

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

*Histories (Un)Spoken. Survival and Social-Professional Integration  
Strategies in Communist Political Prisoners' Families in Central and  
Eastern Europe in the '50s and '60s*



22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016  
Râmnicu Sărat  
ROMANIA



## **Wednesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Before **18.00**: Arrival in Râmnicu Sărat and accommodation at Hotel „Poienița” (Stadionului str., no. 1)

**19.00: Dinner**

## **Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**8.00: Breakfast**

**City Hall Râmnicu Sărat** (Nicolae Bălcescu Str., no 1)

**9.30 - 10.00: Registration**

**10.00 - 10.30:** Opening ceremony. Welcoming speeches from the organizers: Alin MUREȘAN, Cosmin BUDEANCĂ (The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile); Sorin CÂRJAN (Mayor of Râmnicu Sărat); Octav BJOZA (President of the Association of Former Political Prisoners in Romania).

## **Section I**

### **Histories of the Families of Political Prisoners (I)**

**10.30 - 11.50: Presentations**

Chairs: Researcher PhD Cosmin BUDEANCĂ; Prof. Todor CEPREGANOV

- PhD student Maria BUKO (Institute of Applied Social Sciences, University of Warsaw & History Meeting House, Warsaw, Poland) - *Biographies Publicised and Concealed - Different Fates of Families Repressed under Stalinism. A Case Study*
- PhD habilit. Mirosław SZUMIŁO (“Maria Curie-Skłodowska” University, Lublin, Poland) - *Living with the Stigma of “a Traitor*

*of the Nation". Difficult fates of the families of victims of the Stalinist terror in Poland –the Case of Witold Pilecki's Family*

- PhD student Iuliana Ruxandra PETRINCA (McGill University, Montreal, Canada) - *Family Politics and Everyday Life*

Discussions (20 min)

11.50 - 12.10: Coffee Break

## **Section II**

### **Histories of the Families of Political Prisoners (II)**

#### **12.10- 13.30: Presentations**

Chairs: PhD student Robert ANDRZEJCZYK; PhD student Ioana-Zoia SANDU (URSU)

- Researcher PhD Pompiliu-Nicolae CONSTANTIN (Le Centre Régional Francophone de Recherches Avancées en Sciences Sociales, Bucharest, Romania) - *The Story of Zeller Family: a Sport Star and her Deported Family in Bărăgan*
- PhD student Andreea TUZU ("Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History, Bucharest Romania; Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile) - *The Life after Detention of a Romanian Former Political Prisoner and His Family. Case Study: Doru Novacovici Family*
- Researcher PhD. JÁNOSI Csongor (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary) - *Protestant Destiny during the Communist Dictatorship. Professor of Theology and Priest Dobri János in the Security Archives and in the Collective Memory*

Discussions (20 min)

13.30: Lunch

## Section III

### Long Term Effects of Suppression and Professional Survival (I)

#### 15.00 - 17.00: Presentations

Chairs: PhD student Monika KARENIAUSKAITĖ; PhD student Cristina PLĂMĂDEALĂ

- PhD student Dragoș URSU ("Babeș-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile) - *Life After Re-education. Former Political Prisoners from Aiud Penitentiary Destinies between their Release and Professional (non)Integration in the Communist Society*
- Architect PhD Vlad MITRIC-CIUPE (The Department of Architecture, "Spiru Haret" University, Bucharest) - *The Socio-Professional Destiny of Families of Architects that Were Political Prisoners in Communist Romania. General Considerations and Case Studies*
- PhD Silviu B. MOLDOVAN (The National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives, Bucharest) - *Tactics for the Perpetuation of the Political Message: The Case of the Families of the Former Political Prisoners from Romania (1948-1989)*
- Researcher PhD Cosmin BUDEANĂ (The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Bucharest) - *Social-Professional Integration Strategies of Political Prisoners' Wives in Communist Romania in the '5s and '60s*

Discussions 40 min

#### 17.00 -17.20: Coffee Break

## Section IV

### Long Term Effects of Suppression and Professional Survival (II)

#### 17.20 - 19.20: Presentations

Chairs: PhD. habilit. Anna Maria WACHOWIAK; PhD student Dragoș URSU

- PhD student Cristina PLĂMĂDEALĂ (Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society & Culture, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada) - *The life of Antonie Plamadeala and of His Family in the Decade (1944-1954) Following Their Refuge to Romania from Bessarabia*
- Assoc. prof. Mirosław KŁUSEK (University of Agriculture, Cracow, Poland) & PhD student Robert ANDRZEJCZYK ("Nicolaus Copernicus" University, Toruń, Poland) - *The Communist Repression and Survival Strategies of Polish Aristocratic Families on the Example of the Branicki Family (1945-1960)*
- PhD Marin POP (County Museum of History, Zalău, Romania) - *The Nightmare the Coposu Family Lived during the Communist Regime (The '50s and the '60s)*
- Researcher PhD Claudia Florentina DOBRE (Centre for Memory and Identity Studies, Bucharest; Centre Régional Francophone de Recherches Avancées en Sciences Sociales, University of Bucharest, Romania) & PhD Valeriu ANTONOVICI (The National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania) - *Bărăgan Deportation: Trajectories of Survival, Adaptation and Success*
- Researcher PhD. Cipriana PETRE (USA) - *"From Now on, I Take My Name back": The Dynamics of Authorship and Ownership in Romania's Communist Prisons, and beyond. The Case of Painter Nichifor Avramescu*

Discussions (40 min)

#### 20.00: Dinner

**Friday, June 24**

**8.00: Breakfast**

## **Section V**

### **“Collateral” Victims of the Suppressive Systems in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1950s and 1960s**

**9.00 - 11.00: Presentations**

Chairs: Researcher PhD Pompiliu-Nicolae CONSTANTIN; MA Davjola NDOJA

- PhD student Ioana-Zoia SANDU (URSU) (“Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania) - *Memories of Motherhood Imprisoned Inside the Romanian Gulag*
- PhD Ludmila D. COJOCARU (Institute of Social History ProMemoria, Moldova State University, Chişinău, Republic of Moldavia) - *“My Parents Were Enemies of the People”: Perspectives and Difficulties of Interpretation of Silence in the Oral History Studies of RSS Moldavia Deportations*
- Researcher PhD Claudia Florentina DOBRE (Centre for Memory and Identity Studies, Bucharest; Centre Régional Francophone de Recherches Avancées en Sciences Sociales, University of Bucharest, Romania) - *The Everyday Life in the Second Circle of Suffering: The Case Study of Chirilă Family*
- Prof. Todor CEPREGANOV (University „Goce Delchev”, Shtip, Macedonia) & PhD. Sonja NIKOLOVA (Municipality - Shtip, Macedonia) - *„Comrade from UDB-A Destroy Them All!”*

Discussions (40 min)

**11.00 - 11.20: Coffee Break**

## Section VI

### General Perspectives on the Suppressive Systems and Local Particularities

#### 11.20 - 13.30: Presentations

Chairs: Researcher PhD Claudia DOBRE, PhD habilit. Mirosław SZUMIŁO

- Researcher PhD Dalia BÁTHORY (The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Bucharest, Romania) - *A Hungarian's Strategy to cope with the '56 Crisis. Narratives and (imagined) Connections in the Securitate Files*
- PhD. habilit. Anna Maria WACHOWIAK (The School of Higher Education in Humanities in Szczecin, Poland) - *Political and Strike's Leadership of Activists of Peasant Solidarity "Patrimony" (- "Ojcowizna") in Ustrzyki Dolne and Rzeszów. Unspoken History of Imprisoning them and Survival Strategies of their Families*
- PhD student Eli PILVE (Estonian Institute of Historical Memory, Tallinn, Estonia) - *Family Members of "Exploiters" and "Enemies of the People" in the Fetters of the Soviet Regime*
- PhD student Monika KARENIAUSKAITĖ (Vilnius University & The Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Lithuania) - *GULAG Prisoners and their Family Members in Lithuanian SSR under and after Stalinism: Legal, Ideological and Social Definition*

Discussions (50 min)

#### 13.30 - 15.00: Lunch



## Section VII

### Transitional Justice and Families of the Former Political Prisoners

#### 15.00 - 17.00: Presentations

Chairs: Researcher PhD Dalia BÁTHORY; PhD student Iuliana Ruxandra PETRINCA

- PhD student Maciej KOŚCIUSZKO (Institute of History of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland) - *Political Crimes in Greater Poland (Wielkopolska) in the Stalinist Period - Analysis of Sources*
- Researcher Marcin ZWOLSKI (Institute of National Remembrance, Białystok Office, Poland) - *Problems with Transitional Justice in Poland: The Case of the Niechoda Family*
- Davjola NDOJA (University of Bologna, Italy & University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) - *Transitional Justice and Former Political Prisoners in Albania*

Discussions (40 min)

#### 16.40 - 17.00: Conclusions

17.00 - 18.00 Visit at former Political Prison ("The Prison of Silence" Memorial)

20.00: Dinner

### Saturday, June 25

8.00: Breakfast

8.30: Participants' departure

## **BIOGRAPHIES PUBLICISED AND CONCEALED – DIFFERENT FATES OF FAMILIES REPRESSED UNDER STALINISM. A CASE STUDY**

Fates of Polish families repressed under the Stalinist regime still require thorough investigation. If there is any narration, it is mainly martirological (main literature on this topic comes straight from the former prisoners and the right wing environment).

During my research I used these sources as a starting point for further research in the Institute of National Remembrance, where the archives of the Communist police are kept, and tried to fill the blank spaces and find other clues using the oral history method.

By presenting the fates of two families, both involved in very well known cases, I would like to present radically different fates of extremely similar couples. Both families I would like to analyse were strongly involved in the anti-communist conspiracy, came out of prisons with damaged mental and physical health, wives then stepped aside, while husbands pursued quite successful careers. However, due to moral dilemmas they had to face one couple is now remembered as heroic, the other rather tabooed. Both couples had only one daughter and, to my surprise, I found out that although both of them had inherited the trauma, it is the “heroes’” daughter that seems to have not coped with it.

PhD habilit. Mirosław SZUMIŁO\*

## **LIVING WITH THE STIGMA OF A “TRAITOR OF THE NATION” DIFFICULT FATES OF THE FAMILIES OF VICTIMS OF THE STALINIST TERROR IN POLAND - THE CASE OF WITOLD PILECKI'S FAMILY**

Witold Pilecki – A Polish officer, organizer of the resistance movement in Auschwitz concentration camp – after World War II took part in conspiracy against Polish communist regime. He was arrested in 1947 by

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\* “Maria Curie-Skłodowska” University, Lublin, Poland

the Stalinist secret police and executed after a show trial in 1948. His family experienced various repressions from the communist regime. His wife was not allowed to working in their profession (teacher). Children (son and daughter) for a long time could not finish higher education. They lived with the trauma of losing his father and they were burdened with the stigma of the family of „traitor to the nation“.

This paper is based on various sources: memoirs, oral history, archival documents and family documents.

**PhD student Iuliana Ruxandra PETRINCA\***

## **FAMILY POLITICS AND EVERYDAY LIFE**

In the last two decades, personal histories have found their way in respectable scholarship alongside new methodologies such as oral history. As Romania's communist history is still being unearthed, so, too, my family history in socialist times starts to be decoded. Several years ago I would have said that the choice of profession was strongly influenced by my family's history, and more specifically by the grandfather I never knew. Constantin Canache, a member of the Iron Guard and a political prisoner, died soon after his release from prison in 1953, leaving my father and his three siblings in dire poverty. Expelled from school and with limited employment opportunities, the family struggled to survive. To this very day, the elder sister would not talk about the period, and the younger brother, my father, portrays a bleak picture of those years. As a historian who specializes in the study of Romania's communist past, I have conducted several oral history interviews with former political detainees, and heard numerous testimonies. Yet interviewing my own father proves quite a challenge. Hopefully, this conference will provide the opportunities for my family to make peace with the bygone era of communism, and the undersigned an opportunity to bring a small contribution to the historiography of memory studies.

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\* McGill University, Montreal, Canada

## **THE STORY OF ZELLER FAMILY: A SPORT STAR AND HER DEPORTED FAMILY IN BĂRĂGAN**

In the night of 17-18 June 1951, over 40 000 people from the Romanian region of Banat were taken by force by the communist authorities, and relocated in the Bărăgan Plain, following the model of soviet Gulag. Most of those families that were forcibly moved in an arid plain were ethnic minorities. One of them was the Zeller family, from Moldova Nouă: father, mother and daughter.

Another daughter escaped as she was studying in Timișoara, and was living at her uncle's. Her name is Ella Zeller, born in 1933, and she turned out to be one of the most important table tennis players in Romanian history. To be closer to her family in Bărăgan, Ella Zeller moved to Bucharest.

Her career was rising, but on her personal life she tried to help her family and friends. The Zeller family was forced to move on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June in the village Feteștii Noi, a depopulated zone in the region of Constanta. The deported families had no right to leave the village and to contact their relatives and friends. The news was hardly arriving in those areas and the cold winters deeply affected the deported population.

In this context, among the few consolations and moments of joy for Zeller family were Ella's performances. She also became a sport symbol in communist Romania. The Securitate tried to restrict her connections with the family and with other deported people from the village. My presentation tries to recreate the puzzle of this micro-space, using documents from the ex-Securitate files, the testimony of Ella Zeller and press articles.

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\* Le Centre Régional Francophone de Recherches Avancées en Sciences Sociales, Bucharest, Romania

## **THE LIFE AFTER DETENTION OF A ROMANIAN FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER AND HIS FAMILY: DORU NOVACOVICI FAMILY CASE STUDY**

During 1962-1964, the communist authorities in Romania have issued a series of pardon decrees under which the former political prisoners were released from prison. This amnesty, however, did not mean genuine freedom, the life after release was for many political prisoners another form of imprisonment, within which they were condemned to bear the stigma of "enemy of the people". The repercussions were reflected not only on them but also on their families. In this situation was Doru Novacovici, jailed for the crime of machination against the social order in 1959, released in 1964, and known for his anti-Communist activities from France, after he left Romania in 1978.

This paper aims to present, on the one hand, the life after release of a former political prisoner, starting with the immediate impact of the release and continuing with the long-term consequences of the detention reflected on his workplace, family and friends. On the other hand, the study will focus on the context in which he left Romania, the fight for his family reunion and especially on his anti-Communist activity in France (1978-1989).

Corroborating sources as documents from the Securitate archives (Communist Romania's political police) and Open Society Archives, memoirs and Romanian publications of the post-war exile, the study aims to reconstruct the destiny of Doru Novacovici from the moment of his release until the fall of the communist regime and the sufferings of his family during this period of time.

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\* "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History, Bucharest Romania; Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile

**PROTESTANT DESTINY DURING THE COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP  
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AND PRIEST DOBRI JÁNOS IN THE  
SECURITY ARCHIVES AND IN THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

The story of the Transylvanian Protestant priest Dobri János comprises almost all the aspects of suppression known in the communist period, but in the same time it stands as a symbol of human dignity in a totalitarian regime.

A former confessor of the Hungarian army, after returning from the soviet prisons Dobri János became professor and taught Russian at the Protestant Theological Institute from Cluj. In 1951 he was arrested by Securitate and condemned by the Military Court in Cluj to six months of correctional detention for his activity as deputy of the Transylvanian District of Hungarian Scouts Association. In 1953 he was detained again for an “equitable adjustment” of the previous punishment. In March 1957, he was arrested again and condemned to six years of prison in the context of the repressive wave that followed the Hungarian revolution in 1956.

In 1969 he became a priest in Cluj. His efforts during the ‘70s to build a church determined the Securitate to keep him under surveillance. His activities as a priest and his international connections were monitored by the political police until the fall of the Communist regime.

The purpose of this presentation is to depict the strategies of survival and social-professional integration of the priest Dobri János and of his family (wife and six kids).

**PhD student Dragoş URSU\***

**LIFE AFTER RE-EDUCATION: FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS  
FROM AIUD PENITENTIARY DESTINIES BETWEEN THEIR**

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\* Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

\* “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile

## **RELEASE AND PROFESSIONAL (NON)INTEGRATION IN THE COMMUNIST SOCIETY**

The moment of release from prison meant for many political prisoners switching the actual prison with the metaphorical one, which was Communist Romania and in which they were condemned to wear the stigma of the “people’s enemies”.

The aim of this study is to analyse the integration of the former political prisoners in society and family. The time frame for each case study starts at the moment of release and ends at the moment of finding a workplace, and of integrating in the family. The following aspects will be pursued: the impact of release, the contact with the new realities in the country, the difficulty of finding a job, of attending an educational program again, reintegration (being accepted) in the family (marriage, children, meeting them again), reporting and (non)integration in the communist society.

The targeted group of research are the prisoners detained or released from the Aiud penitentiary by the Decree 411/1964 that passed through the later stage of re-education (1959-1964) in this penitentiary.

This study uses oral sources, memoirs and documents from CNSAS, National Archives, OSA in order to make a prosopographical reconstruction of the destiny of former political prisoners in the period after their release.

**Architect PhD Vlad MITRIC-CIUPE\***

### **THE SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL DESTINY OF FAMILIES OF ARCHITECTS THAT WERE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN COMMUNIST ROMANIA: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CASE STUDIES**

From 2011 until today we have been developing the research project entitled: *Romanian Architects and Political Detention 1944-1964*. We have identified and documented over 170 cases until today, therefore we now

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\* The Department of Architecture, “Spiru Haret” University, Bucharest

have a representative sample. In many cases both wives (and husbands) and children of the architects followed their parents' vocation, which is a very interesting aspect considering the topic of this conference. Our text will present a synthesis of situations in which these families found themselves after the sudden disappearance of one of their members. Moreover, we will present their destinies during their absence and after their return, in connection with the general social situations and the everyday ones: home, studies, and workplace. Finally, after years (tens of years) of silence, we will present and analyse the role their offspring in our endeavour to recuperate the memory of their forerunners. The main pillar of our communication is the presentation of several case studies on each important situation.

**PhD Silviu B. MOLDOVAN\***

**TACTICS FOR PERPETUATION OF THE POLITICAL MESSAGE:  
THE CASE OF THE FAMILIES OF THE FORMER POLITICAL  
PRISONERS FROM ROMANIA (1948-1989)**

This study is based upon the motivations for political condemnations in 1948-1960 given by the authorities in support for their decisions of maintaining/reactivating the informative surveillance of the political repression victims. We will analyse both the situations of the former political prisoners and their families (including the cases of those who founded new families only after their release from the penitentiary, sometimes due to the fascination caused by the heroic aura of the former political prisoners).

By reading textually and meta-textually their memoirs, we understand that the memorialists of the post-war prison spaces in Romania almost systematically insist on the motivations behind their literary efforts: on the one hand they want to inform their own families or the posterity on the truth of their cause, and on the other hand they want to perpetuate the political message in which they believed, and in most cases, still believe. The diversity of the means of persuasion correspond to the variety of the survival social and professional (or reintegration) tactics they or their families used (considering

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\* The National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives, Bucharest



the important role played by the “personal file” and the family connections of each candidate, as well as the suspicion the Securitate and the communist activists had towards the “predisposition” of the families to assimilate the former political prisoners’ contesting ideas). In this context there were even attempts of those suspected at adjusting their public positions by making it compatible to the objectives of the regime. More complex strategies are also present, like the one of secretly infiltrating the state institutions with persons closed to former detainees, in order to openly promote the contesting ideas and to legally help those that were forcing the professional integration, despite the inconvenient personal file. The sources used for this study are: the archive of the Securitate, private archives of the former political prisoners, oral history sources and the memoirs of that period.

**Researcher PhD Cosmin BUDEANĂ\***

## **SOCIAL-PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF POLITICAL PRISONERS’ WIVES IN COMMUNIST ROMANIA IN THE ‘50s AND ‘60s**

After the instauration of Communism in Romania, over 100.000 opponents or potential opponents of the new regime were arrested, their wealth was confiscated and they spent years in prisons and work camps. The suppression did not affect only those considered “enemies of the people” but also their families. Their wives were affected most often by deprivation due to confiscation of wealth, loss of jobs, and other social interdictions. For many married political prisoners a true challenge was to maintain functional family relations, while divorce represented a solution of survival for the wives and children that remained at home.

The aim of this paper is to present the sufferings through which some of the political prisoners’ wives passed and the strategies they used to survive and integrate socially and professionally.

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\* Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile

On the one hand, I will identify the general characteristics of the Communist repression of those times and the relationship between the authorities and the political prisoners' families. On the other hand I will present a series of case studies of the political prisoners' wives, who became indirect victims of the regime and second hand citizens, in a so called "equalitarian" society.

The paper is based upon testimonies of those directly involved (former political prisoners and their wives), on documents from the Securitate archive (Communist Romania's political police), and on the general bibliography on Communism or memoirs.

**PhD student Cristina PLĂMĂDEALĂ\***

### **THE LIFE OF ANTONIE PLAMADEALA AND OF HIS FAMILY IN THE DECADE (1944-1954) FOLLOWING THEIR REFUGE TO ROMANIA FROM BESSARABIA**

The proposed paper focuses on Antoine Plamadeala and his family's refuge from Bessarabia in April of 1944 and of his and his family's experience in Romania in the 1940s and 1950s, following their refuge.

My paper will concern Plamadeala's experience with the Securitate in the 1940s-1950s. It will discuss the accusations he received from Securitate of being tied to the Legionary movement, his years on the run from the Securitate, his arrest in 1954, and experience in the Jilava prison, as a political prisoner. This article will also reflect upon his family's struggle to cope with their oldest son's fate in these turbulent years. It will also speak about the family's efforts to survive and to deal with the death of their other son Gheorghe. Gheorghe was sent to the Prislop monastery to warn his oldest brother of the Securitate's arrest warrant the family received on January 11, 1950 from the local police officer. This trip, carried out in the January of 1950, cost Gheorghe his life. He fell severely ill upon his return home and died from tuberculosis shortly after that. In addition to secondary sources pertinent to the subject discussed here, my paper will employ Securitate archival sources currently stored at the Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives

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\* Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society & Culture, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

(ACNSAS), as well as other biographical accounts written by Plamadeala, his brother Mihai Plamadeala and their father.

**Assoc. prof. Mirosław KŁUSEK\***  
**PhD student Robert ANDRZEJCZYK\*\***

## **THE COMMUNIST REPRESSION AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF POLISH ARISTOCRATIC FAMILIES ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE BRANICKI FAMILY (1945-1960)**

At the very beginning it should be noted that the Polish aristocracy was subjected to mass repressions immediately after the Red Army entered Polish territory. The repressions were imposed by Polish as well as Soviet authorities. The study begins in January 1945 when Branicki family was deported from Warsaw to Lubyanka in Moscow and later interned in Krasnogorsk (SSSR). The Branicki family returned to Poland in September 1947 and they found out that they were expropriated without compensation of vast majority of movable and immovable assets, including real estates. Family members as “class enemies” were subject to repression virtually in all spheres of social and political life. For example they were intensively interrogated, they had problems with finding any kind of job and they were forced to move from the district where they had their real estate. Therefore all family members, regardless their age, were collateral victims of repression. The core of the work is the analysis of the restrictions imposed by the communist authorities on the Branicki family members and survival strategies adopted by the family members. The study is based on research on archival documents as well as memoirs.

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\* University of Agriculture, Cracow, Poland

\*\* “Nicolaus Copernicus” University, Toruń, Poland

## THE NIGHTMARE THE COPOSU FAMILY LIVED DURING THE COMMUNIST REGIME (THE '50s AND THE '60s)

The year 1947 was similar to an earthquake to the Coposu family. It was the third “earthquake” for the family. The first one happened after the annexation of Transylvania as a consequence of the Vienna Dictate from August 30<sup>th</sup> 1940, when the family was forced to leave from Bobota, where the Greek-Catholic archpriest served for 32 years and where all his children were born. The second earthquake happened on the July 28<sup>th</sup>, when Valentin Coposu died from a heart attack, at the age of 54.

The second day after Corneliu Coposu’s arrest, his wife, Arlette, was thrown out from the house, and was allowed to keep only the clothes she was wearing. She took refuge in her husband’s family house from where she was arrested in 1950. Cornelia and Doina Coposu, who had been employed, were sacked. Flavia Coposu, who was then graduating the Academy of Economic Sciences from Bucharest, was not allowed to take a job until September 1949, when she got hired at a construction site from Constanta (Sovrom). The youngest sister, Rodica Coposu, suffered as well after the new education bill passed in 1948. To Aurelia Coposu, Corneliu Coposu’s mother, the regime denied the right to pension. The family was in a desperate situation and at some point the only surviving money were Rodica Coposu’s student scholarship.

Even after Corneliu Coposu’s and his wife’s release from prison the family continued to suffer, being under the strict surveillance of the Securitate. The study is based on the information from the CNSAS archives and from the interviews with Flavia and Rodica Coposu.

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\* County Museum of History, Zalău, Romania

**Researcher PhD Claudia Florentina DOBRE\***  
**PhD Valeriu ANTONOVICI\*\***

## **BĂRĂGAN DEPORTATION: TRAJECTORIES OF SURVIVAL, ADAPTATION AND SUCCESS**

Communist persecutions came under various forms. An important repressive tool of the regime was deportation. Under Communism, the former deportees did not dare to speak about their experience. It was a stigma that could have brought more persecutions! As memory cannot be erased, painful memories burdened the feelings and the lives of former deportees. They hunted their sleep, but most of the time their insomnia moments. They influenced their life choices and their life trajectories.

Our paper investigates the Bărağan deportees' personal and professional trajectories as recalled after the fall of the communist regime. Our aim is twofold: on the one hand, to reconstruct the life and professional trajectories of deported families, and on the other, to investigate the impact of the repressive means used by authorities on the living standards of the repressed, on their choices concerning family, education, work, and leisure.

Our analysis is mainly based on oral history inquiries, the findings of which will be corroborated with archival documents issued by authorities but also by repressed people themselves.

**Researcher PhD. Cipriana PETRE\***

## **“FROM NOW ON, I TAKE MY NAME BACK”: THE DYNAMICS OF AUTHORSHIP AND OWNERSHIP IN ROMANIA’S COMMUNIST PRISONS, AND BEYOND. THE CASE OF PAINTER NICHIFOR AVRAMESCU**

By mapping Communism's distorted dynamics between authorship and ownership in prisoner/guard(s) relationships behind the closed doors

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\* United States of America

of one of Romania's Communist political prisons in the late 1950s, this paper argues that Communism's altered concepts of "original" versus "imitation" reflect and promote capitalist impulses that permeate beyond the prisons' closed door on the "outdoor" stage of the nation as prison, prompting citizens in and outside of prison to tailor a new sense of "self" versus "other". By employing Deconstructive analytical methodologies, the paper addresses the case of painter Nichifor Avramescu and his forced artistic labour as described in his yet unpublished manuscript of memoirs from Communist prisons, and investigates (in oral history fashion, in an interview with the painter's son, Rev. Father Cornel Avramescu) the ways in which Avramescu's family has been impacted, and the means through which they developed strategies for survival.

**PhD student Ioana-Zoia SANDU (URSU)\***

## **MEMORIES OF MOTHERHOOD IMPRISONED INSIDE THE ROMANIAN GULAG**

The Romanian Gulag had imprisoned "enemies of the people" throughout the social scale, both men and women. The incarcerations produced lasting traumas as well as a deep fracture of family bonds, marked by loss, distrust and despair. Suffering did not come in political colours to the prisoners; it rather addressed their human nature and their familial relationships. One of the most sensitive of these, during detention, was the status of motherhood.

The paper focuses on the study of detention of female political prisoners who had already been or who became mothers during their time in prison.

Appealing to sources of memory such as detention memoirs and oral history interviews, the research will question several aspects: the episodes of arrest and investigation, the familial fractures resulted from the arrest, the daily life of mothers living in detention, traumatizing episodes as well as cases of giving birth inside prison walls.

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The research will thus portray a dramatic image of the communist abuse against female political prisoners in general, alongside with the traumatic imprisonment of motherhood, as reflected in the memory of the abused.

**PhD Ludmila D. COJOCARU\***

## **“MY PARENTS WERE ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE”: PERSPECTIVES AND DIFFICULTIES OF INTERPRETATION OF SILENCE IN THE ORAL HISTORY STUDIES OF RSS MOLDAVIA DEPORTATIONS**

Silence is a constitutive part of the oral history interview, and the difficulties of approaching it and interpreting it remain on the agenda of Oral History researchers (Freund 2013). The problem of silence is noticed both at the stage of recording the life stories and in the process of their use (Gheith 2007; Jessee 2011).

The author suggests approaching the silence phenomenon in the context of Oral History Studies of the deportations from RSS Moldavia, with a focus on the life experience of the descendants of the families that were so called “enemies of the people”.

On the basis of the case studies the author will analyse the conditions that contributed to an on-going marginalization and isolation of the family members of those deported, continuously suspected of inimical attitudes towards the Soviet state and the strategies employed by the deported persons in order to survive these practices.

The study is based on the empirical material and the experience of infield investigations pursued within the frames of the State Program “The Recuperation and Historical Use of the Memory of the Victims of the Communist-Totalitarian Regime from RSS Moldavia (1940-1941, 1944-1953)” during the first stage of project implementation (2015-2016).

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**THE EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE SECOND CIRCLE OF SUFFERING:  
THE CASE STUDY OF CHIRILĂ FAMILY**

Everyday life during Communism is a promising research field in the attempt of understanding this regime. Studying everyday life will add a few nuances to the existing theories on Romanian Communism, developed either by historians or/and specialists in the field of political and social sciences or by other actors of the public space (such as politicians, artists, writers, etc.) that circumscribe the history of Communism in two paradigms: that of victimisation, by denouncing the regime's crimes and abuses, and that of general culpability, suggesting that all Romanians are responsible of the existence and endurance of Communism.

My approach does not leave aside the influence of structures, dominant representations, and institutions in individuals' daily lives. However, it will privilege individuals' capacity to resist power relations, to subvert dominant representations, and to assume risks; in other words their ability to exercise what Anglo-Saxon literature defines as *agency*. It will focus on the everyday life of a family that experienced persecutions during Communism, a case study which confirms the assessment of Michel de Certeau that "the total colonization of daily life by the system" (Michel de Certeau, *Culture in the Plural*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1997: 137-138) is practically impossible.

**Prof. Todor CEPREGANOV\***

**PhD. Sonja NIKOLOVA\*\***

**"COMRADE FROM UDB -A DESTROY THEM ALL!"**

The total number of persons who were sent to Goli Otok is not yet verified, but according to recent studies it is assumed that to Goli Otok and other

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camps had been sent from 40 up to 60.000 persons, of which 3.800 prisoners died in the camps. From 200.000 to 250.000 were imprisoned on one or more days, and in socialist Yugoslavia from about 17.3 million people approximately 1.000.000 citizens were persecuted. It does not apply only to the prisoners but we have to have in mind the fate of many families who were evicted from their houses, and suffered from confiscation of property, dismissal, forced cooperation, rape, breaking up the marital community, eviction or relocation, changing professions and lack of possibility to thrive. It was the way how Josip Broz Tito conducted the sweep of his party opponents - the old Communists who were participating in the labour movement between the two World Wars and who for decades have been linked to the revolutionary movement and the Communist Party of the USSR and communists who were against Tito's policy.

In our article we will reflect, through the memories of the victims, the fate of the prisoners of R. of Macedonia, who under the sign of „informborovci“ – opponents of Tito's policy, ended up in Goli Otok, and the fate of their families until 1989.

**Researcher PhD Dalia BÁTHORY\***

### **A HUNGARIAN'S STRATEGY TO COPE WITH THE '56 CRISIS NARRATIVES AND (IMAGINED) CONNECTIONS IN THE SECURITATE FILES**

This is the story of one (among many others) Hungarian ethnics in the 1950s Romania who wanted with great ardour to deal honourably with the obstacles the course of events we now call History challenged him. He did not manage. He managed to put himself in prison and his family in danger. The spoiler here is irrelevant, because the true endeavour is to reconstruct his decisions and actions from the various narrative voices that are woven in his files carefully kept by the Romanian Secret Police. I will try to use his story as a case study in order to discuss systemic issues of the suppressive regime in mirror with agency, with respect to both the

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suppressor and the suppressed. In order to reach this goal I will place his life in the historical context it unfolded, I will address several methodological questions regarding the work with Securitate files and I will use Impression Management Theory in order to explain my perspective on his behaviour. I will use the general literature on Communism and the Hungarian minority in Romania and documents from the Open Society Archives in order to establish the historical context and I will analyse files from the Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives for my character's life story.

**PhD. habilit. Anna Maria WACHOWIAK\***

**POLITICAL AND STRIKE'S LEADERSHIP OF ACTIVISTS OF  
PEASANT SOLIDARITY "PATRIMONY" ("OJCOWIZNA") IN USTRZYKI  
DOLNE AND RZESZÓW. UNSPOKEN HISTORY OF IMPRISONING  
THEM AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF THEIR FAMILIES**

Many peasant activists from "Peasant Solidarity", some of them rooted in "Patrimony" (from Ustrzyki Dolne and Rzeszów), just after the imposition of Martial Law in Poland (Martial Law in Poland was imposed during 1981-1983) had been sent into the internment camps.

During 1981-1982 many opposition activists from the majority of opposition movements were imprisoned in the internment camps, as part of action: "The fir" ("Jodła"), and among them there were activists from Ojcowizna (Patrimony). Almost 5 thousand persons were jailed in the network of internment camps, which were mostly created within prisons (decisions of imprisonment for 10 thousand people were issued).

I will share with you the leader of "Patrimony", Wieńczysław Nowacki's unknown history and that of the inmate activists and their struggle for theirs and their family's survival.

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## **FAMILY MEMBERS OF “EXPLOITERS” AND “ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE” IN THE FETTERS OF THE SOVIET REGIME**

After the October Revolution, the Soviet ideology promoted the society without social classes. The proletariat had to be the only class with all rights and power. Other social classes were considered as the enemy classes who had to be liquidated. In practice, this meant repression against everybody who had owned private property or belonged to the class of intellectuals. During the first years of the communist regime the liquidation of the “class enemies” was publicly discussed.

When Joseph Stalin seized the power, repression based on social class became overt. But in various forms it continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union. What was labelled euphemistically “class struggle” was either not documented or was miss-documented, so the reality is not easy to establish today. For example, by using different bureaucratic excuses, students with bourgeois background were not allowed to the matriculation exams at universities, despite the Soviet Constitution of 1936 declared the equality of all Soviet citizens.

Social background never ceased to be taken into account in Soviet Union. Its importance decreased together with the stagnation of the Soviet system in general, but it became a real obstacle in many situations, for example when one applied to get a permission to travel abroad.

PhD student Monika KARENIAUSKAITĖ\*

## **GULAG PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS IN LITHUANIAN SSR UNDER AND AFTER STALINISM: LEGAL, IDEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DEFINITION**

In Soviet Lithuania (LSSR), during Stalinism, the means of communist repression were *judicial* and *extra-judicial*. The *judicial* measures were applied

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against the individual, who was put on trial; the *extra-judicial* ones took place against entire groups. If one member of the “nuclear family” – we use the common sociological definition, meaning that a nuclear family or elementary family is a family group consisting of a pair of adults and their children – became a political criminal and was taken to the Soviet court – the other members were deported *without a trial*, according to the special lists. This meant also the nationalization of the family’s property. If at least one member of the nuclear family was a prisoner of GULAG, it was almost impossible to avoid the deportation for the entire family – only such methods as changed names or falsification of passport could help, but such cases were rare. So, in most cases the families of political prisoners in LSSR were direct victims.

After the death of Stalin, the rehabilitation process was carried out, and the deportees could come back to the territory of LSSR. But the strict restrictions to choosing the living place and work were still imposed on them. Therefore such people went through the secondary victimization process and their traumatization continued. Even the children of families of former political prisoners and deportees, born after the punishment and deportations, became the object of social stigmatization. Deportees and their families witnessed the feeling of being labelled as “someone dangerous” by both administration and society.

**PhD student Maciej KOŚCIUSZKO\***

## **POLITICAL CRIMES IN GREATER POLAND (WIELKOPOLSKA) IN THE STALINIST PERIOD - ANALYSIS OF SOURCES**

The main pillar of this paper is a source analysis regarding the sentences received by the people who committed political crimes in Wielkopolska during the Stalinist period. Based on the sources in reference to this subject – mainly the archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Poznań and the National Archives in Poznań – a new approach has been developed, and concentrated around the following questions: How many children or teenagers were linked to political crimes? What was the average age of the

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sentenced? What were they usually accused of and how many death sentences were issued? All of these questions will be presented in a statistical context, based on the research conducted in the already mentioned archives.

Through the conducted research in Wielkopolska, I would like to consider a wider context of political prosecutions – how representative was this in reference to the whole country? It is also my intention to provoke a discussion about the scale of political sentences issued in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe during the 50s and 60s.

**Researcher Marcin ZWOLSKI\***

## **PROBLEMS WITH TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN POLAND: THE CASE OF THE NIECHODA FAMILY**

After the democratic transition of 1989 in Poland, a number of initiatives were undertaken in order to deal with the crimes of the Stalinism period and to provide redress for the victims and their families. Nonetheless, to this day a significant number of those crimes have still remained un-redressed. Many of the wronged families continue to struggle to reclaim their property that was confiscated by the communists, and to receive compensations for the repressions they experienced.

These problems are illustrated by the case of the family of Piotr Niechoda, who was killed in an interrogation at the detention of the Public Security. He left behind his wife with five children, and the entire property of the family was confiscated. After the fall of the communist regime, the courts confirmed that Niechoda was murdered by the officers of the Public Security. Still, because they have no evidence that he was engaged in any anti-communist resistance organization, they refused to give his family any compensation. His remains were buried in an unmarked grave. Niechoda's children hoped to verify if this grave really contained his remains with the help of DNA analysis, but the authorities denied them the right to exhume the grave, demanding a proof that it was their father who was buried there. Due to the lack of legal regulations, the struggle of this and many other wronged families continues with a limited perspective for success.

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## TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ALBANIA

This paper will focus on the process of transitional justice in Albania from 1990 and on. Taking into consideration the difficult past that the country has faced, 25 years after the fall of the totalitarian regime dealing with the past, and especially with that strata of the population which after 1990 acquired their freedom and also the status of former political prisoners, no progress seem to have been done and Albania has failed to bring justice in society. The political debate has hold hostage the concrete process of dealing with the past and even there has been some legal initiatives, they have had a purely symbolic value.

I will focus on the case of Albanian former political prisoners, their rights and treatment. Unfortunately, this is a two sided coin where from one side it looks like the government, with a very vague legal framework justifies itself and, from the other side there is the reality and conditions in which the former political prisoners live. I refer not only to their economic situation but also to a more an inclusive, social and just life lived with dignity and with respect. In this paper I will present what has been done so far from the point of view of the state as an actor as well an insight of civil society's role, besides the former political prisoners' view in Albania regarding their position, in order to provide a better understanding of how they perceive their current situation and their treatment for these last 25 years.

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