

EMANUEL COPILAȘ, *“Revolutionary vigilance” and social outbursts: Aspects of the Romanian security policy in the backwash of the Hungarian revolution. The case of Timișoara county*

Abstract: Based primarily on an analysis of events, this study discusses a theoretical aspect as well. Considering several aspects of security policy of the regime in the troubled year 1956, I have tried to prove that, in the case of Leninist regimes the ideological factor supersedes the military, political and social factors—excluding completely the ecological ones, which are irrelevant for this investigation. Unlike other East-European Communist regimes, whose leadership was more or less divided as a result of the destalinization process debuting in early 1956, the Gheorghiu-Dej regime not only survived the political and ideological shock but succeeded to get consolidated. Although there existed some inner tensions, but, apart from the fact that they did not develop along ethnic or ideological lines as it is often affirmed nowadays, they never acquired a sufficient weight to threaten seriously the position of Dej and his supporters. Although in the end the Romanian Communist regime emerged successful from the destalinization process, this was by no means a facile test for it. Although Gheorghiu Dej had annihilated from 1952 his main political rivals –but not the last– the leadership from Bucharest was confronted with more and more visible social tensions, lacking a catalyst factor. On this occasion, the supplies of food for population improved, but the “Securitate” troops were set on alert and started to patrol the streets of the major cities. Timișoara region was set apart by the size of its protest movements against the regime, exceeding considerably the similar manifestations from other areas of Romania. The protests and actions of the students from Polytechnic University represent the focal point of both, memoirs and secondary literature. These are analysing the students’ dissatisfactions with living conditions, food quality, the mandatory attendance of courses, including the ideological ones, such as scientific socialism. The secondary literature discusses seldom the protests of the workers from factories such as “Atelierele CFR” (Romanian Railways Workshops), “Energo-Combinat”, or “Tehnometal” or those of the farmers from villages. Their dissents ranged from “hostile” messages posted on walls, singing monarchic or even Iron Guard anthems, displaying “hostile” attitudes during party meetings which “presented” the events from Hungary, to insults or physical aggressions against party leaders and setting on fire hay or straw storages belonging to prominent local Communist party members.

Keywords: destalinization, dissatisfactions, control, propaganda, ideology, resources, stabilization