

# History Through Former Political Elites' Eyes

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## **Introduction**

In 1989, after over four decades of communism, Romania entered a new phase of history and of political development, a phase which should have been under the patronage of democracy and liberty. Shortly after 1989 historical research begun to focus on investigating and analyzing the communist past from various perspectives. In this context, the need for documents and primary sources became imperative. Therefore, when after two decades some of the former communist elite members started to publish their memoirs and diaries, history enriched with a new perspective.

In order to find answers to these questions, but also to some others that can arise during our research, we'll present and analyze primary sources written and published by former ministers, advisors and diplomats such as Silviu Brucan (former ambassador in USA, member of high structures of Romanian Communist Party), George Macovescu (former Foreign Affairs Ministry), Stefan Andrei (high advisor of Nicolae Ceausescu), Nicolae M. Nicolae (former ambassador, high responsible in Foreign Ministry during communist era), Mircea Malița (diplomat, former ambassador in Switzerland and USA) and Marcel Dinu (former ambassador in Germany and high responsible in Foreign Ministry). Their writings cover a long period of history offering the historian significant information and details on an authoritarian regime such was the communist regime.

However, there are still many questions that need answers. Some of these questions are: How do they write history? How did they perceive political actions and events? How being part of the system influenced their understanding of events and politics?

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The article will analyze their understanding of history during communist period and of main events they were part of given their political position. In addition, the way this highly involved in politics group supported the system and their opinions on the communist system will be assessed.

Taking into account that all the above mentioned works are primary sources, the article will also evaluate the importance of these writings for national and international historiography.

### **Being a communist country**

Especially, after 1964, nationalism had long been a prominent feature in Romanian politics. Romania was very much an atypical socialist state in this respect: whereas the USSR intentionally subjugated the national identities of the Warsaw Pact countries, Romania proudly declared its independence from Moscow on nationalist grounds. While this move earned applause from the West, it later proved detrimental for democracy contesters.

In the former Soviet satellites, the national communist party scorned nationalist sentiment, leaving it fully in the realm of the contesters. In Romania, the state had already laid claim to nationalism, using it as a tool to generate “social and national division and hostility, carefully and viciously fostered.”<sup>1</sup> The state monopoly on nationalism also explains the absence of a preexisting national movement in Romania: “Ceausescu’s wedge-driving between the proletariat and the intelligentsia by his frequent criticism of ‘intellectualism’, that widened the gulf between the two groups. Romania remained, therefore, largely without the intellectual dissident leadership which distinguished the movements of popular protest in Czechoslovakia and Poland.”<sup>2</sup> Whereas nationalism provided the masses with a shared sense of non-Russian identity and right to self-government in many post-communist revolutions, it had the opposite effect in Romania.

The strength and structure of the old elites with whom the contesters had to vie for power was of consequence: As Easter postulates, “the structure of the old regime elites, as they emerge from the breakdown phase, determines institutional choice in the transition phase.”<sup>3</sup> While Romania’s old elites do not fit cleanly into one of the three categories Easter outlines

1 Nestor Ratesh, *Romania: The Entangled Revolution*, Praeger Publishers, New York 1991, p. 23.

2 Martyn Rady, *Romania in Turmoil*, IB Tauris & Co Ltd., London 1992, p. 59.

3 Gerald M., Easter, “Preference for Presidentialism: Post Communist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS.” *World Politics*, Vol. 47, No. 2. 184-211, p. 187.

(reformed, consolidated, and dispersed elites), the opposition forces were too weak to force old regime elites to alter the means of acquiring power. As a result, old regime elites successfully retained their monopoly of power resources in the transition phase.

Thus, the survival of the old elites should be attributed not to the solidarity and preserved structure of the old elites, but rather to the disunity of the opposition.

### **Main feature: elites in support of independence from USSR**

With the debut of the autonomy period from Moscow, the principles assumed by Romania's new foreign policy revolved around a few standard phrases such as maintaining national sovereignty, equal rights for states, non-interference in the internal politics of other countries, the rejection of force and use of force, mutual benefits, inalienability right of every state to build its own future while preserving their own desires and legitimate aspirations. The main promoter of this policy between 1965 and 1989, Nicolae Ceaușescu, led to Romania in order to gain a clear place in the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-controlled organization, but also in order to gain prestige in the international arena.

This policy and, in particular, Romania's refusal to participate in the intervention against Czechoslovakia (August 1968), which suppressed "Prague Spring" brought Ceaușescu, for a time, a great international popularity.

An analysis of domestic and foreign policy of Ceaușescu regime was provided by Michael Shafir. Using the phrase "simulation of change - simulation of permanence", the author shows that the regime simulated the change in domestic area through propaganda slogans like "new economic mechanism" or "new agrarian revolution", while in the area of foreign policy the regime simulated its adherence to the Soviet bloc, while ensuring Western Europe on its foreign policy autonomy<sup>4</sup>.

After Dej's death, March 1965, Nicolae Ceaușescu, followed his line. By adopting this attitude Ceausescu provided the West with the opportunity to exploit an apparent gap in the communist camp. Romania was the first of Moscow's satellite countries that established diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany (1967) and the only country in Eastern Europe that had relations with Israel in 1967. In 1971, Romania joined

4 Michael Shafir, *Romania: Politics Economics and Society. Political Stagnation and Simulated Change*, Editura Frances Pinter, Londra 1995, p. 193.

the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), and the following year joined the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. In 1973 Romania received preferential trading status of the Common Market.

Establishing diplomatic relations with West Germany took place as a result of increasing economic contacts, which initially led to an economic agreement signed in October 17, 1963. Although Romania believed that it was very important for European security the conclusion of an inter-German peace treaty, this attitude was not sufficient to establish diplomatic relations between Romania and West Germany, since the latter one considered that only the reunification of Germany was an acceptable position. In these circumstances, it is easy to understand the opposition manifested by the Communist Germany and USSR towards Romanian initiatives. Nevertheless, Romania has assumed the increasing tensions in her relations with the Communist Germany, virtually her partner in the coalition (Warsaw Pact)<sup>5</sup>. In January 1967, Corneliu Mănescu and Willy Brandt, the two foreign ministers agreed on behalf of their governments to establish diplomatic relations at ambassadorial rank only with a simple handshake<sup>6</sup>.

Moscow did not easily accept that fact and continued to pressure the Romanians. During a telephone conversation between Ceaușescu and Kosygin, the latter insisted on the participation of a Romanian representative at a conference of the socialist countries on foreign policy issues. Ceaușescu explained that he understood this conference only as an exchange of views, and that he didn't accept his foreign policy decision to be questioned. Ceaușescu clear stated that *if the at the conference will be discussed Romania's foreign policy actions or other country's foreign policy, we (Romania) will not participate. If it is envisaged that, we (Romania) will certainly not participate in any way*<sup>7</sup>. Confronted with the categorical position of the Romanian leader, Kosygin was forced to accept Romanian delegation position in order to prevent its departure from the conference, which would have allowed Western world to see the divisions from the Communist bloc and would lead to enhancing the Romania's prestige.

From 1965 until 1981, Ceaușescu's political ability assured his undisputed leadership of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP). He appealed to nationalist sentiments to increase his popularity and at the same time to

5 Nicolae M. Nicolae, *O lume așa cum am cunoscut-o. Amintirile unui fost ambasador al României*, Editura Pro Domo, București 2000, p. 25.

6 Nicolae M. Nicolae, *op.cit.*, p. 34.

7 Arhivele Naționale ale României, Fondul CC al PCR, Cancelarie, Dosar 14/1967, Fila 7.

distance Romania from USSR. Ceaușescu's regime managed to give Romania prestige in the international arena in the 60s and 70s, which was shown by the visits at the highest level between Romania and the U.S and by the fact that Romania had and expressed specific opinions on the most important issues of the period: East-West relations, the Middle East conflict, disarmament, etc.

It can be said that Ceausescu fully enjoyed the autonomy position in relation with the USSR. Romania's position against the USSR intervention in Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1968 was an act of courage and Ceausescu earned respect from the country and the world.

In August 1969, Richard Nixon was the first U.S. president to visit a country member of the Warsaw Pact. In the next decade, the United States encouraged the policy of autonomy promoted by Nicolae Ceaușescu, who skillfully exploited this position to remove others criticism mainly on his domestic policy, which he called "interference in internal affairs".

After Richard Nixon became president the focus of U.S. strategic was on two areas: East-West relations (especially the relationship with China) and solving the Middle East conflict. In search of solutions, in 1967, Senator Nixon made a visit to Romania to probe the real possibilities of Nicolae Ceaușescu and his ability to get involved in finding and implementing sustainable solutions in the East. In 1969, Nixon, this time as president, returned in an official visit to Romania and on this occasion between the two have established personal relationships praised during Ceaușescu's visit to the U.S. in December 1973. From Nixon's statement shows that Ceaușescu has contributed greatly to opening dialogues that otherwise would have remained, perhaps forever closed. From Nixon's statement shows that Ceaușescu has contributed greatly to opening dialogues that otherwise would have remained, perhaps forever closed.

Corneliu Mănescu, former foreign minister, said that an important role in the rapprochement between Romania and the U.S. was played by the way he was received in Romania in 1967, when he was just senator. About this episode, former foreign minister, said that *in 1967, when Nixon came to Bucharest, he wasn't very important. He had lost the elections and it seemed that he no longer represents anything. In his tour through Europe, Romania was the only country that received him carefully. The Soviets received him in a low level. Yugoslavs, Poles and Czechs have not received him. The only place where he enjoyed attention was Romania. Throughout his visit to Bucharest he was accompanied by one of my best employees - Mircea Malița. Malița accompanied Nixon to dinner,*

*theater etc. They had discussions which revealed that the man had something very special in his mind, something which for those years appeared as exceptional. He wanted America to get closer to China. When Nixon became president of America, he began to implement his ideas*<sup>8</sup>.

During Nixon's visit to Romania, the discussions approached issues such as the development of bilateral relations, both heads of state agreeing that these relationships needed to be developed. However, Nixon believed that the time had not yet come for Romania to receive *the most-favored-nation clause*, mainly because of the war in Vietnam.<sup>9</sup>

From the transcript results that, beyond politics, where the interests of nations can intersect for certain periods, Ceaușescu genuinely liked Nixon. After their meeting, Ceaușescu admitted that *he can still learn something from imperialists*<sup>10</sup>, referring to the open mode in which they approached the speaker.

Nicolae M. Nicolae shows that Ceaușescu was watching very closely the evolution of relations between the two countries seeking to avoid any topic that could have damaged this relationship. An example of this attitude it is contained in the pages of his memoirs, where he reported that in 1973 during the official visit to Washington it was provided the signing of a joint declaration by the two presidents. Romanian experts of MFA wrote few pages of comments on the document sent by the Americans, but after reading them, Ceausescu decided not to make any changes stating that he would sign it as the Americans prepared it, because they knew better to write such a document<sup>11</sup>.

Nicolae M. Nicolae pointed out that during Nixon's presidency, Romania was interesting for the Americans only insofar Nicolae Ceaușescu could carry out the mediation activities, in the areas the Americans needed. Ceausescu understood very well the American interests and sought to take advantage, mainly in the economic area. In this context, an important role for Ceaușescu's purposes was played by Nixon's public statement on the importance of nations' independence. The declaration was made public on the occasion of Ceaușescu's visit to Washington in 1973. His words were exactly

8 Lavinia Betea, *De vorbă cu Corneliu Mănescu – Conexiunea moscovită a problemei transilvane*, in "Revista Magazin Istoric", nr. 12/2000, see also the website [www.memoria.ro](http://www.memoria.ro)

9 Arhivele Naționale ale României, Fond CC al PCR, Cancelarie, Dosar 109/1969, Stenograma ședinței Comitetului Executiv al CC al PCR, 4 August 1969, Fila 3.

10 Ibid, Fila 12.

11 Ibid, p. 62.

what Ceaușescu wanted to hear. However, his interests were not related only with public statements. As a proof is the fact that when Nicolae M. Nicolae was appointed ambassador in Washington, he had the objective to raise trade value to 1 billion USD.

Former Romanian ambassador shows that the foundation of the development of relations Romanian-American relations, it was the American pragmatism that discovered that Ceaușescu was a useful interlocutor, not so much for the development of relations between the two above mentioned countries, but for the discovery of paths to get closer to China and to settle the conflicts in Vietnam and Middle East. Ceausescu was convinced that the political relations reached its peak and, because of this, he felt it was time to support more the development of economic relations between the two countries.

The situation has undergone a significant change when Jimmy Carter became president, because it was a shift in the policy. Now the focus was on the issue of human rights as a whole, not customized to a particular problem, as it was previously the emigration to Israel (which Romania supported in order to receive American financial aid). The shift towards human rights moved American interest in the domestic policy area and Romania had insurmountable difficulties in this area. As a consequence, the relation entered a period of stagnation, which later even deteriorated.

However, despite the stagnation in the relation with the Americans, Ceaușescu continued the policy of autonomy from USSR. In 1979 he criticized the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and in 1981 he recommended caution in USSR's response to the Poland crisis. In 1982 he opposed the increasing arms costs in the Warsaw Pact and even reduced those of Romania. In 1984 he refused to join the Soviet-led boycott against the Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Ceaușescu tried to use his position to play a mediator role on the world stage, but Romania's economic failure led to the disillusionment against his regime. While in foreign policy Ceaușescu demonstrated the same skill as Gheorghiu-Dej and Maurer in setting an autonomous policy for Romania, in domestic policy he failed to meet expectation and turned into a tyrant.

Case studies: The writings of former diplomats Mircea Malița, Nicole M. Nicolae and Marcel Dinu.

We selected three important names to present and analyze the way they present history and their own experiences. They were involved in high level politics, were part of the decision making process and decided to write about the period they worked for and represented Romania at international level.

Former Education Ministry during communist period (1970-1972), Mircea Malița is one of the most prolific writers on Romanian policy and politics during 1960-1989 mostly because he had important positions that helped him to be in contact with politics, ideology and international relations life. He was born in Oradea in 1927, graduated Mathematics and later Philosophy, worked in high positions in Foreign Ministry and was Romanian ambassador in Switzerland (1980-1982) and USA (1982-1985).

In the book "Scenes from Cold War. The Memoirs of a Romanian Diplomat"<sup>12</sup>, he focused on the period 1960-1977 being concerned on events that he lived and contributed on, such as: Cuban crisis from 1962, Harri-man plan, ONU actions and resolutions, Middle East and Africa from 1967 until 1977.

Malița is an exquisite observer and analyst, being capable of interesting insights and observations. His tone of voice is informative, but also enthusiast on the accomplishments of the regime during the nationalist phase. He is proud of being part of such a great plan (the independence from USSR) and acknowledges the merits of politicians such as Maurer in structuring a distinct foreign policy. In his memoirs he supports the vision of independence shared by the communist strategists.

His relates included in the memoirs are proofs of actions that were meant to support the independent Romanian thinking of politics. For example, he talks about the 1967 moment when Romania refused to break the diplomatic relations with Israel, which he considers on the top successful moments of independence era. He was part of the group who wrote Maurer's speech, therefore part of a momentous moment of Romanian history.

As well, he was part of the international relations systems that was shaped by the UN's structures. In addition to writing on political decisions, he observes and writes about the humans behind the politicians. For example, he recalls a moment that took place in New York, at a diplomatic reception, when he accompanied Khrushchev who was leaving. At that point, an

12 Mircea Malița, *Tablouri din Războiul Rece. Memorii ale unui diplomat român*, Editura CH Beck, București 2007.

American citizen was singing the national anthem while Khrushchev was getting in the car, but instead of pretending that nothing was happening, he stopped and started to direct the man who was singing, as if he were an opera director. Thus, he noticed that Khrushchev was “a showman”, who might need a stage to perform. In this context, one can state that Malița is a keen observer, able to notice psychological traits of leaders.

Malița brings important information on the backstage of Romanian politics. For example, he recalls the fears of Gheorghiu-Dej that because of USSR reckless actions, one day Romania might read in the newspapers that it's in a war with the Western world, without even know it<sup>13</sup>.

In the book “History through Diplomat's eyes”, Malița is focused more on the philosophy of history. For example, he states that while attending the Paris Peace Conference from 1949, as the youngest member of the Romanian delegation, he started to think on what peace really embodied. In this context, he reflects on the fact that history is a rationalized story, just as Ortega y Gasset had noticed long before<sup>14</sup>.

According to his own statements this book was written because he realized the current history books don't talk about history, but about the “literature of history”, therefore, he felt obliged to write the history he had lived. As a result, he wrote a book where he expressed his opinions on various historical events related to Romanian history. As well, he keeps being proud on living momentous times in Romanian history and those are connected to independence search during communist period. He noticed the prestige Romania received during 60's-70's when it managed to play an important role on the international arena.

In the book “My Short Century”<sup>15</sup>, Malița starts his story from his early childhood and finishes it in 2007. In almost 800 pages, he recalls his entire life giving extensive details about the organizations/institutions where he worked and also about the people he met or worked with. As well, the largest part of the work is focused on foreign relations of Romania and on its behavior in international arena. He praises the period of independence of USSR, but also, more than in his other books, Malița talks about Romanian decline. In this context, he blames Elena Ceausescu, who created a parallel control structure that produced the downfall of external prestige build by the diplomacy during 60s-70s.

13 *Ibid*, p. 24.

14 Mircea Malița, *Istoria prin ochii diplomatului*, Editura Rao, București 2014, p. 149.

15 Mircea Malița, *Secolul meu scurt*, Editura Rao, București 2015.

Since most of the books dedicated to history and politics are written and published after 1989, Malița was able to freely express his opinions on the communist regime. He takes pride in what happened during Romania's momentous decade in international arena and also in the decision of the communist politicians to follow a distinct policy than the rest of the communist countries. Yet, he documents the decline and accuses the wife of the former president for her obsession of control.

Nicolae M. Nicolae, former high official in Commerce Ministry and former ambassador in USA (1976-1978), published in 2000 the book "A World that I used to know. Memoirs of a former Romanian Ambassador"<sup>16</sup>. His ascension, just like in Malița's case, took place during 50's and 60's and it was strongly connected with the communist decision to replace those officials who represented the country before 1947. Although, he was suspected of being an undercover intelligence officer, in his book Nicolae position himself as a diplomat that had to help his country to get a special position on international arena. In addition to giving information on the international facts and figures he worked with, he also gives details on the Romanian diplomatic apparatus. For example, he said that in the Romanian Embassy from Washington he could work only with 4 people, while the rest of the employees were intelligence officers. In this context, he recalls a rumor that was circulating during 60s: Ceausescu asked Corneliu Mănescu, foreign minister, to call back the ministry's employees from abroad and he asked his "But how many of them are really mine?"<sup>17</sup>.

Nicolae M. Nicolae's book gives details on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Federal Germany, one of the most important moments for Romanian diplomacy, on the evolutions of the relations with USA and also on Romanian contacts with the so called Third World countries such as India, Chile, Thailand, Group 77. His book notices an important change that took place in American-Romanian relations: the focus of Carter administration on human rights, a topic that presented little interest for Ceausescu. Before Carter, for the American administration used to be enough to have a partner that distanced from the USSR principle in foreign policy and that help Romania to get an important position in international arena. However, Zbigniew Brzezinski moved the center of interest on domestic behavior and Romania as far from being the best partner, since human ri-

16 Nicolae M. Nicolae, *O lume așa cum am cunoscut-o, Amintirile unui fost ambasador al României*, Editura Pro Domo, București 2000.

17 Nicolae M. Nicolae, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

ghts and, during 80's, population's basic needs (food, healthcare, education) were ignored.

His tone of voice is informative and proud when he recalls the action from 60s-70s. As well, he gives details on the people he personally met or worked with such as: Henry Kissinger, Jimmy Carter, Anatoly Dobrinin, Valery Giscard D'Estaing, Salvador Allende, Indira Gandhi, Haim Bar Lev etc.

Since his book was published in 2000, he was able to have an open attitude, but in many parts, readers' impressions is that Nicolae says only what can be said. His literary style is less attractive than Malița's, but the information he provides is equally important. Just like Malița, Nicolae was removed from important positions after he returned from USA, just because Elena Ceausescu started to be too involved in politics.

The tendency of former elites who used to have important positions (representatives in various international political or economic forums, ambassadors, etc) to accuse Elena Ceausescu (Cabinet 2 as it is mentioned in many books) of their downfall is quite widespread. All the former elite members, Malița, Brucan, Mănescu, Marcel Dinu, Bârlădeanu, observed that after Ceausescu gave up on listening to Maurer's advices (former prime minister and responsible with the strategy of distancing Romania from USSR) he was more and more influenced by the opinions of his wife, who insisted on removing from important positions all those who contributed to get Romania's a prestigious position. In their opinion, Elena Ceausescu was afraid that these people were getting to much power and influence, therefore she insisted on changing them.

Another case study is based on Marcel Dinu's book "42 years in Diplomacy. Ambassador under four Presidents"<sup>18</sup>. According to his confessions, he entered the Foreign Ministry in 1964 and retired in 2006. During this time, he had various positions such as secretary, diplomatic missions, UN representative, ambassador, deputy minister. Therefore, he was part of the high structures knowing them very well from inside during communist time, but also afterwards. According to his confession, the purpose of his book is to share his rich expertise with the new generation.

18 Marcel Dinu, *42 de ani în diplomație, Ambasador sub patru președinți*, Editura CH Beck, București 2009.

Since from 1986 to 1990 he was Romania's ambassador in Bonn, he deals with the issues he had to manage in this post, especially that he had to perform during the years of the downfall of the Romanian communist establishment.

Later, after 1989, he was ambassador in the Republic of Moldavia and Egypt. These years correspond to post-communist era and his positions help readers understand that communist elites did not simply disappear from political and ministerial structures just because Ceausescu wasn't president anymore. Actually, in Romania, distinctly from other former communist countries, the revolution was extremely bloody, but the system changes were less spectacular when it came to people employed in various institutions.

Marcel Dinu's approach is distinct that those found in Malița's and Nicolae's books. He entered diplomacy in 1964, when the former two were already in high ranks. Somehow, Dinu is the product of the new diplomacy, that is more attached to communist principles and more adjusted to professional survival during communist downfall. His language and literary style are more conservative than those of Malița and Nicolae. He used to be a production engineer in petroleum industry when he enrolled the newly created Post-University International Relations Institute and only after 2 years of studies, he enters the Foreign Ministry. He takes various positions and later became ambassador. The style of his books is very informative, sometimes with very little insight and personal opinions of people and facts' importance. Out of historical point of view, his memoirs are important from the point of view of understanding how the type of ambassador changed. Since he survived the 80's keeping his ambassador position, it's clear that he knew how to adjust to Elena Ceausescu's mood. As he confessed, he was quite close to Ștefan Andrei, foreign minister and creator of new diplomacy, a more obedient to ideology, and admits that in some cases his support was fundamental for his career.

For example, he recalls a period when a certain state secretary from Foreign Ministry (he does not mention his name) considered that he knew better how to rule diplomatic affairs and refused to take into consideration one his proposals. He went to see Ștefan Andrei, but although he comforted him, he told him that he couldn't change the situation, since that state secretary had a strong political support<sup>19</sup>.

19 Marcel Dinu, *op.cit*, p. 59.

Marcel Dinu's book represents a good option for better understanding how the ministry worked during the period of 80's. His recalls bring to live rivalries that were part of this institution and put some shadow on the team that worked there before 80's.

### **Conclusions**

Romania's case is, maybe, one of most interesting cases to study when it comes to foreign relations. Allotted to Soviet camp after the Second World War, Romania's Communist Party, which reached power due to Soviet support, was one of the most ardent supporters of Soviet policy. Having Soviet troops on its territory up to 1958, Romania was supportive to almost any initiatives the USSR had. For example, in 1956, Romania allowed Soviet troops to enter its territory on the way to Budapest, an action that cast shadow on Romania. However, seen from inside, this action takes more nuances (see Dej's fears that one day Romania may wake up in war with some Western countries without even know it) and precisely this is what the above mentioned books does: they allow readers to see politics from inside.

From our point of view, this is maybe the most important contribution to historiography: The inside view into politics. The actions may be knowing by simply following the press relates and data registered by history, but the mechanism and the road to some decisions can only be understood by having access to inside information.

In this context, it comes up the question "how do they write history?" and after reading their books, the fair answer is: as they lived it. They all manifest a certain type of patriotism that makes them proud to be in the position to represent their country. They focus on the events they lived and on the people they met. All three realized portraits of the people they worked with. Malița was also very concern on their psychological and character traits.

In all three books, the style is informative, they refer to lots of information and give explanations to information that reached the media from that time. It is important to have access to this kind of writing, although it clearly has a degree of subjectivism, because it completes and sometimes clarifies the official history.

Their writings are also a good fresco of the various international organizations apparatus, such as UN's structures, but also of the Romanian foreign ministry structures. Malița and Nicolae M. Nicolae talked more clearly about the changes of the communist rule (influenced by China and

North Korea) and the growth of Elena Ceaușescu's influence over Nicolae Ceaușescu. Dinu is more restrained on this topic, but more concerned with the divisions and envy from Foreign Ministry. As well, Dinu, compared with the previous two diplomats, is very concerned on writing a book in which he clearly mentioned his achievements and merits.

Another fair question that needs to be addressed is whether their privileged position influenced them when talking about the old regime? Malița and Nicolae M. Nicolae are balanced in their approach. They talk about the achievements (the foreign policy during 60s and 70s), but also about the downfall. Both of them accused Elena's clique, and considered her responsible for Ceaușescu's decay, but also for their removal from the first line of diplomacy. Dinu doesn't not approach openly this topic, maybe because his career wasn't interrupted by Cabinet 2 (Elena Ceaușescu) intervention and retired in 2006.

As for the value of these writing for history it is clear that they are important for covering a period which is controversial and hard to investigate in the absence of open archives. Their view is the view of the involved political elites, of those who were part of the action, of those who created history. Their exact value will be understood later when more similar books will be published and when archive materials will be available. Meanwhile, the books mentioned above are important sources for those who study contemporary history and more particularly Romanian foreign policy.

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