

## ROMANIA

### Neither “Fleishig” nor “Milchig”: A Comparative Study

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Right after the change of regime in December 1989, Romania displayed some features that were common to most postcommunist East-Central European countries in regard to antisemitism, as well as some specific features of its own. Freed from ideological and censorship constraints, latent antisemitism erupted in the public space, and after a while it became a cross-party phenomenon. This does not mean that political parties had all put antisemitism on their banners; it rather means that regardless of ideology, both antisemitic prejudice and, above all, the perception of Romania’s “dark past”<sup>1</sup> of the interwar period and the Second World War, as well as the role Jews had allegedly played in the early stage of communism, figured in similar shades, if not intensity, in all political formations. The “dark past” was by and large ignored and occasionally justified, while the claim about the Jews was overemphasized in what turned out to be a renaissance of the “Judeo-Bolshevik” myth.<sup>2</sup> All of these elements were common to most East-Central European countries.

This is not to say that differences between attitudes were not noticeable. One could, for example, distinguish between: (a) self-exculpatory nostalgic antisemitism, or parties and movements of a “radical return” to models of the interwar radical right; (b) self-propelling antisemitism, or what I have

called parties and movements of a “radical continuity,” based on models provided by exacerbated Ceaușescu-era national communism; (c) neopopulist mercantile antisemitism, in which antisemitism is either utilized or discarded according to what “sells” and what does not at both national and international levels; (d) utilitarian antisemitism, which shares some characteristics with neopopulist mercantile antisemitism but is distinguished by the fact that it is employed by parties, movements, and personalities who are on record as being “anti-antisemitic”; (e) reactive antisemitism, which is basically explained in terms of a “competitive martyrdom” between the Holocaust and the Gulag; and (f) vengeance antisemitism, represented by those who are driven by the simple hatred of Jews for whatever they do or refrain from doing.<sup>3</sup> For this chapter, utilitarian antisemitism is of special relevance, for it unwillingly and unwittingly triggered significant shifts in the official narrative on antisemitism and the Holocaust. However, that official narrative is not necessarily accompanied by a similarly extensive shift in unofficial practices and attitudes. This is best examined by observing how reactive antisemitism replaced Holocaust denial and/or trivialization with “Holocaust obfuscation”<sup>4</sup> within the general East-Central European trend of competitive martyrdom.

#### FROM THE ANTONESCU CULT TO ORDINANCE 31/2002

With Romania banging on NATO’s doors, and against the background of protests in the United States and Israel triggered by the Ion Antonescu cult in Romania, in 2001 former Romanian president Ion Iliescu attended a ceremony commemorating the 1941 Iași pogrom, where he felt compelled to declare that “no matter what *we* may think, international public opinion considers Antonescu to have been a war criminal.”<sup>5</sup> This was as honest an admission as Iliescu was capable of that Romanian and Western memory of the Second World War did not coincide.

By early 2002 Romania had been bluntly told by US officials that the conditions for its acceptance into NATO included facing its Second World War past, and that it would have to put an end to the Marshal Antonescu cult that had been thriving in Romania since 1990.<sup>6</sup> Although the cult’s main promoters were people associated with the Greater Romanian Party (Partidul România Mare, PRM), its spectrum was in fact far wider, cutting across party lines and involving prominent historians and other intellectuals.

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Between six and eight statues had been erected in memory of the Marshal, twenty-five streets and squares had been renamed after him, and in Iași even the “Heroes” military cemetery carried the dictator’s name.<sup>7</sup> On March 18, 2002, the Defense Ministry launched a syllabus on the Holocaust at the National Defense College in Bucharest, and in a message to participants, Prime Minister Adrian Năstase said that “the future cannot be built on falsification and mystification,” and that the 1941 pogroms in Iași and the decimation of Jews in liberated Bessarabia and Bukovina, as well as the later deportation of Jews to Transnistria, had been “in no way different from . . . the Nazi operation known under the name of the Final Solution.” In his message, Năstase announced that the government had approved an emergency ordinance prohibiting the display of “racist or fascist symbols,” the erection of statues or plaques commemorating those convicted in Romania or abroad for “crimes against peace” and “crimes against humanity,” and the naming of streets and other places after those personalities.

Emergency ordinances become effective upon their issuance, but must eventually be approved by the parliament in order to become laws. Lengthy debates in parliamentary commissions showed that this was by no means to be taken for granted, as it took four years for the Romanian parliament to approve the new law.<sup>8</sup> The procrastination was obviously intentional. As approved, the new law employed the definition of the Holocaust included in the report issued by the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (see *infra*)—“the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany, *its allies and collaborators* between 1933–1945”—adding to it that the country’s Roma population had also been subjected to “deportation and annihilation.”<sup>9</sup>

#### A PRESIDENTIAL BLUNDER GIVES RISE TO A COMMISSION

The setting up of the Commission has its own peculiar saga. It followed a blunder by Ion Iliescu in an interview with a journalist from the Israeli daily *Haaretz*.<sup>10</sup> Engaging in “Holocaust trivialization,” the president told the interviewer that “the Holocaust was not unique to the Jewish population in Europe. Many others, including Poles, died in the same way.” But only Jews and Gypsies, the interviewer observed in reaction, had been “targeted for genocide” at that time. To which Iliescu responded, “I know. But there were others, who were labeled communists, and they were similarly victimized.”

Although Iliescu admitted that massacres of Jews had been perpetrated on Romania’s territory proper and observed that “the leaders of that time are responsible for those events,” he insisted “it is impossible to accuse the Romanian people and the Romanian society of this. When Germany declared [*sic*] the Final Solution—a decision that was obeyed by other countries, including Hungary—Antonescu no longer supported that policy. On the contrary, he took steps to protect the Jews. That, too, is historical truth.” In an attempt to hush the international scandal created by the interview, the president proposed the setting up of what became known as the Elie Wiesel Commission, after the name of its chairman.

Established in October 2003 and ending its work one year later, the Commission’s achievement proved to be a milestone in the official narrative of the Holocaust in Romania. Its members included several recommendations in their *Final Report*.<sup>11</sup> In what follows, I examine to what extent these recommendations were heeded or sidestepped, and how, and I briefly discuss the reactions that they triggered in society.

In order to improve the public awareness of the Holocaust, the government “should issue an official declaration acknowledging the report of the Commission and adopting the entirety of its contents and conclusion.” This recommendation was promptly implemented and the entire report was placed on the website of the Romanian presidency. Similarly implemented in full was the recommendation that “once accepted and endorsed by the president of Romania,” the report be published in full in Romanian and English. Under the same heading, the Commission also recommended that the “full report be distributed throughout the country to all libraries, schools, universities, and other educational and research institutions.” This recommendation was never put into practice. While the written media carried some rather perfunctory items on the Commission’s conclusions, and while some of these items were often accompanied by dismissive comments by readers, most reactions (particularly on the internet) were negative and had antisemitic tones.<sup>12</sup>

The Commission remarked that “many Romanian textbooks currently in use that do refer to the Holocaust present incomplete or even factually incorrect information.” It therefore recommended that “the Ministry of Education create a working group in cooperation with experts of the Commission and appropriate international institutions, with the purpose of

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reviewing, correcting, revising and drafting appropriate curricula and textbook material on the Holocaust based on the findings of the Commission's report."<sup>13</sup>

The Commission was referring to the textbooks used by schools since 1999, when, following the 1998 initiative of Education Minister Andrei Marga, Holocaust education was introduced in the national curricula as a mandatory subject (to be tackled in two to four hours) in the larger framework of the history of the Second World War (which is taught in the seventh, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades). The first textbooks to include the topic were published in 1999, but due to the lack of reliable resources and a unitary view on recent Romanian history, many of them included wrong or biased information, usually in a clear attempt to exonerate the Romanian authorities from any responsibility for their wartime wrongdoings. As a result of the Commission's recommendation, things appeared to take a turn for the better, and with a few exceptions, the textbooks published after 2004 were generally more coherent and accurate.

Concerning higher education, the Commission recommended that "universities and the Romanian Academy should be called on to organize conferences and symposia on the Holocaust in Romania." It also said "colleges and universities should be encouraged to establish courses on the subject, not only for their students but also for professional, cultural, and public opinion leaders in this country." Four universities (the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, the University of Bucharest, the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, and the National School for Political and Administrative Studies—SNSPA of Bucharest) heeded the recommendation.

The Romanian Academy, mentioned in the report's recommendations, is another story altogether. Packed with members appointed under the national-communist regime of Ceaușescu (as membership in this institution is for life), as well as with historians with links to the former Iron Guard (the Legionary Movement) and/or the communist secret police, the Academy is a bastion of nationalist tradition.<sup>14</sup> After repeated postponements, on February 17, 2014, Romania's most prestigious scientific forum hosted a special public debate titled "Historical Information and Testimonies Concerning the Holocaust in Romania." The meeting was organized in collaboration with the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania (FCER) and the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania

(INSHR–EW) as part of the events marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27). Academy president Ionel Haiduc, who apologized for having to leave early due to other engagements, chaired the meeting. At that point, one of his deputies, historian Dan Berindei, stepped in for Haiduc. Berindei commented that although the forum had heard “interesting things,” it was “a pity that the historical context had not been taken into account.”<sup>15</sup> Though reminiscent of German historian Martin Broszat’s advocacy of “historicization (*Historisierung*),”<sup>16</sup> which warned against demonizing Nazism by judging it outside its actual historical context, Berindei’s remark was a lot more than that. It had all the ingredients of what has been called “Holocaust obfuscation,” which is based on the “Double Genocide” theory that claims that the Holocaust was part of the reaction to (as well as an emulation of) the provocations posed by Bolshevism within what Holocaust trivializer<sup>17</sup> Ernst Nolte called the “European Civil War” (see *infra*).<sup>18</sup>

Returning to the Commission’s conclusions, it was said that “the government of Romania has adopted October 9 (2004) as the official date of Holocaust commemoration.”<sup>19</sup> The choice of October 9 followed the suggestion of the Commission, whose work was ongoing at that time, and it took legal form with Government Decision no. 672 of May 5, 2004. The day marks the beginning of deportations to Transnistria of Romanian Jews from Bukovina. The Commission also recommended that “a national memorial to the victims of the Holocaust should be erected on public property in Bucharest.”<sup>20</sup> After considerable procrastination, the monument was finally inaugurated on October 8, 2009. Since then, annual ceremonies are held at the site on October 9, attended by either the head of state or his representatives, governmental officials, and members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Bucharest.

The Commission drew attention to the existence of “several mass graves of Holocaust victims . . . (most notably victims of the Iași pogrom [June 1941]), that should be properly identified and maintained by the government of Romania.”<sup>21</sup> A first and important step in this direction was made in 2010, when an INSHR–EW team headed by historian Adrian Cioflâncă identified at Popricani, a locality situated at a short distance from Iași, a mass grave in which thirty-six victims of the Holocaust (among them, twelve children and nine women) had been buried.<sup>22</sup> A case file was opened

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with the Prosecutor's Office in Iași, which then relinquished competence in favor of the local Military Prosecutor's Office. In February 2012 the Military Prosecutor's Office attached to the Bucharest Court of Appeal took over the inquiry, as the investigations had established that it was a case of genocide. In an unprecedented decision, the investigators announced in April 2014 that the Romanian army had committed genocide in 1941 in the forest of Popricani.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, as of 2017, the same team was searching for mass graves at locations in the Republic of Moldova, and had already discovered sites where the Romanian army had similarly executed Jews at the outset of the Second World War.<sup>24</sup>

The Commission also noted the necessity of "reversing the rehabilitation of war criminals." In this connection it named "the noted war criminals Radu Dinulescu and Gheorghe Petrescu, whose 'rehabilitation' was recently upheld by the Supreme Court."<sup>25</sup> Colonel Dinulescu, chief of the Second Section of the General Staff, and his deputy within the same section, Colonel Petrescu, had been exonerated by the Supreme Court in 1998 and 1999, respectively. They had been sentenced in 1953 to fifteen years of hard labor and ten years of civic degradation (Dinulescu) and ten years of hard labor and a similar period of civic degradation (Petrescu), and to the confiscation of their assets.<sup>26</sup> They had been found guilty of having participated in the preparations for the Iași pogrom; of organizing the deportations to Transnistria; and of mistreating prisoners of war and a part of the civil population in Bessarabia.<sup>27</sup>

Romania's then Prosecutor General, Ilie Botoș, initiated a procedure called "extraordinary appeal," whereby prosecutors may appeal unjustified sentencing. The whole affair was kept secret. In both Dinulescu's and Petrescu's cases, the Prosecutor General claimed that the Iași pogrom had never involved participation of the General Staff's Second Section, and that it had been organized by German SS troops. The position adopted here clearly corresponds to what elsewhere I described as that variety of "deflective negationism" that, by placing all guilt on the Germans alone, is in fact attempting to exonerate not merely individuals such as Dinulescu and Petrescu, but states and local collaboration.<sup>28</sup>

The Commission also mentioned the need for "correcting and enforcing legislation on Holocaust denial and public veneration of Antonescu."<sup>29</sup> The reference was to Emergency Ordinance 31/ 2002, which eventually

became Law 107/2006. The problems with this law were manifold. First, mention should be made of the traditional Romanian propensity for ignoring legislation. Second, however, the judiciary (prosecutors and tribunals alike) have tended to interpret the legislation forbidding the denial of the Holocaust as if it referred to denial of the genocide having taken place elsewhere (although many such cases were also ignored), not in Romania. In this respect, the report has been a failure, despite having been accepted by the authorities. According to official statistics, between 2002 and 2015, only fourteen cases led to indictments for violating the provisions of Ordinance 31/2002. How many were actually convicted is not known. Between 2007 and 2015, out of a total of 294 complaints to the Prosecutor General’s office for violations of the provisions of Law 107/2016, prosecutions were launched in seven cases, involving nine persons. In 2005 a Braşov-based tribunal convicted Iron Guard apologist Gheorghe Opriţa to thirty months in prison, but the sentence was quashed on appeal in 2006.<sup>30</sup>

Under these circumstances, it became clear that the law had to be amended to address both its main lacunae. First, the legislation had to clarify that denying the Holocaust also referred to Romania and its own contribution to the perpetration of the Shoah; and second, the interdiction on propaganda and display of symbols in the public space had to specifically refer to the Iron Guard. After significant pressure from abroad and intensive lobbying by the INSHR–EW, this was achieved with the approval of Law 217 in July 2015.<sup>31</sup> The amendment was initiated by three parliamentarians representing the Partidul Naţional Liberal (PNL, National Liberal Party), one of whom, Crin Antonescu, had presidential ambitions at the time.<sup>32</sup> According to malicious comments in the media, Antonescu was thereby hoping to enlist US support for his candidacy; true or not, this reflected the notorious canard according to which Romania was ruled by the United States and the United States, in turn, was ruled by Jews. Sadly, Crin Antonescu subsequently confirmed the existence of a huge discrepancy between the official and the unofficial narratives on the Holocaust.

Whereas Ordinance 31/2002 had prompted many negative reactions denying Romania’s role in the Holocaust and Ion Antonescu’s role in particular,<sup>33</sup> this time around, reactions tended to focus on the Iron Guard, but had ramifications for the more general ongoing debates in East-Central Europe about the crimes committed by the two totalitarian regimes of the

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twentieth century—Nazism and communism. Both times, the debates triggered what Rafał Pankowski, when discussing the case of Jedwabne and the “Auschwitz crosses” in Poland, calls a “by-product” that “led to antisemitic views being expressed more loudly than before and with more mainstream legitimacy, especially in the broadly conceived right-wing conservative spectrum.”<sup>34</sup>

#### DOUBLE GENOCIDE, HOLOCAUST OBFUSCATION, COMPETITIVE MARTYRDOM

These reactions fall in line with three main and intertwined characteristics of postcommunist attitudes to memory and the “dark past,” found elsewhere in the region as well. The first characteristic is the repeated use of the Double Genocide theory. In a nutshell, the Double Genocide theory places the Gulag and its local derivatives on par with the Holocaust. In its more benign form, it calls for “symmetry” in condemning the two atrocities of the last century, which it casts as equally repulsive, and for a similar “symmetry” in punishing those guilty for them. In its (rather common) aggressive form, it insists on the role played by Jews in communization, which in the eyes of the theory’s partisans should exculpate local collaboration with the Nazis. This latter form has many elements in common with deflecting the guilt for the Holocaust onto the Jews themselves.

The second characteristic, Holocaust obfuscation,<sup>35</sup> channels the debate toward the alleged guilt of the Jews for bringing communism to power, with the purpose of justifying local participation in the perpetration of the Shoah, which is by and large ignored, while autochthonous resistance against communism is grossly exaggerated. With this purpose in mind, no distinction is made between the Nazi genocide and the Stalinist crimes against humanity, in spite of the fact that according to international legislation both are exempt from the statute of limitations.

This prompts the third and last characteristic, namely, “competitive martyrdom.”<sup>36</sup> In its search for positive heroes to replace the ousted and artificial communist symbolism, and against the background of communist Holocaust neglect and/or distortion, the Double Genocide approach is fast becoming in all these countries the master commemorative narrative, one in which the myth of anticommunist resistance finds both hero-models and exculpation for the past. Within the framework of a century dominated by

the Holocaust as a paradigmatic genocide, competitive martyrdom is the synthesis of all these elements. It strives to provide an alternative dominant narrative, not an alternative paradigm, for the paradigm remains genocidal. In the substituted narrative, the collective trauma of denationalization and Sovietization prevails over any attempt to draw attention to the suffering of Jews and Roma during the Holocaust, the more so as Jews continue to be perceived as instruments of communization.

The Double Genocide theory was first advanced in the Baltic states (to be more precise, in Lithuania) soon after the fall of communism. Lithuania was also the first state to grant Double Genocide institutional recognition, by passing legislation that prohibits the denial of both Nazi and communist “genocides” in 2010.<sup>37</sup> It was followed in the same year by similar legislation in Hungary. The denial of communist crimes was also introduced in the penal codes (albeit in different forms) in Latvia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Moldova, and Ukraine.<sup>38</sup>

Expectedly, publications with overt Iron Guardist profiles denounced the amendment without mincing words. The legionary veterans’ journal *Permanențe* (Consistencies), printed irregularly since 1998, published a special edition entirely dedicated to the new version of the law. The main contribution was a three-page-long article titled “Abuzul statului împotriva drepturilor cetățeanului—încă posibil în România” (The abuse of the state against the citizen’s rights—still possible in Romania). The article ended with an “appeal” supported by nearly all organizations, foundations, and Orthodox Church organizations with legionary sympathies—no less than fifteen in total.<sup>39</sup> The “appeal” had been issued before the approval of Law 217, in the hope of dissuading the legislature from proceeding. Nothing that followed (apart from some injurious attacks on INSHR–EW and its director, and some rather melodramatic outbursts) added anything new to the arguments of the legionaries and their sympathizers. It is therefore sufficient to examine the initial reaction, expressed by the article.

First, it was argued that Law 217/2015 represented an attack on the constitutional provision guaranteeing freedom of expression and of assembly. This was little more than an emblematic illustration of the reactions of extremists (left and right) whenever their own antisystemic capability to undermine democracy is circumvented. To “demonstrate” this contention, the article made use of a syllogism: since all previous postcommunist attempts to outlaw the

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legionaries and their offshoots had failed, this was proof that they had always acted strictly within democratic procedure. This neglects to mention that the failures were due to a great extent to the fact that Ordinance 31/2002 and Law 107/2006 do not specifically refer to the Iron Guard.

The article also utilized as an argument the hoax that the Nuremberg Tribunal had allegedly exonerated the Iron Guard in respect of all accusations. The hoax is not very original, having also been utilized by sympathizers of Monsignor Jozef Tiso in Slovakia.<sup>40</sup> In reality, the tribunal never dealt with any fascist movements anywhere except in Nazi Germany. It was also claimed in the article that the purpose of the amendments included in Law 217 was to introduce a new form of censorship similar to that introduced by Stalinist rule in late 1947 and early 1948. This old-new censorship would allegedly outlaw the reading, studying, and dissemination of works by Romanian intellectuals who at one point or another had sympathized with the Iron Guard (including Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, and poet Radu Gyr, author of the Iron Guard anthem “Holy Legionary Youth”). In actual fact, the amendment specifically referred to propaganda aimed at exonerating Iron Guard ideology; to organizing pro-Guard events; to the dissemination of legionary symbols; and to utilizing public space for the promotion of the cult of personalities sentenced for war crimes after the Second World War. The new law did not mention and was not intended to prohibit the republication of works by former Iron Guard sympathizers when it came to their literary, philosophical, or sociological publications, as critics (and not only declared Guard sympathizers) had insinuated. Finally, the article gave full vent to the Double Genocide theory and to competitive martyrdom. The Iron Guard, it claimed, had been at the forefront of the struggle against communism, and its leaders and sympathizers imprisoned by the communists were the martyrs of the nation, as proved by the numerous priests with Iron Guard sympathies (known for some time as *Sfinții Închisorilor*, or “Prison Saints”).

The Prison Saints phenomenon is not unique to Romania. In Serbia, the dominant Orthodox Church had transformed the virulently antisemitic Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956) from “traitor,” as he was dubbed by the communists, into a “saint.”<sup>41</sup> Slovak attempts to bring about the beatification of Bishop Ján Vojtaššák were thwarted after Israeli historians wrote to Pope John Paul II, showing that the bishop had been a Nazi sympathizer

and had participated in a meeting of the Slovak National Council in March 1942 where plans to deport 58,000 Jews (most of whom perished in extermination camps) had been discussed. Vojtaššák was Deputy Chairman of the council headed by Tiso himself in the clerical fascist state. He was sentenced in 1950 to twenty-four years in prison and released in 1963 under an amnesty. Vojtaššák died in 1965 and his conviction was quashed in 1990. The Slovak Bishops Conference continues to press for his canonization.<sup>42</sup> Croat Archbishop Alojzije Viktor Stepinac, who was Ante Pavelić’s spiritual advisor under the Ustaša Nazi puppet regime and supreme military vicar of the army of the Independent State of Croatia, is a third Prison Saint. One of the initiators of the forcible conversion of the Orthodox Serbs, Stepinac was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1998 and declared a “martyr,” and to the chagrin of the Serbs, he might soon be canonized. Stepinac was tried by the communist regime and sentenced to sixteen years in prison for treason and collaboration with the Ustaša regime, but later was released, confined to his home village, and made a cardinal by Pope Pius XII in 1952.<sup>43</sup>

Returning to Romania, the Prison Saints phenomenon deserves further examination. The incarcerated priests were all, or nearly all, former Iron Guardists, some of whom had been imprisoned already by Marshal Antonescu for having participated in the legionary rebellion against him in January 1941. Their pasts as members of the Iron Guard are seldom mentioned, and if they are, no mention is made of the Guard’s antisemitism. On the contrary, heroic deeds have been attributed to some of them (e.g., Valeriu Gafencu) that prove their “love” for Jews who were also incarcerated, though these alleged deeds are never mentioned in the prison memoirs of the Jews themselves (e.g., Pastor Richard Wurmbrand).<sup>44</sup>

It is not an accident that authors known for their previous attempts to rehabilitate the Iron Guard and its members, including founder Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, edit many of these books that follow a similar goal. For example, a volume edited by Răzvan Codrescu (one of the first to attempt to rehabilitate Codreanu) contains articles by himself, by Sorin Lavric (author of a eulogistic volume on philosopher Constantin Noica and the Iron Guard<sup>45</sup>), and by Radu Preda, who in May 2014 was appointed Director of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Regime Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (IICCMER). His predecessor, the young historian Andrei Muraru, had carefully avoided any association of IICCMER

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with competitive martyrdom and links to Iron Guard promoters, and when he left to become a presidential counselor to newly elected president Klaus Iohannis, his departure radically changed IICCMER's face. Immediately upon his appointment, Preda, a theologian by training, stated that it was his "obligation" to place "the case of the 'Prison Saints' on the agenda of the institute."<sup>46</sup> In the aforementioned volume, he authored two articles: "Mercenarii memoriei" (Memory's mercenaries) and "Memoria ca obligație" (Memory as an obligation). Lavric's contribution was titled "Nevoia de martiri" (The need of martyrs), while Codrescu himself wrote "Martiologia temnițelor comuniste" (The martyrology of communist jails) and reported on the recently held "First Symposium of Martyrdom."<sup>47</sup> In the former tract, he placed anticommunist militant and Radio Free Europe journalist Monica Lovinescu and Corneliu Coposu, the leader of the Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat (PNȚCD, Christian Democratic National Peasants' Party), side by side with Codreanu and legionary police chief Alexandru Gyka. As Alexandru Climescu formulated it, this was disingenuous "organized confusion."<sup>48</sup>

Apologists of the Guard were also at the vanguard of attacks on the INSHR-EW and its director, Alexandru Florian, since INSHR-EW and Florian, personally, had long pressed lawmakers to amend Law 217. Examples abound and can be easily found by a search of the internet. Under the auspices of the Professor George Manu Foundation—one of several organizations specializing in Iron Guard cleansing—Cezarina Condurache (a member of *Permanențe's* editorial board) published in 2015 a volume titled *Chipuri ale demnității românești. Eroi ai neamului și Sfinți ai Închisorilor* (Faces of Romanian dignity: heroes of the nation and saints of prison) and edited another tome titled *Eroi anticomuniști și Sfinții Închisorilor reîncriminați prin Legea 217/2015* (The anticommunist heroes and saints of prison re-incriminated by Law 217/2015).<sup>49</sup> Lavric's contribution to the latter volume says a lot about the purpose of this exercise. Titled "Damnatio memoriae" (Latin for condemnation of memory), it lists fourteen "traits" of the "persecutor." From the very first trait, it becomes clear that this is a stereotypical antisemitic endeavor of Holocaust obfuscation: "The persecutor's first trait is that he descends from the clique [*tagma*] of those who brought communism to Europe. The group of allogeneic conspirators who dreamt of enthroning the

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Bolshevik revolution in all European countries . . . , that group represents the grandfathers of those persecuting us today.”<sup>50</sup>

The second trait, according to Lavric, is in fact a metaphor borrowed from the history of the Roman Empire, where the names of those fallen from grace were banished from even being mentioned, so that “two generations on, nobody knew anymore who that or that person had been.” Similarly, “after having physically exterminated his enemies in communist prisons, the persecutor seeks to kill them for a second time, destroying their posthumous effigy. The destruction goes from symbolic diabolization to elimination from the annals of collective memory.”<sup>51</sup> According to Lavric, this is precisely what the partisans of Law 217 seek to do.

According to the third trait Lavric attributes to the persecutor, he always poses as a representative of the law. The author then spends over half a page clarifying to readers the distinction between legality and legitimacy, without even once mentioning the name of Max Weber, the real author of the distinction. But when he comes to the fourth trait, he duly mentions the Nazi constitutional and international relations theoretician Carl Schmitt, citing as illustration Schmitt’s diary, written between 1947 and 1951, when he was prohibited from publishing. According to Lavric, this illustrates the “humiliating posture of him whose right to reply has been taken away.”<sup>52</sup>

One need not read all fourteen traits, for they are actually summarized in the thirteenth, where Lavric unwittingly confirms the counternarrative nature of competitive martyrdom: “The thirteenth trait is that the persecutor atavistically hates those dignified examples that might belittle his acquisitive influence. This is precisely why the persecutor is seized with defiling frenzy (*frenzie profanatoare*) when he hears about heroes (partisans), martyrs (victims of communist prisons) or saints (clerical figures with power of attraction over the masses). These figures are the totemic capital whose symbol upsets him beyond measure. . . . This is why these words . . . have a ‘democratic’ smell driving the persecutor mad, why the zeal with which he seeks to annihilate their memory touches a draconic threshold.”<sup>53</sup>

One of Condurache’s edited volumes is extensively cited in an article published by Professor Gabriel Andreescu, who joined the attacks against Florian, making personal family allegations for which he was forced to apologize when threatened with a lawsuit.<sup>54</sup> Andreescu, who was among the first

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to embrace “symmetry,” that is, the Double Genocide argument in Romania, and for this (and other) reasons opposed Ordinance 31/2002,<sup>55</sup> also honored the author of this chapter with a few paragraphs in which he reproached me for lack of compassion for the Iron Guard victims.<sup>56</sup>

However, Andreescu was neither the most prominent nor the most influential of the “mainstream” intellectuals to express misgivings about or outright opposition to the amended law. The list is too long to reproduce in full, but two names deserve mention in particular, although, metaphorically speaking, oceans divide the quality of their products: Andrei Pleșu on the one hand, and Oana Stănculescu on the other. We shall deal with both when discussing “liberal negationism.”

#### THE EXTREME RIGHT’S PARLIAMENTARY ANTECHAMBER

In September 2014 the Bucharest Court of Appeals rejected the objections of the Prosecutor General’s Office against registering the Everything for the Country Party (Partidul Totul pentru Țară, TpȚ).<sup>57</sup> The first attempt to register a party under that name—which was also the name of the Iron Guard after 1934—dates back to 1993, when due to the rejection of that bid the group registered instead under the name Everything for the Fatherland (Totul pentru Patrie). Among its leaders (first as vice chairman and later as chairman) was Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu, who was posthumously transformed into a “hero-model” for having fought against the communist regime at the head of a group of Iron Guardist partisans. A motion picture about him titled *Portretul luptătorului la tinerețe* (Portrait of the fighter as a young man), produced in 2010, did not once mention the Iron Guard “detail.”<sup>58</sup> Yet, when Ogoranu died in 2006, his casket was wrapped up in the Legion’s flag, for he had never abandoned his legionary ideas; Premier Călin Popescu Tăriceanu (PNL) saw fit to send a wreath to the burial ceremony.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, in Latvia, Herberts Cuckurs, the deputy commander of the murderous Arājs Commando unit that played a leading role in the mass annihilation of the Jews in Riga and elsewhere in Latvia and Belarus, was transformed into the hero of a 2014 musical depicting his brave deeds as an aviator.<sup>60</sup>

In Croatia, the 2016 release of a documentary by film director Jakov Sedlar titled *Jasenovac—The Truth* that minimized the number of victims at the concentration camp prompted the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Communities in Croatia to boycott the yearly commemoration that takes

place on April 22 at Jasenovac, where at least 83,000 prisoners (Serbs, Jews, Roma, and anti-Nazi Croats) were killed by the Ustaša regime. Instead, a separate vigil was held on April 13 at the site of the former death camp. The decision to boycott the ceremonies was joined by the Serbian National Council in Croatia. Sedlar told Croatian Radio–Television HRT that the number of victims was exaggerated as a result of “non-scientific Yugoslav historiography,” and that the actual figure was 20,000 to 40,000. Culture Minister Hasanbegović (see *infra*) supported his claims.

Returning to the TpȚ, its electoral success was meager, as it managed to elect just a few local councilors. The party reregistered under its original name in 2011, and this time around, the Bucharest Tribunal accepted the registration despite the party’s obvious (and hence illegal) roots in the fascist formation established in 1934 as successor formation of the Iron Guard.<sup>61</sup> The Prosecutor General’s Office failed in several attempts to have the party dissolved on grounds of “fascist ideology.” Yet, the TpȚ was erased from the list of parties in 2015, because it did not comply with legal provisions concerning the functioning of political formations. Among other provisions, the law stipulated that political formations must have at least 25,000 members registered in eighteen counties and obtain a minimum of 50,000 votes in county, local, or parliamentary elections. The tribunal rejected the TpȚ’s argument that it had failed to meet this requirement due to harassment by the Prosecutor General’s office.<sup>62</sup> However, an initiative for changing that legislation on political parties to allow registration with just three members was approved soon after, and it would not be surprising if the TpȚ reapplies for registration as a legally functioning formation. The initiators of the change were not sympathizers of the extreme right. Rather, as civil society activists, they claimed that the current requirements were far too strict and hence undemocratic. The TpȚ, of course, supported this initiative.<sup>63</sup>

Another political formation on the ultranationalist spectrum entered officially into political competition in 2015, after the change in the law on political parties. This is the New Right (Noua Dreaptă, ND). Its roots are in the New Right Association set up by lawyer Tudor Ionescu in 2000. At that time, and in the fascist tradition, the ND defined itself a “movement” rather than a political party. Antisemitism was more implicit than emphasized among the expressions of its members, who often wore green t-shirts with Codreanu’s portrait and displayed the Celtic cross characteristic of the

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neofascists.<sup>64</sup> Considerably more emphasized were (and continue to be) anti-Roma and anti-Hungarian attitudes and homophobia, alongside an ethnocratic affiliation to the Romanian Orthodox Church and (more recently) an antirefugee posture, a subject on which the ND identifies with the positions of Hungary and Slovakia.<sup>65</sup> It has also expanded its activity in the neighboring Republic of Moldova. Soon, the ND also became involved in the apparently lucrative business of marketing Codreanu (and Prison Saints) t-shirts, CDs with ultra-right racist rock bands, and symbols of the Legionary Movement. It was clearly following models from elsewhere in Eastern Europe, for example, Poland in the early 1990s.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps the best and most concise description of the ND is the following: “They are few, but they are vocal. They are religious and march with icons, but they also wear military clothes. They love God, but hate refugees and minorities. They believe they defend their country, but regularly flout its laws.”<sup>67</sup>

A third neolegionary formation that appeared after the change in the law on political parties initially called itself the Group for Romania (Grupul pentru România, GpR). This name was no coincidence, for the central figure in the new formation is Marian Munteanu, the leader of the first neolegionary formation set up after 1989, the MpR (Movement for Romania). Furthermore, the group includes sociologist Ilie Bădescu, who chaired the “senate” of the MpR—a body that copied the legionaries’ “senate.”<sup>68</sup> Another prominent member is actor Dan Puric, known for his unconcealed admiration for the Iron Guard. The GpR spokesman, Florin Zamfirescu,<sup>69</sup> who is also an actor, first introduced the group to the public on January 13, 2016, on the private TV station Realitatea.

Employing classical fascist palingenetic terminology,<sup>70</sup> Zamfirescu began by stating that the main purpose of the GpR was “Romania’s salvation.” That meant, above all, “reestablishing the property right of Romanians over their [own] country,” as Marian Munteanu put it in a separate interview on Realitatea TV the next day.<sup>71</sup> Zamfirescu said the new group appeals to “all Christians” to join it; the implication was opaque but nonetheless reflected the nativist-ethnocratic mind of the group’s organizers. Anyway, according to Florin Colceag, another GpR founding member, Romania was the cradle of European civilization, and its people were “the Dacians, who always lived here.”<sup>72</sup> It was consequently necessary, according to Munteanu, “to defend the identity values of Romanian civilization.”<sup>73</sup> The GpR, Munteanu also

said, intended to become at the next (2016) elections a “significant parliamentary party of at least 100 members,” that is, the third-largest parliamentary group in the legislature after the Social Democratic Party and the PNL.<sup>74</sup>

On March 28, again on Realitatea TV, Munteanu suddenly came up with a new name and a new manifesto for the envisaged formation. Apparently warned about the association with the MpR the GpR had stirred, he singlehandedly changed the name to Our Alliance Romania (Alianța Noastră România, ANR).<sup>75</sup> Its manifesto circulated on the internet the same evening under the title “Proclamation.”<sup>76</sup> He called for a “mobilization of insurrectional dimensions,” carefully adding that he had in mind a “civic insurrection” of all those who put “loyalty” to Romania above any other interest. Some of the formulations utilized in the ANR manifesto were purposely designed to mislead. Among other things, the document said the ANR will “discourage any xenophobic or anti-Romanian actions, blocking any attempts to change Romania’s current political-administrative profile through various forms of coercion—whether ethnic, cultural or religious.”<sup>77</sup>

It was noble of Munteanu to distance the ANR from xenophobia, but literary critic Alex I. Ștefănescu, one of his supporters, explained why xenophobia and anti-Romanian actions had been put on the same footing. In Romania, Ștefănescu said, natives are in the minority when it comes to interest promotion. The time had come to correct this situation: national minorities should be respected, but represented in proportion to their numbers. In other words, denouncing xenophobia turned out to be a veiled call for introducing a *numerus clausus*. It must be said that promoting “Romanianism” and combating its alleged enemies had been an idiomatic form by which the interwar extreme right displayed its phobias;<sup>78</sup> and it must also be said that in 2001 Romania’s chief Holocaust denier and Iron Guard exalter Ion Coja had set up the League for Combating Anti-Romanianism. It was also Coja who disseminated the hoax that half a million Jews had secretly acquired Romanian citizenship as part of a plan to transfer Israelis to Romania and transform Romania itself into a Jewish state, and that the secret plan called for one million.<sup>79</sup> Hence, the promise to resist alleged attempts to change the administrative profile of the country, including its culture and ethnicity.

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## THE LIBERAL NEGATIONISM

Radu Preda might have been the first to claim that the new law was discriminatory, calling it “procommunist” because it ignored crimes committed by the communist regime,<sup>80</sup> but the most influential person to make this claim was aesthetician, philosopher, and former minister of culture and foreign affairs Andrei Pleșu. Though Pleșu and Andreescu are known personal adversaries, they were on the same “wavelength” vis-à-vis the amended legislation. In the spirit of Double Genocide and Holocaust obfuscation, Pleșu called for “symmetry” in addressing legally the two totalitarian legacies and claimed the tribunals that had sentenced wartime Romanian intellectuals had been under communist influence.<sup>81</sup> Starting with the initial reactions to the amendment published by *Permanențe* (see supra), this was one of the leitmotifs shared by radical right, conservative, and even some liberal critics of Law 217/2015. As in other former communist countries, there is a predominant sentiment in Romania that the trauma of communist rule is neglected by the West, which imposed on the new postcommunist regimes a memory that is not their own. Sometimes (in Andreescu’s, but not Pleșu’s case) the implication is that this imposition is instrumentalized by the Jews. In the preface of a book published by Pleșu in 2014 jointly with philosopher Gabriel Liiceanu<sup>82</sup> and conservative author Horia Roman Patapievici,<sup>83</sup> the authors wrote that European reunification has been pursued “exclusively through the westernization” of the East. This, however, had imposed on the region a “new iron curtain.” Unlike the former curtain, the new one is “no longer dividing Europe in line with a geographic axis running—as the old one did—from Szczecin to Trieste, but one that runs through the soul of every European, dividing his memory and dissociating his sensibility.” Those who lived behind the former Iron Curtain, they write, “have other memories, are *marked by other traumas*, remember differently.” Postcommunist Westernization has meant the transformation of its memory (the allusion to the Holocaust is clear) into a common memory. Yet, “the other memory, the memory of communism and of the totalitarian trauma that did not last a decade but half a century, is still not common.”<sup>84</sup>

Oana Stănculescu is altogether another cup of tea. A rather inglorious journalist, she is editor in chief of *Express magazin*, one of Romania’s numerous weeklies without readership whose survival remains a mystery. She is

also a TV journalist. Participating in a talk show called *Power Games* anchored by Realitatea TV director Rareș Bogdan, she repeated the Double Genocide argument that criticized Law 217 for not simultaneously forbidding communist propaganda. She displayed onscreen a few publications authored by interwar intellectuals with Iron Guard sympathies, claiming that the new law aimed to wipe them out of Romania’s history. She also spoke admiringly and at length about Radu Gyr. Furthermore, Stănciulescu displayed an appalling lack of familiarity with (or perhaps ill will toward) the background of the amended legislation; no one, she claimed, has ever denied the Holocaust in Romania. Her aggressive tone was complemented by the anchor with readouts from an article by Pleșu that reiterated the obviously distorted argument that the literary and philosophical production of interwar authors with Iron Guard sympathies would be taken out of circulation; this would, Pleșu wrote, be tantamount to deleting from the world cultural patrimony the works of Ezra Pound, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, and Martin Heidegger.<sup>85</sup>

On her blog, Stănciulescu gave vent to her views without any restriction. She posted a message received from one of her readers, commenting that she entirely identifies with it. Among other things, the reader wrote, “when in Majadahonda, I am proud [of] Moța and Marin,” two prominent Iron Guardists killed at Majadahonda while fighting on Franco’s side. At other times, he went on, I am Nae Ionescu “and suffer for the white race.” An ideologist of the Guard (though apparently never a registered member), Ionescu is famous for his ethnocentric views. Finally, the message went on to say, “I am Ion and Ică [Mihai] Antonescu, caught between Moscow and Berlin.” Ică Antonescu was the Marshal’s deputy, and was executed together with him in 1946. Congratulating the author of the message, Stănciulescu wrote: “I feel the same. Maybe there are more like ourselves.”<sup>86</sup> On one occasion, she publicly stated that the promoters of the law intended to remove from public space figures who were her “moral guide marks.”<sup>87</sup> In January 2016 Stănciulescu participated alongside leaders of the legionary “Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu” Foundation in a symposium dedicated to the memory of a prominent Iron Guard leader, Gogu Puiu, who had committed suicide while in prison.<sup>88</sup> One could hardly find a better example of “heroization” utilized for the purpose of competitive martyrdom and Holocaust obfuscation. This partly explains why Octav Bjoza, president of the Association of Former

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Political Prisoners in Romania (AFDPR), called Stănciulescu “our adoptive daughter.”<sup>89</sup>

Stănciulescu, as well as other intellectuals with similar sentiments, bitterly attacked INSHR–EW director Alexandru Florian. Florian and the Institute had been the driving force behind the initiative to amend Law 107/2006. Once that was achieved, he was adamant that it be enforced in public spaces, demanding that the names of streets and squares named in honor of persons sentenced by Peoples’ Tribunals in the late 1940s for war crimes be changed, and statues erected in their honor be demolished. He also insisted that honorary citizenships bestowed on them be annulled. This made him the target of a hate campaign that included death threats. The case of exiled writer Vintilă Horia, who is on record for having been an admirer of Adolf Hitler, was particularly bitter, for Horia had achieved some notoriety in exile,<sup>90</sup> and it became even more bitter after Horia’s birthplace (Segarcea) acquiesced in withdrawing the honorary citizenship it had bestowed on him.

Yet, as long as the Romanian cultural and historical establishment remains packed with overt and covert admirers of the Iron Guard, and as long as the judiciary writ large either ignores current legislation or interprets it in a distorted manner, the capabilities of INSHR–EW remain constrained. One example should suffice: in 2014 Florian received a reply from the Prosecutor General’s Office in regard to his protests concerning the toleration of neofascist groups in Romania. As in many other instances, Romanian prosecutors said they decided not to initiate legal proceedings against one of the several revived Legionary Movement organizations, which was openly displaying the Iron Guard insignia on the building of its headquarters in Bucharest. The prosecutors specified that the decision was partly based on the testimony of Șerban Suru, the organization’s leader, who claimed that the Iron Guard emblem was not an infringement of the law prohibiting the display of fascist symbols, as it merely symbolized opposition to Soviet expansion. The second basis on which the prosecution refused to pursue the complaint was the opinion of one of the Romanian Academy’s vice chairmen, who said historians are divided over whether the Iron Guard was a fascist organization. The prosecutor did not reveal the name of this person, but he is more than likely to have been Dan Berindei, the only historian who occupies that position (see *supra*).<sup>91</sup>

The 2015 change to the law does not appear to have moved things further—at least not for now. When INSHR–EW again contacted the Prosecutor General’s Office, about the display of Iron Guard insignia and provocative Nazi salutes made right in front of the INSHR–EW office by leader Suru, with video posted on his organization’s webpage, the response was that the offense may have been committed before Law 217/2015 went into force, and the legislation does not apply retroactively. A similar response was received concerning the case of outright Holocaust denier Vasile Zărnescu,<sup>92</sup> whose latest opus is by no means different from those authored in the West by the likes of David Irving, Arthur Butz, and Robert Faurisson.<sup>93</sup> The author is a retired cadre of the Romanian Information Service (the Romanian intelligence service), with the rank of colonel.<sup>94</sup> So far, the only instance when the Prosecutor General’s Office initiated the prosecution of offenders against the legislation prohibiting fascist-like manifestations was in 2014, and this was against members of the Hungarian minority exalting Hungarian irredentism.<sup>95</sup> This can hardly be accidental.

There is, consequently, little reason for optimism. Indeed, shortly after Stănciulescu’s display of solidarity with, and admiration for, the interwar extreme right, she was nominated by the PNL for membership on the Administrative Council of public Romanian TV. And while the appointment triggered a letter of protest addressed to the party’s leaders and signed by prominent intellectuals, it also triggered a counterresponse by her supporters.<sup>96</sup> What is more frightening, Stănciulescu’s colleagues from Realitatea TV called the signatories of the former letter “traitors” in the service of the KGB, the Mossad, and the Freemasons. Reminiscent of the Nazi and Iron Guard zoologic vocabulary that depicted adversaries as repulsive creatures, another called them “worms,” and journalist Octavian Hoandră said he could well understand support for the new law coming from Jews, but not from ethnic Romanians.<sup>97</sup> Thus, not only had the Judeo-Bolshevism legend returned, but so had the Iron Guardist image of the “Yiddized” (*Jidovit*) being more dangerous than the Jew. The station’s main shareholder, Cosmin Gușă, announced on the same program that he would never let Stănciulescu’s critics set foot in the studio again.<sup>98</sup> Judging by the Stănciulescu precedent, Realitatea TV might be striving to become a Romanian version of the Polish Radio Maryja, for the discourse of Gușă and his employees on March 17, 2016, reminded one of the statements of Roman Giertych, the

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leader of the League of Polish Families (LPR).<sup>99</sup> And just as Radio Maryja played a crucial role in the rise of the extremist LPR in 2001,<sup>100</sup> Realitatea TV engaged in promoting Marian Munteanu's comeback to politics (see *infra*).

The new Administrative Council including Stănciulescu was validated by Parliament on March 22, 2016, with an overwhelming majority of 312 votes in favor and 21 against. FCER president Aurel Vainer explained why Stănciulescu's positions on the Iron Guard disqualified her from taking up the post, and Markó Belá, former chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania, announced that his group would boycott the vote in view of eulogies for the Legionary Movement having been uttered in Parliament for the first time in the postcommunist period. This referred to the speech by Cristina Anghel, a senator representing the Conservative Party, who had reiterated the hoax about the Legionary Movement's exoneration at Nuremberg; she also used the occasion to launch an attack on the Hungarian minority. Justifying the PNL's nomination of Stănciulescu to the Administrative Council, PNL deputy chairman Puiu Hașotti misleadingly said that Stănciulescu had not been defending the Iron Guard and had only referred to cultural figures who were sympathetic to the Guard and should not be eliminated from the country's national patrimony. By example, he said that Radu Gyr had been the author of not just the legionary anthem but also other patriotic verse, from which he recited. However, the quoted verse had been authored by someone else—long-forgotten nationalist poet Mircea Rădulescu.<sup>101</sup>

Following two failed designations of candidates for the post of Bucharest mayor in the local elections due to be held on June 5, 2016, the PNL announced on April 13 that it had designated Marian Munteanu as its candidate for the post.<sup>102</sup> The two PNL cochairpersons, Alina Gorghiu and Vasile Blaga, told the media that Munteanu would be joining the party, and Blaga affirmed that he was “unaware of any dubious spot in Munteanu's past.” Apparently, for the PNL leadership, being founder of the first postcommunist legionary party was not a “dubious spot.” Instead, emphasis was placed on Munteanu's leadership of the anticommunist protest in Bucharest's University Square following Ion Iliescu's election as Romania's first postcommunist president, which ended in his brutal beating by the miners called to the capital by the president. There was an obvious trace of “competitive martyrology” in this as well.

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Initially, pundits and politicians who criticized the candidacy tended to refer only in passing or not at all to Munteanu’s legionary past. This was another illustration of the dominance of the Double Genocide approach, albeit an indirect one. A notable exception was Bucharest University professor Ioan Stanomir, who immediately pointed out the ethnocratic character of Munteanu’s unchanged positions.<sup>103</sup> But most of the critical commenators distanced themselves from Munteanu due to his alliance with former Romanian Information Service (SRI) director Virgil Măgureanu ahead of the 2000 elections.<sup>104</sup>

However, the ignoring of Munteanu’s activity in the early 1990s quickly ended. On April 14, several NGOs demanded that the PNL withdraw its support from Munteanu, pointing out that he “had and continues to have sympathies for currents of fascist orientation,” and that he “is promoting a discourse entrenched in Orthodox-fundamentalist values, incompatible with democratic and even constitutional values.”<sup>105</sup> On April 15, the Group for Social Dialogue began gathering signatures on a protest letter addressed to the PNL that stated that although the PNL was free to designate as candidate for the mayoralty whomever it pleased, it must be aware of the fact that Munteanu’s designation compromises liberal values, with which he has nothing in common: “The leap Marian Munteanu makes today . . . is just as stupefying as that made from the values of University Square to those of the Movement for Romania [which were] impregnated with ideologies that ravaged twentieth-century Europe.”<sup>106</sup> Noting that as a governmental institution the INSHR–EW must refrain from interfering in elections, its director general Alexandru Florian reacted only when Munteanu declared on April 13 on the Antena 3 private TV channel that Law 217/2015 was “antisemitic” because it generated antisemitism.<sup>107</sup> This argument, blaming Jews for the existence of antisemitism, is as old as antisemitism itself—and in fact, an oblique justification for it. FCER president Vainer’s reaction to the designation was this time more cautious than what one might have expected or wished. He said he was “somewhat worried,” but “for now we place question marks, to avoid utilizing exclamation marks.” It was, however, “hard to believe” the choice was the best possible one, in view of the fact that “the movement to which he belonged in the past was very nationalist-oriented.” Nonetheless, Munteanu “might respond and show that he has changed.”<sup>108</sup> Finally, MCA director Marco Katz asked Munteanu to clarify his present

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position vis-à-vis the Legionary Movement, Law 217/2015, and “the atrocities committed by the Antonescu regime.” According to “information we received, in the 1990s you led a pro-legionary, pro-Zelea Codreanu party, called Movement for Romania,” said Katz in a letter addressed to Munteanu and published by the negationist and antisemitic *Rost Online*.<sup>109</sup>

In his response to Katz, Munteanu claimed the MpR had never been an Iron Guardist party, a “label” attached to it by the then ruling National Salvation Front in order to discredit it and hide its own communist roots. The MpR ideology, he claimed, had been democratic and inspired by what he dubbed the “conservative-popular” ideology of Nicolae Iorga’s National Democratic Party and by French and British conservative parties.<sup>110</sup> He also wrote that he was ready to send Katz the MpR’s party statutes to demonstrate his arguments. But those statutes demonstrate exactly the opposite, as I proved in several articles written at that time. Sadly (or ironically), the title of one of these tracts was “Marginalization or Mainstream? The Extreme Right in Postcommunist Romania”; looking back, I wish my prediction had failed.<sup>111</sup>

Acknowledging that he had participated in meetings with veterans of the Legion, Munteanu claimed that this was only to show respect for those incarcerated in communist prisons, and that he was later attacked by them precisely because he would not identify with their ideology. Memory must have failed him. Yes, the Timișoara-based wing of the Iron Guard that was linked to Codreanu’s successor, Horia Sima, and published *Gazeta de vest* (Western Gazette), had indeed criticized him, but the MpR publication *Mișcarea* (The Movement) openly and repeatedly hailed Codreanu, and its rivals concurred. He also “forgot” to mention that a photo of Codreanu photo hung in his office.<sup>112</sup> He no less conveniently omitted to mention his open letter to the former members of the Legion in which he wrote that different times call for different strategies, but added: “we are all streams in one and the same river.”<sup>113</sup>

He also wrote in the letter to Katz: “I never was and will never be an antisemite. I am not, and will never be, a xenophobe. I am in solidarity with the suffering of the Jewish people hit by the holocaust [*sic*] provoked by Nazism, just as the suffering of Romanians marks me and other peoples hit by Bolshevik terror.” Leaving the Double Genocide premise aside, one wonders how Munteanu explains the repeated publication in *Mișcarea* of nega-

tionist articles translated from other languages;<sup>114</sup> or his own statement that Jews inflated the number of Holocaust victims in order to “obtain illicit money from Romanian people through disinformation and manipulation of public opinion, with the complicity of treacherous elements who infiltrated the Romanian institutional structures.”<sup>115</sup>

The rest of the letter merely repeats the claims already found in *Permanențe* and many other publications concerning Law 217/2015. Unlike in Western Europe, where “those who had instigated to crimes, those who took decisions and ordered executions were identified and their deeds were punished and criminalized,” Romania’s case is different. The rise to power of “the Bolsheviks” right after the war “superposed and toxically interfered with the natural process of sentencing decision makers guilty of crimes and abuses.” That natural process was replaced by one aimed at “cleansing a whole political and cultural class” out of pursuit of “power interests.” According to Munteanu, “a great many number of people and cultural productions were labeled [by the regime] ‘fascist,’ ‘legionary,’ or, more vaguely, ‘reactionary element,’ despite having nothing in common with events or decisions of criminal nature.” Such “unjustified trials and the traumas of affected families left deep sensibilities among those affected, inclusive of a background of vulnerabilities.” The time that has passed “is too short and the mixed emotions stirred by such still living traumas have not yet settled.” This, Munteanu concluded, “convinced me to evaluate Law 217/2015 as a Trojan Horse in some of its aspects,” one that “serves the interests of groups or directions contrary to those entertained by yourself and me, namely, the building of a stable and powerful society around values and fundamental democratic benchmarks.”<sup>116</sup> In short, this was a considerably more sophisticated formulation of the same “Jews generate antisemitism” claim, and at the same time a veiled warning.

In an interview with the Mediafax independent news agency on April 17, Munteanu was asked whether he considered that Codreanu had been a criminal. He answered that “Romanian justice has said ‘no,’” referring to the trial in which Codreanu was acquitted by a panel of sympathetic judges for killing Iași prefect Constantin Manciu in 1924. Pressed by the interviewer to speak in his own name rather than in the name of “Romanian justice,” all Munteanu was able to come up with was: “I do not know, I have long been waiting for historians, for the justice system, to clarify that.” The

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interviewer confronted him with a citation from his own earlier writings where he had said: “The historic experience of the Legionary Movement enriches the national Romanian patrimony, presenting it with a valuable model for the purity of its spiritual message, the firmness of its political discourse, the performance of its organizing techniques and above all its elevated capacity of national and Christian experience.” Did he maintain that claim? Obviously embarrassed, Munteanu once again provided a typical “competitive martyrdom” reply: “Only inasmuch as it refers to the sacrifice of those imprisoned, who were fighting against Bolshevik occupation.”<sup>117</sup>

The PNL’s reaction was similar, only a lot less sophisticated. Defying all evidence, in an “open letter” addressed to those contesting Munteanu’s candidacy, the Liberals said the accusation about “the alleged proximity of Mr. Marian Munteanu to the extreme right was nothing but a myth” originally launched by former president Iliescu in 1990. Nowadays, however, the accusations stem from “organizations and people who apparently think they have a monopoly over the idea of civil society . . . , part of a propagandist political discourse often encountered in the politicking game.”

The Gorghiu-Blaga PNL leadership’s decision to promote Munteanu at the head of the party’s Bucharest local elections campaign eventually began to be questioned and challenged from within the party’s own ranks. One might have expected former PNL chairman Crin Antonescu, as initiator of Law 217, to take the pole position in this quest. Not only did Antonescu fail to do so, but he called criticism directed at the decision “agitation with hysterical accents.” The former chairman said that one could “say anything about [Munteanu], but not that he is an uninteresting person,” and that Munteanu’s role in the 1990 University Square protests “triggers in me positive emotions.”<sup>118</sup> The first dissenting voice unexpectedly came from former culture minister Alexandru Paleologu, who bluntly stated that he was not going to vote for Munteanu.<sup>119</sup> Petre Roman, today a PNL member (he was Iliescu’s premier in the tumultuous days of 1990), revealed that in an article published in April 1994 in *Mișcarea*, Munteanu had called Liberal premier I. G. Duca (shot by an Iron Guard squad on December 29, 1933) an “assassin.” Duca had outlawed the Iron Guard. The PNL leadership, Roman said, had called for proof that Munteanu had legionary sympathies. What better proof than this article?, he asked. The revelation prompted historian and

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journalist Ion M. Ioniță to publish an appeal to PNL honorary chairman Mircea Ionescu-Quintus titled “Domnule Quintus, nu girați întoarcerea României în anii ‘30!” (Mr. Quintus, do not endorse Romania’s return to the 1930s!). The nonagenarian honorary chairman (the only person to have abstained in the vote for Munteanu’s designation) found himself in an awkward position, for Duca had been a friend of his family, and his assassination prompted his own decision to join the party.<sup>120</sup>

Even worse for the PNL leadership was the announcement made by two Bucharest administrative sector candidates (eventually joined by a third) that their own electoral campaigns would be conducted separately from Munteanu’s. Ovidiu Raețchi, the party’s sector 5 candidate, said, “I have heard [Munteanu] saying he did not know whether Zelea Codreanu had been a criminal or not. . . . I myself am certain he was one. I have also seen things written [by Munteanu] about the importance and the positive elements of the Legionary Movement. I believe . . . it was a terrorist movement that killed three premiers.”<sup>121</sup>

A real danger of a split seemed to be looming over the PNL. Under these circumstances, on April 20 the leadership of the PNL announced it was “withdrawing” Munteanu’s candidacy, replacing him with Bucharest PNL chairman Cătălin Predoiu. On April 23, Munteanu announced he intended to set up a new political formation, with the purpose of changing the government. The executive, he said, must put the country “on a new path,” where Romanians “would not be ashamed of being Romanians.” The government, he added, must “respect our values, our identity.”<sup>122</sup> In turn, Predoiu announced that the PNL had eliminated Munteanu from its list of Bucharest municipal councilor candidates, where he once had occupied the first spot.<sup>123</sup>

What prompted the PNL leadership to rally behind Stănculescu and then Munteanu is yet unclear. One possibility is that with the December 2016 general elections approaching, the party feared that Crin Antonescu’s “sin” would be sanctioned by the nationalist segment of the electorate. In a talk show on Antena 3 on April 14, Atanasiu offered as an explanation that the party hoped to enlist the nationalist electorate of the PRM, left leaderless after the death of Corneliu Vadim Tudor. However, the PNL’s traditional electorate (upper-middle-class successful businesspeople) and the PRM’s (losers of the transition, pseudo-intellectuals of the former regime, and

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former secret police operatives and collaborators) are in many ways mutually exclusive. Another possibility is that the PNL hoped to sail the populist-nationalist winds blowing in other East European countries (but also in Western Europe) such as Hungary, Poland, Croatia, and Slovakia.<sup>124</sup> In any case, within the PNL the unofficial narrative on the Holocaust and its perpetrators had once more prevailed over its official version. The fact that a significant segment of civil society proved capable of rejecting that discourse is the good news. Finally, it must be mentioned that in the parliamentary elections on December 11, 2016, the poor performance of the PNL forced Gorghiu to submit her resignation (Blaga had resigned earlier, under suspicion of taking bribes). The “Munteanu adventure” alone does not explain the party’s failure in the elections. But it obviously contributed to it.

#### CONCLUSION: NOT THE BEST AND NOT THE WORST

Since the 2004 elections, no political party in Romania deserving to be labeled antisemitic has held seats in the legislature. Compared with neighboring Hungary, where the extremist, ultranationalist, antisemitic, and anti-Roma Jobbik (Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, or Movement for a Better Hungary) first gained parliamentary representation in 2010, this is remarkable. Jobbik went on to do even better in the 2014 elections,<sup>125</sup> when ballot returns made it the third-strongest force in the parliament. No Romanian party has attempted to create paramilitary organizations, as Jobbik did when it set up the Magyar Gárda, which functioned from 2007 until it was banned in 2009. In spite of the ban, at the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected legislature in 2014, Gábor Vona, the commander of the Magyar Gárda and the leader of Jobbik, threw off the jacket he had worn during the ceremony and displayed the Guard’s fascist-like uniform.<sup>126</sup>

To be sure, the Hungarian Guard is not the only organization to march the streets of East-Central Europe in uniforms reminiscent of the Nazis. Estonian Waffen SS veterans march annually, and are referred to as “freedom fighters.” Latvian veterans of the former Latvian Legion parade in Riga every year on March 16 (Latvian Fighters Day), while in Lithuania admirers and apologists of the Lithuanian Activist Front march twice a year in Kaunas and Vilnius to commemorate their predecessors’ wartime defense against the USSR; some of them wear modified Nazi symbols.<sup>127</sup> But these

are either very old people or a handful of members of the young generation—not a paramilitary organization engaging in regular training. Still, they enjoy the support of some political parties and prominent politicians.

Even if reluctantly and under foreign pressure, Romania has by and large respected commitments it made on renouncing the initial Antonescu cult. In Hungary, by contrast, there is an uninterrupted promotion of the Miklós Horthy cult in which the ruling FIDESZ–Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz–Magyar Polgári Szövetség) not only collaborates with Jobbik, but also very often leads in cleansing the admiral’s regime and its members of any trace of responsibility for the fate of the Jews during the Second World War. Hand in hand, Premier Viktor Orbán and his supporters utilize the Double Genocide theme to obfuscate the Holocaust and to transmogrify perpetrators into respected intellectual and political historical figures.<sup>128</sup> Two recent attempts (in 2015 and 2016) involved statues honoring historians Bálint Hóman, one of the drafters of Second World War–era anti-Jewish legislation, and György Donáth, a racist and supporter of the same legislation, whose life-sized bust was placed just around the corner from Budapest’s Holocaust Memorial Center, to add insult to injury. Competitive martyrdom also played a role, for Donáth had been executed by the communist regime in 1947 on trumped-up charges, while Hóman was sentenced in 1946 to life in prison and died in jail in 1951. The unveiling of Donáth’s bust stirred a public protest, and the ceremony had to be interrupted. Leaving the site, FIDESZ deputy chairman Gergely Gulyás said that while he did not agree with views that exclude minorities, Donáth was a martyr and deserved to have a statue in Budapest.<sup>129</sup> Vojtech Tuka, the Slovak prime minister largely responsible for the deportation of the Jews in clerical fascist Slovakia, is also considered to be a “martyr” by his contemporary admirers.<sup>130</sup>

Just as worrisome as the transformation of wartime criminals into martyrs is the reaction to Jewish protests against these attempts by pundits close to the official ruling circles. For example, Zsolt Bayer, a FIDESZ founding member notorious for his antisemitism, as well as a personal friend of Prime Minister Orbán, wrote shortly after the Donáth incident in the daily *Magyar Hírlap* (Hungarian News): “Why are we surprised that the simple peasant whose determinant experience was that the Jews broke into his village, beat his priest to death, threatened to convert his church into a movie theater, why do we find it shocking that twenty years later he watched without pity

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as the gendarmes dragged the Jews away from his village?” This was but one of numerous attempts by Bayer to deflect onto Jews the guilt for what happened in Hungary during the Holocaust. In Bayer’s opinion, there is no justification for denying cultural figures the likes of Hóman and Donáth their rightful place for having contributed to Hungarian culture. As for their views on Jews, Bayer cites Zsigmond Móricz, a rampant antisemite of Transylvanian origins: “Their noses and ears are big, their mouths strange, the lower lip is swollen: the kind of mouth I always see with disgust so that I have to avert my eyes. Such a mouth makes my throat nauseous.”<sup>131</sup> As Eva Balogh pointed out, in the eyes of the pundit, antisemitism in Hungary after 1919 was a “natural” state of mind “because of the Jewish preponderance in the leadership of the Soviet Republic. And with this assertion he absolves all anti-Semitism between the two world wars.”<sup>132</sup> This is nothing short of Holocaust obfuscation.

As we have seen, Romania has almost clandestinely rehabilitated some war criminals. Yet, attempts to rehabilitate Ion Antonescu and some of those executed with him in 1946 (Transnistria governor Gheorghe Alexianu, for example) have failed.<sup>133</sup> Neighboring Serbia, in contrast, rehabilitated in May 2015 Chetnik leader Dragoljub (“Draža”) Mihailović, executed in May 1946 for high treason and collaboration with the Nazis. A court of justice in Belgrade ruled that his trial at the hands of Tito’s communist regime had been “political and ideological,” and said serious legal errors had been committed in its course.<sup>134</sup> Worse still, the rehabilitation of the wartime Nazi puppet regime head Milan Nedić appears to be imminent. The procedure was started by his family and has enlisted the support of the Association of Political Prisoners and Victims of the Communist Regime. Under Nedić’s regime, Belgrade became the first capital city in the world to be declared *Judenrein*. By the end of the war, some 90 percent of Serbia’s Jewish population had been murdered by the Nazis. Nedić’s legal successors argue that his trial had been politically motivated. His apologists go even further, claiming that his suicide (in prison, in 1946) was actually murder, and that while acting as the head of the government, Nedić had given refuge to some 600,000 Serbs from all over the Balkans and thus helped Serbs survive Nazi occupation.<sup>135</sup>

Expectedly, Croatia has protested against these steps,<sup>136</sup> but Croatia has problems of its own. Under former presidents Stjepan Mesić (elected in

2000 and reelected in 2005) and one-term successor Ivo Josipović (2010–2014), Croatia successfully dismantled much of the legacy of its first post-communist head of state, Franjo Tuđman. This meant that negationism, among other things, was out, and so was the glorification of the Nazi puppet state under Ante Pavelić. The victory of Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in the presidential runoff on February 19, 2015, and the subsequent return to power of a coalition government in which the Tuđman-founded Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) is the most powerful member changed the change. Leaving other worrisome signs aside, one indication of what seems to lie ahead was provided by the appointment as culture minister of historian Zlatko Hasanbegović.

Apparently a protégé of President Grabar-Kitarović, Hasanbegović is known to have belonged in his youth to the Croatian Liberation Movement (Hrvatski oslobodilački pokret, HOP), a party founded in exile by Pavelić in the 1950s and officially registered in postcommunist Croatia in 1992. At that time, as revealed after his appointment, he wrote extensively for the HOP publication *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (NDH, Independent State of Croatia), an Ustaše-cleansing journal. Photos showing Hasanbegović wearing the beret of the Ustaša (Pavelić’s criminal fascist guard) also emerged. Nowadays a member of the HDZ, Hasanbegović had made the transition via another far-right formation, the Croatian Pure Party of Rights (Hrvatska Čista Stranka Prava, HČSP), founded in 1992, whose youth wing he headed. Hasanbegović is also a member of the Bleiburg Honorary Platoon, an NGO that honors the Ustaše executed by Tito’s partisans in 1945. It is not an accident that soon after being sworn in, the presidency of the parliament elected in November 2015 decided to reinstate sponsorship of the Bleiburg commemoration, which had been withdrawn in 2012—a move Hasanbegović had harshly denounced. In articles published in *NDH*, he called the Ustaše “heroes” and “martyrs,” in the best spirit of what would later emerge as Holocaust obfuscation. And in the same spirit, after his appointment as minister, he rejected criticism and calls for his resignation, saying that antifascism was just “an empty phrase,” and arguing that “Stalin, Tito, and Pol Pot were all antifascists” who after victory went on to establish dictatorships in their countries. Double Genocide has thus come to power in Croatia.<sup>137</sup>

Apparently, so has the heroization of the Ustaše, and, what is more, this enjoys the support of the crowds. At a friendly soccer match with Israel in

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March 2016, the Ustaša slogan “Za dom spremni” (Ready for the homeland) was chanted by the local team supporters in the presence of former premier Tihomir Oresković, who did not see fit to react.<sup>138</sup> Similarly, at the match with Norway in March, supporters at the Maksimir stadium in Zagreb also chanted “Za dom spremni,” and the slogan was shouted by Croatian player Josip Simunić after a game with Iceland in November 2013, which led to his suspension from the World Cup in Brazil.<sup>139</sup> A huge swastika appeared on the pitch at the Euro 2016 qualifier match between Croatia and Italy at Stadion Poljud in Split.<sup>140</sup> Even more worrisome, at an official event in April 2016 marking the setting up of the Knight Rafael Boban unit in 1991, master of ceremony Colonel Marko Skejo, a former commander of that unit and head of its veterans’ association, invited those in attendance to chant “Za dom spremni” in the presence of Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Vukić and other military officials including Generals Zeljko Glasnović and Mile Dedaković, and called for the salute to be legalized (previously, an appeal to make it the official chant of the Croatian army had been signed in August 2015 by several thousand people, but rejected by President Grabar-Kitarović). The Knight Rafael Boban unit was named after Ustaša commander Rafael Boban, who fought alongside the German-allied Axis states on the eastern front during the Second World War. The ceremony was held at a memorial for the unit that had been defiantly inaugurated in Split by the local mayor on May 9, 2014, Croatia’s national Day of Victory over Fascism. Skejo’s speech on the occasion notably was marked by Holocaust obfuscation and competitive martyrdom: “The Croatian dream briefly became a reality in 1941 with the creation of the Independent State of Croatia,” he said, but “unfortunately, due to the treason of part of the Croat nation [i.e., Tito’s Partisans], the NDH was crushed and Croatia fell into the darkest communist darkness in which every Croat word and idea was persecuted.”<sup>141</sup>

Thus far, Romania has been spared similar incidents, but with some additional effort from the likes of Oana Stănciulescu, the day might be closing in when Bucharest stadium crowds will sing again “Holy Legionary Youth.” For the time being, however, Romanian stadiums are used to “just” anti-Roma racist slogans, such as “One million crows, a single solution: Ion Antonescu.”<sup>142</sup>

No figures as controversial as Hasanbegović<sup>143</sup> are (or were) members of the Romanian cabinet. Inaugurated in November 2015, the government headed by Premier Dacian Cioloș included as minister of communication

the sponsor of a right-wing online publication with occasional forays to the extreme right—*În linie dreaptă* (The Right Line). For a communication minister, however, Marius Bostan was graciously silent, and in any case was dismissed by the premier after just a few months in office. Cioloș’s predecessor, Victor Ponta, had included in his cabinet in several positions his personal friend Dan Șova. In March 2012 Șova said in an interview on the private television channel Money Channel that Jews in Romania never suffered during the Holocaust and they have to thank Marshal Antonescu for that. After the INSHR–EW protested, Șova apologized and was “sanctioned” by the premier by being dispatched to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, to “learn the facts.”<sup>144</sup> To find a genuine Holocaust denier in a Romanian cabinet one has to look back to 1993, when PRM member Mihai Ungheanu served as a deputy minister of culture. Among other (mis)deeds, Ungheanu participated in and spoke at the ceremony unveiling a statue honoring Antonescu in the town of Slobozia, which also happened to be his birthplace.<sup>145</sup>

Compared with cabinets in other former communist countries, this is neither impressive nor very frightening. In Poland, for example, the 2015 return to power of the Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS) with an absolute parliamentary majority resulted in the designation of Antoni Macziewic as defense minister. Described as a “leading protagonist of the nationalist populist radical right,” Macziewic had moved to PiS from the League of Polish Families (Liga Polskich Rodzin, LPR), an ultra-nationalist and antisemitic party with which PiS ruled in coalition alongside the radical nationalist antisemitic populists of Self-Defense (Samobrona) between July 26, 2006, and November 2007. Nowadays, Macziewic is one of PiS’s deputy chairmen. He is on record for having said in an interview with Radio Maryja in July 2002 (while still an LPR member and editor of its radical right publication *Głos* (The Voice) that he had read *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and considered the well-known forgery to be “very interesting.” He added, “Some say it is authentic, some say it’s not. I am no specialist. Experience shows that there are such groups in Jewish circles.”<sup>146</sup>

Macziewic is not the only extremist LPR member to be coopted into the high ranks of PiS. So was university professor Richard Bender, an LPR founder who accused former president Aleksander Kwaśniewski of having sold out to Jewish influence because he had participated in the July 2001

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ceremonies commemorating the massacre at Jedwabne. Bender also denied the pogrom in an electoral television spot.<sup>147</sup> Bender, who taught history at the Catholic University of Lublin, had been a member of the communist-appointed parliament in the 1970s, and in the 1980s a member of the communist-led Patriotic Movement of National Rebirth (PRON), as a proregime Catholic representative. Later, he switched allegiance to the right and was for some time an LPR senator and the chairman of the State Council on Radio and Television. He came to the defense of Holocaust denier Dariusz Ratajczak. This record did not impede the Sejm from appointing him as a judge representing his party on the State Court of Justice. In the 2007 elections Bender was elected to a seat in the Senate as a PiS representative.<sup>148</sup> Upon his death in 2016 he was eulogized by the entire right-wing spectrum, including Radio Maryja's daily show *Nasz Dziennik* (Our Daily).<sup>149</sup>

PiS itself had an evolution that was similar to FIDESZ's in Hungary. It started as a classical centrist formation and "absorbed the populist radical right surge through its own appeal to illiberal democracy."<sup>150</sup> Viewed from this perspective, Viktor Orbán might have been the first to utilize "illiberal democracy" as a positive term of reference,<sup>151</sup> but the Kaczyński brothers in Poland were the first to apply it in practice. It is also true that Poland, as Jarosław Kaczyński himself has put it, was overtaken by Budapest and is now trying to catch up. Right after losing the 2011 parliamentary election, Kaczyński was reported to have said: "I am deeply convinced that the day will come when we will have Budapest in Warsaw."<sup>152</sup> The 2015 PiS victory seems, indeed, to be a step in that direction. Should the PNL pursue its 2016 course, Romania might one day join this undistinguished club. After all, the founding father of the PNL, Ion C. Brătianu, shares some traits with Józef Klemens Piłsudski, whose road the PiS follows. Both have great merits, but neither was a democrat in the current sense of the word.

Be that as it may, the collaboration of PiS with the LPR in the 2006 to 2007 government impacted the major coalition partner more than it did the two minor members of the coalition. As Pankowski puts it, this formation "started as a moderate conservative party in 2001, but the strategic alliance with Radio Maryja in 2005 meant a growing acceptance of the radical nationalist and Catholic fundamentalist ideology." This is what opened the door to the 2006 to 2007 coalition, and "by 2007, the Piłsudski party [had] largely absorbed the previous popular support of Self-Defense and the

LPR.”<sup>153</sup> Viewed from this angle, the fact that the election was lost was less important than the move from Piłsudski’s etatist and nationalist (but still civic) ideology to the exclusivist, antisemitic, and integral nationalist ideology of the interwar Endecja led by Roman Dmowski.

Lech Kaczyński was elected head of state in December 2005, but his twin brother Jarosław became premier only in July 2006. Whether or not the same model was followed in 2015, when Jarosław chose lawyer Beata Szydło to step into the premier’s shoes after the PiS ballot victory, remains to be seen. Szydło had earlier organized the ballot victory of little-known PiS presidential candidate Andrzej Duda. During the electoral campaigns, PiS strove to display as little as possible of LPR-like positions. During their (short-lived but significant in the long term) partnership, the LPR was led by Roman Jacek Giertych, who was deputy premier and minister of education (in this position, he was directly in charge of education on the Holocaust!). Roman Giertych was the grandson of the notorious interwar antisemite Jędrzej Giertych. Together with his father Maciej, he had reestablished in 1989 Romania’s National Party (Stronnictwo Narodowe).<sup>154</sup> Maciej Giertych previously had represented the LPR in the European Parliament, where he caused several uproars due to his extreme homophobia and his racist publications directed against non-Europeans.<sup>155</sup>

Two (apparently contradictory, but on closer inspection, complementary) symbolic gestures were made by President Duda not long after taking office. On the one hand, he participated in March 2016 in the ceremony of the inauguration of a museum honoring Polish Righteous among the Nations<sup>156</sup> opened in the southeastern town of Markowa.<sup>157</sup> Earlier, however, Duda had initiated the rescinding of the Order of Merit from Polish-American historian Jan Gross, for allegedly insulting Poles in an article published in the German conservative publication *Die Welt*.<sup>158</sup> In fact, the article referred to the attitude of East-Central Europeans in the ongoing refugee crisis, and Poland was mentioned only in this particular connection, but in the harshest possible terms—as a country whose citizens might have killed more Jews than Nazis during the Second World War. The Order of Merit had been bestowed on Gross in 1996 for his books on the underground structures of the state during the Second World War and on Polish children sent to Siberia, for his personal record of opposing communism as a young man in his native country, and for his support of the independent resistance movement

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after his emigration in 1969 to the United States, where he became a professor at Princeton University.<sup>159</sup> But that was all before Gross shattered Polish self-delusions about their behavior toward Jews during the war and in its aftermath.<sup>160</sup> While a decision on withdrawing the Order of Merit is still pending, in April 2016 Gross was interrogated in Katowice by a prosecutor, under suspicion of insulting the Polish nation—an offense punishable by up to three years in prison.<sup>161</sup>

While campaigning for the presidency, Duda criticized his rival, incumbent Bronisław Komorowski, for allowing Poles to be “wrongfully accused by others for participating in the Holocaust.” He asked why the president had failed to defend the good name of Poland when he did not reject the accusations that Poles had burned alive their Jewish neighbors in Jedwabne.<sup>162</sup> After his electoral victory, Duda proclaimed a “new historical policy strategy” to enhance Poland’s image in the world.<sup>163</sup> Reminiscent of Hungary’s first postcommunist premier, József Antal, Duda’s “new strategy” for dealing with Holocaust-related problems apparently consists of emphasizing the role of the (honorable, but few in number) Polish Righteous among the Nations, while denouncing critical inquiries into Polish society during and after the war. Or, as I put it when discussing Antal’s case, “symbolic history” is to replace real history and play the role of communist “socialist realism,” only in reverse: if for Stalin and Andrei Zhdanov the “typical hero in typical circumstances” existed in a fictitious present, Antal (and now Duda) placed him in an almost fictitious past.<sup>164</sup> But there might be more to that. The Poles are well known to see themselves as the eternally victimized “Christ of Nations,” and one cannot help but remark that competitive martyrdom ultimately leads to the substitution of *imitatio Christi* by *imitatio Judae*. As Polish historian Witold Kukla put it, “in the past, the Jews were envied for their money, qualifications, positions and international contacts—today they are envied for the very crematoria in which they were incinerated.”<sup>165</sup> The “Auschwitz Crosses” saga<sup>166</sup> is but one example among many, and Poland itself is but one among many East European competitors for victimhood.

These comparative remarks should not end without discussion of the possibly emblematic case of Slovakia. In the parliamentary elections of March 2016 an openly neo-Nazi party, the Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko (ĽSNS, People’s Party—Our Slovakia), led by the governor of the Banská Bystrica region Marian Kotleba, garnered 8.1 percent of the votes and en-

tered the legislature with fourteen deputies out of 150 in the Národná rada. The LSNS has also sent to the legislature the youngest member of the new parliament, Milan Mazurek. Aged only twenty-two, Mazurek is an admirer of Adolf Hitler, denies the Holocaust, and is known for his involvement in anti-Roma and antiimmigrant incidents.<sup>167</sup>

Soon after, Kotleba said he intends to utilize the subsidy from the state budget to which the LSNS was entitled as a parliamentary party (some 5 million euro) to set up a militia modeled on the Magyar Gárda. After the elections, members of the militia began boarding trains, allegedly to ensure the passengers’ safety. In fact, a paramilitary formation linked to the LSNS already existed in Slovakia; unlike the Hungarian Guard it does not yet march on the streets to intimidate the Roma population, but it trains in the woods. Occasionally, it surfaces in towns, marching in uniforms and carrying torches, according to Slovak president Andrej Kiska. The formation is called Akčná skupina Vzдор (Action Group Resistance), and Kotleba’s close collaborator Richard Holtan set it up.<sup>168</sup> Kotleba and the Akčná are linked to Slovenská pospolitost’ (Slovak Brotherhood), set up in 1995, whose members wear the fascist uniform of the Hlinka Guard—the militia of the Slovak clerical fascist state between 1938 and 1945. In 2003 Kotleba became the leader of the far-right Slovak Solidarity–National Party (Slovenská pospolitost’–Národná strana),<sup>169</sup> which the Slovak Supreme Court dissolved in 2006. As leader, Kotleba was charged for having ended a speech delivered on the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Slovak fascist state with the official salute of that state—“Na stráž!” (On guard!). The charges were dropped by the prosecution in 2009 on the strange grounds that it could not be proven that the use of the slogan was meant to display sympathy for extremism.<sup>170</sup> As a member of parliament in April 2016, Kotleba proposed that the house observe a minute of silence in Tiso’s memory. “Today is the sixty-ninth anniversary of an abominable judicial murder [of Tiso] that is rightly seen by every patriot as a martyr of Slovakia’s sovereignty and a defender of Christianity against Bolshevism,” Kotleba said in an open letter addressed to parliamentary speaker Andrej Danko.<sup>171</sup>

According to Cas Mudde, the entrance of the LSNS into parliament is mainly explained by Premier Robert Fico’s campaigning on a nativist, anti-Islamic, and antirefugee campaign that legitimized the positions that Kotleba had long been advocating.<sup>172</sup> This is probably accurate, but only in part. After

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all, Kotleba had been elected as governor already in 2013, and his activity at the head of far-right organizations dated back to the 1990s. There is more to an electoral performance than just its immediate outcome. I have in mind what Pankowski calls the “cultural resources.”<sup>173</sup>

The cultural resources of the Slovak extreme right are well rooted, and so, I dare add, are those of its Romanian counterpart. Viewed from this perspective, the “solution” the Slovaks came up with as a result of the election is both short-term and ironic. Its main pillar seems to be the Slovak National Party (Slovenská národná strana, SNS), which has entered into coalition with Fico’s Smer–SD (Smer–sociálna demokracia) and, surprisingly enough, with the Slovak-Hungarian Bridge (Most–Híd) and the centrist Siet’ (Network).<sup>174</sup> But the SNS is an ultranationalist formation, whose members had been exalting Tiso’s interwar Slovakia and calling for his rehabilitation long before the LSNS.<sup>175</sup> Though it is true that the SNS is nowadays led by new parliamentary speaker Andrej Danko rather than the embarrassingly flamboyant Ján Slota, whom Danko replaced at the head of the party in 2012, one wonders if he can change a party that used to threaten to send tanks to Budapest (Slota). The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament twice in the past suspended Smer for entering into a coalition with the SNS, and is warning it once more against the partnership.<sup>176</sup> For now, however, Fico does his best to alleviate such apprehensions. On March 14, 2016, the anniversary of the establishment of Tiso’s state, he laid a wreath on the monument dedicated to Holocaust victims at the Rybné Námestie square in Bratislava. Three LSNS representatives just elected to the new parliament, on the other hand, marked the day at Tiso’s grave at the Martinský cemetery in the Bratislava borough of Ružinov.<sup>177</sup>

Far-right and antisemitic organizations are active in the Czech Republic as well, but they are by and large marginal and have little echo in Czech society. Adam B. Bartoš, leader of the extraparliamentarian National Democracy Party, and a fellow member of the party were convicted in early March 2016 for making antisemitic statements at the grave of Agnes Hružová. Hružová was murdered on Easter 1899, and the Jew Leopold Hülsner (Hülsner) was convicted for the crime in September the same year, in a blood libel.<sup>178</sup> Unfortunately, there haven’t been the same legal consequences for the anti-Roma activism that some of these groups also promote, with a lot more success.

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The best way to conclude might be to refer to Jewish dietary laws that prohibit mixing meat with milk. Compared to other places in East-Central Europe, Romania is neither the worst plate (meaty, or *fleishig* in Yiddish) nor the best portion (dairy, or *milchig*). It is rather a mixture of the two. And that, without doubt, is not *kosher*.

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#### NOTES

1. See Himka and Michlic, “Introduction,” 1–2.
2. See Geritz, *The Myth of Jewish Communism*.
3. Shafir, “Rotten Apples,” 150–187.
4. This term was first utilized by Katz in “On Three Definitions,” 259–277.
5. *RFE/RL Newslines*, January 22, 2001. Emphasis mine.
6. On a visit to Romania in February, Bruce Jackson, chairman of the US NATO Committee did not mince words: “Give me a bulldozer and I shall immediately destroy all Antonescu statues,” adding that adherence to democratic values includes facing the historical past, and that this adherence is “not negotiable” in the NATO accession process. *România liberă*, February 27, 2002.
7. Currently, and in defiance of the legislation discussed below, a street in the town of Beiuş, Bihor County is still named after the wartime leader, and the local council of Târgovişte, Dâmboviţa County, obstinately refuses to annul his honorary citizenship of the locality. See Florian, “Memoria publică a Holocaustului în postcomunism,” 35–44. There is also a bust of the Marshal in the regional museum of Argeş County in the town of Piteşti. While the law allows this for didactic purposes, it certainly does not allow the eulogies that surround the bust. There is also a monument to Antonescu at Movila lui Burcel (Vaslui County) depicting him giving the order to Romanian soldiers to “cross the river Prut” and liberate Bessarabia in 1941. I owe the latter information to historian Adrian Cioflâncă.
8. Law no. 107 in *Monitorul oficial al României*, no. 377, May 3, 2006.
9. International Commission, *Final Report*, 381. Emphasis mine.
10. *Haaretz*, English edition, July 25, 2003. See also *RFE/RL Newslines*, July 28, 2003.
11. International Commission, *Final Report*, 386–390.
12. See Totok, “Receptarea publicistică a raportului final al Comisiei Wiesel în presa românească și germană,” 186–195.
13. International Commission, *Final Report*, 387.
14. See Shafir, “Unacademic Academics,” 942–964.
15. The author of this chapter attended the meeting.
16. Broszat, “Plädoyer für eine Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus,” 373–385.

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17. Gay, *Freud, Jews and Other Germans: Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture*, xi–xii.
18. Nolte, *Războiul civil european*.
19. International Commission, *Final Report*, 388.
20. *Ibid.*, 389.
21. *Ibid.*
22. See Cioflâncă, “Groapa comună de la Popricani (Iași)”; Florian, “Holocaustul evreilor din România. Un nou document juridic.”
23. IHRA, “Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research in Romania.”
24. Cioflâncă “Gropile comune din nord-est (I–II).”
25. International Commission, *Final Report*, 389.
26. Climescu, “Post-Transitional Injustice,” 151. For other rehabilitations of persons condemned under the same legislation, see Climescu, “The Holocaust on Trial,” 314–318.
27. Climescu, “Post-transitional Injustice.” On the activities of Dinulescu and Petrescu on the eve of and during the Second World War, see also Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, 64–65, 127–128, 155–156 and passim; Ancel, *Preludiu la asasinat*, 25–26, 29–30, 42, 290–292, 441; Deletant, *Hitler’s Forgotten Ally*, 137, 153, 156–157, 320 (note 76); Florian, “Memoria.”
28. Shafir, “Between Denial and ‘Comparative Trivialization,’” 24–37.
29. International Commission, *Final Report*, 390.
30. *Cotidianul*, June 3, 2006; Clej, “Negarea Holocaustului și activități fasciste—16 inculpați în 14 ani.”
31. “Legea nr. 217/2015 pentru modificarea și completarea Ordonanței de Urgență a Guvernului nr. 31/2002 privind interzicerea organizațiilor și simbolurilor cu caracter fascist, rasist sau xenofob și a promovării cultului persoanelor vinovate de săvârșirea unor infracțiuni contra păcii și omenirii,” *Monitorul Oficial al României*, July 15, 2015.
32. While Crin Antonescu was a member of the Senate, the other two (Dominic Gerea and Adrian Silviu Scutaru) were members of the lower house.
33. Shafir, “Memory, Memorials,” 67–97.
34. Pankowski, *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*, 105.
35. See note 4.
36. For earlier uses of the concept, see Chaumont, *La concurrence des victimes*; Besançon, *Le malheur du siècle*, 138; Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction*, 71–75; Rosenbaum, “Introduction to First Edition,” 2. According to Pankowski, *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*, 109, Western-based Polish sociologist Irineusz Krzemiński published in 2002 an article in which he proposed “an interpretation of contemporary Polish antisemitism without Jews as a result of the competition of two national narratives, both claiming supreme martyrdom, or, in other words, the competition of suffering.”
37. In Lithuania, the term *genocide* has been officially “redefined to include victims of Soviet deportations,” and the NKVD and the KGB were “officially declared to be criminal organizations, thus bringing them in line with the Nürnberg tribunal’s definition of the SS” Bartov, “Conclusion,” 668.
38. Andreescu, “Interzicerea negării crimelor comuniste pe plan european,” 41–58; Geissbühler, “The Struggle for Holocaust Memory in Romania and How Ukraine Can Learn from It,” 1–10; Socor, “Moldova Condemns Communism at Long Last,” *Eusiasia Daily Monitor* 9, July 12, 2012.
39. *Permanențe*. Ediție specială, no date, 2015.

40. Shafir, “Between Denial and ‘Comparative Trivialization,’” 59.

41. See Byford, *From “Traitor” to “Saint”: Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović in Serbian Public Memory*; aByford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism*.

42. See Webb, *The Routledge Companion to Central and Eastern Europe since 1919*, 156; “Protest against Beatification of ‘Anti-Semitic’ Bishop. Israeli Historians Have Expressed,” *The Tablet*, November 18, 2000; JTA, “Controversial Slovak Bishop May Be Canonized,” June 13, 2001; Meštan, *Anti-Semitism in the Political Development of Slovakia (2000–2009)*, 47 and passim.

43. See Carter, “Once the Ustasha Archbishop Stepinac Is Canonized, He Becomes Officially a Catholic Saint,” *There Must Be Justice*, February 13, 2014; Dragojlo, “Serbian Church Demands Vatican Talks over Stepinac,” *BalkanInsight*, June 2, 2015; Milekić, “Croatia PM to Push Pope to Canonise Stepinac,” *BalkanInsight*, April 7, 2016; “Zuroff: Jews, Serbs Were Victims of Genocide in NDH,” *inSerbia*, July 14, 2015; “Croatian Prelate: Pope Francis Believes Blessed Stepinac Is a Saint,” *Catholic Culture*, January 22, 2016; “Pope Appoints Members of Commission to Study Cause of Cardinal Stepinac,” *Catholic Culture*, March 8, 2016; “Croatian Archbishop Confident that Cardinal Stepinac’s Canonization Will Not Be Delayed,” *Catholic Culture*, March 9, 2016; “Croatian Leader Meets with Pope, Presses for Canonization of Cardinal Stepinac,” *Catholic Culture*, April 7, 2016; Pavlić, “Želimir Puljić, Archbishop of Zadar, Talks about Cardinal Stepinac and Meeting with the Pope,” *Total Croatia*, March 8, 2016.

44. A converted Jew and a former communist, Wurmbrand is claimed to have had his life saved by Valeriu Gafencu, but he never mentions that in his autobiographical works. See Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ*; Wurmbrand, *With God in Solitary Confinement*; Wurmbrand, *In God’s Underground*.

45. Lavric, *Constantin Noica și Mișcarea Legionară*.

46. Preda, “Este de datoră mea să pun pe agenda institutului cazurile Sfinților Închisorilor,” *Cuvântul Ortodox*, April 26, 2014.

47. Codrescu, *Cartea mărturisitorilor and Sfinții Închisorilor în lumea credinței*. Texte alese, prefață și note de Răzvan Codrescu.

48. Climescu, “IICCMER, centenarul Vintilă Horia și apologia fascismului. ‘Diversitate igienică’ sau confuzie organizată?,” *contributors.ro*, April 8, 2016.

49. Condurache, *Chipuri ale demintății românești*; Condurache, *Eroi Anticomuniști și Sfinții Închisorilor*.

50. Lavric “*Damnatio memoriae*,” 3.

51. *Ibid.*, 4.

52. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

53. *Ibid.*, 8.

54. Nonetheless, Andreescu republished the same article in the Bucharest weekly *Contemporanul* soon after, replacing the original attacks *ad personae* with others, seeking to demonstrate that Florian, “who determines the policy of the Elie Wiesel Institute, promoted under the former regime Lenin’s ideas, nourished the Nicolae Ceaușescu cult, and was an active supporter of communist ideology.” The references were an obvious effort to discredit the Institute through “guilt by association.” In fact, very few social science or history authors had a chance to see their work published if they declined to introduce quotes such as those mentioned by Andreescu. See his “*Etica, politica memoriei și ‘legea anti-legionară,*’” 21–22. By the same (unjustified) token, I could associate Andreescu with

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the promotion of the Codreanu cult. Back in 2011, I stopped collaborating with *Contemporanul* following the publication by its editor in chief, writer Nicolae Breban, of excerpts from a book exalting the leader of the Legion. For details, see my “Doamnei Aura Christi, redactor-șef, ‘Contemporanul. Ideea Europeană,’” *Acum*, July 15, 2011.

55. Andreescu, “Necesitatea amendării Ordonanței de urgență nr. 31,” 8–19.

56. Andreescu, “Temele ‘legii antilegionare’ din perspectiva eticii memoriei,” *Noua Revistă a Drepturilor Omului*, no. 4/ 2015. I found it amusing to be charged with lack of compassion by the author of a volume titled *I Hated Ceaușescu*, as compassion is probably one of the opposites of hate. (See Andreescu, *L-am urât pe Ceaușescu: Ani, oameni, disidență*). So much for Mr. Andreescu’s “ethics”; one might add that such criticism is seldom found in Andreescu’s works for foreign consumption.

57. Dinescu, “Partidul legionar Totul pentru Țară a intrat în legalitate.”

58. The movie can be watched at <http://www.iedb.net/movie/portrait-of-the-fighter-as-a-young-man>.

59. See Hategan, “Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu s-a frânt, dar nu s-a indoit,” *România liberă*, May 5, 2006.

60. Zuroff, “The Musical Rehabilitation of a Latvian Mass Murderer,” *I24 News*, October 7, 2014; Zuroff, “False Symmetry between Perpetrator and Victim,” *The Jerusalem Post*, October 19, 2014; JTA, “Israel Slams Latvian Show Celebrating Life of Alleged Nazi War Criminal,” October 23, 2014.

61. Miron, “Oficial: Legionarii revin în forță,” *stiripesurse.ro*, September 25, 2014.

62. See the misleadingly titled article by Stoica, “Premieră. Primul PARTID POLITIC desființat în JUSTIȚIE. Partidul ‘Totul pentru Țară’ a fost acuzat de procurori de FASCISM. Judecătorii au decis să fie dizolvat și radiat din Registrul partidelor politice,” *Evenimentul zilei*, May 5, 2015.

63. “TPT susține apelul societății civile către parlamentari,” *Buciumul*, March 12, 2015.

64. Totok, “Noua Dreaptă (Rumänien),” 453–455; Davis and Lynch, 311; Davis, *The Extreme Right in France*, 127.

65. See the interview with Tudor Ionescu on the private channel Neptun TV, February 10, 2016, conducted by journalist Răzvan Zamfir on the program *Contraziceri*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pO-OoyFHpto>.

66. Pankowski, *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*, 99.

67. From the introduction to the documentary “The Faces of Romanian Extremism,” produced by RISE Project, and Atlátszó, *Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting*, March 12, 2016. RISE Project was set up by a group of Romanian journalists to investigate organized crime in Romania and other countries in the region and its links to politics. I owe this information to William Totok. Atlátszó is a Budapest-based NGO combining investigative journalism and civic activism to promote transparency.

68. Shafir, “The Inheritors,” 70–89.

69. Although initially the spokesman of the group, Zamfirescu ran in the December 2016 elections at the head of the PRM, one of several nationalist formations that failed to gain seats in the legislature.

70. See Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 26–55, and Feldman, “Editorial Introduction,” XII–XXVII.

71. Udrea, “Marian Munteanu, despre ‘Grupul pentru România’: Dorim să apărăm calitatea de proprietari a cetățenilor români în România,” *Evenimentul zilei*, January 14, 2016.

72. On “Dacopathy” see Alexe, *Dacopatia și alte rătăcirii românești*.
73. Bălașa, “Marian Munteanu anunță coagularea unei a treia forțe politice în România,” *Rost Online*, March 4, 2016.
74. Ibid. The ANR (as the GpR was renamed) garnered in the December 2016 elections less than 1% of the votes for either of the two parliamentary chambers.
75. Realitatea TV, 28 March 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7azN4CKZVQ>.
76. <http://www.aliantanoastra.ro/Proclamatie-Alianta%20Noastra.pdf>; <https://translate.google.ro/translate?hl=en&sl=ro&u=http://aliantanoastra.ro/&prev=search>.
77. Realitatea TV, 28 March 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7azN4CKZVQ>.
78. For a brief discussion see Boia, *Mihai Eminescu, românul absolut*, 88–89.
79. Coja, “Proiectul ‘Israel în România’ este în plină derulare,” February 6, 2014; Coja, “România, colonie a Israelului?” *Justițiarul*, March 27, 2015.
80. Fati, “Interviu cu directorul ICCMER,” *România liberă*, August 23, 2015.
81. Pleșu, “O dezbatere blocată,” *Adevărul*, August 3, 2015; Pleșu, “Spiritul civic în acțiune . . .,” *Adevărul*, September 7, 2015; Pleșu, “Greșeală, vină, justiție,” *Adevărul*, February 1, 2016; Pleșu, “Memorie înjumătățită,” *Dilema veche*, February 18, 2016. For an excellent response, see Ioanid, “Aproximațiile păgubitoare ale domnului Andrei Pleșu,” *Adevărul*, February 5, 2016.
82. Gabriel Liiceanu, director of the publishing house Humanitas, was the first to indulge in comparative trivialization of the Holocaust, and may be said to have become the main conservative promoter of the Double Genocide theory in his country. See Liiceanu, *Ușa interzisă*, 256–257, and repeated statements in the collection of interviews in Liiceanu, *Estul naivităților noastre. 27 interviuri 1990–2011*, 77, 83–103, 133–134, 164. On Liiceanu, see Shafir, “Between Denial and ‘Comparative Trivialization,’” 70–71; Shafir, “The Man They Love to Hate,” 74–75; Shafir, “Strange Bedfellows,” 175–177; Laignel-Lavastine, “Fascism and Communism in Romania,” 178–179.
83. On Patapievici, see Shafir, “Reconciliation at the Wrong End,” 696–701.
84. Pleșu, Liiceanu, and Patapievici, *O idee care ne sucește mințile*, 7–8.
85. See the precedent set by Romanian Writers’ Union President Nicolae Manolescu, who made the same claim in 1997, coming out against voices objecting to the publication in Romania of a translation of a negationist book. Shafir, “The Man They Love to Hate,” 71. The Realitatea TV program is available on <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3ocsfq>. For the article by Pleșu, see supra, “O dezbatere blocată.”
86. <http://oanastanculescu.ro/index.php/2015/08/13/mihai-boeru-sunt/>. On this particular point, Pleșu and Manolescu parallel Hungarian antisemite FIDESZ pundit Zsolt Bayer, about whom more is said below. Bayer also insists that the pro-Nazi pasts of figures such as Ezra Pound, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Gerhart Hauptmann, and Knut Hamsun do not detract from their value as writers, as if this was relevant to the discussion. See Balogh, “Zsolt Bayer: It’s All the Jews’ Fault,” *Hungarian Spectrum*, March 14, 2016.
87. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dHBKk\\_jo9M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dHBKk_jo9M).
88. “Simpozion memorial Gogu Puiu și rezistența anticomunistă din Dobrogea.”
89. “Mesaj pentru Oana Stănculescu: Ești fiica noastră adoptivă,” *Știri sociale*, March 21, 2016.
90. See Hermeziu, “Cazul Vintilă Horia: ‘criminal de război’? Interviu cu Basarab Nicolescu,” *Adevărul*, January 20, 2016; Bălașa, “Cea mai recentă țintă a Institutului Wiesel: Vintilă Horia,” *Rost Online*, January 20, 2016; Hermeziu and Roșu, “Dezbatere. Cazul

Vintilă Horia și memoria culturală. Cum se aplică Legea 217/2015 privind crimele împotriva umanității și crimele de război,” *Adevărul*, February 6, 2016; Pleșu, “Greșeală, vină, justiție,” *Adevărul*, February 1, 2016; Pleșu, “Adaos la ‘cazul’ Vintilă Horia,” *Adevărul*, February 8, 2016. For responses, see Ioanid, “Aproximațiile păgubitoare ale domnului Andrei Pleșu;” Laszlo, “Andrei Pleșu față cu hitlerismul,” *e-leonardo*, February 5, 2016; Varzariu, “Pleșu poate este, dar sigur nu îi place,” *Adevărul*, February 8, 2016; Iliescu, “‘Cazul Vintilă Horia’ și sofistica zglobie a lui Andrei Pleșu,” *Argumente și fapte*, February 28, 2016; Șerban, “Vintilă Horia: un invitat inopinat la masa discuțiilor,” *Observator cultural*, March 4, 2016; Climescu, “IICCMER, centenarul Vintilă Horia și apologia fascismului.”

91. I owe this information to Alexandru Florian.

92. *Ibid.*

93. Zărnescu, *Holocaustul. Gogorița diabolică*, vol. 1. On earlier Romanian outright deniers see Shafir, “*Ex Occidente Obscuritas*,” 23–82.

94. Iacob, “Scandal de proporții: SRI are dispensă să nege Holocaustul?,” *inPolitics.ro*, April 8, 2016.

95. Ministerul Public. Parchetul de pe lângă Înalta Curte de Casație și Justiție, Biroul de Presă. “Comunicat,” December 2, 2015.

96. “Protest împotriva desemnării Oanei Stănciulescu ca membră în Consiliul de Administrație TVR,” *Observator cultural*, March 17, 2016; Andreescu, “Oana Stănciulescu, scrisoare deschisă de susținere a jurnalistei în CA al TVR,” *DC News*, March 19, 2016.

97. See the editorial by Șimonca, “Pentru decență în spațiul public,” *Observator cultural*, March 23, 2016.

98. Realitatea TV. Jocuri de Putere, March 17, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFD8K1WNeSg>.

99. “As long as the forces of the Nation do not express themselves in a single strong organization, foreign agents and homegrown traitors will be having a free hand and play on our nose.” Cited in Pankowski, *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*, 120–121.

100. See *ibid.*, 111, 119.

101. “Parlamentul a validat noul CA al SRTV,” *Romania TV.net*, March 22, 2016; parliamentary debate on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkDoW7EqH78>; Totok, “Aufstieg des Legionarismus zur parlamentarischen Leitkultur,” *Halbjahresschrift-online*, March 22, 2016. The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) published the next day a strongly worded communiqué denouncing the vote in Parliament. See “Comunicat de presă-Daniel Barbu (ALDE),” *Agerpres*, March 23, 2016.

102. Udrea and Vintilă, “Marian Munteanu este candidatul PNL pentru primăria capitalei. BPN a validat în unanimitate candidatura sa. Prima reacție a fostului lider al studenților,” *Evenimentul zilei*, April 13, 2016.

103. Stanomir noted that by embracing Munteanu, the PNL “identifies with the ideological line organically leading from Legionarism to Nicolae Ceaușescu’s National Stalinism and to the National tribalism of the Romanian Cradle and Corneliu Vadim Tudor.” The “common denominator” of these, Stanomir wrote, “is the appeal to autochthonism, to autarchic isolation, and to ethnic messianism.” According to Stanomir, “Marian Munteanu is the contemporary image of this hybrid, but no less toxic, formula.” Stanomir, “Marian Munteanu—etnocrația ca proiect politic,” *contributors.ro*, April 13, 2018.

104. The National Party led by Măgureanu announced the designation of Munteanu as presidential candidate of an alliance of which it was member, but in the end Munteanu did not run for the position.

105. Roșca, “Institutul pentru Politici Publice și alte ONG-uri cer PNL să îl retragă pe Marian Munteanu: ‘Are simpatii pentru curente de orientare fascist,’” *HotNews*, April 14, 2016. The list of signatories also included the following NGOs: Romanian Academic Society; Filia Center; Romani Criss; Communitarian Development Agency “Together”; Accept; Euroregional Center for Public Initiative; and European Center for the Rights of Children with Disabilities.

106. “Chiar vreți să ne întoarcem la ideologiile care au făcut ravagii în Europa secolului XX?,” *Revista 22*, April 15, 2016.

107. “Declarația Institutului ‘Elie Wiesel’ în privința candidaturii domnului Marian Munteanu la funcția de Primar al Capitalei.”

108. Udrea, “Candidatul PNL la Capitală, pus la zid de ONG-uri și Elie Wiesel,” *Evenimentul zilei*, April 15, 2016.

109. All quotations from Katz’s letter reproduced from Marincu, “Marian Munteanu răspunde acuzațiilor din ultimele zile,” *Rost Online*, April 16, 2016.

110. *Ibid.*

111. Shafir, “The Movement for Romania,” 16–21; Shafir, “The Romanian Extreme Right in the Post-Communist Period, 4–6 (part 1) and 16–17 (part 2); Shafir, “The Inheritors”; Shafir, “The Mind of Romania’s Radical Right”; Shafir, “Marginalization or Mainstream?,” 247–267.

112. Totok and Macovei, *Între mit și bagatelizare*, forthcoming. Fragment published in *Halbjahresschrift-online*, April 18, 2016.

113. *Mișcarea 1*, March 1992.

114. For example, in *Mișcarea 5*, March 1–15, 1995.

115. Cited in JTA, “Bucharest Mayoral Candidate Accuses Jewish Community of Lying about Holocaust Dead,” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 18, 2016.

116. Marincu, “Marian Munteanu răspunde acuzațiilor.” Emphasis in original.

117. Tiță, “Interviu Marian Munteanu,” *Mediafax*, April 18, 2016.

118. “Antonescu: Despre Munteanu se poate spune orice, dar nu că nu este interesant,” *Ziare.com*, April 19, 2016.

119. Tiță, “Interviu—Paleologu despre conducerea PNL,” *Mediafax*, April 14, 2015.

120. Mihalache, “Petre Roman: Munteanu a scris în 1994 că I.G. Duca a fost ‘asasin’.” Conducerea PNL să spună dacă se dezice de istoria sa,” *Adevărul*, April 17, 2016; Ioniță, “Domnule Quintus, nu girați întoarcerea României în anii ‘30!,” *Adevărul*, April 18 2016.

121. Petrariu, “Doi candidați la primăriile de sector se leapădă de Marian Munteanu,” *Hotweek.ro*, April 19, 2016; Popa, “Încă un candidat PNL de sector se delimitează de Munteanu,” *știripesurse.ro*, April 20, 2016.

122. “După primărie, Munteanu vrea la guvernare: Lucrez la o noua construcție politică,” *Ziare.com*, April 23, 2016.

123. *Romanian TV*, April 25, 2016, [http://www.romaniatv.net/catalin-predoiu-marian-munteanu-nu-mai-este-pe-lista-pnl-ciprian-ciucu-va-fi-primul-pe-lista-pentru-consiliul-general\\_288743.html](http://www.romaniatv.net/catalin-predoiu-marian-munteanu-nu-mai-este-pe-lista-pnl-ciprian-ciucu-va-fi-primul-pe-lista-pentru-consiliul-general_288743.html).

124. See Uteanu, “Candidatura lui Marian Munteanu, opțiunea perfectă în direcția unei anumite Europe,” *Adevărul*, April 13, 2016; Verseeck, “Vormarsch der Nationalisten: Rumänien auf Rechtskurs,” *Spiegel Online*, April 26, 2016.

125. Since the number of seats in Parliament was reduced from 386 in 2010 to 199 in 2014, one has to take into account the proportion of the garnered vote rather than the number of won seats. This calculus shows that Jobbik increased its support from 16.67% in

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2010 to 20.22% in 2014. According to current polls, the party has become the second-strongest political force in Hungary.

126. Follath, "Europe's Capital of Anti-Semitism," *Der Spiegel*, October 14, 2010. Since its disbandment, the Guard has unsuccessfully attempted to re-register under the name Hungarian Guard Foundation. Members of the Guard or people closely associated with it are suspected to have participated in the 2008 and 2009 murder of Roma minority members, but the suspicion was not proved in court, which sentenced three of the murderers to life in prison and a fourth to thirteen years in 2013. See Verseck, "Justice in Hungary: Neo-Nazis Get Life for Roma Murder Spree," *Der Spiegel*, August 6, 2013; Vágyvölgyi, "On Roma Murders in Hungary," *Open Democracy*, September 5, 2014.

127. Shafir, "A Present of *Chiaroscuro*," 225–250.

128. For a detailed analysis, see Shafir, "Conceptualizing Hungarian Negationism," 265–310.

129. Balogh, "Bálint Hóman Is Rehabilitated," *Hungarian Spectrum*, May 17, 2015; Balogh, "Viktor Orbán, the Man Responsible for the Statue Honoring the Anti-Semitic Bálint Hóman," *Hungarian Spectrum*, December 16, 2015; Balogh, "Another Attempt to Erect a Statue Honoring an Anti-Semitic Racist," *Hungarian Spectrum*, February 25, 2016; Than, "Hungary Protest Prevents Unveiling of Statue for Anti-Jewish World War 2 Politician," *The Star Online*, February 24, 2016.

130. See Meštan, *Anti-Semitism in the Political Development of Slovakia*, 30.

131. Cited in JTA, "Israel's Ambassador to Hungary Blasts Mainstream Daily's Anti-Semitic Columns," April 14, 2016. On Bayer and previous antisemitic incidents see Shafir, "Strange Bedfellows," 170, and "Conceptualizing Hungarian Negationism," 277.

132. Cited in Balogh, "Zsolt Bayer: It's All the Jews' Fault," *Hungarian Spectrum*, March 14, 2016.

133. Shafir, "Marshal Antonescu's Postcommunist Rehabilitation: *Qui Bono*," 349–410; Shafir, "Polls and Antisemitism," 582, note 4 (Alexianu).

134. "Court Rehabilitates WW2–Era Chetnik Leader Draza Mihailović," *b92*, May 14, 2015; "Draza Mihailović Rehabilitated," *inSerbia*, May 14, 2015; Ristić and Milekić, "Serbia Rehabilitates WWII Chetnik Leader Mihailović," *BalkanInsight*, May 14, 2015.

135. Nolić, "Rehabilitation of Nazi-Backed Leader Begins in Belgrade," *BalkanInsight*, December 7, 2015; Nolić, "Nazi-Backed Leader Milan Nedić 'Helped Serbs,'" *BalkanInsight*, February 8, 2016; Nolić, "Nazi-Backed Leader Nedić 'Saved Serbian Families,'" *BalkanInsight*, March 14, 2016; Sokol, "Serbia Begins Rehabilitating Legacy of Controversial Nazi-Era Leader," *The Jerusalem Post*, December 15, 2015.

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148. Pankowski, “From the Lunatic Fringe to Academia: Holocaust Denial in Poland,” 78–79; Pankowski, *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*, 121, 187.
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