

LAVINIA STAN, LUCIAN TURCESCU (EDS.) 2017, *Justice, memory and redress in Romania. New insights*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 358 pp.

The work coordinated by Lavinia Stan and Lucian Turcescu brings together a series of studies conducted by specialists interested in the communist period in the East European space in general and in Romania, in particular. Structured in three parts, the work was made of perspective transitional justice.

The first part of the book, *Memory, Reckoning, Legitimacy, and Justice: Theoretical Considerations* seems to be rather a theoretical presentation of concepts used in international literature when analyzing the communist period: memory, historical redress, collaboration and resistance, and delayed transitional justice.

Beyond the theoretical explanations on ‘archival memory’, ‘relational memory’ and ‘social memory’, Cristian Tileagă makes in the first chapter of the book an analysis of how communism was represented by the authors of the Report of the Presidential Commission for Analysis Communist Dictatorship in Romania, known as the Tismăneanu Report (2006).

“Post-communist transition has developed its own complex social conventions and discursive codes that resist and repress the topic of collective involvement in the perpetuation of the communist system. By constructing communism as the Other, paradoxically, even progressive texts such as the Tismăneanu Report are engaging in the collective avoidance of this very sensitive topic”. (Tileagă, 2017:16).

The second chapter, *WITH* by Lucian Turcescu and Lavinia Stan, was developed around the concepts of “collaboration and resistance”. The authors compare their way of showing collaboration and resistance during the Nazi regime and the communist regime. Particular attention has been given to the way in which the Romanian legislation has defined the term collaborator of Security. The conclusion reached by the two authors confirms the situation in the countries that have gone through the communist regime. The scope of the collaborator of Security term was restrained “the legislation passed in Romania (and other post-communist countries) has tended to reserve the term “collaborator” for the secret

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informers who surreptitiously aided the repressive apparatus” (Turcescu and Stan, 2017: 44). The major difference seen by the authors between the de-communization and the denazification process would be that of how collaborators were defined. In their view, the communist countries excluded from the process of de-communization categories that were included in the denazification process: “factory managers, newspaper editors, university professors, heads of agricultural cooperatives and other decision-makers had all collaborated with the hegemonic Communist Party” (Ibidem).

Another study that comes into notice to the status of post-communist Romania in the Balkan region by Cynthia M. Horne, presents the results of the comparative analysis on transitional justice measures adopted over the last 25 years in Romania and other post-communist European countries (Bulgaria, Albania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia). Author selected for this analysis, “several transitional goals related to transitional justice measures like lustration, public disclosures and access procedures, namely building trust in public institutions, tackling corruption, and promoting democratization”(Horne, 2017: 62).

The second part of the book, *Transitional Justice in Practice: Successes, Failures and Challenges*, brings into question, among other things, two very interesting studies conducted by international specialists. The study also includes information on “practices of memorialization and commemoration that are represented, played out, and contested in urban space” (Light and Young, 2017: 145) but also how art (movies, theatre plays and paintings) reflects the communist past and turns into “art of memory” (Preda, 2017: 167).

The last part of the study, *Victims and Collaborators*, contains four studies, out of which two draw our attention. This is the chapter on *Pain and Politics in Testimonials* in which Delia Popescu presents the results of the documentary “The Memorial of Pain” by Lucia HossuLongin. The author only reviews the 36 episodes published as a set of DVDs. The ways in which the documentary was produced were brought to the foreground, rebuilding thus the period of anti-communist resistance based on the information accessed in the documents from the official or personal archives of the victims of communism (journals, photographs), testimonies of family members, witnesses or victims.

In the chapter *Nostalgia, Identity and Self-Irony in Remembering Communism*, Cristina Petrescu proposes an evaluation of “memories of the last generation that experiences Romanian communism” (212). To this end, the author decided to select and analyze the posts and the comments of visitors on the Latrecut.ro website (initiated in 2006 by Cristian Vasile) (Petrescu, 2017: 194).

ECATERINA BALICA