

# LOOKING AT THE PAST THROUGH AN ARTISTIC LENS: ART OF MEMORIALIZATION

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**Abstract:** During the communist regimes art was both a reflection of the political (politicized art), a critical reflection and partially at least a replacer of politics. At the moment of transition to democracy the watchwords seem to be: concord, consensus, forget the past, look to the future, build the future, and so on. Paradoxically enough, once the process of democratic consolidation is set in place, the societies – that seem/desire to have been created at the exact moment when the regimes change their names from dictatorship to democracy – begin to look to the past.

Romanian post-communism has thus also seen slowly the desire to recuperate a lost past and it is only in the years 2000 that what I call “art of memorialization” is seen developing. The reclamation and reinterpretation of past symbols and the evocation of the previous period as a means of healing still present wounds is seen in different artistic supports and is somehow situated between legacy and nostalgia.

The question I address is: What and how do we artistically remember? Are there patterns, symbols, common elements that appear in artistic discourses; how are these perceived by the public, what is their impact. Thus, I explore the question of artistic invocation of the past – as a means of construction of an artistic memory (art of memorialization). For that I shall address the discourses of Romanian visual artists (Vlad Nancă, Dumitru Gorzo, Dan Perjovschi) and the most important films part of what is called the “Romanian Nouvelle Vague” and which include: 12:08 East of Bucharest (Corneliu Porumboiu, 2006), The paper will be blue (Radu Muntean, 2006), How I spent the end of the world (Cătălin Mitulescu, 2006), Tales from the Golden Age (Cristian Mungiu, 2009). Although taken as a corpus, these films have quite different standing points on the communist period. I will also compare this recent new wave of Romanian cinema to the earlier look of Romanian cinema onto reality, the cinema of the early 1990s. Moreover I intend to take into account official attempts to artistically memorialize: public monuments, statues, public places and parks, museums and discuss the “why” of the absence of a Museum of communism in Romania.

**Keywords:** art of memorialization, legacy and nostalgia, the new wave, Romanian cinema.

During the communist regimes art was both a reflection of the political (politicized art), a critical reflection, and partially at least a replacement for politics. At the moment of transition to democracy the watchwords seem to

be: concord, consensus, forget the past, look to the future, build the future, and so on. Paradoxically, once the process of democratic consolidation is set in place, the societies – that seem to have been created at the exact moment when the regimes change their names from dictatorship to democracy – begin to look to the past. Romanian post-communism has thus also seen slowly the desire to recuperate a lost past and it is only in the years following 2000 that an “art of memorialization” is seen developing. The reclaiming and reinterpretation of past symbols and the evocation of the previous period as a means of healing still present wounds is seen in different artistic supports and is somehow situated between legacy and nostalgia.

The questions addressed by this investigation are: What and how do we artistically remember? Are there patterns, symbols, common elements that appear in artistic discourses; how are these perceived by the public, what is their impact? And, at the same time: How is an artistic form used by the official discourse so as to memorialize the official version of the past?

Thus, the issue of artistic invocation of the past is explored – as a means of construction of an artistic memory (art of memorialization). For that, the discourses of Romanian visual artists (Vlad Nancă, Dumitru Gorzo, Dan Perjovschi), as well as the most important films part of what is called the “Romanian Nouvelle Vague” and which include: *12:08 East of Bucharest* (Corneliu Porumboiu, 2006), *The paper will be blue* (Radu Muntean, 2006), *How I spent the end of the world* (Cătălin Mitulescu, 2006), *Tales from the Golden Age* (Cristian Mungiu, 2009) are addressed. Although taken as a corpus these films have quite different standing points on the communist period and its end. I will also briefly compare this recent new wave of Romanian cinema to the earlier look of Romanian cinema onto communism, the cinema of the early 1990s. Moreover, the analysis looks at the way the Romanian state used artistic forms to memorialize through public monuments and statues, public places, parks, and museums. Finally, the issue of the absence and the reasons for this absence of a Museum of communism in Romania is also dealt with.

## WHICH MEMORY?

Memory which becomes unbearable is transmitted best by Anish Kapoor’s work, *Memory* (presented at the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2009). His work has to be seen on site in order to feel its weight, to be confronted by the feeling of asphyxiation when faced with the impossibility of getting passed the huge metal form trapped inside the exhibition room. I of course took the literal translation of the work and saw it as the unbearable weight of the past which is manifest in the artistic creations of the first period of Romanian post-communism.

Moreover, memory is understood here as “a retrospective form of opinion (...) that constitutes a collective identity in its relation to a significant past for this identity. It works with this past, real or imaginary, as with a material: it

selects the facts, uses them to edify what it desires to present as a genealogy of this identity”<sup>1</sup>.

There are several approaches to memory, quite a few of them are competitive or, on the contrary, others are complementary. If we refer to the memory of communism as it is encrypted artistically, a distinction must also be drawn between the memories of the daily life, the remembrance or evocation of repression (terror, torture), propaganda and culture, and the rather absent references made to other types of gazes on economy and society, institutions.

Furthermore, as De Brito observed, “the politics of memory” includes both the “policies of truth and justice in transition (*official or public memory*)” and the ways in which “a society interprets and appropriates its past, in an ongoing attempt to mould its future (*social memory*)”.<sup>2</sup> So to understand the artistic interpretation of the communist past and its invocation, the officially sanctioned artistic memory is first brought to the fore.

In Romania, the official memory only concerns the victims, the dissidents talk about the suffering and the victims, and the need to bring to justice the perpetrators. For Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci the discourses about communism are in fact discourses about anti-Communism and have become dominant since 2004<sup>3</sup>. My chapter discusses the symbolic aspects of the politics of memory as they are defined by De Brito. From the range of symbolic resources, artistic artifacts are privileged because as Gómez-Barris observed,

[L]ike other forms of cultural memory (i.e. representations of history with shifting contextual meanings), visual art has the capacity to speak to, contest, elaborate upon, and produce collective experiences that escape the domain of “politics as usual” [but] art (...) can [also] be the voice of official memory or an alternative to it<sup>4</sup>.

In fact, I argue here that art calls into question certain aspects of the communist past (mainly related to personal experiences under this regime) that are not present in the official narrative or in the discourse on the past of the democratic opposition. Thus, artistic means are used “to challenge

<sup>1</sup> As Roginski observed the memory of Stalinism remains that of its victims and not that of its crimes. “Toutes ces sculptures, chapelles, croix, pierres debout perpétuent la mémoire des victimes. Mais dans cette mémoire est absente l’image des crimes. Les criminels n’y figurant pas non plus.”; Arseni ROGINSKI, “Mémoire du stalinisme”, in *Le débat*, May-August 2009, no. 155, pp. 119–130, 120, 122.

<sup>2</sup> Alexandra Barahona DE BRITO, Carmen GONZALEZ ENRIQUEZ, Paloma AGUILAR, *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies (Oxford Studies in Democratization)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 15–16.

<sup>3</sup> Gabriela CRISTEA, Simina RADU-BUCURENCI, “Raising the cross. Exorcising Romania’s Communist Past in Museums, Memorials and Monuments”, in Péter APOR, Oksana SARKISOVA (eds.), *Past for the Eyes. East European Representations of Communism in Cinema and Museums after 1989*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008, pp. 273–303, p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> Macarena GOMEZ-BARRIS, *Where memory dwells. Culture and state violence in Chile*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, pp. 78, 22.

institutional narratives about the past providing alternative standpoints from which to understand the complex and unending effects of collective trauma and loss in the present.”<sup>5</sup>

The comparative analysis of the politics of memory in Eastern Europe and Latin America realized by De Brito et al. shows us that if in the Southern Cone<sup>6</sup>, “[t]he building of commemorative sculptures and monuments has become one of the most important ways to remember and honor the dead in public”<sup>7</sup>, in Romania, the number of monuments is less important. But, as “[i]n the Southern Cone democracies, where judicial processes have been slow, uneven, or deficient” in Romania “the role of cultural memory takes on great significance by offering new ways to imagine the past en route and linked to the future.”<sup>8</sup> In fact, the mix of these two opposed or complementary processes creates the memory of communism.<sup>9</sup>

### POLITICS OF REMEMBRANCE AND FORGETTING

The way communism is remembered in Romania, both officially and as a “counter-memory” is conditioned not only by the legacies of the period, but also by the way the first democratic regime imagined the construction of this memory:

The legacies of dictatorship condition the position of actors during the transition. If one of the legacies is the weakness, or even absence, of opposition forces, this may mean that cosmetically renewed dictatorial parties are in place to take power after the old regime collapses. This was the case in Romania, where accountability and truth telling were undertaken only symbolically to satisfy immediate desires for revenge and were then abandoned in order not to threaten the position of former Communist elites wearing “new clothes”.<sup>10</sup>

The time frame of the decisions taken by the Romanian state to memorialize and/or forget is different if one refers to the presidencies of Ion Iliescu (1990–1996, 2000–2004), Emil Constantinescu (1996–2000), and Traian Băsescu (2004–2009 and since 2009). If in the first period of the 1990s “the

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 130–131.

<sup>6</sup> The Southern Cone is a regional sub-unit of South America and it usually includes: Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and depending on the source, Brazil. In the 1970s and early 1980s the regimes in these countries were right-wing dictatorships led by the military.

<sup>7</sup> Alexandra Barahona DE BRITO, Carmen GONZALEZ ENRIQUEZ, Paloma AGUILAR, *op. cit.*, p.157.

<sup>8</sup> Macarena GOMEZ-BARRIS, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>9</sup> “*Memory symbolic* to indicate how the national public sphere in transition is mediated and constructed by state-led initiatives (truth commissions, reports, commemorative events, memorials) and alternative forms of memory that reconstruct the past (gatherings of witnesses, public funerals, memorials) with present interests in mind, *Ibidem*, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Alexandra Barahona DE BRITO, Carmen GONZALEZ ENRIQUEZ, Paloma AGUILAR., *op. cit.*, p. 37.

communist past was viewed (...) by the Romanian intelligentsia: as a black hole that had to be forgotten, in order to make it easier to reach back to the interwar period where the ‘real’ Romanian history and identity were supposed to be found”<sup>11</sup>, later on, European integration and recuperating the space between Romania and Western Europe became predominant. The absence of an initial official debate of the past, the disappointment of Romanian society after the victory of Iliescu in 1990 and the revenge unleashed against the participants of the Piața Universității demonstrations by the new regime are all important events in the postcommunist trajectory of the construction of an artistic memory of communism.

It can be seen that at the moment when the communist past seemed to disappear from the political scene (lessening in influence of the communist/anti-communist cleavage at the 2000 elections), symbols of communism were invoked by other actors from the Romanian society, arguing in favor of a new *narrative*.

(...) memories will be reworked and meanings renewed. (...) Memory is part and parcel of cultural production, giving rise to biographies, academic studies, novels, films, and theatre productions, all of which reflect on past events or reinterpret them. Symbolic representations and language are transformed; the phrase “never again” is a case in point. The politics of memory engenders the politics of commemoration and monument building. Symbolic dates and commemorations become established foci of resistance to the logic of amnesty and forgetting. Struggles are waged over the meaning and “ownership” of symbols, commemorations, and monuments.<sup>12</sup>

As Alexandru Gussi observed, the FSN made the PCR invisible and “the Ceaușescu clan” solely responsible for the communist crimes; thus adopting “policies of forgetting” which underlined the “primacy of the present”<sup>13</sup>. In fact, “the recent past was mainly represented as a celebration of the moment of the ‘December revolution’, but the significance of the moment was never discussed”<sup>14</sup>.

The moment of passage, the **revolution** of December 1989 is in fact the topic of three films which form part of the so called *New Wave of Romanian cinema*: *12:08 East of Bucharest* (Corneliu Porumboiu, 2006), *The paper will be blue* (Radu Muntean, 2006), *How I spent the end of the world* (Cătălin Mitulescu, 2006) (albeit only partially for the latter). The first one is a rather static comedy presenting the preparation and transmission of a televised talk-show in a small Romanian town about the 1989 revolution. The film brings “the after” into question by presenting the lives of those that come to the talk

<sup>11</sup> Gabriela CRISTEA, Simina RADU-BUCURENCI, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

<sup>12</sup> Alexandra Barahona DE BRITO, Carmen GONZALEZ ENRIQUEZ, Paloma AGUILAR., *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>13</sup> Alexandru GUSSI, “The Ex-communist’s Policy of Forgetting in Romania after 1990”, in *Studia Politica Romanian Political Science Review*, 2009, vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 277–2788, 281, 286.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 284.

show, it presents also the innuendos of the “revolution”, the different sides of the story but all this in a ironic view; nothing is explicit, only alluded to.

Conversely, *The paper will be blue* is a more personal evocation of “the December revolution” nights accentuating the confusion that reigned then. Special attention is drawn to the mystification regarding the “terrorists” accused of killing the innocent victims of those days and which remain unknown until today. *How I spent the end of the world* by the director Cătălin Mitulescu is set at the end of the Ceaușescu regime in a poor Bucharest neighborhood and although it finishes with the “December revolution” it talks about youth during communism, about living in those times from a very personal point of view and is very easy to identify with.

Another Romanian visual artist, Irina Botea, based in Chicago produced a documentary (*Auditions for a revolution*, 2006) about a reenactment of the revolution of December 1989 by working with American citizens. The short film aimed to reproduce one of the famous “scenes” shown on Romanian public television in December 1989 when actor Ion Caramitru and poet Mircea Dinescu shout “Am învins!” (We have won!)<sup>15</sup>. The quote from this scene and the way in which it is clearly foreigners speaking in broken Romanian highlights the “masquerade” or false imagery this particular scene has come to represent.

The first democratic regimes of Romania after 1990 did not consolidate a policy of remembrance of the communist past. No important monuments or museums were dedicated to the topic. It is rather in relation to the December 1989 moment that attention was scarcely directed to. In that sense we can see how the politicization of the memory was enacted. The best example of this is the work by Alexandru Ghilduș, a clearly political decision that has failed to unite around it those that participated in the Revolution: “The memorial of rebirth – Eternal glory to the heroes and to the Romanian revolution of December 1989” realized by the sculptor Alexandru Ghilduș and placed in the Revolution square of Bucharest. In March 2004, from the 15 projects that participated in the contest, apparently Ion Iliescu personally chose Ghilduș’ project, and this in spite of the disagreement of the then Minister of Culture, Răzvan Theodorescu and of the jury designated to choose a project. Inaugurated in August 2005, the monument – and despite the explanations of the author<sup>16</sup> – has become part of the Bucharest urban culture but in a bad

<sup>15</sup> See the video on the artist’s website: [www.irinabotea.com/pages/auditions.htm](http://www.irinabotea.com/pages/auditions.htm) (accessed September 16, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> “I assure you it is not a little spike, it is an obelisk, a consecrated term in monumental art and which signifies a commemorative monument in stone in the form of a trunk of a pyramid, very high and pointed to the top... and the element above is not a potato but a crown. The pyramid symbolizes the gnomon, which, in relation with the sun measures the passing of time. The crown recalls the Armillary Sphere, solar instrument used to measure time” Quoted in Maria BERCEA, “O ofensă: Monumental revoluției”, in *Revista 22*, 2005, vol. XIV, no. 806. Available online: <http://www.revista22.ro/o-ofensa-monumental-revolutiei-1970.html> (accessed July 14, 2010).

sense, being laughed at and called alternatively, a spike, a potato or olive on a stick and so on.

It is only during the first mandate of the current president of Romania, Traian Băsescu (2004–2009) that a new impetus was given to the approach of the communist past by the official institutions. The Presidential Commission for the Analysis of Communist Dictatorship in Romania, also known as the “Tismăneanu Commission” and its report (2006) ensured the condemnation by the Romanian state through its president, Traian Băsescu of the communist past December 19, 2006. The discourse held by the president in front of the reunited chambers of parliament was not at all well received by its members as it wasn't by a part of Romanian society and mass media. In a similar way to the processes seen developing in several countries of Latin America where the acting president as representative of the state assumed the guilt for the wrongdoings of the past dictatorships (i.e. president of Brazil, Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva in 2007), in Romania this happened in December 2006. President Băsescu declared the communist regime as “illegitimate and criminal” and the Report established, among other, the creation in Bucharest of a museum of communism and of a monument to the victims of communism (perhaps in line with the earlier proposal of Ticu Dumitrescu in 1994).

### THE ABSENT MUSEUM AND THE MISSING MONUMENTS

One of the official policies pertaining to memory is to create specific places which exhibit artifacts and/or objects of the past. Several museums of memory have recently opened in Latin America – the latest being that of Santiago de Chile inaugurated in December 2009 (and several other exist in other countries of Eastern Europe<sup>17</sup>) –, as memory sites for those who suffered the torture or just “disappeared”. In the Romanian panorama of a memory still disputed and with competing institutions being devoted to the study of communism (from quite different standing points), no Museum of communism imagined as such has been organized. The project of the “Tismăneanu Report” was thus to establish a museum of communism in Romania but more than three years after the publication of the report this has not been accomplished.

In spite of this absence, several museum spaces exist in Romania. The former museum of the Communist Party of Bucharest (History Museum of the Romanian Communist Party and Revolutionary and Democratic Movement of Romania) was transformed after 1990 into the Peasant Museum, the previous “collection of works” being now partly shown in a permanent exhibition in the basement of the museum, whilst the rest lay in the underground deposit of the museum or have been sent to other institutions<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, there

<sup>17</sup> According to the website of the IICCMER, “concentration sites that were transformed into memorial museums [are seen] in... Budapest, Warsaw, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Moscow and Berlin”.

<sup>18</sup> Gabriela CRISTEA, Simina RADU-BUCURENCI, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

are, for instance as part of the Sighet Memorial Museum<sup>19</sup>, selective displays of the different aspects of suffering during the communist regime, as Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci recall, “detention and Gulag, Securitate and demolition, resistance and repression, fake elections, Ceaușescu’s ‘Golden Era’”<sup>20</sup>. The Sighet Memorial which includes the Museum of Sighet (1994) and entitled the Memorial of the victims of communism and of the resistance was organized inside the ex-penitentiary of Sighet openly adapting the perspective of the victims<sup>21</sup> by the Civic Academy Foundation. Sometimes, temporary exhibitions have also shown different instances of communism in Romania, such as the exhibition at the Museum of History in 2007<sup>22</sup>. The exhibition was organized around several themes and included aspects of the daily life under communism, the surveillance practices of the Securitate, as well as important artifacts of the kitsch produced so as to praise the Ceaușescu family, along with presents received by the couple from their foreign counterparts. Another memorial museum is projected on the site of the former penitentiary of Râmnicu Sărat by the Institute of Investigation of the Communist Crimes and the Memory of Romanian Exile (the IICCMRE).

Finally, there is also a *nostalgic* look onto the past which is exemplified by the “the Museum of RSR” of Dinel Staicu (2001–2004) near the city of Craiova. Encomiastic, the space has been reformed and re-launched in 2008 under a new form, that of the “Palace of the RSR” including a hotel, a garden, and a traditional space<sup>23</sup>. In the period of Staicu, the museum was a collection of dissembled symbols of the past (Romanian princes and great actors glorified by the communist regime) crowned by the stoned image of Nicolae Ceaușescu.

#### THE MISSING LENIN<sup>24</sup>

One of the best images one could find for the way in which Romanian communism was merely transformed is as the head of Lenin fell that of I. L. Caragiale replaced him on the same body. This story refers to the currently

<sup>19</sup> See the website of the Memorial: [http://www.memorialsighet.ro/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=52&Itemid=94&lang=en](http://www.memorialsighet.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52&Itemid=94&lang=en) (accessed June 20, 2010).

<sup>20</sup> “The Museum of National Art had been removed from the building in 1952, and the Lenin-Stalin Museum installed in its place. It was successively renamed the Lenin Museum, the Museum of the Romanian Communist Party, and finally the History Museum of the Romanian Communist Party and Revolutionary and Democratic Movement of Romania”. Gabriela CRISTEA, Simina RADU-BUCURENCI, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 301.

<sup>22</sup> “Epoca de aur. Între propagandă și realitate”, *Romanian Museum of National History*, Bucharest, 26 January – 26 February 2007).

<sup>23</sup> See the description of the complex on the website: <http://www.palatul-rsr.ro/palat/index.html> (accessed July 14, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> The image of the statue of Lenin being displaced is an image very much present in the artistic imaginary of the 1990s if we think of the Danube sailing Lenin, an image of the film *Ulysses’ Gaze* by Theo Angelopoulos (1995) or the flying over Berlin Lenin in the film by Wolfgang Becker, *Goodbye Lenin!* (2003).

exhibited statue of I. L. Caragiale in Bucharest, originally imagined as a statue of Lenin by its author during the communist regime.

Among the first tasks assumed by the democratic regime was that of giving new names to the public space. Streets, buildings, squares and parks were renamed; the heroes of communism disappeared and so did their names from the streets<sup>25</sup>. Streets were renamed after 1990 in Romania according to the indications of the Decree no 100 of March 1990<sup>26</sup>. The desire to erase the communist symbols and invoke the inter-war period was seen in Romania but in spite of this there still are streets that bear the names of the past<sup>27</sup>. In Bucharest famous boulevards such as the Victory of Socialism (Unirii Boulevard today) or May 1<sup>st</sup> (Ion Mihalache today) changed their names and so did other public places with lesser known communist assigned names: Moghioroș market (inspired by the communist leader Alexandru Moghioroș), the neighborhood and boulevard of Sălăjan (named after Leontin Sălăjan a communist minister) or Titan and so on. Others have changed their names and assumed the pre-war names; an example is that of the Domenii Market (formerly November 7 market).

Another initial action concerned the erasure of the past through the elimination of the public symbols of communism, and besides the clearance of the signs of Ceaușescu (paintings and photographs as no statues of the dictator existed) the displacement of the monuments erected for communist heroes was seen. Thus, the most important statue of this kind, the seven meters high statue of Lenin from the Scânteia Square in Bucharest, erected in 1960 by Boris Caragea was displaced in March 1990. No statue has since replaced the missing symbol which has been since abandoned in the garden of the Palace of Mogoșoaia. Recently, the artistic project of Ioana Ciocan part of her broader “Project 1990”<sup>28</sup>, the “Ciocan vs. Ulyanov” work wants to signal the importance communism had for the East and is imagined also as the first step in a larger project which would end with the establishment of a museum of communism/park of communist statues that the artist would like to coordinate herself. The artist had already placed a polystyrene made, shiny version of Lenin on his pedestal. Part of the same project, Ciocan as a curator, presented the work of Andrei Ciubotaru, “Replacing Lenin” which invited the “Romanian Piano Trio” who sang on top of the same pedestal.

<sup>25</sup> See [www.bjc.ro:8280/wiki/index.php/Denumirea\\_str%C4%83zilor\\_din\\_Cluj-Napoca\\_dup%C4%83\\_1918](http://www.bjc.ro:8280/wiki/index.php/Denumirea_str%C4%83zilor_din_Cluj-Napoca_dup%C4%83_1918), (accessed July 13, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> The text of the Decree, in Romanian, can be found at this web address: <http://freelex.wolte-rskluwer.ro/DocumentView.aspx?DocumentId=457> (accessed July 13, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> “There still are numerous streets of the Proletariat and one of Romania of the workers in Târgu Jiu and in Craiova, the Work Heroes in Piatra Neamț or even of the Collectivists in Galați”; Pavel LUCESCU, “Redenumirea străzilor patriei: Ctrl+Alt+Delete”, Corso, 27 April 2010. <http://www.ofcorso.ro/articol/inapoi/corso/articol/redenumirea-strazilor-patriei-ctrl-alt-delete.html> (accessed July 14, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> See the artist’s website: <http://www.ioanaciocan.ro/work/2010/ciocanvs/index.html> (accessed July 13, 2010).

After having erased the space of the signs of the past, the new democratic regime scarcely replaced the place left empty by the former statues or monuments with memorials dedicated to the remembrance of the communist regime. In spite of this lack of interest of the state, commemorative practices in the public space exist nonetheless and they belong (also) to the civil society. Thus, in Bucharest one can see the “improvised” memorials of the University Square (“*troița*”) which became permanent; reminders of the heroes of the Revolution they were also transformed in anticommunist symbols. Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci also mention the eighty-two monuments built between 1991 and 2004 from private funds by the Association of Former Political Prisoners in Romania<sup>29</sup> led by Ticu Dumitrescu.

### ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIONS OF THE COMMUNIST PART

The artistic *re*interpretation of the recent past, of the “still present past” is seen in the Romanian case in the proliferation of *films* (the already mentioned 2006/7 productions) as well as in other artistic forms inspired by a past now “safer” because distant; a sign that the regime was not yet completely absorbed. All the Romanian films that have attracted some attention in the last period deal either with the communist past or with the “ongoing transition”. This represents no change, for, since 1990 Romanian films have dealt with these subjects (especially the transition), what changed is the perspective; the change as I see it is an aesthetic one. The past is but a pretext to tell a story and not as before *the* obsession. This novel artistic interest in the past is quite interesting as political scientists consider that the political cleavage between communists and anti-communists that had dominated the Romanian political landscape until 2000 has been seen to decline in intensity.

A discourse about the past is seen to take form also in the field of visual arts. An art marked by symbols of the past (the daily objects and the obsessive images) and a critical discourse on our identity formed by the past (the myths) are the two main themes identified here.

### A HISTORY OF TERROR IN FILM

The criminals, punishers are absent as Roginski observed, from the official discourse and of the one supported by dissidents/the democratic opposition but they are pointed to in artistic forms. An example in this sense is that of the film by Lucian Pintilie, *The afternoon of a torturer* of 2001. Even if the film had only very bad reviews it deals with the portrait of Franț Țandără a torturer that has retired in a southern city of the country. The image created of Țandără humanizes him because his trajectory is presented as having drawn him to what he did; he is also presented as a human being, sentimental and sensitive

<sup>29</sup> Gabriela CRISTEA, Simina RADU-BUCURENCI, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

to his son. He says: "I would lie to say pressures were made on me... We were not forced. I did it. This is what I say in front of God." But, for the film critic Mircea Dumitrescu this is an error on the part of the director, as it was already known that the torturer was visited in jail by two generals who blackmailed him into becoming the oppressor.<sup>30</sup> Finally, at the end of the film locals come to scare him and his wife, sent over by "his former Securitate friends" who break over the film by their constant phone calls. Nonetheless, the image created by Pintilie can be compared also with the portrait of the Securitate put forward in one of his strongest movies, *Balanța/The Oak* (1992) on the final days of communism in a small town of Romania.

At the same time, the portrait of Țandără can be paralleled with the realist representation by Alexandru Solomon in the documentary film *Cold Waves* (2007) of the torturer Ilie Merce. Solomon interviews Merce in the House of Romanian Parliament (House of the People) as he seems careless about his past crimes against members of the exiled community or working for the Romanian section of Radio Free Europe. His impunity is symbolized by his parliamentary office. The documentary follows with the televised image of another unpunished famous torturer, General Nicolae Pleșiță, a constant presence on one of the most popular television channels, Oglinda TV.

Equally, the image of the members of the Securitate in film can be compared to their evocation by the writers of the first decade of post-communism. As Ruxandra Cesereanu documented in her book about *The Gulag in Romanian consciousness*, in the novels written after 1989, "the members of the repression apparatus appear in all three hypostases (the falsely seraphic investigator, the torturer, and the balkanized buffoon)", the brutal torturer being in fact the obsession of the authors born in the so called period of liberalization of communist Romania<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, one could also recall the play by Constantin Turturică, *Red Comedy*, at the National Theater of Bucharest (Director Alexandru Tocilescu). A comedy with caricatures of members of the Securitate, its director considering that "these things about communism and the Securitate have to be said... until the last idyllic crumb related to communism is gone".<sup>32</sup>

#### FILMIC RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE IMMEDIATE PAST: HISTORIAS MINIMAS

The Cannes awarded *Four months, three weeks and two days* by director Cristian Mungiu is a human drama that, in my opinion, is only located in the final period of the communist regime. It is of course molded by the

<sup>30</sup> Mircea DUMITRESCU, "După-amiaza unui torționar". Available at: <http://mirceadumitrescu.trei.ro/dupaamiazaunuitortionar.htm> (accessed July 12, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Ruxandra CESEREANU, *Gulagul în conștiința românească*, Iași: Polirom, 2005, pp. 349–350.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in: "Comedie cu securisti", in *Evenimentul Zilei*, 22 March 2006.

communist regime but the drama presented is larger than communism; communism is but the background of [our] lives. In spite of this, it is true that especially this film has drawn attention to a new type of gaze bestowed onto our past quite different than before. Besides the central drama, the film of Mungiu also recreates an epoch: the end of the Ceaușescu regime and its atmosphere, having dinner, the life in the student dorm, and the darkness around, the absurd portrayed by the hotel receptionist.

Even more in the collective project *Tales from the Golden Age* (Cristian Mungiu, Hanno Hofer, Răzvan Mărculescu, Constantin Popescu, Ioana Uricaru, 2009) to which Mungiu also collaborated, the minimal histories, the personal collection of memories about (mostly) late communism urban myths became the main subject. The six tales tell the stories of daily life, the absurd and the humor all in the form of myths known by everybody at the time: *The legend of the party photographer*, *The legend of the official visit*, *The legend of the chicken driver*, *The legend of the greedy policeman*, *The legend of the air sellers*, *The legend of the zealous activist*. The “getting-by” and the favors (the chicken driver and the policeman and his gassed pig), the corrupted atmosphere and its illogical contours (the visit that perhaps will not take place), the zealousness of the employees (the concern for the way the president looks in the party photographer legend) are all mixed so as to re-create the atmosphere of the Ceaușescu epoch.

## COMMUNIST SYMBOLS

One of the ongoing projects of the young artist Vlad Nancă departs from one of the most potent symbols of the communist period, the *Dacia* car. This was a Romanian car produced after the French model of Renault 12 and that was the overwhelmingly dominant vehicle of the communist regime only in recent years being replaced on the Romanian streets by other “foreign models”. As the curator of one of the exhibitions of Nancă, Dan Popescu, noted, “the Dacia was an egalitarian car that anybody could have... it was for Romania what Trabant was for East Germany”<sup>33</sup>, it is transformed then into *the* symbol of the period. The artist’s “Dacia 1300” project consists of a series of public exhibitions: “Boulevard Renault 12” (February 21 to March 15 2007, French Institute, Bucharest), “Dream of Bucharest” (Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart January 25 to March 11 2007), “Cars everywhere” (September 2008, Bucharest white night).<sup>34</sup> But before these organized exhibitions he drew the contours of the Dacia 1300 car all around Bucharest as a stencil or on the sidewalks as children do with chalk.

<sup>33</sup> The curator of the Bucharest 2007 Nancă exhibition, Dan Popescu (director of the Bucharest based H’art gallery) on the website Bad or Good (<http://badorgood.com/>) 10 December 2008.

<sup>34</sup> See the artist’s blog for some images of this work: <http://vladnanca.blogspot.com/2007/02/boulevard-renault-12-works.html>; <http://vladnanca.blogspot.com/2007/01/dream-of-bucharest.html>; <http://vladnanca.blogspot.com/2008/09/cars-everywhere.html> (accessed July 11, 2010).

Another artist, Ștefan Constantinescu, based in Stockholm, works with the symbol of Dacia, the Romanian car. This year he is premiering as part of a larger project, a documentary film about the communist symbol car, realized with Julio Soto: “My Beautiful Dacia”. This is how the film is presented:

My Beautiful Dacia is a light hearted and humoristic portrayal of the evolution of Romania from Communism to Capitalism, seen through the eyes of its most emblematic symbol, the *Dacia* automobile. In our film, we will follow different generations of Romanians – from the old nostalgic to the young entrepreneurs – showing the present transformation of Romanian society. The connecting point between the different stories is always the Dacia car: first, a symbol of the ambitions of Communist technology and now a reflection of the new global economy. In 1999, Dacia was bought by Renault and nowadays it's a best-selling car in developing markets.<sup>35</sup>

*The great communist bank robbery* (Alexandru Solomon, 2004) tells the story of the reenactment by the communist authorities of the holdup against the National Bank six members of the nomenclature organized in 1959. They were afterwards forced to play their part in a documentary before being sentenced to death and executed. This **staging** by the communist regime **of the real** is I believe the most important aspect the film underlines.

Ceaușescu seems to be still present as a central figure in the artistic imaginary of post-communism. Nonetheless, the perspective on his persona is quite different than the communist one. I think most importantly the former dictator is humanized by the images created by artists.

A recent project, that of Dragoș Burlacu, the *Understanding History* series of 2009 which uses photographic images from the archive of Ceaușescu and of his *Golden Epoch* “from the need to recall the recent history and implicitly to achieve connections with the present to understand the future”<sup>36</sup>. For the curator of the exhibition of this series of works by Burlacu, Cosmin Năsui, the artist uses irony to underline the transformation of Ceaușescu “into a capitalist product success with gadget-vintage-glamour specifications.”<sup>37</sup>

Dragoș Burlacu represents Ceaușescu both in the hypostasis of a Supreme Leader and as the man sometimes attracted by expensive pleasures. The frames of these past realities seem fantastic. His compositions where Ceaușescu appears firing a bow or a gun, a chess hunting, or diving enthusiast in working visits, or in Court widely gesturing are inspired from “The Golden Age”<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> [www.hifilm.ro/files/Dacia\\_press\\_kit.pdf](http://www.hifilm.ro/files/Dacia_press_kit.pdf) (accessed September 15, 2009).

<sup>36</sup> Cosmin NASUI, *Ceausescu, the gadget-vintage-glamour, contemporary idol*, [www.dragosburlacu.ro](http://www.dragosburlacu.ro), (accessed July 14, 2010).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*.

The image that is most interesting for my argument here is that of Ceaușescu wearing a red nose, typically worn by clowns<sup>39</sup>. The laughing, clownish Ceaușescu is maybe the portrait of the ridicule that was transposed onto his image after 1990 when he became only the illiterate shoemaker that ruled us for so many years.

The same approach, the humanization of the dictator, or the creation of a complete character, separated from the caricature version or, on the contrary the tyrant version that have dominated the public sphere of the 1990s is seen in other works such as those of Ion Grigorescu and Andrei Ujică. An example of the stereotyped version of the Ceaușescu couple can be seen in the case of the play *A day from the life of Nicolae Ceaușescu* (Small Theater of Bucharest, Director Alexandru Tocilescu) about a day in Ceaușescu's life; this is rather a tragi-comedy as it presents the dictator and his wife according to the common (mis)conceptions, Ceaușescu as the analphabet shoemaker and Elena Ceaușescu as the real tyrant in their rise to power.

Ion Grigorescu – an artist that began work under the Ceaușescu regime – has recently reworked one of his earlier works. In 2007 the artist produced a video called “Posthumous Dialogue with Nicolae Ceaușescu”, a continuation of the 1978 “Dialogue with Comrade Ceaușescu”. The first work, a video presentation supra-written with a fictitious interview to the dictator presented the artist in the double posture of the interviewer and the interviewee by wearing a mask of Ceaușescu. The questions and answers surpassed the permitted array of expression of the epoch. The 2007 video departed from the same idea of an invented interview with the now forgotten dictator. Placed in the House of the People landscape, the video offers the “vision of Ceaușescu on present-day Romania”. The artist goes even further and signals that by demonizing Ceaușescu the critical spirit was invalidated, not only by ignoring the positive outcomes of the 34-year long dictatorship but also by shifting the discussion to a level that obscures the truly important questions<sup>40</sup>.

*The Autobiography of Ceaușescu*, the documentary directed by Andrei Ujică (2010) apparently has the intention of presenting Ceausescu in a *realist* light, showing all sides of the character and affirming that his demonization and caricaturization have provoked the loss of the true man. I believe this is an interesting phenomenon, part of our artistic memorialization of Ceausescu. Using only archive filmed material of Ceaușescu in both official and personal contexts, Ujică redraws the portrait of the dictator as Ceaușescu himself would have done it. The formula of the author is reminiscent of that used by Adrian Cioroianu when he characterized the portraiture of Ceaușescu as “videology” stating that all the paintings of the dictator looked as if they were painted by

<sup>39</sup> See the image on the website of Burlacu: [http://www.dragosburlacu.ro/work/16-Understanding\\_History/2/5-.html](http://www.dragosburlacu.ro/work/16-Understanding_History/2/5-.html) (accessed July 14, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Ion Grigorescu at the public meeting “Arte marșiale” organized by the Romanian Cultural Institute, Bucharest, November 27, 2007.

him, identically. This “obsession of the self-portrait”<sup>41</sup> led to the repetition of the same idealized image of the leader.

Ion Bârlădeanu, a non-professional artist who was discovered in 2008 by the owner of the Bucharest-based H’Art gallery) is evocative of another conceptualization of the Romanian leader. The collage that can be seen below was realized in the 1970s–1980s thus in the same period with the official images realized by the state artists, but outside of the officially controlled public space. The use of the collage and not of the academic easel-painting (or mural) represents in itself a detour from the official imagery. Ceaușescu is still presented at the center of the image, he is smiling and waving but he is now smaller than the dancers, which dominate and rhythm the ensemble, and seems even a caricatured image of himself.



Ion Bârlădeanu

The resurgence of the once constant presence of the dictator in the everyday space is seen through the developing of a new type of urban intervention in the years 2000: the stencils. These are drawings that are reproduced on all types of surfaces and supports throughout cities and which disrupt for a brief instant the daily life by their straight-forward messages. The stencils with Ceaușescu saying “Vin în 5 minute” (I’ll come in 5 minutes) by Gorzo or “I’ll be back”, or the new “Lost” tag, are already part of the urban culture of Bucharest (although they are present also in other Romanian cities).<sup>42</sup> This is a common preferred mean of expression of the visual artists Vlad Nancă and Dumitru Gorzo.

<sup>41</sup> Cioroianu observes that all the artistic representations of Ceaușescu’s cult seem as if the *Conducător* would have painted them himself, if only he would have known how to. Adrian CIOROIANU, “‘Videologia’ lui Nicolae Ceaușescu. Conducătorul și obsesia autopoortretului”, in Ruxandra Cesereanu (ed.), *Comunism și represiune în România*, Iași: Polirom, 2006, pp. 251–265, 251.

<sup>42</sup> See this archive of Romanian stencils: <http://www.2020.ro/>



The end of the Ceaușescu regime was itself staged by the new power through the use of media: the broadcasting of the masquerade trial on December 25<sup>th</sup> is part of this new narrative. The artist Mircea Suciuc has recently included in his exhibition “89” (March 2007, H’Art gallery, Bucharest) a reenactment of the killing scene of the Ceaușescu couple in December 1989. The exhibition of Suciuc consisted in the recreation of wax mannequins representing the two Ceaușescus lying on the wall (restoring the famous filmed image that ran on Romanian television Christmas night, 1989) on which red paint was sprayed. The soundtrack of the exhibition was made-up of the process of the couple and the sound of the firing squad. This direct quotation of the execution of the dictatorial couple is another manner of evoking this time not the communist past but the departure point of the democratic regime tainted by the lack of an honest trial.

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Besides this delving into the communist reservoir for symbols and/or the distorted image of the still present Ceaușescu, *the great topics*, otherwise absent from the larger public debate have also been rediscovered by Romanian artists. An example in this sense is the film *The portrait of the fighter as a young man* (Alexandru Protocean, 2010) that recounts the fight of the anticommunist partisans in the Romanian mountains, and which has already provoked a certain unrest over its launch. Furthermore, **repression** seems not to be a theme for Romanian artists as in other contemporary cases of post-dictatorial settings, for example in Latin America; see for instance the works that recall the still important issue of those *disappeared* by the dictatorships such as the artworks of the Chilean artist Carlos Altamirano<sup>44</sup>. But “the sufferance of Romania” can be recognized in artistic forms.

<sup>43</sup> Stencil found on the walls of Bucharest apparently pertaining to the artist Dumitru Gorzo.

<sup>44</sup> See my discussion of the topic in: Caterina PREDA, “Enclaves autoritaires’ artistiques au Chili? Art et politique dans la démocratie retrouvée”, in *Studia Politica Romanian Political Science Review*, 2008, vol. VIII, no. 4, pp. 869–888.

The artistic discourse of Dan Perjovschi is one of the most interesting in the Romanian post-communist context as it constantly questions the current events as they unfold. Perjovschi's choice for "naked drawing" (in his own words), for the pure line is thought to be a response to the traditional painting he was taught in Romanian art school but at the same time to the official line super-imposed by the Ceaușescu regime. His response is thus "The plain and simple line [that] enables it to remain political, without puffing itself up as political representation"<sup>45</sup>. We could say that Perjovschi's artwork is constructed in the aftermath of the dictatorial regime taking it as the precondition of his critically committed artistic expression. In many of the works of Dan Perjovschi realized after 1989 allusions or direct links to past events are made. One of his post-1990 actions shows how everything he did at the time was determined by Romania and its fate. This consisted in tattooing the word Romania on his shoulder during the action "Romania" of 1993; in 2003 "Erased Romania" was the act that closed the action as the artist removed his tattoo (Stiles). As Ileana Pintilie notes, Perjovschi's action "was one of the most sincerely desperate forms of manifesting a post-December trauma, a form of protest against a "collective amnesia" manifested by the general indifference for the great problems which remained unresolved during the transition from communism to another stage"<sup>46</sup>.

In addition to the use of the past already described, there is a series of artworks that seek to *contest the values imposed by the communist regime*. "FAQ about Steve the Great" (H'Art Gallery December 2004) is such a project that questions the communist past in a more indirect manner. The exhibition which featured five artists (Dumitru Gorzo, Alina Buga, Suzana Dan, Sabina Spătariu and Sorin Tara) was organized to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the death of Steve the Great, one of the most famous Romanian princes and his sanctification by the Orthodox Church. The purpose of the artists was to present "the human side" of the Romanian prince and to "demystify" him, but also to criticize public spending of a value of three million euro for what they considered was a "nationalist display".<sup>47</sup> Dumitru Gorzo's representation of the prince was among the most criticized as it presented a black version of him, with woman breasts and blonde hair (against all possible principles of political correctness).<sup>48</sup> The exposition created one of the most interesting public debates (similar to the 2008 ICR scandals<sup>49</sup>) as it questioned the sanctification

<sup>45</sup> Julia FRIEDRICH, "The line that speaks", <http://www.perjovschi.ro/line-speaks.html> (accessed June 1, 2009).

<sup>46</sup> Ileana PINTILIE, "The Public and the Private Body in Contemporary Romanian Art", *Art margins*, June 2007 [www.artmargins.com](http://www.artmargins.com) (accessed June 1, 2009).

<sup>47</sup> Dan POPESCU, "Indicator de sănătate culturală", *Dilema Veche*, no. 119, 5.05.2006.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Dumitru Gorzo, *Metropotam*, (November 7, 2006), <http://metropotam.ro/Interviuri/2006/11/art7977512042-Interviu-Dumitru-Gorzo/> (accessed June 1, 2009).

<sup>49</sup> The controversy regarding the Romanian Cultural Institute's activity was provoked essentially by two exhibitions and opposed in the public space the communist defined concept of national art and contemporary artistic discourses.

of the so-called untouchable “national symbols”. The show even saw the visit of the police after a denouncement (as in the case of the New York exhibition of 2008) along with the critiques of the Church and nationalistic leaders. Furthermore, as Dumitru Gorzo, Vlad Nancă questions the intangible symbols transformed by the communist regime: Mihai Eminescu the national poet is transformed in a stencil displaying his consecrated photographed image underneath which is written Eminem. Equally questioning consecrated symbols, Daniel Knorr imagined in 2007 “Trams and institutions” – as part of the larger artistic project “Public Art Bucharest” –, an artistic intervention meant to desecrate the four most respected institutions by Romanians. Thus, during one month four trams painted with the colors and symbols of the army, the police, the Orthodox Church and the Red Cross circulated around Bucharest as normal trams<sup>50</sup>. We must not forget in this sense that the army was in 1989 the one that made the victory of the revolution possible according to the official version on the December facts.

### *POPULAR CULTURE – THE CHE GUEVARA CONNECTION*

What is more, a look at **popular culture** is also useful because we can notice here a kind of nostalgia for the past “Golden epoch” which could be translated as “communist still sells”. As such, advertising has marginally dwelt in the communist reservoir reclaiming images or star-products of the communist period. See in this sense the commercials for the mobile telephone company Zapp or the Imperial vodka commercial or the recent advertising campaign for Rom chocolate, “a brand present on the market since the 1960s”<sup>51</sup>, the beer Bucegi<sup>52</sup>, etc. Furthermore, recently this passion for the past is seen in a strange action taken by one of the most important daily newspapers, *Jurnalul Național*. The newspaper published as a supplement the official communist newspaper *Scântea* for the year 1989 as if censorship would not have existed. In fact, as elsewhere in Eastern or even Western Europe the communist period has gained in the last years a new sense of “coolness”; in a twisted kind of way it’s fashionable to wear or display reminders of those times.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, longing for one’s youth spent during communism is more and more present in the Romanian

<sup>50</sup> *Spațiul Public București/Public Art Bucharest 2007*, Cluj: Idea Design & Print, 2008, pp. 146–156.

<sup>51</sup> Commercial for “Rom tricolor”, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77ZoJZ6mIDM> (accessed July 1, 2009).

<sup>52</sup> This commercial evokes “staying in line” as most of Romanians did in the last years of the Ceaușescu regime as most of products were absent from shops and were rationalized, [http://www.iqads.ro/clipul\\_publicitar\\_1484/bucegi\\_\\_\\_carnea.html](http://www.iqads.ro/clipul_publicitar_1484/bucegi___carnea.html) (accessed July 1, 2009).

<sup>53</sup> Bucharest has even seen recently the inauguration of a club called “La Scântea” as the official newspaper of the communist regime. One can “enjoy” here the good old times including the lack of food characteristic to the final period of the Ceaușescu regime. Even before this recent opening, Bucharest night clubs have organized pioneers nights, working people nights and so forth.

virtual space with several web sites dedicated to the topic.<sup>54</sup> Finally, communist nostalgia is recuperated by popular television shows as demonstrates one of the main private channels of Romanian television, Antena 1. Its televised program for 2009 New Year's Eve saw the television screen once again occupied by the smiling portrait of Ceaușescu, pioneers, policemen and Securitate workers, poor people standing in line accompanied by a strange kind of humor.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Twenty years after the fall of communism in Romania a growing interest in the communist past can be identified. Several examples of artistic discourses that deal with the past in various ways were given so as to show the plurality of expressions; from the project of Ion Grigorescu to the film of Porumboiu and TV commercials or theater plays. Art not only questions this past but also questions authority as it can be seen in the ironic treatment of national symbols (Gorzo and Nancă) or of the institutions that are still revered by the grand majority of Romanians (Perjovschi, Knorr).

Because "postmodern memory is constructed from residues"<sup>55</sup>, my chapter presented a puzzle of images: the daily lives in the 1980s, the obsessive, laughing Ceaușescu, the secret police in the background, etc. As I showed, there are mixed and competing memories of the revolution and of the communist regime especially during the first democratic governments and this was acknowledged with reference to several artworks (Botea's film, the work by Suci). An interesting aspect is how newly accessible archive material is used to tell another story about Ceaușescu (Dragoș Burlacu with painting and Andrei Ujică with his film). The art of memorialization helps build a new memory of the communist past, a much more diverse, multifaceted image, strong in symbolism. At the same time artists question the cultural edifice built during the Ceaușescu regime and help articulate a critical discourse on the past.

At the same time, the official gaze onto the past does not use on a large scale artistic means to express its version of memory (except for the monument raised for the martyrs of the December revolution). There still is no museum of communism in Romania, even though there are temporary or even permanent (at Sighet) exhibition spaces dedicated to several aspects of the communist regime.

## FILMS

4 Months, 3 weeks and 2 days (2007), Directed by Cristian Mungiu, Romania, Mobra Films.

12:08 East of Bucharest (2006), Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu, Romania, 42 km Film.

<sup>54</sup> See one of the best known sites of this type: <http://www.igu.ro/latrecut>.

<sup>55</sup> Macarena GOMEZ-BARRIS, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

How I celebrated the end of the world (2006), Directed by Cătălin Mitulescu, Romania/France, Les Films Pelléas.

Tales from the Golden Age (2009), Directed by Cristian Mungiu, Hanno Hofer, Răzvan Mărculescu, Constantin Popescu, Ioana Uricaru, Romania/France, Mobra Films.

The paper will be blue (2006), Directed by Radu Muntean, Romania, Multimedia Est.

Cold Waves (2007), Directed by Alexandru Solomon, Romania, Hi Film Productions.

Great Communist Bank Robbery (2004), Directed by Alexandru Solomon, UK, BBC.

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