**Excerpts from Gala Galaction, *Journal*, vols. 5-6. Bucharest: Editura Albatros, 1996.**

**Translated by Roland Clark.**

*Grigorie Pișculescu (1879-1961), better known by his literary pseudonym Gala Galaction, was one of the most prominent Romanian writers and church figures of the twentieth century. In his short stories, novels, and newspaper articles, Galaction developed an idiosyncratic style that integrated Eastern Orthodox themes and imagery into the lives of his characters, most of whom were peasants or working class. Unlike most religious writers in early twentieth century Romania, who were committed ultranationalists, even fascists, Galaction was a socialist who believed that defending the rights of the poor constituted a central Christian duty. As a result, he became valuable to the Romanian Communist Party (PCR) after the Second World War. Written over a 57-year period, his journal provides unique insights into major changes in Romanian religion, politics and society that took place during the twentieth century. In these excerpts he writes about being courted–and manipulated–by the PCR because of his celebrity status.*

*February 23, 1945 (Friday)*

It has now been six months since the change of our country’s politico-military regime. Endless miseries fill the news, giving the impartial spectators something to titter about. The Romanian bourgeoisie refuses to die on command. The assault of red democracy is more and more relentless. Will we follow the Greeks or will we be outbid?[[1]](#footnote-1)

*August 10, 1945 (Friday)*

Today I sanctified the “lesser water” in the house of Alice Voinescu.[[2]](#footnote-2) In the Writer’s Commission yesterday, which is presided over by Mihail Ralea, we remedied an old injustice and gave the great national poetry prize to the vigorous Tudor Arghezi.[[3]](#footnote-3) Great news today: Japan has capitulated. This cursed war has to end. From now on the atomic bomb will probably become what makes us keep our heads down.[[4]](#footnote-4) I am constantly waiting for news from Rome.[[5]](#footnote-5) Lord and Savior, send it to us on wings of blessing. Today we celebrate Saint Lawrence [of Rome]. Tropical heat! Extreme temperatures like those of childhood summers spent on the plains of Teleorman.

*September 20, 1945 (Thursday)*

Who runs the newspaper *The Moment* [*Momentul*]? Whoever it is decided to inform his readers about my visit to the Choral Temple.[[6]](#footnote-6) What a rotten idea! The whole world is upset. It’s tragic to see that antisemitism and legionarism are still there under the ashes, like coals ready to set the world on fire again.[[7]](#footnote-7) Angry, insulting voices called me on the telephone to harangue me for daring to appear among Jews, in their house of prayer, on a Jewish holiday. What reasons, what arguments, what eloquence these demon-possessed people have over the telephone. Last night at ARLUS I listened to the prime minister, Petru Groza, who told us about his impressions from Moscow.[[8]](#footnote-8) Congenial, relaxed, naïve and communicative, he tried and succeeded in sharing something of his calm optimism with the audience.

*October 22, 1946 (Tuesday)*

I was in Cluj from October 13-16, together with Camil Siciu, the Secretary General, to establish a branch of the Romanian-Hungarian Society. We searched out the church notables: the bishops [Iuliu] Hossu [a Greek Catholic] and [Nicolae] Colan [a Romanian Orthodox], the [Roman Catholic] canon [Aloisiu] Boga, the Calvinist superintendent Vásárhely, and then the strange philosopher Lucian Blaga. The Romanians were hesitant, even skeptical. The Hungarians were enthusiastic. I visited the splendid cathedral next to the no less splendid statue of Matthias Corvinus many times. On October 19, a clear Fall day, I drove from Cluj to Bucharest via Copşa Mică, Sibiu, and Piatra Olt. It took from 8am in the morning until 8pm in the evening.

Arriving in Bucharest, I learned that the Bloc of Democratic Parties wants to make me a deputy. It’s true: misfortune never comes alone! I became Vice President of the Romanian-Hungarian Society, I’m something similar at ARLUS, I’m who-knows-what at the Red Cross, am the Honorary President of the committee to resolve the famine in Moldova… and tonight I found out that I have been nominated as a member of the group of journalists who will visit Moscow. Too much! I adamantly refused to go to Moscow with the noxious Nicodim, the phony Patriarch of Romania, who leaves for there tomorrow.[[9]](#footnote-9) …Can I still leave with the newspaper men and meet with Nicodim in Moscow? Too many thoughts, complaints, visits, and phone calls every day!… I am not even a deputy yet and the sinister comedy has already begun!

*November 19, 1946 (Tuesday)*

It rained profusely yesterday, but today is beautiful. My heart is heavy. When I was rummaging around the library, I discovered a pamphlet about how the French suffered under the German occupation… Today’s election certainly won’t bring people together and teach them to love one another… I am a candidate–against my will–in Vâlcea county. What a pity! No one has ever cursed at me before, but the obscenities will flow in the county today. What am I doing with these people who want to reform society without Christ and without Christian humility? Why doesn’t God just let me fall off the electoral cart? Even with all my complaining, why did I let them put my name on the list for the Bloc of Democratic Parties? Because the people who invited me are facilitating my daughters’ departure in Italy… Oh, if it wasn’t for my kids! The poor Macedonski: “I’m a coward! I have three children!”[[10]](#footnote-10) What would I do in Parliament, in the unlucky event that I win the elections? How will I bear the burdens and responsibilities of the moment? And the insolence of the so-called opposition? How can I side with people who don’t believe in Christ, even though they can be sincerely democratic (when the mood takes them…)? So many questions, so many problems! They all seem so disgraceful and unwelcome.

They say that I will represent the Orthodox Church in the future Parliament… What an irony!… A church whose head is the monstrous Nicodim! A church I expect to separate from the state! O Lord, perhaps because my sins are so many I will be made to pass through this threshing machine with fear and trembling! Perhaps the Savior wants to be proclaimed and glorified through me, the most worthless of His servants, in a democratic political assembly that is without God and outside of His will!

*December 2, 1946 (Monday)*

Yesterday, December 1, was the opening of Parliament. I had to be there as the deputy for Vâlcea. I arrived early and listened to the prayers being said in the cathedral for this event and for “the nation’s appointed.”… Complete lack of attention!… Two or three deputies seemed to make the sign of the cross. Otherwise, there was formalism and indifference. Wouldn’t it be a million times better to remove the Church and this holy service from the official political circus?

I went in under the arch and sat down in the back. But a politician came and invited me to sit up the front where the nobles of the Church used to sit in olden times… There are numerous novelties in this assembly: female deputies, many rural deputies, plenty of authentic workers with strong hands. But the most beautiful and touching moment is the king’s entrance. Tall, straight, serious to the point of sadness, and confidence in himself from beginning to end.[[11]](#footnote-11) He reads with a muffled, slow voice. He reminds me of Arghezi, though Arghezi’s voice is more nuanced. The king reads like a demi-god, without thrill or shadow of emotion–a calm, impassive sovereign. The assembly loves him and applauds passionately. But the king is immortal and cold! When he has finished reading his message he waits a moment, inspecting the room’s human terrain with his steely eyes as they are stirred up in a storm of enthusiasm. Then he bows, almost imperceptibly, and walks out through the arch.

The diplomats of our lucky country and their friends stay in the lodge; elegant people who are decorated, festive, men and women… There are many renowned names among the deputies and ministers; faces from posters stuck on fences like heads on stakes. But I don’t know them and do not recognize anyone. I don’t even know comrade Ana Pauker or Florica Bagdasar.[[12]](#footnote-12) What will I do in this parliament? The speaker pays cold reverence to the Church and moves on. Parliament will not concern itself with the Church’s problems. Is my election just a national prize then?

*January 9, 1947 (Thursday)*

The weather has turned freezing since Epiphany. We are passing through a period of exceptional cold. The thermometer drops to minus 13 degrees Fahrenheit. The water pipes have started to worry me. Luckily the snow is abundant, but not too much. For several nights the moon has been shrinking in a steely, unforgiving sky… It is clear and the stars are sparkling! I cannot remember a winter like this one, when I cannot warm my hands. ... I write with difficulty; my poor fingers feel like novices next to a hot *sobă*[[13]](#footnote-13) and between windows that breathe icicles.

In about a week’s time I have to give a lecture on a theme amiably imposed on me: *On the Progressive Spirit of Nineteenth Century Russian Literature*. It’s an enormous subject and requires years of reading and study… My dearest Mrs. Romanenco–one of the Vestals of ARLUS–gave me some useful material. But it is one thing to read and another thing to understand… Yes, Slavism has won… Germanism has lost the spiritual hegemony it had through a stupid, lamentable, and pointless ferocity. It fell into an abyss of deep antipathy… The English and Americans, obtuse and selfish, helped the Slavs to crush the Germans… (Perhaps it would be more accurate to say they were secretly urged not to leave Israel in the claws of destruction). Slavism has won! Completely, immensely, and more brilliantly than the Anglo-Americans would have liked.

Today’s Russian literature is drunk on the champagne of victory!… Everything written exalts the Russian people, the Russian fatherland, and “Father Stalin”!… It’s a legitimate and enormous exaltation! They won! They passed through the valley of death! They overturned the monstrous, gigantic war machine sent against them by the arch-demon Hitler! They have the right to sing and dance for thirty or forty years! And naturally, we poor singers in the shanty next door must proclaim it with our mouths and our fiddles. If you stop and think about it, today’s Slavic victory over putrid Europe began with Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy… But maybe it would have been slower if German megalomania–if the Devil, the enemy of Israel–had not destroyed the ancient floodgates and let the Russians loose on Europe.

Now we begin again…from the beginning!… Leonid Maximovich Leonov, who appears to be an extraordinary literary talent, declared in an interview the other day that he doesn’t like Anatole France.[[14]](#footnote-14)… Wonderful, profoundly instructive sincerity!… Down with the glory of Europe, down with its classical traditions, its amiable tolerance, independent thought and mysticism! Leonid Maximovich Leonov is new life. He is the fresh and wild mountain torrent that comes to fill and dissolve the ancients and our Hellenistic European dreams!…

*February 26, 1947 (Wednesday)*

Bucharest, the capital of Romania, is drowning in snow. It snowed again a few days ago. New drifts are sitting on top of the old ones. The streets are doomed. The footpaths are slippery. Thick yellow grit swallows your feet. Or else, when the snow melts, a giant system of streams and puddles carpets the streets and footpaths… I can’t remember ever having seen this city in such a dilapidated state… There are no shovels anywhere, the wagons are falling apart, laborers are on strike… With great difficulty, this afternoon I cut my way through the muddy, icy paths winding through the snow all the way to Jianu Road–the aviation monument–where, for better or worse, a bus was waiting to take me as far as National Square… I go to parliament, vote financial laws, sit in the wooden chairs and look around. There are scores of faces that I have never managed to identify… I was there for the celebrations of [Iosif] Iser and [Krikor] Zambaccian.[[15]](#footnote-15) On Saturday, March 1, I have to preside over a symposium at ARLUS on Aleksey Tolstoy’s novel *The Road to Calvary*. I read the first of the three volumes.[[16]](#footnote-16)

*March 2, 1947 (Sunday)*

I rushed through the other volumes... I will have to re-read this novel, which is such a revelation. Aleksey Tolstoy’s realization, his fidelity to the new calling of Russian society before the Great War and on the eve of the Revolution, the immensity of the fresco that he paints… He makes one admire the “calvary” of the Russian people. One great question that leaves us timid and insecure: We confess, believe and worship the calvary of the One who sacrificed himself for each one of us… But is it possible that an entire people could sacrifice itself for all humanity honestly, definitively, and without any delusions? In other words, is there such a thing as collective messianism, in the spirit of individual messianism, the personal redemption that the Savior brought us? The sacrifice of the Russian people is truly enormous! A whole world–two hundred million people just like us–boiled in blood and tears for years on end to produce the type of social organization they have today. Is this social formula an apogee, a truth worth keeping? Will it be, in time, adopted across the globe? And just as we Christians are baptized in Christ today, one by one, clothing ourselves with Christ, will all peoples one day be baptized in the Russian Revolution and in today’s socialism? Will one nation after another receive the Soviet baptism? There is no answer to such a question!… The powerful vision of Aleksey Tolstoy subjugates us, and–shaken and adoring–we look upon his heroes as they–like Lot’s family–overcome the depravity of Sodom and Gomorrah… The human holocaust that burns up and down Russia astounds us!… We tremble before the red epic!… And we ask ourselves–as I asked at the ARLUS meeting last night–whether the Russian calvary will become a vicarious and redemptive sacrifice, once and for all, for all other nations?

*May 5, 1947 (Monday)*

I went to Negoiţă’s church yesterday and we celebrated the Holy Liturgy together. I read the prayers for rain with passion… Lord, Lord! Remember the innocent beasts, for we humans no longer dare to pray for ourselves! I took part in a select commission in parliament researching a proposed law to force bishops and priests who are too old or infirm to retire... I kept my mouth shut as much as I could. The law saddens me deeply… That lay people have to intervene to resolve the disorder and strife in the Savior’s house… The clergy are so debased that the Ministry of Denominations [*Ministerul Cultelor*] has to come between them with clubs and force them to behave! The gangrene must be operated on. The separation of church from state will be the harsh but only appropriate solution to today’s sad state of affairs. Let the Church sort out its own business and its own hierarchy!

*May 9, 1947 (Friday)*

The evening before last, May 7, the Soviet Ambassador, [Sergey] Kaftaradze, welcomed a number of writers, journalists and artists at the Soviet embassy. I was there too (for the second time). The gate was guarded by a single Romanian sergeant. Inside, I greeted our host with a certain stiffness. Mrs. Kaftaradze deigned to ask me whether I knew Russian. I answered in French… A Soviet film was shown in the embassy’s large hall: *Hello Moscow!* or something like that.[[17]](#footnote-17) The movie was highly political, but of very little artistic value. I wanted to leave after the film, but Mrs. Kaftaradze appeared in front of me and led me to the buffet, where I lingered for a minute or two. I left the palace with Mr. Catargiu, the owner of Monteoru House, where ARLUS has its offices.[[18]](#footnote-18) He complained gloomily that “It’s sad; these Russians are very amiable. They’re eager to make friends with us but we don’t want to benefit from their good dispositions…”

I lunched in the home of N. D. Cocea yesterday, my in-law for the past 45 years and my friend for over half a century.[[19]](#footnote-19) He picked up our earlier conversation: “Fate is persecuting us.

Communism and today’s whole democratic regime have crashed disastrously into our pro-Hungarian policy in Ardeal, into the same drought that produced the friendship between Russia and Romania. It is finishing badly with the Hungarians. The Romanian-Hungarian Week in Budapest ended in a tragic Sabbath… The Hungarians suggested to Groza that we enter into a Balkan Bloc that would exclude the Soviets… You can imagine what was going on inside Groza’s head! The hopes and preferences of democracy are starting to move towards Gheorghiu-Dej!”[[20]](#footnote-20) If that’s what he wants to think!… The real news of recent days is that God has put up with our perfidy and our spiritual disarray and granted that the clouds might discharge some long-awaited rain upon us.

In Parliament, Radu Roşculeţ, the Minister [of Denominations], managed to pass a law modifying three articles of the law governing the organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church.[[21]](#footnote-21) Now the electoral congress and deputies from the vacant bishopric will choose new bishops. A metropolitan will be elected by all the deputies in the Metropolitanate and in the bishoprics the metropolitan is responsible for. Then in the case of electing the patriarch, all Orthodox deputies. There was strong support for returning to the old way of doing things: all Orthodox deputies elect church leaders. But the National Church Congress also had to be taken into account, an innovation introduced by Miron Cristea (on the Ardelean model) which I for one have always disliked. I stayed out of it. The new law and all those which give the state the right to interfere in Church affairs are, in my opinion, bad news… I said so clearly in *The Capstone*: An atheist state giving laws to the Church of Jesus Christ! The only conceivable and definitive law is the law–which I am still awaiting–that clearly separates church from state.[[22]](#footnote-22)

*May 18, 1947 (Sunday)*

I should have been in church celebrating the Holy Liturgy today, but I was drowsy and lethargic, so I stayed home and read the service to myself… I am getting old… Kneeling down is hard and getting up just as bad. ... I blunder through the sixty-ninth year of my futility. My right arm is starting to creak… My rheumatism is worse than it’s been before.

Last night the students from the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy invited me to talk about my memories of being a student and a writer. The question is imprecise… I never had a youth as a student. Like Filipache from *At the Crossroads of the Centuries* I stayed away from the anarchic childish enthusiasm that has them charging across the summits of the Carpathians…[[23]](#footnote-23) “Oh, n’y vouloir, oh, n’y pouvoir mourir un peu!…”[[24]](#footnote-24) I spent my student years writing letters to Dr. Olga Sacară-Tulbure and Sister Zoe…[[25]](#footnote-25) I was a theology student too, and in 1899-1902 the agitators and upstarts who became famous later on had not yet risen up among the theology students… On top of all this–I told my listeners last night–I had been enthralled by socialism since high school. A socialist from the age of 15 or 16, I couldn’t be a chauvinistic nationalist at the age of 20.[[26]](#footnote-26)

When I got home, my friend and colleague Father Nicolae Popescu, a member of the Academy, gave me the news that the literary section of that venerable institution has unanimously agreed that I am worthy of joining it. A member of the Romanian Academy! I never wished it. Sometimes I dreamed that it might be possible, but I never took any steps to make it happen. Perspective is more grey than illuminated. My friend Caracostea told me on the phone today that the honor being offered is not one of rest but of work and exertion. I got it! Every day I ask myself how I could abandon city living and run away to a monastery, never how I might take on the honorary obligations of an academician. What weighs on me is that I was elected in the place of Nichifor Crainic.[[27]](#footnote-27) Poor Nichifor Crainic. Where might he be at the moment and what will he think when he learns that I was elected to the Academy in his place?… Before my heavenly Lord and the Holy Eucharist, I am sorry that Nichifor Crainic–the great talent, Nichifor Crainic–was ostracized and punished by the new world and I am sad that I won’t be able to or won’t be allowed to eulogize him.

*July 16, 1947 (Wednesday)*

Blessed be our God! It rained gently and constantly all day yesterday and all last night. I venture the corn, vegetables and other crops will grow well now and that we will be able to enjoy their bounty. I was in Parliament yesterday after ten days’ vacation. The important ministers are away–in Bulgaria and Belgium–and it seems we will be closing the shutters again. The news that rattles around in the press is about the arrest of some of the leaders of Iuliu Maniu’s party–including Ion Mihalache–because they tried to flee the country by plane.[[28]](#footnote-28) That means that the signs of decay are multiplying. I have no sympathy for Mr. Iuliu Maniu and for his little political factions; I don’t know what his party stands for and I don’t meet with any the “Manists.” I don’t approve of their attempt to escape by air, but their arrest doesn’t excite me either. What would have happened if they had been allowed to do what they want, leaving us to draw our own conclusions? It’s sad, but when you have power in your hands and the devil whispering in your ear you almost always listen to his intimations and his twisted, misanthropic advice.

In Arghezi’s column yesterday he mentioned, out of the blue, the Bible translated by “Fathers Vasile and Galaction, one blessed in the hereafter and the other in the here and now”. Maybe he was being ironic, maybe caustic… Probably Arghezi himself doesn’t know. I would have answered him (if I still wrote for the newspapers, if the *Journal* hadn’t been suspended, if… I wasn’t so incredibly tired of our world and of every printed page…). I would have said: “Dear Arghezi, you’re very clever! Your claim that I am blessed in this world arrived just on the day when my dentist, M. Rabner, pulled out a wisdom tooth that has been bothering me for a long time and which was well and truly infected with pus!”

*September 12, 1947 (Friday)*

I come from the Athenaeum, where I presided over a small popular gathering called to listen to comrade Liuba Chişinevschi and the deputy Andrei Neagu.[[29]](#footnote-29) The former took part in the Congress of the International Federation of Former Deportees and Political Prisoners held in Warsaw and gave a report on the discussions and decisions of the congress. He also told us what he had seen and heard in the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. Even though his Romanian isn’t very good, Liuba shook us and brought tears to our eyes with his descriptions of the unspeakable horrors that took place in those camps. Damn! The tragedy of those prisoners from the German camps isn’t just a story or an invention. The deputy Neagu wasn’t as good. He spoke after Liuba and drew parallels with what happened in Romania under the bourgeois regime. The meeting was crowded, noisy, childish, and trivial. I am not used to the indecency and familiarity of political meetings. My presidency was very sober. I was more of a figurehead. But what place have I in these political meetings? You understand of course that I never wanted to preside over such a thing. My friend Elisabeta Vasile Luca roped me into being president.[[30]](#footnote-30) I wasn’t particularly happy about it. The comrades demanded “revenge,” the “extermination of enemies,” “death to the fascists,” and other things that didn’t sit well either with my convictions as a Christian priest or with the spirit of the Gospels. How long will my relationship with these revolutionaries of the new paganism–some of them courageous and imposing–last?

As we were leaving the Athenaeum and crossing the boulevard to the right of the Simu Museum, a car crossed in front of me at full speed and swerved out of its way for no reason. It came within a breath of me just as I had reached the tram stop and someone from the car swore wickedly at me. It was, certainly, an enemy angry at my latest achievement: presiding over a democratic meeting at the Athenaeum. I will have to get used to all sorts of unpleasantness from now on, starting with the cursing and ending with a knife between my shoulder blades. I have thrown my lot in with those who are on the rise socially and have made deadly enemies with all those who benefited from the former, condemned social world.

*Questions for Discussion:*

1. How much agency does Galaction claim to have had during this period? Why do you think he portrayed himself in this way in his journal?
2. According to Galaction, what changed after August 23, 1944? What stayed the same?
3. What role did the Romanian Orthodox Church play in politics during this period, and how did politics impact the Church?
4. How did the rise of communism impact Romanian intellectuals and writers?
5. What does Galaction’s journal show about why communists were able to take control of so many aspects of Romanian society?

1. Greece was plunged into a civil war between Communists and the Western-backed Greek government from 1946 to 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In Eastern Orthodoxy the “Lesser Blessing of the Waters” is a rite done as needed, usually on certain feast days. Alice Voinescu (1885-1961) was a celebrated Romanian philosopher and theater critic. She was arrested in 1948 for her monarchist sympathies. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mihai Ralea (1896-1961) was a Romanian writer and journalist who had been associated with the National Peasant Party during the 1930s but collaborated with the Communists from 1945 onwards. Tudor Arghezi (1880-1967) was a leading Romanian poet and a close friend of Galaction. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Romanian expression here is literally “the fear that watches over the watermelons” (*spaima care păzeşte pepenii*). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Galaction’s daughters were living in Rome during and after the Second World War. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Choral Temple is a synagogue in Bucharest. It had been devastated by legionaries in 1941. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Legion of the Archangel Michael was a fascist movement in interwar Romania which ruled between September 1940 and January 1941 before being declared illegal by General Ion Antonescu. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Romanian Association for Closer Relations with the Soviet Union (Asociația Română pentru Strângerea Legăturilor cu Uniunea Sovietică, ARLUS) was established on 17 December 1944. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Born Nicolae Munteanu (1864-1948), Nicodim was patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church from 1939 to 1948. Galaction despised him, primarily because of his association with the antisemitic regime of General Antonescu followed by his willingness to support the Romanian Communist Party once Antonescu’s regime collapsed. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Alexandru Macedonski (1854-1920) was a Romanian Symbolist writer. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. King Michael I (1921-2017) was king of Romania from 6 September 1940 to 30 December 1947. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ana Pauker (1893-1960) was a leading communist before, during, and after the Second World War. She became the world’s first woman to be appointed Foreign Minister in November 1947. Florica Bagdasar (1901-1978) joined the Romanian Communist Party after 1944. She became Minister of Health in December 1946, the first woman to hold a ministerial post in Romania. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. A *sobă* is a brick stove commonly used for heating apartments. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Leonid Maximovich Leonov (1889-1994) was a Soviet novelist and playwright. He helped found the Union of Soviet Writers and wrote patriotic literature after the Second World War. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Iosif Iser (1881-1958) was a left-wing expressionist artist who was honored by the Communist Party. Krikor Zambaccian (1889-1962) was a prominent art collector who donated his collection to the state in 1947. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Aleksey Tolstoy (1883-1945) was a celebrated Soviet novelist. His trilogy, *The Road to Calvary*, won the Stalin Prize in 1943. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The film *Zdravstvuy, Moskva!* (1945) was a musical directed by Sergei Yutkevich (1904-1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. According to her descendants, Elena Lascăr Catargi (c.1908-2014) donated Monteoru House to the state in 1945 when communist officials put a gun to her head. The house was given to ARLUS at the time, was officially nationalized in 1948 and became the property of the Writers’ Union of Romania in 1952. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Nicolae Dumitru Cocea (1880-1949) was Galaction’s former schoolmate and close friend. He became a leading socialist organizer and novelist during the early twentieth century, sitting in parliament as an Independent Socialist and retaining close ties to the Communist Party after the Second World War. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1901-1965) was the First Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party and would replace Petru Groza (1884-1958) as Romanian President in 1952. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. A member of the National Peasant Party, Radu Roşculeţ (1895-1951) was Minister of Denominations from November 1946 to November 1947. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See Gala Galaction, *Piatra din capul unghiului* (Bucharest: Tipografiile Române Unite, 1926), 101-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Gala Galaction, *La răspântie de veacuri* (Bucharest: Editura “Cultura Națională”, 1935). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. “Oh, not to want to! Oh, not to be able to die a little!” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Zoe Dimitriu-Marcoci lived at the Agapia Monastery where she was preparing to take holy orders before she married Galaction in 1903. Olga Sacară-Tulbure (1856-1927) was a successful surgeon living in Techirghiol and a mutual acquaintance. See Gala Galaction, *Scrisori către sora Zoe: Corespondenţă inedită, 1901-1902* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ultranationalist and fascist currents dominated the theological student bodies in Romania during the interwar period. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Nichifor Crainic (1889-1972) was a theologian, poet and journalist associated with ultranationalist and fascist causes during the 1930s. He was expelled from the Romanian Academy after being arrested in 1947 and sentenced to fifteen years in prison for crimes against the people. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Iuliu Maniu (1873-1953) was a leader of the National Peasant Party and served as Prime Minister of Romania for three terms between 1928 and 1933. His party represented the last of the major interwar democratic parties to be represented in the Romanian Parliament in 1947. Ion Mihalache (1882-1963) was a co-founder of the National Peasant Party with Iuliu Maniu and an important politician during the first half of the twentieth century. His arrest resulted in the final suppression of the National Peasant Party. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Iosif Chișinevschi (1905-1963) was a Communist politician in control of state propaganda during the late 1940s and early 1950s. A former carpenter, Andrei Neagu was a member of the Romanian Communist Party. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Born Betty Birnbaum (1909-?), Elisabeta Luca was a veteran of the Spanish Civil War and the former secretary of Ana Pauker. She was married to the Minister of Finance, Vasile Luca (1898-1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)