

## The politics of writing history: historians' debates and high-school history teaching in post-socialist Romania

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### Abstract

**A**fter exhibiting one of the "hottest" instances of ethno-national related violence in all post-socialist transitions, early 90s Romanian society seemed to have "cooled" down in terms of identitarian conflicts, hence making it even more surprising why an apparently small-scale debate concerning history textbooks quickly spiraled to the point of becoming a fully-fledged public scandal against a Government dubbed as "Anti-Romanian". The aim of this paper is thus to contribute to the overarching research question: Why did nationalism remain such a powerful force despite the fall of the Ceausescu regime? To provide a comprehensive answer the article looks at two, tightly interwoven, sides of cultural reproduction: the politics of history-teaching in Romanian high-schools and its more general background - historians' debates on nationalism. The conclusion reached through this analysis is that a conservation of ethno-centered nationalistic thinking about history was generated by a distorted understanding of professionalization of history qua science.

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The sweeping events of Eastern

Europe in 1989 were intuitively expected to bring a sharp break with the past and all its "obsolete" elements: centralized economies, monolithic Party rule and rampant ethno-nationalism. Interestingly enough though post-socialist transitions seemed to be more complex than this envisaged one-way road, with societal cohesion towards the goal of re-uniting with the "West" being oftentimes questioned. Naturally, in such a scenario, cultural reproduction remains an important element of stability and cohesion (Paraianu:2001, 111 in Trencsenyi et al. (eds):2001). What follows logically is that perceptions of the past and more importantly, their massification, via history teaching are put in a very intricate position.

The aim of this paper is to focus on post-socialist Romania, trying to contribute a possible answer to a huge over-arching question: *Why did nationalism remain such a powerful force despite the fall of the Ceausescu regime?* The intuitive consequence foreseen by many was that the oppressive ethno-centric discourse of the Ceausescu regime would generate a backlash effect of complete refutation towards manifestations of nationalism. Much to the contrary, Romania seemed to exhibit a continuation of strong nationalist feelings (the violent events of Targu Mures are most often quoted in this line of thought). Despite the fact that violence occurred only in this singular event, the huge scandal prompted by alternative history textbooks in the late 90s showed clearly that Romanian policy makers were still very much attached to older interpretations of history, which were used to draw popular attachment and legitimacy.

Using this example, I will expand the discussion and analyze the broader topic of historical myth-making as a basis for identity-building in post-socialist Romania. My main argument is that although there has

been a liberalization of historical research and historiography in the post-socialist setting, the nation-building inner logic, so dear to communist state-makers, is still very much preserved. While the old historians are preserving it via the classical proxy of anti-Hungarian rhetoric (and the age-old of myth of Romania protecting the "West"), the new wave of "de-mystifying" historians have fallen to the other extreme of considering Romanian history purely as a succession of national myths (with the apparent aim of creating a quasi-void on which a more European identity might be built - obviously, still identity-building!). To be precise, I am not arguing that the presence of some form of nationalism is the central cause of Romanian laggard transition (Petrescu:2001 in Trencsenyi et al (eds):2001). What I will argue throughout this paper is that the outward liberalization of Romanian historiography is still done under the old template of "*historia magistra vitae*" (Iggers:2010, 35-36) which entails a clear instrumentalization. This idea is perfectly caught by Dumitru Nalin who argues that the core of the problem lies in the use of discourses about the philosophy of history in a debate that was intended to be political (Nalin:2002, 44). The consequence of this continuation of patterns is that nationalism in post-1990s Romania was perpetuated (at least in part) by a lack of modernization of history as a science.

Structurally I will divide the paper into two main parts: an analysis of the 2000 alternative textbook scandal and a widening of the discussion through the debate between the "old guard" historians and the new "de-mystifiers"<sup>17</sup>. Certainly, the second part cannot be fully mapped in the narrow

<sup>17</sup>To be clear, I am not arguing that all Romanian historians fall into this model. What I am arguing is that on a large scale (i.e. mass-media and non-university school-teaching) this is the fundamental divide. As noted by Paraianu in the early 2000s when the original textbook scandal erupted Western academic debates about Romanian history were not very well integrated into the Romanian academia thus making it methodologically sound to analyze the divide I have selected.

confines of this paper (for in-depth analysis Iordachi&Trencsenyi:2003, 415-453) and therefore I will focus on the debates spurred up by Lucian Boia and his followers, and the rather recent critique put forward by a group of University Babes-Bolyai of Cluj lead by Ioan-Aurel Pop (member of the Romanian Academy). It feels methodologically sounds to do this selection because Prof. Boia's works have been best-sellers (albeit not instantly in some cases), achieving this status by taking a controversial stand on topics such as Romanian national history and nationalism in general. Interestingly enough, despite having originally been published before the 1999 textbook scandal, Boia's *opus* had not achieved public notoriety until then. Certainly, any direct link cannot be inferred but this intertwining does point towards a clear tendency.

### **The alternative textbook scandal - What image of the nation is the Romanian educational system disseminating?**

According to Brubaker, the tendency to view the nation as incomplete makes the state adopt an active political stance (Brubaker:1996, 63). After the abrupt fall of the Ceausescu regime, the Romanian policy-makers were faced with the daunting challenge of re-structuring an obsolete educational system, which was mass-producing obedience towards a unitary teleological vision of the "socialist nation" (Petrescu:2007 in Jaraus&Lindenberger:2007). The early reforming of this system was a tenuous process, torn between the need for a new approach and the overwhelming mass of personnel inherited from communism. History-teaching continued to be rather monolithic: while certain aberrations were abandoned, the core teleology and "hard truths" (i.e. continuity, unity, nationhood) were maintained.

During the early 90s, public debate towards alternative text-books and interpretations was limited, while grass-

roots pressures for reforms tended to focus more on the quantitative side (i.e. refurbishing schools, heating systems etc.) rather than on fundamental epistemological issues. History-teaching reform in Eastern Europe followed three important dimensions: ideological reconsideration, lightening the syllabus and teacher innovation (Nalin:2002, 41). In the following, I will attempt to analyze the first two criteria in the context of the Romanian text-book scandal, which escalated almost instantaneously from a scholarly debate into a fully-fledged political scandal where the opposition labeled the Government as having "Anti-Romanian feelings". This scandal highlights that despite its outward liberalization the post 1989 Romanian non-university education system still aimed at mass-producing the communist creed of "good Romanian citizens with a love of country and past"(Nalin:2002, 43) The main point of contention in these early attempts at reforming the system was the introduction of alternative text-books for final year high-school students, which were supposed to focus exclusively on Romanian *national* history. One interesting side-note must be made here: within the Romanian education framework study of national history is reserved for the last year of the high-school studies, which overwhelmingly overlaps with the age of vote-right acquisition. Although a direct link is not easily measurable, there seems to be an intricate underlying logic between a particular way of understanding Romanian history and the transformation of students into "good" citizens.

The first major shock came as a result of Romania's efforts to join the EU, namely the late 90s-early 2000s European recommendation of moving towards liberalized history teaching emphasizing the European dimension of regional evolutions. In the autumn of 1999, historian Sorin Mitu was publicly scorn by the opposition parties for coordinating a text-book that introduced perceived identity-threatening topics: the idea of constructed nationhood, the brief hint that mechanisms of the historical imaginary plays a role in the image of the

Romanian ethno-genetic process, the downplay of some national heroes (Paraianu:2001, 95-97 in Trencsenyi et al (eds):2001). As an accomplished historian Mitu was trying to bring his text-book at a crossroads between the aforementioned goals: attempting to tear down Romanian perennialism and lightening an overburdened curricula. The intellectual background here is rather interesting to note: the EU directive involved integrating national histories into a broader narrative, which generated a divergence between Romanian historians acting as textbook authors - some continued to stress the old myth of Romania having protected Europe from the Ottoman invasion, while Mitu was pursuing the more delicate aim of introducing Western-inspired scholarly perspectives on Romanian history.

A broad comparative overview between Mitu's textbook and the available alternatives uncovers the following differences: instead of certainty the author proposes understanding the construction of a narrative (Iggers:2010, 41-43 and White:1973); instead of heroes of Europe medieval rulers approached as boyars with personal aims and agendas; nationhood not as fact but construction, with state-hood being another purpose on the agenda rather than an "eternal dream". By contrast, other manuals kept to the hardcore myths (Manea&Teodorescu:1994 for example), stating that the Romanian nation is a fact, a result of a 2000-year old teleological evolution (eerily reminiscent of the communist discourse). To further complicate the issue, Mitu was not outwardly anti-Hungarian: the arrival of the Hungarians in Transylvania is depicted in a moderate stance, with an eye on both narratives, clearly leaning towards caution when looking at 12-13th century sources (Mitu et al:1999 textbook). Much more abrupt is the textbook's stance on 19th century nation-building: top-down elite-construction of the nation, an idea perceived as radical by hard-core historians and particularly by politicians. Instead of following main-stream public discourse

which was constantly including issues on perceived Hungarian revisionism (Paraianu:2001, 105 in Trencsenyi et al (eds):2001), Mitu's textbook hints towards the fact that Romanian and Hungarian narratives should be seen as intertwining histories.

The critique was violent, straightforward and mirrored a very simple template: if Hungarian text-books state it as *fact* that the Romanian ethno-genetic process took place in the South of the Danube, why should Romanian schools teach teenagers that the North-Danubian continuation narrative is a hypothesis and not *fact*? (A. Nastase *apud* Paraianu:2001 in Trencsenyi et al. (eds):2001) The siege mentality so dear to communist nation-forgers pervades this rhetoric and points towards an important direction: the Romanian education system, particularly through history-teaching (Nalin:2002, 40), was mass-producing attachment to a very organic definition of the nation. The point of contention raised in the Romanian media was not that of whether high-profile Western academic studies (that Mitu was mirroring, being himself a prominent name in the field - Mitu:2001) are suitable for high-school pupils, but that the author is falsifying what "The Romanian Academy in its entirety has certified" (C.T. Popescu *apud* Paraianu:2001, 107 in Trencsenyi et al (eds):2001). On the other hand, I disagree with general assertion that in a turbulent political context a grass-roots level "longing" for the nation (Verdery:1993, 192), substituting distorted understandings of democratic values and practices (Gaber:2006, 35-39), was the logical fallback point. Rather I would concur with the argument that what should have been an academic debate was quickly enveloped in politics, pointing towards the direction that this clash was perceived by society as a manifestation of "conflicting interests" (Nalin:2002, 44-45). Consequently, it feels safer to assume that at a grass-roots level the scandal was perceived through a political lens: emphasizing a complete break with the old-guard politicians inherited from communism, the CDR Government

appeared to back an anti-national version of history, which meant a huge blow to their popularity.

Although alternative manuals had existed for quite some time in the Romanian education system, this complete deviation from the norm happened to overlap with an EU recommendation, which Romania had recently started negotiating with. Consequently, there is yet another paradox: the intellectual origin of Mitu's purported "Anti-Romanian" character is not based on European discourse, but on globalization *à la américaine!* (C.T. Popescu apud Paraianu:2001 in Trencsenyi et al (eds):2001) The siege mentality is obvious: if the EU cannot be directly blamed due to immediate interests, the need for a new scapegoat arises. Reflected in the history textbooks the issue was simple: Romania's return to Europe is natural because ever since the Middle Ages Romanians have protected Christian Europe from the "onslaught" of the Ottoman Empire. Quite to the contrary, the image of the US becomes blurred in with that of a "West" that abandoned Romania at Yalta, the 1918 unification became a purely Romanian victory rather than a contextual exploitation of Wilson's 14 points and so on (these were not novel issues but rather a continuation of what communist historiographers had stated for over 20 years). Instead of an integration of regional narratives, the Romanian education system made it clear to its pupils that EU integration is not an ongoing process but part and parcel of some sort of "national pride".

Last but not least one important point should be tackled here: does history teaching matter that much? In his critique to Boia, Pop argues that society does not listen that closely to historians making it hard to assume that there would be some sort of grass-roots pressure against a perceived obsolete philosophy of history (Pop:2011, 180). Certainly, this argument does hold some validity in the sense that it is extremely hard (if not impossible) to assume that society is made up of social scientists that would immediately react to a change such as

that proposed by Mitu's textbook. Nonetheless I draw attention again to the important issue of politicization. Even if society does not listen to historians and their debates, it seems safe to assume that when politicians render the impression that the textbook will fuel sensitive issues such as purported Hungarian revisionism, society is likely to respond. The obsessive use of "what history are we teaching our children?" rhetoric is likely to directly influence the significantly greater electorate schooled in communism (the 10 years since the fall of communism were not sufficient to consider a generational change), who was socialized with the fundamental myths of continuation, unity and the nation. Consequently it seems rather clear that cultural reproduction in post-socialist Romania was still revolving around national identity. This scandal highlights that despite an outward rhetoric of breaking with the ethno-centered communist approach to nationalism, the underlying truth is that national identification was still a key coordinate of post-socialist Romanian society and its politics.

Summing up, there are a few key issues to be noted from the history textbook scandal: despite outward liberalization the education system was still focused on an identity-building style of cultural reproduction; while nationalist rhetoric is not an outward and open tool of electoral competitions and politics, there seems to be a rather tacit acknowledgment that certain "lines" connected with national identification must not be crossed clearly pointing towards the direction that nationalism *qua* ideology was still a force in post-socialist Romania.

### **Beyond the textbooks - historians, historiography and nationalism in post-communist Romania**

To being with, in the post-socialist context national historiographies in Eastern Europe were expected to depart from their underlying parochialism and start employing

a more "Western" framework and methodology (Iordachi&Trencsenyi:2003, 416). The envisaged liberalization would entail a renouncing of the communist teleology, a re-consideration of the exaggerations concerning Romania's history. Reconciliation with the past glossed with remarkable ease over communist influence on historiography, considering it a mere compromise with the totalitarian state rather than analyzing its very intricate effects. The point here is to analyze the intellectual background on which the Romanian textbook scandal fell: it is not only that a politicized education system disseminates a nation-building rhetoric, but academic debates also seem to revolve around it. Although this stepping back to a more theoretical level might seem a bit far from the very concrete issue of high-school textbooks, one can argue that it is impossible to consider text-book authors as a "special group" of historians to be delineated from the broader academic debates. Most aforementioned authors are university professors fairly well connected with the *zeitgeist* of historians' debates in Romania hence solidifying the link between these seemingly disengaged lines of analysis.

What emerges is a very complicated picture: a large number of communist-educated historians faced with political pressures for reconsideration, free from oppressive ethno-national ideological boundaries, yet faced with an abrupt return to a democracy with a very unclear place in Romanian history (intellectual and political history). This provides a fertile ground for vicious circle effects both for demystification efforts as well as for hard-core supporters of the old interpretations. In the following, I will argue that in fact this vicious circle effect did happen in the case of the most systematic effort at demystification. Equally interesting is the fact that instead of focusing on certain methodological aspects that are obviously shaking in Boia's argumentation, critics have responded in a predictable manner: national teleology. What will be drawn is the rather logical conclusion that both discourses fall

into the trap of the East/West divide framework (Brubaker:1998 in Hall(ed):1998), thus ensuring the survival of some forms of nation-building rhetoric and logic.

Before any conclusions on cultural reproduction can be made a brief overview of the main spokes-persons for both sides of the debate is needed. In the Romanian context, a huge shock was generated by Lucian Boia's 1997 work *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (for a synthetic presentation of the author's main approach see Stancu:2012, 56-67; Boia:2001) followed by an ample series of publications, by the same author, dedicated to the mechanisms of historical imaginary, a methodology that had previously not gained much ground with Romanian historians. By employing a lax definition of historical myths Boia attempts a blending in of modernist theories on nationalism (Boia often quotes Anderson's classical works for instance, Anderson:1991) and Hayden White's approach to historiography (White:1993), reaching the conclusion that what is being taught as Romanian history is mostly a well-plotted narrative instrumentalized from its earliest beginnings *qua* science for the sole purpose of nation-building. The gist of Boia's *opus* is epitomized by the following idea: since unity and the nation are being considered by historians as fundamental for Romanian history, this points towards a very fragmented polity who was held together by powerful symbolic myths, most of which revolved around organic ties and cultural homogeneity. He goes on to argue that historians cannot seek *truth* but must contend with putting forward convincing narratives, inextricably linked with moral judgments (Pop:2011, 20-25). Not surprisingly this approach shocked (although it is important to say that for some years the book was not a best-seller) violently contradicting the cause-effect teleology employed by the bulk of Romanian historians.

A coherent reaction in the form of a book appeared rather late, in 2011 in the

guise of Ioan Pop's<sup>18</sup> *Istoria, Adevarurile si Miturile* [History, Truth and Myths]. Written with a collective tone, Pop proceeds with a step-by-step analysis of Boia's framework and arguments reaching the following conclusions: the lax use of myths (which have a conceptual background and framework of their own) makes it possible to consider any passed event as fiction for the simple fact that the modern historian did not partake in them directly, but relies on written accounts which according to Boia are meaningless stories; the critical reader of *History and Myth* is left with a sense of having been taken through an exercise in convenience sampling by putting together seemingly methodologically inconsistent examples; Boia's approach to nationalism gives the impression that nation-building is a normatively undesirable process of elite-manipulation, myths representing the only point of cohesion of the national community. This book encompasses a blending in of criticism aimed at methodology with epistemological concerns, attempting to "rehabilitate" the image of the Romanian historian.

For the sake of space I will not provide a thorough individual analysis but rather focus on the purported aims of the debaters: reconciliation with the past in the sense of better delineating the place of nationalist rhetoric and nation-building projects in Romanian history, with an eye on regional European integration. In itself this points to a clear direction: Romanian historians seem to take a very normative approach to nationalism, focusing on the new teleology of EU integration<sup>19</sup>. It is important to bear in mind this stake since it

appears to be the center of the normative vicious circle around which both sides of the debate gravitate.

Since the paternalistic argument is rather straight-forward I shall start by analyzing cultural reproduction through this lens. Although Pop's approach is not stereotypical of the old-guard historians, his nuancing does not hide the perennialist tone: the Cluj historian argues that there is an undeniable "core" to nationhood (although he is very far from the classical use of the notion in Benner:2001, 155-174) and it is the "honest historian's mission" (a phrase that he uses obsessively) to uncover the truth (similar approach as in Berindei:1997). For this type of discourse national identity is salient, the purpose of historians being to come as close as possible to a purist type of objectivity in uncovering the *national* past. This discourse would aim to go beyond normative debates since in this line of thinking a historical *fact* cannot be good or bad, it simply exists. The immediate proxy through which this intellectual strand of thought reaches main-stream audiences is simple and potent: ancient hatreds. By continuous referrals to purported Hungarian revisionism this discourse remains at least latent in Romania. The vicious circle is rather obvious: even if free from political constraints, historians will continuously uncover the *truth* that will always be a part of a *national* past regardless of methodology and outward liberalization of discourse. Consequently, instead of escaping the oppressive ethno-centrism of communist historiography, paternalist post-socialist Romanian historians continuously operate within its framework ensuring its cultural reproduction (albeit in a more toned-down fashion). In this sense there is no reconciliation to be done with the past: communism did not have an impact on Romanian nation-hood whose "natural" place is in the European community from whom it was temporarily disconnected.

The case of the de-mystification trend is somewhat more complicated as it supposedly draws on a purely Western methodology. Boia's main point is that

<sup>18</sup>Ioan Aurel Pop - member of Romanian Academy, fairly accomplished historian of the Middle Ages, Professor at Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj.

<sup>19</sup>Again I emphasize that it is beyond any shadow of a doubt that these historians who fall outside the framework of this debate, but Boia and his followers seem to have gained public notoriety to rival that of the 1999 textbook scandal. On the other hand, Pop's reply although not highly mediatized is written as a collective response, thus permitting us to use overarching categories such as "Boia and his followers", "main-stream Romanian historians".

history writing cannot be separated from the historian's belief system hence making it a futile effort to search for "truth" since history itself is a narrative. Two important consequences can be drawn from here about Boia's approach: although modernist in the sense of recognizing the importance of constructionist approaches, there is a pervading sense of normative judgment. The veil seems to be better lifted when one takes a closer look at Boia's subsequent works that complement his *opus*: Romanian national history is not only a myth, but it is a *bad* myth in the sense of espousing non-Western values (Boia:2001). Since the shortcomings of this East/West ethnic/civic approach are well documented, for the purpose of this paper suffice it note a more subtle observation on the Romanian de-mystification trend: in itself it creates the myth that "everything is a myth", which is envisaged as a foundation for a new identity-building in a Western-civic-normative understanding! However, the issue here is still nation-building, although in a different scope: the teleology of civic nationhood and "Western liberalism". Certainly, the communist template is abandoned, yet the inner logic of identity creation through history is maintained. The normative argument of this de-mystification is that once the realization that Romanian history of a myth is acknowledged, a new identity can be constructed, supposedly better managing the delicate regional integration of historical narratives.

There is one underlying thread connecting these two issues in a very subtle way: both strands consider themselves as "de-mystifiers"! In a very ironic twist the early 90s historians considered their mission to de-mystify communism, Lucian Boia and his followers claim to de-mystify the entirety of Romanian historiography and its nationalist-orientation, while Ioan Pop opens his laborious critique with the clear aim of tearing down the "Lucian Boia myth"! (Pop:2011, 120) Acknowledging the very strong point that one can analyze this issue through the obvious need for truth in the post-socialist setting (Nalin:2002, 44), I

draw attention to another important dimension to be noted here: if myths are, by and large, considered identity building blocks then de-mystification efforts clearly signal the presence of perceived identity-threats and nation-building rhetoric. In the post 90s Romanian environment the issue of reconciliation with the past is aligned with delineating a "true" historical identity: a communist-shaped one, or an older version rooted in the perceived democratic inter-war (hence communism being perceived as a past-discontinuous). This seems to point towards some sort of "new nation syndrome" (Petrescu:2007, 39 in Jarausch&Lindenberger:2007), again strengthening the argument of cultural reproduction towards identity-building. Even if one concurs with Pop's idea that society rarely listens to historians, the overarching sense of a vicious circle persists: post-socialist Romanian historiography is spinning around everyone "de-mystifying" everyone for the sake of "truth". Although Boia and his followers disagree with the idea that the historian is looking for "truth" they are putting forward the very normative argument that "Eastern" nationalism is the sole cause of Romania's economic and political problems (a rather similar argument to be found in Petrescu:2001 in Trencsenyi et al. (eds):2001). This is the point of the myth that "everything is a myth": identity-void on which a purported "better" national-identity be constructed. Either side seems to fall into a teleological trap: national-identity as a salient category (be it constructed, or perennial the pervading idea seems to be that there it is a clear developmental-historical goal). Certainly, both sides acknowledge that the goal of EU integration is an on-going progress, nonetheless they seem tied down to finding a "hard-core" starting point for a quasi-historical quasi-cultural argument of why Romania should join the EU.

## Conclusions

Broadly speaking, historical discourse in post-socialist Romania seems to gravitate around the very political goal of EU integration, attempting to put forward a hard-core argument of why Romanian's particular historical trajectory recommends it as a natural enlargement goal.

The 1999-2000 alternative text-book scandal and the vicious "de-mystification" circle seem to be powerfully intertwined: although oppressive ethno-national discourses are not used in political competitions, there is an institutionalized cultural reproduction that ensures the presence of a latent nationalist discourse. The background is not purely political rhetoric, as historians themselves seem to be locked into a debate in which everyone espouses a more "truthful" history than the other. The criticism that society does not follow historians fails when faced with the institutionalization of a rigid ethno-centered approach to history. Certainly, the polarization between the text-books and historians must not be directly equated with a societal polarization. On the other hand, polarized historical narratives seemed to point towards normative stances more than actual methodologies of historical research: the teleology of the East/West ethnic/civic divide.

To be fair to the sides, I am not arguing that they are putting forward pseudo-scientific research, rather that the conclusions they seem to draw have less to do with history than with the politics of nation-branding and nation-building. Consequently, post-socialist Romania seems to be exhibiting an exaggerated identity crisis based on its efforts to join the EU and the continuous struggle for reconciliation with the past. The natural backlash effect of the communist ethno-centered discourse is that open nationalist rhetoric does not raise much political support (being perceived as extremist), yet socialization is still done under a very rigid pattern that continuously emphasizes the mythology of continuation,

unity and nation-hood. Institutionalized cultural reproduction seems to be revolving around a different type of discourse (certainly, it is far-fetched to call either Boia and his followers or the critics as "communists"), which touches however on a hard-core set of issues that is continuously preserved.

All things considered, nationalism in post-socialist Romania appears not to be a freak occurrence, nor is it a *persona non grata* of public discourse. The efforts of tearing down socialist legacies (institutional and intellectual) seem locked, for the time being, in a vicious circle. Nonetheless, open and fair debate has taken a fairly solid grip in the Romanian environment, leaving the door open for the possibility of reconciliation with the past and a fair reconsidering of Romania's place in an integrated regional narrative.

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