The socialist transformation of Rumania, according to Stalin's precepts and the basic Rumanian blueprint, the Constitution of April, 1948, was all but completed by the time of Stalin's death. The transformation was radical and affected all aspects of Rumanian life. But by 1953 the bases for a Rumanian "road to socialism," albeit Stalinist, had been firmly established. Superficially, the red thread in the transformation of the country was the indiscriminate adoption of Soviet models, whether appropriate or not. In reality, the crucial aspects of the process of communization were the retention of power by the Rumanian communists and the forging, by them, of a Rumanian communist state which differed in at least one essential respect from the Russian.

The radical transformation of the country was most apparent in the socioeconomic area.1 The nationalization of industry and the planning of the economy, which started with two one-year plans in 1949 and 1950 and the first Five-Year Plan for 1951-55, accelerated modernization. Most of the capital investments

---

1 A convenient survey of these developments is contained in Ionescu, *Communism in Rumania*, pp. 165 ff.
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF RUMANIA

went into heavy industry (36.8 per cent) and the transportation system (21.2 per cent), at the expense of consumer goods, agriculture, and housing. Though these allocations aggravated the plight of the population in general, they provided the means for extremely rapid industrial growth. By 1950 total Rumanian industrial production had reached the 1938 level (in January, 1948, the level had been only 75 per cent of 1938). By 1953 Rumania's industrial production was 2.7 times greater than in 1938. The production of consumer goods proceeded at a much slower rate, but still was nearly twice as large in 1953 as in 1938. These statistics, however, hide the fact that the rising social and economic requirements of the population were not met in a satisfactory manner. With industrialization, the urban population grew from 3,713,139 in 1948 to 4,424,000 in 1953 and put tremendous pressure on housing facilities and food supplies. Housing was worse than inadequate: only 872 apartments were built in Bucharest between 1949 and 1952 for an influx of population in excess of 250,000. Food supplies were also deficient, primarily because of the peasants' opposition to a low price structure for their produce and, after 1949, to the beginning of agricultural collectivization. And in all instances, the salaries of the newly created industrial labor force were too low to permit satisfaction of even rudimentary socioeconomic needs. These factors increased the hostility of the population toward the Rumanian communist leadership and the Soviet Union, the primary beneficiary of Rumania's economic growth. Indeed, such foreign trade as existed was primarily with the U.S.S.R. itself (70 per cent of

2 Interesting details and a careful analysis of industrial development in that period are contained in Montias, Economic Development, pp. 23 ff.
INTENSIVE SOCIALIST DEVELOPMENT

total foreign trade), at prices and conditions distinctly detrimental to Rumania. The rest of the trade, at relatively better prices, was entirely with members of the Soviet bloc.³

The dissatisfaction of the industrial working class mattered little to the communist regime; they were still small in number (in the vicinity of 1,000,000 in 1953 as compared to 750,000 in 1938) and could be rewarded by membership in the Rumanian Workers’ Party and by other ideological and material benefits. But the displeasure of the peasantry over the betrayal of the principles of the reform of 1945 and the oft-repeated assurances that collectivization was not contemplated, posed graver problems to the communists. In practical terms, the collectivization of agriculture decreed in March, 1949, was designed to created the basis for effective agricultural production commensurate with the industrial development of the country and to carry the social revolution to the “bourgeois-oriented” village. Collectivization enjoyed a modicum of success in its first objective, despite opposition by the peasantry. The process of socialization of the land was slow and tedious, but by 1953 collective farms and agricultural associations of the TOZ type were more productive than the still predominant private sector. Moreover, the gradual mechanization of agriculture and development of model state farms had by 1953 raised the level of production to that of prewar Rumania. That objective was attained only by force, because of the tremendous resistance of the peasantry to socialization. The physical annihilation of “kulaks,” the de facto confiscation of agricultural produce in the name of compulsory

³ Agricultural problems and foreign trade questions are discussed and analyzed by Montias, Economic Development, pp. 87 ff.
deliveries and through arbitrary price structures, and the general attack on traditional values identified with religion and the family, brought the villages to the verge of revolution by 1953. By that time, the peasant had not been subdued, and agricultural problems were still plaguing the regime, but the kulaks had been eliminated.

By 1953 the fate of the bourgeoisie and professional class had been settled. Private commerce had been eliminated and the commercial bourgeoisie financially ruined. All professional groups, except physicians, had been reduced to the status of state employees. Those of "suspect social origin" were barred from any employment commensurate with their training and were generally forced to engage in manual labor or other menial jobs. The threat of, or actuality of, imprisonment for any conceivable offense against the "socialist order" were all-pervasive phenomena. A new society was being created by eradication of the "class enemy" and introduction of new "socialist values." These values were inculcated by a revamped educational system and a new, socialist, culture.

The educational system was recast to insure the training of the cadres required for socialist construction and their indoctrination in communist values and ideology. Technical schools, trade schools, and schools for unskilled workers were set up throughout Romania at the expense of the traditional theoretical elementary and secondary schools. New universities and institutions of higher learning were also created. The efficiency of the educational system was below expectations, for the masses admitted to the various

---

schools were largely illiterate, as were the makeshift teachers who replaced the suspect members of the academic profession. The mass purging of teachers, and the restrictions imposed on the admission of children of nonproletarian or peasant origin, proved detrimental to the training of competent cadres, but facilitated the process of indoctrination. By 1953, however, the manpower requirements were generally met, and destruction of the “bourgeois” values and influences that had traditionally emanated from Rumanian schools was complete.¹

Rumanian intellectuals and artists who had not been associated or identified with “fascism” became the disseminators of “socialist realism” for the masses. The others were purged and their earlier writings or artistic creations banned. Even Rumanian classical writers fell into disgrace because of their “bourgeois-nationalist” prejudices and, on occasion, anti-Russian and pro-Western attitudes. Religion, historically identified with nationalism and anticommunism, was drafted into the service of the state.² When the required conformity to socialist realism was rejected by religious leaders, or when the leaders and parish priests themselves were suspect, more radical measures were used. Thus, the Concordat of 1927, which regulated relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Rumanian government, was unilaterally abrogated in July, 1948, and Catholic cultural and educational activities were terminated. The Rumanian Uniate (Greek Catholic Church), which had approximately 1,500,000 members and had functioned in Transylvania since the late seventeenth century, was dissolved by decree in December, 1948, and incorporated into the Rumanian Orthodox

¹ Consult Fischer-Galati, Romania, pp. 165–81.
² Ibid., pp. 132 ff.
Church. The lesser denominations fared better but, invariably, church attendance was discouraged, and all churches became instruments for dissemination of communist propaganda, occasionally in biblical terms.

The socioeconomic and related cultural revolution were completed by 1953, as was the all important political revolution. The formal, constitutional, and institutional changes emulated Soviet prototypes. The Constitution of 1948 was closely patterned on the Stalinist Constitution of 1936 and was almost identical with similar fundamental laws in Albania, Bulgaria, or Hungary. The entrenchment of the one-party state; the establishment of a mock parliament, the Grand National Assembly, and of a powerless presidium, the collective presidency of the Republic; the reorganization of the organs of local government through the establishment of people's councils—all were significant in providing the Party with total control of the country's political life and government. Even the Council of Ministers, which structurally resembled the pre-entry council, was staffed by members of the Party's highest organs and acted merely as an executor of the decisions of the Party. Similarly, the revamped system of state security and the small military establishment (limited to approximately 150,000 men by the Peace Treaty of Paris) were modern versions of prewar equivalents whose function was to maintain the authority of the communist regime in Rumania and extirpate all actual or potential opposition. By 1953, the Party was the all-powerful and sole political organization; even tacit opposition had ended. And at least superficially, the Rumanian Party and government seemed committed

7 A good summary of these changes is contained in Ionescu, *Communism in Rumania*, pp. 156 ff. See also Triska, *Constitutions*, pp. 362 ff.
to the role of satellite to the Russian Party and government. The Kremlin's directives were followed blindly at home by trusted leaders like Gheorghiu-Dej, the Party's General Secretary, Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca, the leaders of the Moscovite contingent, all other members of the Politburo and Central Committee, and lesser officials. The rank and file of the Party, which comprised some 1,000,000 members, had no voice in determining policies and merely carried out orders from above. In foreign affairs there was no deviation from Moscow's policies. The annual cultural and trade agreements between Rumania and the members of the Soviet bloc were renewed as a matter of course; condemnation of "imperialists," Titoists, and all other enemies of the socialist camp was more virulent in Rumania than in Moscow.\(^8\) The loss of national and political identity seemed complete by 1953. But this was a deceptive impression since under the surface of conformity and subservience a major and decisive struggle for power was taking place within the Rumanian Workers' Party between the "Rumanians" and the "Moscovites." This struggle within political organization was to decide the country's future after Stalin's death.\(^9\)

It is now known that, from as early as 1947-48, the so-called Rumanian group, headed by Gheorghiu-Dej and made up of his former associates of the pre-1945 period, was much less pro-Russian in its orientation than the Moscow group, headed by Ana Pauker and her Moscow-trained supporters. It is also known that the struggle developing between these groups centered

\(^8\) A list of the principal treaties concluded between Rumania and members of the Soviet bloc in this period may be found in Fischer-Galati, *Romania*, pp. 382 ff.

\(^9\) A careful analysis of these factors is contained in Fischer-Galati, *The New Rumania*, pp. 35 ff.
on the question of Rumania's position and role in the Soviet empire, and consequently, on the extent of the Party's authority to determine national and international policies and to implement the goals first formulated in 1945.

Belief System and Social System

This issue came into the open only in 1952, during the Korean War, when the Rumanian group emerged victorious and proclaimed that the national goal of the Rumanian Workers' Party and of the Rumanian people was the attainment of socialism on the basis of the 1945 blueprint. Certain "objective factors" favoring broader international cooperation with party states, as well as with nonmember nations of the socialist camp, were cited by the victorious group as relevant to their action and decision. These factors were directly connected with alterations in the country's traditional belief system that occurred during the Stalinist period, reflecting the forcible social-demographic transformations imposed by the regime. The industrialization of society revolutionized the countryside and markedly decreased the ratio of urban to rural population. By 1952 more than 10 per cent of the rural population had moved into towns, joining the ranks of the industrial proletariat. Through mass indoctrination, the urban workers became conscious of the international nature of the industrialization process and of the need not only for cooperation with other communist nations for the attainment of the socialist society but for overcoming nationalist prejudices and nonsocialist ways of thought as well.

The same propaganda was conducted, with mark-
edly less success, in the villages. These new views rejecting religion, nationalism, and ethnic prejudices transcended national considerations of the older type. An international outlook, loosely defined as “proletarian internationalism,” was the aim. The effectiveness of these condemnations of past values and affiliations must have been limited, considering most recent developments, but it is safe to assume that the relentless indoctrination and the realities of industrialization did transform the traditional belief system to a large extent.

The basic goal of the regime—the socialist transformation of society—was apparently shared by the entire ruling élite, who differed only over the means of attaining it. The goal was unacceptable to the peasantry, however; they adamantly opposed the “socialist transformation of agriculture” despite educational efforts and police repression. The technical cadres and industrial working class, in spite of the frustrations and hardships of dictated industrialization, supported the goal.

*Degree of Integration of Rumania with Other Systems*

As industrialization progressed, the principle of international cooperation in the economic and technological fields became widely accepted. Industrial progress also brought the growing realization that Rumania's economic exploitation by the Soviet Union was most detrimental to the attainment of the aims of the government. This fact was best understood by the technological and bureaucratic cadres and by the intelligentsia, who favored reduction of economic sub-
servience to Russia on the expectation that such action could bring about some relaxation of internal pressures exerted by Gheorghiu-Dej's Stalinist regime. In their opinion, ties with countries outside the Soviet bloc, including contacts with Tito's Yugoslavia as well as other party and nonparty states, would enhance the possibilities of liberalization at home. It is for this reason that the Rumanian group gained a modicum of popular support in 1952; directing its offensive against the obvious stooges of the Soviet Union, this group urged the attainment of national goals by the peoples of Rumania, with the assistance of Moscow as opposed to exclusive dependence upon the Soviet leaders. The assertion of the "national" nature of the communist goal, to be attained through a Romanian effort in close cooperation with the international communist movement and the party states, gave the country a well-defined status and eliminated the much-discussed possibility of Rumania's transformation into a Soviet republic.10

It would be erroneous, however, to assume that in 1952 Gheorghiu-Dej and his close associates seriously entertained the possibility of pursuing international policies at variance with Soviet dictates. Rumania remained a Russian satellite, and its freedom of cooperation was restricted to the Soviet-controlled party states of Eastern Europe; international connections had to be en famille. Nevertheless, there were elements of contradiction in the regime's aim of attaining socialism at home and its inability to reduce dependence on the Soviet Union, since Russia was in effect the principal

impediment to the attainment of the goals of 1945 as restated in 1952. Technological and economic ties with the West were essential to the attainment of the "national" goals, a fact that was clearly realized by Gheorghiu-Dej. The question remained whether international cooperation might be achieved without renewing at least some of the traditional ties. In short, could Gheorghiu-Dej's Rumania, if dedicated to international cooperation for the attainment of her goals, extend this internationalism to nonparty states without jeopardizing the internal security of the regime and incurring the wrath of the U.S.S.R.? Although the basic problems are still to be resolved, tentative solutions became possible after Stalin's death.