

**Demonizing Armed Anti-Communist Resistance:
The Făgăraș Group in the Securitate Files**
(Abstract)

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Active between 1950 and 1956, the Făgăraș Group is one of the most important and controversial movements of armed anti-communist resistance in Romania. Demonized by the communist propaganda, which called the partisans “bandits” and “terrorists”, the group was discussed from opposite perspectives after 1989. In post-communist historiographical works, media debates, fiction and documentary films, the partisans in the mountains are sometimes depicted as heroes, sometimes as extremists. In order to expose the biases of the post-communist discourses, this research goes back to the archival systems of the 1950s and studies the gaps, inconsistencies, and pitfalls of the Romanian political police files. The text proposes a historiographical approach based on a critical reading of the primary sources – i.e. the Securitate files – which transcends the binary system with heroes and villains. Following Katherine Verdery's methodology of exploring the files as “ethnographical objects”, this paper reveals the working process behind the political apparatus and the viewpoint through which reality was perceived and recorded during communism. The working premise is that only by understanding how the archive was produced, can one critically read it and ponder its long-term effect. The conclusion of the research is that the communist archive cannot be taken as ultimate truth. A rounded view of the movement should be based on a critical reading and comparison of different kinds of sources.