacifist movement."¹³⁸, "the living legend",¹³⁹ a "Titan among Titans", and an "unsurpassed strategist among strategists",¹⁴⁰ the "most Romanian of men".¹⁴¹

Two years before the collapse of the socialist system in Europe and of Ceausescu himself, two ideological officials with history qualifications, Mircea Musat and Ion Patroiu, produced a list of the great ages of Romania's national history, each named after a dominant personality: Burebista, Decebal, Mircea the Old, Stephen the Great, Michael the Brave, Constantin Brancoveanu and Cuza, with a final emphasis placed on Ceausescu's era "of dignity and fulfillment of the great national ideals."¹⁴²

During this "era" in Romania – as in Yugoslavia but with more absurd dimensions – it was the intellectuals who were some of the most important promoters of the cult. Some in particular made interesting contributions to the theory of flattery. The dictator enjoyed receiving birthday gifts containing wishes such as "Long live *Stăpîne*",¹⁴³ "Many happy returns, O symphony of mountain pines", "Many happy returns to our Lord", "Many happy returns, Husband and Father", "Many happy returns, Son of the Nation", "Many happy returns, Sun of Peace", "Many happy returns, Prometheus", and even "To Sir Ceausescu, the Eminescu of Politics."¹⁴⁴ Some addresses were reminiscent of those found among the ordinary people's letters, but the former were more pompous and probably hypocritical.

The President and his wife received gifts and expressions of homage and gratitude from all professional groups: medics, geographers, scientists etc.¹⁴⁵ The wishes accompanying such gifts expressed the nature of the respective professions of the senders, but usually the flattery of poets and writers came out on top: "In paying tribute to a woman, to Romanian woman, and more than ever and especially to you, dear comrade, Elena Ceausescu, I dedicate the *Dochia* poetic series, where I have tried to link the legends surrounding the courageous daughter of Decebal with the custom of *mărtișor*, a custom that among the nations in the world only we possess."¹⁴⁶ Another poetic wish read: "To Nicolae Ceausescu, a poet of discrete sensibility and mild intimate elegance, and above all profound comprehension for Romanian spirituality which has created this autochthonous state. A supreme homage to the Great Patriot who is akin to the *Voievods*."¹⁴⁷ Writers bowed their heads before "the bravest man in the world" in front of "the immortal oak".¹⁴⁸ In 1978, Mircea Tomuş spoke of "the great man", "the actual symbol of Romania" who makes enormous efforts for "the glittering of Romanian literature".¹⁴⁹

The church also contributed. In 1971, the Archbishop of Ardeal, Nicolae Mladin, together with his gift forwarded a worshipful dedication to the "most loved nation's son", the "skillful *Conducator*", who "dedicated entirely his energies to the advancement of the Socialist Fatherland, to the struggle for peace", "a statesman of high international authority" and so on. In 1979 another man of God, Valeriu Anania, was keen to stress the exceptional nature of the state and party leader: "To his Excellency Nicolae Ceausescu, the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania and brave defender of the roots from which we rise and flourish into our identities as people protecting us from the drama of the characters in this book."¹⁵⁰

However, in 1989, Ceausescu suddenly became a scapegoat, and the following question, asked 15 years later, is well suited to the situation. "Can we imagine Ceausescu's frustration when he stood in front of the firing squad: could he understand a nation which had worshiped him for 25 years but in the end came to shoot him?"¹⁵¹

Scapegoating

The year 1990 in Yugoslavia was characterized by a process of visible reassessment of Tito's personality. The new rulers started to destroy Tito's

positive image in an indirect, rather than direct way. The political cult surrounding Tito disappeared along with the invalidation of the legislation which called for the obligatory paying of homage to his personality.¹⁵² As a result, intellectuals and youth in the country became much more open. The writer's edition *Knjizevne novine* introduced the first caricatures depicting the late dictator as an evil uncle, frightening children in their sleep. The student's magazine gradually changed its colors. Students called for the abolition of the law protecting the works and character of Josip Broz. Soon, however, new leaders, like Sesel and Karadzic, were to appear on the covers of the magazine. Sesel smoked cigars like Tito and Tito became an anti-Milosevic symbol, and the Serbian opposition issued a poster mocking Milosevic as Tito's successor: on the poster Tito votes "For Sloba", as is written on the wall behind Josip Broz.

In Croatia, slogans at Tudjman rallies, such as "Franjo, with you our future is secured", were reminiscent of the former Tito slogans – "Comrade Tito, we swear we shall not deviate from your path" – however, the latter were gradually being removed from public places in Croatia.

During the Yugoslav conflict, Tito images fared badly and photos from Sarajevo in the period 1992-1995 depicted the symbolic destruction of his portraits and books, implying that the changed perceptions of Tito were actually part of much more important and tragic changes taking place in an environment where Jovan and Ivan were at each other's throats, George beat Jafer with the latter spiting on the former, the Cyrillic and Latin alphabets swore at each other like taxi drivers after a car crash, and centuries old religious temples were blown up together with the remnants of the gesso Tito heads. Some Yugoslavs were so disgusted by this abrupt change that in the nationality column of the population census they wrote "Mercedes", "Toshiba" and "Indian".¹⁵³

Here I will only briefly illustrate the influence of the Tito cult on the formation of the images for the Croatian president Franjo Tudjman and Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic, the politicians whose participation in the break-up of Tito's Yugoslavia was the strongest. Comparisons with Josip Broz became one of the favorite weapons wielded by *yugonostalgics* to mock the new rulers.

No one would be surprised by the fact that the first job of the new national Croatian and Serbian rulers was to move to the old state buildings and surround themselves by the same old cronies – "communists turned democrats, democrats turned nationalists, nationalists turned liberals,

liberals turned conservatives..."¹⁵⁴ In Croatia, a large photo monograph of the new father of the nation, Franjo Tudjman, had been published. Beneath the pictures there were some short explanatory notes, such as "The President shaves... Good morning Mr. President! The President plays tennis. Play a backhand Mr. President!"¹⁵⁵ The Croatian leader began to dress in white jackets as did Tito; and he gave children apricots from his garden, precisely as Broz used to send children baskets with tangerines from his gardens in Brioni. At state shows the former JNA general was even more active than the man from Kumrovec. Dubravka Ugresic commented that while Tito used to sit calmly when his people demonstrated their talents, the Croatian president was participating actively in the production: "Surrounded by young girls in Croatian folk attire on the open stage on the occasion of his inauguration, the Croatian president performed a pathetic pantomime, placing in a solemn manner a gold coin into a symbolic cradle of the new born Croatia, as is the custom of good luck for babies."¹⁵⁶ Newspaper articles devoted to Tudjman revived "the almost forgotten genre of socialist iconography". In new primary school textbooks Tito had been replaced by "the daddy", the nickname of Franjo Tudjman.¹⁵⁷

Slobodan Milosevic also adopted some of the propaganda clichés of the Tito cult. As already mentioned, new songs were devoted to the Serbian president that resembled the songs about Tito. If Tito was presented as the savior of Yugoslavia in 1989-1990, Sloba was praised as the man who resurrected Serbia. The latter was depicted in the central pane of a triptych flanked by the legendary heroes Prince Lazar and Milos Obrenovic. In Milosevic, the Serbian people saw the new Tito. In keeping with folk tradition, the people sang: "From the grave rose Tito and turned into Milosevic Sloba." But when the Serbian President turned from hero to scapegoat, the people began singing a different song: "Tito, come out of the grave and take Sloba with you." It would not be unexpected, however, if one day this new Balkan Leoncio¹⁵⁸ were to appear in some of the episodes of the Balkan soap opera as the good guy. And why not, given that some Serbian politicians already have nicknames like the Paw, the Undertaker, and the Window-Doll, the Peasant, the Dung, the Fur Coat and the Owl?¹⁵⁹

Today Tito's image is still controversial, but in the main it seems that perceptions of the late dictator are steadily improving. Possibly most controversial is Tito's image in Serbia, where the Youth Day rallies were transformed into a transferal of the holy remains, with photos from 2000

showing the newly-elected Serbian president, Vojislav Kostunica, together with the current prime minister, kissing the coffin during the transfer of the holy remains. In 2003, in the center of Belgrade and in front of the Media Center building, it was possible to sign a petition to relocate the remains of Josip Broz. The controversial position of Josip Broz in the memory of the Serbs can be seen on the main Belgrade street that used to be known as *Marshal Tito*. Its new name is that of *Serbian Rulers*, but on one building's entrance the old name is still preserved.

Recent opinion polls have shown public attitudes toward the late leader to be quite positive. Two years ago, Tito was chosen Croat of the century, ahead of Nicola Tesla. He was chosen to be the most influential Slovenian and one of the most important Serbian personalities – though, ironically, this time behind Nicola Tesla.

As part of *Yugonostalgia*, Tito became a part of popular culture and business. Bars would use Tito symbols. Tito symbols could be seen as modern graffiti and anti-war symbols on the remaining walls of a house destroyed during the war in the Bosnian town of Mostar¹⁶⁰ as well as in tattoo form on a young lady's chest on the cover of Slovenia's *Mladost* (Youth) magazine.

This may give an indication as to the secret of the success of the Broz image. He actually looks quite modern. His glittering appearance can fit any context. He could be a millionaire in Texas or California, or an ex-communist turned banker from the primitive accumulation of the 1990s. Tito also appears as a sympathetic old tourist in party mood. And it is for this reason that Josip Broz could be placed in a collage as a kind of businessman or at least a well-to-do German pensioner taking a picture of the sexy Slovenian “superstar” Natalija Verboten,¹⁶¹ and an Internet site tells us that, according to astrological data, the Marshal and the pop star are a perfect match.¹⁶²

Tito's native village of Kumrovcets in Croatia is a tourist destination. For the local inhabitants Tito is a legend and also a successful business story. Last year the village was visited by more than 30,000 tourists. However, at the end of the same year the monument to Tito was mysteriously blown up. The right-wing Croatian Government condemned this violent act as a “barbarity”. The reaction would have been quite different at the beginning of the 1990s.

In many ways, the Romanian case was different from that of Yugoslavia. There has been no gradual reassessment of the dictator's

record. If in Yugoslavia the political elite had not clearly expressed its attitude towards Tito clearly, in Romania the execution of the ruling couple sent more than a clear message: *Conducatorul* became *Impușcatul* (the shot one).¹⁶³

After 1989 Ceausescu was compared with Nero, Ivan the Terrible, Stalin, and Hitler. The dead idol was described as the “Dracula of the Carpathians” and a “Romanian Idi-Amin”.¹⁶⁴ In fact, over “The Impaler” Romanians preferred Caligula.¹⁶⁵ This sounded attractive to a number of foreign experts as well,¹⁶⁶ but on the whole “Westerners” became more addicted to representations of the late Dictator as Dracula’s heir.¹⁶⁷ Thus it is possible that the most brilliant research into the Dracula myth also grasps the popular notion. While mentioning that the Romanian “official Communist party historians” portrayed Vlad Tsepes as a national hero, rationalizing his supposed cruelties, the authors of *In Search of Dracula* tell their readers that:

None exhibited that hero-worshiping attitude more than the late dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, who, according to some authorities, shared many character traits with Dracula. Revolutionaries often caricatured him as a vampire with fangs.¹⁶⁸

The final line above indicates Romanian participation in the promotion of the Dracula-Ceausescu relationship.

The death of the Ceausescus was attributed to Dracula’s mysterious influence, which rumor claims guided the fugitives to Dracula’s capital, Tirgoviste, where they were “evidently seeking solace and support”.¹⁶⁹ And did the desperate dictator then mutter Eminescu’s famous line: “Where are you Lord Tsepes, now that we need you?”¹⁷⁰

Any comparison with Prince Vlad or Count Dracula is obviously a negative representation. But like the alleged vampire Ceausescu is on the road to becoming a trademark. In 1992 Michael Jackson stayed in the former dictator’s summer palace in Snagov.¹⁷¹ In the spirit of “transition”, the late Communist leader was privatized and, as such, from worshiped national hero he became a private hero. The new era gave one more face to his omnipresent image. Ceausescu is a character in vampire fiction and thus provides tired writers with new plots. The anthology *The Ultimate Dracula* appeared in 1992 and the tale “All Dracula’s Children” for the first time combined a Romanian background with the horrors of death and Ceausescu.¹⁷² In the same year another

anthology was released with a quite ordinary title *Dracula: Prince of Darkness*. The Romanian setting is mixed with the old Dracula's theme and that of Ceausescu as a new "special guest." The curious reader discovers "that the vampire Dracula actually inhabited Ceausescu's body since 1944. Suddenly the vampire rises from its coffin to attack Payne [the main character, a "Western" screenwriter], who flees. But Dracula-Ceausescu pursues Payne and tears out his throat. The police are baffled by the murder and cannot figure out the mysterious note left by Payne, with an actual quotation from Ceausescu "A man like me comes along only every five hundred years!"¹⁷³

In 1999 the vampire business inspired Tomas M. Sipos to write *Vampire Nation*. On the cover the Order of Lenin is depicted, one of the highest Soviet distinctions. Blood runs from the golden Lenin's mouth. This bloody image does not suggest the actual setting, but reviews show that this book is a "horror satire about communist vampires in Ceausescu's Romania". The plot was "inspired by Sipos's visits to relatives in Cold War Transylvania."¹⁷⁴

In the same year Mr. Sipos wrote his book the Romanian *National Institute for the Study of Opinion and Marketing* released the results of a poll in which 1,200 individuals from all over the country were asked to choose "the most important historical personalities to have influenced the destiny of Romania for the better". This resulted in the following "top ten" list, in order of descending popularity: Alexandru Ioan Cuza (24.6%), Michael the Brave (17.7%), Stephen the Great (13.4%), Nicolae Ceausescu (10.3%); Michael I (5.2%), Vlad Tsepes (4.1%), Nicolae Iorga (3.1%), Carol I (3.1%), Nicolae Titulescu (2.3%), and Ion Antonescu (2.2%).¹⁷⁵

November 1999 saw the announcement of the results of a survey according to which 22% of Romanians declared Ceausescu to have been the best Romanian leader of the 20th century. He was followed by Ion Iliescu with 9%, King Michael with 4%, and the then president, Emil Constantinescu, with 3%. The worst Romanian leader was again judged to be Ceausescu, again with 22%, with Constantinescu coming in second place, followed by Ion Iliescu in third.¹⁷⁶

These results show that despite all the hardships of the 1980s, Romania is also part of Eastern Europe's communist nostalgia. "Nothing personal just business" could be heard from characters in American movies. As in Yugoslavia, a composite of nostalgia and business was to appear. Dinel

Staicu, the sponsor of the *Universitatea Craiova* football team, built the so-called *Hotel Restaurant RSP*, and of course the late dictator is an important feature of this semi-hotel, semi-museum. In the open air, Ceausescu's bust forms part of a row of works beginning with Amza Pellea,¹⁷⁷ followed by Vlad Tsepes showing his just sable, Michael the Brave, who has prepared his *bozdugan* for the enemy, Brancoveanu, Iorga, and Marshal Antonescu ordering a crossing over the river Prut. There is also a church on whose walls we see the images Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu as martyrs beneath a depiction of the Last Supper and with the inscription: "Elena and Nicolae Ceausescu in front of those who killed them: a place for prayer and eternal gratitude for those who come to pay tribute to the memory of the heroes of the Romanian nation of whom we beg forgiveness for their shameful and unjust sentence."¹⁷⁸ In this way, the traditional and historical faces of Ceausescu have remained. He is no longer an interpreter of Marxism-Leninism or the party leader; he is now perceived as an important symbol of the past, part of the historical chain of national heroes, a man of the people (Amza Pellea also deserves his place as an actor of the people), martyr. In some respects he is also part of an eclectic ideology that combines *Ceausism* with admiration for "peasant roots, nationalism, and Christian fundamentalism", as Iaromira Popovici has put it.¹⁷⁹ To this I would add only the anti-Russian sentiments.

In the hotel-museum/museum-hotel Ceausescu's "multilateral" image is presented on Bucharest's artistic stage at *Teatrul mic* as the main character in the play *A day in the life of Nicolae Ceausescu*.¹⁸⁰

The increased interest shown for the executed leader is possibly a marker of relief. When commenting at the presentation of Mihaela Ceausescu's book about her famous uncle, Ion Cristoiu suggested that 10-15 years ago such a mass-attendance event would not have been possible, or at least would have been met by shouts from the audience of "Down with Ceausescu!" ("Maybe now they will shout 'Up with Ceausescu!'" someone joked at the time). But, in Cristoiu's opinion, most of those who attended the presentation were not *Ceausescunostalgics*; rather they came because were interested in a political personality who was a part of history. Cristoiu proposes that this interest in Ceausescu's personality is a sign of normalization.¹⁸¹

Nevertheless, due to the mistaken and outdated state and party policy of the 1980s, Ceausescu's image has remained much more negative than that of Tito in the former Yugoslavia. Could this still change?

Lucian Boia gave a perfect example of the possibility for historical gymnastics with “Ioan Voda, who represents one of the most striking cases of ideological transfiguration. His position in the Moldavian chronicles was that of the “bad governor par excellence”. However, during the mid 1860s he was proclaimed to be a “a great administrator, a great politician, a great general” and a personality that had seen the need to reform society against the dominant class taking into account the interest of the majority.¹⁸² Is it then possible that, after some centuries go by, a similar interpretation of Ceausescu could appear, produced by a speculative reader of the past?

As you may well know, one of the most distinguished saviors of the world, “Bond, James Bond”, only lives twice. I will bring this paper to a close with a question. How many lives do Tito and Ceausescu have?¹⁸³

NOTES

- ¹ In a biography dedicated to one of the greatest Bulgarian illusionists, Astor, one paragraph, which depicts his experience in Belgrade in the mid 1960s, is called "Luxury. Beauties. Abroad. All this only in Belgrade." The illusionist was impressed by the western cars, neon lights and that nearly everywhere there were portraits of Josip Broz. But it was the Yugoslav capital's nightlife, the pretty girls, and not the cult of the leader, that were best remembered by the Bulgarian artist. GOZES, I., *Astor. Gospodaryat na magiyata*, Magicheska kashta Astor, Sofia [n.y], p. 54-61.
- ² Because of this, Romania, and especially her leader, offered a quite convenient image for neighboring socialist leaders. The gap between foreign and internal policy could be useful – "Look at him, he is playing with the Americans, but his people are starving. Is this what you want?" Speaking of Bulgaria, as far as I can remember, it was not a problem to tell tales about Ceausescu. I also don't think it was very dangerous to make fun of Zhivkov, though this occurred far less.
- ³ During the last presidential campaign in Romania, the current president, Mr. Traian Basescu, used a poster depicting his rival candidate, the former Prime Minister Adrian Nastase, and the then president Ion Iliescu as the useless helmsmen of the sinking PSD-PUR (the coalition dominated by the Romanian Social Democrat Party) ship. In the background could be seen a rather ghostly looking Nicolae Ceausescu, though in fact it is Mr. Basescu's nickname, "The Captain", due to his naval career. A petty observer might point out that Ceausescu was praised in nautical terms as *carmaciul* (the helmsman).
- ⁴ KULJIĆ, T., "Tito u novom srpskom poredkom sećanja", in *Sociologija*, No. 2, 2003, p. 66.
- ⁵ The program proposes to replace Dej by Den, Dee, Dew, Jed or Deem; Zhivkov could be corrected by Zhukov and it would be acceptable to insert instead of Hohxa Hoax, Hoaxer, Hoaxed, Hoxie and Hoo-ha.
- ⁶ Zhivkov offered a rather different interpretation. For details see his memoirs ZHIVKOV, T., *Memoari*, SIV-Abagar, Sofia, V, Tarnovo, 1997.
- ⁷ Her "yugosmile" can be seen on a picture of the funeral of the Yugoslav President of the Federal Executive Council Djemal Bijedic in 1977. See *Iljistrovana Politika*, No. 11, 1977.
- ⁸ Especially in the 1950s when she was very attractive. Looking at the pictures from the visit of the Greek royal couple in September 1955 to Belgrade one is fascinated by Jovanka's splendid image. See *VLASTITO iskustvo, past-present*, ed. Radonja Leposavic. Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, pp. 184, 186, 187, 194.
- ⁹ For a less symbolic and more reasonable explanation see DJILAS, M., *Obshtuvane s Tito*, Hristo Botev, Sofia, 1991, pp.118-128.

- ¹⁰ Member of the Political Executive Committee of CC (1974-1989); member of the Permanent Bureau of the Political Executive Committee (1977-1989) and First Deputy Prime minister (1980-1989). *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989*. Dicționar, Editură Enciclopedică, București, 2004, p. 138.
- ¹¹ GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 109.
- ¹² OLTEANU, C. L., E.Gheoana, V.Gheoana, *Femeile în România comunistă. Studii de istorie socială*, Politeia, SNSPA, 2003, pp. 31-62.
- ¹³ See BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001 (First edition in Romanian *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*, HUMANITAS, București, 1997); also MISHKOVA, D., *Prisposobyavane na svobodata: Modernost i legitimnost v Serbia i Romania prez XIX vek*, Paradigma, Sofia, 1999.
- ¹⁴ The process of scapegoating was conducted not in the New Testament meaning as the gospel of John describes Jesus as the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei) on whom guilt and repentance were consciously transferred and the burden of the guilt is willingly accepted, but in the Old Testament sense as it had been shown in the Book of Leviathans when describing the Day of Atonement: the Lord tells Moses to make Aaron “come into the holy place: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering... Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself and for his house... And when he has made an act of atoning, for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of Israel, and send him away into the wilderness... The goat shall bear all their iniquities upon him to a solitary land...”
- ¹⁵ KULJIĆ, T., “Tito u novom srpskom poredkom sećanja”, in *Sociologija*, No. 2, 2003, p. 72.
- ¹⁶ VLAHOVIĆ, D., S. Kačarević., *Blago i rasko ? Josipa i Jovanke*, Beograd, 1990. *Rasipni ? tvo i zloupotrebe Josipa i Jovanke: Nepoznato o Brozovim*, Beograd.
- ¹⁷ See for example SIMIĆ, P., *Tito agent Kominterne*, Beograd, 1990.
- ¹⁸ Accusations and theories of that kind could be seen as a synthesized mode in the work of the lawyer TODOROVIĆ, M. *Hoh?tapler*, Narodna knjiga -Alfa, 2003.
- ¹⁹ MICU, C., “Între Țepeș și Caligula: Fiul lui Dracula”, in *Jurnalul Național/ Ediție de colecție*, 24.01.2005, p. 20.
- ²⁰ Just a note: Gheorghe Hagi in his turn was proclaimed as “the Genius of the Carpathians”.
- ²¹ MICU, C., “Între Țepeș și Caligula: Fiul lui Dracula”, in *Jurnalul Național/ Ediție de colecție*, 24.01.2005, p. 20.

- 22 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito-nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička Misao*, No. 1, 1995, p. 53.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 24 A popular hero who had led a revolt of Croatian peasants in 1573. One of the first Croatian films directed by Aca Binicki is called *Matija Gubec* (1917). The 32nd Yugoslav partisan division was called *Matija Gubec*. In 1971-1973 the sculptor Antun Augustinčić (1900-1979) made the Monument of the Peasant Rebellion and Matija Gubec. The same sculptor was also responsible for most famous Tito monument in Kumrovcu in 1948 and again the monument of the Marshal in Velenje, Slovenia in 1977 (on the occasion of Tito's 85th birthday). It is not unusual that the same artist in 1935 erected the Monument to King Alexander in Varazdin (demolished in 1945), the Monument to King Peter and King Alexander (1937), Skopje, Macedonia (demolished in the course of World War II) and another monument to King Alexander (1940), Sombor (demolished and re-melted in the course of Second World War). See <http://www.mdc.hr/augustincic/eng/augustincic/spomenici.html>
- 25 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito-nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička Misao*, No. 1, 1995, p. 54.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 27 Christenings, baptisms.
- 28 *Scrisori, invitații la oficierea acordării numelui noilor născuți și căsătoriilor adresate de cetățeni conducerii partidului și personal lui Nicolae Ceaușescu-secretar general al P. C. R.*, Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (ANIC), fond C. C. al P.C.R., Cancelarie, dosar nr. 183/1966, f.103; *Scrisori, invitații referate, certificate de naștere adresate lui Nicolae Ceaușescu-secretar general al P.C.R.. privind acordarea numelor noilor născuți și oficierea căsătoriilor și mulțumiri adresate de către cetățeni din țară*, ANIC, fond C. C. al P.C.R., Cancelarie, dosar nr. 188/1966; *Scrisorii- invitații la oficierea acordării numelui noilor născuți, căsătoriilor și mulțumiri adresate de cetățeni lui Nicolae Ceaușescu.. 1 ianuarie-31 decembrie 1967*, ANIC, fond C. C. al P.C.R., Cancelarie, dosar No. 199/ 1967, f. 324; *Scrisorii- invitații la oficierea acordării numelui noilor născuți, căsătoriilor și mulțumiri adresate de cetățeni lui Nicolae Ceaușescu.. 1 ianuarie-31 decembrie 1967*, ANIC, fond C. C. al P.C.R., Cancelarie, dosar No. 200/ 1967, f.271; *Scrisori, invitații adresate tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, privind acordarea numelor noilor născuți, și oficierea căsătoriilor. 1 ianuarie-31 decembrie 1968*, ANIC, fond C. C. al P.C.R., Cancelarie, dosar No. 240/ 1968, f.316
- 29 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, pp.190-1.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p.198.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 193-94.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p.192.

- 33 PAVICEVIĆ, M., "Himna Kralja Nikoli I", 1910, quoted in ANDRIJAŠEVIĆ, Ž. M., "Istorijske paralele: Kralj Nikola. Jedan za sve", in *Monitor*, 27.12.2002-3.01.2003, p. 18. For more details on Nicola's cult see ANDRIJAŠEVIĆ, Ž. M., "Politička osnova vladarskog kulta knjaza Nikole krajem 19. i početkom 20. vijeka", in *Istorijski zapisi*, No. 1-2, 2002, pp.91-112.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 36 The old Montenegrin capital.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 18. In fact, Nicola experienced some trouble after giving Montenegro a constitution in 1905. The problems were mainly with the educated in Belgrade Montenegrin Youth, which wasn't a typical representative of the Montenegrin society at the beginning of the 20th century.
- 40 DEDIJER, V., *Veliki buntovnik Milovan Đilas-prolozi za biografiju*, Kultura, Beograd, 1991, p. 235. Because of this phenomenon there existed the expression in Ex-Yugoslavia "From Cetinje to Dedinje" (Cetinje was the old Montenegrin capital and Dedinje was the Belgrade residential area where Tito lived).
- 41 SUBOTIĆ, D., "Kralj Petar I Karađorđević i institucija ustavne (parlamentarne) monarhije u Srbije (1904-1914)", *Srpska politička misao*, 1/1995, p. 16.
- 42 PETRANOVIĆ, D., *Kralj Petar Karađorđević i Regent Aleksandar. Događaji iz prošlosti i sadašnjosti*, Beograd, 1921, p. 60.
- 43 BANAC, L., *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins History, Politics*, Ithaca & London, 1984, p. 143.
- 44 LALKOV, M., "Tsar Boris III, kral Aleksandar Karadjordjevic-dve realnosti, dva mita", in *Predci i predtechi. Mitove i utopii na Balkanite*, Blagoevgrad, 1997, p. 313.
- 45 LALKOV, M., "Tsar Boris III, kral Aleksandar Karadjordjevic-dve realnosti, dva mita", in *Predci i predtechi. Mitove i utopii na Balkanite*, Blagoevgrad, 1997, p. 313.
- 46 Elder brother, uncle, good man.
- 47 SHEMYAKIN, A. L., "Nikola Pashich", in *Vaprosiij istorii*, No., 2, 2002, p. 80.
- 48 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 189.
- 49 VERZEA, M., "Numele lui Carol al II-lea inspirat de Dimitrie Sturdza", in *Historia*, No., 38, februarie 2005, p. 53.
- 50 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 201.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 189.
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 202.

- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 204.
- 54 See *1 Decembrie 1918 în imagini. Alba Iulia. București*, Editura Fundației PRO, s.a, s.l.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 68-71.
- 56 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 203.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 204.
- 58 Boris III was glorified as “the first citizen”, “supreme leader and creator of new Bulgaria”, “the most powerful engine in the rise of our fatherland”, “the dearest leader of the people”, “great personality”, “wise state leader”, etc. POPPETROV, N., “Obrazat na tsar Boris III v dnevniya red na balgarskoto obshtestvo-1918-1943”, in *Istorigheski pregled*, No. 1-2, 2002, pp. 64-65.
- 59 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 205.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 205.
- 61 See *Discursuri culturale ale M.S. Regelui Carol II, 1930-1936*, 1936.
- 62 See *Cuvântările regelui Carol II. 1930-1940*, 1936.
- 63 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 206.
- 64 See *1 Decembrie 1918 în imagini. Alba Iulia. București*, Editura Fundației PRO, s.a, s.l.
- 65 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 208-210.
- 66 For details regarding “Zbor” see KULJIĆ, T., “Srpski fa?izam i sociologija”, in *Sociologija*, No. 2, 1972.
- 67 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 213
- 68 COTRUȘ, A., “Corabia verde” [The Green Ship], quoted in *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu și Epoca sa*, Crestomație de Gabriel Stănescu, Crterion Publishing, s.l., 2001, pp. 53-54.
- 69 “Noul Întrupat”, *Buna Vestire*, 8.11.1940. Cited after BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 213.
- 70 Quoted in *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu și Epoca sa*, Crestomație de Gabriel Stănescu, Crterion Publishing, s.l., 2001.
- 71 CIOROIANU, A., “Art, Propagande et Politique: Le cas de Nicolae Ceausescu”, in *New Europe College Yearbook 2000-2001*, p. 149.
- 72 Possibly the best work on the relations of communism with the tradition is BERDYAEV, N., *Izvori i smisal na ruskiya comunizam*, Hristo Botev, Sofia, 1994.
- 73 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 190.

- 74 Nikolai Chernishevski (1828-1889) Russian revolutionary, literary critic,
utopian philosopher.
- 75 Sergey Nachaev (1847-1882) Russian revolutionary terrorist.
- 76 Peter Tkachov (1844-1886) Russian revolutionary terrorist.
- 77 Andrei Zhelyabov (1851-1881) was one of the leaders of the revolutionary
organization "Narodna volya". He organized the attempt on Tsar Alexander's
life and was executed.
- 78 BERDYEV, N., *Izvori i smisal na ruskiya comunizam*, Hristo Botev, Sofia,
1994, pp. 126-127.
- 79 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito - nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička
Misao*, No. 1, 1995, pp. 55-56.
- 80 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European
University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 191.
- 81 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito-nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička
Misao*, No. 1, 1995, p. 63.
- 82 For the instructive photo see [de.geocities.com/opimznanarod/slike/fotografije/
004.jpg](http://de.geocities.com/opimznanarod/slike/fotografije/004.jpg).
- 83 KULJIĆ, Todor, *Tito: Sociološkoistorijska studija*, Institut za Politička studije,
Beograd, 1998, p. 47.
- 84 *Titova štafeta mladosti*, Beograd 1985.
- 85 I was kindly allowed to take a picture of this gift by the staff of the Museum of
Yugoslav History.
- 86 MOCNIK R., "Tito: Pop-Romantic Mastery", in *VLASTITO iskustvo,
past-present*, ed. Radonja Lepasovic, Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 207.
- 87 MARKOVIĆ, I., *Sretno dijete*, Zagreb, 2004, quoted after *VLASTITO iskustvo,
past-present*, ed. Radonja Lepasovic, Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 35.
- 88 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito-nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička
Misao*, No. 1, 1995, s. 67. For the same conclusion about Lenin's "life after
death" see BURNS, J. M., *Leadership*, Harper & Row, New York, 1978, p.
248.
- 89 "Quotation from the official statement of the Presidency of the CC of LYC
and the Presidency of SFRY on the occasion of Josip Broz Tito's death", in
Titova štafeta mladosti, Beograd, 1985.
- 90 Now the name of the square is St. Sava.
- 91 Lennon was shot on December 8, 1980.
- 92 IRWIN, Ljubljana, "Poster Scandal", in *VLASTITO iskustvo, past-present*,
Ed. Radonja Lepasovic. Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 174.
- 93 ČOLOVIĆ, I., "On Models and Batons", in *VLASTITO iskustvo, past-present*,
ed. Radonja Lepasovic. Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 155.
- 94 "I'm not afraid of the generals, I find colonels more frightening. interview
with Zarko Cigoja conducted in the Museum of Yugoslav History", Belgrade,
April 2002, in: *VLASTITO iskustvo, past-present*, ed. Radonja Lepasovic,
Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 178.

- 95 IVKOV, M. A., *Antologija srpske udvoričke poezije (Od Dosteja do naših dana)*, Panpublik, Beograd, 1988, p. 83.
- 96 For different periodizations see FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p.120; FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado; CIOROIANU, A., *Ce Ceausescu qui hante les Roumains: Le mithe, les representations et le culte du Dirigeant dans la Roumanie communiste*, Curtea Veche Publishing, București, 2004.
- 97 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p. 120.
- 98 The Prime Minister of the State (1961-1973) and a prominent almost mythical Romanian communist.
- 99 *Ibid.*, p.122.
- 100 *Ibid.*, p.123.
- 101 "Cu tovarășii Ion Niculi și Gheoghe Stere despre Primul Prezidiu al Republicii", in *Magazin Istoric*, anul I, Nr. 9, dec. 1967, 35.
- 102 CIOROIANU, A., "Art, Propagande et Politique: Le cas de Nicolae Ceausescu", in *New Europe College Yearbook 2000-2001*, p. 151.
- 103 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p.124.
- 104 Here I attach two of the most striking examples. The grammar is that of the senders.
- Letter from "poet necolificot Mihoil Godru" to Nicolae Ceausescu August 23 1968:
(Diclorație)
- Domnule Nicoloe Ceușescu, Știu co sînteți îngrijorot pentru foftul co ormotele celor cinci țori socialiste cori ou ocupote pe republico Sociolisto Cehoslovacă prin surprindere,
n -om respectot legea pocii
și nici frica
semnelor Dumnezeesti.
dor Stefan Cel More o reușit cu credințo
sfînto-la toote rozboole și dvs.
Veți reuși doco veți oveo credințo.
Il-om credințo toto
Pe -om un ochi scos din ormoto
Dor în caz co e razboi,
Vod cu unul co cu doi
Și mo duc pe front lo lupto
Cu credinto meo ceo sfînto

So-mi scot țoro din nevoi,
Pe la porei, și de a boi.

Referindu-mo lo situoțieo din Republico Socialisto Cehoslovoco, propun so întoriți, granițile în Jurul Romaniei, și so concentroți so instruți, indeferent fete, femeii foro copii, cît și oameni, s-om boeți de lo 18 ani, so romîne numoi ce nu poate curoți cortofi co cozormo.

trebie sa fim goto
pentru opororea patriei,
și m-oi mult nimic.

Domnule Nicolae Ceaușescu,

Doco nu oveți ormoment,

s-au populația suficiento, cereți ojutor de lo țorile copitoliste numoi so nu pierdem Tora. Lo închiere vo doresc încorojore, și încorojore so – mi trimateți:

Poet necolificot

Domnului Nicolae Ceausescu

Mihoil Codru.

Prim secretar al PCR

Com. Gromiști

1968, 23 August

Jud. Suciova

ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R, Cancelarie, dosar nr. 231/1968, f. 14

Excelenței-Sale

Domnului Nicolae Ceaușescu

Președinte al Consiliului de Stat al Romîniei

[...]

În concluzie forma și condițiile vieții contemporane impune ca toți cetățenii țării să-și exprima liber părerile politice, despre realism si nerealism în toate domeniile de creație artistică inclusiv publicistica; o politică de democrație reală, autentică cu toate libertile ce decura din această democrație ar aduce după sine o mai mare încredere în regimul comunist de la putere din partea unei majorități a națiunii romane, care astăzi privește sceptică la toate promisiunile sterile ale excelenței sale domnului Ceausescu, dar speră odată îndeptati din partid Bodnaras, Chivu Stica și Gh. Apostol, excelențe-sa domnul Nicolae Ceaușescu va putea traduce în viața națiunii ceea are în gând, suflet și inima: o Dacie Felix, o Romînie Mare și moderna cu prestigiu și demnitate, suveran și independentă, bastion al pacii și progresului în acest continent european, care a jucat dar care urmează să joace un rol preponderent în viitor mult mai mare ca întrecut în această parte a lumii contemporane.

[...]

Excelenta [used 16 times in the letter]

Natiunea romînă urează excelenței-voastre sănătate deplină și succes în înfăptuirea unei politici creatoare, care să facă posibilă afirmarea energiilor romînești spre binele patriei și al întregii națiuni, pînă atunci poporul este disciplinat și cu o maturitate politica bine conturată așteaptă.

[...]

Excelență,

În lumina celor expuse mai sus desi aceste teze sunt cunoscute de ideologii, conducatorii politici ai României de azi și mai presus de toți excelența-voastră domnule Ceaușescu, sper că Excelența-voastră veți alege o politică realistă pe plan intern și extern în interesele națiunii Române și nu al partidului din care face-ți parte, abilitatea excelenței-voastre va face ca interesele partidului să corespundă total cu interesele națiunii române, acest act istoric vă va rezerva locul de cinste printre eroii neamului: Decebal, Ștefan cel Mare, Mihai Viteazul, Horia, Cloșca, Crisan, Avram Iancu, Tudor Vladimirescu, Brătienii, Maniu, Antonescu, Pătrășcanu, Ceaușescu.

Ioan I. Stanciu, Oradea, str. Delavrancea 31, Județul Bihor.

ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R., dosar nr., 231/ 1968, f. 85, 88, 89-90

105 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, pp. 125-126.

106 NEAGOE, S., "13 Septembrie în dealul spirii", in *Magazin Istoric*, anul II, nr. 9, sept. 1968, p. 13.

107 *Magazin Istoric*, anul II, nr. 9, noiembrie 1968.

108 See *Magazin Istoric*, anul III, nr. 5 (26), mai 1969, pp. 37-43.

109 CIOROIANU, A., "Art, Propagande et Politique: Le cas de Nicolae Ceausescu", in *New Europe College Yearbook 2000-2001*, p. 158.

110 *Ibid.*, p. 152.

111 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

112 Traditional dance.

113 "Nicolae Ceaușescu: 55 ani de viață și patru decenii de activitate revoluționară", in *Magazin Istoric*, anul VII, nr. 2 (71), febr. 1973, pp. 3-15.

114 *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

115 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p. 129.

116 PETRESCU, D., The Collapse of Communism in Hungary and Romania: A Comparative Analysis, in *Studia Politica*, Vol. III, No. 1, 2003, p. 166.

117 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p. 131.

118 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceausescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 17-18.

119 CIOROIANU, A., "Art, Propagande et Politique: Le cas de Nicolae Ceausescu", in *New Europe College Yearbook 2000-2001*, p. 159.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

- 121 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, pp. 32.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.
- 123 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p. 134.
- 124 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 30.
- 125 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 126 FISCHER, M. E., "Idol or Leader? The origins and future of the Ceausescu Cult" in *Romania in the 1980s*, ed. by Daniel N. Nelson, Westview Press / Boulder, Colorado, p. 118.
- 127 CIOROIANU, A., "Art, Propagande et Politique: Le cas de Nicolae Ceausescu", in *New Europe College Yearbook 2000 – 2001*, p. 168.
- 128 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 38.
- 129 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 130 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 131 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 221.
- 132 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 44-45.
- 133 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- 134 *Sovetskoye dekorativnoye iskusstvo. Materialiy i Dokumentiy 1917-1932. Agitacionno-massovoe iskusstvo. Oformleniye prazdnenstv. Tabliciy, Isskustvo*, Moskva, 1984, p. 6.
- 135 GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 58.
- 136 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- 137 *Ibid.*, p. 73.
- 138 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 139 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- 140 *Ibid.*, p. 77.
- 141 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 142 BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 222.
- 143 Here the word means master, householder, like the Russian *Hazyain*, as Stalin was called by his called by his associates. Above I mention that Tito was also called in this way.

- 144 PLEȘU, A., *Obscenitatea publică*, Humanitas, București, 2004, p. 76.
145 *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
146 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
147 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
148 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
149 *Ibid.*, 2004, p. 84.
150 *Ibid.*, p. 89.
151 *Ibid.*, p. 90.
152 KULJIĆ, T., "Tito-nacrt sociološkoistorijskog istraivanja", in *Srpska Politička Misao*, No. 1, 1995, p. 74.
153 UGRESIC, D., *Kultura na lazhata. Apoliticheski eseta*, Stigmati, Sofia, 1999,
154 p. 54.
155 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
156 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
157 *Ibid.*, p. 66.
158 *Ibid.*, p. 67. One of Tito's nicknames was *The Old man*.
159 Leoncio is the antagonist from the famous Brazilian soap opera *Izaura the Slave girl*.
160 *Kurir*, No. 306, 1, 2-3 maj 2004, br. 306, god. II.
161 *Balkanite+*, No. 24, Feb. 2004, p. 2.
162 www.camiola.org/theglory/2004/08/natalija_verbot.html
www.geocities.com/s000ngs/verboten_fun.htm. The stars show that Broz is
"impatient, sentimental, an idealistic explorer of far-off ideas and schemes,
however very resolute, determined, and forceful, with an unstoppable ability
to turn his dream into reality."
163 *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 292 Issue 1, Jul/Aug2003, p. 13.
164 KUNZE, T., *Nicolae Ceaușescu: O biografie*, Editura Vremea, București, 2002,
165 p. 7.
166 "Ceaușescu și Caligula", in *Journalul Național/ Ediție de colecție*, p. 20.
167 See BROWN, J. F., "Preface" in GABANYI, A. U., *The Ceaușescu Cult: Propaganda and Power Policy in Communist Romania*, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 13.
168 MICU, C., "Între Țepeș și Caligula: Fiul lui Dracula", in *Jurnalul Național/ Ediție de colecție*, 24.01.2005, p. 20.
169 McNELLY, Raymond T., Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires Completely Revised*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, New York, pp. 4-5.
170 *Ibid.*, pp. 6.
171 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
172 *Ibid.*, p. 103.
173 *Ibid.*, p. 168.
174 *Ibid.*, p. 168.
www.comunistvampires.com

- ¹⁷⁵ BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p. 17.
- ¹⁷⁶ KUNZE, T., *Nicolae Ceaușescu: O biografie*, Editura Vremea, București, 2002, p. 8.
- ¹⁷⁷ Amza Pellea (1931-1983) a popular Romanian actor.
- ¹⁷⁸ POPOVICI, I., "Fantoma la televizor", in *Dilema Veche*, No. 53, 21-27.01.2005, p. 22.
- ¹⁷⁹ POPOVICI, I., "Fantoma la televizor", in *Dilema Veche*, No. 53, 21-27.01.2005, p. 22.
- ¹⁸⁰ Learn more from www.teatrulmic.ro/spectacole/o_zi_din_viata.htm
- ¹⁸¹ CRISTOIU, I., "Semnul normalității", in *Monitorul de Vrancea*, luni, 6 dec. 2004, Internet Edition, www.monitorulvn.ro/index.php?&omega=articol&id=7269
- ¹⁸² BOIA, L., *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2001, p.197
- ¹⁸³ KRSIC, D., "Work in Progress", in *VLASTITO iskustvo, past-present*, ed. Radonja Leposavic. Samizdat, Beograd, 2004, p. 29.