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Romanian Students’ Reactions  
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Soviet Intervention, 1956–1958

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## Abstract

The events of 1956 (the Twentieth CPSU Congress, Khrushchev's Secret Speech, and the Hungarian revolution) had a strong impact on the evolution of the Romanian communist regime, paving the way for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania in 1958, the stricter policy toward the Transylvanian Hungarians, and Romania's greater independence from the USSR in the 1960s. Students complained about their living and studying conditions long before the outbreak of the Hungarian crisis. Ethnic Hungarians from Transylvania listened closely to Budapest radio stations, and Romanian students in Budapest in the summer of 1956 were especially affected by the ferment of ideas there. For the Gheorghiu-Dej regime, the Hungarian revolution and Soviet invasion provided a useful excuse to end the destalinization process and crack the whip conclusively—carrying out mass arrests, but also granting short-term concessions to ethnic minorities and workers.

Of all segments of the Romanian population, university students were the most discontented. Drawing on archival documents, published memoirs, and recent Romanian scholarship, this paper will analyze and compare the student unrest in Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, and Timișoara. Due to a combination of psychological, logistical, and historical factors, students in the latter city were especially vocal and organized. On October 30 over 2,000 students from the Polytechnic Institute in Timișoara met with party officials, demanding changes in living and study conditions, as well as the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania. Another 800-1,000 students convened on October 31, calling for the release of students who were arrested the day before. Obvious discrepancies between the Romanian and Hungarian media sparked their curiosity about events in Hungary, while their cramped dorm rooms actually facilitated student meetings. In the Banat region itself, a tradition of anti-communist protest had prevailed since 1945. Although arrested *en masse*, these students set a vital precedent—especially for the Timișoarans who launched the Romanian Revolution thirty-three years later.

Bilingual comics of the Republic of Moldova find differences between the Russian and Romanian languages grist for the humor mill. In one joke, an effervescent Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev invites the Romanian communist leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej over to the Kremlin one day for the Romanian national dish, *mămăligă* (polenta). “Yesh!” he says, beaming. Indignant, Gheorghiu-Dej gets up from the table and walks out the door. In Russian, “Yesh!” means “Eat!” but in Romanian it is the imperative form of the verb *a ieși*, meaning to go out or exit.

Although widely considered to be one of Khrushchev’s most loyal allies in 1956, Dej secretly loathed the mercurial Soviet leader. He stalled even longer than Matyás Rákosi in Hungary (March 12–13, 1956) and Walter Ulbricht in East Germany (March 4, 24–30, 1956) in reporting thoroughly on the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) of February 1956.<sup>1</sup> On March 23, Dej dodged the Secret Speech altogether and relayed to the leadership of the Romanian Workers Party (Partidul Muncitoresc Român, or PMR) only the main conclusions of the congress: “peaceful coexistence” and the avoidability of a third world war. Dej stated that Stalin had besmirched his reputation by indulging in the “cult of personality” and permitting the secret police to abuse its power. (Only at a meeting with *apparatchiks* of the Bucharest region in Floreasca Hall on March 30 did Dej present a short version of Khrushchev’s speech, forbidding the audience to take notes.) A full debate on the “teachings” of the Twentieth CPSU Congress did not take place until almost a year and a half later, at the plena of June 28–29 and July 1–3, 1957, when Miron Constantinescu was expelled from the Politburo and Iosif Chișinevschi was expelled from both the Politburo and Secretariat. Both men were expelled from the Central Committee three years later, on June 25, 1960.<sup>2</sup>

The events of 1956—the Secret Speech, de-Stalinization, and the Hungarian revolt, as well as its suppression—had a strong impact on the evolution of the Romanian communist regime, paving the way for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania in 1958, the stricter policy toward Transylvanian Hungarians, and Bucharest’s greater independence from Moscow thereafter. Students griped about their living and studying conditions long before the outbreak of the Hungarian crisis. Ethnic Hungarians from Transylvania listened closely to Budapest radio stations, and those studying in Budapest in the summer of 1956 were especially affected by the ferment of ideas there. For the Dej regime, the Hungarian revolution and Soviet invasion provided a splendid excuse to end Khrushchev’s zany experiment in de-Stalinization and crack the whip conclusively—carrying out mass arrests, but also granting short-term concessions to the workers and to Hungarian, German, and Serbian minorities.

Of all segments of the Romanian population, university students were the most restless. In their “informational bulletins,” secret police (Securitate) officers frequently

warned about widespread “demonstrations” (*manifestarile*) that allegedly occurred.<sup>3</sup> However, these were mostly isolated, anonymous incidents that were economically, not politically, motivated, such as rumors, graffiti, vandalism, arson, and physical beatings—a far cry from the types of organized civil disobedience possible in Western democracies, such as the events in 1968 in Berkeley, California or the demonstrations in Kent, Ohio and Paris. No organized, nationwide revolutionary movement was possible in Dej’s Romania. The PMR leadership took comprehensive, draconian measures to prevent a Hungarian-style revolt. Put metaphorically, the “spillover” or steam from the Hungarian uprising evaporated on the Romanian stove.

Drawing on archival documents, published memoirs, and recent Romanian scholarship, this essay will analyze and compare the student unrest in four main Romanian cities with universities (Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, and Timișoara).<sup>4</sup> The students in Timișoara came the closest, on October 30, 1956, to organizing a mass demonstration due to a combination of psychological, logistical, and historical factors. Although arrested *en masse*, they set a vital precedent—especially for the Timișoarans, who launched the Romanian Revolution thirty-three years later.

## The Background

### Romania’s Uniqueness

Compared to those of other communist bloc states, Romania’s reactions to the events in Hungary are unique in many ways. Romania’s complex minority problem, together with its historically disputed, 448-kilometer border with Hungary, gave the Romanian communist authorities a great stake in the crisis. Romania possesses the largest community of ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary, in comparison to Slovakia, Subcarpathian Ukraine, Serbia (Vojvodina), Austria (Burgenland), Croatia (Baranya), and Slovenia (Mura region). Of the 14 percent of the Romanian population that was not ethnic Romanian in 1956, 9.1 percent were ethnic Hungarians. They were largely Roman Catholic or Calvinist, not Orthodox like most Romanians of the eastern Wallachian and Moldavian regions. Over two hundred fifty thousand Hungarians lived in the Oradea (Nagyvárad) region just eight kilometers from the Hungarian border.<sup>5</sup> Other Hungarians lived in key cities of Transylvania (Erdély in Hungarian, Ardeal in Romanian).

Apart from security-related fears, the PMR leadership had a great incentive to cooperate with Khrushchev in the repression of Hungary given the fact that, earlier, on November 7, 1955—long before the Hungarian revolution erupted—Khrushchev had promised to withdraw Soviet troops from Romania. The Soviet leader delivered the verbal pledge to Emil Bodnăraș at a reception in the Kremlin following the anniversary

celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution in Moscow.<sup>6</sup> Thus, unlike other communist states with Soviet troops (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and East Germany), the Dej regime was able to use its cooperation during the Hungarian revolt as an additional catalyst for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania in 1958.<sup>7</sup> The Romanian leaders offered to participate militarily in the intervention, although Khrushchev rejected the proposal. They also allowed the use of Romanian territory, widened roads, helped rebuild the Hungarian security police (ÁVH), sent to Budapest undercover Securitate agents of Hungarian descent to gather intelligence, and stalled Romanian passenger trains to make way for Soviet trains.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Romanian leaders volunteered to hold deposed Hungarian leader Imre Nagy on their territory.

Romania had not experienced any major internal revolts like the Berlin uprising of June 1953 or the Poznań revolt of June 1956. Dej had already bested in 1952 the “Comintern-internationalist” group led by Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca and weathered the challenges of PMR Politburo members Miron Constantinescu and Iosif Chişinevschi in March–April, 1956, thus achieving a complete closure of ranks by October 1956. Internal repression in Romania also differed from that in other East European communist states in that two separate waves of mass arrests occurred, one in the late fall of 1956 and a more punitive one in 1958 to coincide with the Soviet troop pullout. According to Ion Varlam, a first-year student of architecture in 1956, “There were over 5,000 victims in November–December and a similar number in June 1958.”<sup>9</sup> Newly-declassified Securitate records indicate that the number of informers in major cities was greatly increased after the Hungarian revolt, resulting in an increase in arrests and expulsions.<sup>10</sup> A new decree was issued on July 17, 1958, that contained two catchall articles (211 and 212) extending the death penalty to anyone who “caused disorder in the state or endangered its security.”<sup>11</sup>

## **Political Context**

Given the conservative nature of the Romanian political system and the difficulty in acquiring objective information, it is amazing that students could express dissent in any organized way. The one-party regime under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, from 1952 to 1965, ranked as one of the most totalitarian of all communist bloc countries. Everything centered around the PMR. Party cells and committees abounded in every institution and enterprise; Securitate agents and informers were ubiquitous. Even Romanian students studying in Moscow in the 1950s felt stigmatized when they returned home, as if tainted by Khrushchev’s anti-Stalinist “liberalism.” According to Victor Frunză, a professor of journalism in Bucharest who in 1956 was a third-year student in the faculty of journalism at Moscow State University (MGU), having a degree from a Soviet institute of higher education in 1956–1958 (except from those for ballet or

music), was like having “a stone on one’s ankle” (*o piatră la gleznă*), especially if the student returned home with a Russian spouse, as 90 percent of them did.<sup>12</sup> Dej, who had spent more years in jail (ten) than school (seven), perceived Soviet universities to be “hotbeds of intellectual dissidence.” Frunză himself studied under the future dissident Andrei Sinyavsky, then a thirty-one-year-old professor of literature at MGU who was himself profoundly affected by the Soviet crackdown on Hungary.

In contrast to the chain of portentous events in other communist bloc countries, the Dej regime kept party debates unpublicized and castigated still other party stalwarts calling for change. On June 16–17, 1956, ten days after Hungarian reformist intellectuals in Budapest celebrated the sixtieth birthday of the former prime minister Imre Nagy (June 6), and ten days before both the stormy debate of the Petőfi Circle on press freedom (June 27), attended by at least five thousand people, and the Polish workers’ revolt in Poznań (June 28), the Dej leadership purged a group of old communist veterans, the “Eremia group.” For allegedly opposing the party’s economic and membership policies, Dej expelled General Ion Eremia from the party and censured his “accomplices”—Victor Dușa, Constantin Agiu, Dumitru Petrescu, and others.

As early as the summer of 1956, the PMR leaders monitored events in Hungary closely, dispatching Securitate officers to Budapest to gather intelligence, as mentioned above. They kept close tabs on the activities of graduate students returning from Budapest after summer research trips. Securitate informers regularly harassed citizens who listened to foreign radio stations. Nevertheless, the Bucharest leaders knew they could not stop the large community of ethnic Hungarians from listening to Budapest radio stations or Radio Free Europe altogether. Thus they took a proactive approach, broadcasting full blast their own propagandistic version of the events, a measure which, as we shall see, backfired in the case of Timișoara. As early as June 22, they convened a Politburo meeting, inviting all the first secretaries of the regional committees, as well as other members of the Central Committee (CC) and ministries. A resolution was issued, with detailed instructions on how to strengthen “political-educative work” among Romanian students.<sup>13</sup> Intensive meetings continued throughout the fall of 1956. Political activists at the regional, municipal, and county level typed up actual “scripts” with well-developed themes to guide party instructors. On October 24 the Politburo decreed that all instructors be specifically warned not to discuss “the events in Hungary in close relation to those in Poland,” perhaps fearing that citizens might draw parallels between reformers Imre Nagy and Władysław Gomułka and construe both as cases of successful defiance of Moscow.<sup>14</sup>

The mass of Romanian workers and peasants, relying entirely on the Romanian media, would not discern the anti-Soviet, nationalist essence of the crisis in Hungary. Objective news about events within Romania itself was hard enough to come by, since



all foreign journalists and diplomats were forbidden to travel to regions like Transylvania. Most people first heard the news by Romanian radio on the evening of October 24 and in the party newspaper *Scânteia* the following morning. For perhaps the first time in its history, the newspaper sold out—due not to its veracity, but to Romanians’ keen interest in the topic. Readers were informed that foreign reactionary forces had incited some Hungarians to counterrevolution, and in response, the Hungarian communist party leadership had requested Soviet military assistance.<sup>15</sup>

However, enough information was leaking into Romania from Budapest radio, Radio Free Europe, and other foreign radio stations both to foster distrust in the official Romanian press (especially among students and the intelligentsia) and to fuel wild rumors. Frunză and his classmates in Moscow had access to foreign radio stations, as well as newspapers that were not for sale in Romania and whose perspectives differed somewhat from *Pravda*, the official Soviet newspaper: *Borba* and *Politika* from Yugoslavia, as well as leftist newspapers from capitalist countries like Great Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium.<sup>16</sup> Although political instructors from the Romanian Embassy held regular seminars of political indoctrination just for the Romanian students in the Russian capital, the students could spread candid information on Hungary every time they called or wrote home.

Several other students could tell their friends and family in person. They were deported home in disgrace to have “discussions” with the Securitate after making audacious statements at a large assembly for the Romanian community in Moscow in December 1956. One student from Bacău whose last name was Sporicî, said: “Enough with the Party’s fist in our mouth! Let’s end the leading role of the Party!” Viorica Valtrich, of Hungarian origin, said, “*Scânteia* lies like hell!” Dumitru Balan, a third-year student of philology, attacked the dogma of socialist realism. Laurențiu Duță, a fourth-year student of journalism, and two history students from Iași, Morărașu and Karețki, told classmates at MGU that the government had collapsed in Budapest. All those who had spoken, except Balan, were immediately expelled from the Romanian educational system, never permitted to finish their studies. Even Soviet professors from the faculty of journalism at MGU, including the dean, tried to intercede on behalf of the young Romanian students, sending a letter of protest to the Romanian Embassy, to no avail. Back in Romania a few years later, unemployed, Duță nearly committed suicide by hurling himself on the railroad tracks.<sup>17</sup>

## **A Note on Sources, Historiography, and Methodology**

Much excellent research has been carried out by Ioana Boca, Zoltán Tófalvi, Ildikó Lipcsey, Mihai Retegan, Mihaela Sitariu, Stefano Bottoni, Dennis Deletant, Vladimir Tismaneanu, and others. However, a comparative survey of Romanians’

reactions to the Hungarian events remains to be written.<sup>18</sup> To be sure, the events in different cities are not always comparable. Some meetings involved the intelligentsia more than the students. At other times no specific dates are given for actual meetings, only references made to certain memoranda that emerged from such meetings. Few sources exist on the topic in English.<sup>19</sup> Romanian archives were closed until the 1990s, and some document collections (e.g., Securitate records for Timișoara and the former Hungarian Autonomous Region) remain classified.<sup>20</sup>

Some authors have perhaps underestimated the scale of arrests—not hundreds, but thousands of students and professors were arrested or imprisoned.<sup>21</sup> In Timișoara alone, after the protest meetings of October 30 and 31, 1956, as many as four thousand students were arrested, and although some were later released, many languished in prison until 1964.<sup>22</sup> Upon release from prison, many were then taken to Bărăgan (a hot, Romanian equivalent of Siberia in the southeastern corner of the country), without advanced warning, for additional years of hard labor. In all likelihood, the highest number of arrests and executions took place in the Hungarian Autonomous Region or Province (Magyar Autonóm Tartomány or MAT) in the center of Romania.<sup>23</sup> Between 1957 and 1960, twenty-five hundred people were arrested and imprisoned on charges of solidarity with the Hungarian revolution and plotting armed revolt against the state. Generally, the ethnic Hungarians received much longer prison sentences than the Romanians. For example, for laying wreaths on the monument at Fehéregyháza (Albești) honoring the Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi and other soldiers who died in battle on July 31, 1849, five Hungarians received sentences of twenty-five years, and twenty-two others received sentences of twenty years of forced labor.<sup>24</sup>

A good deal of primary source material has become available in recent years, including stenograms of Politburo meetings, “informative bulletins” and other reports by the Securitate, telegrams sent by Romanian diplomats, and memoirs of students who survived their prison experiences.<sup>25</sup> Useful documentary collections and studies have been published in Hungarian as well.<sup>26</sup> However, this primary material should be treated with caution. Apart from the liberal use of the word “manifestation” to refer to all kinds of acts, it should be remembered that the Securitate personnel had a special set of motives that distorted their reports in various ways. The Hungarian crisis and brewing unrest in Romania motivated Securitate officers both to escape the fate of the ÁVH agents in Hungary and to restore the reputation of their own institution, the past abuses of which had been used by Constantinescu and Chișinevschi as a political weapon against Dej during the plenum of March 23–25, 1956 and Politburo meetings of April 3, 4, 6, and 12, 1956. “The Securitate is like a wild horse which we didn’t ride well,” Ceaușescu also said at the time.<sup>27</sup> It was to the Securitate’s advantage to magnify supposed threats to the regime in order to justify its own existence. Agents seized upon

this opportunity to crack down on all “suspicious elements,” guilty or innocent: clergy members, former political prisoners, and former “legionaries” (i.e., members of the Iron Guard, an ultranationalist, anti-Semitic, fascist movement active from 1927 until the 1940s). Many of these individuals were arrested by sheer provocation. “Come with us for ten minutes to make a statement, and we’ll bring you right back,” a Securitate officer assured former inmate Alexandru Sălca. “You said that in 1948 and I came back six years later,” Sălca retorted. (He was nevertheless arrested again on November 15, 1956, for failing to report a train-stopping plot in Braşov to the authorities.)<sup>28</sup> Memoirs reveal how often Romanian students were arrested simply for asking about the events in Hungary, or asking when a rally was scheduled, or, like Sălca, failing to inform the Securitate about a planned event.

As for the planned measures for preventing a Hungarian-style revolt in Romania outlined in the PMR Politburo stenograms, the researcher should also read these with caution, since they do not always indicate which measures were actually carried out.

Of the living eyewitnesses, some prefer to forget their prison ordeals completely, while others write sketchy, subjective memoirs which often cannot be corroborated because their fellow students are now dead. In writing from memory alone, they sometimes confuse the dates of events as well. In their efforts to correct the long-held view that Romanians—in contrast to the “bolder” Hungarians and Poles—did not criticize the communist regime, these survivors now tend to fall prey to a certain postcommunist bias, magnifying the scale of student protests in 1956 as well as the partisan resistance in the Southern Carpathian Mountains. However, historians generally do not dispute what the British scholar, Dennis Deletant, calls a “tendency toward hyperbole”:

It is as though some authors feel embarrassment at the fact that challenges to Communist authority in Romania under Dej were not as widespread or as serious as in some of the other Soviet satellites and seek to overcompensate by exaggerating the scale of resistance in Romania. The publication of memoir literature and the opening of the Securitate files have dispelled the general impression that there was no opposition to Communist rule, but at the same time, they have revealed the true dimension of resistance. It was not widespread . . . and never threatened to overthrow the regime.<sup>29</sup>

Former prisoners perhaps have a more fervent need: to portray the events in Romania in 1956–1958 as the “beginning of the end” of communist rule in Romania. If they can show how their protests in 1956 contributed to the collapse of communism in 1989, they can alleviate somewhat the pain of spending the best years of their youth in miserable prisons and labor camps and losing their friends. Yet, had someone interviewed these survivors during the Ceauşescu regime in the 1970s, they probably would have expressed regret for their naïveté and viewed the 1956 events

as the “end of the beginning.” Prison made them realists. It is doubtful that they said, “Yes, that was worth it. My suffering was not in vain. I know I’ve sown the seeds for Romania’s future independence!”<sup>30</sup>

Some authors reason to a false conclusion, claiming that the scale and vehemence of the Romanian government’s repression of the students in Timișoara “proves” the political significance of the unrest there.<sup>31</sup> But other factors, such as the Securitate’s paranoia and Dej’s determination to intimidate the students in Timiosara, should also be considered. Moreover, Romanian and Transylvanian Hungarian historians sometimes historians present different analyses, with each emphasizing the fate of those citizens who share their own ethnicity.

## Case Studies

### Bucharest

As early as the summer of 1956, Romanian students traveling to Hungary were affected by the revolutionary atmosphere there. Likewise, Hungarian students visiting Romania transmitted their excitement.<sup>32</sup> In response, the Dej regime launched the program to intensify “political-educative work” among students, as decreed on June 22. Nevertheless, student dissatisfaction grew. One of the first stormy student meetings that can be documented took place in Bucharest, the capital city nicknamed in the interwar period as the “Paris of the East” or “Little Paris” (Micul Paris). Located in the southeast of the country on the banks of the Dâmbovița River, the city is reputed to have acquired its name from its legendary founder, the shepherd Bucur.<sup>33</sup> In 1956 Bucharest had 1,177,661 citizens, at least 11,626 (about 1 percent) of whom were ethnic Hungarians.<sup>34</sup>

The meeting was held at C. I. Parhon University of Bucharest on September 27 from 4:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to elect leaders to the Union of Working Youth (Uninea Tineretului Muncitoresc or UTM) organization among the fourth-year students in the faculty of philology.<sup>35</sup> Conspicuously absent from the students’ comments at this meeting, which long predated the first Hungarian student revolt (October 23), were larger political questions or demands concerning Romanian-Soviet relations, such as the withdrawal of Soviet troops; they mostly concerned living conditions and basic human rights. As the Politburo members remarked later, “We should emphasize that the meeting was held in an atmosphere of economic and material demands [*atmosferă de revendicări economice-materiale*].”<sup>36</sup> One of the students’ most vociferous grievances concerned scholarships. Romanian communist leaders had reneged on their promise to increase the amount and number of scholarships, which were chronically low and doled out only to the children of peasants who earned below a certain amount. In early September the Central Committee passed

a resolution to raise scholarships by 27.3 percent. Simultaneously, they raised the parents' salaries, thus reducing the number of students eligible for scholarships. As Securitate agents reported, "If up to now a father had had an income of 650 lei, his son would have been eligible for a scholarship. Now that the father gets 750 lei, his son is no longer eligible for a scholarship."<sup>37</sup>

Thus, students who had received scholarships the previous year were suddenly deprived of one in the 1956–1957 academic year. To add insult to injury, for those students whose parents' wages had been increased, exceeding the ceiling by 20–30 lei, meal tickets for the cafeteria that they had received when classes started were withdrawn, and they lost the right to live in the hostels. PMR officials identified fourth-year students in the faculty of philology—Nicolae Mihai, Georgeta Naidin, Marin Perșinaru, and Gheorghe Zarafu—who criticized the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance especially harshly about the scholarship issue.<sup>38</sup> As children of peasants, they felt they deserved scholarships since the peasants' living standard was much lower than depicted both by the press and in the socialist political economy courses taught in the faculty of philology. The poor peasants "would live better working for the kulaks than for their own farms impoverished by taxes and dues," Marin Perșinaru is reported as having said.<sup>39</sup>

The rudeness of university personnel exacerbated the students' fury. Naidin said, "I agree completely with comrade Mihai Nicolae. . . . I'm angry that I don't have a scholarship just because I exceed the limit by 35 lei. . . . When I went to see comrade Rășpop in the social services department, he snapped: 'Nothing can be done, comrade, absolutely nothing. Get it out of your head that the limit will be raised.'"<sup>40</sup>

Besides the low scholarships, Bucharest university students carped about crowded dorms and bad food. "In the newspapers they praise the 'Carpați' dormitory as a model dormitory with excellent facilities," Georgeta Naidin griped. "In reality, eight to ten girls sleep in one room. I myself sleep on the floor on a bare mattress."<sup>41</sup> Another student pointed out that *mămăligă* was served three times a week instead of bread. (This was a problem, since two students often shared one meal ticket; they took turns skipping meals and spiriting bread from the cafeteria. *Mămăligă* was infinitely harder to smuggle).<sup>42</sup> In his retrospective report of January 1957, a Hungarian diplomat, Kálmán Kádár, referred to an incident whereby students from Parhon University in a gesture of protest offered their lentil dish to pedestrians on the street.<sup>43</sup>

In terms of academics, students were indignant about the "abstract manner" in which political economy was taught, glossing over the plight of Romanian peasants. They requested that more courses on Romanian literature be added and that courses on Marxism-Leninism and the Russian language be eliminated from the curriculum

altogether. They complained that courses on Russian literature were taught too superficially and asked for more in-depth courses on Soviet writers like Maxim Gorky.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, although the Alexandru Jar case disheartened the Romanian intelligentsia, it only riled the students more. Dej and the party ideologue Leonte Răutu (Lev Oigenstein) had cleverly coaxed the dull, arch-Stalinist writer into complaining about the impact of the cult of personality on the intelligentsia in an interview for *Gazeta Literară* (April 12), knowing full well that this would induce the more talented intellectuals to dismiss the ludicrous episode as “no more than an internal party affair.”<sup>45</sup> Predictably, Jar was expelled from the Writers’ Union in May 1956.<sup>46</sup> The writer “leads a double life [*viața dublă*]—one that is split between his private thoughts and public persona,” Jar groused in a speech at a party meeting in the Stalin region of Bucharest in May.<sup>47</sup> Throughout 1957 and early 1958, press articles and official spokesmen expressed the regime’s dissatisfaction with the work of Romanian intellectuals, accusing them of “bourgeois nationalism,” “seeking refuge in the past,” and “loss of contact with the people.”<sup>48</sup>

But the Jar case piqued the interest of Bucharest students, who also felt the disparity between their public and private lives. “It is interesting that Alexandru Jar had been considered a poor writer until he was excluded from the party,” party officials noted, “but that, after his expulsion, some students showed a special interest in his literary works.”<sup>49</sup> One student, Nicolae Jura, reportedly said: “We don’t understand and almost all of us don’t agree with the way the writer Alexandru Jar was treated. I think Jar, who wrote *La Borna 203* [At the Milestone 203] and whose activity as a resistance fighter we all know, does not deserve to have his books removed from public libraries. Why all this drama? [*Ce-i cu teatrul ăsta?*]. People who before praised his books, are today labeling them as ‘schematic’ and ‘formalist.’ We have our own opinion. Jar remains a valuable writer.”<sup>50</sup> Another student, Marin Perșinaru, compared the Jewish Jar (his real was Alexandru Avram) to Julius Fučík, the Czechoslovak journalist and communist who was tortured and murdered by the Nazis in the fall of 1943 and became a national martyr.<sup>51</sup>

This meeting on September 27 greatly worried the PMR leaders because of the heated emotions of students when they spoke about the lies in the official press. They also noted that, of the twenty-two UTM members who spoke critically at the meeting, only one of them, Gheorghe Zarafu, recanted, thus signifying that the party’s program of political indoctrination among the youth had ultimately failed.<sup>52</sup> More seriously, students were calling for a strike and comparing themselves unfavorably to the youth from Czechoslovakia and other socialist countries. Students like Sergiu Șerban and Sorin Titel urged their classmates to go on strike, the latter suggesting that a demonstration be staged with posters quoting the Politburo’s pledges to improve students’ living condi-

tions.<sup>53</sup> Sorin and Nicolae said, “Romanian students are cowards . . . we don’t follow the example of the students from Czechoslovakia who demonstrated for their rights.”<sup>54</sup>

Romanian leaders were not the only ones who were worried. Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev himself, in a speech to the Komsomol organization in Moscow on November 8, 1956, alluded to the “unhealthy moods” among the students “in one of the educational institutes in Romania.”<sup>55</sup> At one point, Khrushchev and his colleagues actually thought the Dej regime might assist Imre Nagy against Moscow. “They told us that, at one point, when things got started in Hungary and Poland, that they were worried that we might help the Hungarians,” Chivu Stoica, a member of the PMR Politburo, told Dej and his colleagues on December 5, 1956, upon his return from Moscow where he signed a declaration approving the Soviet invasion of Hungary.<sup>56</sup> Romanian exile broadcasters for Radio Free Europe in New York also proliferated the idea that Moscow feared the spread of the Hungarian unrest to Romania and started rumors of Romanian students’ deportation to the Soviet Union. On December 27, 1956, Alexandru Bunescu told listeners:

I am certain . . . that the dictators in Moscow were also afraid of an extension of the Hungarian despair into Romania. Despite the strictness of censorship, despite the terror and the chasing away of the foreign correspondents, the news about the students’ manifestations in Bucharest, Cluj and Iași in favor of the Hungarian revolutionaries and against the Soviet occupation got through to us here [New York], [as well as] news about Romanian youngsters being deported to Russia and the riots of the working classes.<sup>57</sup>

The Dej administration indeed took prompt and efficient countermeasures toward the students of Bucharest, first sticks and then carrots. The Politburo met on October 4 at 12 p.m., and Gheorghe Apostol presided in Dej’s absence. Nicolae Ceaușescu was instructed to report on “demonstrations at the faculty of philology, C. I. Parhon University in Bucharest.” The Politburo decided to “advise” the V. I. Lenin District Committee Bureau of the UTM to expel Mihai Nicolae, Sorin Titel, Șerban Sergiu, and Georgeta Naidin from the UTM and to “propose” to the university staff that Marin Perșinaru, Sorin Titel, and Șerban Sergiu be expelled without the right to join another faculty. A “serious warning” was also issued to the entire primary party organization of the fourth-year students, threatening punishment if the students did not immediately “cease their grave deviations” (*lichida gravele abateri*).<sup>58</sup>

Like most politicians typically refusing to take responsibility, PMR leaders blamed their subordinates—officials in primary party organizations, UTM bodies, and the university staff—for failing to “enlighten” students politically. They were chagrined to learn that, of over one hundred UTM members (*utemiști*) present at the September 27 meeting, none spoke out against the students’ “hostile outburst,” not

even UTM leaders.<sup>59</sup> They decided to invalidate the elections to the UTM among the fourth-year students in the philology department, since the meeting had not been “conducted according to the UTM Central Committee’s instructions.”<sup>60</sup> A new UTM meeting would be held with these students to: (1) “clarify the problems raised”; (2) “unmask the disruptive elements” (*să fie demascate elementele dizolvante*); and (3) inflict the “severest of penalties.”<sup>61</sup> Politburo members Nicolae Ceaușescu and Miron Contantinescu were instructed to form a committee that would periodically screen students in hostels and cafeterias to spot the troublemakers. Since the party officials believed “distorted press materials” had poisoned students’ minds, they also ordered the editorial boards of three newspapers—*Informația Bucureștiului*, *Scânteia tineretului*, and *Roumanie d’aujourd’hui*—to punish those responsible for printing “inaccuracies.”<sup>62</sup> (Only later in the October 16 and 17 issues of 1957 did the main communist daily *Scânteia* mention the disaffection among students—especially Hungarians—denouncing their “nationalism” and “bourgeois chauvinism”).<sup>63</sup>

The PMR leadership also decided to increase the number of “politically enlightening” meetings, which were fanatically enumerated in documents, including the number of attendees and number of speakers. By October 29 in the city of Bucharest alone, for example, some 959 meetings were held in party organizations and 105 meetings in UTM organizations.<sup>64</sup>

The PMR leadership then took measures to conciliate the students of Parhon University. Regarding eligibility for scholarships, they raised the earnings ceiling from 700 to 800 lei for children of employed parents, and from 2,000 to 2,200 lei, “subject to tax,” for children of unemployed parents. They also increased the total number of scholarships in the 1956–1957 academic year to 28,000.<sup>65</sup> They decided to give places in the hostel gratis to those students who met all the conditions for scholarships with the exception that their parents’ salaries only slightly exceeded the 800 lei ceiling, and to grant them free meals in the cafeteria as well.<sup>66</sup> The PMR officials also commissioned a study to determine whether or not to set up a meritorious scholarship, based on a contest, for the 1957–1958 school year.

Throughout October and early November, students in Bucharest tried to express their dissatisfaction with the regime, but every attempt to organize a mass rally was thwarted by Securitate informers and officers. As mentioned earlier, news of the first student revolt in Budapest on October 23 was broadcast on Romanian radio on the evening of October 24 and appeared in *Scânteia* on October 25. Although Yugoslav newspapers like *Politika* and *Borba* were unavailable, many Romanians had heard alternative news via the Yugoslav radio in Novi Sad or Budapest radio stations and now avidly read their own newspaper “between the lines.”



Two Bucharest students in particular, Teodor Lupaş and Ştefan Negrea, who were fifth-year students in the faculty of philology, discussed with classmates (Vasile Rebreanu, Ovidiu Vişan, and Corneliu Tatic Ilişiu) what they had heard on Budapest radio. They organized a UTM meeting in the Matei Basarab hostel, where they drafted a letter addressed to the newspaper *Scânteia Tineretului*. In the letter they demanded from the press precise information about the events in Hungary. Lupaş, Negrea, and the others were swiftly arrested and imprisoned by October 27. An Italian language professor, Dumitru Panaitescu, was imprisoned for refusing to betray his students. Although Negrea received a two-year sentence, and Lupaş a three-year sentence, the others were released shortly after their arrest. Negrea, a sensitive poet, hanged himself in the Gherla prison on November 3, 1958—just three months before his scheduled release—after prolonged physical torture and moral traumatization. Lupaş reportedly was sent to a labor camp in Bărăgan and released in 1964. He resumed his studies in philology and became a teacher at a provincial school.<sup>67</sup> The PMR Politburo callously resolved to underscore these students' fates in mass meetings in all major university cities, to deter further student unrest.<sup>68</sup>

On October 26, Securitate agents were reporting that they had found leaflets on various Bucharest streets (Spătarului, Calea Moşilor, Armenească, Vasile Conta, Ştirbei Vodă) and in Cişmigiu Park urging Romanians to express solidarity with the Hungarian revolutionaries and fight for a free Romania. Slogans were found on the doors of public toilets: “Down with the communists” (*jos comuniştii*), “long live the National Peasants' Party,” and “we want King Michael.”<sup>69</sup> But the PMR regime quickly arrested those responsible for the leaflets or anyone they chose to suspect (former convicts, Iron Guard members, clergy members, etc). For example, Alexandru Bulai, a philosophy student in Bucharest, along with his dormitory roommates—Aurel Lupu (who was blind), Dumitru Arvat, Remus Resiga, and Ion Zane—were sentenced to between three years of prison and eighteen years of forced labor for writing and distributing around forty manifestos cleverly converting Marxist slogans and depicting Khrushchev as the “Great Puppeteer” whose marionettes were the political leaders of satellite countries.<sup>70</sup> This was all the more embarrassing, since the period from October 7 to November 7, 1956, had been proclaimed the official “Romanian-Soviet Month of Friendship.” Numerous festive parties and publications were organized by ARLUS (Asociația Româna pentru Legături cu Uniunea Sovietică, or Romanian Association for Ties with the Soviet Union) to celebrate the occasion.<sup>71</sup>

On October 29, another written manifesto summoned people to a nonviolent rally on November 5 in front of the university on Bălcescu Boulevard, near the statue of Mihai Viteazul.<sup>72</sup> The Securitate prevented the rally by surrounding the area with tanks and arresting organizers like Alexandru Ivasiuc and Mihai Victor Serdaru

(faculty of medicine) and Marcel Petrișor (Polytechnic Institute in Bucharest), who were then sentenced to between one and five years in prison.<sup>73</sup> The slogans planned for this rally, following the final Soviet intervention in Hungary of November 4, now concerned more serious political demands, such as the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania.<sup>74</sup> Also on October 29 railroad workers in the Grivița workshops in Bucharest organized a protest meeting seeking better working conditions. The PMR government promptly announced that same day that the minimum wage would be raised and free travel would be granted to all railroad workers.<sup>75</sup> They also increased the supply of basic food staples like potatoes in Bucharest markets.<sup>76</sup>

Meanwhile, Securitate agents continued to report other “manifestations” in the region of Bucharest in late October. At the Brancovenesc Hospital, busts of Lenin and Stalin were found with their noses cut off.<sup>77</sup> A drunken peasant from the commune of Mitreni near Bucharest said: “Soon our people will come and scalp the communists [*În curând vor veni ai lor și vor lua pielea de pe comuniști*].” Another peasant from the commune of Cascioarele flogged the president of the agricultural associations (*întovărășirii*). Finally, a group of fifty to sixty peasants in the commune of Manastirea demanded that the local commune officials return their land.<sup>78</sup>

On November 4, half the students at the Polytechnic Institute in Bucharest skipped their classes in Marxism-Leninism.<sup>79</sup> Trucks full of armed soldiers surrounded academic buildings throughout the city, and massive arrests were carried out of all students suspected of involvement in the thwarted rally, including the future dissident leader Paul Goma, then a third-year student in the faculty of philology. Philosophy students Mihai Stere Derdena, Dan Onaca, and Constantin Dumitru were all arrested at this time, simply for sketching a reform program.<sup>80</sup> Some officers from the Military Academy in Bucharest were also jailed just for thinking about posting anti-Soviet leaflets—without actually doing this or organizing any plan to overthrow the communist establishment.<sup>81</sup> Students of both the humanities and sciences were arrested. In November, for example, arrests were carried out in the faculties of law (17), medicine (14), philology (10), philosophy (9), architecture (2), and journalism (1).<sup>82</sup>

Despite the dissatisfaction of the students, no major street demonstration involving thousands of people occurred in Bucharest in the fall of 1956. As the capital of the country where the entire PMR leadership was concentrated and where the General Command (*Comandamentul General*), an emergency crisis team with sweeping powers, was headquartered beginning on October 30, the students were simply monitored too closely. The odds were against them, especially after the Timișoara meetings of October 30–31 (described below), when the Politburo organized more precisely the “worker guards” (*gărzilor muncitorești*) in all enterprises with at least one hundred employees. Meanwhile, the Hungarian Embassy took extra precautions to keep Hun-

garian exchange students in Bucharest separate from Romanian students. In his report of January 14, 1957, one Hungarian diplomat, István Dobos, wrote: “After October 23, many Hungarians, stuck in Bucharest, visited our embassy. . . . I organized numerous meetings to avoid panic. . . . [T]ogether with Comrade Kádár we discussed the Hungarian events. Thanks to these discussions, our students remained calm, did not interrupt their studies, and stayed away from the movements emerging among the Romanian university students.”<sup>83</sup> Although anonymous leaflets were found in the Bucharest region calling for the overthrow of the communist regime, the students themselves were in most cases focused on economic issues. It is significant that the first animated meeting in Bucharest transpired on September 27, 1956, long before the first Hungarian student revolt of October 23. In other cases sincere communists (such as Teodor Lupaş) criticized the system merely in the interest of improving it.<sup>84</sup>

## Cluj-Napoca

Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár in Hungarian, Klausenburg in German) is the historical capital of Transylvania located in northwestern Romania; in 1956 it had a population of 154,723, or about 13 percent of Bucharest’s population. In contrast to Bucharest, Cluj contained a substantial number of ethnic Hungarians, including the Székely Hungarians.<sup>85</sup> Of the total population, Hungarians (74,155) and Romanians (74,033) each made up about 48 percent, while Germans comprised .6 percent (990), and Jews .2 percent (377).<sup>86</sup> Although the name of the city derives from the Latin words *castrum clus*, meaning “enclosed camp,” it was anything but insulated or cocooned from the revolutionary ferment in Hungary.<sup>87</sup> Given its large Hungarian population, one might have predicted a revolutionary uprising here, especially since in the fall of 1956 the Securitate’s regional division in Cluj had only seven informers to shadow nine thousand students and seven hundred professors.<sup>88</sup> “The Securitate bodies have very weak connections at Bolyai University,” Răutu (candidate member of the Politburo) and János (Ion) Fazekas (PMR CC Secretariat member) reported to the Politburo on December 5 after their fact-finding mission in Cluj (November 23–26). “There is no comrade aware of the problems of the Hungarian people in Cluj.”<sup>89</sup>

Indeed, as explained below, several “manifestations” did alarm officials, but each was promptly squelched. One cannot explain the ultimate absence of any violent revolts in Cluj without revisiting the earlier repression of the Hungarian intelligentsia in the city. The calibrated carrot-and-stick policies practiced since 1948 kept Hungarians constantly off balance. By 1956, Transylvanian Hungarian intellectuals and their children were on the whole too cowed to organize a mass movement in reaction to the Hungarian events.

A detailed appraisal of the complicated struggle between Romania and Hungary over Transylvania is outside the scope of this essay. Suffice it to say that much blood has been spilled on both sides as control over Transylvania passed among Hungarians, Romanians, Russians, and Austrians over time. In September 1944, the Russians took over the administration of Northern Transylvania primarily to stop the six-week killing spree of Hungarians by the National Peasant Party of Romania (the so-called Maniu Guards). Romanians, having regained northwestern Transylvania (43,492 square kilometers) from the Hungarians after the Treaty of Paris in 1947, were in a constant state of vigilance. Before 1948 any irredentist movements were blamed on Budapest's alleged efforts to fuel anti-Romanian sentiments among Transylvanian Hungarians in Romania through espionage and financial aid. Even after 1948, Romanian leaders remained suspicious. Romania's border with Hungary, not surprisingly, was heavily guarded by men recruited from outside the Carpathian region to ensure their loyalty.<sup>90</sup> Romanian leaders' apprehension is evident in the report of November 2, 1956, that Valter Roman, director of the Political Publishing Company (Editura Politică), and Aurel Mălnășan (deputy foreign minister) presented to the PMR Politburo after their fact-finding mission in Budapest, where they had been sent after Dej's return to Bucharest from Yugoslavia on October 28. "Even in this situation, when they have a counterrevolution over there, instead of saying: hold on tight to Transylvania, he [Kádár] said: grant autonomy to Transylvania," Roman bemoaned.<sup>91</sup>

It has long been a classic technique of Romanian policy to offer concessions to the minority nationalities in order to divide and circumvent them. In the first decades following the communist takeover in 1947–1948 in Romania, ethnic Hungarians had considerable freedom. It was to the Bucharest regime's advantage to coopt them, offering compromises to moderate political leaders in order to discredit their more radical colleagues. The Hungarian minority had its own political organization called the Hungarian Popular Union (Magyar Népi Szövetség). On paper, at least, Transylvanian Hungarians were supposed to have equal rights with Romanians. Prior to the Paris Peace Treaties (signed on February 10, 1947), when the Romanian government worried about a possible transfer of land to Hungary, a so-called Nationality Act no. 86 was issued in February 1945. According to article 4 of this decree, "Romanian citizens, regardless of nationality, language, and religion shall receive equal treatment, as guaranteed by law. Any restriction, direct or indirect, of a citizen's rights, as well as any direct or indirect privileges for citizens based on nationality, language, and religion . . . will be punishable by law."<sup>92</sup> This Nationality Act guaranteed the use of the mother tongue in the courts and in the administration, provided that at least 30 percent of the population belonged to the nationality group.

The Bucharest leadership implemented a stealthy carrot-and-stick approach toward the Hungarian minority over a prolonged period. One of the first steps in the repression, in 1948, was to purge all old teachers on the basis of the new Stalinist “Law concerning qualification, training, and stabilization [*stabilizarea*] of the teaching staff in the educational system.”<sup>93</sup> “Internal purifications [*purificări interne*]” of the party were also executed in 1948–1952 against influential representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in Transylvania, most notably Bishop Márton Áron in June 1949, of the Hungarian Popular Union in November 1949, and luminaries in the sciences and humanities such as Edgár Balogh,<sup>94</sup> Lajos Csögör,<sup>95</sup> Zsigmond Jakó,<sup>96</sup> József Venczel,<sup>97</sup> János Demeter,<sup>98</sup> and Lajos Jordáky.<sup>99</sup> On a single night, May 5–6, 1950, the Romanian security police arrested most of the twenty-four members of the Academia Româna (a national institution founded in 1866 consisting of five branches, modeled after L’Institut de France in Paris) and incarcerated them at the infamous prison in Sighetu Marmației in northwestern Romania.<sup>100</sup> Hungarian vocational schools in Cluj were being closed down in 1955. In the 1956–1957 school year the faculty of agronomy in Cluj, for example, which had a ninety-year-old tradition of teaching in Hungarian, had Hungarian-speaking students only in the third and fourth years.<sup>101</sup>

Some Hungarian intellectuals and students did begin to protest. In late September 1956, after spirited meetings—similar to the September 27 meeting in Bucharest—of the primary party organization of the Hungarian-language Bolyai University and of the primary party organization of the Cluj branch of the Writers’ Union, the Regional Party Organization of Cluj appointed three Hungarians to compose a memorandum “enumerating the anxieties [*frământările*] of the Hungarians in Romania,” such as constant accusations of “Hungarian nationalism,” sparse Hungarian-language periodicals, dwindling admissions of Hungarian students to Bolyai University, and the suspension of subjects taught in Hungarian. The Cluj party organization promptly sent the memorandum to the PMR Central Committee, which called it a “hostile act” [*acțiune dușmănoasă*].<sup>102</sup>

Alarmed by the memorandum, the Politburo at the September 18 session instructed a committee composed of Constantinescu, Fazekas, Pavel Țugui (head of the science and culture section of the PMR CC), Iosif Ardeleanu (director of the main department of the press), Zoltán Bihari (head of the publications office for the agitation and propaganda section in the CC), and others to go to Cluj, investigate the claims, and report their findings to the CC. The committee visited Bolyai University and various Hungarian high schools, and then met with Hungarian writers and students from Cluj and Târgu Mureș. Imre Juhász, a diplomat in the Hungarian Embassy in Bucharest, noted that all the writers signed up to speak and that each of their speeches had a “heated and accusatory tone.” He described this three-day meeting as “more powerful” than an earlier meeting

of Hungarian writers at the Writers' Congress in the Central Committee building in Bucharest.<sup>103</sup> Juhász also attributed the Transylvanian intellectuals' indignation in part to the article in the September 9 issue of *Szabad Nép* by the Hungarian journalist and literary critic Pál Pándi, in which Pándi stated that as long as the plight of Transylvanian Hungarians remained a taboo subject in Romania, it could not be resolved.<sup>104</sup>

Constantinescu's committee concluded that the claims were for the most part valid. He and Fazekas presented their findings at the PMR Politburo meeting of October 5, 1956, where the Central Committee decided to take a number of conciliatory measures toward the nationalities.<sup>105</sup> In published literature it is often stressed rather simplistically that in 1956 the Dej leadership cracked down harshly on ethnic Hungarians.<sup>106</sup> In fact, in the weeks and months leading up to the Hungarian revolt, numerous concessions were granted, albeit temporarily. In the final analysis, these served to weaken and divide ethnic Hungarians and prevent them from revolting against the regime. For every punitive measure, someone could point to an irenic one.

A plethora of measures were decided upon at both the September 18 and October 5 Politburo sessions. For example, in the Ministry of Culture, a deputy minister of Hungarian origin would be appointed, and a new post of general director would be established. The Pedagogical and Agronomical Institutes would be reestablished, where the language of instruction would be Hungarian.<sup>107</sup> The possibility would also be studied of creating within the Great National Assembly a permanent commission devoted to solving the problems that the "cohabiting nationalities" faced in Romania.<sup>108</sup> Another committee would be formed to study the feasibility of constructing a new wing to the building of Bolyai University and of building a Hungarian-language theater and opera in Cluj. During the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Romanian People's Republic, the art and literature of the cohabiting nationalities would be honored. Measures would be taken to celebrate the birthday of the Hungarian poet János Arany, to restore the János Arany Museum in Salonta near Oradea, as well as to restore the house where the Hungarian poet Endre Ady was born.<sup>109</sup> The Hungarian-language journal *Korunk* would be re-established. Likewise, one page in Romanian journals would "periodically" be devoted to issues concerning the literature of the nationalities. A historical analysis of the contemporary literature of the nationalities in Romania from August 23, 1944, to 1956 would be commissioned. A cycle of articles discussing "the nationality problem" would appear in *Scânteia* and other publications.<sup>110</sup>

In addition, a number of Hungarian scientists from Bolyai University in Cluj would be honored and admitted into the Romanian Academy of Sciences. The Party Control Commission considered the possibility of rehabilitating several authors and academicians: Edgár Balogh, János Demeter, Ludovic [Lajos] Takács, Gábor Gaál, and Sándor

Kacsó.<sup>111</sup> Shortly after their abovementioned fact-finding mission to Cluj, Răutu and Fazekas spoke to four of the men—Gaál died earlier in 1954—and welcomed them back into the party.<sup>112</sup> As early as May 1955 Bucharest leaders had wrestled with the idea of releasing Demeter and Jordáky. At a Politburo session on May 24, 1955, both Dej and Chisinevski concluded that Demeter was a “good Romanian patriot” for having helped to free communist prisoners. Anticipating a Soviet-Romanian offensive in Transylvania in 1944, the Gestapo had sought to evacuate to the Reich certain communist prisoners detained in Cluj. Demeter, a lawyer by training, pressed the local judges to release them instead, as a sign of his goodwill to the soon-to-come communist regime in Romania. As for Jordáky, Chişinevski admitted that he had been imprisoned on the basis of the Securitate’s interrogations alone—on the charge of espionage, not chauvinism—and that no real evidence existed to support the accusation. As Dej noted charitably, “Jordáky still wants Hungary to annex Northern Transylvania . . . but we have to reeducate him . . . to show him that we are building socialism there, which will lead to peace, and that one day the borders will not be where they are now.”<sup>113</sup>

However abundant and impressive these concessions sounded, many of them were superficial, easily reversible, palliatives that did not confer real political power on the Transylvanian Hungarians. Hungarian intellectuals pressed on. At a meeting on October 9, two Bolyai University professors, László Szabédi and Gyula Csehi, chastised László Bányai, the rector of the university, for having “blood on his hands” (*vér tapad a kézeihez*). Bányai had assisted in illegal arrests of innocent Hungarians in the 1940s and carried out the Romanians’ unjust national minorities’ policy, thus betraying the interests of ethnic Hungarians in Romania. Despite the regional delegate’s rebuke of Szabédi and Csehi for criticizing Bányai, the professors were elected leaders of the university’s primary party organization.<sup>114</sup>

The professors were bold in expressing their concerns in September, a month before the Hungarian revolt, but only the students of Cluj were courageous enough to hold an unauthorized meeting. On October 24 about three hundred students convened from the Ion Andreescu Institute of Fine Arts, as well as from both Bolyai and Babeş Universities, one of the first meetings directly influenced by the events in Hungary. The students had been planning such a meeting at least three days earlier, but decided on the timing—according to the rector of the Institute of Fine Arts—“exactly on the night when the events in Budapest started.” The demonstrations in Budapest on October 22 and 23 were broadcast on the radio. “Yesterday, before lunch, they listened to the Budapest radio,” the rector told Constantinescu and other party officials who gathered the following day to analyze the event. “I glanced at the faces of the listeners and all were clearly affected by what they had heard.”<sup>115</sup> One of the main organizers of the meeting, Imre Balázs, a sixth-year student of painting at the Institute of Fine

Arts, had just been in Budapest for a month and a half and had returned to Cluj three weeks earlier. The meeting lasted just two hours (8:20 to 10:30 p.m.). He gave a twenty-minute speech summarizing the students' demands.<sup>116</sup>

School officials, including the rector, were not invited, but they could tell that something was afoot. The rector recalled: "At 5:00 p.m., they were in a state of agitation. . . . By 7:00 p.m., numerous students from other faculties had gathered. I glanced up the street and saw groups of students coming toward the institute. I tried to talk to several of them, but they wouldn't tell me anything. . . . The hall was packed with students . . . including those of Hungarian origin."<sup>117</sup> When the rector asked Balázs why he had not been not invited, the latter explained that the meeting concerned pedagogical issues only. "Well, I am a pedagogue," the rector snapped. Balázs and his fellow students were inspired by the Hungarian students' earlier formation on October 16 of MEFESZ (Magyar Egyetemisták és Főiskolások Egységes Szövetsége or Union of Hungarian University and College Students) across the border in Szeged, Hungary. It was the first time an organization had established itself and even elected its own leaders without any meddling from the Hungarian communist party.

István Várhegyi, a twenty-four-year-old year student in the faculty of philology and history at Bolyai University, was also inspired by MEFESZ. On November 12, he and other students gathered to form a student association for their faculty. Várhegyi drafted a reform program, a so-called decision project (*proiect de hotărâre*). He and the other students of Cluj, in contrast to the students of Bucharest, called not only for a series of university reforms and the need to jettison dogmatic strictures, but also for university autonomy and the right to maintain ties with foreign students' associations like MEFESZ. Although Várhegyi's program discussed the rights of Transylvanian Hungarians, it did not analyze larger political issues like Romania's relations within the communist bloc or the country's unequal position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Ironically, his initiative was in response to the Romanian government's own desire to talk with students. "They wanted to talk to the youth," Várhegyi recalled, "so the irksome political situation would not turn into something akin to the events in Warsaw or Budapest. The problems of university students were spreading all the way from Leningrad to Budapest. The program of the students' association for university autonomy at Bolyai University—later called a counter-revolutionary action—was drafted merely as an answer to this official impulse."<sup>118</sup>

Bucharest tried to keep the October 24 and November 12 meetings secret, but to no avail. Constantinescu fulminated at the fact that "imperialist radio stations" had learned of the October 24 meeting.<sup>119</sup> Securitate agents in an October 29 report referred to an "attempt to organize a student meeting in Cluj," and noted with satisfaction that "the three organizers were arrested."<sup>120</sup> Although Transylvania was a "forbidden zone"



to all foreigners, even to the diplomatic corps of other communist bloc countries (as noted by the Hungarian diplomat Kálmán Kádár), Robert Thayer, the U.S. ambassador to Romania, had also heard of the meetings in Cluj.<sup>121</sup> He reported to Washington that students were “insisting not only on more cultural autonomy, but also [on] more political power for [the] large Hungarian population in Transylvania.”<sup>122</sup>

The students were expeditiously punished. Balász and Aristid V. Târnovan (a fourth-year student at the Fine Arts Institute) were arrested the same day as their meeting, October 24. Five more students in the faculty of philology and history at Bolyai University were arrested on November 17–18 and sentenced to between three and seven years in prison, including György Koczka, Kálmán Kelemen, Benedek Nagy, Éva Sárosy, and Várhegyi. Várhegyi was dismissed from the university and the UTM and sentenced to seven years in prison, accused *inter alia* of fraternizing with the “counterrevolutionary” Roman Catholic priest Lajos Erős and of refusing to sign a telegram drawn up by Professor Edgár Balogh denouncing the “counterrevolutionary events in Hungary.”<sup>123</sup> Officials of the Dej regime now rued Jordáky’s release from prison. “Professor Jordáky knew the text of the decision project of the student association in the faculty of philology,” Răutu and Fazekas reported on December 5. He has a “negative influence on students,” telling them “nothing valuable” can come from relying on “unreal theories and slogans,” they carped.<sup>124</sup>

Each vexing meeting of students and intellectuals in Cluj in the fall of 1956 was rapidly followed by a visit by Constantinescu, during which he delivered a series of trenchant speeches at various institutions. One day after this October 24 meeting, he convened a meeting of the Cluj regional committee, which was attended by all the secretaries of the primary party organizations, as well as the rectors and deputy rectors of all institutions of higher education in Cluj. “No indulgence toward the enemy can be allowed,” he told them. “We will talk and try to convince our confused friends, but we will [also] attack our enemy without mercy.”<sup>125</sup>

Another excuse for a series of trials in Cluj was provided by Dr. István Dobai, a thirty-three-year-old lawyer and university professor. He had drafted a memorandum for the United Nations, proposing the reorganization of Transylvania based on federalist principles. Entailing population exchanges, the plan was jejune and unwelcome even among the Hungarians in Transylvania. Nevertheless, in 1957 he received the death sentence. Many other men arrested along with Dobai received twenty-five-year sentences, including Gábor Kertész, József Szekeresi, József Komáromy, Ferenc Gazda, and others.<sup>126</sup> (Dobai’s sentence was later changed to life imprisonment, but he was eventually released in 1964.)

Several isolated, mostly anonymous “manifestations” then followed in the Cluj region in late October and November. Leaflets were found on the campuses of Babeş

and Bolyai Universities urging students to join efforts and express solidarity with Hungarian students across the border. In the Bonțida commune slogans were scratched with chalk, such as “down with the quotas” and “brothers, grab your axes” (*fraților, puneți mâna pe secure*). On October 26, around 4:00 p.m., someone started a fire in the forest between Valea Medri and Bănișoara in the Turda region. Another fire was started at 11:00 p.m. in a silica factory in Turda.<sup>127</sup> In the Sinteriog commune, in the Transylvanian town of Beclean, the kulak (*chiaburul*) Vasile Farkaș threatened the president of the agricultural association: “Don’t think something similar to Hungary won’t occur in our country” (*să nu credeți că nu se va petrece și la noi ceea ce s-a petrecut în Ungaria*). The Securitate promptly arrested him.<sup>128</sup>

In Cluj, perhaps more than in Bucharest and elsewhere, even symbolic gestures had great political significance. Given the large numbers of famous Hungarians buried in Cluj, there was an annual tradition—called the Day of the Dead (*Ziua Morților*)—whereby Cluj residents would visit the Hajongard (Házsongárd) cemetery on November 1 to lay flowers on the graves of Hungarian writers, such as the historical novelist Miklós Jósika (1794–1865), the poets Sándor Reményik (1890–1941) and Jenő Dsida (1907–1938), and the author and government official Sándor Bölöni-Farkas (1790–1842), who wrote about his travels to the United States. In 1956, however, the communist establishment was alarmed when Hungarian students went to the cemetery wearing black ribbons on their coat lapels to pay homage also to the Hungarians across the border who had already died during the revolution. Ferenc Bartis, a first-year student, recited the poem he wrote for this occasion: “Torchlight in honor of the Hungarian revolution and fight for freedom.” Three days later, after the final Soviet military invasion of Hungary, students in Cluj again wore black ribbons. Mass arrests ensued. On November 18, Bartis, Gyula David, and Géza Páskándi received seven-year prison sentences for “organizing a revolutionary manifestation.”<sup>129</sup> Both David and Páskándi had conducted doctoral research in Budapest in the summer and fall of 1956, so were automatically under suspicion. On November 26, when the poet Mihai Beniuc visited Bolyai University to deliver an eyewitness report of the events in Hungary, Hungarian students and intellectuals stayed away.<sup>130</sup>

More arrests followed in 1957 and 1959 of university students Elemér Lakó, Lajos Vastag, Lajos Páll, Iren Peterffy, and others.<sup>131</sup> Professor Jordáky was also rearrested in 1957, despite his promises to serve the party and submit his lectures for prior approval. “He plans to prepare his own course on twentieth century culture no matter what the official position might be,” Răutu and Fazekas wrote. “He can’t be trusted.” Dej’s patience had also run out. He told the Hungarian ambassador in Bucharest, Ferenc Keleti—whose surname in Hungarian literally means “eastern”—that Jordáky’s nationalism had caused the PMR serious harm.<sup>132</sup> Ultimately, during a

Politburo meeting (April 20–23, 1959), PMR officials approved the decision to merge Bolyai University with Babeş University, with only a limited number of courses taught there in Hungarian. On December 24, 1960, the Hungarian Autonomous Region was gerrymandered and then eliminated altogether by the Ceaușescu regime on February 16, 1968.

For at least four reasons, no mass meetings calling for the overthrow of the Dej regime occurred in Cluj, the abovementioned disturbances notwithstanding. First, precisely because of their fears of irredentism, the PMR leadership focused especially closely on Cluj as the capital of Transylvania. Second, despite the grumbling of some intrepid Hungarian intellectuals and students there, the ethnic Hungarian community of Cluj was generally too meek and disoriented by the carrot-and-stick approach of the Dej leadership. Third, as mentioned above, the population of Cluj as a whole—unlike in other Romanian cities—was evenly split between Romanians and Hungarians (48 percent each), which served to divide it, preventing a united front against the party establishment. Some Hungarian students resented their Romanian classmates from the Romanian-language Babeş University, since the latter were hired more quickly than the graduates of Bolyai.<sup>133</sup> The rector of Bolyai University, Raluca Ripan, deftly played up “the Hungarian danger.” Having managed the university since 1951, Ripan was replaced in 1956 by an even more aggressive personality, the historian and archaeologist, and reputedly former Iron Guardist Constantin Daicoviciu, signaling an even stricter hold over the university.<sup>134</sup>

Fourth, the erstwhile “political opposition” in Romania now became—ironically—Dej’s staunchest ally in the task of containing the student unrest throughout the country. Having failed in his challenge of Dej at the plenum of March 23–25, 1956, and Politburo meetings of April 3, 4, 6, and 12, 1956, Constantinescu went out of his way to prove his loyalty to the regime and to prevent a mass uprising in Cluj. It was convenient for Dej that Constantinescu was assigned to the city of Cluj, the citadel of the Transylvanian Hungarian intelligentsia, where problems were bound to arise. *De rigueur* in eliminating a rival—as all seasoned politicians know—is to link him to a problem and to prove his incompetence. The more accomplished and talented the rival, the more one must plan the ouster in advance. Constantinescu’s personal background and academic interest in Transylvania, as well as his previous work experience as undersecretary of state (*subsecretar de stat*) in the Ministry of Education (1947–1948), made him a shoo-in both for the assignment to Cluj and for his later promotion as Minister of Education (November 24, 1956–July 16, 1957). He attended high school at the age of seventeen in the town of Arad near the Hungarian border, knew a good deal of Hungarian, and produced at least four books on the history of Transylvania and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.<sup>135</sup> In linking his

nemesis to the educational establishment filled with students keen on accelerating the process of de-Stalinization, Dej facilitated the later expulsion of Constantinescu from the PMR Central Committee on June 28–29, 1957 on the charge of “deviation on the de-Stalinization issue.”

Perhaps sensing that he was on trial, Constantinescu took an especially firm stance, visiting Cluj at least six times in the fall and delivering copious, vituperative speeches at schools and party institutions. Although he pledged in his speech on November 5, 1956, to improve the students’ living conditions in Cluj, Constantinescu refused to budge on other issues such as eliminating compulsory Marxism-Leninism courses or granting university autonomy. Learning from the Rákosi-Gerő regime’s mistake of becoming too isolated from the people, Constantinescu advocated one-on-one, “friendly” meetings “from morning to late night” with the students. At one meeting of the primary party organization of Bolyai University on November 3, 1956, for example, he scolded the university officials:

We have about 2–3 sick zones [*zone bolnave*] in Cluj. One of them is Bolyai University. I think it’s better if I say directly, it is [in Hungarian] “súlyos” [serious or heavy]. . . . [O]n October 25, at 12:00, as instructed by the Central Committee, I called your attention to the events in Hungary. Afterward I held more meetings. Can you claim that the organization and the rectorate didn’t receive adequate information? No. . . . Why didn’t you trust the word of the party ten days ago? . . . [O]n the radio I transmitted our position in Hungarian. . . . History will judge and blame you for your attitude. You stayed away. With your oscillating attitude, you help neither the Hungarian youth, nor the working class of Hungary. Ideologically you were under the influence of the anarchic press and petty bourgeois of Hungary.

He added contemptuously, “What was the purpose of asking me at yesterday’s meeting: if we have contracts with the Soviet Union, why don’t we have meat? The comrade has degraded political work to bacon and ham [*tovarăș a adus munca politică la slănină și șuncă*].”<sup>136</sup>

## Iași

Located far from Cluj on the opposite side of the country, about twenty-two kilometers from the eastern border with Moldova, Iași was the historical capital of Romanian Moldavia until 1859, when Moldavia was united with Wallachia. In 1956, Iași had a population of approximately 112, 977, or only 10 percent of Bucharest’s population. The majority were Romanian (99,471, or 88 percent).<sup>137</sup> Our discussion of Iași must be brief, since generally the students in this city resigned themselves to working within the system. According to Alexander Zub, director of the Xenopol

Institute of History and Archaeology in Iași and head of the Romanian Academy's History Department: "If in Timișoara the students raised a number of political and professional issues in October 1956 and were quickly reduced to silence; if in the capital [students] didn't succeed in publicizing their requests due to their arrest on the eve of the planned meeting; if in Cluj no coherent action emerged, [then] in Iași . . . [students] conducted themselves pragmatically in the sense of using the existing institutional framework in order to affirm specific values as yet not admitted by the regime . . . values that could inspire a certain degree of Romanian dignity."<sup>138</sup>

In Iași the one event that most alarmed communist authorities, one which was perhaps as purely symbolic and harmless as tending the graves of deceased Hungarian writers in Cluj, was the planning of a historical conference to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the crowning of Ștefan cel Mare as prince of Moldavia (1457–1957). Famous for his stubborn resistance against the Ottoman Turks, Ștefan cel Mare maintained Moldavia's independence during his reign from 1457 to 1504.<sup>139</sup> In October 1956 during a trip to the Putna Monastery, four students in the faculties of history and philology at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași decided to organize a nationwide celebration to encourage others to honor Romania's heroes and to inculcate the "consciousness of masters, not slaves" (*conștiința de stăpâni și nu de slugi în propria noastră țară*).<sup>140</sup>

It should be recalled that the historical principality of Moldavia (in Romanian, Moldova) once spanned the area between the Carpathian Mountains and the Dniester River, with the Prut River running through the middle of the territory. Existing from 1359 to 1859, the principality of Moldavia was united with Wallachia to form the kingdom of Romania (minus Transylvania, still under Austro-Hungarian rule until 1918). The eastern part of Moldavia, between the Prut and Dniester Rivers, called Bessarabia, was lost at various times to Russia and the USSR, first in 1812 after the Russo-Turkish War, in 1940 as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and finally after World War II, when part of Bessarabia was renamed the Soviet Republic of Moldavia. (The rest of Bessarabia was joined to the Ukrainian Soviet Republic.) Following the fall of communism, it became an independent state, the Republic of Moldova. No doubt Bucharest party officials interpreted the students' homage to Ștefan cel Mare, who had presided over all of Moldavia, as a fillip for Romanian irredentist claims over Soviet Moldavia.

These former students (now academics) were the abovementioned Alexander Zub, the poet Dumitru Vacariu from Iași, the late Aurelian I. Popescu (former professor and folklorist in Craiova), and Mihalache Brudiu, historian, archeologist, and university professor in Galați. They were unable to pool their efforts with students and professors from other cities, since the Securitate agents intercepted letters and

stalked them on trains. Brudiu recounted how a Securitate officer tailed him on a train heading for Cluj and how he narrowly escaped arrest by dressing like a peasant in a gray fur cap, getting off the train early at Apahida, and spending the night at Hotel Transylvania near the railroad station instead of at the student hostel.<sup>141</sup>

The students managed to hold the conference, but it was a far more insipid version of what they had planned. It took place April 12–14, 1957, first in Iași and then Putna, the site of a famous monastery that Ștefan cel Mare began constructing in 1466 to celebrate his victory against the Turks during which he conquered the Chilia citadel.<sup>142</sup> As a way to lessen Romanian solidarity, authorities permitted a delegation of seven students only from Hungarian-language Bolyai University to attend—not the students from Babeș University, as the organizers wished.<sup>143</sup> Nevertheless, it was an inspiring event for students like Zub, who wrote his speech in careful Aesopian language to pass the inspection of the dean of the faculty of history. “Ștefan cel Mare was more than a man; he was an epoch.” “This man and his epoch obviously contrasted with the powerless present, that it needed great examples from history in order to rejuvenate itself,” Zub later reminisced.<sup>144</sup>

Although the students of Iași were indeed influenced by the revolutionary ferment in Hungary, they had not “plotted against the social order” as was later claimed. Like students in Bucharest and Cluj, they did not discuss macropolitical questions such as Romania’s relations vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Securitate agents dressed in priest’s clothes or national costumes mingled in the crowd, alert for any suspicious comments. As one Securitate chief taunted Vacariu: “Hey, bandit! Bear in mind that the woods of Putna were crowded with our men, including the bridge to the monastery, ready to shoot you had you tried to execute your criminal plans!”<sup>145</sup>

Repression soon followed. In the fall of 1956, before the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, the Securitate had only thirteen agents in Iași to monitor seventy-three hundred students. Shortly after the revolution began, at least sixty-nine additional agents were recruited from among the students in the city. One month after the celebration, in May 1957, the Securitate had already compiled thick files on each of the conference’s organizers.<sup>146</sup> After meticulous searches, the Securitate found only one hunting gun and a rusty handgun from World War I, discovered in the attic of the house of Popescu’s parents in the southeastern town of Târgu Cărbunești.<sup>147</sup>

The trial of the organizers of the Ștefan cel Mare celebration was held on June 5, 6, and 7, 1958, just one month before the last echelon of Soviet troops left Romania.<sup>148</sup> Brudiu was harshly condemned for having worn a historical costume from the Bucovina region, a hat just like Ștefan cel Mare’s soldiers, and an ancient horn across his chest. Zub was accused of “plotting against the great Soviet Union” simply for posting a map of Moldavia during Ștefan cel Mare’s reign on the main wall near the

entrance to the university.<sup>149</sup> For their idea of drawing inspiration from history, these students endured more than six years of imprisonment in different prisons and camps of forced labor. They were not released until 1964.

Apart from the students' pragmatism and the Securitate's diligent monitoring, there are perhaps at least two other reasons why no mass demonstration occurred in Iași. First, as the city farthest from the Hungarian border, pro-Hungarian sentiments were arguably less developed. Far fewer ethnic Hungarians lived in Iași in 1956 than in the other three university cities—only 126 or 0.1 percent—and they were mostly rural Csángó Hungarians who, although Catholic like many Transylvanian Hungarians, spoke an archaic regional dialect of Hungarian containing many words borrowed from the Romanian language. In fact, many of the Csángós of the Moldavian region of Romania did not even understand the standard Hungarian language spoken in Hungary. According to ethnographers, the Csángós “defy classification as either Romanian or Hungarian.”<sup>150</sup> Most were concentrated in the city of Bacău, not Iași. During the “socialist industrialization” of the 1930s, thousands of these Moldavian Csángós had been encouraged to move to towns in Transylvania and to the southern industrial regions of the country. According to one estimate, about thirty thousand ethnic Hungarians lived outside Transylvania in 1956.<sup>151</sup> Considerably fewer lived in the city of Iași. Indeed, the city is best known historically not for its Hungarian community, but instead for its large Jewish community. By the mid-nineteenth century, the city was at least one-third Jewish. However, about fourteen thousand people, or a third of the Jewish population, were massacred in the infamous pogrom of June 29 to July 6, 1941. In 1956, nevertheless, Jews still constituted the largest ethnic group other than Romanians in 1956 (12,697 people, or 11 percent of the city's total population).<sup>152</sup>

Second, the Ștefan cel Mare celebration transpired late—April 1957—a whole five months after the threatening meetings in Timișoara. Having acquired a certain “Timișoara syndrome,” the security apparatus augmented its forces. Decree no. 70 of 1957 ordered the Securitate to increase surveillance of former democratic party leaders, members of the Iron Guard, and those who had resisted the collectivization of agriculture. In early 1957, the Securitate's regional division in Iași arrested at least fifty-six individuals alone who had resisted collectivization.<sup>153</sup>

## **Timișoara**

Only in Timișoara, in contrast to Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași, did students come the closest to staging a successful demonstration. Boisterous mass meetings took place on October 30–31. Yet even in this case, students were unable to publish their demands or join forces with workers and peasants, much less with students from other cities.

The Securitate quickly arrested three hundred students and literally locked others in their dormitories.

Perhaps the most multicultural of all Romanian cities, Timișoara (Temesvár in Hungarian)—the capital city of both the Banat region and of Timiș County—is located about thirty kilometers from the Serbian border and one hundred kilometers from the Hungarian border. The Banat region extends across western Romania, northeastern Serbia, and southern Hungary. It is demarcated by the Southern Carpathian Mountains to the east, the Danube River to the south, the Tisza River to the west, and the Mureș River, a tributary of the Tisza, to the north. In 1956, the city had a population of about 142,258. Romanians comprised 53 percent (75,855); Hungarians 21 percent (29,968); Germans 17 percent (24,326); Jews 5 percent (6,700); and other nationalities, such as Serbs, Gypsies, and Bulgarians, 8 percent (12,108).<sup>154</sup> Once an ancient Roman fortress (Castrum Temesiensis) dating back to 1212, Timișoara was alternately dominated by Tatars and Turks (from 1552 to 1716) before it became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire for 200 years. To this day, much of its architecture is in the Habsburg style, earning the city the nickname “Little Vienna.”<sup>155</sup>

On October 26, a few fifth-year students from the faculty of mechanics at the Polytechnic Institute in Timișoara decided to use a propaganda meeting previously scheduled for the following day, October 27, in order to confront the instructor, a junior lecturer named Ștefan Rozinger, with candid political questions. Rozinger and other academic officials had been instructed to organize what would today be considered “focus groups” of ten to fifteen students to ascertain their attitude toward the Hungarian events. When Rozinger arrived in the classroom of the thermal engines department, he saw more than one hundred students—the whole fifth-year class. (Party leaders had earlier issued an order, *dispoziție*, banning all meetings of more than three students, with the exception of official lectures and seminars.)<sup>156</sup> Forced to proceed, Rozinger began to tell them the “truth” about Hungary. “Recently in our friendly neighboring country, delinquent hooligans and released prisoners have caused problems. Encouraged by the hostile propaganda of foreign radio stations, they broke shop windows and started fires. The people banded together against them and restored order.” The students booed Rozinger and denounced the lies.<sup>157</sup> At this meeting, the students decided to stage a more massive meeting of all their peers three days later, on October 30.

On that day, students gradually convened in room 115, the largest auditorium in the faculty of mechanics with a capacity to seat 200 people. When that room grew too crowded, the meeting was continued in the 2,000-seat dining hall of the Polytechnic Institute, where there soon was standing room only. During the meeting, the students added demands to a preexisting memorandum that the fifth-year mechanics student



Teodor Stanca had drafted by hand.<sup>158</sup> The students from Timișoara had concerns broader than students in Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași, although they too bemoaned the paltry scholarships, the plight of peasants, crowded dorms, bad food, dull teaching methods, mandatory Russian language courses, the unjust expulsion of Alexandru Jar, and distortion in the media. They also expressed larger political grievances, most notably the withdrawal of Soviet troops and Romania's subordination to the USSR in foreign policy and trade. Legion were remarks such as: "Hands off Hungary" (*jos mâinile de pe Ungaria*) and "What are the Russians doing with our uranium and oil?" (*Ce caută rușii la uraniul și petrolul nostru?*).<sup>159</sup>

At the meeting a committee was elected, which was instructed to publicize the memorandum by broadcasting it on the radio and distributing multiple copies to local party officials. A young professor of Marxism-Leninism at the Polytechnic Institute, Gheorghe Pop, was selected to contact sympathizers in Cluj. Several party officials, specifically invited by the students, attended the meeting. The local officials from Timișoara included Alexandru Rogoian (rector of the Polytechnic Institute), Gheorghe Cristodorescu (deputy dean of the mechanics department), Coriolan Drăgulescu (deputy minister of education), as well as several UTM secretaries. Two PMR Politburo members who happened to be in town also showed up: Petre Lupu (minister of labor) and Ilie Verdeț (alternate member of the CC). They promised to respond to the students' demands within three days, claiming that they needed to consult with the Bucharest leadership. The students agreed to this delay, but threatened to start a general strike on the fourth day if the PMR officials had not responded by then.<sup>160</sup> (They wrote this "ultimatum" into the memorandum and underlined it for good measure.) Meanwhile, during the meeting, Securitate forces surrounded the Polytechnic Institute buildings. The meeting lasted from 2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Within thirty minutes of its closure, the Securitate had arrested the most vocal leaders, including Stanca and other fifth-year mechanics students, such as Aurel Baghiu, Caius Muțiu, Friedrich Barth, Ladislau Nagy, and Romulus Tașcă. Every student hostel was surrounded by troops.

Knowing that they would probably be arrested, these students had planned a follow-up demonstration to call for the release of probable detainees. Thus, on October 31, Gheorghe Păcuraru, a second-year zoology major, led about eight hundred apartment-dwelling students in a march from the faculty of agronomy down the Vasile Pârvan Boulevard. As fourth-year medical student Octavian Vulpe recalls: "We marched in rows of seven people each. . . . As we approached the womens' hostel of the faculty of chemistry, which was adjacent to the park and already surrounded by the Securitate, we were shouting: 'We want our colleagues!' The girls in the hostel were shouting and throwing at the Securitate officers flower vases and whatever they

could find. Soldiers with bayonets were coming toward us.”<sup>161</sup> The Securitate forces ambushed the students at the bridge over the Bega Canal on Piața Maria. They had almost reached the Cathedral when, “all of a sudden, the troops came out from nowhere,” said Doina Pordea, a third-year student in the faculty of industrial chemistry at the Polytechnic Institute. “They caught them [the students] and loaded them in trucks. We kept screaming at the soldiers to let them go.” “They locked us in the dormitory and forbade us to move from floor to floor. An armed soldier guarded each floor,” recalled Stela Tașcă, a fourth-year chemistry student. The Securitate troops transported all these women to a defunct military barracks at Becicherecul-Mic, a village eighteen kilometers from Timișoara, isolated them for three days and insisted that they sign a declaration denouncing their classmates for organizing the meetings.<sup>162</sup>

The crackdown was fierce. The PMR Politburo convened in Bucharest on the evening of October 30 at 8 p.m. and agreed on a wide range of measures to control the population. As mentioned earlier, a General Command was formed, composed of Emil Bodnăraș (first vice-president of the Council of Ministers), Alexandru Drăghici (minister of internal affairs), Leontin Sălăjan (minister of the armed forces), and Nicolae Ceaușescu (secretary of the PMR CC responsible for organizational problems). The General Command reported only to the PMR Politburo; the Ministries of Armed Forces and Internal Affairs, courts, guard units, factories and enterprises were subordinate to the Command. This body was entitled to “take any measures necessary to secure order . . . including the right to open fire.”<sup>163</sup> A separate General Command was also established for Timișoara alone, which then on October 31 postponed all classes. By November 10 classes had resumed.<sup>164</sup>

As for the students, since over 2,000 of the entire number of students in the Timișoara university (4,287) had attended the October 30 meeting, plus another 800–1,000 in the October 31 street procession, the PMR authorities were in a quandary.<sup>165</sup> They could not possibly arrest them all. Thus, Bodnăraș and Drăghici modified the penal code. Normally the students, at least the organizers of the meeting, would have been prosecuted under Decree 199 from 1952, and they would have been sentenced to twenty years of prison or forced labor for life for “conspiring against the security of the state.” Instead, Stanca and others were prosecuted under paragraph 327 of the Romanian Penal Code and received sentences of up to ten years for “sedition against the popular regime.”<sup>166</sup>

In contrast to the trial of the Derdena group in Bucharest, which was public, Bodnăraș and Drăghici also decided to keep the trials closed.<sup>167</sup> The trials were held on November 15–16 and December 13–14, 1956, respectively. The Military Court of Timișoara prosecuted a total of twenty-eight students and Professor Gheorghe Pop. The organizers—Caius Muțiu, Teodor Stanca, and Aurel Baghiu—received eight years

in prison, and Pop received five years. Other students who spoke at the October 30 meeting received briefer sentences: Friedrich Barth (six years), Ladislau Nagy (four years), and Nicolae Balaci (three years).<sup>168</sup> Students who were not imprisoned were punished in other ways, either by being expelled from the university or the UTM. In the late fall of 1956, the Timișoara Military Tribunal expelled twenty-nine students from the faculties of mechanics, construction, and medicine for their involvement in the October 30–31 events, and another eighty-one were expelled (*exmatriculați*) from the university for their “hostile manifestations” (*manifestările dușmănoase*), while seventy-two were excluded from the UTM. Often these students were only guilty of being of “inappropriate social origin.”<sup>169</sup>

After serving their sentences at Gherla Prison, forty-five kilometers from Cluj, many of the organizers of the October 30–31 meeting, much to their dismay, were then sent to the prison camps in the Bărăgan desert and Balta Brăilei in the Danube Delta for more years of hard labor. This new punishment was separate from the original trial and court sentence and was solely up to the whimsical Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>170</sup> While the shortest period of forced labor was one year, most of the students remained in Bărăgan for up to five years. Aurelian Păuna, a fourth-year student in the faculty of construction, for example, had received only a one-year sentence, but after prison he was sent to Bărăgan for another five years. “Aren’t you a civil engineer?” Vomir, the political officer at Gherla, sneered. “You’re going there to build something.”<sup>171</sup> Vomir had decided to punish Păuna for surreptitiously supplying classmates with cigarettes.<sup>172</sup>

Again, together with sticks, carrots were offered to students of Timișoara and of all Romanian cities. Once the main troublemakers were isolated, the party leadership then addressed some of the students’ concerns. In his November 5, 1956 speech in Cluj, Constantinescu promised to raise scholarships, improve the quality of food in the hostels, and lighten the curriculum.<sup>173</sup> A week later, on November 13, the Politburo appointed him as the new minister of education.<sup>174</sup> In this capacity he issued orders on November 27, 1956, to make physical education optional, decrease political indoctrination meetings by two hours, and end the local anti-aircraft defense courses. These were, however, simply stopgap measures which were all reversed in 1957.<sup>175</sup>

## Events in Other Cities

To be sure, various incidents occurred in cities other than the four cities covered in this study and involved former convicts, clergymen, military officers, and ethnic Hungarians. For example, in the Transylvanian city of Brașov (called “Stalin” from 1950 to 1960), a group of men, who had already served prison sentences between

1948 and 1954, met on November 4 in front of the Sfânta Adormire Cathedral on Piața Sfatului. Stanislav Șeremet, originally from Soviet Moldavia, suggested attacking Russian trains at the tunnel between Predeal and Timișul de Sus to prevent them from reaching Hungary. However, one of the men—a former medical student, Mircea Ionescu—immediately informed the Securitate. He had been recruited by the secret police while imprisoned in Pitești and Gherla. Ionescu then approached other former prisoners (like Alexandru Salcă) who had nothing to do with the plot, trying to provoke them into saying something that would justify rearresting them. Sure enough, on November 15, Șeremet, along with Salcă, Luca Călvărăsan, Victor Mihăilescu, Ovidiu Țifrea, and Dumitru Teodorescu, were all convicted for “sabotage of the railroads.” The next day eighteen more innocent men were arrested for their “counterrevolutionary attitude.”<sup>176</sup>

Later, between September 1957 and February 1958, the personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne* or MAI) arrested fifty-seven other “elements hostile to Romania,” allegedly led by thirty-one-year-old Aladár Szoboszlay (a Roman Catholic priest of Magyarpécska in Arad County) and Josif Huszár (a former baron and landowner).<sup>177</sup> During the trial of the “Szoboszlay group,” the men were accused of possessing “subversive documents and weapons.” Ten received the death sentence and were executed, and the rest all served lengthy prison terms.<sup>178</sup>

If documents of the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs can be believed, another revolt was planned on December 17–18, 1956, by a twenty-four-year-old military officer, Lieutenant Teodor Mărgineanu of the 255th Artillery Regiment stationed in Prundul Bârgăului, a mountain village between Bistrița and Vatra Dornei in north-central Romania. Mărgineanu had recruited fourteen soldiers, and together they planned to travel to Bistrița, then Cluj, and across the Carpathians to Pitești, rallying others to join the antigovernmental revolt. Again, a soldier who had been recruited at the last minute, Ion Tripovici, informed on the group, forcing Mărgineanu to abandon the plan and flee. He was arrested two days later, carrying a gun and twenty-five bullets.<sup>179</sup>

Moreover, in Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely in Hungarian), the administrative center of the MAT, students formed pro-Hungarian organizations such as the Transylvanian Democratic Opposition Movement (Erdélyi Demokratikus Ellenállási Mozgalom or ENDEM) and the Union of Transylvanian Hungarian Youth (Erdélyi Magyar Ifjak Szövetsége or EMISZ). In 1956, 77.3 percent of the city’s population were Székely Hungarians.

Soon after October 23, when they heard what had happened in Hungary, a technician named Imre Kelemen and six ethnic Hungarians (László Kelemen, Sándor Fülöp, Imre Dózsa, István Pal, Mihály Tofan, and Ferenc Magyar) planned to acquire weapons and join the revolution in Hungary. They were all arrested on October 29

and received sentences of between four and ten years. On November 4, 1956, again in Marosvásárhely, a medical doctor named Sándor Maier was arrested with his father and sentenced to twelve years in prison. The city court in Marosvásárhely tried and convicted at least 514 individuals, including 75 members of EMISZ, 11 people from Miercurea-Ciuc (Csíkszereda in Hungarian), 6 people caught distributing leaflets, and 3 members involved in an alleged “armed rebellion.”<sup>180</sup>

Finally, in the region of Pitești, large rocks were found wedged into the railroad tracks between Bascov and Valea Ursului, near the Soviet military unit there. Presumably the perpetrators hoped to derail Soviet trains en route to Hungary.<sup>181</sup>

### **Success and Failure in Timișoara**

If the Dej regime was able to prevent mass street demonstrations in Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași, how did it initially fail in the case of Timișoara? How did the students in this city get the opportunity to speak out so freely? One can answer these questions by considering several psychological, logistical, and historical factors.

Psychologically, from the students’ point of view, the Bucharest leadership’s strict measures backfired to some extent. By banning all meetings of more than three students, scheduling deliriously long political meetings to “clarify” the situation in Hungary, and blasting information in the Romanian media that starkly contrasted with the broadcasts by Budapest radio—which ethnic Hungarian students gladly translated for their Romanian classmates—the Dej regime signaled its own fear and vulnerability. This discrepancy in the media was the catalyst for the October 30 meeting. Teodor Stanca recalls: “I was the first to take the floor. When the rector Rogojan arrived with his retinue, I said: ‘For at least a week now much confusion has resulted from the events in Hungary. The Hungarian media say one thing and our media something completely different. Furthermore, a couple of days ago, professors were obligated to hold meetings with us to explain the situation. During these discussions, we noticed that the truth was falsified.’”<sup>182</sup>

During the October 30 meeting, the party officials’ fear permeated the atmosphere, furthering empowering the students. “In spite of all the indoctrination we were subjected to or perhaps, as a cause of it, we, the youth, especially the conscientious ones, were beginning to reject the clichés; we felt a great thirst for truth and change,” said one student and memoirist Alexandru Bulai.<sup>183</sup>

Moreover, the Central Committee member Petru Lupu actually goaded the students into speaking freely. Several students distinctly remember that during the meeting, he told them solemnly: “You can say anything you want; nothing will happen to you,” as he placed his hand over his heart.<sup>184</sup> “Undercover” Securitate officers also

sought to provoke the reform-minded students into denouncing the regime *in toto*, bellowing “Down with communism! We want freedom!”<sup>185</sup> But the presence of the *securiști* only fostered derision and further signaled the regime’s fear of the students. After university and party officials left the room, a group of “workers” came onto the stage pretending to fraternize with the students. In retrospect, Aurelian Păuna mused: “Now how would the workers have even known where to come, directly to the mechanics department? How did they even hear about the meeting? And who allowed them to leave the factory during working hours? All this was sewn with white thread [i.e., a story full of holes]. . . . [T]heir task was in fact to identify the initiators. . . . They did not stay long because students started to shout: ‘Boo! Boo!’”<sup>186</sup> A fourth-year student in the faculty of construction, Marian Lazar, remembers when another “worker” sitting right next to her, his face deliberately besmirched with soot, was exposed. “No . . . I am a student in the mathematics-physics department!” he balked. They asked him: “What student? We study there and we’ve never seen you!” He claimed he was “part-time,” but all students were full-time in 1956. “Take the gun out of your pocket!” they commanded him contemptuously.<sup>187</sup>

They actually wanted party officials and security forces to hear their protests. “We knew there were informers among us,” Heinrich Drobny wrote. “But we did not protect ourselves. That’s why we asked for the bosses [*șefii*] to come, because we wanted to be heard.”<sup>188</sup>

From the school officials’ point of view, the fact that the students actually invited them to the meeting made it hard for them to ban it as “unauthorized.” Moreover, the fact that the two students issuing the invitation (Lazăr Dezideriu and Heinrich Drobny) had been elected to political posts tended to allay their suspicion of the students’ intentions. Dezideriu, a fifth-year mechanics student, was the secretary for the department union (*secretar al sindicatului pe facultate*), and Drobny, a fourth-year mechanics student, was the UTM secretary for the fourth-year class.<sup>189</sup>

An explanation of how the students were able to convene *en masse* also lies partly in logistics. The dorm rooms actually facilitated meetings among students, since each had to share a room with several others. In fact, the organizers of the meeting (Stanca, Baghiu, Muțiu, Barth, Tașca, and others) were all students of mechanics and had been roommates for the first four years of their university experience.<sup>190</sup> The faculty of mechanics had the largest dorm as well. Thus, the ban on large meetings was ineffectual.

In contrast to the manifestos in Bucharest mocking Marxist slogans or summoning students to the rally on Bălcescu Boulevard, the Timișoara students refrained from putting anything in writing about their upcoming meeting. They announced it orally to students only on the very day the meeting was to be held, and only a few

hours in advance (9:00 a.m. for the 2:00 p.m. meeting).<sup>191</sup> As for the school officials, they were invited only two hours in advance of the meeting (12:00 noon). To avoid suspicion, the students quietly entered room 115 in single file or in groups of two or three. The room was left unlocked. According to Stanca, when the dean initially refused to give him the key, Stanca threatened to beat the door down.<sup>192</sup>

Finally, by cancelling classes and neglecting to arrest those who did not live in the dormitories, city officials actually facilitated the follow-up street rally of October 31 calling for the arrested students' release.

Apart from psychological and logistical factors, perhaps one should look to the nature and history of Timișoara and of the Banat region itself to explain why the October 30 and 31 demonstrations occurred here, but not in Bucharest, Cluj, or Iași. As inhabitants of what had become a separate frontier province with a clear military role within the Habsburg Empire after the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, it can be argued that the citizens of the Banat of Timișoara had become accustomed to a certain degree of autonomy. The series of foreign conquerors of the Banat since the thirteenth century (Tatars, Hungarians, Turks, Austrians, and others) forged in them strong skills of self-defense. In the late eighteenth century, Austrian Empress Maria Theresa invited Germans from Swabia, Alsace, and Bavaria in southern Germany ("Danube Swabians" or *Donauschwaben*) to colonize the Banat. The German colonists inculcated a strong work ethic in the population and contributed to the economic development of the province by, for example, helping to drain the marshes and dig a canal through the city of Timișoara for the Bega River. Since Serbs, Hungarians, Slovaks, as well as Romanians also settled in the region, a tradition of ethnoreligious tolerance and respect for individual rights developed, which was absent in the Transylvanian city of Cluj. Large numbers of Germans were Roman Catholic, as opposed to the Orthodox Serbs and Romanians.<sup>193</sup> According to the Romanian historian Lucian Boia: "In comparison to Transylvania with its political and ethnic structures crystallized over centuries, the Banat seemed to be a shifting frontier zone, a substantially new land made fruitful by colonists. This may explain the fact that ethnic tensions on the scale of those in Transylvania have never been seen here. The Banat has seen the formation of a culture of ethnic diversity."<sup>194</sup>

Moreover, since World War II the Banat region has had a long history of persecution that perhaps instilled in the population a permanent reaction of distrust and hostility toward communist authorities. After Romania switched sides in the war, on August 23, 1944, German intellectuals from the Banat were deported to labor camps, like the one in Târgu Jiu, in Oltenia, and their houses were confiscated.<sup>195</sup> From there several thousand Germans were taken to the Soviet Union as slave laborers in the mines. Seen as war enemies, about two hundred thousand other Germans voluntarily immigrated to

Austria and West Germany. Later, as the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict heated up, the Romanian government established a security zone along the Romanian-Yugoslav border and deported an additional forty thousand Germans, Serbs, and Romanian citizens to the Bărăgan desert in southern Romania from 1951 to 1956.<sup>196</sup> Among the deportees were also kulaks, professors, artists, people from Bessarabia or Bucovina, former members of the National Peasants' Party or National Liberal Party, or anyone suspected of being pro-Tito.<sup>197</sup> One list drawn up in 1950 contained 982 names of individuals from Timișoara alone. On another day, June 18, 1951, as many as 25,233 people from sixty-four villages of Timiș County and thousands of other inhabitants of Caraș-Severin County were loaded into freight trains and deported to Bărăgan.<sup>198</sup>

In the city of Timișoara itself, students in particular have been especially vocal. Shortly after World War II, they responded indignantly to the forcible installation of the communist regime. Between June 4 and 6, 1945, students from the Polytechnic Institute and the Institute of Medicine started a general strike in protest against the harsh regime of Petru Groza, the prime minister of the coalition government from 1945 to 1952. Later, on November 8, 1945, students from the same schools staged a promonarchist demonstration, when the first street confrontation took place between students and communist shock troops, along with Soviet soldiers disguised as workers. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, many students from Timișoara participated in clandestine, anticommunist groups by distributing leaflets and expressing solidarity with armed resistance groups hiding in the mountains of the Banat. Romanian researchers have found evidence in Timișoara court records of students from the Polytechnic Institute sentenced in October 1949 to between one and twelve years of prison for collecting money to help the families of political prisoners and to bolster anticommunist propaganda. They were accused of conspiring against the social order (*crimă de uneltire contra ordinii sociale*).<sup>199</sup>

As the region closest to Yugoslavia, the Banat region of Romania was greatly influenced in 1956 by this country—its freer press, greater latitude for national minorities, Tito's liberal belief in many paths to socialism, and experiments in worker self-management. Former students like Alexandru Bulai mention often how they listened closely to the Novi Sad radio while in Bucharest.<sup>200</sup> Tito visited Bucharest June 23–26, 1955 (immediately after his stay in Moscow, June 1–23) and raised the issue of the deported Serbs. The Romanian government pledged to exonerate and reimburse some of the deportees who had been permitted to return to their homes.<sup>201</sup> Some Serbs were promoted in the party and state organizations, while personalities from the interwar period, such as the poets Radu Gyr and Aurelian Benteoiu, were released from prison.<sup>202</sup> Tito's Yugoslavia came closer to what Romanian students wanted: a country independent of Moscow with no Soviet troops stationed on its



soil. As one Securitate officer noted on October 26, there was a widespread, naïve impression—based on the recent exchange of visits of the Romanian and Yugoslav leaders—that Tito was “training” Dej in Yugoslavia and that, as soon as Dej returned to Bucharest, “what happened in Hungary will happen here, too.”<sup>203</sup> According to one “informative bulletin” of October 27: “Szilágy Ladislau, owner of a dye workshop [near Oradea], invites friends to his home, where they favorably comment on the counterrevolutionary actions in Hungary and express regret at having failed to do the same thing [in Romania]. In this group people say ‘the students in Timișoara wait for Gheorghiu-Dej’s return from Yugoslavia, so that they can present their claims.’”<sup>204</sup> In another bulletin of November 2, 1956, one Samoil Luca from the commune of Hălmeag commented that Tito asked Dej while in Yugoslavia, “where are Teohari, Ana, and Luca?”<sup>205</sup> Moreover, although Tito ultimately defended the Soviet military intervention in Hungary in his speech at Pula on November 11, 1956, as being necessary to defend socialism against “counterrevolution,” he also scored points with disgruntled Romanians by severely criticizing the Soviet Union for its Stalinist politics and for not deposing Hungarian dictator Mátyás Rákosi soon enough.<sup>206</sup> Even Romanian diplomats in Budapest held grudging respect for the proactive stance of the Yugoslav leadership, in comparison to the passivity of the Kádár government. “So far, Hungarian communists have only one explanation of the events: the one that Tito gave them,” the Romanian Ambassador Popescu explained in a telegram. “The confusion felt by Hungarian party members and honest people stems from the hesitation and delays of Kádár’s government in explaining to them what happened in Hungary. Kádár contents himself with general speeches.”<sup>207</sup>

Apart from the influence of Banatian history and the Yugoslav example, the collective hatred of Soviet troops also unified the students in Timișoara and focused their attention on Romania’s status vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and other, broader political concerns. To be sure, students in the other three Romanian cities also resented the Soviet military presence, but Timișoara had the largest garrison: four Soviet military units (9,657 men).<sup>208</sup> Stationed right in the historic center of the city, these units (tanks, infantry, artillery, and communications) were especially visible and occupied the best buildings, including the famous Baroque palace on Union Square (Piața Unirii). Built in 1733, it was once the official residence of Banat’s Austrian governors and now hosts the art department of the Museum of the Banat.<sup>209</sup> Hence the students directly associated the stationing of Soviet troops in Romania with their own shortage of dormitory space. “[M]ost of [the student leaders’ speeches] were related to the Russians’ presence in Timișoara and the crisis of living space, because the Russians occupied the best buildings along the Bega Canal,” said Karl Lușiasca, a fourth-year student in the faculty of medicine. “Why couldn’t the Russians go home and evacuate our buildings?”<sup>210</sup>

At the time of the Hungarian revolt, two Soviet army divisions and one Soviet air force division were reportedly stationed in Romania.<sup>211</sup> According to another dispatch that Soviet military officials sent to the Bucharest leadership in 1958, so that the latter could award medals to the departing Soviet commanders for “liberating Romania from fascism,” Soviet troops were at that time deployed as follows: Timișoara (9,657), Constanța (9,016), Ianca (2,957), Braila (2,486), Galați (2,430), Focșani (2,232), Corgaria (2,117), Râmnicu Sărat (1,730), and Ploiești (1,402).<sup>212</sup> According to Order no. 20701 of the Romanian Ministry of War issued on July 17, 1945, and another activity report of 1958, Soviet troops or personnel were also stationed in several other cities, including Iași and Bucharest.<sup>213</sup> While the administrative headquarters of the Soviet occupational army was located in Bucharest, actual troops (air force units) were stationed only on the outskirts of the city, in Otopeni.

The students realized that Soviet troops from Timișoara were directly involved in crushing the Hungarian “counterrevolutionary uprising” and were conscious of exact troop movements. On October 23, 1956, at 11:35 P.M. the Herzen 33rd Mechanized Guard Division, stationed in Timișoara, was ordered to battle readiness and instructed to march three hundred kilometers to a point fifteen kilometers south of Budapest. Meanwhile, the Moscow leadership instructed the 35th Mechanized Guard Division to approach the Hungarian border by rail across Romanian territory from the Ukrainian port city of Reni and the Romanian city of Galați to the northwest of Timișoara, then to proceed to Békéscsaba in Hungary to relieve a regiment of the 32nd Mechanized Division there.<sup>214</sup> On the morning of November 4, the 35th division arrived in the Timișoara area. “It was known that the Russians of Timișoara had already crossed the border to Hungary in tanks,” Axente Țerbea recalled. “They said they left Hungary. First they withdrew, and then they organized and came back in force,” Aurelian Păuna pointed out. Romanian passenger trains were delayed for hours to facilitate Soviet troop movement. It took another student, Mihalache Brudiu, two days and two nights to travel the four hundred kilometers from Bucharest to Hunedoara. He wrote: “Soviet trains loaded with tanks and army forces passed through Romanian railroad stations only at night. That’s why the passenger trains would stall in the village stations at night for fourteen hours. Everyone was crowded, and the lack of food and poor hygiene doubled the misery. Parents could not change their childrens’ clothes, and babies would cry terribly. The uncertainty was exasperating, the fatigue overwhelming.”<sup>215</sup>

Thus, in contrast to the students of other cities, those in Timișoara were perhaps more politically minded and absorbed in issues beyond those concerning their living conditions. “The essential issue was not the students’ claims,” Heinrich Drobny said in an interview. “Of course we asked that the study of the Russian language be optional—we had had enough of it, and some of us did not have places in the dorms, but what

really interested us was to get rid of the Russian occupation and open up toward the West.”<sup>216</sup> The “immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops stationed on Romanian territory” was point “II (a)” in the students’ original memorandum of October 30, 1956. Their revulsion toward the Soviet military presence is illustrated by the fact that several of them thought Soviet, not Romanian, security forces were waiting outside the Polytechnic Institute buildings on the evening of October 30 to arrest them.<sup>217</sup>

The physical presence of the Soviet troops in Timișoara served as a permanent, humiliating reminder that, although Romania had been the first pro-Nazi, East European country to switch sides in World War II and fought alongside Soviet forces, Romanian territory was nevertheless occupied by Soviet military troops like an enemy country. Not only did the Russian troops take the best buildings, but they also demanded free meals, transportation, and training fields.<sup>218</sup> “Their stationing here was regarded as [Romania’s] subordination. Theoretically, we were independent. The Russians had nothing to do in the country any longer,” said Axente Țerbea. (Article 21 of the peace treaty had stipulated the withdrawal of Allied forces from Romanian territory within ninety days of ratification.) “But we knew that between 1953 and 1954, for example, thirty railway engines from the factory in Reșița were sent to the Soviet Union as payment for a war debt.”<sup>219</sup>

In addition to the war reparations demanded by the armistice convention of 1944 and the Paris Peace Treaties, the students in Timișoara were also keenly aware of the Romanian-Soviet joint ventures (*sovroms*). Established at the end of World War II, they enabled the Russians—who owned 50 percent of the shares—to acquire Romanian products and resources for well below their actual value.<sup>220</sup> Sovrompetrol (oil) was the first sovrom, followed by others in transportation, banking, chemicals, construction, cinema, metallurgy, and uranium. By an agreement of 1954, these ventures were gradually eliminated between 1954 and 1956. It was decided on October 22, 1956, to disband the last one, Sovromcuarț (uranium), although this was not officially announced until November 15, 1956.<sup>221</sup> “After the war, all companies had a mixed leadership. . . . We knew the story of the uranium at Ștei,” Axente Țerbea remembered.<sup>222</sup> (Ștei, a town in western Transylvania, was founded in 1952 as an industrial center for the grinding of uranium mined by Sovromcuarț in nearby Băița. Since no uranium mill existed there, all ore was then shipped to Estonia for processing).<sup>223</sup>

The physical presence of Soviet troops accentuated Romania’s unequal economic status vis-à-vis the USSR. Students found it hard to understand why, for example, bread had to be rationed in Romania, which was at the time mostly an agricultural country. “Where is our wheat?” (*Unde este grâul nostru?*) was one of the slogans shouted at the October 30 meeting.<sup>224</sup> As noted by one British legation official, Mr. Macdermot, as early as August 1956, the harvest in Romania was especially poor that year, and the shortage

of wheat and other food crops was increasingly felt in Romanian cities throughout the fall of 1956.<sup>225</sup> Nearly all the memoirists recall the zeal of an arthritic chemistry student, Teodor Stanciu. Waving his cane from the balcony on October 30, he asked rhetorically, “[H]ow long will the Russian communists suck up our blood? . . . [H]ow can you feel the pulse of the people when they are chained? . . . [T]his is injustice!”<sup>226</sup>

Radio Free Europe, which we know from Securitate reports was easily heard and listened to in the Banat and Transylvania, helped to fan the flames of Romanians’ hatred of Soviet exploitation.<sup>227</sup> The broadcasts of some Romanian exiles like Alexandru D. Bunescu were just as saucy in tone as the Hungarian exile broadcasters. On September 6, 1956, for example, Bunescu told his Romanian listeners:

I reckon you were not very thrilled to read the telegram from Moscow in the August 8<sup>th</sup> issue of *Scântea*, which informed you that the youth from Romania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia passed through Moscow on their way to Siberia and Kazakhstan, where they will harvest crops. . . . And the young, so-called ‘volunteers’ were certainly not thrilled either, despite the efforts of their friends from Moscow to enchant them with the splendors of the Red Paradise. . . . [A]s though it were not enough that the subdued nations toil on their native ground primarily for the benefit of Soviet Russia, they also have to send their youth to slave away in the steppes of Siberia and Kazakhstan. . . . [T]he Kremlin will never allow our people to lead a better life than the Soviets.<sup>228</sup>

The students’ bitterness toward the Russians for their military presence in Timișoara was probably heightened by certain views filtering through the airwaves via Radio Free Europe and the Romanian National Committee in the United States.<sup>229</sup> One view is that Romania would have been better off had it not suddenly switched sides in World War II. Although there is no direct proof that the students of Timișoara subscribed to it, this viewpoint prevailed among the Romanian exiles working for RFE and especially members of the Romanian National Committee. Romanian émigrés such as the former minister of foreign affairs, Constantin Visoianu, and the statistician and demographer Dr. Sabin Manuilă wrote about how, despite switching sides on August 23, 1944 to fight against the Germans, Romania nevertheless ended up a captive nation of the USSR and forgotten by the United States.<sup>230</sup> They pointed out how Romania had saved thousands of American and British lives by fighting in Hungary, imprisoning some sixty-five thousand Germans in Romania, and shifting the Allied front westward, thus causing the Nazi collapse in the Balkans. Yet, despite Romanian sacrifices (one hundred fifty thousand extra casualties) that helped the Western Allies, the Soviet Union occupied Romania and treated it like an enemy country. The Russians betrayed the Romanians by postponing the signing of the armistice until September 12, 1944, which they then used as an excuse to arrest and deport to Siberia all the Romanian

soldiers who had been fighting with the Germans against the Russians. In return for Romanian help, they claimed, the United States basically sacrificed Romania to the Russians. They argued that Romania would have prospered more had it not switched sides and instead become occupied by the Americans, like Germany and Japan. “[F]or a period, [Romania] had a fascist government, it is true,” wrote Manuilă to the columnist George Ephraim Sokolsky on December 15, 1950, in response to a radio broadcast in which Sokolsky omitted Romania as “one of the countries caused irreparable harm” by U.S. foreign policy. “But Romania has overthrown it with decision and firmness. Italy had, Germany had, Japan had fascist governments, which were never overthrown until conquered. Yet they are today recipients of American favors.”<sup>231</sup> This argument of course omits the point that Stalin maneuvered to award Northern Transylvania to Romania instead of Hungary in 1947 in large part thanks to the latter’s break with Hitler and military cooperation with the Red Army.<sup>232</sup>

Whether or not they analyzed Romania’s allegiances during World War II, the peasants in Banat villages such as Lugoj and Făget—in contrast to peasants in other regions of the country—called for especially radical changes. Not content with simply abolishing the quota system (compulsory delivery of agricultural products to state authorities), exiting the GACs (Gospodăriile Agricole Colective, or collective agricultural farms), or predicting a Hungarian-style revolution in Romania, they called outright for the overthrow of the Dej regime. “Down with Gheorghiu-Dej and his gang of parvenus” read one leaflet in Lugoj. “We, citizens of Romania, fight for the following: the removal of the communist regime, a regime of terror” were the words on a poster in Făget.<sup>233</sup>

## Why the Demonstrations Ultimately Failed

Although the students of Timișoara were better organized, determined, and politically minded than students in other cities, they—like Romanian students elsewhere—were ultimately too idealistic. The sheer act of doing things they had not previously dared to do, like collectively throwing away their *mămăligă* in the cafeteria on October 27 or skipping Russian language classes, gave them a false sense of power. “I wrote into the memorandum the points that were added during the meeting . . . freedom of the press and of speech,” Păuna recalled. “There was such enthusiasm, all fear vanished!” Ioan Hollender, a third-year student in the faculty of mechanics, said: “I went home ‘on wings’ . . . in a very optimistic mood because something burst within me, within all of us. . . . A valve had opened and enormous pressure was released. What we said excited us and we forgot everything: all arrests, all crimes and harsh consequences.” As Heinrich Drobny mused, “We weren’t sociologists or

skillful historians who knew what it was all about. We didn't discuss politics with colleagues. We were instead romantic idealists."<sup>234</sup> In fact, the students preferred to study ancient Romanian history and religion rather than contemporary politics.<sup>235</sup> Ultimately, the students of Timișoara failed to mobilize the workers, peasants, and rest of the intelligentsia, believing naively—much like Leon Trotsky twenty-five years earlier—that if a simple spark could be lit or if a “snowball effect” could take hold, then a “permanent revolution” would spread among the Romanian population and ultimately the rest of the socialist camp. Drobny said: “We counted on spontaneity. We were not aware of the international context that was not ripe at that moment. . . . Our hope was that Hungary would succeed and this would snowball. We counted on this snowball effect to affect the masses, because we realized that people were dissatisfied, both workers and peasants. . . . [We hoped] that this would create a rift in the Socialist camp.”<sup>236</sup> Incidentally, a version of this idea circulated among Radio Free Europe personnel and undercover sources, namely, that if the West intervened in Hungary, revolutions would break out in the rest of the “captive nations.” According to a report by an anonymous forty-four-year-old Transylvanian Romanian intellectual who clandestinely left Romania for Paris on November 27, 1956: “Intervention carried out by the West would have generated revolt in all occupied countries, especially in Romania, which was waiting for this sign.”<sup>237</sup>

This idealism blinded the students to the need to mobilize other segments of the population to pressure the regime enough to bring about real change. Like the students in Bucharest and Iași, they were unable to summon students from other cities, since the Securitate intercepted letters and arrested supporters on trains, like Professor Pop en route to Cluj. Ultimately, the reasons why the demonstration in Timișoara failed are the same reasons why a nationwide revolution did not occur in Romania as a whole. Unlike students in Hungary, Romanian students certainly could not count on the support of any government leaders. Conceivably Constantinescu and Iosif Chișinevschi (vice president of the Council of Ministers) might have guided the students. At the March 1956 plenum and Politburo meetings of April 3, 4, 6, and 12, 1956, the two attempted to challenge Dej. Constantinescu was the most vocal, accusing Dej of dodging the issues in Khrushchev's Secret Speech, especially the abuses by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Both men miscalculated Dej's williness and skill in rallying other Politburo members against them. In fact, Constantinescu's attempt to coopt the CC member of Hungarian origin, Alexandru Moghioroș (Sándor Mogyorós) backfired; the latter tattled on him to Dej. Despite his ritual self-criticism (*autocritică*) and his rigorous measures to contain unrest in Cluj, Constantinescu, as well as Chișinevschi, were noticeably not appointed as leaders of the General Command. Dej never forgot their betrayal. However, the party leadership confined its disapproval strictly to private

circles; it was never publicly debated in fora like the tumultuous Petőfi Circle in Hungary.<sup>238</sup> Some students, such as third-year undergraduates in the faculty of philology at the University of Bucharest, must have heard about the support of Constantinescu and Chișinevschi for de-Stalinization, however, because on October 31 they asked for either of the two party officials to come visit them. “No one is capable of responding to [our] anxieties,” they reportedly complained (*Nimeni nu e în stare să le răspundă la ceea ce îi frământă*).<sup>239</sup> But neither of the men replied, and instead participated actively in the repression of the student unrest, thus showing their true stripes as careerists and opportunists.

Moreover, unlike other East European countries, Romania lacked famous martyrs, living or dead, whom students could use against the regime. There was no László Rajk or Imre Nagy or Władysław Gomułka or Traicho Kostov. Anna Pauker, erstwhile minister of foreign affairs whom *Time* magazine in 1948 dubbed “The Most Powerful Woman in the World,” was demoted in 1952, arrested, and then released without a trial shortly after Stalin’s death. Unlike her male counterparts in other East European communist countries, she spent her last seven years in quiet retirement, working as a translator and editor for the Political Publishing House (*Editura Politică*) in Bucharest.<sup>240</sup> Dej kept former Minister of Justice Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu in secret captivity for six years (1948–1954) and then had him executed on April 17, 1954, with no show trial. There were no ceremonial reburials, like the one for Rajk in Budapest on October 6, 1956, which was later construed as a “rehearsal for the [Hungarian] revolution.” Incoming eyewitness reports from Mălăeșan and Roman attested to the confusion and lack of unity in the Nagy government, thus further justifying Dej’s own closure of ranks and undermining of Constantinescu and Chisinevschi. “It was very noisy in there; delegations kept coming in,” Valter Roman told the PMR Politburo on November 2 after his trip to Budapest. “They haven’t eaten, slept or left the place for 7 or 8 days. They are physically wasting away. . . . They can’t get out and contact the masses. . . . They were starting a meeting of the Politburo or Government, the devil knows better what it was. . . . [W]e walked right into the lion’s mouth [*în gura leului*].”<sup>241</sup>

The students lacked a liberal role model among the younger party officials, who, on the contrary, played an active role in the repression. Ion Iliescu (future president of Romania beginning in 1990) is a good example. Twenty-six years old at the time, he had just returned from a study program in the USSR and had been elected secretary of the UTM Central Committee in 1956. Later he was appointed president of the Union of Student Associations (set up in December 1956) and organized mass meetings to strengthen the party’s role in the university milieu.<sup>242</sup>

Likewise, Romanian students lacked support from the intelligentsia. Despite the students’ sympathy for Alexandru Jar, Dej’s skillful discrediting of him intimidated

the rest of the intelligentsia. In Timișoara only Professor Pop, younger than some of his own students, actually supported the organizers of the meetings and was arrested with them. Another professor at the Polytechnic Institute, Iosif Haiduc, whose name literally means “outlaw” in Romanian, had not really supported the students, but was also arrested with them and used merely as a scapegoat.<sup>243</sup>

Perhaps most importantly, the workers and peasants in Romania did not support the students, despite their many grievances about low wages and high production quotas. No workers’ councils were formed as in Hungary, where they sprouted up like mushrooms with no central leadership, as the RFE broadcaster, Alexander Bunescu explained on December 4, 1956.<sup>244</sup> “I felt frustrated,” Stela Tașcă said. “Eighty percent of us were children of workers. . . . I told my father in a very serious conversation that I would never forgive him for the fact that we, the offspring, had been treated this way and that they, the workers, did not lift a finger! My father, an honest and principled person, swore to me that they didn’t know anything about it, [even] the railroad workers, and that they only heard what had happened several days afterwards.”<sup>245</sup>

Of course, in the case of Timișoara, this blackout of information can be attributed in part to the students’ own refusal to announce the meetings in writing. Yet even if they had tried to broadcast their meeting and the points in their memorandum by radio, they would have been thwarted. Noting that the radio station in Budapest was one of the first buildings attacked, PMR Politburo leaders decided on October 24 to reinforce the Securitate’s guard of all radio stations throughout Romania.<sup>246</sup>

The Romanian government also went to elaborate lengths to cut off the flow of information from abroad, imposing strict visa regulations, evacuating from Hungary only reliable Romanian citizens, curtailing leaves of absence for Romanian soldiers, and closely surveilling all repatriates recently arriving from Western capitalist countries, especially from West Germany. Stories told by live eyewitnesses are perhaps the most inspiring and infectious. Hence, preventing “suspicious elements” from traveling to and from Romania was one way to halt or at least retard the flow of “counterrevolutionary” ideas. After Khrushchev’s Secret Speech in February 1956, visa rules had been significantly relaxed. The Soviet government proposed that all citizens of the “peoples democracies” be able to travel to these bloc countries without a passport, using simply their identity cards. “We informed the embassy of Hungary that we agree with this proposal,” the Romanian Foreign Ministry reported.<sup>247</sup>

However, one day after the October 23 street demonstration in Budapest, Mălnășan sent a telegram to Ambassador Popescu in Bucharest: “to prevent elements who participated in the riots in Hungary from taking refuge in our country, slipping in to stay with their relatives, our government . . . will allow Hungarian citizens to enter Romania only if they hold a regular or business passport issued by Hungarian



authorities, stamped with a visa from the Romanian embassy in Budapest.” Romanian Embassy officials could issue these visas without consulting the Romanian Foreign Ministry. As before, Hungarian diplomats needed just a passport without a visa.<sup>248</sup>

The Dej regime seemed even more concerned about security threats from its own Romanian citizens trying to return home than about possible anti-Romanian protests in Budapest. A week after the tighter visa regulations were issued, on October 31, Popescu sent a frantic telegram to Bucharest, heavily underlining each sentence: “All the friendly embassies sent their citizens home in buses. Only Romanian citizens, extremely agitated, remained in hotels and various institutions in Budapest. Increasingly large groups are assailing [*asaltează*] the embassy, loudly accusing the government of not evacuating them from Hungary. Please analyze the situation quickly [*urgent*] and send 3–4 buses to transport them to Oradea. Otherwise there is a risk that others will join them and there will be an anti-Romanian protest [*Altfel riscăm ca în jurul lor să se strînga și alții și să avem o manifestație anti-romînească*].”<sup>249</sup>

We can only consider them “on a case by case basis,” Grigore Preoteasa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, conveyed by telephone. “You must show what kind of group it is, who sent them, where they came from, their names, and so on.”<sup>250</sup> Two planes were sent for those citizens on official government business, while the others could return only via Romanian ships on the Danube. “Gather data on each citizen and take all necessary measures to make sure that, among those who return, there are no provocateurs [*elemente provocatoare*],” Deputy Foreign Minister Alexandru Lăzăreanu wrote back two days later, on November 2. “Pay special attention to this last matter,” he added for emphasis. Some Romanian citizens were barred from Romania simply for having been born in Hungary, as was Elisabeta Ana Gabriela Koczwald, born in Szeged, Hungary, in 1934.<sup>251</sup>

By November 29, still more caveats were added to the rules, which caused undue delays in processing visas. The Romanian Embassy in Budapest needed to wait for approval from the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest in order to grant visas to Hungarian citizens wanting to resettle in Romania permanently; to Romanian citizens living in Hungary who wished to visit Romania; or to Romanian citizens wishing to visit Hungary who claimed to have lost all their traveling documents.<sup>252</sup>

Unlike Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab, Dej did not have to worry about thousands of Hungarian refugees flooding into Romania in search of freedom. On the contrary, some Romanian citizens were *fleeing from* Romania to Hungary. When on December 7 two Romanian citizens who were ethnic Hungarians—Ferenc Csiriak (seventeen years old) and József Nemes (twenty-three years old)—were arrested by the Hungarian army in Budapest, having crossed the border illegally, Romanian visa rules got even stricter.<sup>253</sup> Beginning on December 12, holders of any kind of passport,

even a diplomatic one, could not enter Romania without an additional stamped visa.<sup>254</sup> Only a full year later, November 10, 1957, could Popescu report to Bucharest, “I’m happy to learn that the granting of visas for individual trips has been accelerated; it is good, because [Hungarians] with relatives in Romania may visit them very easily [*foarte ușor*].”<sup>255</sup>

Other groups of people considered capable of spreading dangerous ideas were Romanian soldiers on leaves of absence. On October 24 the PMR Politburo decreed that “permission for leaves of absence should not be granted to soldiers [and] those who are on leave should not be recalled.”<sup>256</sup>

Still more threatening were those people who had recently returned from the West—especially Germans, for they had the freshest ties with the West and could spread the worst anti-regime ideas about the events in Hungary. As of July 1956 an estimated twenty-five hundred Romanian refugees lived in West Germany. About fifteen different associations—social, cultural, political, and religious—existed, twelve of which were united under the umbrella of the Union of Romanian Associations and Institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn, headed by a Romanian Orthodox theologian and writer, George Racoveanu.<sup>257</sup> Initially, in the summer of 1956, the Bucharest leadership had tried to entice ethnic Germans to return to Romania from Germany, recognizing them as a technically and economically progressive minority that could contribute to Romania’s economy.<sup>258</sup> However, the Hungarian crisis triggered the Dej regime’s paranoia, and the fact remained that the community of ethnic Germans in Romania was a notoriously anti-communist, isolated, and close-knit group, making it nearly impossible for Securitate informers to penetrate. On October 26 the PMR Politburo met and instructed the Ministry of the Interior to “propose a plan of measures” for the “strict verification” (*verificări*) of “all suspicious elements” who had “recently repatriated to Romania from the capitalist states.”<sup>259</sup> Later that same evening, at 11:00 p.m., Securitate informers reported that a group of ethnic Germans were spotted leaving the house of Eve Andrei, who had just emigrated from West Germany.<sup>260</sup>

In cases where information could not be kept out, strenuous efforts were made to mollify the effects by augmenting pro-communist propaganda, making wide-ranging concessions to the national minorities like the Germans, and by establishing armed “workers’ guards” in all enterprises to defend the regime if necessary. A neglected topic, which nevertheless looms large in archival documents, is the alarm of Bucharest leaders regarding a widespread rumor that ethnic Germans—the Saxons of Transylvania and Swabs of the Banat—would soon be deported *en masse* to West Germany. Other Germans thought they might be sent to Canada, Alsace, Lorraine, or northern Sweden.<sup>261</sup> Given the two earlier waves of deportations of Germans in 1945 and 1951, one can easily grasp the Germans’ phobia, but such rumors further escalated anti-regime

sentiment. The last thing party officials needed was for the non-Romanian minorities to form solidarity with each other. “A group of organized Germans fraternizes with the Hungarian rebels in the region of Vatra-Dornei, in the Suceava Region,” one Securitate informer warned on October 28.<sup>262</sup>

PMR officials blamed foreign radio broadcasts of the “capitalist countries, particularly of Western Germany, which campaign constantly in favor of such a deportation.” They were sure the Germans were listening to these broadcasts, because “broad circles of the German population were informed well in advance about the planned trip to Romania in the spring of 1956 of Dr. [Heinrich] Weitz, president of West Germany’s Red Cross.”<sup>263</sup> The importance of the German deportation issue to the Bucharest government is revealed in an early telegram of February 2, 1956, sent to the Romanian Embassy in Budapest, requesting that the embassy collect from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs “as much information as possible” about Weitz’s recent trip to Budapest, “the precise objective, form, and possible difficulties.” Mălnășan wrote: “We need this information because a similar trip has been suggested to us too, and we wish to benefit from the Hungarian comrades’ experience.”<sup>264</sup>

The Politburo members came to realize—as discussed in a thirteen-page secret report—that “this rumor about deportation finds more fertile soil . . . in places where disrespect [toward Germans], theft, embezzlement, [and] tendentious interpretation of governmental decrees are the most acute.”<sup>265</sup> The author of the report cited a detailed letter written by German members of a collective farm in Biled in the Timișoara region, explaining their decision to quit work due to the abusive behavior of the collective farm’s alcoholic director Sabin Bec. “All Germans should leave,” Bec had reportedly shouted. “I’ll cut up 50 of them and drink the blood of 20 of them.” Pointing to his moustache, he said, “this is the last trace of Stalin’s moustache. I am the commander around here.” “No wonder cases like the ones we mentioned embitter the German population in Transylvania and the Banat,” concluded the author.<sup>266</sup>

It should be remembered that, between 1945 and 1948, about sixty thousand ethnic German farmers had lost their homes, farms, fields, cattle, and agricultural machinery. Some of them were allowed to remain in parts of the buildings that they had owned, but others were sent to live elsewhere within local communities. Middle-class merchants also lost their urban residences, and Saxon and Swab banks and enterprises were nationalized. Only those Germans who fought in the Romanian army against Nazi forces after August 1944 were spared. After 1949 the status of the German minority improved. In 1950, German citizens were given the right to vote, and in June 1956, Decree no. 81 was proclaimed (although not published), in which the return of confiscated German property was stipulated.

This decree was only partially carried out, however. As the authors of the secret report revealed, Romanians continued living in the houses, taking the best rooms and forcing the German owners to live in sheds on their own property. The authors wrote: “We mention the case of J. Player, who for the last two years lives in the shed of his house, having been refused a room in his own house. When he tried to protest, the chairman of the council replied cynically, ‘As far as I’m concerned, you can continue to live ten more years in the shed. The houses have been returned to the Saxons only in the sense that they now must pay taxes and do repairs. We are absolutely indifferent about where they live.’ [*Unde stau ei îmi este absolut indiferent*].”<sup>267</sup> They concluded that the Romanians should at least pay rent to the German taxpaying homeowners. In other cases, Germans who received their houses back were physically attacked, as in two communes in Timis County, in Periam, as well as at Sacălaz, “where a retired Romanian military officer set up a gang and regularly incites fights with Germans.” The authors continued, “We were told that a German citizen was beaten to death. His killer was sentenced to only one year in prison.”<sup>268</sup> Other Germans whose houses were returned were then barred by Romanians from joining the collective farms. Moreover, German repatriates, such as those from the commune Steierdorf-Anina in the Timișoara region, were refused their pensions.<sup>269</sup> From this mistreatment, the Germans concluded that they were about to be deported.

Nationalist sentiments outweighed international socialist tenets, even for Romania, outwardly one of the most loyal Soviet satellites. As with the Transylvanian Hungarians, PMR Politburo members decided to grant a wide range of concessions to the Germans. They met on October 24 and resolved to study the Germans’ situation in depth. Party activists of German nationality—Filip Gheltz, Anton Breitenhofer, and others—were dispatched to German-populated regions like Timișoara and Brașov. Friedrich Müller, the German Lutheran bishop from Sibiu, was “persuaded” to support the Dej administration. The regime promised ethnic Germans that their relatives from West or East Germany could visit them in Romania—a disingenuous claim, given the stricter visa rules.<sup>270</sup> A committee was sent to the provinces to solve cases where Decree no. 81 was not being applied, i.e., where Germans’ properties had still not been returned.<sup>271</sup> Statistics were published about how many Germans had indeed received their property. Loans were issued to those citizens who needed to build new houses. The “most devoted German elements” were admitted into the party and state leadership. Regional and district party committees appointed lecturers to speak in the villages, particularly at meetings with German intellectuals, teachers, and “even with priests, if necessary.” Other measures, as in the case with the Hungarians of Transylvania mentioned above, were mostly symbolic. German-language theaters were set up in Timișoara, Sibiu, and Brașov. Two German newspapers, a literary journal, and a

faculty of German language and literature were established. German painters, such as Franz Ferch from Timișoara and Stefan Jäger from Jimbolia, received awards. Ironically, the Dej regime's anxiety to prevent a grassroots rebellion in Romania induced it to improve the situation for the "cohabiting nationalities" there, at least temporarily. All these concessions to the ethnic Germans of Romania—like those to the Hungarians of Transylvania—thus served to dilute criticisms of the communist establishment and divide the population. If one person mentioned a shortcoming of the regime, someone else could counter with a positive contribution. Confusion resulted.

Unlike the Hungarian insurgents, Romanian students did not have access to firearms, but the Dej leadership, learning another lesson from the Hungarian revolt, made plans to arm all pro-communist workers. At the Politburo session of November 2, Mălnășan and Roman (who spoke Hungarian and knew Nagy from their work in the Comintern in Moscow) reflected on the causes of the crisis in Hungary. One of the mistakes of the Nagy government, Roman concluded, was the failure to arm the workers. The Hungarian party leaders "including Gerő and everybody . . . decided to arm the workers in factories, but this was never carried out," Roman told his colleagues. "An order was issued to open fire, but the deputies [*adjuncții*] did not want to execute the minister's order."<sup>272</sup>

A previously unpublished background report dated November 16 by Bodnăraș and the three other General Command leaders (Drăghici, Ceaușescu, and Sălăjan) reveals their resolve to mobilize the entire workforce in Romania through the establishment of so-called workers' guards. By mid-November the tumultuous meetings of October 30–31 in Timișoara had passed, as well as the final Soviet military crackdown on Hungary on November 4, and thus Romania leaders—perhaps more than leaders of any other East European communist country—decided to spare no expense in preventing any further disturbances in their country. Like Dej, Walter Ulbricht in East Germany also realized the utility of force. However, rather than arming all loyal workers, he merely authorized authorized members of the SED (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands) Politburo to carry guns and sent armed battle groups (Kampfgruppen) to suppress specific student demonstrations at Humboldt University in East Berlin.<sup>273</sup>

As designed by the General Command, the purpose of the workers' guard would be defense only in enterprises of between 100 and 300 workers, whereas in enterprises of over 300 workers, the guard would be trained both for defensive and offensive operations. A "worker group" (*grupa muncitorească*) would consist of ten men: one commander with an automatic revolver, nine men armed with rifles and three grenades each. A worker "platoon" would comprise of a commander, three worker groups, and three liaison officers (*agenți de legătură*) or a total of "34 men

with 4 automatic revolvers, 29 rifles, one machine gun, one pistol, and 96 grenades.” The authorities preferred volunteers who were party members, but did not exclude nonparty members. They preferred that the commanders, whenever possible, be those party members who had been active in the underground communist movement in the 1930s. Both commanders and guard members would receive combat training. To ensure loyalty, political deputies would be assigned to the units, and back-up units would be organized. Worker guards involved in combat would receive a special food bonus in addition to their salary. The worker guards’ uniform would consist of a “cap, overalls (shirt and pants), belt, and cartridge box.” To make sure they could recognize each other, they would also be issued a special identification card, as well as an armband or badge. Commanders of groups or platoons would also wear distinctive badges on their collars.<sup>274</sup>

## Conclusion

In short, due to this mobilization of the entire work force, and the PMR leadership’s other thorough measures, a Hungarian-style revolt was impossible in Romania. The Bucharest leadership did everything possible to show Moscow that it had firm control at home and that an emergency Soviet invasion would never be needed in Romania. They carried out mass arrests, guarded all radio and newspaper buildings, tightened visa restrictions to prevent suspicious people from entering Romania, but also granted concessions to ethnic minorities and workers. Seriatim meetings of political indoctrination numbed most citizens into unthinking obedience. For the sake of self-preservation, they joined the party, attended the meetings, mouthed the bromides, and kept their distance from discontented students and intellectuals.

The students in Timișoara came the closest to organizing a mass demonstration due to psychological, logistical, and historical factors. Obvious discrepancies between the Romanian and Hungarian media provoked the students’ animus and generated a thirst for the unvarnished truth. Cramped dorm rooms promoted student meetings. Teodor Stanca, Aurel Baghiu, and Caius Muțiu publicized the meeting verbally, only just before it was to begin. Students at the Polytechnic Institute entered room 115 quietly, in single file. The cancellation of classes on October 31 facilitated a follow-up march protesting the students’ arrests. A tradition of anticommunist protest had prevailed since 1945 among the students of Timișoara, especially of the Polytechnic Institute.

In Bucharest the Securitate and General Command monitored students too closely and thwarted each potential rally, while the Hungarian Embassy sequestered Hungarian exchange students. Party and university officials in Cluj played the “irredentist card” to prevent mass solidarity among Hungarian and Romanian citizens. In

the smaller city of Iași to the east, where far fewer Hungarians lived, the pragmatic students' celebration of Stephen cel Mare was defused by the Securitate's infiltration and the party's ban on the attendance of Romanian students from Cluj.

Had the Dej regime not taken such speedy, drastic measures to control the population during the Hungarian crisis, would a nationwide revolution have occurred in Romania? One can surmise that it would have been possible but unlikely, given the general submissiveness of the intelligentsia and the closure of ranks among PMR officials shocked by what had transpired in Budapest.

The extent to which student protests in 1956 contributed to the collapse of communism in 1989 is subject to debate. At the risk of succumbing to the postcommunist bias, perhaps one can apply Isaac Newton's Third Law of Motion to Romanian politics. For every action there is always an equal and opposite reaction. To some extent, the events of 1956 gave rise to the principal protagonists—both loyalists and rebels—of the successful 1989 revolution thirty-three years later. Trained at a special military school in Moscow, the future dictator Ceaușescu—then thirty-eight years old—vehemently supported the Soviet military intervention, actively participating not only in the four-member General Command, but also supervising the Securitate's intelligence operations in Hungary.<sup>275</sup> But in giving rise to Ceaușescu, the Romanian October of 1956 perhaps also spawned the forces that would eventually dethrone him. For supporting the Hungarian revolution, twenty-one-year-old philology student Paul Goma was imprisoned at Jilava and Gherla, and then put under house arrest in the village of Lătești in Bărăgan until 1964. Undaunted, Goma thirteen years later (February 1977), at age forty-one, coaxed two hundred dissidents to sign an open letter addressed to the Belgrade meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe protesting human rights abuses. Radio Free Europe broadcast the letter for other Romanians to hear.<sup>276</sup>

It was not wholly a coincidence either that the 1989 revolution began in Timișoara. The students of the Polytechnic Institute might not have prevailed in 1956, but they set a vital precedent, emboldening the thousands of Timișoarans who on December 15–16, 1989, formed a human chain around the block where the apartment of László Tőkés was located. They opposed the eviction of this Hungarian Calvinist pastor—his last name, ironically, means “capitalist”—who had criticized Ceaușescu's human rights abuses and rejected the tyrant's plan to restructure Romanian and Hungarian villages. Dej's handy formula for suppressing rebellion did not work for Ceaușescu. The Romanian army this time no longer supported the regime. Defense Minister Vasile Milea shot himself in order to be relieved from office, accidentally hitting an artery and dying. His successor, Victor Stănculescu, refused to carry out Ceaușescu's repressive orders. The Romanian revolution—the bloodiest in Eastern Europe—had begun, one which

this time led to the final overthrow of the communist regime and execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu.

Linguistic differences pale in comparison with misperceptions of intention. Most of the students in 1956 were merely trying to work with the system, not to overthrow it. They lacked weapons, a living martyr for guidance, and a following among peasants, workers, and intelligentsia alike. The majority of Hungarians from Transylvania and the Banat had no separatist or irredentist agenda. They just wanted more freedom and equal opportunity. At the trial of Pál Fodor, one of the repressed Hungarians in Cluj, Bálint Szentmártoni (“Father Odorik”) said: “Our sin is that we hoped, so if hope is sin in Romania, then we, Hungarians in Rumania, are all guilty.”<sup>277</sup>



## Notes

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1. On March 4, 1956, Ulbricht published an article in *Neues Deutschland*, stating that “Stalin cannot be considered a classic of Marxism.” At the third party conference of the SED, March 24–30, Ulbricht focused on the more innocuous themes of the CPSU congress. Hope M. Harrison, “The Effects of the 1956 Hungarian Uprising on the East German Leadership,” paper presented at Budapest conference, “Hungary and the World, 1956,” September 26–29, 1996, 11–14.

2. Constantinescu and Chișinevschi were completely excluded from the party during the plenum of June 9–13, 1958, along with the “Doncea group” (Constantin Doncea, Ovidiu Șandru, Grigore Răceanu, Pavel Ștefan and Iacob Coțoveanu).

3. The Romanian language is replete with “false cognates,” or words that sound like English words but have quite different meanings. These false cognates, to name just a few, are: *a afirma* (to state or assert, not to affirm); *avertisment* (warning, not advertisement); *a controla* (to check or verify, not always to control); *a determina* (to cause or persuade, not to determine); and *prejudiciu* (harm, not prejudice). Other Romance languages like French are full of such false cognates.

4. The official name for the Romanian national archives in Bucharest is Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (ANIC), or National Central Historical Archives of Romania. Communist party archival documents were delivered to the National Archives after 1989. The Foreign Ministry archive is known as Arhivă Diplomatică, Ministerul Afacerilor Externe (Arh. MAE). The documents, which to my knowledge have not yet been published or translated into English, include protocols, stenograms, and diplomatic telegrams sent to the Romanian leaders in Bucharest from Budapest. All passages are cited in the original Romanian as they appear in the documents. However, it should be noted that in 1993 the Romanian Academy decided to reverse the orthographic reform of 1953. Except at the beginning of a word or in compound words, the letter *â* replaces *î* (e.g., România, not Romînia). See Dennis Deletant, *Colloquial Romanian: A Complete Language Course*, 2d ed. (London: Routledge, 1995), 7.

5. Open Society Archive, box 49, folder 1, no. 110, “Report on Rumania: Background and Current Situation,” Dec. 24, 1959, on <http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/49-1-110.shtml>.

6. “Fragment din interviul acordat de Gheorghe Apostol domnului Ioan Scurtu și doamnei Virginia Călin la data de 20 octombrie 1994 privind momentul retragerii trupelor sovietice din România,” document 41 in Ioan Scurtu, *România retragerea trupelor sovietice, 1958* (Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1996), 227–236.

7. Soviet army units never reached Albania, and only passed through Yugoslavia in 1944, never to return to Yugoslavia. Soviet troops left Bulgaria in 1947. Six Soviet divisions remained in all of Hungary, Romania, and Austria. In 1955 Soviet troops left Austria.

8. The Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow, Veljko Mićunović, wrote that “Romanian forces might have taken part but the Russians considered it was not necessary.” Veljko Mićunović, *Moscow Diary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 131–132. On Romanian intelligence assistance to the ÁVH, see Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1987), 358–359; Tibor Méray, *44 év után. A Budapest-Moszkva-Bukarest háromszög* (Marosvásárhely, Romania: Mentor, 2001), 28–57; and Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948–1965* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 267.

9. Maria Someșan and Mircea Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956 în universitățile din România,” in Ioana Boca, ed. *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului* (*Sighet Annals*, no. 8, 1954–1956) (Bucharest: Fundația Academica Civică, 2000), 624.

10. Before the Hungarian revolt there were no agents among professors in seven out of ten university institutes in Bucharest. At the same time, only thirteen agents in Iași were covering 7,300 students, and only seven agents in Cluj were “pursuing” 9,000 students and 700 members of the teaching staff. After the revolt, 69 students in Iași and 57 agents in Cluj were recruited. Elisabeta Neagoe and Liviu Pleșa, “Radiografia Securității în anul 1957,” in Cristina Anisescu, ed. *Arhivele Securității* (Bucharest, Editura Nemira, 2004), 167.

11. Sergiu Verona, *Military Occupation and Diplomacy: Soviet Troops in Romania, 1944–1958* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992), 148.

12. Victor Frunză, “Studenti la Moscova în 1956,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 736.

13. See Arh. St. Cluj (State Archive of Cluj), Comitetul Orășenesc PCR Cluj, fond 55, dosar 14/1957, 23 februarie 1957, ff. 2–5, document 42 in Andreea Andreescu, Lucian Nastasă, and Andrea Varga, eds., *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1956–1968)* (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația CRDE, 2003), 246.

14. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 354, ff. 1–5, Protocol No. 54, al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956, in Corneliu Lungu and Mihai Retegan, *1956 Explozia: Percepții române, iugoslave și sovietice asupra evenimentelor din Polonia și Ungaria* (Bucharest: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1996), 78.

15. Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 260.

16. Dumitru Balan, “Martor la recrudescențe staliniste,” in Boca, ed., *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 884.

17. Ibid., 884–86, and Frunză, “Studenti la Moscova în 1956,” 738–740. First names of Sporic, Morărașu, and Karečki not provided. Balan had added the caveat that “the general methods of the party are fair.” Nevertheless, three years later, as a professor of Russian literature at the Maxim Gorky Pedagogical Institute in Bucharest in 1958, Balan was interrogated, snubbed at the August 23 festival, and dismissed as secretary of the institute’s UTM committee.

18. Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecourile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 626. A few Romanian scholars are making great strides in this direction. See, for example, Ioana Boca, “1956 în România,” in Doina Jela and Vladimir Tismaneanu, eds., *Ungaria 1956: revoltă minților și sfârșitul mitului comunist* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2006), 169–195.
19. Two useful English sources on student unrest in Romania in 1956 are: chapters 11 and 12 in Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, and chapters 4 and 5 in Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).
20. According to Elisabeta Neagoe and Liviu Pleșa, reports for 1956–1957 of the Securitate’s regional divisions in Timișoara and the Hungarian Autonomous Region are missing. See “Radiografia Securității în anul 1957,” 162.
21. See pp. 338–339 in *Comisia prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România*, [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/news/docs/RAPORT%20FINAL\\_%20CADCR.pdf](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/news/docs/RAPORT%20FINAL_%20CADCR.pdf).
22. Ioana Boca, “Urmările mișcărilor studențești din toamna anului 1956,” in *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 658.
23. The Hungarian Autonomous Region (in Romanian, Regiunea Autonomă Maghiară) was an autonomous region in Romania between 1952 and 1960. Its population in 1956 consisted of 77.3 percent Székely Hungarians; 20.1 percent Romanians; 1.5 percent Gypsies; 0.4 percent Germans; and 0.4 percent Jews. Hungarian was declared one of the official languages of the province. Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely) was the administrative center. See Stefano Bottoni, “Integrálódó kisebbség? A Magyar Autonóm Tartomány politikai elitje,” <http://bottoni.adatbank.transindex.ro/>, and Károly Kocsis and Eszter Kocsisné Hodosi, *Ethnic Geography of the Hungarian Minorities in the Carpathian Basin* (Budapest: Geographical Research Institute, 1998), 130.
24. Árpád Kosztin, *Az Erdélyben elkövetett magyarellenes román kegyetlenkedések idorendje és leltára* (Budapest: Szenci Molnár Társaság, 2000). See also the English edition: *Chronicle of Cruelties: Romanian Mistreatment of the Hungarian Minority in Transylvania*, trans. Éva Barcza Bessenyei, <http://www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/kosztin/kosztin.pdf>, 112.
25. For useful memoirs see those collected in the volume edited by Ioana Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, including: Aurel Baghiu, “Procesul lotului 1 al studenților de la Timișoara—noiembrie 1956” (704–709); Caius Muțiu, Teodor Stanca, and Aurel Baghiu, “Mișcările studențești anticomuniste din octombrie 1956 din Timișoara, văzuteși prezentate de inițiatorii și principalii organizatori” (667–90); and Teodor Stanca, “Acțiunile PCR de reprimare a mișcărilor studențești anticomuniste. Timișoara—octombrie 1956” (691–703). Also see the papers presented at the Symposium of Sighetu Marmăției, July 2–4, 2000 (Bucharest: Romulus Rusan, 2000), and the collected reminiscences of the students in Timișoara: Mihaela Sitaru, ed. *Oază de libertate: Timișoara 30 octombrie 1956* (Bucharest: Polirom, 2004). In addition, see Mihai Stere Derdena, *Mărturisirea unui neînvins* (Bucharest: Fundația Culturală Aromâne “Dimândarea părintească,” 1998); Dumitru Andreica, *Drumuri în întineric. Destine mehedintene (1945–1964)*, (Bucharest: Fundația “Academia Civică,” 1998); Aurel Baghiu, *Printre grații* (Cluj, Romania: Zalmoxis, 1995); and David Prodan, *Memorii* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedica, 1993).

26. Hungarian documentary collections on Romanian–Hungarian relations and on the Transylvania question include *Budapest–Bukarest 1956. 1956-os vonatkozású romániai dokumentumok adattára*, on the website of the 1956 Institute (Budapest): <http://www.rev.hu/index.html>; Ildikó Lipcsey, ed. *Magyar-román kapcsolatok, 1956–1958. Dokumentumok* (Budapest: Paulus-Publishing, 2004); and several collections edited by Gábor Vincze, such as *Történeti kényszerpályák: kisebbségi realpolitikák II: dokumentumok a romániai magyar kisebbség történetének tanulmányozásához 1944–1989* (Csíkszereda, Romania: Pro-Print, 2003), and Mihály Fülöp and Gábor Vincze, eds., *Revízió vagy autonómia? iratok a magyar-román kapcsolatok történetéről, 1945–1947* (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 1998). See also Méray, *44 év után*. Recent studies on the effect of the Hungarian revolt on Romania include Stefano Bottoni, ed., *Az 1956-os forradalom és a romániai magyarság (1956–1959)* (Csíkszereda, Romania: 2006), <http://adatbank.transindex.ro/cedula.php?kod=564>; and Stefano Bottoni, “Recepció és párhuzamosság. A romániai ’56 és a magyar forradalom viszonya,” *Korunk* 2 (2006): 40–48. The website “Erdeyi Magyar Adatbank” (<http://www.adatbank.transindex.ro>) is a rich source of documents and bibliographies on the Hungarian minority in Romania. Documents such as Ambassador Popescu’s daily reports sent from Budapest to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest were first published in Hungarian in *Heti Magyarország* between October 22, 1993, and November 26, 1993. Finally, Zoltán Tófalvi is currently preparing a 1,000-page archive-based volume about the impact of the 1956 revolution on the Transylvanian Hungarians in Romania.

27. “Ședința Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 3 aprilie 1956,” in Alina Tudor and Dan Cătănuș, *O destalinizare ratată. Culisele cazului Miron Constantinescu—Iosif Chișinevschi* (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2001), 54.

28. Alexandru Salcă, “Brașovul solidar cu revoluția maghiară,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 711.

29. Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 234.

30. The prison experience turned writer Alexandru Ivăsiuc, one of the students in Bucharest who tried to organize a rally, into a realist, for example. He stopped studying medicine and, upon his release in the early 1960s, began working for the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest, even though that necessitated daily reporting to the Securitate. He later became secretary of the Writers’ Union. A street in Bucharest is now named after Ivăsiuc, who was killed in the Bucharest earthquake of 1977. Information provided by the *New York Times* journalist David Binder, who knew him personally.

31. Ioan Munteanu, “Manifestația anticomunistă a studenților de la Timișoara din octombrie 1956,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 647.

32. Magyar Országos Levéltár or MOL (Budapest), KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00248-1957, January 10, 1957, document 36 in Andreescu et al., *Minorități etnoculturale*, 246.

33. Steve Kokker and Cathryn Kemp, *Romania and Moldova* (London: Lonely Planet, 2004), 52.

34. *Recensământul populației din 21 februarie 1956: Structura demografică a populației* (Bucharest: Direcția Centrală de Statistică, Intreprinderea Poligrafică, 1959). Population data

alone available in English at <http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol5/tables/t02.pdf>. The number of ethnic Hungarians in Bucharest is provided in Ioan Lacusta, “In București, acum 50 ani,” *Magazin istoric*, 40, no. 6 (June 2006). <http://www.magazinistoric.itenet.ro/>.

35. See ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, ff. 19–35, “Referat cu privire la unele comentarii și manifestări din rîndul studenților în legătură cu aplicarea noului sistem al burselor, precum și alte manifestări ale corpului didactic, 1 octombrie 1956.” A reduced facsimile of this document is published also in the appendix of Ioana Boca, *1956. Un an de ruptură. România între internaționalismul proletar și stalinismul antisovietic* (Bucharest: Fundația Academica Civică: 2001), 216–236.

36. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 11, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.”

37. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 19, “Referat cu privire la unele comentarii și manifestări din rîndul studenților în legătură cu aplicarea noului sistem al burselor, precum și alte manifestări ale corpului didactic, 1 octombrie 1956.”

38. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 10, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.” The name “Georgeta Naidin” is spelled in different places as “Georgeta Naidar.”

39. *Ibid.*, f. 11.

40. *Ibid.*, f. 15. *[N]imic tovarășe, absolut, nimic. S-ți i asă din cap că se va ridica plafonul.*

41. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 23, “Referat cu privire la unele comentarii și manifestări din rîndul studenților în legătură cu aplicarea noului sistem al burselor, precum și alte manifestări ale corpului didactic, 1 octombrie 1956.”

42. Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 668.

43. MOL (Budapest), KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00248-1957, 10.I.1957, document 36 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 248. Kádár used the Hungarian word *lencseadag*, or “a serving” (*adag*) “of lentils” (*lencse*). However, it is possible he meant polenta or *mămăligă*.

44. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 13, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.”

45. Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 150.

46. “The cult of personality emerged in our creative methods, to the detriment of depicting the true Communist,” Jar said during the interview. See “În întâmpinarea Congresului Scriitorilor: Problemele actuale ale prozei. De vorbă cu Alexandru Jar” in *Gazeta literară* 15, no. 109 (April 12, 1956): 1. For an insightful analysis of the Jar case, see Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Arheologia terorii* (Bucharest: Editura Allfa, 1996), 101, 110.

47. See the stenograph of Alexandru Jar’s speech in Elisabeta Neagoe, *Problematica cultului*

*personalității în mediul literar din România. Cazul Alexandru Jar*, in Anisescu, *Arhivele Securității*, 473–481.

48. NARA (National Archives and Records Administration, Maryland, USA), RG 59, OSS - INR Reports. Paper prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, IR no. 8005, Washington, April 27, 1959. <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/frus/frus58-60x1/04easteur3.html>.

49. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, ff. 12–13, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.”

50. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 24, “Referat cu privire la unele comentarii și manifestări din rîndul studenților în legătură cu aplicarea noului sistem al burselor, precum și alte manifestări ale corpului didactic, 1 octombrie 1956.”

51. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 12, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.” According to Elizabeth Neagoe, Jar’s real name was Alexandru Avram. See Elisabeta Neagoe, *Problematika cultului personalității în mediul literar din România. Cazul Alexandru Jar* in Cristina Anisescu, ed. *Arhivele Securității* (Bucharest: Editura Nemira, 2004), 646. However, Vladimir Tismaneanu attests that the writer’s real name was “Pashkela,” while Eugen Iacob provides it as “Solomon Iacob.” See Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 149, 367; and Eugen Iacob, *Securitatea și evrei, despre călăi și despre victime* (Bucharest: Editura Ziua, 2003), 369.

52. *Ibid.*, f. 6.

53. *Ibid.*, f. 12.

54. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 21, “Referat cu privire la unele comentarii și manifestări din rîndul studenților în legătură cu aplicarea noului sistem al burselor, precum și alte manifestări ale corpului didactic, 1 octombrie 1956.”

55. Khrushchev’s Komsomol speech was published in *Pravda*, November 10, 1956. Cited in Ghiță Ionescu, *Communism in Romania, 1944–1962* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 272. Also Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 262.

56. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 135/1956, f. 12, “Stenograma ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua de 5 decembrie 1956.” *O singură dată au spus că atunci cînd au început lucrurile în Polonia și în Ungaria aveam grijă că o să aveți cu ungurii.*

57. Hoover Institution Archive (Stanford, Calif.), Alexandru D. Bunescu Social-Economic Radio Talks (in Romanian), box 1, accession no. 78003-41.07, p. 2. Speech broadcast by Radio Free Europe, “Pretinsele Tratatative Româno-Sovietice,” December 27, 1956.

58. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 9, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.”

59. *Ibid.*, f. 13.

60. Ibid., f. 15.
61. Ibid., f. 2.
62. Ibid., f. 4.
63. Open Society Archive, box 49, folder 1, no. 110, “Report on Rumania: Background and Current Situation,” December 24, 1959, on <http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/49-1-110.shtml>.
64. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 74/1956, ff. 52–61, “Buletin informativ, 29 octombrie 1956, oră 10.00” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 131.
65. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 113/1956, f. 1, “Protocol nr. 48 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 4 octombrie 1956.”
66. Ibid., f. 17.
67. Arhiva postului de radio “Europa Liberă,” fond România, document nr. 2431 (1962), 13, cited in *Capitolul II : “Represiunea Genocidul Comunist în România. Conceptul de Genocid,”* [http://www.adevarulonline.ro/comunism/CAPITOLUL\\_II.pdf](http://www.adevarulonline.ro/comunism/CAPITOLUL_II.pdf). Accounts of the fate of Teodor Lupaș differ. See Balan, “Martor la recrudescențe staliniste,” 878–895; and Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecourile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 617–634. According to Balan, Lupaș died in a “bizarre car accident many years after his release,” and according to Someșan, he died one year later, also as a result of physical torture.
68. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 354, ff. 1–5, “Protocol No. 54, al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 78.
69. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 74/1956, ff. 6–10, “Buletin informativ referitor la starea de spirit din țară și măsurile preconizate pentru rezolvarea problemelor interne și contracararea efectelor evenimentelor din Ungaria, Bucuresti, 26 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 90.
70. ACNSAS (Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securității, or Archive of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives), fond penal, dosar nr. 845, vol. 1, f. 58. Cited in Vladimir Tismaneanu et al., *Comisia prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România* (Bucharest, 2006). [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/news/docs/RAPORT%20FINAL\\_%20CADCR.pdf](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/news/docs/RAPORT%20FINAL_%20CADCR.pdf), 337. Also Alexandru Bulai, “Aspirația spre normalitate” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 776–777.
71. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 110/1956, ff. 5–6, “Plan de măsuri pentru sărbătorirea Lunii Prieteniei Romîno-Sovietice (7.X. - 7.XI. 1956).”
72. In the original document, Bălcescu is mistakenly referred to as a square (*piața*). ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 74/1956, ff. 52–61, “Buletin informativ, 29 octombrie 1956, oră 10.00” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 125.

73. Alexandru Bulai would have been one of the leaders of this rally in Bucharest, had he not decided to leave Bucharest and go home to visit his parents. When he later met Ivasiuc in the prison camp at Balta Brăilei, the latter told Bulai that he had been looking for him to help with the rally and, had he found Bulai, he would have been sentenced to “only seven” years of prison like Ivasiuc. See Alexandru Bulai, “Aspirația spre normalitate,” 776–777. On the failed rally, see also Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 622. Bulai is mistaken; Ivasiuc was sentenced to five, not seven, years in prison. Bulai was sentenced to seven years of prison and fifteen years of forced labor.

74. Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 621.

75. See *Enciclopedia Istoriei Politice a României, 1859–2002* (Bucharest: Editura Institutului de Științe Politice și Relații Internaționale, 2003), 424–425. Also Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 262.

76. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 74/1956, ff. 52–61, “Buletin informativ, 29 octombrie 1956, oră 10.00” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 124.

77. *Ibid.*, 125.

78. *Ibid.*, 131.

79. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 75/1956, ff. 57–65, “Buletin informativ întocmit de secția organelor de partid a CC al PMR, 4 noiembrie 1956, oră 21.45,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 192.

80. Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 621, 622.

81. On various alleged or real plots by military officers, see Mihai Retegan and Florin Șperlea, “Armata română și revoluția ungară din 1956,” *Privirea* 61 and 62 (March 1997). Also Boca, *1956. Un an de ruptură*, 133–134; and Cornelia Ghinea, “Un caz de revoltă anticomunistă în armată (decembrie 1956),” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 714–721.

82. For analysis and statistics on the arrests of students in Bucharest see Boca, *1956. Un an de ruptură*, 145–171. Also “Loturile studenților arestați și condamnați în urma evenimentelor din 1956,” *Adevărul* 5073 (October 28, 2006).

83. MOL (Budapest), KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00244-1957, 14.I.1957, document 37, in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 253–254. Kálmán Kádár was a Hungarian diplomat in Bucharest in 1956. He was unrelated to the communist leader János Kádár.

84. Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 621.

85. Although there is no ethnic difference between the Székelys (*Szeklers*) and the other Hungarians in Romania, they have different origins. Both groups speak Hungarian and are predominantly Roman Catholic, but the Székelys, like the Saxons, were once warriors assigned to the border regions of the Hungarian empire, namely the Eastern Carpathians. Transylvania



was once known as the “union of three nations”—three areas ruled by the Saxons, the Székelys, and the Hungarian nobility. Generally, most of the Székelys live in the counties of Harghita, Covasna and parts of Mureș.

86. See table II-19 in Elemér Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania: Change in Transylvania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). Also at <http://www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/minor/min05.htm>.

87. Adrian Room, *Placenames of the World: Origins and Meanings of the Names for 6,600 Countries, Cities, Territories, Natural Features, and Historic Sites* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2006), 93.

88. Neagoe and Pleșa, “Radiografia Securității în anul 1957,” 167.

89. “Notă-raport a delegației de partid care s-a deplasat la Cluj, 5 decembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 374. This document is also published in the appendix of Mihai Retegan, “Conducerea PMR și evenimentele din Polonia și Ungaria în 1956,” *Arhivele Totalitarismului* 1 (1995): 159. The document is entitled “Notă privind deplasarea la Cluj a lui Leonte Răutu și Janos Fazekas, 7 decembrie 1956.” While the initial report of these party officials is dated December 5, 1956, the appended list of recommended measures is dated December 7, 1956.

90. See the Preface (*Cuvânt Înainte*) in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 25.

91. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 48/1956, ff. 1–15, “Stenograma ședinței din 2.11.1956 cu tov. Aurel Mălnășan și Valter Roman,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 176.

92. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 114/1956, ff. 10–14, “Legea Nr. 86 Pentru Statul Naționalitatilor Minoritare Decretul Nr. 309 din 6 februarie 1945. Monitorul Oficial Nr. 30 din 7 februarie 1945.”

93. Milan Radu, “Epurări politice în învățământul bihorean între anii 1954–1960” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 838.

94. Edgár Balogh (1906–1996) was a Hungarian communist and leader in the Hungarian Popular Union, vice president in the period 1945–1949. In October 1944, he edited *Világosság*, the first postwar Hungarian paper of Transylvania under restored Romanian rule. A historian and literary critic, he was a professor in the philology faculty at Bolyai University in Cluj from 1948 to 1968.

95. Lajos Csögör (1904–2003), a medical doctor by profession, participated in populist, left-wing movements. After 1945, he was active in organizing Bolyai University. He was imprisoned during the period of the show trials. After his rehabilitation, to 1967, he practiced medicine in Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely). He later immigrated to Hungary.

96. Zsigmond Jakó is a professor of medieval history at Bolyai University, member of both the Romanian and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and director of the Society of the Transylvanian Museum in Cluj. He studied history under Elemér Malysz in Hungary in the

1930s and then returned to his native Transylvania in the 1940s. He has published many archival sources of the history of Transylvania.

97. József Venczel (1913–1972) was a statistician, economist, and director of the Hungarian Economic Society in Transylvania (Erdélyi Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület). After August 23, 1944, he and other politicians and scholars of Northern Transylvania—which was still part of Hungary—sent a memorandum dated September 9, 1944, to Regent Horthy, urging him to ask for an armistice immediately. For an analysis of the Transylvanian Hungarian elite in 1956, see Stelian Mândruț, “Între ‘culpabilizare’ și ‘compromis’. Intelectualitatea universitară maghiară din Cluj ‘ante’ și ‘post’ 1956,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 793.

98. János Demeter (1908–1988) graduated from the faculty of law at Bolyai University and was an active member of the communist movement of the interwar period, of the Hungarian Popular Union, and the Romanian Communist Party. He helped to establish the journal *Erdélyi Fiatalok* (1930–1940) and served as editor of the newspaper *Falvak Népe*. In 1945 he was deputy mayor of Cluj, but was jailed in 1949 on trumped-up charges. Rehabilitated in 1956, he served as a dean at Bolyai University in 1956; chancellor of Babes-Bolyai University (1969–1979); and president of the Hungarian National Workers Council of Cluj.

99. Lajos Jordáky (1913–1974) was a professor in the faculty of history at Bolyai University and a researcher at the Institute for History and Archaeology in Cluj. A militant social democrat and communist before and after 1944, he was imprisoned from 1952 to 1955 and again from 1957 to 1958.

100. Petre Popescu-Gogan and Claudia Voiculescu, “Academia—între agonie și extaz,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 913. In the 1950s and 1960s the Securitate used the Sighet prison to punish “class enemies,” including former prime minister Iuliu Maniu, who died there in 1953. The prison has been converted into an extensive museum of communism, Memorial for the Victims of Communism and of the Resistance.

101. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 114/1956, f. 6, “Propuneri privind unele măsuri pentru îmbunătățirea muncii în rîndul populației maghiare din orașul Cluj, 6 octombrie 1956.”

102. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-007588/1956, 5.X.1956, old. 3–5, document 10 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 172–175.

103. *Ibid.*, 173.

104. Pál Pándi, “Közös dolgainkról,” *Szabad Nép* (September 9, 1956).

105. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 114/1956, ff. 1–3, “Protocol no. 49 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 5 octombrie 1956.”

106. This emphasis is noticeable to various degrees, usually in research by Hungarian researchers. See, for example, Kosztin, *Az Erdélyben elkövetett magyarellenes román kegyetlenkedések idorendje és leltára*, 109–110; and Zoltán Tófalvi, “Az 1956-os magyar forradalom visszhangja Erdélyben,” in *Századok* 5 (1998): 898–926. Ildikó Lipcsey, on the other hand, does point out that

in 1956 Romanian policy toward the Hungarian minority was “duplicitous.” See Lipcsey, “The Gheorghiu-Dej Era: Effects of the Power Struggle within the RCP on Hungarians in Romania, 1948–1952,” in *Romania and Transylvania in the Twentieth Century*. <http://hungarianhistory.com/lib/lipcsey/lipcsey.pdf>, 83.

107. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-007588/1956, 5.X.1956, old. 3–5, document 10 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 172–175.

108. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 114/1956, f. 1, “Protocol nr. 49 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 5 octombrie 1956.”

109. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 99/1956, ff. 25–27, “Extras din protocolul ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 18 septembrie 1956,” document 6 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 134–137. János Arany (1817–1882), born in Salonta Mare, is often called the founder of modern Hungarian poetry, and incorporated folklore in his work. He served as a member of the Hungarian Academy (1858–1879). Endre Ady (1877–1919), a Hungarian writer and journalist, was known especially for his love poems. His poetic opus was published in twelve volumes (the first appeared in 1899, *Versek*), while his prose was published in seven volumes.

110. *Ibid.*, 135.

111. Lajos Takács was rector of Bolyai University (1947–1952) and deputy minister in the Department of Coinhabiting Nationalities. In 1953 he was expelled from the party on the accusation that, before 1944, as secretary general of the Hungarian community in the Banat, he had maintained ties with the Hungarian consulate in Arad and was involved in espionage. In 1957 the party control commission readmitted him into the party.

Gábor Gaál (1891–1954) was a Hungarian communist who graduated from the University of Budapest and participated in the failed 1919 revolution in Hungary. He fled to Vienna, but later returned to Hungary where he was arrested. He escaped and took refuge in Romania, where he edited the communist journals *Korunk* (1926–1940) and *Útunk* (1946–1954). Also a professor of philosophy and Hungarian literary history at Bolyai University, Gaál was dismissed in 1954 from the university and journal and expelled from the party.

Sándor Kacsó (1901–1984) was a graduate of Bolyai University in Cluj. In 1944–1945, he was incarcerated at the Târgu Jiu prison camp. He became an active leader in the Hungarian Popular Union from 1946 to 1952, and later became chief editor of the State Publishing House for Art and Literature (Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, or ESPLA) in Cluj.

112. “Notă-raport a delegației de partid care s-a deplasat la Cluj, 5 decembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 374.

113. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 40/1955, ff. 5 and 13, “Protocol no. 9 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 mai 1955.”

114. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-007587/1956, 9.X.1956, old. 2, document 9 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 169–170.

115. Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul Regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dosar 29/1956, 25.X.1956, f. 74–79, document 15 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 189.

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid.

118. Mária Gál, “1956: Mítosz vagy történelem? Beszélgetés dr. Várhegyi Istvánnal.” *Campus (kolozsvári Szabadság melléklete)*, 5, no. 25 (June 24, 1994): 4. Cited in Tófalvi, “Az 1956-os magyar forradalom visszhangja Erdélyben.” Also at [http://www.arts.u-szeged.hu/doktar/texts/tofalvi\\_56.html](http://www.arts.u-szeged.hu/doktar/texts/tofalvi_56.html). István Várhegyi (1932–) is a Hungarian historian and sociologist. After his prison term, in the mid-seventies, he immigrated to Germany. He now resides in Hungary.

119. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 2152/1956, ff. 1–13, “Cuvântarea tovarășului Miron Constantinescu la Cluj, 5 noiembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 214–215.

120. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 72–78, “Informare cu privire la măsurile luate de organele locale de partid și starea de spirit a populației în urma evenimentelor ce se petrec în ultimul timp în Republica Populară Ungară, 29 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 138.

121. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00248-1957, 10.I.1957, document 36 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 243.

122. National Security Archive (Washington, D.C.), “Flashpoints” Project, box 2, folder 10/23/56, record no. 62392, 1 p. Telegram from U.S. ambassador to Romania, Thayer, regarding student strike in Cluj in reaction to recent events in Hungary.

123. Tófalvi, “Az 1956-os magyar forradalom visszhangja Erdélyben,” 901. Also at [http://www.arts.u-szeged.hu/doktar/texts/tofalvi\\_56.html](http://www.arts.u-szeged.hu/doktar/texts/tofalvi_56.html).

124. “Notă-raport a delegației de partid care s-a deplasat la Cluj, 5 decembrie 1956,” 373.

125. Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul Regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dosar 29/1956, 25.X.1956, ff. 74–79, document 15 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 189.

126. Kosztin, *Az Erdélyben elkövetett magyarellenes román kegyetlenkedések idorendje és leltára*, 109–111. Dobai’s memorandum, yet unpublished, is located in ACNSAS, fond penal, dosar 104 (“Dobai și altii”). An official interrogation report of Dobai in 1957 can be found in Bottoni, *Az 1956-os forradalom és a romániai magyarság*, document no. 68, “Dobai István kihallgatási jegyzőkönyve.”

127. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 26–33, “Buletin informativ privind starea de spirit din țară și reacțiile față de evenimentele din Ungaria, București, 27 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 101.

128. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 6–10, “Buletin informativ referitor la starea de spirit din țară și măsurile preconizate pentru rezolvarea problemelor interne și contracararea

efectelor evenimentelor din Ungaria, București, 26 octombrie 1956, oră 20.00” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 87.

129. Gyula David, “Toamna anului 1956 și consecințele ei,” *Memoria* 19 (March 1997): 91.

130. “Notă-raport a delegației de partid care s-a deplasat la Cluj, 5 decembrie 1956,” 372.

131. Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecourile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 629.

132. MOL, XIX-J-1-j004816, cited in Lipcsey, “The Gheorghiu-Dej Era,” 85.

133. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00248-1957, 10.I.1957, document 36 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 247.

134. Almira Țentea, “Aspecte ale mersului universității din Cluj la sfârșitul anilor ‘50” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 779, 782. According to an anonymous Transylvanian Hungarian professor who emigrated to the West in 1977, Daicovicu had “stalked the streets of Brassó [Brașov] and Kolozsvár in a green shirt, with two pistols in his belt” in 1939 before the insurrection of the Iron Guard, an ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic, anti-Hungarian, fascist movement active from 1927 until the 1940s. He later claimed that the communist party had instructed him to “infiltrate” the Iron Guard. See Anonymous Napocensis, “Methods of Rumanianization Employed in Transylvania,” *Magyar Híradó* (Vienna, Austria), vol. 22, no. 1 and 2 (January–February 1978). Cited from the English translation on website “Witnesses to Cultural Genocide.” <http://www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/witness/wit06.htm>.

135. See Miron Constantinescu, *Destrămarea monarhiei austro-ungare. 1900–1918* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Române, 1964); *Histoire brève de la Transylvanie* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1965); *Desăvârșirea unificării statului național român: unirea Transilvaniei cu vechea Românie* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1968); *Études d’histoire transylvaine* (Bucharest: Editions de l’Académie de la République socialiste de Roumanie, 1970). “Miron Constantinescu” in Florica Dobre and Liviu Marius Bejenaru, eds., *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R., 1945–1989: Dicționar* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedica, 2004), 175–176.

136. Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dosar no. 29/1956, 3.XI.1956, ff. 97–106, document 24 in Andreescu, et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 204, 208.

137. *Recensămîntul populației din 21 februarie 1956*. See also <http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol5/tables/t02.pdf>.

138. Alexandru Zub, “Un program de redresare națională, la Iași, în 1957,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 754–755.

139. Eugen Denize, “Semnificația haraciului în relațiile Moldo-Otomane din vremea lui Ștefan cel Mare,” *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, 23 (2005): 227–240.

140. Written accounts differ about when the idea first arose. Brudiu asserts it was in early October. The official Securitate report cited by Zub claims it was in late October during a trip to the Putna

Monastery. Vacariu writes that discussions began as early as the spring of 1956. See Mihalache Brudiu, “România văzută de un student în noiembrie 1956,” 765; Alexandru Zub, “Un program de redresare națională, la Iași, în 1957,” 755; and Dumitru Vacariu, “Sărbătorirea, în anul 1957, la Iași și Putna, a 500 de ani de la urcarea pe tronul Moldovei a lui Ștefan cel Mare și sfânt și urmările aceluși eveniment,” 761, all in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*.

141. Brudiu, “România văzută de un student în noiembrie 1956,” 767.

142. Kokker and Kemp, *Romania and Moldova*, 293.

143. Brudiu, “România văzută de un student în noiembrie 1956,” 767.

144. Alexandru Zub, *Ștefan cel Mare și posteritatea*, in *Viața Studențească* 2, no. 4 (April 1957): 11; and “Un program de redresare națională, la Iași, în 1957,” 757.

145. Dumitru Vacariu, “Sărbătorirea, în anul 1957,” 762.

146. Neagoe and Pleșa, “Radiografia Securității în anul 1957,” 168.

147. Vacariu, “Sărbătorirea, în anul 1957,” 761.

148. Sergiu Verona, *Military Occupation and Diplomacy*, 147.

149. Vacariu, “Sărbătorirea, în anul 1957,” 762.

150. James A. Kapalo, “The Moldavian Csángós: ‘National Minority’ or ‘Local Ethnie’?” Master’s thesis, University of London, 1996. <http://www.hi.is/~maurizio/danubiana/Csángó1.htm>.

151. Ildikó Lipcsey, “The Gheorghiu-Dej Era,” 100.

152. *Recensămîntul populației din 21 februarie 1956*, and <http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol5/tables/t02.pdf>. On the pogrom, see Jean Ancel and Yehuda Bauer, *Preludiu la asasinat. Pogromul de la Iași, 29 iunie 1941* (Bucharest: Polirom, 2005), 11. The death toll of those murdered and buried in mass graves in the city (and not on the trains) can only be estimated. Radu Ioanid estimates the figure to be around one thousand. Other sources give estimates ranging from eight to twelve thousand for the total number of victims killed both in the city and on the trains. See Radu Ioanid, “The Antonescu Era,” in Randolph L. Braham, ed., *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 136, 144.

153. Neagoe and Pleșa, “Radiografia Securității în anul 1957,” 170.

154. Elemér Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, table II-19.

155. Melanie Tatur, ed., *The Making of Regions in Post-Socialist Europe—The Impact of Culture, Economic Structure, and Institutions: Case Studies from Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004), 72.

156. Aurelian Păuna, “Era așa un entuziasm, dispăruse frica!” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 52.

157. Caius Muțiu, Teodor Stanca, and Aurel Baghiu, “Mișcările studențești anticomuniste din octombrie 1956 din Timișoara, văzute și prezentate de inițiatorii și principalii organizatori,” in Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 670.
158. The original memorandum (“*Memoriu*”) can be found in the appendix of Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 195–197.
159. Muțiu et al., “Mișcările studențești anticomuniste din octombrie 1956 din Timișoara,” 674.
160. Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 41.
161. Octavian Vulpe, “Strigam: ‘Vrem colegii! Vrem colegii!’” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 72–73.
162. Doina Pordea, “I-am văzut venind încolonați,” and Stela Tașcă, “Populația Timișoarei nu a ridicat un deget pentru noi!” both in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 77–78.
163. “Protocol no. 58 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 30 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 143–145.
164. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 2153/1956, f. 1, “Referat, contrasemnat de Leonte Răutu și Petre Lupu, cuprinzând măsurile propuse a fi aplicate în urma manifestărilor studențești de la Timișoara, 10 noiembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 239. The Securitate reported: “A series of measures was taken that permitted the resumption and normal development of courses.”
165. Munteanu, “Manifestația anticomunistă a studenților de la Timișoara,” 645. Teodor Stanca states that there was a total of 4,600 students. See “Ne-am dat seama cât de grav erau sancționate unele manifestări” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 118.
166. Stanca, “Ne-am dat seama cât de grav erau sancționate unele manifestări,” 117.
167. Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 115. On the Derdena trial, see Derdena, *Mărturisirea unui neînvins*. Also Someșan and Iosifescu, “Ecurile și consecințele revoluției maghiare din 1956,” 624.
168. Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 115–116.
169. *Ibid.*, 188.
170. *Ibid.*, 163.
171. Aurelian Păuna, “Știți ce ne-a maid at putere și rezistență? Că eram tineri și eram împreună!” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 153.
172. Ladislau Nagy, “Am fost dus la procesul lotului doi,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 125.
173. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 2152/1956, ff. 1–13. “Cuvantarea tovarasului Miron Constantinescu la Cluj, 5 noiembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 204–216.

174. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar nr. 361/1956, ff. 2–5, “Protocol nr. 61 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din ziua 13 noiembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 241–244.
175. Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 187.
176. This account draws on the recollections of Alexandru Salcă. See “Brașovul solidar cu revoluția maghiară,” 710–713.
177. Trib. Reg. III. Mil. Cluj, dosar nr. 357/1958, “Concluziuni de învinuire 877 din 12. III. 1958 Dor. Reg. M.A.I. Timișoara,” cited in Zoltán Tofálvi, “Antecedentele dezbaterii privind Memorandumul,” *Provincia-Ediția Română* (Cluj-Napoca) 20 (2002), <http://www.ceeol.com/asp>.
178. Lipcsey, “The Gheorghiu-Dej Era,” 84.
179. Ghinea, “Un caz de revoltă anticomunista în armată (decembrie 1956),” 714–721. This study draws on official interrogation reports from the Romanian Military Archive and should be read with caution. Romanian interrogation officials were notorious for writing their reports to “prove” guilt, with or without real evidence. Mărgineanu himself burned on December 9, 1956, the only copy of the “action plan” he allegedly wrote, so we only know about it secondhand.
180. This paragraph draws on the account by Kosztin, *Az Erdélyben elkövetett magyarellenes román kegyetlenkedések idorendje és leltára*, 109–111.
181. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 72–78, “Informare cu privire la măsurile luate de organele locale de partid și starea de spirit a populației în urma evenimentelor ce se petrec în ultimul timp în Republica Populară Ungară, 29 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 139–140.
182. Teodor Stanca, “S-a creat un fel de oază de libertate,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 44.
183. Bulai, “Aspirația spre normalitate,” 772.
184. Axente Țerbea, “A fost o răbufnire tinerească,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 46. Octavian Vulpe, Caius Muțiu, and Aurel Baghiu also mention this in their published accounts of the meeting. See Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 56, and Boca, *Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, 673.
185. Karl Lupșiasca, “Nu se poate spune că a fost un complot,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 67.
186. Păuna, “Era așa un entuziasm, dispăruse frica!” 54.
187. Marian Lazăr, “A fost ceva de neimaginat!” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 49.
188. Heinrich Drobny, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 64.
189. Stanca, “S-a creat un fel de oază de libertate,” 43, fn. 1.



190. Romulus Tașca, “A fost avântul tineresc,” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 59.
191. Muțiu et al., “Mișcările studențești anticomuniste din octombrie 1956 din Timișoara,” 672.
192. Stanca, “S-a creat un fel de oază de libertate,” 43. See Tismaneanu et al., *Comisia prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România*, 338.
193. Lucian Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 25. Other scholars disclaim the “myth” of the Banat’s distinct culture and civilization. See Maciej Janowski, Constantin Iordachi, and Balázs Trencsényi, “Why Bother about Historical Regions? Debates over Central Europe in Hungary, Poland and Romania,” *East-Central Europe. L’Europe du Centre Est, Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift* 32, no. 1–2 (2005): 5–58.
194. Boia, *Romania*, 25.
195. Józsa Hévízi, “Autonomies in Europe and Hungary: A Comparative Study,” <http://www.hungarianhistory.com/lib/hevizi/hevizi.pdf>.
196. Munteanu, “Manifestația anticomunistă a studenților de la Timișoara din octombrie 1956,” 637.
197. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-006162/1956, 30.XI.1956, old. 2–4, document 5 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 132, n. 8.
198. Munteanu, “Manifestația anticomunistă a studenților de la Timișoara din octombrie 1956,” 637.
199. *Ibid.*, 638, 639.
200. Bulai, “Aspirația spre normalitate,” 773–776.
201. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-006162/1956, 30.XI.1956, old. 2–4, document 5 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 131.
202. Dan Cătănuș, “The Romanian Communists under the Impact of Destalinization, 1956–1961,” in *Arhivele Totalitarismului* 1–2 (2002): 182. Radu Gyr (Radu Demetrescu) was never completely rehabilitated, however. In response to his poem against Gheorghiu-Dej’s collectivization policy, he received the death sentence in 1958, which was commuted to life imprisonment.
203. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 6–10, “Buletin informativ referitor la starea de spirit din țară și măsurile preconizate pentru rezolvarea problemelor interne și contracararea efectelor evenimentelor din Ungaria, București, 26 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 89.
204. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 26–33, “Buletin informativ privind starea de spirit din țară și reacțiile față de evenimentele din Ungaria, București, 27 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 102.

205. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 75/1956, ff. 17–26, “Buletin informativ întocmit de secția organelor de partid a CC al PMR, 2 noiembrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 156. He refers to Ana Pauker (foreign minister), Teohari Georgescu (minister of interior), and Vasile Luca (minister of finance) who were accused of both left-wing and right-wing deviationism and purged at the plenum of May 26–27, 1952.
206. An English translation of the Pula speech is published in Csaba Békés et al., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2002), 418–431.
207. Arh. MAE (Bucharest), fond Budapesta, dosar no. 7, volumul 3, număr 112, f. 9, “Telegramă cifrată intrată no. 231. Trimisă de Popescu de la Ambasada României din Budapesta către MAE, 20. XI. 1956 oră 23.00.”
208. Petre Oprea, “1958. Plecarea armatei sovietice din România între mit și realitate,” *Anuarul muzeului marinei române 2002*, vol. 5 (Constanța: Editura Companiei Naționale Administrația Porturilor Maritime Constanța, 2003), 391–398. Also available at <http://standard.ro/historicum/2002-soviet.pdf>.
209. “The Baroque Palace in Timișoara,” <http://www.darastean.com/Dag/mapaprimarie.html>.
210. Lușșiasca, “Nu se poate spune că a fost un complot,” 67.
211. Open Society Archive, RFE/RL Background Report, box 29, folder 1, no. 136, “Report on Rumania: Background and Current Situation,” November 2, 1956, [http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text\\_da/29-1-136.shtml](http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text_da/29-1-136.shtml).
212. Oprea, “1958. Plecarea armatei sovietice din România între mit și realitate.”
213. Arhivă Ministerului Apărării Naționale (Archive of the Ministry of National Defense), fond Comisia Româna pentru Aplicarea armistițiului, dosar 242, ff. 512–513, “Notă a Ministerului de Război către Comisia Româna pentru Aplicarea Armistițiului privind zonele de staționare a trupelor sovietice pe teritoriul României, 18 iulie 1945.” See also “Plan privind activitățile și ceremoniile legate de plecarea trupelor sovietice din România, 11 iunie 1958,” document 64 in Scurtu, *România retragerea trupelor sovietice, 1958*, 287–292.
214. Jenő Györkei and Miklós Horváth, *Soviet Military Intervention in Hungary, 1956* (New York: Central European University Press, 1999), 138, 151.
215. Țerbea, “A fost o răbufnire tinerească,” 46; Păuna, “Era așa un entuziasm, dispăruse frica!” 54; Brudiu, “România văzută de un student în noiembrie 1956,” 766.
216. Drobný, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” 62.
217. See Octavian Vulpe, “Am jurat, în numele Facultății de Medicină, să fim alături de ei,” and Stela Tașcă, “Unii ziceau: ‘Să ieșim în stradă!’” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 58 and 60 respectively.
218. Scurtu, *România retragerea trupelor sovietice, 1958*, 58.

219. Țerbea, “A fost o răbufnire tinerească,” 47.
220. See Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx. O introducere în istoria comunismului românesc* (Bucharest: Editura Curtea Veche, 2005), 68, 71, 73. The Romanian war reparations amounted to \$300 million.
221. MOL, KÛM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-4/j-00248-1957, 10.I.1957, document 36 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 252, n. 9, 250. Although it “officially” concerned quartz, Sovromcuart was actually involved in the secret exploitation of uranium for use in the Soviet atomic bomb project. See Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, 69–70.
222. Țerbea, “A fost o răbufnire tinerească,” 47.
223. Adina Popescu, “Phihoza uraniului,” *Lettre Internationales* 46 (2003): 29–32.
224. Muțiu et al., “Mișcările studențești anticomuniste din octombrie 1956 din Timișoara,” 674.
225. Cited in Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 259. The official’s first name was not provided.
226. See Octavian Vulpe, “Am jurat, în numele Facultății de Medicină, să fim alături de ei,” 57; Romulus Tașca, “A fost avântul tineresc,” 59; and Heinrich Drobny, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” 62.
227. See accusations about RFE and Voice of America listeners in ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 52–61, “Buletin informativ, 29 octombrie 1956, oră 10.00” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 123, 127; and Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul Regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dosar 76/1956, 14.XII.1956, “Notă Telefonică,” ff. 267–268, document 33 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 235. A pseudo rally denouncing RFE for “spreading shameless lies” and “violating UN principles” was staged on November 19 in Cluj and attended by over nine hundred students and professors. See Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul Regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dosar 76/1956, 21.XI.1956, ff. 267–268, document 31 in Andreescu, et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 232.
228. Hoover Institution Archive, Alexandru D. Bunescu Social-Economic Radio Talks, box 1, accession no. 78003-41.07, speech broadcast by Radio Free Europe, “Românii și recolta din Kazakhstan,” September 6, 1956.
229. The main sponsor of the Romanian National Committee was the National Committee for a Free Europe, also the sponsoring organization of the Assembly of Captive European Nations and Radio Free Europe.
230. Constantin Visoianu (1897–1994) was minister of foreign affairs in the last precommunist regime headed by Nicolae Rădescu (1944–1945). As foreign policy counsellor for Iuliu Maniu, he participated in the secret negotiations with the Allies in Cairo in 1944. The American Legation in Bucharest helped him immigrate to the United States, where he served as president of the New York-based Romanian National Committee until its dissolution in 1975.

Sabin Manuilă (1894–1964) was a high official in the Romanian Ministry of Health, founder and director of the Central Institute of Statistics, and undersecretary of state in the government of Iuliu Maniu in the 1930s. He immigrated to the United States, and, as a member of the National Peasant Party, was appointed in December 1950 as a counsellor in the Romanian National Committee in New York. Between 1955 and 1957 he also served as a special adviser to the U.S. Census Bureau in Washington. See Hoover Institution Archive, Sabin Manuilă Papers (in Romanian), box 1, folder 1.3, letter to Sabin Manuilă from Constantin Visoianu, president of Romanian National Committee, December 4, 1950; and folder 1.1, access no. 76102 8M.4, biographical sketch by Nicolae Georgescu-Roegen and obituary in émigré newspaper, *România* (September–October 1964), no. 78.

231. Hoover Institution Archive, box 4, folder 4.8, letter from Manuilă in New York to columnist George E. Sokolsky, December 15, 1950, p. 4. On this issue see also Marin Radu Mocanu, ed., *Romania, the Big Victim of the Second World War: Documents* (Bucharest: Romanian State Archives, 1994), 306–307.

232. “In the note of September 12, 1945, the director of the department of Balkan countries, Lavrishchev, listed four key reasons for the Soviet decision: abrogation of the (second) Vienna Award engineered by Hitler; ethnic composition (57.9 percent Romanians in all of Transylvania, 50.15 percent in Northern Transylvania); economic reasons (coal, metal, and chemical industries based in Transylvania); and Romania’s help in “liberating” Transylvania from the German aggressors. (Romania was the first satellite to switch sides, on August 23, 1944; Bulgaria followed on September 9). See Tofik Islamov and T. A. Pokivailova, “SSSR i Transil’vanskii Vopros (1945–1946),” *Voprosi Istorii* 12 (2004): 29.

233. Munteanu, “Manifestația anticomunistă a studenților de la Timișoara din octombrie 1956,” 641.

234. Păuna, “Era așa un entuziasm, dispăruse frica!” 54; Ioan Hollender, “Era o atmosferă. . . . Era ceva nou, era ceva ce n-a mai fost!” in Sitaru, *Oază de libertate*, 51; Drobny, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” 63.

235. Boca, 1956. *Un an de ruptură*, 81.

236. Drobny, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” 62.

237. Open Society Archives (Budapest), box 267, Romania, item no. 1423/57, March 5, 1957, document 44 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 276.

238. MOL, KÜM, XIX-J-1-j-Rom-27/a-006162/1956, 30.XI.1956, old. 2–4, document 5 in Andreescu et al., *Maghiarii din România*, 130–131.

239. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 74/1956, ff. 106–107, “Buletin informativ referitor la măsurile Comitetului UTM al orașului București, 31 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, 1956 *Explozia*, 145.

240. “Ana Pauker” in Dobre and Bejenaru, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R., 1945–1989: Dicționar*, 453–454. Also Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker: The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 1.
241. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar nr. 48/1956, ff. 1–15, “Stenograma ședinței din 2.11.1956 cu tov. Aurel Mălnășan și Valter Roman,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 176–177.
242. Bulai, “Aspirația spre normalitate,” 774.
243. Drobny, “Nu îți mai spui că ceea ce faci aici te va duce la pușcărie,” 62.
244. Hoover Institution Archive, Alexandru D. Bunescu Social-Economic Radio Talks (in Romanian), box 1, accession no. 78003-41.07, p. 2. Speech broadcast by Radio Free Europe, “Lucrătorii și revoluția ungara,” December 4, 1956.
245. Stela Tașcă, “Populația Timișoarei nu a ridicat un deget pentru noi!” in Sitariu, *Oază de libertate*, 78–79.
246. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 354, ff. 1–5. “Protocol nr. 54 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 75.
247. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 1, număr 22, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 22323. Trimisă de MAE către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 22. II. 1956 oră 13.30.”
248. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 2, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 28913. Trimisă de MAE (Mălnășan) către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 24. X. 1956 oră 19.20.”
249. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 7, volumul 2, număr 143, “Telegramă cifrată intrată no. 128. Trimisă de Popescu de la Ambasada României din Budapesta către MAE, 31. X. 1956, oră 12.00.” The Romanian word for “assault” (*asalt*) can also mean “assail.” Most likely the citizens assailed embassy officials with words and did not assault them physically.
250. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 3, număr 1, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 28812. Trimisă de Proteasa către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 31. X. 1956 oră 01.00.”
251. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 3, număr 105, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 28235. Trimisă de MAE către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 28. XII. 1956 oră 24.10.”
252. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 3, număr 76, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 28196. Trimisă de MAE către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 29. XI. 1956 oră 19.00.”
253. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 7, volumul 4, număr 51, “Telegramă cifrată intrată no. 306. Trimisă de Popescu de la Ambasada României din Budapesta către MAE, 13. XII. 1956, oră 17.30.”
254. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 3, număr 90, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 29154. Trimisă de MAE (Mălnășan) către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 10. XII. 1956 oră 02.30.”

255. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 210/Ungaria 2, “Telegramă cifrată intrată no. 588, f. 3. Trimisă de Popescu de la Ambasada României din Budapesta către MAE (Mălăeșan). Extras din notă ambasadei RPR Budapesta în legătură cu discuțiile ce au avut loc cu ocazia repeției din seara zilei de 4.XI. 1956, 10. XI. 1957.”
256. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 354, ff. 1–5. “Protocol no. 54 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 74–78.
257. Hoover Institution Archive, Comitetul Național Român, box 13, folder 13.11, “Rumanian Exile Associations in West Germany,” July 20, 1956.
258. Open Society Archive, RFE/RL Background Report, box 49, folder 1, no. 110, “Report on Rumania: Background and Current Situation,” December 24, 1959, on <http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/49-1-110.shtml>.
259. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 355, ff. 1–5, “Protocol no. 55 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 26 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 91–95. The number of the folder (*dosar*) of this document in ANIC has changed to 170/1956. For an English translation, see Békés et al., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2002), 246–249.
260. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 34–41, “Buletin informativ întocmit de secția organelor de partid a CC al PCR, București, 28 octombrie 1956, oră 20.30,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 116.
261. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 169/1956, f. 12, “Pentru combaterea zvonurilor din rîndurile populației germane privind strămutarea lor, se vor lua următoarele măsuri, 24 octombrie 1956.” (This is a heretofore unpublished appendix to point 10 in “Protocol no. 54 al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956.”) The protocol itself was published in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 74–78. The archival citation has changed since the book’s publication. It is now dosar no. 169/1956, ff. 1–5.
262. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 74/1956, ff. 34–41, “Buletin informativ întocmit de secția organelor de partid a CC al PCR, Bucharest, 28 octombrie 1956, oră 20.30,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 116.
263. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 169/1956, f. 13, “Pentru combaterea zvonurilor din rîndurile populației germane privind strămutarea lor, se vor lua următoarele măsuri, 24 octombrie 1956.”
264. Arh. MAE, fond Budapesta, dosar no. 37, volum 1, “Telegramă cifrată ieșită no. 23578. Trimisă de MAE (Mălăeșan) către Ambasada României din Budapesta, 2. II. 1956 oră 20.45.” Red Cross negotiations began in earnest in Geneva on August 21, 1957, between Weitz and Octavian Belea, chairman of the Romanian Red Cross. After an initial German proposal to allow 13,000 Germans to immigrate to West Germany, Romanian authorities agreed to release only 8,500 Germans, provided they could prove their nationality. See Open Society Archive,

RFE/RL Background Report, box 49, folder 1, no. 110, “Report on Rumania: Background and Current Situation,” December 24, 1959, on <http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/49-1-110.shtml>.

265. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 169/1956, f. 18, “Pentru combaterea zvonurilor din rîndurile populației germane privind strămutarea lor, se vor lua următoarele măsuri, 24 octombrie 1956.”

266. Ibid., f. 17.

267. Ibid., ff. 8, 17. See also *România Liberă*, June 7, 1956, on the Romanian government’s efforts to induce educated Germans to return to Romania.

268. Ibid., f. 16.

269. Ibid., f. 19.

270. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 354, ff. 1–5, “Protocol no. 54, al ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 octombrie 1956,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 77.

271. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 169/1956, f. 7, “Pentru combaterea zvonurilor din rîndurile populației germane privind strămutarea lor, se vor lua următoarele măsuri, 24 octombrie 1956.”

272. ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, dosar no. 48/1956, ff. 1–15, “Stenograma ședinței din 2.11.1956 cu tov. Aurel Mălnășan și Valter Roman,” in Lungu and Retegan, *1956 Explozia*, 176.

273. SAPMO (*Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv*), Berlin, DY/30/IV 2/1/170, p. 46. Ulbricht’s speech to the 30<sup>th</sup> SED Plenum, January 30, 1957, cited in Johanna Granville, “Ulbricht in October 1956: Survival of the Spitzbart during Destalinization,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 3 (2006): 487.

274. On the organization of the worker guards, see ANIC, Fond CC al PCR/Cancelarie, dosar no. 128/1956, ff. 11–18, 30, “Referat cu privire la organizarea gărzilor muncitorești din întreprinderi, 16 noiembrie 1956.”

275. Pacea, *Red Horizons*, 358–359.

276. Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgoch, *Dissent and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe: Origins of Civil Society and Democratic Transition* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2004), 146. See also Paul Goma, *Amnezia la români* (Bucharest: Editura Litera, 1992). True, Goma joined the Communist Party in 1968 after Ceaușescu denounced the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, but he was expelled later for publishing his books abroad without official permission.

277. Cited in Tófalvi, “Az 1956-os magyar forradalom visszhangja Erdélyben,” 926.

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