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Abstracts

FRANCESCO ZAVATTI, *Stalinismo e nazionalismo nella storiografia della Romania comunista*

The present article analyses the relation between politics and historiography in communist Romania (1948-1989). Since the beginning of the four-decades-long communist dictatorship, history has been turned into an ancillary discipline of the political discourse. The analysis of this peculiar kind of historiography starts from the processes that have determined its political nature and brought to its development over time. In this article, the history of historiography is presented in the light of the two main political strategies that have been at the core of Romanian communism, namely the attempt to implement a Stalinist civilization (1948-1956) and a slow but steadily implemented road to national-communism (1956-1989). Both projects operated for conferring legitimacy to the Romanian communist leadership. The first one did so by legitimating the rule of communism and the Soviet Union; it was implemented by marginalizing and destroying the interwar élite and by banning the traditional national discourse in favour of a novel glorification of the Soviet Union and of Marxism-Leninism. The second strategy, instead, aimed at establishing the rule of a domestic, Romanian form of Stalinism. Party Secretary Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej ideated this second strategy as a reaction to the de-Stalinization began with the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1956). For implementing the second strategy, the Romanian leadership re-established gradually the national discourse and its symbols. The role of history became fundamental for showing the domestic audience that the Romanian leadership and the Party were truly national and were serving the interests of the homeland against foreign exploiters. Nicolae Ceaușescu, who succeeded to Gheorghiu-Dej in 1965, potentiated this strategy along the years. However, he was unable to adapt it to the new international circumstances. He favoured instead a sterile nationalism which included also the cult of his own personality. The article presents the fallout of the two strategies on Romanian historiography.

Keywords:

Historiography

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Communism

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