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Cosmin Popa

Historiographical Confrontations between Romania and Other Socialist Countries during the “Developed Socialism” Era (the 1970’s and the 1980’s)

(Abstract)

Lacking a structured ideological basis, the early Romanian national Communism stresses the idea of independence, attempting to assert the theory of Communist national origins. The recourse to Romanian history was used to fill in the void created within the ideological space by the rejection of Muscovite integration policies. During the first phase, until 1968, history was used mainly as a weapon to wage foreign ideological battles; afterwards, national history, reinterpreted according to Ceaușescu’s views, became the basis of a new national ideology and, consequently, a means of propaganda. Historian’s professional actions and historiography itself became part of the state policy and therefore were completely subdued to Ceaușescu’s efforts of forming a new type of Romanian civilization, having a Socialist form and National content. The increasing frequency and quality of contacts with the West, along with an obvious timing of Romanian historians’ participation in inter-Socialist projects started a genuine ideological battle between Romanian historians and those from the “Socialist community”, especially the USSR, Hungary and Bulgaria – countries with whom Romania had a series of territorial disputes and the interpretation of national history became a means of outward signal sending, particularly towards the Socialist countries and especially the USSR.