was connected to Western imperialist and intelligence services. Although Pauker engaged in self-criticism during her interrogation, she never confessed to being an agent.

In the final analysis, Levy who paints a much more sympathetic and humane portrait of Pauker than those drawn by conventional communist and post-communist historiographers, is to be commended for shedding further light on the Byzantine maneuvers of the Romanian communists during the Stalinist period, maneuvers which provided the basis for the emergence of Ceaușescu's personality cult.

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The key point in Tismaneanu's latest book on the Romanian version of communism and post-communism is that he makes a critical distinction between national communism, and national Stalinism, which exemplified the particular brand of communism that developed in Romania, culminating in the rather bizarre Ceaușescuist personality cult. Tismaneanu seems to take Stalinism to mean rule in an arbitrary fashion by a despotic figure, an economic plan of development based on the industrialization of heavy industry and the collectivization of agriculture, the application of terror directed not only against the masses but also against members of the elite who might pose a challenge to the power of the central ruling figure or figures, the construction of a police state (a Securitate state), and the existence of an ideology (not only primitive socialist but also nationalistic and "crypto-fascist"), known as Ceaușescuism. However, one could quibble with Tismaneanu over whether the Romanian communist system under Dejism and Ceaușescuism really could be equated with classical Soviet style Stalinism and the massive purges and terror which resulted in the deaths of millions.

Tismaneanu goes into great detail about the characteristics of the personality cult that evolved in Romania headed by the Ceaușescus, with their son Nicu being groomed as the heir apparent to the throne of the socialist dynasty that finally collapsed in a violent revolution in December 1989 with the execution of the two leaders of the cult, Nicolae and Elena on Christmas day.

The main thesis that seems to be propounded by Tismaneanu is that Romania never went through a genuine process of de-Stalinization, but rather underwent a simulated or fake form of de-Stalinization. Rather, Romania experienced a process of de-Sovietization in which the hegemonic role of the Soviet Union in the bloc was challenged. The type of communism that characterized Romania was marked by strong elements of Byzantinism, authoritarianism, anti-intellectualism, and nepotism. But one of the more difficult elements in Tismaneanu's narrative is his contention that the communist and post-communist systems that developed in Romania should not be considered exceptional. What happened in Romania "simply epitomizes political, moral, and psychological features found in all the other societies long subjected to Leninist experiments in mandating happiness." (p. 254) However, Tismaneanu's case
would be strengthened if he could make more explicit the reasons why what developed in Romania during the communist and post-communist eras should indeed not be considered exceptional, given the rather unique characteristics that he sketches out in an elegant literary fashion that defined the idiosyncratic nature of the particular version of communism that emerged in Romania.

Tismaneanu traces the historical genesis of the introduction of socialism in Romania. Socialism was transplanted to Romania like an exotic plant, and consequently never developed any sense of legitimation in Romanian civil society. The Romanian communists only had a miniscule number of supporters during the interwar period because they were often led by political figures who were not native Romanians but rather non-Romanian “aliens” who followed the bidding of the Comintern and advocated very unpopular policies that were designed “to defend the interests of the Soviet Union.” (p. 54)

In tracing the formative stages of the early history of the party in Romania, Tismaneanu describes the Byzantine-like maneuvers of the various factions that resulted in the triumph of the Stalinist group led by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (a “Stalinist Machiavellian” (p. 99) and his successor, Nicolae Ceausescu. Tismaneanu presents a “trilateral” frame of analysis based on three major factions that competed for power with one another. The Muscovite faction, basically headed by Ana Pauker; the “prison center” faction headed by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej which also included Nicolae Ceausescu, and the domestic underground faction headed by Stefan Foris who was brutally murdered. Dej consolidated his power by eliminating rivals such as the aristocratic Lucretiu Patrascanu (who was executed in 1954), and, most important, by purging the Muscovite Ana Pauker in 1952. Tismaneanu interprets this as a move by the national Stalinists against the “internationalist factions” in the Romanian Communist Party. (p. 133). Pauker was spared a show trial and possible execution by the death of Stalin in 1953. Dej was to argue later with the advent of Nikita Khrushchev’s de-Stalinization campaign in 1956, that the purging of the Pauker group constituted Romania’s version of de-Stalinization.

The autonomous foreign policy that Romania developed during the Ceausescu era did not represent a form of liberalization as some naive Western analysts believed, but more an effort at de-Sovietization to reduce the hegemony of the Soviet Union in the international communist movement. Romania’s autonomous foreign policy was made possible by the removal of Soviet troops from Romania in 1958, following the display of unwavering support offered by Romania to the Soviet Union during the Hungarian crisis in 1956. According to Tismaneanu, the immediate stimulus for a more autonomous foreign policy was based on economic nationalism in reaction to a Soviet plan designed to relegate Romania to the position of an agrarian producer in the international socialist division of labor in Comecon in 1962-63. This was followed by the famous Romanian Declaration of Independence in 1964, which stated that each socialist state could follow its own path of development. The apogee of Romanian autonomous behavior in the bloc was reached in 1968 when Romania criticized the Warsaw pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, to crush the Czech experiment with reform communism; even then, however, the Romanian position was designed to protect the principle of state sovereignty, and not to support the liberalization of the communist system.