

# WHAT THE YALTA CONFERENCE FOR THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF THE PEOPLES OF WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPE, MEANT?

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**Abstract:** *Many books have been written on the subject of the „Yalta conference”, but the subject of this article is how the discussions in the winter of 1945 later influenced the fate of peoples around the world. Human rights were born at the end of the war, and among the protagonists who campaigned for them were the conference leaders. The article below attempts to show the historical role the Yalta conference played, not only in terms of spheres of influence, but also how it shaped the rights and freedoms of the peoples of Eastern and Western Europe.*

Keywords: conference, rights and freedoms, religious freedom, Yalta, UN

## **The geo-political context of the Yalta conference**

The war was not yet over, but the Allies were already foreshadowing the defeat of Nazi Germany. That's why a negotiating table was needed to chart the future of Europe and the post-war world after Germany was defeated.

It was against this background that Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin decided, after much negotiation, that the negotiating table should be held in Yalta in the Crimea.

Held from 4-11 February 1945, the Yalta Conference was to mark the beginning of national bodies dealing with citizens' rights and freedoms. The emergence of the 'United Nations' was no accident, as it came about as a result of discussions between Britain's leader Winston Churchill and America's leader Roosevelt. But its official use took place on New Year's Day 1942, and it was signed not only by the British and American leaders, but also by representatives of the Soviet Union, as well as Chiang Kai-shek's China and twenty-two other nations.

The pledge of those who signed the United Nations Declaration was to fight together and not to make a separate peace. The purpose of their struggle was "to secure life, liberty, independence and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice". Several more rounds of debate were to take place before the overall structure of a United Nations was clarified. The idea was that all eligible nations could participate in this General Assembly, and that smaller nations could be heard.

It was thus envisaged to create a Security Council composed of representatives of eleven states, of which only the "five policemen" would be permanent (USA, UK, Russia, France), the other seats being allocated by rotation. This Council would take and implement decisions, including the use of force "to maintain peace and security".

What did the Yalta Conference for the Rights and Freedoms of Peoples mean?

The end justifies the means, as the saying goes, but it is not so easy to pronounce when it comes to people's lives and freedoms. Sometimes the preservation of spheres of influence has required the sacrifice of people whom history has placed in buffer zones. A simple game on a piece of paper by a leader who did not want to lose the British position in the Mediterranean later led to the division of the zones of influence. 90% British influence in Greece, 90% Soviet influence in Romania, 75% Soviet influence in Bulgaria and 50% influence for both countries in Yugoslavia and Hungary.

For Romania, the Yalta Conference was the swan song of the monarchy, the intelligentsia and free initiative. Romania had taken part in the Second World War in order to regain the territories it had lost in 1940, following the Ribbentrop Molotov Pact. From a legislative point of view, with the installation of the communist regime in Romania, the rights and freedoms of citizens were abominably mutilated. Religious freedom was one of them.

### **The aftermath of the Yalta Conference on Poland (Western Europe)**

A country with an enviable strategic position, Poland was the victim of invading armies who used it as a corridor in their desperation to reach both east and west.

It was recognised at the beginning of the last millennium, only to unite with Lithuania in the 15th century through dynastic marriages, which led to their rule over a large region of central Europe, as well as Ukraine, Belarus and other territories that were incorporated into Russia. The many wars in which it would be involved would lead to its division between its three great neighbours, Russia, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

A hardy people, the Poles would never give up their sense of national identity or the fight for independence, despite the waves of persecution that came upon them.

The Polish question was a major issue on the negotiating table at Yalta.

The procedures Stalin used in countries such as Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia worked more difficult in Poland. Poland had a national army, called the "Home Army", which was made up of those who had fought in the resistance against the Nazi occupiers.

To achieve his goals, Stalin sought to destroy the Interior Army and set up a communist political embryo.

” Thanks to the clever backroom game combined with the drastic measures applied by the Red Army, the Soviets will not succeed in destroying the Polish armed forces, thus allowing the Liberation Committee - a communist-led formation established in Lublin - to proclaim itself as the sole government of Poland. However, the Soviet approach met with fierce resistance in the form of the Polish government-in-exile refusing to accept any form of dialogue with the similar formation in Lublin. Added to all this were the insistence of the Western European allies, also noted at the Yalta Conference, to broaden the representation of the political spectrum in the self-proclaimed Polish government. Soviet propaganda would embark on an extensive process of setting up political parties which appeared not to be of communist origin. Taking on the names of traditional Polish parties, they had a dual purpose, namely to numb Western vigilance and to substitute the attention of the Polish electorate from the intransigence of the government-in-exile. Under these conditions, under the cover of these new political formations the Soviets would succeed in discrediting the image of the Polish exiles as well as the survivors of the Home Army.”<sup>1</sup>

### **The impact of the Yalta Conference on Europe in general**

The leaders meeting in February 1945 at Yalta could not have foreseen the atrocities, the murders, the deportations that followed during and after the conference.

As a result of the discussions there, in addition to the transfer of people according to their ethnicity, there were also concentration camp survivors, prisoners coming to Europe.

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1. George Marcu, *Studiu: Yalta și nașterea democrațiilor populare. Sovietizarea Europei centrale și de sud-est.*, available at [https://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Studiu:Yalta\\_%C5%9Fi\\_na%C5%9Fterea\\_democra%C5%A3iilor\\_populare.\\_Sovietizarea\\_Europei\\_centrale\\_%C5%9Fi\\_de\\_sud-est](https://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Studiu:Yalta_%C5%9Fi_na%C5%9Fterea_democra%C5%A3iilor_populare._Sovietizarea_Europei_centrale_%C5%9Fi_de_sud-est), accessed on 21 February 2024.

Estimates show that up to forty million people may have been displaced in total and that, at the end of the war, seventeen million of these were in Germany, including eight million forced labourers, released Allied prisoners of war, of whom the British and Americans numbered about two hundred and seventy-five thousand, and an unknown number of concentration camp internees and East German refugees.<sup>2</sup>

Little did Churchill and Roosevelt suspect that the agreement they had made to repatriate Soviet prisoners of war and captured Soviet prisoners of war who had fought for Germany would be blatantly violated. Their return to their homeland did not mean the end of the war, but the beginning of a nightmare that would irreparably stain Russian history because of inhumane deportations and detentions in gulags.

An eloquent example is that of the Cossacks who had fought against the Bolsheviks and for Germany, who were handed over to the Soviets by the British in Austria, who, knowing the fate that awaited them in the country from which they had left, preferred to fight or commit suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Soviets.

The British Empire will begin to crumble. The appointment of Lord Louis Mountbatten, Viceroy of India was necessary to mark the rapid transition to independence. Thus, on 14 August 1947, India and Pakistan would become independent countries, but those caught on either side of the border would mark the event with their lives, exposed to religious violence as they were expelled or fled.

In February 1946, Stalin would proclaim the incompatibility of capitalism and communism, and Churchill would deliver the famous "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri, a speech that would be harshly criticized by Stalin, accusing him of racism for suggesting the superiority of English-speaking peoples.

Churchill's speech will condemn Stalin's policy, pointing out that "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended across Europe, behind which the Soviet Union 'is increasing its control over its neighbours'."<sup>3</sup> The conflict between East and West would escalate.

The Allies will establish the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO) as a mutual defence organization in April 1949 and the Soviets will establish the Warsaw Pact. With the fall of the Iron Curtain, Bolshevik propaganda began to spread across the countries of the East, focusing particularly on civil society, with the aim of attracting the population to support communist elements.

Stalin, through his propaganda apparatus, would speculate on the economic shortcomings that the countries were going through after the war, using the historical moment to eliminate from industry and agriculture, everything that meant capitalist element.

Moreover, it will try to attract the population to the new order installed against the background of the general desperation of the population facing the lack of food, the food necessary for everyday life.

The Stalinist method was thought through to the last detail. The infiltration of so-called bridgeheads, communist groups, into the heart of political life was intended to help the process of communization which was spreading rapidly.

The communist parties that would spring up in countries subject to Bolshevik propaganda would wage a constant campaign to destroy traditional political opinion. They will constantly criticize the capitalist order through propaganda speeches and will succeed in winning over followers from the workers' movement, which they will succeed in winning over to their side.

As for the cultural dimension, the communists will try to annihilate any current that opposed the new order, in an attempt to impose Marxism-Leninism by force. The

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<sup>2</sup> Diane Preston, *Eight days at Yalta, How Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin Shaped the Post-War World*, (Atlantic Mountain Press, 2020), 421.

<sup>3</sup> Churchill's speech, Missouri available at [www.winstonchurchill.org](http://www.winstonchurchill.org), accessed on 23 January 2024.

aim was to create a new human typology, the new man, who would be standardised, without his own thought and will, without initiative, ruled by the state in all areas.

### **The aftermath of the Yalta Conference on Romania**

With the fall of the Iron Curtain, Romania will fall into a shadow of history, a shadow that will mask the atrocities that the Bolshevik-inspired governments will pour on a people who only wanted to live in the bedrock inherited from their ancestors.

The impact of the installation of communism was multi-layered, including in the field of religious life. The most affected were the non-Orthodox denominations.

According to historian Marius Silveșan, the communist regime in Romania launched a campaign against the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the Romanian Church United with Rome, known as the Greek Catholic Church.<sup>4</sup>

After 1920, the first legislative, restrictive and even repressive measures were adopted against those who belonged to the neo-Protestant cults.

In this regard, we recall the first order of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to regulate "the exercise of worship of various sects throughout the country", namely Circular Order No 15.831/1 April 1921 signed by Minister Octavian Goga.

In the explanatory memorandum it was stated: "In recent times, we have received from various civil and military authorities a number of reports of the unlawful propaganda being carried on in all parts of the country by the Adventist, Baptist and Nazarene sects, with money received from abroad, by the back door. We are convinced that this propaganda is likely to disturb the peace of the people and contains elements dangerous to the higher interests of the country"<sup>5</sup>.

With the abrogation of the 1923 Constitution and the forced abdication of King Michael in December 1947, the repression of the Christian churches, whether Orthodox, United, Catholic or other denominations, began. The Communists believed that "nunciatures were more like espionage offices than diplomatic representations", so the nuncios were forced to leave the Eastern European countries where they were on mission one by one.<sup>6</sup>

The communist regime in Romania failed to subordinate the Roman Catholic Church, nor to impose its own statutes, allowing this cult to operate in semi-clandestinity, while its elite was decimated. The Greek-Catholic faithful did not escape the Communist regime either, which wanted to abolish them. The Greek-Catholic elite was then arrested, and by Decree 358/1948 of 2 December 1948, the Greek-Catholic cult was abolished and the Romanian Church United with Rome was integrated into the BOR. However, the BOR did not escape persecution either, as the communist regime's objective was to gain control over the deliberative bodies of the B.O.R. The aim was to influence its decisions according to the aims of the political leaders.

English philosopher and politician of the 17th century. John Locke stated in his "Letter on Toleration": "True and saving religion consists in the inward conviction of thought, without which nothing is acceptable to God. This is the specificity of understanding, it cannot be forced to believe anything by external means. Confiscation of property, deprivation of liberty, torture, nothing of this kind is effective enough to make people change the inner conviction they have formed about things."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Marius Silveșan, *Bisericile creștine baptiste din România între persecuție, acomodare și rezistență* (1948-1965), (Cetatea de Scaun Publishing, Târgoviște 2012 ), 64, 65.

<sup>5</sup> The Official Journal, no. 11, April 1921.

<sup>6</sup> Cristian Vasile, *Între Vatican și Kremlin*, Biserica Greco-catolică în timpul regimului comunist, (Curtea Veche, Bucharest, 2003), 35.

<sup>7</sup> John Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cărmuire*, *Scrisoare despre toleranță*, (Nemira Publishing 1999), 280.

In Romania, as far as religious persecution is concerned, the period 1920-1944 was a difficult time for Christians who did not belong to the Orthodox Church, be they Greek Catholics or neo-protestants. Baptist churches began to appear in the Romanian villages of Transylvania, in Bihor, extending first to Banat, then to Maramureş and all parts of Transylvania. The Greek Catholic churches had appeared in Transylvania two hundred years before the Baptists came to these lands.

There were eight persecutions of Baptists between 1920 and 1944.

In a memorandum submitted in February 1924 by the Baptist Union to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, several types of persecution are recorded:

- Prohibition of the movement of pastors; closing of churches without any reason, without prior warning; 28 cases are given from all the provinces of the country, specifying that in Bihor all the churches were closed;
- The organization of religious talks under the direction of Orthodox missionaries, at which Baptists are forcibly brought by gendarmes to attend and be questioned, especially in Bessarabia;
- Various other forms of persecution such as: fines, arrests, beatings, imprisonment, exclusion from land reform. A case worthy of the Middle Ages is that of the mayor of the commune of Salca, Gura Humorului, who forcibly buried Nicolae Bâgu's child in the marsh where dead cattle were buried. There have been cases where midwives have been forbidden from attending births in Baptist families, threatening them with not being given holy water for washing. Other Baptists have been refused registration in the civil registers."<sup>8</sup>.

Under the communist regime, the persecution was directed against the representatives of religious cults, whether Orthodox, Catholic or neo-Protestant.

Persecution extended to all religious denominations, especially priests, who were considered by the leaders of the time to be 'enemies of the people' because they preached about another ruler and another homeland, but a heavenly one.

The vast majority perished in the abominable dungeons of the regime, but there were some who survived and managed to recount the torture and dehumanization to which they were exposed during their martyrdom.

Among the victims of communist prisons, we mention: Nicolae Steinhardt, the Roman Catholic bishop of Alba Iulia, Marton Aron, the Lutheran pastor Richard Wurmbrand, a Jew, who went from being a convinced atheist to becoming a fervent Christian, one of the best known opponents of the communist regime, known throughout the world for his books, translated into dozens of languages, of which we shall mention: "With God in the Underground", "Tortured for Christ", invaluable testimonies of the persecutions endured in the cells of the totalitarian regime, ruthlessly installed in our country.

The Bishop of Cluj-Gherla, Iuliu Hossu, together with the Vicar Bishop Vasile Aftenie from Bucharest, the Apostolic Administrator of the Metropolitanate of Blaj, Brother Ioan Suci, the Archbishop ad personam Valeriu Traian Frenţiu, Bishop of Oradea, Bishop Ioan Bălan of Lugojului and the Bishop of Maramureş, Alexandru Russu, were also arrested and killed in Communist prisons.

Monsignor Vladimir Ghika, priest, confessor, spiritual director, lecturer, scientist, diplomat was also one of the long line of martyrs of communist prisons.

These are just a few of those who gave their lives in defence of religious freedom and their convictions, without compromising with the communist regime, and who are enshrined in the history of our nation as reminders to future generations of what freedom and human values mean.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 108.

## **The legislative framework on religious freedom during the communist regime**

The communist regime sought control in all spheres of society. The model was imported from the Soviet Union. The church, in turn, had to subordinate itself to political power. In order to pursue and achieve its aims, the representatives of this regime decided to change the law. Three constitutions were adopted, in 1948, 1952 and 1965, which, although they appeared to confer certain freedoms, the reality proved otherwise. Each of the three provided for regulations on freedom of conscience.

Prior to these, the 1923 Constitution of the royal period stipulated in Article 22, regarding religious freedom, the following:

Article 22 - Freedom of conscience is absolute.

"The State guarantees all religions equal freedom and protection, since their exercise does not prejudice public order, morality or the laws of organization of the State.

The Orthodox Christian Church and the Greek Catholic Church are Romanian churches.

The Orthodox Church, being the religion of the vast majority of Romanians, is the dominant church in the Romanian State, while the Greek Catholic Church is the dominant church in relation to the other religions.

The BOR is and remains unattached to any foreign hierarchy, while maintaining its unity with the Ecumenical Church of the East in terms of dogma.

Throughout the Kingdom of Romania, the Orthodox Christian Church will have a unitary organization with the participation of all its constituent elements, clergy and laity. A special law shall lay down the fundamental principles of this unitary organization, as well as the manner in which the Church shall regulate, conduct and administer, through its own organs and under the control of the State, its religious, cultural, foundational and episcopal affairs.

The spiritual and canonical affairs of the Romanian Orthodox Church shall be regulated by a single central synodal authority.

The metropolitans and bishops of the Romanian Orthodox Church shall be elected according to a single special law.

The relations between the various cults and the State shall be established by law"<sup>9</sup>.

From the analysis of the text of the law, it is easy to see the privileged status of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches in relation to other religious denominations. The 1923 Constitution played a significant role in the interwar Romanian context.

## **The Constitution of 1948**

The first Communist Constitution was that of 13 April 1948, which in Article 27, regarding religious freedom, stipulated the following:

Freedom of conscience and freedom of religion are guaranteed by the State.

Religious cults are free to organize and may function freely if their ritual and practice are not contrary to the Constitution, public security or morality.

No denomination, congregation or religious community may open or maintain general educational institutions, but only special schools for the training of religious personnel under State control.

The Romanian Orthodox Church is autocephalous and unitary in its organization.

The way of organization and functioning of religious cults will be regulated by law"<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Constitution of 1923 [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis\\_pck.htm\\_act\\_text?id=1517](http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=1517), accessed on 23 of January 2024.

<sup>10</sup> Constitution R.P.R. of 1948 [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis\\_pck.htm\\_act\\_text?id=1574](http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=1574), in Official Journal, part I, year CXVI, no 87 bis, 3381, accessed on 23 of April 2020).

According to Patricia González Aldea this is "the first legislative result of communism in Romania. Its orientation was exclusively economic and its aim was to lay the foundations of the communist regime in this area" and it can be considered a first step towards shaping the predominant role that the so-called economic, social and cultural rights were to play, from that moment on, in communist legal texts, as opposed to civil and political rights"<sup>11</sup>.

### **The Constitution of 1952**

The issue of freedom of conscience is taken up in the 1952 Constitution, Chapter VII, Article 84:

"Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Romanian People's Republic. Religious cults are free to organize and may function freely. The school is separated from the church. No denomination, congregation or religious community may open or maintain general educational institutions, but only special schools for the training of cult personnel. The organization and functioning of religious cults shall be regulated by law". For the first time, the text of the Constitution introduces the idea of the separation of school and church. The way of expression and manifestation of religious cults is limited by the introduction of the final paragraph which also existed in the 1948 Constitution, "the organization and functioning of religious cults shall be regulated by law".

### **The Constitution of 1965**

Title II contained the following provisions:

Art. 17. "Citizens of the Socialist Republic of Romania, irrespective of nationality, race, sex or religion, shall have equal rights in all areas of economic, political, legal, social and cultural life. The State shall guarantee the equal rights of citizens. No restriction of these rights and no distinction in the exercise of these rights on the grounds of nationality, race, sex or religion is permitted.

Any manifestation aimed at establishing such restrictions, nationalist-Soviet propaganda, incitement to racial or national hatred shall be punishable by law."<sup>12</sup>.

Article 30 formally guarantees freedom of conscience and freedom of religious worship.

"Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Socialist Republic of Romania. Everyone is free to share a religious belief or not. Freedom of religious worship is guaranteed. Religious cults shall organize and function freely. The organization and functioning of religious cults is regulated by law. The school is separated from the church. No denomination, congregation or religious community may open or maintain any educational institution other than special schools for the training of religious personnel."<sup>13</sup>.

### **Decree No 177 of 4 August 1948. Law for the general regime of religious cults**

An important document of 1948 is the decree regulating the regime of cults. Thus, in SECTION I, On Religious Freedom, the following was stipulated:

Art. 1

"The State guarantees freedom of conscience and freedom of religion throughout the Romanian People's Republic. Everyone may belong to any religion or embrace

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<sup>11</sup> Patricia González Aldea, "Helsinki 1975. Începutul sfârșitului.", (Ed. Curtea Veche 2008),173.

<sup>12</sup> Constitution R.S.R. 1965

[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis\\_pck.htm\\_act\\_text?id=37735](http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=37735), accessed on 23rd of April 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., art. 30.

any religious belief, provided that the exercise thereof is not contrary to the Constitution, public security and order or morality.”<sup>14</sup>.

Article 6 stipulates the following:

” Religious cults shall be free to organize and may function freely, provided that their practices and rituals are not contrary to the Constitution, public safety or order and morality.”<sup>15</sup>.

The wording leaving room for interpretation and interference on the part of the State appears once again, with the insertion of the paragraph ”if they are not contrary to the Constitution, security or public order”.

For the first time, the area of external relations is regulated, which is stipulated in Article 40.

”The relations of religious cults with foreign countries shall be of a religious nature only. No religious cult and no representative of any cult may maintain relations with religious cults, institutions or official persons outside the territory of the country, except with the approval of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, Article 42 of Decree No. 177 introduced State control over religious manifestations: ”Aid or offerings received from abroad by religious cults in the country or sent by them abroad shall be controlled by the State.”<sup>17</sup>

## Conclusions

History often shows us that people are subject to mistakes, and often when they make major decisions they do not consult God.

The Yalta conference showed us that the leaders of that time were limited and often took a light-hearted view of the fate of other peoples, often driven by the interests of their own nations.

The leaders meeting at Yalta laid the foundations for the map of post-war Europe. The representatives of Britain and the United States understood that they had to offer Stalin certain advantages, advantages that would allow the USSR to expand and impose its domination over Eastern Europe in an unbridled manner.

This compromise reached at Yalta would lead to the Sovietisation of Eastern Europe and the division of Germany.

The two major issues that concerned the winners of the war were the regime of the defeated countries and their post-war borders.

The Yalta Declaration stipulated that for defeated countries, governments could be elected in free elections. Territorial issues concerning Poland and Germany were hotly debated. Germany was to be divided into four occupation zones, in the same way as Berlin. This division was meant to last until the signing of the Peace Treaty, but as the eastern part of Germany was sovietised, Germany would be divided, symbolising the splitting of Europe in two.<sup>18</sup>

What would Europe have looked like without the Yalta conference?

Probably much worse and many nations would have disappeared from the map of history. Some authors wonder whether "Churchill and Roosevelt bought the stability of Western Europe at Yalta at the cost of Eastern freedom?" For Romania, the Yalta conference meant the stagnation of a nation and its mutilation for more than 50 years. And today we are still feeling the consequences of a godless, atheistic, communist rule.

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<sup>14</sup> Decree no. 177 for the general regime of religious cults, published in the Official Journal ( Part I), Year CXVI, no. 178, 1948.

<sup>15</sup> Legea cultelor, Decree no. 177 for the general regime of cults, art. 1 și 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., art. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., art. 42.

<sup>18</sup> Jean Carpentier and Francois Lebrun, *Istoria Europei*, (Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest 1997), 412-414.



The rights and freedoms of nations are born only in harmony with the word of God. The Bible, the Holy Scripture, shows us since the Old Testament what are the commandments that we humans must respect in order to be happy and in harmony with divinity. Totalitarianism is born out of the absence of God, and the power of a single party, which is embodied in the state, also penetrates into the private lives of individuals, controlling them completely.

According to Roosevelt's speech to Congress on 1 March 1945, the Yalta conference did not end "the system of unilateral action, of exclusive alliances, spheres of influence, balances of power", but was a "compromise".

Citizens' rights and freedoms are the driving force behind democratic societies and their development, because it is only in freedom that values can be created, and man, left to dream, can go beyond his limits.

This article has not attempted to present the consequences of the Yalta conference on all the countries of Europe, but on a few, and in particular on Romania, in terms of freedom of religion, a country that has been throughout its existence in the buffer zone of Europe, on the edge of it, marked by the waves of co-opters that have succeeded one another throughout history. Many pages of history have been written and will be written on this subject, which is not exhaustive, a subject that has attracted the attention of teachers, historians, journalists and politicians alike.

The moral of this article is that human decisions are imperfect and will be imperfect until Christ returns, and leaders temporarily placed on the stage of history should meditate more often on the fact that history can repeat itself if we do not learn from it.

I end this article with the words of a martyr of communist prisons, Valeriu Gafencu (1921-1952) who said that "There is a peace more destructive than any war and there is a war that brings peace. Investigate the spirit that gives birth to events and the end they pursue, and then you will know what is right to do."

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