

SUMMARY
of the habilitation thesis entitled
“Totalitarianism: historical reality, ideology, historiography”

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After graduating university studies (1998) and master studies (1999) I became research assistant (1999) at the National Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism and, in 2006, I got my PhD in History at the “Babes-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca. In 2011-2013 I attended post-doctoral studies within the Romanian Academy. The most recent professional promotion took place in 2017, when I became a 2nd rank scientific researcher. Since 2013, I have been a university lecturer within the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration. In close relationship with the scientific researcher activity, I would like to mention holding the position of member in the College of the National Council for Study of Securitate Archives - C.N.S.A.S. (2012-2018), as well as being Romania’s Representative in the Steering Committee of the European Network “Remembrance and Solidarity” from 2014 until the present day.

I have constructed my habilitation thesis in two parts. The first, structured in 16 subchapters, was intended to describe my professional activity after getting the PhD in History (2006-2018), in order to demonstrate reaching a maturity stage in research, which would justify acquiring necessary abilities for coordinating doctoral level researches. During the second part, I am succinctly describing potential directions of career development, indicating a thematic of some future doctoral research.

From the very beginning of the habilitation thesis I have revealed personal motivations for which I have studied and described the totalitarian phenomenon during the last two decades, emphasizing the major role of this phenomenon for the history of the 20th century. Then, I considered necessary, for understanding the institutional architecture of historiography production for the history of communism, to present the main institutions generating historiography discourse in Romania. Also, using information offered by the *Historical Bibliography of Romania* and the *Historiography Yearbook*, I have analyzed the issue of totalitarianism’s historiography, emphasizing domination of political history. This institutional and thematic analysis is fundamental for being able to suggest new research directions within the Romanian Academy’s School of Advanced Studies.

In the first subsection, in which I mentioned acquiring the necessary experience for being able to coordinate doctoral papers, I emphasized participation to multi-annual research projects such as “Repressive Mechanisms in Romania: 1945-1989. Biographic Dictionary”, “Encyclopedia of the Communist Regime: 1945-1989”, with several subsections, or the project “The Communist Party: Ideology,

Organization Forms, Aspects concerning Selection and Promotion of Leading Cadres". The most important conclusion refers to acquiring the ability of team working. Also, I demonstrated direct participation in building essential research tools for the history of communism.

I wanted to present in more detail my preoccupations for the conceptual-methodological consolidation of totalitarianism's historiography, through books (*Epistemological Challenges of Totalitarianism*, 2013), scientific articles and organizing scientific conferences with methodological thematic.

Afterwards, I brought forward an example of offering historiography's expertise for elaborating public policies. In 2014, I was invited to participate in a project competition organized by the Korea Institute for National Unification - KINU/ Center for International Relations Studies, Seoul, Republic of Korea. The project coordinator, Dr. Kyuryoon Kim invited me to write a report about how the Romanian experience could be used in order to build scenarios concerning the fall of communism in North Korea and how the political and economic transition of unified Korea should take place. The result of this report was published in a collective volume in English, present in several international libraries.

Alongside my preoccupation for theoretical and methodological conceptualization, at the center of my professional activity was the desire of opening new thematic fields. To this end, I have mentioned a broad study dedicated to the justice system during the communist era, analyzed as a totalitarian bureaucracy. This approach is something new in a thematic field situated in its initial development phase. Another novelty, beside the conceptual one, is the establishment of institutional dynamic regarding the main judicial institutions (trial courts, Prosecution) during the entire period of communist regime.

Within my empowerment thesis, I indicated my preference for "problem-history", which seeks to find solutions to present problems by evaluating the past. To this end, I indicated historiography contributions to the history of the transition period, under the form of books, studies, articles and participation to several scientific conferences. An important role is played by studies dedicated to "transitional justice" and public policies in the field of democratization by decommunization.

In order to demonstrate the experience of being professionally active at international level, which is a mandatory condition for a successful PhD coordinator, I have indicated the following: ability of working in international research projects; documentary stages abroad (University of Oxford, Central European University); activity of member in a curators' team in two international exhibitions ("Roads to 1989. East-Central Europe 1939-1989"; "After the Great War. New Europe: 1918-1923"); participation to international conferences abroad; publishing articles abroad, as well as the most important historiography personal contribution, the monograph *Romania since the Second World War a political, social and economic history*,

published by Bloomsbury Academic in 2016 for the European market and at the beginning of 2017 for the North American and the global markets.

Another dimension of the habilitation thesis concerns demonstrating managerial abilities of leading research teams. To this end, I mentioned the experience of the six years when I was a member of the C.N.S.A.S. College and the effective activity for a decade as head of department within the "Ovidiu Sincai" Institute, resulting in several political analysis reports. An important professional experience is that of Romania's Representative in the Steering Committee of the European Network "Remembrance and Solidarity", a position in which I am participating to the creation of policies/working tools in the field of memory policies, prioritizing history of the totalitarian period. In the same context of emphasizing professional experience, I would like to mention being awarded the "Academic Merit" accolade (2016) from the Romanian Academy.

During the end of the first part of the habilitation thesis, I included a succinct bibliographic essay, structured around three dimensions: essential works for the theory and history of the totalitarian phenomenon; some reference works for the totalitarian phenomenon in Romania; my historiography contribution, thematically structured.

In the second part of the empowerment thesis, I wanted to present my conception concerning unfolding of the PhD coordinator activity. Obviously, at the beginning of doctoral research stages, a special emphasis will be on a very good methodological and theoretical preparation; then, the emphasis will be on the attempt of producing very good quality studies regarding the chosen subject. I indicated a preference for achieving comparative researches in the field of political history of totalitarian regimes, a broader opening towards the huge field of social history, as well as internalizing cultural history. Also, I revealed the potential of accomplishing co-tutorship doctoral researches in order to contribute to increasing diversity, quality and prestige of Romanian historiography.

