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STUDIES AND ARTICLES

**ROMANIANS AND ITALIANS: PARALLELISM AND IDENTITY
IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY
(1848-1857)**

*Laura Oncescu**

Abstract

A restless supporter of the fight for freedom and a true symbol of the ideas of freedom and unity, Giuseppe Mazzini is one of the faithful friends of the Romanians'. Mazzini, in his attempt of creating a confederation of the oppressed peoples of Europe, turned his attention to the Romanian people as well, and the leaders of the Romanian revolutionary emigration carried out, in this sense, an ample diplomatic and propaganda activity in different European capitals. The preoccupations of the Romanian political leaders of giving the revolutionary emigration a rigorous organization were doubled by the collaboration with the democratic Italian revolutionaries through the adhesion to the Democratic European Committee of London for the organization of a revolution and the constitution of an Oriental Confederation, which was requiring the reorganization of SE Europe after the freeing and protection of all the peoples from the threat of pan-Slavism.

Key words: *National Unity, Revolutionary Emigration, European Revolution, Synchronous Action, Free Nations*

The political relations between the Italian and the Romanian people amply developed during the period of the Risorgimento. Numerous Italians considered the Romanian countries as being "the other Italy", and the Italian diplomacy never ceased to provide support to the Romanians' fight for unity and independence¹. The Italian democratic revolutionaries also showed themselves friends of the Romanian people from the bottom of their hearts. Among them, a special place goes doubtlessly to the man who was the greatest ideologue of Italy during the Risorgimento period, namely Giuseppe Mazzini.

Born in Genoa, on 22 July 1805, Mazzini lived in the atmosphere of a Republican tradition, which proved very little committed to the Sardinian

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¹ Dan Berindei, *Les Roumains et Giuseppe Mazzini*, in "Revue Roumaine d'Histoire", XXIV, 4, București, 1985, p. 313.

dynasty. Because of having registered as a member of the secret society Carbonari, Mazzini was arrested and forced to emigrate in Marseille, France. Here, he realized that the Italian liberation movement did not need to content itself with a simple political action of several individuals, but had to turn into an ample and profound trend of spiritual renaissance, having a religious and moral character, based on trust in God and in Mankind. From his perspective, the Italian Revolution needed to transform the whole mankind and Italy had a primordial role in this action, namely to open the other actions of the peoples under foreign dominion. This would shape a new Europe, organized in free, equal, independent and sovereign nations¹. Guided by these feelings, Mazzini founded, in 1831, in Marseille, “The Young Italy”, a society aiming to create a “unitary republic” by means of popular and insurrectional actions². For Mazzini, a nation was unitary if it had a unity of religion, language and customs, in brief “a genius” of its own. The key concept of the Mazzinian political vocabulary, that “people”, had to be the protagonist and the creator of the new national unity, and the Italian revolution had to be the creation of the people, springing from within the Italian society³.

The propaganda and organization work of the society led by Mazzini was quite strong at first, yet in the long run the organizations of the South and of Piedmont were destroyed. Although he had founded, in 1834, in Bern, a new society, under the name of “Young Europe”, the attempts of the Italian leader to reinforce the Italian revolutionary movement by the use of foreign exiles failed. Consequently, many were forced to leave in exile, and at the beginning of 1837, even Mazzini himself had to go to London⁴.

At the heart of the political credo of the “Young Europe” remained the conviction that the most important were such peoples as the Italians, Germans or Poles, who had proved that they were able to trigger a crusade against the monarchs’ Europe⁵.

Lacking any immediate results, however the Mazzinian action had a great importance as far as the idea propaganda was concerned. It shaped the national Italian conscience and involved the European public opinion in this fight of the

¹ Luigi Salvatorelli, *Sommario della storia d'Italia*, Giulio Einaudi editore, Torino, 1982, p. 422-423; see also Raluca Tomi, *Nicolae Iorga și Risorgimento* (Nicolae Iorga and the Risorgimento), in *Nicolae Iorga 1871-1940* (coordinator Constantin Bușe), București, Editura Universității, 2001, p. 190.

² Luigi Salvatorelli, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

³ Giuliano Procacci, *Istoria italienilor* (The Italians’ History), București, Editura Politică, 1975, p. 314-315.

⁴ Luigi Salvatorelli, *op. cit.*, p. 424-425.

⁵ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini și românii în Risorgimento* (Mazzini and the Romanians in the Risorgimento), București, Editura Paideia, 2006, p. 6. See also Dumitru Suci, *Evoluția ideii de Europă Unită*, București, Editura Historia, 2007, p. 188.

oppressed peoples. So, Italy had the mission to wipe the Habsburg Empire off Europe's map and to replace it with a free federation of nations¹.

The publication by Hippolyte Desprez in "Revue de Deux Mondes" of three studies on the Romanians' national movement: "La Moldo-Valachie et le mouvement roumain" (Moldo-Walachia and the Romanian Movement), "Les Roumains, le protectorat russe et la Turquie" (The Romanians, the Russian Protectorate and Turkey) and "La Pologne, les Valaques et leur alliance avec les Slaves du Midi" (Poland, the Walachians and Their Alliance with the Southern Slavs) determined Mazzini to affirm the existence or even the appearance of a new potential ally in the fight for freedom. The idea of a political closeness between the Romanians and the Southern Slavs was a fundamental topic for Mazzini, who was interested in a Slav-Romanian-Hungarian Triple Entente. Therefore, the newly arrived on the political arena was the only Eastern people bearing in its name the fame of Rome and which was now united to Italy not just by origins, memories, traditions, but also by aspirations². Such a signaling of affinity concerning the Romanians had a particular relevance for the Mazzinian thinking. Actually, the weight of the Romanian presence in his writings previous to 1850 was very low. The references concerned the Principalities as a whole, as a core of the future united state. Yet, after 1850 and until the end of his life, in 1872, the Romanians will remain in his plans and his program, being mentioned in scores of articles and memos, manifestos bearing his signature³.

A restless animator, through his incandescent writings, of the fight for freedom, and a true symbol of the ideas of freedom and unity, Mazzini is part of the category of the most faithful friends of the Romanians'. A famous personality of modern Italy, Giuseppe Mazzini belonged at the same time to mankind and, above all, to the oppressed peoples of the world, as his political projects went beyond the geographic borders of the Italian Peninsula, which he wanted free, independent and republican⁴. The great Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga said about Mazzini that he remained a mysterious, republican, Carbonari character, calling him a "warm messenger of beliefs"⁵. The Latin origin of the two peoples, namely the Romanian and the Italian ones, naturally led to their convergence towards the same ideals. Both the Romanians and the Italians were situated on almost similar positions regarding the fight for

¹ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p.14.

² *Ibidem*, p. 15-16.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 17; see also Adriano Papo, Gizella Nemeth, *Da Mazzini a Kossuth: L'evoluzione del progetto di Confederazione Danubiana*, in "Quaderni della Casa Romena di Venezia", IX, 2012, ("Nazionalita e autodeterminazione in Europa Centrale: Il caso romeno"), a cura di Francesco Leoncini e Sorin Sipoș, București, 2013, p. 158-165.

⁴ Dan Berindei, *Les roumanis et Giuseppe...*, p. 313.

⁵ Raluca Tomi, *Nicolae Iorga și Risorgimento...*, p. 193.

national freedom. The personal connections that drew Mazzini near a series of leaders of the Romanian national liberation movement led the two peoples towards a mutual knowledge, which became possible despite the distance and also despite the context imposed by the influence of the great absolutist empires¹. The public adhesion of the Romanian democrats to the Mazzinian movement dates since the first years of his exile, yet the ideal, undeclared one precedes it by a few years. The Mazzinian thinking became known to the Romanian politician before 1848, a period during which the writings and publications showed a previous knowledge of his doctrine².

One of the ways the Mazzinian ideas penetrated into the Romanian area was related to the Levantine traffic. A fifth of the 8-900 ships that arrived in the ports of Brăila or Galați every year were of Sardinian origin. Consequently, the Sardinian consul, Bartolomeo Geymet, mentioned, in an 1838 consular report, several people “compromised” politically in the ’30s³.

In the transmission of the Mazzinian message to the Romanians, the Polish canal was unparalleled. The Poles became close to the Romanians when the Polish Committee of Paris projected a vast insurrection, a sort of baptism of the Young Europe. A place of safety for the Polish refugees even since the sharing of their country, the Principalities and Transylvania served as a base for their conspiracy projects. At the same time, the Romanian culture of the 19th century reflects the Italian values. An appreciated school and destination, Italy had found in the Romanians active participants to its spirit and civilization. The feeling of Romanity worked in the Risorgimento as a psychological factor of the national awakening and the parallelism of the analogous fight as an incentive⁴.

So, the language of the Proclamation of Islaz was one of a Mazzinian religiosity. In the language used by the Romanian political leaders, expressions such as *spirit*, *gândire* (thinking), different idioms were of Mazzinian inspirations, and the dealing with the topic of “nation” (*națiune*) was also totally Mazzinian, so that a parallel between the Romanian and the Mazzinian Risorgimento brings to light analogies both as tendencies and as ends⁵. The Romanian patriots, who inaugurated, beginning with 1848, a new stage in their modern history, were animated in their political creed and program by a democratic republican vision similar to that of Mazzini⁶. Direct relations were

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 313.

² Stefan Delureanu, *Mazzini și Românii...*, p. 60.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 52-54.

⁵ *Ibidem.*, p. 63.

⁶ See, for the connections between the Romanians and the Italians during the 1848 Revolution, Raluca Tomi, *Români și italieni în timpul revoluției de la 1848-1849* (Romanians and Italians

established with Mazzini by the Romanian revolutionary exiles, and the first of them was the revolutionary democrat Nicolae Bălcescu, who, in 1850, considered Mazzini “the greatest revolutionary of Europe”¹. Arrived in Paris in October 1849, Bălcescu met Teleki and Szemere, yet the thought of meeting Mazzini prevailed in all his initiatives. In January 1850, the leader of the Romanian emigration was already in London, yet it was impossible to meet Mazzini as the latter was in Switzerland to trigger an imminent action, using the dispute between Austria and Prussia².

His persistent interest, his commitment to the organization of some democratic international and European structures anticipating or parallel to the Mazzinian ones, originate in synchronous conceptions. The similarities between the historical destinies of the Poles, Italians, Hungarians and Romanians represented for Bălcescu the major indicator that only the solidarity of peoples can transform history³. The creation, in 1849, in London, of the European Democracy’s Central Committee (EDCC) rekindled in Mazzini the hope of setting the foundations of a Union of the European Nations⁴. The Romanian revolutionary emigrants embraced in the exile the idea of a general European revolution. Organizing in Paris the “Propaganda Committee or Commission”, Nicolae Bălcescu, Vasile Mălinescu and Dumitru Brătianu considered that the revolution was the only possibility to create a united, free and strong Romania. Nicolae Bălcescu, along with ten other leaders of the Romanian revolutionary emigration, signed a manifesto by which they showed that the future revolution will not be limited to the obtaining of internal freedoms, as it was aimed to extend these freedoms especially externally, through liberation from foreign dominion⁵.

The preoccupations of the Romanian political leaders for a rigorous organization of the revolutionary emigration were doubled by the collaboration with the Italian democratic revolutionaries through the adhesion to EDCC for the organization of a revolution and the creation of an Oriental Confederation,

during the 1848-1849 Revolution), in “Studii și Materiale de istorie modernă” (Studies and Materials of Modern History), vol. XI, București, Editura Academiei, 1997, p. 21-34.

¹ Dan Berindei, *Les Roumains et Giuseppe Mazzini...*, p. 314.

² Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 69.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 71.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 67-68; see also Dumitru Suci, *op. cit.*, p. 193; V. Maciu, T. Bugnariu, *Lupta poporului român pentru unire și unirea Italiei* (The Romanian People’s Fight for Union and Italy’s Union), in “Studii. Revistă de Istorie” (Studies. History Review), anul XIV, nr. 1, București, Editura Academiei, 1961, p. 133.

⁵ Cornelia Bodea, *Interferenze rivoluzionarie romeno-mazziniene dopo il 1848*, in *Risorgimento. Italia e Romania 1859-1879. Esperienze a confronto*, coord. Bianca Vallotta Cavallotti, Milano-Bucarest, Editura Anima, 1992, p. 236-237.

which supposed the reorganization of SE Europe after all the peoples had been previously freed and were being protected against the threat of pan-Slavism¹.

During the post-revolutionary period, the adhesion of the Romanian revolutionary emigrants to EDCC meant a solution for the realization of the national goals. The Romanian politicians, either radical – Nicolae Bălcescu, the Brătianu brothers, C.C.Rosetti, Al. G.Golescu Negru – or moderate – I.H. Rădulescu, Christian Tell or Ion Ghica – all intensely believed in the possibility of triggering a new revolution. The affiliation to EDCC did not occur immediately, since, as Bălcescu mentioned, the act of adhesion had to be preceded by a deepening of the contacts with the country, by an intense activity of organization and coordination in order to permit the realization of a vigorous national action. In a letter addressed to Ion Ghica, on 26 November 1850, Bălcescu mentioned that above all “we need to take root in the country, in order not to go without a foundation or power and cheat on Mazzini and on ourselves”².

For the ideologue and main protagonist of the Romanian Risorgimento, Mazzini was the contemporary man that he most wanted to meet. The parallelism of ideas, the similarity and the identity of certain formulas adopted during the organization of the European democracy were obvious even before getting into contact with the Mazzinian movement. The two never met, yet Bălcescu was the Romanian patriot best familiarized with the Mazzinian proposition. The concordance of the thinking of the two fundamental interpreters of the programs of Romania and Italy concerning the country, nationality, and mankind are illustrated through the use of a vocabulary in which words such as virtue, faith, duty, mission, law, holiness received a charge of ethical-religious rigor³.

The one who managed to establish the closest relations with Mazzini was Dumitru Brătianu. Arriving in London as a representative of the Romanian revolutionary emigration, Brătianu had on him a complimenting recommendation letter from Jules Michelet to A.A.Ledru Rolin and another from Edgar Quinet addressed to Mazzini⁴.

¹ Raluca Tomi, *Romeni i italiani nel periodo dell'esilio rivoluzionario (settembre 1848 – dicembre 1852). Affinità. Opinioni. Contatti*, in “Annuario”, anno 3/nr. 3, Istituto Romeno di cultura e Ricerca Umanistica, Bucarest, Casa editrice Enciclopedica, 2001, p. 209.

² Apud Dan Berindei, *Giuseppe Mazzini și Giuseppe Garibaldi și românii* (Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi and the Romanians), in vol. *Românii și Europa în perioadele premodernă și modernă* (The Romanians and Europe during the Premodern and Modern Period), București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1997, p. 194.

³ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 72.

⁴ Anastasie Iordache, *Dumitru Brătianu, diplomatul, doctrinarul liberal și omul politic* (Dumitru Brătianu, a Diplomat, a Liberal Ideologue and a Politician), București, Editura Paideia, 2003, p. 127.

On 10 May 1851, Dumitru Brătianu addressed a formal demand of joining EDCC. In his request, it was mentioned that Romania was very joyful for the creation of this organism, especially as he understood the particular significance of the need that all the peoples desiring freedom should get united. Between the Romanian and the Italian leader, a fruitful letter exchange was initiated, in order to set the foundations for collaboration and, especially, to draft a memo to the Romanians on behalf of EDCC¹.

Being confident that the peoples' fight for freedom will finally succeed, Brătianu committed himself to act in favor of the common cause of the oppressed peoples. In the realization of his plan, Mazzini also counted on the Romanians and on the Hungarians alike. In this sense, the Italian leader, during the first days of the month of June 1851, issued a manifesto addressed to the Romanian people, entitled "Alle popolazioni romene" (To the Romanian Populations), in which he mentioned: "you are part of the nation of the immortals. You have your name from your parents; your language, your traditions, your tendencies, everything reminds you that you are part of That people which, 20 centuries ago, meant the world with huge actions on the great road of the European civilization. Today, That same people lives again, and you also need to live, because you have a mission in Europe, whose instinctive conscience has never faded in your heart..."².

The text of the proclamation was published, on Mazzini's demand, in a series of Italian periodicals such as "Italia del popolo", "Il Progresso", but it also appeared in the French periodicals "La Presse", "Le National", "Le Siecle"³.

Showing a vivid interest in the Romanians' problems, Mazzini proved concerned by organizing the reconciliation between the Romanians and the Hungarians with the help of EDCC, mediating a meeting between Brătianu and Kossuth. Mazzini supposed that when the Romanians were going to stand together aligned against the Russian autocracy, the Ottoman Porte would agree to give up on its pretensions of suzerainty, which would have led to the Romanians' "complete emancipation"⁴.

The close connection between the two political leaders was visible in their correspondence as well. Mazzini successively began his letters to Brătianu using the expressions "Dear Mister Brătianu", "Dear Mister Colleague", to

¹ Anastasie Iordache, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

² See the whole text in Alexadru Marcu, *Conspiratori și conspirații în epoca renașterii politice a României 1848-1877 (Conspirators and Conspiracies during the Political Renaissance of Romania 1848-1877)*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 2000, p. 58-64.

³ Dan Berindei, *Les Roumains et Giuseppe Mazzini...*, p. 315.

⁴ Idem, *Giuseppe Mazzini și Giuseppe Garibaldi...*, p. 196.

finally use the name “dear brother” or sign simply “Joseph”¹. On 11 September 1851, Brătianu signed, on behalf of the Romanian National Committee, the act of adhesion to EDCC, at the same time presenting the answer to the proclamation that had been addressed to the Romanians: “...Have faith, brothers, this time we will all be united and will move on together, Hungarians, Slavs, Greeks, they will all fight on our side in the holy crusade of democracy, because we will not fight just for ourselves, we will fight for everybody’s right...”².

During the time spent in exile, Dumitru Brătianu evoked Mazzini describing his way of life, his personality and his physical appearance. So, we find out about the Italian leader that he “...lived like a great man. His room did not cover more than three-four square meters. In it, there was a bed, a table, three chairs made of straws and flowers... On the lower floor, he had a parlor, where numerous visitors were waiting for their turn to go up into the room where Mazzini slept, worked and received guests... His clothes were simple, yet always clean, thanks to his friends who took care of reminding him from time to time that the need calls for the buying of a coat, a hat, a pair of shoes...”. “Mazzini, wrote the Romanian political leader next, had a skinny complexion yet veined, strong; I have never seen him ill. His figure seemed carved in steel, his features had a classic regularity and Moorish finesse... he was easy to get close to, pleasant, nice... He was good, merciful, he had a heart for all the suffering, for all the pains... he had the simplicity and purity of morals, the austerity of a monk and a saint’s power of sacrifice... He had very extensive knowledge; he was erudite, without being not in the least pedantic. He had a vivid imagination, a great memory, an admirable good sense, a healthy judgement... a rare talent of expressing, especially, in writing, his feelings and ideas in the most inspiring ways... he wrote in aphorisms, in ten lines he was able to concentrate a material that under any other pen would have filled ten pages”³.

During the whole time spent in London, Dumitru Brătianu was close to Mazzini, and the latter honored him with his friendship. Beside Dumitru Brătianu, a whole series of Romanian revolutionary exiles got involved in the activity of EDCC. Out of them, Constantin Racoviță and Alexandru Manu⁴ carried out in Piedmont, Liguria and Lombardy a series of propaganda

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

² See the whole text in Alexandru Marcu, *op. cit.*, p. 70-75.

³ Apud Dan Berindei, *Giuseppe Mazzini și Giuseppe Garibaldi...*, p. 196-197.

⁴ For the activity of Manu in Piedmont, see Raluca Tomi, *Europa naționalităților” între revoluție și război: cazul românilor și italienilor* (The Europe of Nationalities between Revolution and War: the Case of the Romanians and of the Italians), in *Războiul Crimeei. 150 ani de la încheiere* (The Crimean War. 150 Years Since Its End) (coordinator Adrian-Silvan Ionescu), Brăila, Editura Istros, 2006, p. 59-60, 74.

activities. They were both closely connected to the deputy of the subalpine Left, Giuseppe Lyons, one of the most vehement Mazzinians in the Parliament¹.

At the same time, the two Romanian leaders wanted to join the army of Piedmont, and Racoviță was already writing to Ștefan and Nicolae Golescu on the interest that the Italian diplomats were showing in the Romanian cause². In his turn, Ion Ghica recommended George Adrian, who was familiar with the Italian world, to the Italian diplomat in Constantinople, the Baron Giovanni Pietro Romualdo Tecco, in order to improve his tuition at the Military School of Turin. On 12 July 1851, George Adrian had been arrested by the papal police, as he had had on him a letter from Bălcescu to the Hungarian Committee of Paris, which mentioned the federal state. His stay in the pontifical prisons, his discussions with the political detainees made him understand the difficulties those in the south of Italy were faced with, compared to those in the north, where "people can breathe freely and talk without the police arresting them"³. Another promoter of the united Romania who was delegated to collaborate with EDCC was the painter Constantin Daniel Rosenthal. His education of Hungarian and Austrian inspiration encouraged C.A. Rosetti to entrust to him a series of special missions in Switzerland and Austria. Rosenthal, after having given Mazzini one of his paintings, moved on to Hungary, in order to give a new impulse to the revolutionary propaganda. In Pest, he was supposed to make a survey of Mazzinian inspiration among the public opinion and the politicians concerning the extent to which they believe in the possibility of initiating a new revolution. But before reaching his destination, Rosenthal was arrested and submitted to harsh interrogatories, being obliged to betray his friends. Faced with such a situation, the Romanian painter preferred to commit suicide in his cell, on the night of 22 to 23 July 1851⁴. Another great Romanian emissary with a rich itinerary in Europe, which included Berlin, Frankfurt, Magonza, Dresda, Wien, Prague, militated for the cause of the Romanian exiles. He was Ștefan Golescu. Writing from London to Effingham Grant, the British consul in Bucharest, the latter informed him on the meetings with Mazzini and Ledru Rollin and the discussions he had had with the Italian leader concerning the future European revolution⁵. Ștefan Golescu travelled in the autumn of 1851, in the service of the common movement, in Germany, Austria and Bohemia, sending afterwards to London an ample and well-documented report on the

¹ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini și românii...*, p. 96.

² Raluca Tomi, *Romeni e italiani nel periodo dell'esilio rivoluzionario...*, p. 217.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 217-218; see also Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 97.

⁴ Cornelia Bodea, *Interferenze rivoluzionarie romeno-mazziniene...*, p. 240-241; see also Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 87-88.

⁵ Raluca Tomi, *Romeni i italiani...*, p. 219; see also Cornelia Bodea, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

Germans', Czechs' and Transylvanian Romanians' willingness to participate in the future insurrection planned for the year 1852¹.

A special mission was entrusted to Golescu by Mazzini in Athens, where there was a nucleus of the National Italian Association. Here, the Romanian leader had to obtain the synchronization with the Hellenic movement in the prefiguration of a conflagration that involved the South-Oriental peoples as well. His role was to carry out a movement with a propagandistic character, while the Mazzinian groups of Syra, Smyrna and Corfu were to reinforce the idea of collaboration between these forces in order to trigger the Revolution².

The year 1852 was supposed to become, therefore, the year of the new European Revolution, yet in the Orient one could see a new Russian-Ottoman conflict taking shape, while in France, important changes were coming along. The European tensions were an occasion for the political leaders in London to hope that the political situation will turn towards the obtaining of a democracy. The great brotherhood of the Corfu Island, where the Italian and the Greek refugees used to meet, extended north of Italy and in the Turkish provinces. Marc Antonio Canini, a member of this association, said that "the only hope of salvation was a symphonious and synchronous revolution of all the subjugated peoples". After the war, a confederation was to be created, bearing the name of the Confederate States of the Orient³.

Using the Crimean War as a pretext, Mazzini tried to insert his own plan in the ample conflict sparked in the Orient, considering that its evolution could favor a general revolution of all the oppressed nations of the area⁴. Yet, the failure of the movement of 6 February 1853 of Milan, which had proved Lombardy's desire to be free, and the proclamation of the second French Empire stopped at that moment the impetus of the European Revolution⁵.

In parallel to the Congress of Peace from Paris, Mazzini reconsidered the topic of the future organization of Europe. In the project of the reconstitution of the Orient, the Ottoman Empire was replaced by a union of free nations, connected to the Italian one, and the basic ethnic elements were the Greek, the Southern Slavs and the Romanians. This was also the political credo present in the thinking of the Italian leader until the end of his life⁶. Although the period of the Romanian exile came to an end in 1857, and the Romanian national

¹ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 91-92.

² *Ibidem*, p. 94-95; idem, *Italia și România spre unitatea națională. Un secol de istorie paralelă (1820-1920)* (Italy and Romania towards National Unity. A Century of Parallel History: 1820-1920), București, Editura Paideia, 2010, p. 152-154.

³ Raluca Tomi, *Romeni i italiani...*, p. 219-220.

⁴ See, for the evolution of the Mazzinian projects in the context of the Crimean War, Raluca Tomi, "Europa naționalităților" între revoluție și război..., p. 57-76.

⁵ Ștefan Delureanu, *Mazzini...*, p. 100-103.

⁶ Idem, *Italia și România spre unitatea națională...*, p. 165.

movement entered a new stage, the Romanian political leaders continued to see in Mazzini a supporter and a defender of their cause. Even though they proved to be utopian projects, the intentions of federalization demonstrated to the Romanian political leaders that they held a well-deserved role in the redefinition of the concept of nation in Europe¹.

All the publications appeared in exile, as well as the periodicals, the memoirs, the manifestos or the memos reflected the organic connection to the Mazzinian movement². The Romanian periodicals paid attention to Mazzini especially after the creation of the united Romanian nation, and the hero's death also had a deep echo in the writings of the time. So, Dumitru Brătianu published in the pages of *Românul* (The Romanian), the following lines on Mazzini: "The action of this giant man had something supernatural; this is why his action was immense, immeasurable. For the future generations, Mazzini will be a legend, a myth"³.

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¹ Raluca Tomi, *Romeni i italiani...*, p. 221.

² Ștefan Delureanu, *Italia și România spre unitatea națională...*, p. 65-67.

³ Apud Dan Berindei, *Giuseppe Mazzini și Giuseppe Garibaldi...*, p. 200.

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**POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
BETWEEN ROMANIA AND ITALY AND THEIR ROLE
IN THE EUROPEAN DANUBE COMMISSION**

Ionuț Șerban *

Abstract

The political and diplomatic relations between Romania and Italy were not always at a level of sustainment and closeness. In the matter of the Danube Commission, Italy, in order to retain its great power status, considered the Danube issue a favorable ground for affirmation. Because, between Romania and Italy there was no agreement in the Triple Alliance, Italy will have a similar attitude to that of the great powers, unfavorable to Romania. On the other hand, the Romanian diplomats tried to give their country the status it deserved and an important role in the European Danube Commission, based on its rights as a riverine state of the most important river in Europe.

Key words: *Political and Diplomatic Relations, European Danube Commission, Romania, Italy*

The Ottoman Empire unilaterally controlled the Black Sea and the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits until 1774. Tsarist Russia, keen to have access to as many seas, imposed, after the war of 1788-1791, to the Ottomans to cede Crimea, which provide access to the Black Sea. The Kuchuk Kainarji Peace Treaty gave free passage through both Straits to the Tsar's commercial vessels¹. Following the Treaty of Adrianople, which ended the Russo-Turkish war of 1829, free movement in the Black Sea was enacted for commercial vessels of other countries as well. Russia, as the winner of the conflict, imposed also the free passage of its war ships, passage protected by a treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire from 1833. Negotiations for the establishment of an international regime of the Straits led to the London Conference of 1840, where was signed a Convention which decided to ban the right of passage through the Straits to warships of all countries, except the Turkish ones.

By the Treaty of Paris of 1856 it was decided to neutralize the Black Sea. By this treaty it was, for the first time, established a general legal regime for the

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¹ A.D. Xenopol, *Resboaiele dintre Ruși și Turci și înrăurirea lor asupra țărilor române*, vol. II, Iași, 1880, p. 190.

Navigation on the Danube, supervised by the Danube Commission, which provided freedom of navigation for all states – riparian or not – and dividing river in terms of deployment and management of navigation in two sectors: the Danube river and the Lower Danube¹.

Among the most important duties of the Commission were: developing rules of navigation and river police at the mouth of the Danube; the possibility of using armed force by Member States; a right of jurisdiction regarding violations of navigation rules; setting and charging fees for vessels sailing on the Danube.

Non-riparian Empires and kingdoms were part of the European Danube Commission such as: The British Empire, the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Sardinia, and riparian empires such as: the Ottoman and Habsburg empires. Romanian Principalities were not participating in this committee, because they were under Ottoman suzerainty and European powers guarantee².

The broad powers granted to the European Danube Commission, based in Galati, translated into practice the concept of “extraterritoriality” despite the harm to the interests of the Romanian Principalities³.

The Romanian minister in Rome, Obedenaru, wrote to the Foreign Minister on July 24, 1877 that, in a conversation with the Italian ambassador in Vienna, he was advised that Romania should provide the dualistic Empire with many raw materials and that the Danube and Rhine had to be a way of peaceful exchange⁴.

The long and tortuous course of international negotiations on regulating navigation on the Danube, in accordance with the express provisions of the Treaty of Berlin of July 13, 1878, art. 55 and 57, led to a pronounced wear in bilateral relations, between Romanian and the Austro-Hungarian Empire due to the fact that the last one intended to acquire fluvial supremacy between the Iron Gates and Braila, with the cost of violating the sovereignty and national interests of Romania⁵.

The Treaty of Berlin, in 1878, located the problem Danube into a new phase, namely: The river was divided into two sections: the Lower Danube to Galati, located under the protection of the European Commission and the upper Danube, under the so- called control of the residents; The European

¹ I. Cârțână, I. Seftiuc, *Dunărea în istoria poporului român*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1972, p. 51-54.

² *La Commission Européenne de Danube et son oeuvre de 1856 à 1931*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1931, p. 40.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 42-50.

⁴ Serviciul Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale (S.A.N.I.C.), colecția Microfilme, Italia, rola 22, c. 625-629.

⁵ Sorin Liviu Damean, *România și Congresul de Pace de la Berlin (1878)*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2005, p. 87-90.

Commission has decided to create a Joint Committee of the Lower Danube, composed of riverine state Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Austria- Hungary, which was just awarded the presidency, with the task to supervise and enforce the rules of navigation. In fact, through this body, Austro-Hungary established their control over the lower Danube; also, Austro-Hungary was given the right to carry out development works at Iron Gate and charge appropriate fees¹.

Essentially, the Treaty of Berlin failed to establish for this great river of Europe, a uniform system, to guarantees freedom of navigation and commerce throughout the navigable portion. The Treaty of Berlin violated the sovereignty of lower riparian states and reinforced the position of the European powers, which were provided with such a legal basis for direct intervention in the internal affairs of these nations. Grave violations to the Romanian sovereignty were brought by the article 55 of this Treaty, in accordance with which the European Commission received a mandate to develop regulations for navigation, surveillance and police on the Danube between the Iron Gates and Galati, sector in which the residents were Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria, which had naturally, this right².

From insinuations and mutual accusations, amplified by publications in Romania and abroad, especially from Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, UK and Belgium, to acute manifestations of the imperial phenomenon, it was attempted to discredit and isolate our country, being threaten with economic and trade sanctions, acts of intimidation, culminating in braking the diplomatic relations and obligating the Romanian Government to a public apology on December 15, 1881, for the second time after 1867, under the pretext of adopting measures considered vexatious for Austrian subjects³.

Navigation Rules, drafted in 1882 by the European Danube Commission, became obsolete after the international relations became tense and Austro-Hungarian surrender its claims with the intention of attracting Romania into the Triple Alliance. Russia's influence in the matter of the Danube was to grow discreet, representing, among others, one of the causes of the First World War⁴.

Romania was against this attempt that would have hampered the freedom of trade and proposed, therefore, that the committee charged with overseeing navigation between Galati and iron gates to belong only to riparian states. Thus begins the conflict in question Danube⁵.

¹ I. Cârțână, I. Seftiuc, *op. cit.*, p. 55-57.

² Sorin Liviu Damean, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

³ Corneliu-Mihail Lungu, *Relațiile Româno-Austro-Ungare 1875-1900*, București, Editura Silex, 2002, p. 330-345.

⁴ I. Cârțână, I. Seftiuc, *op.cit.*, p. 85.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 87.

In 1882 it was accepted the “Barrère proposal” (the French representative in the European Commission) that the Joint Committee should be composed of representatives of local residents and a representative of Austria-Hungary, as permanent president and a delegation of the European Commission of the Danube¹.

The London Conference from February-April 1883 did not resolve the dispute in the Austro-Hungarian-Romanian relations, reinterpreting text of the agreement to the new interests of the great powers².

The Italian Diplomacy, eager to retain their country status as great power, considered the Danube issue a favorable ground for affirmation. Because, between Romania and Italy there was no agreement in the Triple Alliance, Italy will have a similar attitude to that of the great powers, unfavorable to Romania.

On August 12, 1881, a ciphered telegram from the Italian Ministry in Bucharest, Tornielli addressed to the foreign minister Mancini, showed Ion Brătianu opinion which considers that Romania could not be prevented, despite the opposition of Austria, to be part of the discussion of the Danube European Commission³.

The Italian Foreign Minister, Mancini, replied a telegram sent from Vienna by the Italian ambassador, Di Robilant, on December 19, 1881, referring to his speech in the House of Representatives on the issue of the Danube. The Italians were mainly concerned with one aspect, namely that would be better to solve this matter by applying the principle of freedom of navigation⁴.

On February 10, 1882, Tornielli reported to the diplomatic plant the imminent assembly of the European Commission as the proposed deadline for the completion of the quarantines issue and sanitary service was approaching⁵.

The Italian ambassador in Berlin, De Launay, send a telegram to the Quirinal, on February 12, 1882, presenting the contents of the discussions held on 11 February 1882 with Count Wolkenstein, arrived in Berlin for talks on the Danube issue. The Count has reported De Launay that the talks have not reached their goal, being pressured to express his point of view⁶.

On April 12, 1882, the French point of view was revealed, as shown in Tornielli 's telegram, sent from Bucharest to Rome. He stated that negotiations led by Mr. Wolkenstein in Paris reached a formal compromise and it was

¹ *Ibidem*, p.90.

² Gheorghe Căzan, Șerban Rădulescu-Zonner, *România și Tripla Alianță*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979, p. 85-86.

³ Rudolf Dinu, Ion Bulei, *35 anni di relazioni Italo-Romene, 1879-1914. Documenti diplomatici italiani*, București, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2001, p. 110.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 113-115.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 117-118.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 119.

expected at any time that the French Minister to submit its conception on the known Barrère proposal¹.

After unsuccessful attempts by a joint committee to prepare a draft widely accepted (this committee become a super state under the chairmanship of Austria-Hungary) and after the rejection of the Romania counter-project in accordance with the principles of freedom and equality of navigation, things have reached a deadlock.

During the year 1883, the Danube issue is present in 15 reports of Italian diplomats accredited in Bucharest, Vienna and Berlin. From these reports emerges the idea of Italy supporting the European point of view that was unfavorable to Romania².

It is worthy to mention that Carol wrote in his journal about the frequent meetings with Tornielli, the Italian envoy in Bucharest between 1881-1887, meetings that were crucial for the Romanian approach to the Triple Alliance³.

In the period that preceded the first world world war and then in 1916, the freedom of navigation on the Danube suffered because of interests and then hostilities between some of riparian river. In these circumstances, Romania had to take some action.

As for the Black Sea, this must be seen only in association with the Danube, because together they form a complex complementarity. After the Berlin Congress, along the Ottoman Empire and Russia, in the Black Sea area submerged two other sovereign states: Romania in 1878 and Bulgaria in 1908, with their own interests. The essence of the "five European powers concerning the Straits" treaty from 1841 was that as long as there is peace, the Sultan was not allowed to give passage to any foreign vessel, except light vessels of the legations⁴. Therefore, any Russian war ships had no right to pass through the Straits. The Convention void Russia to have a preference and obtain separate agreements for its vessels with the Ottoman Empire. This act is important because it remained in force until the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923⁵.

In this context, the South East European region has experienced Russian foreign policy shift that took priority in breaking the unity of the coalition that imposed this treaty to the Sultan. As for the Romanian government, he carefully watched the dynamic traffic through the Straits, the specific application of

¹ *Ibidem*, p.120-121.

² *Ibidem*, p. 110-139.

³ Carol I al României, *Jurnal* (ediție Vasile Docea), vol. 1, 1881-1887, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2007, *passim*.

⁴ Ion Ionescu, *Dificultățile trasării frontierei dunărene între România și Bulgaria, efect al viciilor de text, redact are și procedură, în urma Tratatului de la Berlin*, în "Analele Dobrogei", Serie Nouă, Anul V, nr. 1, Constanța, 1999, *passim*.

⁵ Nicolae Dașcovici, *Dunărea noastră*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale "Principele Carol", f.a., p. 36.

goods competition with other countries, the possibilities of asserting Romanian exports variety of products. It is worth mentioning that Russia, from 15 / March 27, 1876, had already signed an agreement with Romania with provisions on sea navigation. Romania's independence proved to be another obstacle for the Russian policy oriented towards the Straits. Russian political and diplomatic circles commented unfavorably the appearance, shortly after the Congress of Berlin, of some war ships under Romanian flag on the Black Sea, which were organized in a flotilla. As these military ships, built in prestigious UK shipyards, proved to be efficient, Russia tried, through media campaigns, to dissuade Romanian effort. Petersburg considered Romanian fleets to represent the emergence of a great wrongdoing, a violation of existing treaties, which did not record anywhere provisions relating to a Romanian fleet¹.

All normative documents were only referring to the Russian and the Ottoman fleet. The Russian point of view was that it was created a utterly unpleasant precedent, most likely because the role of this flotilla is to be a left phalanx of the enemy that could attack Russia from Bosphorus, making harder further Russian expansion towards the Straits. Indirectly, it refers to the good relations between the Ottoman Empire and Romania which at April 6/18, 1897, had to sign in Constantinople the Romanian-Ottoman Commercial Convention, "which came into force from 15 / February 27, 1898"².

Even though Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Romania, in early 1895 had visited Russian imperial capital, "making a good impression" and even if "there was a favorable attitude of Russian politicians towards Romanian Royal Legation to Sankt Petersburg, Russia did not hesitate to create a new crisis in its relations with Romania.

It is about the "incident" occurred on the Black Sea Bosphorus, the so-called "the diplomatic label incident" from January 1896, when the Russian media (and not only) have distorted or overly thickened a minor fact, happened in the Constantinople laugh. Romanian Fleet Commander, Colonel John Murgescu, traveling to the capital of the sultans would not have granted (according to the Russian) all outward signs of respect, as is customary diplomatic and naval customs, to the Russian commander of the stationary "Colchida", a senior ship of the Russians³.

In essence, the period between the Congress of Berlin and the First World War has brought changes in the Straits regime, although a number of incidents always updated treaty clauses regarding the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

² Grigore Antipa, *Dunărea și problemele ei științifice, economice și politice*, București, Librăriile "Cartea Românească" & Pavel Suru", 1921, p. 112.

³ Arhiva Ministerului Afacerilor Externe, fond 21, vol. 75, f. 127.

Therefore, the ruling circles of Russia continued to show great concern for Constantinople.

In 1890, one of the tense situations in the Danube Commission was “the Spartali affaire”. Spartali was an Ottoman official of the Commission of the Danube, which after his death that occurred on January 20, 1890, left the sum of 6000 francs in his home vault in the Sulina Consulate, which would have to reach, in the form of inheritance, his widow. The Ottoman Empire representative, Maxim Effendi, in violation of its status as foreign official in a sovereign state, appropriated the legacy of the deceased, under the guise of the Ottoman law control over the financial situation of his subjects. The Italian delegate, G. Tess, dissatisfied with the performance of the Ottoman official discussed his acts in the Commission meetings from June 1890¹.

As the economic relations were obviously impacted on the political ones, on March 23, 1878, it was signed a Romanian-Italian commercial agreement, ratified on March 1, 1881. Thus, on February 4, 1891, the representative of Italy in Bucharest, Nitto, informed the Cabinet in Rome, about his talks with the Prime Minister Petre P. Carp that considers applying a differentiated custom tariff to Romania, as a political discrimination².

Since the Constitution of 1866, and its amendments, provides that any treaty concluded by Romania had to be voted for in the House and Senate, Nitto received instruction to announce the extension of the trade treaty with Romania, the procedure of concluding a new treaty requiring a longer period than the duration treaty into force. Italian side decided the extension of the convention, by a law of 10 July 1891³.

As a whole, the Berlin Congress meant strengthening German preponderance in Europe and England's in the Mediterranean, by removing Russia's approach to Constantinople and getting Cyprus; Russia's discontent, hoping for more than it got, and an extension of the Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. This led, however, to emphasize the contradictions with Russia and increasing domestic instability by incorporating Slavic territories⁴.

Therefore, aware of these shortcomings, the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy sought, in addition to expanding the influence at the mouths of the Danube, to conclude a number of agreements with Serbia and Romania, understandings that they could be used in the imperial double-headed internal stability and

¹ Ion Ionescu, *Gurile Dunării și Strâmtoarele Mării Negre, Cheia “Chestiunii Orientale” 1878-1916*, în “Revista de Istorie Militară”, nr. 4, 2003, p. 54-58.

² Archivio Storico Diplomatico dello Ministero degli Affari Esteri (ASDMAE), Roma, *Serie Politica “A” (1889-1892) Italia*, Busta 89, Nitto către Minister, 4 februarie 1891.

³ *Ibidem*, Nitto către Minister, 25 februarie 1891.

⁴ N. Ciachir, *Războiul pentru independența României în context european*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1977, p. 275.

could assure its strategic advantage over Russia, and his approach to Germany, the dominating Europe through its political and military force.

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**DU NATIONALISME CHEZ LES CONSERVATEURS ROUMAINS
DU XIX^e SIECLE**

*Mihai Ghițulescu**

Résumé

Ceci est un essai portant sur la manière dans laquelle l'idée nationale a été reflétée dans l'idéologie conservatrice roumaine du XIX^e siècle. Il traite le conservatisme en général aussi bien qu'un de ces courants particuliers, le *junimisme*. L'analyse a pour base les écrits et les discours de quelques penseurs et/ou politiciens représentatifs et elle aborde deux questions: l'attitude face aux minorités ethniques et religieuses et les idées concernant le développement de l'économie nationale.

Mots clés: *conservatisme, nationalisme, junimisme, minorités, économie nationale*

Conservatisme et nationalisme

Ce serait une simplicité d'imaginer l'opposition entre les libéraux et les conservateurs, en ce qui concerne le nationalisme, telle qu'elle a été conçue pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle. Même à cette époque-là, la séparation entre les „nationaux” et les „antinationaux” n'était aussi ferme que les premiers l'auraient voulue. Cependant, il faut nuancer l'opinion de certains historiens qu'il y aurait eu un consensus sur „la question nationale” et que les disputes ne commenceraient qu'au-delà de celui-ci, portant seulement sur les problèmes politiques, économiques, sociaux. Il faut dire que le nouveau conservatisme, de la seconde moitié du siècle, avait ses racines spirituelles non pas dans le „réactionnarisme”, mais dans le „modérantisme” de l'ancien régime, traité, plus tard, lui-même de „réactionnaire”. Mais la situation reste similaire: d'un côté, les libéraux font l'impression d'avoir le monopole du nationalisme, de l'autre, certains proclament le consensus, excluant la nationalité de la sphère des questions disputées. Les chercheurs trouvent, d'habitude, quelques traits du conservatisme: „les formes sans fond”, le traditionalisme, le gradualisme, l'organicisme. Ils hésitent à y inclure le nationalisme. Dans sa massive monographie du Parti Conservateur, le professeur Ion Bulei a prudemment mis

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le mot *nationalisme* entre guillemets¹. Le nationalisme est-il donc une composante du conservatisme roumain et, en cas de réponse affirmative, a-t-il une existence autonome ou il n'est qu'un corolaire normal du traditionalisme, évolutionnisme, organicisme? La réponse doit prendre en considération qu'à l'instar du libéralisme, le conservatisme n'est pas un monolithe, mais la résultante de plusieurs tendances, assez différentes.

Tout comme dans le cas du libéralisme, on a souvent considéré que le nationalisme a été une composante importante du conservatisme. Mais on a ajouté qu'il doit être compris comme principe de la conservation de la nation. Bien qu'on y comprenne la lutte contre les forces étrangères menaçantes, il est vu comme dépourvu de toute exagération ou poussée chauvine. Dans la vision conservatrice, „l'étranger” ne doit pas être éliminé, mais intégré et adapté². De ce point de vue, leur politique, généralement considérée rétrograde, semble progressiste.

Dès „l'union définitive” de 1861, le plus important des représentants de la première génération conservatrice, Barbu Catargiu, annonçait une ligne nationale par le célèbre cri pathétique: „Tout pour le pays, rien pour nous!”, suivi de plusieurs „Vive la Roumanie!”. Il se prouvait en phase avec l'esprit nationaliste de l'âge: „La puissance du siècle dans lequel nous vivons est la puissance morale, de la sagesse, du mot, de la fraternité pour l'union des nationalités”, plaidant pour le renforcement de l'union politique par une union spirituelle, par la création d'une conscience nationale, car „ce n'est qu'ainsi que nous pouvons garder notre place parmi les nations de l'Europe”. Il résistait à la tentation d'interpréter nationalement l'histoire, affirmant qu'au passé, „l'union des nations divisées” ne s'était pas réalisée à cause d'un autre „esprit des siècles”³. La nation est souvent invoquée. Quant à la question de l'économie et des minorités, l'attitude est radicalement différente de celle des libéraux. Catargiu s'est dit d'accord, en principe, avec le refus des droits politiques pour les étrangers, mais compte tenu des conséquences économiques, il a conseillé de „traiter la question sans enthousiasme... commercialement, économiquement”, sans „les mots pompeux, de sentimentalisme, de patriotisme” de Brătianu⁴.

En 1866, au sein des conservateurs majoritaires dans l'Assemblée Constituante on a pu entendre des voix contre la discrimination ethnique et

¹ Ion Bulei, *Sistemul politic al României moderne. Partidul Conservator*, București, Editura Politică, 1987, p. 508.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Discursurile lui Barbu Katargiu* (1859-1862 iunie 8), culese și însoțite deo notiță istorică asupra familiei Katargiu și de o biografie a oratorului de Ang. Demetrescu, Tipo-litografia Eduard Wiegand, București, 1886, p. LVII-LX.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 233-244, 197-199.

confessionnelle, qui n'ont abouti à aucun résultat. Les années suivantes, les conservateurs des bancs de l'opposition ont critiqué les mesures des libéraux contre les juifs, mais en 1873, revenus au pouvoir, ils ont voté une loi restrictive. Après la guerre de 1877-1878, lors des discussions autour de la révision de l'article 7, ils ont pu exprimer leurs avis sur la „question nationale”. On observe le manque de consensus et une effervescence qui a provoqué même des ruptures¹.

Le processus de coagulation des groupes conservateurs a été plus lent que celui de leurs adversaires. Le premier programme du Parti/Club Conservateur (1880) a essayé de jeter les bases d'une construction doctrinaire qui réponde aux besoins et aux dangers de „notre nation petite et faible”². Comme chez les libéraux, tout était fait pour et au nom de la nation. On trouvait que les deux grands problèmes des roumains étaient la dénationalisation et la pauvreté, toutes les deux issues des gouvernements défectueux et des „théories abstraites de cosmopolitisme, importé d'ailleurs”. Le concept „conservateur” était défini en opposition avec „libéral”, sur des bases politiques, économiques, sociales, investies d'une signification nationale: „A l'intérieur, le mot «Conservateur» signifie: Face aux abstractions humanitaires, professées par le parti libéral, l'idée du développement historique de notre individualité nationale, l'idée de la nationalité roumaine”³. Le but suprême était que „notre nationalité” devienne „une force capable d'affronter les dangers qui nous menacent”⁴.

Cette tendance de définir son identité par rapport à l'adversaire libéral a caractérisé le conservatisme roumain, obligé toujours de prendre une position défensive. Tout en rejetant les accusations de réactionnarisme, cosmopolitisme, il a créé son cadre théorique. Le simple fait que les uns se sont dits „national-libéraux”, tandis que les autres ont resté conservateurs sans aucun ajout – bien que P.P. Carp, dans son discours „Era nouă” („Le nouvel âge”) (1881), ait parlé des „idées national-conservatrices”⁵ – a donné l'occasion de quelques précisions doctrinaires. P.P. Negulescu, essayant d'apprendre dans quelle mesure le nationalisme peut être un principe des partis politiques, a affirmé que, pratiquement, tout parti, pour mériter cette titulature, doit être national, mais „compte tenu des différentes voies de leurs activités, les partis ne sont pas tous

¹ Z. Ornea, *Junimea și junimismul*, vol. I, București, Editura Minerva, 1998, p. 271-274.

² „Programul Partidului Conservator (1880)”, dans *A fi conservator*, antologie, comentarii și bibliografie de Ioan Stanomir și Laurențiu Vlad, București, Universitatea din București, Institutul de cercetări politice – Ed. Meridiane, colecția „Studia politica analecta”, 2002, p. 448.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 449.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 451.

⁵ P.P. Carp, *Discursuri parlamentare*, ediție îngrijită de Marcel Duță, studiu introductiv de Ion Bulei, București, Editura „Grai și suflet – Cultura națională”, 2000, p. 87.

également nationaux”¹. Il considérait que le parti libéral a trahi le principe nationaliste et que les parti conservateur est „le parti national, par excellence”². Constantin Rădulescu-Motru a exprimé une idée similaire: ce n’est que l’idéologie qui est commune pour tous les conservateurs du monde; les programmes ont toujours des particularités nationales. Le parti conservateur serait le seul spécifique au pays où il agit: „Tandis que les autre partis ont une doctrine homogène pour tous les pays, seuls les conservateurs se présentent différents selon les divers pays”³.

Nous devons remarquer que l’observation de Negulescu sur les manières différentes dans lesquelles les partis interprétaient le nationalisme n’est que partiellement juste. On le voit même de son argumentation. En quelque mesure, le nationalisme des libéraux et celui des conservateurs sont semblable. Il s’agit, dans les deux cas, d’une opposition face aux immixtions étrangères. Les libéraux s’opposaient à la pénétration des capitaux et des marchandises; les conservateurs, à la pénétration des idées morales, sociales, politiques, des „formes de vie empruntées entièrement aux étrangers, formes de vie qui ne sont pas issues par une évolution naturelle du vrai fond spirituel de notre nation”. Les premiers ont pensé aux conditions objectives du développement national, les seconds, au côté subjectif, à „l’énergie de la conscience nationale”. Il s’agit ici de l’idée de l’évolution naturelle – la nation vue comme organisme unitaire – qui a fait naître la théorie des formes sans fond. D’ici le reproche fait au libéraux, qu’en dépit de leur protectionnisme économique, ils avaient crée „le danger de la falsification de notre vie nationale”⁴. Le contact avec l’extérieur et les emprunts n’étaient pas complètement rejetés, mai seulement dans la mesure où ils menaçaient le „fond national”. Si les libéraux justifiaient leur résistance par le sous-développement de l’économie nationale et le risque d’être avalée par la „finance internationale”, les conservateurs parlaient d’une immaturité de la conscience nationale, „qui est plus faible chez nous que chez le peuples civilisés de l’Occident”⁵. L’objectif du Parti Conservateur était le développement de cette conscience, spécialement au sein de la masse paysanne.

Le nationalisme des conservateurs est plus discret que celui des libéraux. Il est observable dans plusieurs discours ou textes programmatique, mais il semble n’avoir pas d’existence autonome. Pour l’illustrer, les historiens invoquent des noms comme: Mihai Eminescu, A.D. Xenopol, Constantin

¹ Petre P. Negulescu, *Principiul naționalismului în politica conservatoare*, dans *A fi conservator*, p. 438.

² *Ibidem*, p. 440, 444.

³ C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Concepția conservatoare și progresul*, în *Doctrinile partidelor politice*, ediție și note de Petre Dan, București, Editura Garamond, 1994, p. 77.

⁴ Petre P. Negulescu, *Principiul naționalismului...*, p. 440.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 444.

Rădulescu-Motru ou bien Nicolae Iorga. Tous ceux-ci ont été nationalistes, mais leur conservatisme est discutable. On ne peut pas nier leurs idées conservatrices, mais ils sont tous été des marginaux et ils ont fait une note plus ou moins discordante au sein du parti. Eminescu est un cas spécial: journaliste avec une conception politique ambiguë. Xenopol a été *junimiste*, député libéral et à la fin conservateur-démocrate du camp de Take Ionescu. Ses idées concernant l'économie et les minorités le place plus proche des libéraux. Rădulescu-Motru, *junimiste* de la seconde génération, *takiste* et idéologue conservateur, a exprimé quelques idées nationalistes afin d'élaborer une doctrine, mais elles n'ont jamais été très populaires au sein du parti. Finalement, Iorga, dont la doctrine nationaliste a un fond conservateur, n'est pas représentatif pour le courant. Il s'est placé entre le conservatisme de La Belle Epoque et l'extrémisme nationaliste de l'entre-deux-guerres. Ils font tous partie de ce qu'Eugen Lovinescu et Ștefan Zeletin nommaient „la réaction”. Elle avait au centre *Junimea*, avec son criticisme d'origine romantique et évolutionniste allemande, qui a marqué la culture de l'époque. On peut dire que le nationalisme conservateur n'a pas eu un rôle politique très important, mais il a donné une direction à la culture roumaine¹.

Le *junimisme* – entre nationalisme et cosmopolitisme

Le *junimisme* est considéré par la plupart des historiens une branche du conservatisme roumain. Du point de vue politique cela n'est pas tout juste. Le petit groupe *junimiste* est né en 1970 parmi les conservateurs (P.P. Carp et Titu Maiorescu ont même rejoint le gouvernement de Manolache Costache Epureanu), ils ont participé à la formation du Club Conservateur, en 1880, et ils ont dirigé l'unification de 1907 (lorsque P.P. Carp est devenu le président du Parti Conservateur, unifié pour peu de temps). Mais, au cours de cette période, les *junimistes* se sont aussi éloignés, plusieurs fois, des conservateurs: ils ont collaboré avec les libéraux, en 1883, ils ont eu leur propre cabinet, en 1889, et ils ont créé même un Club Constitutionnel. Les causes de ces inconséquences ne sont pas idéologiques. Elles tiennent plutôt aux circonstances, aux attitudes différentes face à des situations particulières. Du point de vue idéologique, les *junimistes* ont été des conservateurs par excellence, plus penchés vers la théorie que les autres. Tous les penseurs qui ont interprété l'histoire comme une lutte entre le progrès et la réaction ont considéré *Junimea* le fer de lance de cette dernière. En même temps, le *junimisme* n'est pas vu comme un courant politique et idéologique, mais comme un „vague état d'âme, un sentiment, plutôt qu'une théorie bien définie”, comme le disait Garabet Ibrăileanu². Zeletin

¹ Ioan Bulei, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

² G. Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească*, édition sélective, note și tabel cronologic de Const. Ciopraga, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1970, p. 85.

a repris l'idée¹ et Eugen Lovinescu a parlé d'un „état d'esprit caractéristique pour toute une génération”, une réaction normale à l'exaltation quarante-huitarde².

En ce qui concerne „la question nationale”, le *junimisme* a été l'expression de la raison. Même ceux qui chassent partout des nationalistes et des xénophobes, reconnaissent que le groupe de Carp et Maiorescu a rejeté tout excès. Dès sa formation, en 1870, il a combattu la *Fraction libre et indépendante*. En 1879, il a voté pour la révision de l'article 7, donc pour la naturalisation progressive des juifs. Dans son discours de février 1879, P.P. Carp a soutenu que les juifs ne représentaient pas un danger pour le pays, mais, au contraire, „une motivation pour dérouler, dans le champs économique, un travail plus intense qu'aujourd'hui”. En outre, même s'ils avaient représenté un danger, les mesures restrictives n'auraient pas été désirables, car, comme on pouvait observer du passé, elles étaient incapables d'atteindre leurs objectifs. La solution du „problème juif” n'était pas, à son avis, la marginalisation ou l'élimination par voie législative. La cause du problème n'était pas la situation des juifs, mais celle des roumains. Cette idée a été reprise plusieurs fois. Le roumains devaient améliorer leur état matériel et culturel pour résoudre le „problème juif”: „Si vous voulez vous débarrasser des juifs, il n'y a qu'un seul moyen: travaillez et civilisez-vous!”. Même si, en principe, il était favorable à la révision, Carp considérait que ni l'exclusion, ni la naturalisation immédiate et totale n'étaient pas possibles, que „la question juive ne peut être résolue qu'en dérangeant à la fois le pays et l'Europe”. Il proposait un délai de 15 ans, au but duquel les roumains soient convaincus que leur peur manquait de fondement³.

Du point de vue économique, les *junimistes* ont fluctué entre le libre-échangeisme et le protectionnisme. Le premier est saisissable surtout dans leurs articles, où ils citaient les ouvrages de Friedrich List et de son vulgarisateur roumain, Dionisie Pop Marțian⁴. En outre, du sein du groupe se sont affirmés deux des plus connus partisans du protectionnisme: Eminescu et Xenopol, qu'on doit regarder comme des cas spéciaux. L'esprit critique ne permettait pas une option ferme pour l'une ou l'autre des théories économiques. L'option devait être faite en fonction du problème discuté et des circonstances. Carp a critiqué le protectionnisme radical des libéraux: „... n'oublions pas que même le système du *protectionnisme* a ses limites”. Il aurait été une grande erreur de le

¹ Ștefan Zeletin, *Burghezii română. Originea și rolul ei istoric* (1925), dans Ștefan Zeletin, *Burghezii română *** Neoliberalismul*, ediție alcătuită de Cristian Preda, note bibliografice de C.D. Zeletin, studiu introductiv de Cristian Preda, București, Editura Nemira, 1997, p. 243.

² E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, ediție și studiu introductiv de Z. Ornea, București, Editura Minerva, 1997, p. 188-189.

³ P.P. Carp, *op. cit.*, p. 80-83.

⁴ Z. Ornea, *op. cit.*, p. 239-241.

considérer la seule voie pour le développement de l'économie nationale. Ses exemples étaient l'Hongrie et les Etats-Unis. De plus, le protectionnisme ne devrait pas être total, mais limité „aux produits étroitement liés à l'état du moment, c'est-à-dire, chez nous, l'agriculture”¹. Plus tard, en 1895, Carp a présenté directement et clairement „sa doctrine en matière économique”. En rejetant les théories abstraites, il s'est montré le partisan d'un état minimal, plus libéral que ses adversaires libéraux: „Que l'état fasse ce qui est strictement nécessaire, qu'il mette les gens en mesure de travailler, mais puis qu'il les laisse travailler, sans croire qu'il a le devoir de les nourrir, de les habiller, de les guérir ou de le faire je ne sais quoi, en les traitant comme des drones”².

En pratique, les politiciens *junimistes* se sont montrés de véritables défenseurs du libre-échange. On a deux exemples suggestifs: La Convention commerciale avec l'Autriche-Hongrie (1875) et la Loi des mines (1895). La première, vigoureusement critiquée par les libéraux comme un coup donné à l'économie nationale, a eu, selon les *junimistes*, un rôle plutôt politique qu'économique, car „elle reconnaissait d'une manière ostentatoire l'émancipation économique de la Roumanie de la suzeraineté de la Porte et prévoyait la reconnaissance de l'indépendance complète”, comme le disait Titu Maiorescu³. La loi de 1895, elle aussi condamnée par les libéraux, a accordé une liberté contrôlée au capital étranger, n'étant qu'une solution pragmatique pour le problème de l'insuffisance du capital autochtone⁴.

La politique économique n'est qu'un des arguments apportés au soutien de l'accusation de cosmopolitisme faites aux *junimistes*. L'autre est théorique, il concerne le criticisme de leur idéologie, et vient de ceux qui s'étaient proposé de contester le *junimisme* avec ses propres armes. Après avoir reproché aux libéraux le caractère abstrait de leur politique, l'ignorance concernant réalités roumaines, la rupture du rythme normal de l'évolution nationale, les conservateurs et surtout les *junimistes* ont vu toutes ces idées tournées contre eux. D'ici l'accusation d'antipatriotisme ou cosmopolitisme. Zeletin a essayé plus tard d'expliquer le cosmopolitisme *junimiste*. Son accusation n'est pas explicite, mais on peut la déduire. L'idéologue „néolibéral” a voulu montrer que tout le courant de pensée dit „réactionnaire” n'a été qu'un „simple formalisme”. Paradoxalement, la théorie des formes sans fond n'aurait été elle-même qu'une forme sans fond. La „réaction” *junimiste* est définie comme „un paquet de formules générales empruntées aux auteurs étrangers” et „au-delà de la recherche des faits”⁵. Historiquement, ces reproches peuvent être facilement

¹ P.P. Carp, *op. cit.*, p. 43-44.

² *Ibidem*, p. 454.

³ Apud Z. Ornea, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 247.

⁵ Ștefan Zeletin, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

rejetés par des exemples concrets. Lovinescu, l'autre grand critique de la „réaction” a considéré que le manque d'originalité n'était qu'une question marginale. C'est l'action de l'idéologie *junimiste* sur la culture roumaine de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle, qui était vraiment importante¹.

A leur époque, les *junimiste* n'ont du répondre qu'à des reproches plus simples. Chaque fois quand ils étaient nommés „cosmopolites”, il suffisait de répondre avec les mots de Maiorescu: „Tous, sans exceptions, nous avons été et nous sommes les partisans de l'idée de nationalité, et tous ceux qui ont soutenu que nous sommes contraire à cette idée a soutenu une inexactitude”².

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*** *A fi conservator*, antologie, comentarii și bibliografie de Ioan Stanomir și Laurențiu Vlad, București, Universitatea din București, Institutul de cercetări politice – Ed. Meridiane, colecția „Studia politica analecta”, 2002.

*** *Discursurile lui Barbu Katargiu* (1859-1862 iunie 8), culese și însoțite de o notiță istorică asupra familiei Katargiu și de o biografie a oratorului de Ang. Demetrescu, Tipo-litografia Eduard Wiegand, Bucuresci, 1886, p. LVII-LX.

*** *Doctrinile partidelor politice*, ediție și note de Petre Dan, București, Editura Garamond, 1994.

¹ Eugen Lovinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 189-190.

² Apud Z. Ornea, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 57.

**SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE MACEDONIAN CHURCH-SCHOOL
COMMUNITIES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION
TO THE MACEDONIAN LEGAL HISTORY (XIX CENTURY)**

*Irina Simonovska-Spirkovska**

Abstract

The occurrence, development, and meaning of the activities of church – school communities (with a special emphasis on the autonomous legal aspect) have a great significance for the social existence of the Macedonian nation – also representing one of the important points that are invaluable for state – legal development of Macedonia. The basis was set church and customary norms of the past, practicing procedures and management of many social relationships between people, legal entities and institutions, thus embodying modern views of life, slowly leading to the present state and positive law. This has shown a clear confirmation of the Macedonian identity.

Key words: *Church, Communities, Ottoman Empire, Influences, Church Law, Customary Law*

Introduction

The church-school communities in Macedonia and their competences as the subject matter of this article, represent unavoidable and prominent issues in the acquisition and finalization of Macedonian independence process. The main reason for casting light on this historical aspect is a determination of a very important process for the Macedonian people (through the legal prism). Thus, the above has been perceived as one of the additional arguments for the struggle for civil emancipation, which had not only been reduced to declarative thoughts and ideas.

This autonomous manner could be described as another tool for the social, political, cultural, commercial and national recognition of the Macedonian people as a separate nation; it had created its own assumptions on organizing and arrangement of social life in different organizational forms. The primary focal point of the above organization is represented by the family as the basic social cell, its existence and all kinds of associated social relations (in this

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sense – the family relationships), followed by various types of organizational forms, such as the communities; the unavoidable role of the church, altogether inspired by the most important goal – establishment of a sovereign Macedonian state and an emancipation of all other forces, which, over different time periods, had been claiming their sovereignty over the territory and its people.

The Macedonian church-school communities and the intelligentsia are one of the most important carriers of the Macedonian revival process and strengthening of the Macedonian national consciousness, acting together and complementary not only in a declarative manner, but also by setting the first steps towards full autonomy and further, a state in the proper sense of the word.

There is an important distinction, important for the study of the activity of the church school communities. Firstly, the time when an autonomous Orthodox archbishopric church had existed, having the communities under its jurisdiction, followed by periods when they had been heavily influenced (even ruled) by the Greek and Bulgarian propaganda. However, both cases have witnessed a constant element of self-government. The latter is particularly evident in the struggle against the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whereas the lower layers of the Macedonian intelligentsia have fought for supremacy. In this sense, one part of Macedonian communities had retrieved the Macedonian supremacy over the influences, together with forming of new ones. The ecclesiastical element, in the case of an autocephalous Macedonian Church (as well as in an absence of such, indirectly), through its activities and auxiliary bodies (the communities) – had acted as one of the decisive elements for building of the Macedonian statehood in its early form.

The communities, along with other organizational forms of action, such as guilds, even the revolutionary organizations, had been acting as representatives of the most important forms of articulation of Macedonian peoples' interests. The various national norms, rules of conduct and regulation of social relationships (rooted in the church and common law), have become a symbol and guardian of peoples' tradition and authenticity on a certain area, as well as a guarantee its survival and development.

1. The Existence and Place of the Communities in the Ottoman State

Macedonia, throughout different chronological periods had been under the jurisdiction of other states (the Byzantine Empire, Slavic organizations, Bulgaria, Ottoman Empire, the states created at the beginning of XX century). The related legal systems and norms, with their *ius cogens* have edited the fundamental socio-economic relations in Macedonia and their impact on the Macedonian law; the Macedonian church-school communities represent a system which is not isolated, but based on coexistence and upgrade with items from other jurisdictions.

In the referent period, Macedonia, as well as the neighboring countries, had been under the Ottoman rule. The Empire had been granting certain rights of Orthodox peoples in few social areas, which had primarily been under the responsibility of the churches. The most powerful Orthodox church on the territory of the Ottoman Empire was certainly the Ecumenical Patriarchate. According to the above, it possessed the right to rule and manage all of the churches and monasteries under its jurisdiction, had the right to appoint bishops (with a consent by the Ottoman Sublime Porte); the Patriarch had been recognized as a supreme justice authority for the whole clergy; the bishops had possessed a limited authority of settling marital disputes and issues; authority of taxation on the behalf of the church and clergy; attendance to the civilians' needs; the Orthodox Christian church had been given the right to dispose of their properties; the bishops had acquired the right to attend meetings of the administrative Council headquarters of their departments etc.¹

The crucial attribute of the communities would be the word "public", since they have been established and modeled by the people. They have occurred in an extremely difficult time – when the Macedonian people did not have a formal state, as well as recognized legal and ecclesiastical apparatus. They were derived from and selected by the people – with responsibilities to care for and manage the religious, school and other social needs of the people, or, the so called "public" affairs.

Therefore, they can be considered as the main pillar and engine of the overall socio – then political life of the Macedonian people. Unique in their character, based on democracy and self-management, they had one of the strongest selling assets for a real pre-state organizing competence, especially in the absence of an independent state and not least – an autocephalous Macedonian church. Thus, a thought by the famous XIX century Macedonian revolutionary Petar Pop Arsov is fully justified, that the communities constitute a kind of an "informal parliament".

As a support to the above assertions, comes the historical fact that the Macedonian people were increasingly refraining from the strict church-feudal framework in addressing church-school and social problems, implemented by the Ottoman state, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Bulgarian Exarchate. They were beginning to exercise regulation of almost all their social problems, primarily the matters of lesser Ottoman interest. In the middle of the XIX century, the people had managed to reach a high level of political maturation through its national revival process, followed by a short political liberation from the Ottoman Empire (through the ten days lasting Krushevo Republic preceded by the Ilinden Uprising against the Ottoman rule) and establish a new social

¹ *History of the Macedonian People*, Skopje, Institute for National History, 1988, p. 123-125.

order through the system norms and institutes of the revolutionary government. In this respect, the continuity of the Macedonian state and the acquisition of state – legal prerogatives were assured. It had continued throughout the mid – XX century with the Yugoslav Federation Republic and later in 1991, with the creation of an independent Republic of Macedonia.

2. The Structure and Organization of the Communities

An interesting fact on the communities' origin is that the church construction boards, had in fact been transformed into parishes/communities, managed by the citizens themselves. They gradually had transformed into institutions of representative character, with an established community apparatus. The communities had been largely a product “of the guild members and merchants”, who “gave” their representatives as members of the community¹.

Besides their regular commercial activities, with the help of the guilds' participation and donations, the communities had directly contributed to the realization of the religious, school and other social activities among the Macedonian population. They had especially contributed to the raising of the social, cultural and national consciousness at the time being². The guilds, in turn, have been defined as one of the greatest “culprits” for the creation of church-school communities and their way of functioning³. The main prerogative for the communities' activities and the social life in general were the producers of the commodities (artisan producers and merchants). It was difficult to imagine the activities of municipalities and social life in a city without the participation of those who had produced commodities, such as the artisan producers and traders, organized in guilds⁴.

The community structures had been elected at the communal assemblies. There were significant differences in the way community assemblies have elected members of the communities themselves, whose number was not firmly established. In some communities, the members were elected by the guild exclusively, in others – by the town dignitaries, or by the religious believers, or by the villagers' representatives and so on. The above election process had been

¹ *Ibidem*.

² Manoleva-Mitrovska Dance, *The Guild Organizations and their Activities Regarding the Customary Law and the Autonomous Norms*, Contributions for the Customary Law of the Macedonian People, Volume I, Skopje, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2000, p. 98-103.

³ The guilds had a goal and task to address organizational and economic issues of its membership, to regulate domestic relations in the guild and individual economic communities (shops) and meet all the needs related to military activities. *Ibidem*.

⁴ For further references see: Krste Bitovski, *The Continuity of the Macedonian Revolutionary Struggle XIX – XX century* (in Macedonian), Skopje, Institute for National History, 1988.

accordance with the Hatt-ı Hümayun, the Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856, with one of the articles stating: "... *There will be a reform of the municipal councils composition and areas to guarantee the honesty of the election of delegates to the Muslim, Christian and other municipalities and freedom on the voting of councils ...*"¹.

3. The Macedonian Struggle against Neighboring Church and Secular Influences in the XIX century

After the abolition of the autonomous Macedonian church, the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767, all of the respective dioceses came under the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Thereafter, it began to implement a policy of fierce negation of everything previously done by the Archbishopric. Firstly, it began to change diocesan bishops, replacing them by the phanariotes, conducting church services in Greek language. The bishops were assisted by their helpers called novice priests, acting a great administrative role with actual power in terms of management of dioceses².

However, sometime in the second half of the XIX century, the Macedonian struggle against Greek propaganda had received a different dimension. Whereas the municipalities were still in the hands of graecized strata, the ethnic Macedonian citizenry had fought for realization of their interests by seizing the mentioned power. Thus, a new danger was lurking on the behalf of the Ottoman government, recognizing only the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, which can be described by the factual inability of the communities to have their own representatives in the Majlis-Turkish Council. However, despite the numerous interventions by the Greek bishops, the local Ottoman authorities had not conducted any particular pressure on the emancipated communities, thus tolerating them for purely practical reasons. First, the Ottoman government had taken to intensifying the split between the Christian

¹ Hatt-ı Hümayun, *Documents for the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Sovereignty and a National State*, Volume I, Philosophical Faculty (Group on National History), Skopje, 1981, p. 178-180.

² "...*They could have represented the bishop in Majlis in the Governing Council, the Ottoman court and in many other instances. They had the right to investigate the church crimes of priests, punish minor offenses, so the punished priest had to serve his sentence there. They cared for filling in vacant parishes ... gave approvals for weddings, participated in the making of wills, family and marital settled disputes, etc. . They had a regular income from other church matters. No marriage could be concluded without the permission of the oeconomus (administrator) and the bishop. They also had the power to impose taxes, similar to the ones of the Ottoman Empire, whereas the service of the tax collectors was of limited duration. Driven by the desire for rapid enrichment, they often unfairly increased the tax sums...*" See in: Slavko Dimevski, *History of the Macedonian Orthodox Church*, Skopje, Makedonska Kniga, 1989, p. 322-323.

peoples in the empire¹. The unilateral cancellation of obedience to the Patriarchate had not been considered a permanent solution to the problem; the real challenge had been the obtaining a permanent ecclesiastical institution, relying on legitimacy – so that it would be recognized by the Sublime Porte or one of the Orthodox churches recognized by the Sublime Porte. Therefore, the citizens had begun to file frequent appeals to the Sublime Porte to consider their request for renewal of the Archdiocese.

On the other hand, in the 60's of the XIX century, neighboring Bulgaria had fought a battle for establishing its national church, with the help of Russian diplomacy. It was the time when a Bulgarian community in Constantinople had been substantially active, taking under "protection" some of the Macedonian church-school communities, promising to restore the Archdiocese. The Bulgarian Exarchate and the Bulgarian bourgeoisie had numerous aspirations to remove the Macedonian element of church organization. Out of all communities, the protests were loudest and most articulated in the town of Ohrid, being directed not only against the abolishment of the Ohrid diocese, but at the same time, asking the question of renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The mentioned request had relied on the former agreement with Bulgarian officials in Constantinople, according to which, the seat of the church would be in Ohrid². The Bulgarian Exarchate considered that the Macedonian civil element had many weaknesses and believed that it is not able to independently lead a struggle for its autocephalous Church, as it only chooses the influence – Greek or Bulgarian. However, the majority opted for the Exarchate (Bulgarian) jurisdiction.

Once there was a clear absence of a church as a pillar that will connect the communities, the Macedonian communities were frequently associating with other communities, based on common origin. The above had contributed to the national awakening of the Macedonian people and the efforts to establish their own church.

In the middle of the XIX century, the communities had acted relatively independent in terms of the Greek Patriarchate, as each community had its own way of coping with the Greek influence. For example, the Kukush community (close to the Macedonian – Greek border in present terms) had accepted a union with the Roman Catholic Church, the Skopje community had requested a Macedonian bishop and the Ohrid community was ardent in supporting of the Archdiocese renewal³.

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 347-348.

² *Ibidem*, p. 325.

³ Jovan Belchovski, *Macedonian Struggle for Church and National Independence in the XIX Century, Life and Activity of Slavko Dimevski, PhD (1920-1994)* (in Macedonian), Institute for

Given the fact that the Greek diocesan bishops were quite hostile towards the opening of Macedonian community schools, the communities could not expect any help, so they were forced to solve the technical problems of the financial support of schools, recruitment of teachers and etc. However, the economically underdeveloped communities had not been able to solve all the financial problems without help and donations from outside. It had forced them to turn to the economically developed municipalities, usually adjacent, possessing a financial capacity to intervene with lump sums¹.

In this regard, the Roman-Catholic, Romanian and Jewish communities have played a significant role. For example, the success of the communities that have been associated to the Roman Catholic Church in the 1870's have been due to the fulfillment of the Macedonian requirements for autonomy, i.e. choosing leading church figures from ethnic Macedonians, as well as respecting the local religious practices. However, due to the non-assignment of a Macedonian Archbishop, this Roman Catholic Union communities have fallen apart².

Another example would be the existence of the Romanian propaganda, whose target was the Vlach population, having also rebelled against the Patriarchy. The above propaganda takes place in the 1860's, having become synonymous with the foundation of the Romanian-Macedonian Committee, as well as the opening of several Vlach schools. The first community was established in 1863. The community had its own patron, the Vlach Masho Costa, serving as its president for many years, acting as a representative in the Majlis as well.

4. The Communal Activities

As stated previously, whereas the Ecumenical Patriarchate has not claimed an ecclesiastical authority, the power had been concentrated in the hands of the President of the community. At that time, the communities had been consisted of eight to twelve members. The head of the so-called patriarchal communities had been the bishop, assisted by his deputy. The supreme authority in all church and school communities had been represented by the communal assembly. The assembly had the authority to elect a number of authorities, primarily the so-called administrative educational and cultural institutions, hospitals, cemeteries, cathedrals, etc. Members of the educational,

National History, Institute for Sociological, Political and Legal Research – Skopje, 2007, p. 316-317.

¹ *Ibidem*.

² Aleksandar Trajanovski, *The Appearance of the Uniate, Protestant, Jewish and Vlach Church-School Communities in the 60's and 70' of the XIX century* (in Macedonian), Article Proceedings, Bitola, 1988, p. 52.

administrative and hospital administrations were also members of the so – called community board¹.

There had been a number of subsidiary bodies with various competences boards as well, taking care of the daily needs of the people².

The communities had covered competencies in few areas such as the: construction, publishing, health, social, religious, educational and judicial. In some settlements, the educational activity had been concentrated exclusively in the hands of the communities. After the mentioned abolishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric, there had been a clear lack of a unifying element that would bring together all the communal competences. Out of all these, the educational, religious and legal competences have been marked as the most pronounced.

As asserted, the church competence is considered as one of the most important, rooting from the fact that the communal assets and activities were condensed mostly in the churches and religious buildings (monasteries, hospices etc.). The church activity had consisted of the construction, reconstruction, restoring and ongoing care of the listed buildings. More specifically, there was a separate body called a church administration – “nastojništvo”, with a term of one to two years. It had been elected by the communal assembly, convened by the President of the community. The mentioned assembly had been determining the competence territory of the individual parishes, forbidding an overlap of different parishes. The church administration had been engaged in activities directly related to the religious life on a certain geographic territory, had collected financial contributions (for example by selling candles), had taken care of the purchase of the church assets and church inventory, cared for the supplies, collected church taxes, issued certain religious church documents, cared for celebrating of the religious holidays, maintained the church and monastery movable and immovable property, lease of real property and so on³.

One of the most important activities as well, was the educational activity. This took place at a time of an official state absence. At the beginning of the XIX century, in Macedonia, the schools were predominantly Greek influenced. After the liberation of Greece, the Greek government has laid the foundation for the Greek foreign policy, known as the “*Megali Idea*” having had the ultimate goal of creating a “*Magna Graecia*”. The mentioned had prompted few eminent Macedonians who had already articulated certain awareness of Slavic origin and emancipation of the Greek influence. Some of the Macedonian towns in the

¹ Aleksandar Hristov, Nikola Sotirovski, *History of Yugoslav States and Peoples*, Skopje, 1980, p. 172-174.

² Aleksandar Trajanovski, *The Church-School Communities in Macedonia* (in Macedonian), Institute for National History, 1988, p. 122.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 129.

middle of the XIX century have shown a great interest in the popular education, beginning with the opening of the first secular schools. In this regard, the popular Ottoman Reform Edict, the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856 had provided certain rights for the communities in terms of education, proving useful for spreading the enlightenment in Macedonia. Notably, one article stated: “...*All of my subjects Empire will be accepted regardless of the state in civilian and military schools as eligible for age and qualifications provided by the organic rules of the aforementioned schools ...*”¹.

The Macedonian citizenship had also taken interest in socialization of the previous church and private schools, to make them more accessible to the people². Thus, they had turned into public schools, free of tuitions, becoming more accessible to the poorer students. Seeking help from neighboring countries and more developed church-school communities, as Constantinople, had become a practice. There are even known cases of staff members having set permanently in Macedonia. The management activities in the communities had been entrusted to the school administrations (“*nastojnishtva*”) as operating authorities, which, at that time worked on almost all kinds of educational issues (ex. purchase of textbooks and teaching means, school inventory, granting scholarships for poorer students, seeking for and making contacts with educational staff, submitting reports on their work, establishing communal libraries, opening schools and so on). For the achievement of the above stated, the communities had needed funds, usually received from the Macedonian intelligentsia, guilds and their voluntary deposits. They donated financial means and other assets. The community had their own budget at disposal³.

5. Legal Competences of the Macedonian Communities – the Role of Legal Influences in Creating an Autonomous Legal System

The legal and juridical competence of a state (or a relatively autonomous political system) is considered as one of the requirements for its survival. The colorful history of the Balkan Peninsula represents a true conglomerate of autonomous legal systems and legal influences. In addition to the above, each community, whether formally defined or not, requires certain legitimacy. The legitimacy derives from its ability to autonomously regulate social relationships, using certain rules and norms of behavior.

The wider Balkans history witnesses many influences from other legal systems. The law, used within the church – school communities (having in fact

¹ Hatt-ı Hümayun, *Documents for the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Sovereignty and a National State*, Volume I, Philosophical Faculty (Group on National History), Skopje, 1981, p. 178-180.

² Trajanovski Aleksandar, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

³ *Ibidem*.

set a basis for their legal emancipation), represents an interesting combination of church law, common law, Sharia law (with a necessary practical twist) and idiosyncratic customary rules.

The role of the autonomous common law in this case is very much underlined – as a dominant form of popular contribution to the organization of everyday life on a particular territory. This legal form represents a consequence of the centuries – long tradition of practicing the customary rules, heavily influenced by different legal aspects of the countries which ruled the Macedonian territory.

The church law is a kind of legal system that has been perceived as very eminent for the entire Eastern European region, under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox churches. It has been characterized by developed material – legal basis in terms of established rules/laws, followed by a relatively strict organization, jurisprudence and so on. However, despite this relatively highly defined organization, over the centuries, the Church (and its law), did not exist as an isolated system, as it had to coexist with various states and political communities, as well as with the law of organized groups of people (the common law). In this sense, the coexistence between the church and the political communities had been characterized by altering the church scope of action by the state, according to the real power of the former. The Church, as history shows, has been outliving the state, regardless of the specific forms of social structure and ideologies.

The customary law, as a source in Macedonia, had been followed by the same qualification as other customary rights in the region. It had derived from the field of customs that existed and were applied together with the written positive law in many areas of life. A good example for the autonomous existence of customary rules is the fact that the family and marital legal rules that had regulated the lives of Muslim Macedonians, up to date, is in fact no different than the one that took place before the process of islamization. Another example would be that stored customary legal rules in the field of marriage and family are interchangeable both for the Macedonians living in the country but for the diaspora as well. The above is suggesting their existence before the process of islamization, i.e. the issue of roots in the time before and after their settlement in the Balkans or about their transition to Christianity, around the XVIth century¹.

Essentially, the church and customary law represent two separate legal systems, which, had been tolerating and even supplementing each other. For example, in certain historical periods, the church had accepted some customs,

¹ Mile Hadzivasilev-Vardarski, *The Customary Marital and Family Law of the Macedonian People* (in Macedonian), Contributions for the Customary Law of the Macedonian People, Volume I, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Skopje, 2000, p. 123.

even though it had been vehemently against the above. Some authors believe that this consideration cannot be seen as a reactionary, since certain customary practices were indeed directed against the Christian faith and moral, while others were derived from the Ottoman legal influence, so they had seriously threatened the ethnic identity of enslaved Christian peoples. The aforementioned assertion puts an outline that the church was meant to defend the uniformity of law in the Ottoman period¹.

The Orthodox Church as a concept and a concrete item, had remained relatively the same, regardless of the aforementioned state legal systems². In this sense, the coexistence between the church and political communities is characterized by changing the scope of action of the church on the behalf of the state, according to the real power of the former. The Church, as shown throughout different historical periods and conditions, has outlived all states, regardless of the specific forms of social structure and ideologies³.

In the very traditional Ottoman state, a sharp distinction between the religious and the secular had been clearly absent. The religious aspect of the Ottoman state and legal system is especially important, since it had been predominant in the socio-political structure. The Ottoman state in its structure is defined as a theocratic monarchy, meaning that the overall social system was based on the Islamic religion. The free exercise of religious and cultural practices by non-Muslim nations is a very prominent feature of the whole Ottoman rule, so the cultural identity of the subjects was, in some way, being modeled through the cultural and religious tolerance that was part of the Ottoman colonizers code. The famous Millet system represented a useful form of granting autonomy to the peoples under Ottoman rule. In the Ottoman Empire, three millets were recognized as official: Jewish, Orthodox, Armenian, while the fourth is actually Muslim, obtaining the official millet status. Every non-Muslim millet had been represented appropriately in the Ottoman system, having been allowed certain autonomy in religious, cultural and legal sense, as well as local self-government⁴.

Besides the main legal sources, there are subsidiary sources, witnessed regionally, and more specifically on Macedonian territory. They can even be more specifically defined as legal influences and implants.

¹ Haralambos K. Papastatis, *Church and Ottoman Law in the Balkans During the Ottoman Rule* (in Serbian), Customary Law and Self – Governing in the Balkans and the Neighboring Countries, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Beograd, 1974, p. 197.

² Dragan Nikolic, *Fragments of the Legal History* (in Serbian), Nish, 1995, p. 204.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 205.

⁴ Kevin Goodwin, *The Tanzimat and the Problem of Political Authority in the Ottoman Empire: 1839-1876*, Honors Projects Overview, Paper 5, 2006, p. 12-13.

A good example is the expansion of the modern civil law, gaining great strength and supremacy after the French bourgeois revolution of 1789. The practice of the Sharia legal system is pointed as another good example, having penetrated the Balkans soil fairly early, sometime after the arrival of the Turks in the Balkan Peninsula. The Ottomans, as it is commonly known, had applied the Sharia legal system, which had favored the feudal system of the Arab region; having just won the Balkan Peninsula, this legal system was predominant until their departure from the designated area. Its significance derives from the fact that it represents the official state law in this area. However, the legal relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims had been evident anywhere where the legal competence had not been in the hands of municipalities. In some parts, such as the family and inheritance law for example, it had been continuously applied even after the Second World War. The aforementioned aspect is supplemented by the fact, that even in present terms; the positive law is covered by parts of such customary rights and rules, thus filling legal loopholes.

Seen through a more specific territorial perspective, a good example would be the Serbian and Bulgarian customs and traditions, as well. Although the Bulgarian and Serbian historiography are fairly poor with written material from this period, there are archives' materials proving that both Bulgaria and Serbia have in fact similar solutions for different situations, corresponding to the similar socio-economic conditions that have been found in the three countries in the mentioned period, due to their mutual influences. Since the Balkans were under Ottoman administration (heavily based on feudalism), the feudalism as such, despite its original elements, contained borrowings from the Byzantine, Roman and other legal systems. In this case, some countries, such as Greece and Bulgaria, had been transferring the influences to the territory of Macedonia.

Bulgaria, for example, shows similar general social and economic conditions in the aforementioned period, as it had also been under Ottoman rule. Both Bulgarian and Macedonian communities have enjoyed a great legitimacy and discretion in regulating the many social and legal relations between the populations (considered the protector of the above in the fight against excessive taxation, since they were tax collectors). Similarly, they have been known to actively participate in resolving family disputes, applying the marital, property and criminal law, with necessary parts and application of Sharia law¹.

¹ Marija Manolova, *Composition and Legal Competences of the Bulgarian Communities During the Last Decades of the Ottoman Rule* (in Serbian), Customary Law and Self – Governing in the Balkans and the Neighboring Countries, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Beograd, 1974, p. 239-240.

The legal aspect represents, in fact, a part of a much broader and more significant multidisciplinary area that deserves much more serious and deeper approach. The legal aspects, based on legal rules and customs used in the past, had not only supplemented and perfected the legal system in general, but have also stood as a significant representative of a national culture. That culture, with all its components, should not be discarded as a past category.

In few words, the widest juridical competencies of the communities were in the area of civil law (more accurately – family and inheritance law). In other legal branches, such as the criminal, the communities were practiced to a lesser extent, i.e. the extent that was allowed by the Ottoman state law.

The South Slavic peoples, in the more distant history, were quite familiar with the communal organization (but without the prefix church). That organization, as previously mentioned, had reflected the interests of the higher social classes (rich merchants, craftsmen etc.). But, they had offered some protection for the lower strata's legal interests as well. That could be most easily detected in the area of civil law, but it can be also found in the area of the criminal-legal regulation (for ex. the minor offenses, such as assault, petty theft, damage to agricultural crops etc.)¹.

The roots (sources) of this hybrid legal system stem from customary law and the church (Orthodox) law of the past. In terms of the article, it could be asserted, that the communities had played a major role in taking care of the citizens' needs; moreover, they played a crucial role in the implementation of the aforementioned system on a particular territory. After the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1767, the Macedonians had solved and taken care of their family, marital, criminal, property and other forms of issues through the community sessions. The hybridization is a logical consequence of a "collision" or "cohabitation" of several legal systems and their autonomic application, tailored to the conditions of a certain territory, applicability, time and subjects.

The social processes reflect a need of creating a new social and legal organization, at a certain degree of their development, through transplants and borrowings from the more developed systems. They implement certain principles, practices, rules, regulations and institutions. These assertions had always existed, although with different social roles in a different time and historical context. Thus, the "copying" or "borrowing" can be considered a useful tool, practiced voluntarily (or forcefully) between two or more groups, two or more social entities, two or more legal systems – that possess an appropriate social, cultural and ethnic background. It is important to realize that

¹ Mihail Andreyev, *Customary Law of the Southern Slavic People and their Self – Governing Organizations During the Ottoman Rule* (in Serbian), Customary Law and Self – Governing in the Balkans and the Neighboring Countries, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Beograd, 1974, p. 20.

rules and regulations may be altered, depending on their nature or essence. Indeed, the impact factor (and its longevity), suggest that a given society (or social community) and its legal system are in a tight complex relation.

The essence of the communal role comes to light in the aspect of their appliance of law; that was simply the fastest and most efficient way to solve various kinds of and regulate social relationships. A greater acknowledgment of their legitimacy had relied precisely on their authority, since most of the decisions were accepted and respected not only by locals but also by the higher authorities of the Ottoman justice.

It must be mentioned that, some parts of the customary/common law, in the specified historical periods, have been partly found in rudimentary form (more specifically detected in the property and commercial law); however, the above does not diminish its importance. As stated, the latter had gained a strong form of legitimacy by the mere fact of implementation, followed by a wide acceptance by the people, as most distinguished manager of social relations.

Conclusion

The occurrence, development, and meaning of the activities of church-school communities (with a special emphasis on the autonomous legal aspect) have a great significance for the social existence of the Macedonian nation – representing one of the important points that are invaluable for state – legal development of Macedonia.

Thus, the people were improving and cultivating their own social life, by creating new standards for the organization of their own social existence. The basis was set of nearly the same church and customary norms of the more distant past, practicing procedures and management of many social relationships between people, legal entities and institutions, thus embodying modern views of life, slowly leading to the present state and positive law. This has shown a clear confirmation of the Macedonian identity.

The absence of a sovereign state does not reduce the importance of building social relationships, which are broadly similar to many nations of the Balkan Peninsula. They have all witnessed a similar organization of self – government, practicing customs and customary rights, with traces detected today, especially in terms of the civil law. The historical continuity of the above self-government is particularly long, being most notable in the XIX century, when most of the Balkan nations simultaneously fought for liberation from Ottoman rule and to build their own national states.

The Macedonian legal system in the XIX century, along with the other competencies and activities of autonomous Macedonian authorities, stands as a strong expression of the high awareness for statehood. There is also an undisputed and relatively high degree of democracy in the above processes. The

mere existence of an Assembly, the majority voting method, the principle of delegation of the community members of the governing bodies, respect of the authorities' decisions, is actually a reflection of the consciousness of a compulsory system of regulation. The system of self-government and the legal competences by the communities on the Macedonian territory, has witnessed a relatively slow but steady growth-primarily through the tradition. The evolution of collective responsibility, in the legal but also the wider social context, has become a symbol of the struggle for individuality and independence.

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**THE IMPACT OF THE BERLIN TREATY OF 1878 ON THE
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION**

*Aleksandar Spirkovski**

Abstract

The Congress of Berlin re-established the status quo in accordance with the interests of the dominant European Powers: the equilibristic Great Britain, the newly emerged Germany, the dual monarchy of Austro-Hungary, all of them interested to contain the rising influence of Russia, envisaged after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the provisions of the San Stefano treaty. Hence the Treaty defined the new territorial reorganisation of the Balkans in order to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and it provided a reformatory framework for the European provinces. In that sense, Article 23 of the Treaty provided that statutory changes would be introduced in the Macedonian vilayets, similar to the status of the island of Crete. Nevertheless, such reformatory endeavours had to be introduced in the reality of the existing Ottoman *rum millet*, a system of a certain level of political autonomy granted to the communities defined on the basis of their confession and religious affiliation. Furthermore, the reforms were prevented by the reluctance of the Porte, combined with the rising German interest in the region. Nevertheless, the provisions of the Berlin Treaty had an immense role in the definition of the ideological objectives of the Macedonian liberation movement (especially IMRO) and served as main postulates for the proposed reformatory programmes of the Great Powers concerning Macedonia, in the period of 1903-08.

Key words: *San Stefano Treaty, Berlin Treaty, Ottoman Empire, Millet System, the Great Powers, IMRO, Macedonia, Reforms*

Introduction – Preconditions prior to the Congress, the Eastern Crisis and the Russo-Turkish War 1877-1878

Historically, the influence of the Berlin Treaty on the development of the Macedonian Question is of undisputed significance. The expression of the interests of the Great Powers, especially after the events of San Stefano, in regional Balkan terms, caused irreversible consequences that shaped the ideological postulates of the new emerging national movements, within the already existing historical circumstances of the shaken Ottoman Empire.

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The concept of diplomacy had been established during the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and had an outstanding contribution to the maintenance of the security in Europe, and this significance was visible throughout the nineteenth century. However, there was serious unpreparedness of the European powers to efficiently disarm their military capacities, hence no real demand was introduced, which was unprecedented, as not even Britain was prepared to denounce its naval power¹. That was a time of redefinition of the national rise of certain powers, while the ruling elites no longer opposed the changes in the policy courses. The war had become a political means, tending to last as short as possible, in order to gain certain political or rather territorial concessions, instead of being presented as a method of destruction. This change of late nineteenth century warfare had been influenced by the economic and technological progress, with the industrialized powers of Western Europe taking the lead, while the backward ones, such as Russia, were still dominant².

In a time of nationally powered Europe, the Ottoman Empire was still multi-national and multi-religious, enforcing economic relations, while the abandoned ancient European regime, based on land ownership and exploitation, was stagnating in the pre-industrial status³. The Porte was facing discontent in its own backyard – the loud voice of change invoked by its own progressive representatives of the aristocratic class, aware of the stagnating stage of the empire. These young aristocrats, known as “Westerners”, educated in accordance with the Western principles (after politically defeating the reactionary forces in 1826⁴), exerted substantial influence on the conduct of both the internal and foreign policy of the Empire, launching series of reformations. Still, the critical effect of the Eastern Question was irreversible – the economic reforms had a reverted outcome, hence no real ground for building competitive economy within European frames, led to further discontent and reactionary enhancement in the Empire. The result was the establishment of the regime of Abdul Hamid and his centralised conduct of reactionary policy, carefully concentrating and controlling all centres of political power around him. The Ottoman policies became even more coercive and reactionary than ever, in the best manner depicted in the treatment of the Empires’ internal problems, such as the national-awakening riots and rebellions of the Balkan people. The mere process of stagnation and dissolution of the

¹ C.K. Webster, *The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815*, Humphrey Milford, London, Oxford University Press, 1919, p. 147-148.

² F.R. Bridge, Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System, 1815-1914*, London, Longman, 1980, p. 82-83.

³ Marian Kent, *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, London, Frank Cass., 1996, p. 5-6.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

Ottoman Empire, from the 1820's onwards, challenged the interests of the great imperial powers at the time – Russia, Great Britain and Austro-Hungary. France also took interest in expanding its sphere of influence, however aggravated by the fact of internal political turmoil and absence of immediate vicinity, regarding the Ottoman Empire. Hence, the latter's policy converges with the British one, regarding the status quo preservation. The dissolution of the Empire would mean one thing (in terms of power politics): an open access to the Mediterranean Sea via the Bosphorus and Dardanelle straits, especially in terms of naval prevalence.

Russia was no exception. In the first decades of incumbency of the Eastern Question, Russia found the opportunity of imposing its imperial power over the decaying Empire. With the beginning of the Balkan people's rebellions against the Ottoman rule (the first Serbian Uprising, the Greek War of Independence), Russia had the inadmissible opportunity to be presented as a patron of the rising Balkan nations, primarily for the common Orthodox identity. Complementarily, tsar Nicholas I was considered a sworn enemy of the liberalistic wave, which stranded Europe in 1848 and claimed to restore autocracy by crushing the signs of revolution, wherever it may emerge. In this respect, Russia had positioned itself as a sole power ready to challenge the weakened Ottoman Empire by itself, trying to impose influence on the emerging young states on the Balkan Peninsula. After the Crimean War 1854-56, had asserted that any unilateral belligerent attempt of crushing the Ottomans would be prevented by the intervention of the other European powers, primarily Britain, Russia never declined from the policy of expansionism and coercion regarding the region. Now, the period 1876-77 was once again presented as an opportunity for Russia to conduct the final attempt of spreading the influence over the Balkan Ottoman reigns. Another wave of national rebellions against the Ottoman rules in the Balkans emerged in the form of the Bulgarian Uprising in 1876 and the Kresna Uprising in Macedonia. The Tsar, instigated by the fearsome crush of the Bulgarian Uprising (led by the autocrat Abdul Hamid), used it as a reason for declaring war to the Porte. This provoked reactions from the rest of the major powers.

Great Britain was quite on the opposite scale of interest. Finding itself at the peak of its national power, mostly due to the global naval predominance and strong commercial network over the world, Britain would strongly preserve the status quo of the conditions and prevent any other power in Europe to challenge and enhance its naval power. This was one of the premises regarding the Ottoman Empire as well, hence the Empire in XIX century already spread all over the Mediterranean Sea and comprised the neuralgic points for the British naval interest – the Bosphorus access to the Sea and the Persian Gulf in Asia. This had required an active interest in the political processes within the Empire,

as well as prevention of any other power to use the advantage of imposition over the Porte. Therefore, Britain would always directly oppose Russia in this sense, as long as the latter did not renounce its imperial appetites. The declaration of war in 1877, once again provoked British intervention.

Austro-Hungary had different reasons to be interested in the Eastern Question. The heterogenic empire, comprised of various nations, cultures and religions, had sufficient reasons to worry about its own integrity and continuously to undertake cunning political methods of prevention and self-preservation¹. In this respect, any rebellious tendency of the Balkan people, especially the Slavic people, was considered a sign of trouble for Vienna, endangering its reign over the Balkan territories. Aware of the cultural and religious paternalism that Russia cultivated towards the orthodox Slavic people in the Balkans, Austro-Hungary also opposed the Russian belligerent policy. The dual monarchy did not allow an establishment of an immense Slavic country, regardless whether Great Bulgaria, Great Serbia or Serbo-Bulgaria, perpetually fearing a possible territorial aggrandizement of Serbia on the account of Bosnia and Herzegovina². Such development would have fortified the Russian regional hegemony, further diminishing the Austrian influence and possibly endangered the existence of a monarchy comprising a vast population of various Slavic people. Therefore, Vienna also strongly opposed the emergence of the Russo-Ottoman war in 1877.

The 1870's saw the rise of two new major players on the European historical scene, emerging out of internal political consolidation and unification – Bismarck Germany and Italy. While Italy still found itself in the process of consolidation and strengthening power, the strongly unified Germany, under immense directions of the Prussian chancellor, proved and established itself as the new imperial power in the heart of Europe, as strong as its neighbours, if not stronger, which was evident in the Prussian-French war in 1871. German rise to power came not only as a result of the brilliant foreign policy under the conducting pole of Bismarck, but also as a result of the socio-economic evolution of the internal factors and elements of recruitment and unification under strong national sentiment³. Importantly, the Congress of Berlin had suitably manifested the political goals of Bismarck. In this period, he strived to maintain the peace in Europe, and prevent any major territorial concessions of the continent even to Germany, as he perceived that the Baltic states had been of different nationality rather than German, and also that the annexation of the Austrian Catholics in the German Empire would have only strengthened the

¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and the Fall of the Great Powers – Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York, Vintage Books, 1989, p.

² *Ibidem*, p. 268.

³ *Ibidem*.

interior centrifugal tendencies¹. For once, Germany, without imperial reigns, would continuously oppose the actions of the existing imperial forces in Europe, imposing demands for new power distribution on the continent. Regarding the Ottoman Empire, this opposition will have two directions – convergence towards the newly emerged states at the Congress – e.g. Romania and Bulgaria and gradual convergence to the Porte, as the Sultan's antagonism with both London and Moscow, would consequently rise in the following period. The unified Germany was disproportionately disturbing the power balance in Europe, a fact tangible with the victory over France in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871. This situation was directly questioning the Russian interests in the Heartland, so Russia had to manoeuvre their action. First, in order not to intervene in the aforementioned war, Russia demanded neutrality of the Black Sea and the concession of Besarabia, a request indulged by the rest of the Powers at the conference in London. Afterwards, in order to assert its interest further, Russia initiated the informal establishment of the Triple Emperors Alliance with Germany and Austro-Hungary². Thus, their focus had been regularly concentrated on the East, where the interests of both Russia and Austro-Hungary had been tangled. Hence, both empires had been mutually cautious about their own policies. The mere location of the revising Congress has got an immense historical significance. It is with the concordance of the Bismarck's designs of creating a unique German core area in the heart of Europe by unification of the containment policies of Germany and Austria³, and in this particular case to contain the attempt of imposition of Russian hegemony in the southern part of the continent and the Mediterranean. The Congress of Berlin marks the beginning of the Russo-German rivalry on the European and global scene.

In 1876, the Ottoman Empire's failure to efficiently deal with the insurgency in Bosnia and Herzegovina again triggered the attention of the Triple Alliance. Russia had recognised the priority of Vienna in the matter, and attempted to remain neutral in the matter, not allowing interference by Serbia and Montenegro in the Bosnian clash⁴. Nevertheless, under the influence of the domestic Panslavist movement, general Chernaieff arrived in Belgrade in order to prepare the Serbian army for combat. Later that year, Serbia and Montenegro were in war with Turkey, hoping for aid from potential Bulgarian insurgency.

¹ Annie Elizabeth Adams, Erich Brandenburg, *From Bismarck to the World War: A History of German Foreign Policy 1870-1914*, London, Oxford University Press, 1933, p. 3.

² Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans, Eighteen and Nineteenth Century*, Volume I (Translation in Macedonian), Skopje, Nik List, 1999, p. 418.

³ John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 264.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 420.

In the meanwhile, the Triple alliance was convened in the Reichstadt in order to outline the future borders of the Balkans in case Turkey was ultimately defeated. Both ministers, Gorchakov and Andrashi generally endorsed that Serbia and Montenegro would be granted territorial concessions, Greece would gain Crete and Thessaly, while the rest of the Ottoman reigns on the Balkans would be established under three new states: Bulgaria, Roumelia and Albania, without defining their demarcations. Furthermore, Constantinople had been projected as being granted a status of a free city, Russia would receive South Bessarabia and Austro-Hungary would gain Bosnia¹. However, after the rise of the Bulgarian insurrection in 1876, it became obvious that the Slavic states were not strong enough to oppose the Ottoman forces, resulting in the most preposterous atrocities imaginable. The Bulgarian massacres had triggered the necessity of Russian intervention. Meanwhile, in Britain, the most consistent protector of the Ottoman integrity, Disraeli's regime had been losing political support exactly because of these occurrences, allowing the Liberal party to rise to power². This eased the forthcoming actions of Russia.

In this specific constellation of power relations and objective conditions, the Russian-Ottoman war had started in 1877. Defeated, the Sublime Porte signed the infamous Peace Treaty of San-Stefano on 3rd of March 1878³. The Treaty introduced the autonomous Bulgarian state, established under direct Russian influence, comprising a vast part of the Ottoman reigns on the Balkans: the Vranje County from Serbia, Corcha County from Albania and the entire Macedonia. Rightfully interpreted as a culmination of the Russian imperialism in the region, the San Stefano Treaty was determinably opposed by the rest of

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 422.

² *Ibidem*.

³ "The Treaty of San Stefano in its essence embodied the clauses of the armistice. It provided for the recognition of complete independence for Montenegro, Serbia and Roumania. Montenegro and Roumania were to receive territorial aggrandizements... A new Balkan state, Bulgaria, came into existence as an autonomous but tributary state with a ruling prince to be elected by the people but to be confirmed by the Sultan with the assent of the powers. The territory of this new state was generously drawn along ethnographic lines taking in even Bulgarian minorities. Thus it included the whole of present day Bulgaria, the greater part of Macedonia and a portion of Albania....Turkey was further to pay an indemnity of 1,410,000,000 roubles to Russia but, in view of the bankrupt condition of Turkish finances, a part of this payment was to be made in cession of territories to Russia, including the province of Dobrudja in the Balkans, and in Asiatic Turkey the cities of Batum, Ardahan, Kars and Bayazid. Russia reserved the right to retrocede Dobrudja to Roumania in return for Bessarabia. As for BosniaHerzegovina, their status was to be settled jointly by Turkey, Russia and Austria along the lines decided upon by the Conference of Constantinople of 1876, and finally the Straits Question was to be settled by a new agreement in conformity with Russia's interests ...". A. Rostovsky-Lobanov, *Russia and Europe 1825-1878*, George Wahr Publishing, Ann Arbor, MI., 1954, p. 293.

the European powers: Britain, Germany, and Austro-Hungary, as well as attracting the revolt of the neighbouring Serbia and Greece. More specifically, the provisions of this Treaty directly undermined any potential realisation of the Austrian territorial aspirations aiming for ultimate inclusion of Salonika. The establishment of GreatBulgaria (including the port of Kavala), ensured the Russian incursion in the Mediterranean basin, as feared that Kavala would be transformed in a future Russian naval base, with the most certain possibility of even subsequent granting a status of free zone to Constantinople¹. Furthermore, such dramatic disposition of hegemony also instigated the German interests; hence it endangered the German trade routes in the Black Sea basin, stretching from the Danube Valley to Persia, with the emphasis on the port of Batum, which had been annexed by Russia with the San Stefano Treaty². Materially and financially exhausted by the war, Russia had no other choice but to succumb to revision of San Stefano Treaty. For that purpose, the Congress of Berlin was summoned in the summer of 1878. According to the new Treaty, Bulgaria was divided into two parts: an autonomous duchy of Bulgaria and a county of Eastern Rumelia. Macedonia was returned to the Ottoman Empire³.

The significance of the Congress of Berlin 1878

The treaty of Berlin would resolve the Ottoman rules on the Balkans under the advocacy of the major powers: Romania, Serbia and Montenegro would gain independence; Bulgaria would be divided in two territorial entities – the Ottoman province of Eastern Roumelia, ruled by a Christian Governor, and the autonomous principality of Bulgaria; Macedonia and Albania would be restored under Ottoman rule; Austria would gain the entitlement to overtake Bosnia and Herzegovina; Crete would be granted the status of political autonomy. The Tsar would be appeased by the recessions granted in the form of annexation of south-western Bessarabia from Romania and recognized patronage over the new state of Bulgaria.

The important moment of convergence of both elements, due to the mere subject of research here, also presented at the Congress of Berlin, was the clear invocation of further internal reformation of the Ottoman Empire. The process was characterised by open advocacy of the Western powers and confirmed at the Congress: the best possible manner for preserving the territorial and political integrity of the Empire was to introduce substantial institutional reforms, modernising the administration and integrating the different nationalities living under Ottoman rule in the frame of institutional processes.

¹ John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 141.

² *Ibidem*, p. 142.

³ G.P. Gooch, *History of Modern Europe 1878-1919*, New York, Henry Holt, 1923, p. 3.

The concept of reformation was firmly supported by the British foreign policy in continuity, completely in adherence to the terms of status quo maintenance. This was clearly visible in the attempts of the Constantinople Conference (1876)¹ and the project of transforming the Ottoman Empire into a constitutional monarchy. Although the new Constitution was introduced in December 1876, it did not prevent Russia from declaring a war on the Ottomans in 1877. However, the Berlin Treaty would present a new moment – a reiteration, at a least formal one, of all major powers in order to support the provisions of the Treaty, by including the principles of institutional reformations.

In this respect, two major points can be emphasized. First, the specific engagement of the British representatives for an utmost administrative reformation of Ottoman Empire, while the Prime minister Salisbury (who at the same time also resumed the position of the Foreign Secretary), was so eager to seize the opportunity of imposing reforms on each and every vilyaet in Turkey. The reformatory project included an appointment of a Governor in control over the police, tax collection and the entire administrative system, and, for that purpose, it even presented the idea of granting six million British pounds as loan to the Sultan, providing the necessary funding for such an ambitious endeavour. The same project, however, had later been vetoed by the same Prime minister, as the bondholders manifested their protest towards ideas such as the trade depression, the bad harvest and the war in Afghanistan which came forth as premises for a prognosis of a financial crisis².

Nevertheless, the British efforts towards imposition of internal reforms continued, unfortunately so had the open reluctance and resistance by Abdul Hamid II, in relation to his regressive regime and refusal to introduce any reformatory process that may have limited his power. Still Britain would utilize the Berlin provisions to instigate further attempts of combined diplomatic efforts with the rest of the European powers to succumb the Porte to this concept in the decades following the Congress.

¹ An European Conference was organized in Constantinople in December 1876, in order for the six great European powers to impose internal reformation of the Ottoman Empire, as an attempt to preserve its integrity. On 22.12.1876, the Conference made a proposal for an administrative autonomy to be established in Macedonia, Bulgaria and Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the austerly of the great powers. The Porte made a clever move, introducing the Constitution the very next day -23.12.1876, making any further acts of the Conference pointless. The Constitution established a bicameral Parliament, with two Macedonian representatives – Dimitar Robev (known merchant from Bitola) and Georgi Chakarov from Struga. Nevertheless, it didn't prevent the Russian-Ottoman war...See in: *History of the Macedonian People*, Institute of National History, Prosvetno delo, Skopje, 1972.

² G.P. Gooch, *History of Modern Europe, 1878-1919*, New York, Henry Holt, 1923, p. 20-21.

The second, more important point are the provisions of Article 23 of the Berlin Treaty, directly providing the legal basis for institutional reforms in the Empire, according to which the Porte was obliged to establish special commissions designated to design the new statutes for the European provinces, using the details implemented in the Organic statute of the island of Crete:

“Similar laws adapted to local requirements, excepting as regards the exemption from taxation granted to Crete, shall also be introduced into other parts of Turkey in Europe for which no special organization has been provided by the present Treaty. The Sublime Porte shall depute special commissions, in which the native element shall be largely represented, to settle the details of the new laws in each province. The schemes of organization resulting from these labours shall be submitted for examination to the Sublime Porte, which, before promulgating the Acts for putting them in force, shall consult the European Commission instituted for Eastern Rumelia”¹.

Article 23 of the Berlin Treaty introduced the necessary legal precedent for all future political aspirations of the Macedonian liberation movement-political autonomy within the framework of the Ottoman Empire, as an achievable objective, affirmed by the great powers. Therefore, an implementation of this specific provision, adopted by the diplomatic will of the great powers, in absence of a legal political framework of national expression, served the purpose of a certain legal and political form of self-determination. This is the general moment of convergence of the ideological matrix of the liberation movement and diplomatic efforts formulated by the Treaty, predominantly the British ones. The forthcoming period would confirm this convergence.

The framework for implementation of the Treaty – the existing millet system

The Ottomans implemented the *millet system*, established back in the XVII century, separating the Muslims and non-Muslims in communities headed by a religious figure². According to the millet system, the Porte did not give any significance to the ethnic affiliation of the subjects, hence the religious confession was the only important base for distinction of the subjects. The Porte

¹ Duncan M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements, 1893-1903*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1988, p. 213-214.

² “The *millet system* was the way whereby the Ottoman Empire organized its Muslim and non-Muslim subjects into separate communities, all headed by a religious figure. These communities were quasi-autonomous in that they administered their own educational and judicial systems. In return for this status as quasi-autonomy, the millets collected taxes for the Ottoman government and helped to enforce social discipline...” Kevin Goodwin, *The Tanzimat and the Problem of Political Authority in the Ottoman Empire: 1839-1876*, in “Honors Projects Overview”. Paper 5, 2006, p. 12-13.

recognised certain elements of self-government of the Slavic people within, still under exclusive jurisdiction of the Christian Orthodox Church. The millet system had a pragmatic value for the Porte – by granting certain rights on the ground of religious confession, it positioned the religious leaders of the Ottoman subjects as the ones responsible for the conduct of the subjects themselves¹. In practice, all the Orthodox subjects were united by the decree of the Sultan in a single Rum millet, defined under the dioceses of the Supreme Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The Ottoman millet system recreated the Christian Orthodox churches as institutions of political power, centres of cultural and national dissemination, assimilation and as a factor of the enhanced national awakening of the Orthodox people under the Ottoman Empire in the XIX century. In this political respect, the right to confession of the subjects was guaranteed by the Hatt-i – Humajun Constitution of 1856², representing a continuation of the transformation period of the Empire marked as Tanzimat era, having begun in 1839 with the promulgation of the Hatt-i Sherif of Gulhane³. Hatt-i – Humajun promulgated by the new sultan Abdul Mecid in 1856, by granting new rights to the non-Muslim population in the Empire, specifically enhancing the right of undisputed confession, protection of the Christians and legal equality, regardless of the religious affiliation. More specifically, it granted every Christian eparchy an abolishment of the church taxes and replacement with a certain income of the patriarchs and the heads of the religious communities. Furthermore, it guaranteed the real-estate property of the Christian clerics, and also confessional freedom of every religion to exercise its own cult. One of the greatest concessions was the delegated jurisdiction of mixed courts, Christian and Muslim, to prosecute any sort of legal violation that included Muslim and Christian, or any other non-Muslim, subjects⁴.

¹ Carlo Caldarola, *Religion and Societies – Asia and the Middle East*, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1982.

² “...this document abolished the tax farming system and bribery of government officials. In addition, there was an attempt to create equality for all subjects. For example, the *Hatt-i Humayun* wanted to reform the court system in which the courts would be mixed ethnically in order to take care of a greater proportion of cases involving Muslims and non-Muslims. There were other statements regarding equality such as, equality of taxation, all subjects were allowed to enter military schools regardless of religion and race and they were to be equal in regard to military service and administration of justice”. Kevin Goodwin, *The Tanzimat and the Problem of Political Authority in the Ottoman Empire: 1839-1876*, in “Honors Projects Overview”. Paper 5, 2006, p. 25.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

⁴ (Translation) Faculty of Philosophical and Historical Sciences, *Bulletin of Documents of the Struggle of Macedonian People for Independence and National State*, University “Sts. Cyril and Methodius”, Skopje, 1981, doc. No. 126, p. 179-180.

Under the auspices of the millet system, the churches became unique national institutions, fostering the ethnic identity and culture of the people through the services and the education in the official language of the church. In this prospect, the Ohrid Archbishopric, that existed since the X century, had played a significant role concerning the non-Greek identity of its affiliates until the Archbishopric had been abolished by the Porte in 1767. Afterwards, all the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire became part of the dioceses of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople and, respectively, under enhanced Greek lingual and cultural influence – as the Rum Millet entity was serving a purpose of enhancing the Greek nationalism and the Greek romantic ideal of a greater nation which also emerged in the XIX century. In its own nationalistic view, the Greek nationalism of the time had utilized the continuity between the ancient and modern times to impose historical claims over the Macedonian territory, observing the once ancient territory of the great kingdom of Phillip II as its own, using it as a weapon against the raising Bulgarian influence at the time, and thus not allowing any divergent views to be developed. Ultimately these national aspirations would have been satisfied, at least to a greater extent, by the occupation of the most of the Macedonian territory during the Balkan wars¹.

As far as the Macedonians were concerned, the elements of opposition towards the Greek Patriarchate had always been present, mostly because of the imposition of the Greek language in the services and the education conducted by the church schools, as unknown and alienable in the everyday communication and usage. The foundation of the Bulgarian Exarchate of Veliko Tarnovo in 1870 coincided with the culmination of the Bulgarian liberation movement at the time and the historically utilized moment by the Bulgarian political forces to separate themselves from the jurisdiction of the Patriarchy and found their own national church, a move widely supported by the Russians and the Ottomans². The new Exarchate was praised by some of the communities as a possibility of exercising the religious customs and services in

¹ Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question*, Praeger, 2002, p. 73.

² "...the ecclesiastical conflict between Greeks and Bulgarians intensified and the Ottoman government became an important player. The Ottomans manipulated the situation in order to divide the Balkan Christians... When the Ottoman decree (*firman*) of 12 March 1870 officially established a Bulgarian Exarchate, it further complicated this situation. The *firman* limited the Exarchate's jurisdiction to the Danubian Bulgaria (the area between Danube and Stara Planina mountain); however, it provided (Article 10) that the Exarchate could add additional dioceses if in a plebiscite two-thirds or more of the population voted to join it. 6 By 1878 the Bulgarian Exarchate included eighteen dioceses with approximately 2,000,000 to 2,400,000 people as its subjects..." Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question*, Praeger, 2002, p. 88.

a more understandable Slavic language. Therefore, a lot of Macedonian communities voluntarily joined and accepted the dioceses of the Exarchate. Hence, the millet system created a certain precedent, wisely utilized by the neighbouring countries, using the church related antagonisms to impose their influence in Macedonia, even through coercive means, attempting to present the population in Macedonia as “their own brethren under Ottoman rule”¹, especially as the Bulgarian newly founded state would further implicate the Exarchate as a political instrument of national assimilation². The church propagandas caused objective historical internal division among the Macedonian people, because of the scrupulousness in the conduct. Soon the armed propagandas would initiate as a means of forcing the Macedonian communities to join the national churches. The church propagandas attracted the attention of the Great Powers and the international perception especially through the popular reaction of the peoples in Macedonia, mostly against any sort of confessional imposition. Regarding the British perception, most of the attention was focused on the discontent and revolt with the Greek patriarchy, vis-a-vis the orientation towards the Exarchate. The ambassador, Sir William White, in April 1889, described the aspirations of the Exarchate towards the Macedonian eparchies, and commended the allowance of Bulgarian bishops to be appointed in Macedonia. In that respect, he had assessed the decision of the Grand Vizier to permit one visiting Bulgarian episcopate to Skopje, as a justified one, in accordance with the Article 62 of the Berlin Treaty³. Article 62 had been introduced in order to guarantee the right of religious liberty within the Ottoman Empire, preventing any sort of discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation⁴. In practice, such provisions further instigated the existing inter-ecclesiastic rivalry in the Macedonian vilayets, striving for definition or redefinition of the perceivable demographic composition of the Macedonian population. In that sense, the Berlin Treaty enhanced such policies.

There were various examples manifesting the resistance among the local population against the various impositions. The British ambassador in Constantinople of 1878, Henry Austin Layard informed the State Secretary, the

¹ Donev, Jovan, *Macedonia in the British-Russian relations 1907-1908, Tactics or Strategy*, Archive of Macedonia & Matica Makedonska, Skopje, 1994, p. 61.

² “...During the semi-personal regime of Stephan Stambolov (1887-94), Bulgaria's first prime minister, the Bulgarian state used the Bulgarian Exarchate to foster the development of Bulgarian national identity in Macedonia and Thrace...” Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question*, Praeger, 2002, p. 89.

³ Dragi Gjorgiev, *British Consuls in Macedonia 1797-1915*, Documents, State Archives of Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, 2002, doc. 104, p. 240-241.

⁴ R.B. Mowat, *Select Treaties and Documents to Illustrate the Development of the Modern European States-System*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1915, p. 79-83.

Marquee of Salisbury, about a petition of the local pro-Hellenic cultural societies in the Macedonian town of Strumica. The petition had been addressed to him, protesting the annexation of Strumica to Bulgaria with the provisions of the Berlin Treaty. The petition described the revolt of the local population over the unification with Bulgaria, because they described themselves as Macedonians and as Helens at the same time, however admitting their usage and knowledge of the Slavic language, but affiliating to the Greek, nevertheless¹.

As for the Greek interest, Macedonia was an ancient Hellenic kingdom that had suffered sufficient ethnic incursions in the centuries afterwards, resulting into a non-typical mosaic of religious and linguistic coexistence and perplexing cultural identities, often margining into attempts of creating neologisms, usually on the strict basis of the spoken languages, as Bulgarophone, Vlachophone etc². Here it was clear that the recognition of the significance of the spoken language was the only tangible feature that could alter the individual's ethnic identity, more visibly than other cultural features that lacked the ground of material historical sources. According to the Greek stance, the learning of the Greek language stood as a wonderful inheritance by all Greek-speaking Christians in the Ottoman Empire, and the Greek education was regarded a way to knowledge and a way from knowledge to freedom³. Therefore, their strategic goal was to subject the Macedonian cities to Greek influence, from the mount Grammos and the Ohrid Lake in the west to the river Nestos in the east, and turn them into urban centres of dissemination of the process of hellenisation⁴. But nevertheless, this could have been automatically interpreted as lingual resemblance which was equal to uniformity. Douglas Dakin agrees that the language did not bring the Slav people together, as their tongues differed from each other. In this relation, he emphasised that the Macedonian Slavic language or dialect, as he refers to the Slavic languages as dialects, was different both from Bulgarian and from Serbian, as a Macedonian would feel a stranger both in Belgrade and Sofia, and in this sense it cannot be interpreted as a slightly different version of Bulgarian, which was predominantly assumed in Western Europe in the referent historical period. This was the reason for establishing Bulgarian schools in Macedonia, along with the Greek and Serbian ones, as a means of continuous nationalistic

¹ Dragi Gjorgiev, *British Documents for the History of Macedonia*, Vol. IV, 1857-1885, State Archives of Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, 2003, doc. 70, p. 322-325.

² Ioannis Koliopoulos, editor, *The History of Macedonia*, The Museum of the Macedonian Struggle, Thessaloniki, 2007, p. 172.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 175.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 177-180.

propaganda¹. On the other hand, in relation with the Greek claims on Macedonia, using the argument of antiquity, according to Dakin, could also be absurd, as the modernity had little resemblance to the classic memories. Keeping this in mind, the perpetual presence of the Greek Church, presented as a preserver of all Balkan Christians from absorption by the Islam, was utilized as a means of asserting the missing modern territorial claims, and as an efficient means of propaganda². Dakin thought that such claims were possible because at the time being the Macedonians had not yet developed into a separate nation.

The Treaty provisions consisted in the programmes of IMRO and the reformatory programmes of 1903-08

Rising from the sole core of the Macedonian peasantry, which presented the foundation of the national liberation movement – organised in informal groups for self-defence against the volatility of the Ottomans, the need for an organisational framework of the movement was recognised and imposed by the semi developed Macedonian intelligence³, scattered in the cities and villages, predominantly as educational staff. In this reference, the core of the authentic Macedonian revolutionary movement was found in the development of the Macedonian civic social class in the 1870's, and the development of the Macedonian citizenry and intelligence, represented by the merchants, teachers etc, and their strife to overthrow the foreign cultural influence within the predominant ecumenical authority – incarnated in the Greek Patriarchy, as well as to distinguish themselves in the cultural and lingual nature. Aiming for their social and economic prosperity, they were also oriented towards activation of the vast peasantry masses⁴. Under these conditions, on the eve of 23rd of October 1893, six Macedonian intellectuals, most of them teachers: Ivan Hadzi Nikolov, Dame Gruev, Hristo Tatarchev, Petar Pop Arsov, Anton Dimitrov and Hristo Batandziev, founded the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation – IMRO. Soon afterwards, the Constitution of the organisation was adopted, defining the ultimate goals, as well as the general institutional and organisational framework. The main constitutional elements were afterwards

¹ Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia, 1897-1913*, Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, 1966, p. 17-18.

² *Ibidem*, p. 17.

³ "The Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO) was born in the mélange of competing Balkan nationalities, ideologies, and European economic interests of the late nineteenth century. It was intrinsically an organization internal to Ottoman Macedonia, the antecedents of which are complex. Social, educational, economic, political, religious, cultural, and international factors all played a role in its evolution..." Duncan M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements, 1893-1903*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1988, p. 31.

⁴ Vlado Popovski, *The Macedonian National Liberation Movement – until SMORO – Social and Political Character*, Skopje, Makedonska Kniga, 1989, p. 56-60.

supplemented with certain programme documents, like the ones adopted at the Congress of Salonika in 1896. The ultimate revolutionary goal was defined as achieving status of autonomous Macedonia under guardianship of the great European powers, which would ensure the independence from any sort of foreign interference, including the regional imperialism of the neighbouring countries. Furthermore, it defined that such an objective could be achieved solely as the result of a wider popular and national armed uprising that would strictly be founded on domestic strength of the Macedonian people. In that respect, the Organisation made a difference between the objective of the national revolutionary struggle and the “aiding” armed propagandas of the neighbouring countries, perceiving them as a decoy for their territorial appetites¹.

Dame Gruev, one of the founders and the first Secretary of the Organisation, remembered these moments years later, in his memoirs, where he recalls the purpose of the meeting in the school year of 1893/94, as a meeting of old friends with an old idea: the implementation of the Berlin Treaty. Gruev confirmed that a secret organisation had been established, headed by a Central Committee, and revolutionary branches, membership fees, and an oath of loyalty had been foreseen as well². The Constitution of IMRO, adopted at the Congress of Salonika, 1896, defined the ultimate political autonomy of Macedonia³ and the struggle against the foreign propagandas⁴ as programme postulates of the Organisation. The goal of political autonomy of Macedonia undoubtedly derived from the provisions of the Berlin Treaty, especially the aforementioned Article 23, thus providing sufficient international legality of the claims, while preserving the consideration of the interest of the Great Powers. Such proclamations were also notable during the Great Ilinden Uprising of 1903, while the Headquarters addressed the Memorandum to the representatives of the Great Powers in August 1903, demanding for it to be recognised as a belligerent side and its struggle to be internationally legitimized⁵. While the Ilinden Uprising was fiercely crushed by the Porte, the proclamations once again brought the Macedonian Question to the European official and public attention.

¹ Aleksandar T. Hristov, *IMRO and the Macedonian Statehood* (historical and legal approach), Skopje, Kultura, 1993, p. 29-34.

² Faculty of Philosophical and Historical Sciences, *Bulletin of Documents of the Struggle of Macedonian People for Independence and National State*, University “Sts. Cyril and Methodius”, Skopje, 1981, doc. No. 223, p. 322-323.

³ *Ibidem*, doc. 228, p. 331.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Bulletin of the documents of the Macedonian statehood (1893-1944)*, University “St. Cyril and Methodius”, Skopje, 1970, document No. 24: *The Supreme Headquarters addresses the representatives of the great powers in Bitola*, p. 89-90.

Furthermore, the same provisions were utilized in the forthcoming endeavours of the Great Powers concerning Macedonia, specifically the reformatory attempts in the subsequent period: the Russo- Austrian initiated Murzsteg programme of 1903 and the British-Russian reformatory projections of the period 1907-08. Both programmes strove to the objective of stabilisation and pacification of the Macedonian vilayets, in the outcry of the immense Ilinden reprisals, while preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The programmes utilized the same provisions stipulated in the Berlin Treaty, as a basis of achieving administrative reforms, comprising the judiciary, gendarmerie and the administrative apparatus in a direction of higher satisfaction of the needs of the Christian population, while decreasing the presence and the authority of the vast Ottoman military and paramilitary troops. Another sensitive point was the achievement of financial autonomy of the vilayets within the work of a specific Financial Commission, which was a step that the Porte regarded with great reluctance. The Austro-Russian programme resulted in merely appointing adjunct officers to the Inspector General of the gendarmerie for the purpose of preventing misconduct and potential excesses of the gendarmes¹, proven inefficient by the aforementioned reluctance of the Porte, which had already established a similar Commission with German aides (generals) in order to prevent execution of the former programme². The programme of 1907-08 had a more ambitious agenda as a part of the British and Russian attempts towards diplomatic and political rapprochement. The programme, as originally initiated by the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, had operationally observed the idea of appointing a Governor of Macedonia, released of any religious rivalry, as a guarantor of the successfulness of the reforms³. While the further development of the programme was prevented by the rise of the Young Turks revolution in 1908, such reformatory premises presented a historically immaculate moment of convergence between the diplomacies of the Great Powers and the ideological strivings of the Macedonian liberation movement, which derived from the unique postulates of the Berlin Treaty.

¹ Report of the Ambassador in Constantinople, Caliche to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Vienna, Goluchowsky about the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in Macedonia, No. 64C, 29th of December 1903 – Mihajlo Minoski, Gjorgi Stojceski, *Austrian Documents about the Reformatory Actions of the Great European Powers in Macedonia, 1903-1909*, State Archives of Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, 2002, p. 100-102.

² Tevfik Pacha to Ottoman Ambassadors in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Rome, Sankt Petersburg and London, No. 55031/225, Constantinople, 7th of November 1903, Sinan Kuneralp, Gul Tokay, Editors, *Ottoman Documents on the Origin of World War One, The Macedonian Issue 1879-1912*, Part I 1879-1904, Istanbul, The Isis Press, 2011, p. 474-477.

³ Telegram from Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, No.6, 3rd of March 1908, reference No. PRO 499 – House of Commons Accounts and Papers, Various, 1859-1908, s. 759-761.

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**CONSIDERATIONS ON THE ROMANIAN-RUSSIAN
AND ROMANIAN-BULGARIAN RELATIONS
AT THE BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR I. A FEW ROMANIAN
AND FRENCH DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

*Hadrian Gorun**

Abstract

This article is a short analysis of the relations between the Romanian Kingdom and the Russian Empire and between Romania and Bulgaria in the eve of the World War I and at its beginning. It is based mainly on the documents from Romanian and French archives. After 1913, when Romania obtained South Dobrudja (Cadrilater) from Bulgaria, the relations between the two countries worsened. The Government led by Vasil Radoslavov wanted to revise the Treaty of 1913. The Entente and the Central Empires used “divide et impera” principle, trying to obtain military aid from the neutral Balkan states, as Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia.

If the relations between Bucharest and Petrograd became better at the beginning of the First World War, Romania’s relations with its Southern neighbour remained strained. Finally Romania and Bulgaria adhered to rival belligerent blocks.

Key words: *World War I, Romania, Russia, Cadrilater, Entente*

This paper is based mainly upon documentary sources discovered at the Diplomatic Archives of Quai d’Orsay, from Paris, at the Military Archives of Vincennes and at the National Archives of Romania, as well. Using a “triangular” method, we strived to point out Romania’s relations with the two slavic states, from the perspective of Romanian and French documents.

The outburst of the world conflict and Romania’s dilemmas. The declaration of neutrality

On 28 June 1914, the archduke Franz Ferdinand, the crown prince of Austria-Hungary, was murdered at Sarajevo¹. This assassination represented the pretext for the outburst of World War I one month later.

After that, the Austro-Hungarian authorities addressed an ultimatum to Serbia¹. As Serbia did not accept all the conditions, Austria-Hungary declared

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¹ Mircea N. Popa, *Primul război mondial 1914-1918*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979, p. 152.

war. Almost immediately, the Great Powers that formed the two political and military blocks (the Entente and the Central Powers) declared war reciprocally. The military conflict gained the amplitude and the characteristics of a global scale war. It did not remain limited to Balkan area. The Austro-Hungarian attack of 28 July 1914 against Serbia represented the beginning of the First World War.

The military operations took place next to its frontiers, so that Romania and the Romanian authorities had three options: to enter the War together with the Central powers, to adopt a neutrality policy or to enter the war together with the Entente and to fight for the Romanian territories of Austria-Hungary. The Crown Council of Sinaia (21 July/3 August 1914) decided Romania's neutrality despite the will of King Carol I. At the same time, the Romanian Kingdom had to adopt all the necessary measures for the defense of the frontiers. The treaty of 1883, that Romania signed with the Central Powers did not enter into force. It provided *casus foederis*. Thus, România would have had the duty to intervene in the favour of the Double Monarchy, only if Austria-Hungary had been the victim of a military aggression. But Vienna had the initiative of the aggression against Serbia. So, Romania's treaty with the Central Powers remained caducous².

Romania's lack of trust in Russia

After the declaration of neutrality, Romanian diplomacy held talks with both belligerent blocks, but especially with the Entente. Romania's main goal was the achievement of the national ideal, which involved the union of Transylvania, Bukovina and Banat with the Ancient Kingdom. Under those circumstances, we could not talk about the obtaining of Basarabia, because this region was incorporated in the Russian Empire and Russia was a member of the Entente. The province between Prut and Nistru had been integrated in the Empire of the Tsars in 1812, after the Russo-Turkish war, between 1806-1812.

¹ *Documents diplomatiques concernant les rapports entre l' Autriche-Hongrie et la Roumanie: 22 Juillet 1914-27 Août 1916*, Vienne, Imprimerie I. R. de la Cour et de l'État, 1916, 1-2.

² Serviciul Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale (hereafter: S.A.N.I.C.), fond Diamandi, dosar nr. 27, p. 83. The American historian Glenn E. Torrey underlined the fact that most officials from that Crown Council agreed Romania's neutrality. For this reason, the offensive action of Austria-Hungary against Serbia absolved Romania of any obligation assumed by the Treaty of 1883. See Glenn E. Torrey, *Romania and the Belligerents, 1914-1916*, in *Romania and World War I*, Iași, Oxford, Portland, Center for Romanian Studies, 1999, p. 10. See also, among others, Radu Rosetti, *Mărturisiri (1914-1919)*, București, Editura Modelism, 1997; I.G. Duca, *Memorii*, Timișoara, Editura Helicon, 1992; Constantin Argetoianu, *Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1991; Ion Bulei, *Arcul așteptării 1914-1915-1916*, București, Editura Eminescu, 1981; Vasile Vesa, *România și Franța la începutul secolului al XX-lea (1900-1916)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1975; Constantin Nuțu, *România în anii neutralității (1914-1916)*, București, Editura Științifică, 1972.

In 1856, the Peace Congress of Paris decided that the counties from South Basarabia, namely Cahul, Bolgrad and Ismail would be again parts of the Romanian state. But after a short interlude of Romanian administration, which lasted until 1878, Russia expanded again its rule over the whole territory of Basarabia. In exchange, Romania took over Dobrudja and the Danube Delta. At the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878, the Eastern neighbour of Romania had a new hostile attitude. The Russian army tried to occupy parts of the Romanian territory¹.

Later, Russia continued to demonstrate strong hegemonic tendencies. Its claims concerning Constantinople and Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits were obvious. Moreover, its policy of presenting itself as a protector of the Slavic and (or) orthodox states and peoples from Balkan area, has always created, in the XIX-th century and in the beginning of the XX-th century, the premises of a hegemony. Russia's role of "protector" legitimated all its interventions, interferences and ingerinces, including the internal affairs of the Romanian Principalities. The Convention of Akerman (1826) and especially the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) institutionalized the so-called "protectorate" of the tsarist Russia over Romanian Principalities. Later, the Congress of Paris (1856) substituted the unilateral Russian protectorate with the collective guarantee of the European great powers. Nevertheless, under the guise of the former role of protector, Russia continued its efforts to impose its domination on Balkans and to seize new territories.

Romania's adhesion to Entente in World War I was also delayed because of the Empire of Tsars' presance in this military alliance. Russia's unfair attitude from the past weighed decisively. The domination on the city of Constantinople and the control over Bosphorus and Dardanelles represented the objectives of war for the Romanovs' Empire, but Russians' way to the Straits passed through Romania, another reason of concern for the Romanian authorities. Therefore, at the beginning of the World War, Romania's relations with Russia were not very cordial, despite the visit of tsar Nicholas II at Constanța, in June 1914². If the French Republic represented the state of the Entente, which wanted the most the obtaining of Romanian collaboration in the war, the Empire of Tsars was rather reluctant on this topic. Some Russian officials wanted more the military cooperation of Bulgaria. Moreover, the cabinet from Bucharest expressed its will to have all freedom in choosing the moment of the intervention.

¹ Hadrian G. Gorun, *Relații politico-diplomatice și militare ale României cu Franța în primul război mondial*, Cluj-Napoca, Argonaut, 2009, p. 28.

² Concerning this visit, see M.N. Popa, *Contribuții privind relațiile româno-franceze în anul 1914*, în "Analele Universității București", no. 2/1969, p. 69.

Tensions in Romanian-Bulgarian relations

We can see a similar reality if we analyse Romania's relations with this Southern neighbour, the Bulgarian Kingdom. These relations were characterized by a growing tension after the second Balkan war. The alliance of 1912, victorious over the Ottoman Empire, disintegrated. In the second conflict that shook this very important geostrategic region, Bulgaria fought against its former allies, Serbia and Greece. During the second Balkan war, Romania's attitude is interesting. It played the role of a balancer, trying to hold the balance of power in Balkan area. At the beginning, it remained deliberately in expectation, in reserve and intervened only when Bulgaria could compromise the balance of power in the region and become hegemonic. Due to its special dynamic and increased instability, the Balkan region was called the powder keg of Europe. It is obvious that the authorities from Bucharest decreed mobilization and intervened against Bulgaria, with the approval of the great powers, France and Russia. Paris persuaded Russia to accept Romanian intervention in the South of the Danube. The Romanian involvement in the second Balkan conflict has a special signification. Bulgaria was perceived as a state protected by the Dual Empire of Austro-Hungary. The Romanian action represented somehow an affront, an unfriendly act directed against the Double Monarchy¹.

After the defeat of Bulgaria in the second Balkan war to which Romania had decisively contributed, the latter became a regional power, in fact the most important power in this region. The organization of the peace conference in Bucharest and the signing of the treaty (10 August 1913), without the participation of the representatives of the great powers, represented a peremptory proof for the recognition of Romania's growing role in the Balkan area. Romania received the south of Dobrudja (Cadrilater) from Bulgaria. This defeated state was also constrained to proceed to territorial cessions to the benefit of Serbia and Greece. The leading circles from Bucharest will act constantly for the preservation of the statu-quo established by the treaty of 1913. As France insisted, Russia gave up the idea of revising the treaty². Of course, Bulgaria showed obvious revisionist intentions. The resentments and the revenge tendencies of the Bulgarians could burst anytime energetically and violently.

A military Bulgarian action directed against the Romanian Kingdom was possible. The regaining of Cadrilater from Romania, lost in 1913 was a great

¹ V. Vesa, *op. cit.*, p. 46; Vasile Maciu, *La Roumanie et la politique des grandes puissances à la veille de la Première Guerre Mondiale (octobre 1912-août 1914)*, in "Revue Roumaine d' Histoire", an XV, no. 4/1976, p. 80.

² Paul Oprescu, *Problema națională în politica externă a României din preajma primului război mondial*, în "Revista de istorie" an XXXVI, no. 11/1983, p. 1100.

challenge for the authorities from Sofia. On 10 August 1914, one year after the event that marked Romania's most important moment as regional power in the Balkans, the French plenipotentiary minister in the capital of Romania, Jean-Camille Blondel reported to Quai d'Orsay: "*I continue to believe that for this moment, the Romanian neutrality is better than its entry into campaign and its interest – and ours as well – is to maintain its forces [...]. Wouldn't it better that Romania should decide itself to enter the war, if Bulgaria or Turkey forced it? [...]*"¹. Blondel waited for the events to develop. In his opinion, the Romanian intervention could be the result of the hostile circumstances, of the actions directed against it by its neighbours. Bulgaria's indefinite attitude and Romania's indecision were also underlined by the military attaché of the France in Bucharest, the captain Jules Pichon, on 28 July/10 August 1914. He realized that Bulgaria's policy had held in suspension the Romanian action. Romania hesitated between the possibility of passing the Danube for the second time, to stop the Bulgarians on their way to Macedonia and the risk of crossing the Carpathians with the Bulgarian threat at its back². So, we can conclude that Romania itself could take the initiative of an attack against its Southern neighbour. We also know that Bulgaria had strong territorial disputes with Serbia and Greece concerning Macedonia.

From *divide et impera* to the principle of territorial compensations. The approach to Russia and attempts to achieve a *modus vivendi* with Bulgaria

Trying to obtain a military and psychological advantage over the enemy, the two rival blocks (Entente and Central Powers) attempted to attract the countries which had decided to remain in neutrality or expectation. Entente took important steps to gain the support of the countries that gravitated, at least de jure, in the sphere of influence of the Central Powers. The cases of Romania, Bulgaria and Italy were eloquent. This tactics, synonymous with *divide et impera* principle, which aimed at the destruction and, at least, the weakening of the rival block, represents a classical method for the maintaining and restauration of the balance of power. The Entente (especially Russia and France), tried to revive the Balkan alliance, victorious in 1912 against Turkey. This time, the Balkan block was to include Romania too³.

¹ Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères Français (hereafter: A.M.A.E.F.), Série Guerre, Sous-Série Roumanie, d. 337, p. 14.

² Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes, Série Attachés Militaires en Roumanie, Carton 7N 1455, The Report of captain Pichon to Minister of War, no. 38, of 28 July/10 August 1914.

³ H. Gorun, *Demersuri ale Antantei pentru normalizarea raporturilor româno-bulgare în vederea reconstituirii unui bloc al statelor balcanice*, in "Sudia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia", vol. 52, nr. 2/2006, p. 97-113.

If Romania's relations with Russia could hardly be considered relations of trust and friendship, the Romanian-Bulgarian relations were characterized by a sinuous evolution, which ended with the entry of the two countries in opposite belligerent camps. In Bulgaria, the government led by Vasil Radoslavov cautiously looked to a possible alliance with the other Balkan states. Taking into account the orientation of the high majority of the Bulgarian political class and public opinion in favour of the Central Powers, Bulgaria will join this military camp. The foreign policy of Radoslavov's government aimed at normalizing the relations with its neighbours¹. Due to the second Balkan war, Sofia's relations with Bucharest worsened, as well as its relations with Belgrade and Athens. The territorial concessions Bulgaria had to accept in favour of the winners generated the growth of the revisionist Bulgarian spirit. At the beginning, the revisionist intentions were present only at the diplomatic level, in discussions and negotiations. Given the Romania's growing role in the south-east Europe after the treaty of Bucharest, the Bulgarian authorities could not be indifferent regarding Romania's subsequent policy.

Nevertheless, during the summer of 1914, there were some tendencies to a rapprochement between Bucharest and Sofia, taking into account the rather good relations before 1913. The tension and the coldness, which undoubtedly intervened after August 1913, were amplified one year later due to some border incidents. The Romanian authorities were careful to the attitude of the Bulgarians and also to the attitude of the great powers. So they rejected the proposals of the Bulgarian cabinet which wanted that this case should be investigated by an international commission. Thus, Romania suggested the creation of a mixed Romanian-Bulgarian commission with this role². Romania and Bulgaria oscillated between the two belligerent camps, hoping that their objectives of foreign policy will be fulfilled. They declared their neutrality, adopting a policy of expectation. In Romania, as well as in Bulgaria, the separation of the political circles according to their foreign policy orientation, to one or another belligerent block, became from this very moment on particularly obvious. If in Romania the pro-Entente trend was preponderant, on the contrary, in Bulgaria, the activity of the pro-German circles was very intense and even the authorities were closer to the Central Powers³.

Russia's policy towards Romania changed quite suddenly. While immediately after the declaration of neutrality the Russian authorities seemed to be satisfied with the solution adopted in Bucharest, on 23 July/5 August 1914, Stanislas Poklevski-Koziell, the Russian minister from Petrograd's legation

¹ Ema Nastovici, *Cu privire la unele aspecte ale relațiilor româno-bulgare în anii 1914-1916*, in "Analele Universității București", Series Social Sciences. History, XVII, 1968, p. 130.

² *Ibidem*, p. 132.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 133.

delivered a Russian-Romanian project of convention to Ion I. C. Brătianu's government. This project stipulated Romania's cooperation with Russia using all its forces against Austria-Hungary. The military collaboration would have begun after the date the armistice was signed, in exchange for Russia's obligation not to cease the war against the Double Monarchy until the territories inhabited by Romanian population will have been taken by the Romanian Kingdom. On its turn, Romania would engage not to conclude peace with Austria-Hungary without Russia's approval and together with it. The Romanian and Russian Headquarters will establish the ways of cooperation, and this convention would remain into force until the conclusion of peace between Russia and Austria-Hungary. Prime-minister Brătianu had an objection concerning the Russian proposal, rightly noting that a military convention should be the fruit of a political treaty. But this project of convention referred only to the military cooperation¹.

The project of convention allowed Romania to choose the suitable moment for the military operations to liberate the Romanian territories incorporated in the dual empire. The limits of these territories would have to be determined later. The principle of the population majority will be the most important for the establishment of the frontiers. The minister of Foreign Affairs, Serghei Sazonov, declared that Russia would guarantee the territorial integrity of Romania from that moment in case of a Bulgarian attack during the Romanian-Russian military cooperation².

The projected Balkan block encountered many difficulties. Each state wanted to obtain everything to its own advantage, even if it would risk to affect the interests of its neighbours. On the other hand, the Central Powers attempted to create a Bulgarian-Turkish-Romanian block under their control. Bulgaria's attack of the Balkan alliance, under the patronage of Russia and France, was not possible only by promising that its national aspirations would be achieved. Thus, the Entente had to guarantee the extension of its territory, not only to the detriment of Turkey, but also at the expense of Romania, Serbia and Greece. This thing required great sacrifices from their part. In order to convince Bulgaria to adhere to the Balkan alliance, Serbia would have to give up a large part of Macedonia, Romania would have to lose Cadrilater, and also Greece, Kavalla, including Seres and Drama. The dissatisfaction of the states that would lose territories would be limited or even removed using the principle of dissatisfaction. For instance, Romania would have to gain territorial compensations in Transylvania and Bucovina, Greece in Epir and Serbia, in

¹ S.A.N.I.C., fond Diamandi, d. 27, f. 110-112, 105-107; d. 28/1914, f. 2; Anastasie Iordache, *Reorientarea politică a României și neutralitatea armată 1914-1916*, București, Editura Paideia, 1998, p. 120-121.

² A.M.A.E.F., Série Guerre, Sous-Série Roumanie, d. 531, f. 13, 17.

Bosnia and Herzegovina¹. This time, Entente intended to preserve the balance of power using the principle of territorial compensations.

On 9 August 1914, Romania's minister from Sofia, Derussi, had a discussion with his French colleague, Panafieu, informing him personally that his government would definitely accept some sacrifices in the new foreseen Balkan association, if the Transylvanian issue was solved taking into account Romania's national aspirations². So, Romania showed its willingness to agree territorial cessions in favour of Bulgaria unless the Allies would have recognized as indisputable the rights of the Romanian state over Transylvania³.

In order to obtain a peaceful attitude of Bulgaria, the plenipotentiary minister of Romania in Paris, Emil Lahovari proposed the use of the so-called "Scottish shower", so the promises concerning territories should be combined with threats. As a way of pressure and threat, Russia would have to send war ships and also troops from Caucasus to Varna⁴.

The Romanian government declined Russia's proposal concerning the military cooperation, declaring that at this stage of the war, they wanted to conserve all the efforts for maintaining the Balkan balance of power. Romania intended to supervise Bulgaria's attitude during the first months of the conflict.

Nevertheless, on 18 September/1st October 1914 a convention was signed between Russia and Romania, the latter committing to remain neutral. In exchange of its benevolent neutrality- which involved the interruption of the transports of war materials to Turkey on its territory, and also the facilitation of the Russian transports to Serbia-Romania received guarantees on its territorial integrity. Moreover, Romania's right to incorporate the provinces of Austria-Hungary inhabited by a Romanian majority population was recognized. Romania also enjoyed the Russian approval concerning all its power of decision on the opportune moment to occupy these territories. In a conversation with Romania's plenipotentiary minister in Petrograd, Constantin Diamandi, the Russian diplomat, the baron Maurice Schilling also approached the issue of a possible separate peace with Austria-Hungary. In his opinion, the idea would not be rejected by the ruling tsarist circles, if the Double monarchy admitted concessions in favour of Serbia⁵.

The issue of the concessions for the Romanian Kingdom was not stipulated in the case of a separate peace. So, the peace negotiations conducted

¹ Iuri Nikiforovici Danilov, *Rusia și intrarea României în război*, în *România în timpul primului război mondial. Mărturii documentare*, edited by Dumitru Preda, Maria Georgescu, Ștefan Pâslaru, Marin C. Stănescu, București, Editura Militară, 1996, p. 137.

² A.M.A.E.F., Série Guerre, Sous-Série Balkans, d. 217, f. 2.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*, d. 337, f. 19.

⁵ S.A.N.I.C., fond Diamandi, d. 27, f. 183; G.E. Torrey, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

by the Russian government demonstrated the violation of the agreement signed in 18 September/1-st October 1914¹. Romania continued to fear Bulgaria's attitude and its projects, which have always been unpredictable.

On 7 October 1914, Bulgaria's minister from Bucharest, Radev, declared again to Jean-Camille Blondel, his French colleague, that Bulgaria would remain neutral even if Romania intervened in war. If we give credit to the words of the Sofia's representative, Bulgaria had not decided to attack Serbia until that moment, trying to avoid a conflict with the Entente. In fact, the Bulgarians could not fight allegedly against the Russians and their will was to reach an agreement with Romania. But the latter had not taken into account the Bulgarian initiatives. Given these realities, Blondel thought that, in fact, if the Romanian cabinet really wanted to reach a *modus vivendi* with Bulgaria, this would be possible due to Russia's arbitration. Unfortunately, the Romanian government disagreed the idea of such an agreement, insisting on evoking the Bulgarian danger in order to explain its lack of action. An agreement with Bulgaria would have been possible only by giving up Cadrilater. Bucharest rejected this alternative from the very beginning. However, at the end of October 1914, Sazonov foresaw the possibility of an alliance between Romania and Bulgaria, provided that Romania's southern neighbour consented to intervene against Turkey².

Some Romanian diplomats, as the minister from Petrograd thought of a possible simultaneous action: Bulgaria in Tracia, and Romania in Transylvania³. The Russian nationalist deputy, Krupenski, even made concrete proposals at a session of Duma. He suggested a bargaining, pleading for Basarabia's retrocession to Romania. In exchange, Russia would have ensured domination over the Straits and the same time, Bulgaria would have obtained the line Turtucaia-Balcic⁴. Thus, all parts would have got satisfaction.

The Russian minister of Foreign Affairs, Sazonov, sought an agreement between Serbia and Bulgaria, but its chances of success were little due to the Macedonian dispute and the recent resentments, which made the rapprochement unlikely. Anyway, the Entente's diplomacy was sure that a Bulgarian military involvement would lead to Romania's intervention. It is certain that in 27 October 1914, Romania was unquiet concerning the Straits and wanted to obtain guarantees or even commitments on this issue. The Romanian diplomatic representative in Petrograd, Constantin Diamandi suggested the declaration of the commercial neutrality for the Straits and the

¹ A. Iordache, *op. cit.*, p. 58, 60.

² A.M.A.E.F., Série Guerre, Sous- Série Roumanie, d. 337, f. 123-124.

³ S.A.N.I.C., fond Diamandi, d. 27, f. 216.

⁴ *Ibidem*, d. 30, vol. I, f. 279.

city of Constantinople, and also the free circulation for all types of ships during peace and war¹.

In November 1914, a new event inflamed much more the spirits in the Balkan area. There was a lot of tension in this zone anyway, on one hand due to the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia and, on the other hand, due to divergent interests, which didn't unite the Balkan states, but on the contrary they aggravated the contradictions and the rivalries between them. The tsar Nicholas II's proclamation of 8 November 1914 caused an escalation of disagreements and unrest especially in Bucharest.

This proclamation expressed the hope that Russian-Turkish war would finish marking the triumph of the hegemonic program initiated by Peter the Great. There were many fears that Russia could extend its rule over the Black Sea and Straits. Therefore, Blondel requested an official explanation from the Russian government to end these assumptions and not to allow any doubt on the principles of freedom and internationalization of Straits Bosphorus and Dardanelles².

When the Romanian government requested an explanation from Russia concerning that proclamation, the Russian ruling circles adopted a very contemptuous attitude, declaring that Romania was not entitled to participate in the regulation of very important matters³.

Thus, the Romanian-Russian and Romanian-Bulgarian relations were quite cold and this reality was a cause for the failure of the reconstruction of the Balkan block. The national interests remained essential.

They were too important and that's why the concessions could hardly be agreed. The dialogue and the negotiations demonstrated their inefficiency in the attempt to bring together and simultaneously in the same camp all the states from Balkan region. Romania remained neutral for more than a year, while Bulgaria finally joined the Central Powers in October 1915, despite Entente's diplomacy efforts to attract it. Turkey had also joined the same military block in November 1914.

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¹ *Ibidem*, d. 27, f. 230.

² *Ibidem*, f. 68.

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TURKEY AND ARMENIA, IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

*Ionuț Cojocaru**

Abstract

What happened in 1915 regarding the Turkish-Armenian dispute, the difficulties concerning the historic logic this event falls under, and establishing “truth” based on the different hypotheses that are not backed by the documents present in the archives, has succeeded in achieving media attention due to the propaganda from the political factors of both camps and got to be analysed even in the far corners of the world, that were not as familiar to the subject. Even more so, in this dispute between states, historians’ counsel was not asked for. The present article is based on three independent, but convergent ideas: the thesis belonging to Scott Taylor concerning this “genocide”, why Canada is the only state that recognizes “genocide” as claimed by the Armenians, as well as a document found in the National Archives of Turkey that proves the fact that the representatives of the Ottoman Empire did not issue any repressive order against the Armenian minority. The analysis starts with Decree no. 1331/163 from May 1915 concerning the conditions of Armenian relocation by the Ottomans, document of major importance that may be the basis for historic arguments, beyond the subjectivism in each of us.

Key words: *Decree no. 1331/163, Ottoman Empire, Armenia, Genocide, Canada*

A genocide? Was there or wasn’t there a genocide? The Canadian Scott Taylor is one of the authors who dared inquire and write about the Armenian “genocide”. Due to mass-media propaganda, but not only, it is rather difficult to find really objective books on this issue.

In recent years, the parliaments of some important countries in the arena of international relations have spoken about and envisaged voting a law meant to condemn the “genocide” perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire on the Armenians. The subject is interesting, and makes the object of challenging debates in broad diplomatic environments and also in the political world. Actually, should a parliament pronounce itself on historical events, then this decision ought to rest on solid researches made by reputed historians whose opinions in this field are highly respected. Without the historians’ expertise –

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where the members of the parliament voted a law which acknowledged the “genocide” perpetrated on the Armenians.

In the context of the beginning of World War I, the Ottoman Empire, exhausted by so many conflicts, had neither any interest, nor any concealed desire to become an actor in it. Before the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Empire had concluded with Great Britain an agreement regarding the building of two cruiser-like battleships. On the eve of World War I, the Ottomans whose financial resources were scarce could no more pay the warships, therefore the British kept them for themselves. The Germans took advantage of this situation and sent two of their warships in the Mediterranean.

In his memoirs, Hans Kannengiesser¹ depicts the moment when Enver Pasha, the minister of war, decided to which camp the Ottoman Empire would belong: “I was at the usual report at Enver Pasha, the minister of war, when, against usance, in the very middle of the report, the servant announced lieutenant colonel von Kress”. The latter told the Turkish minister of war: “The city of Cannakale reports that the German battleships <<Goeben>> and <<Breslau>> flow in front of the Dardanelles and ask permission to enter peacefully. The fortress asks to receive urgent instructions for the commandants of the forts of Kum Kale and Sidil Bar”. Irritated by the possible consequences entailed by this situation, the Turkish minister answered: “I cannot decide right now. I have to speak first with the grand vizier”. Kress: “But we have to cable on the spot”. Not persuaded by his decision, Enver Pasha approved: “Let them enter”. D.v. Micusch and lieutenant colonel Kress, who witnessed this scene, relate that they felt relieved seeing that a favourable decision to their country was made. The continuation of the dialogue is even more interesting. Kress: “If British battleships are to follow the German ones, shall we fire upon them in case they would also want to enter?” Naturally, the minister of war replied that such a decision should be made by the council of ministers, yet, according to his memoirs, the German officer went on raising the stakes: “Excellency, we cannot leave our subalterns without clear and immediate orders when confronted with such a situation. Shall they fire or not?” After a short break, Enver Pasha concluded: “Yes, they shall”².

The Germans took advantage of this event, and pushed the Ottoman state into an alliance resented by the public opinion. A secret treaty signed with

¹ Hans Kannengiesser was a German officer in World War I. He fought alongside the Turkish forces during the Gallipoli battle. He was not merely a liaison officer with the Turkish army, he led the Turkish troops on the battlefield, including the 9th Turkish Division. The 9th Division was part of the 5th Army, which was led during the campaign of Gallipoli by the German general Otto Liman von Sanders. After the war, Kannengiesser published his memories about the Gallipoli battle.

² Hans Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, Berlin, 1927, and in D.v. Micusch Gazi, *Mustafa Kemal 1880-1938*, Craiova, Editura Scrisul Românesc, f.a., p. 114.

Germany existed since 1914, still most of the ministers in Constantinople pleaded for neutrality. Because of its position and because for the Great Powers it was vital to be able to cross the straits, it was obvious that the Turkish state would not maintain for a long time its neutrality. Things took a precipitous turn, for the main persons of the executive body, Enver, Talaat and Djemal, convinced that the Central Powers would win, decided to assume the risk and present their cabinet colleagues with a fait accompli. Three ministers resigned, the most famous of them being Djavid Doenme¹. The scales could be tipped in favour of those who preferred the Entente, which was willing to guarantee their integrity, but which would not eliminate the capitulations. Because of the Russian-Turkish hostilities in the Black Sea, the Entente declared war to Turkey, in November 1914.

Profiting from the weakness of the Ottoman Empire, the British attached Cyprus and invoked officially the mandate of protectorate in order to withdraw Egypt from the Ottoman influence. Statistics show us that the Ottoman Empire possessed a considerable force. During the war, 2,700,000 Turks were enlisted in 80 divisions.

The Armenian Issue

In the East of Anatolia things were moving at high speed. The Tsarist Empire struck this zone for the first time by recruiting large contingents of Armenian volunteers from the Caucasus with a view to annexing Eastern Anatolia. The Armenians living on this territory under Ottoman occupation were well armed and fully prepared to support the Russian army. The Nationalist Party DASHNAK sent a series of letters in which they pledged allegiance to the tsar Nicholas II, as soon as the hostilities would begin. A declaration issued by the Armenian National Bureau sounded as follows:

“While the glorious Russian armies are fighting against Turkey, who, supported by Germany, dared raise her hand against the majestic Russia, on the territories of her own hegemony, in the snowy mountains of Armenia, and in the large valley of Alashkert, following the ancestors’ advice, the Armenians gathered to sacrifice their lives and goods for the sake of Great Russia and the glory of her throne.

The good news from the war with Turkey aroused the enthusiasm of the entire Armenian people. Armenians of all countries are rushing to join the glorious Russian armies and share in the victory of Russia’s armies, even if that means to shed their blood. We pray God to help us triumph over the enemy”².

¹ “Doenme” – name given to the Jews who emigrated from Spain and converted to Islam.

² Scott Taylor, *Diferențe ireconciliabile Turcia, Armenia și Azerbaidjan*, București, Editura Paideia, 2012, p. 101.

In the first stage of the conflict, the Russians and the Armenians lost almost 40% of their men, the Turks being now in high spirits and heartened by their success. Elated, the minister of war, Enver Pasha, decided to launch an ambitious attack. On December 26, 1914, under a brass monkey weather, 95,000 soldiers set forth for the final assault. On January 17, 1915, the battle came to an end and out of the 95,000 Turks that had begun the attack almost 75,000 died, most of them because of their frostbites and starvation.

The Armenian population thought to capitalise on these circumstances and tried to obtain the city of Van. The Ottomans improvised an army made up of reservists and a militia of volunteers to recover this town. In their turn, the Russians also took advantage of this instability generated by the Armenian revolt in Van. Organising their own assaulting force made up of about 4,000 Armenian volunteers from the Caucasus, the Russians marched to break down the Ottoman defensive walls of the city of Van. In order to hasten the advance of the Russian force the Armenian rebels committed a series of crimes in the whole region. In their turn, the Armenian guerrillas slaughtered both Turkish and Kurd civilians.

The Armenians did not hide their horrible massacre perpetrated on the Turks, during the fights. On May 24, 1915, Gochnak, an Armenian newspaper in the U.S.A., declared that “*only 1,500 Turks remained in Van*” the rest having been slain or expelled from their houses¹. On May 31, 1915, the Russian troops marched into the city of Van, and were acclaimed as liberators by the Armenian inhabitants. The tsar Nicholas II sent a cable to the Armenian Revolutionary Committee of Van and thanked it for the services it rendered to the Russians.

Against this background, the Ottoman authorities made a last appeal to the Armenian Revolutionary Committee of Van asking it to stop slaughtering the Muslims of Eastern Anatolia. The Armenian Gregorian Patriarch was summoned together with the Armenian members of the Ottoman Parliament. And since the Ottomans continued to be butchered unremittingly, the Ottoman leaders changed their tactics. They closed the Armenian Revolutionary Committee, and 235 revolutionaries were arrested for crimes against the state.

Moreover, the Council of Ministers ordered the forced deportation of 700,000 Armenians. The motivation of this decision: the direct and overt support offered by the Armenians to the Russians. At that time, the Armenian Revolutionary Committee was fighting a guerrilla war in the Ottoman inland zones, and deportation seemed an excellent strategic solution. The order regarding the Armenians' relocation sounded like this:

When the Armenians residing in the afore-mentioned towns and villages, that must be relocated, are transferred to their new settlements, they should

¹ Scott Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

enjoy during the transportation all the possible comfort and their lives should also be protected; after their arrival, their food should be paid with the money allotted to the refugees, till they are completely settled in their new abodes. Properties and lands should be distributed to them in accordance with their previous financial situation, and their current needs; and for those who need supplementary assistance, the government shall build houses, and provide farmers and craftsmen, seeds, tools and equipment¹.

The aim of the ordinance was to limit the expansion of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee. The Ottoman army which had to protect 700,000 Armenians had just lost 75,000 soldiers. The hatred of the two nations was beyond words. The Armenians' forced deportation engendered massacres and deep suffering among the displaced. The Ottoman standing army was busy to stop the Russians' advance, and the local constabulary units were endeavouring to protect the Muslim residents of Anatolia against the Armenians' retaliation, therefore the columns of deportees could not be totally protected. Under these circumstances, the Kurds became the greatest problem for the Armenians. Justin McCarthy describes the Kurds' assaults in his "Death and Exile":

"Although usually the tribes did not involve in mass murdering the Armenian emigrants, the tribes killed a huge number of Armenians, and kidnapped their women. The tribes must have been the main cause which increased the mortality, for they were endlessly stealing the resources the Armenians needed to subsist. In spite of the orders, the emigrants received rather few victuals, being thus compelled to feed themselves. But the Kurd tribes deprived them of their means of livelihood, the result being their starvation".

In July 1915, the Ottomans had received significant reinforcement, and by the end of the month they succeeded in driving away the Russians and the Armenians from the Van zone. As the Armenians feared a reprisal of the Turkish army, they retired to the Caucasus, under the protection of the withdrawing Russian troops, though the relocation plan imposed by the Ottomans intended to displace the Armenians in Syria, Palestine and Iraq, and not into the Caucasus.

The town of Urfa (today Şanlıurfa) made an exception. On September 29, 1915 the Armenian militia took control of the district and opposed the Ottoman constabulary forces. In the Armenian neighbourhood the Muslims were killed and their houses were destroyed. It was necessary to send the Turkish army in order to subdue the Armenians.

¹ Decree 1331/163, May 1915; see also Scott Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

General Mehmed Wehib Pasha, commander of the third Ottoman Army depicts the liberation of the town of Erzincan:

“I saw villages so devastated that no hut escaped undemolished. The trees were cut off in all the orchards, and all the villagers are dead. History has never before recorded such atrocities as those committed by the Armenians in Erzincan. For three days all we did was to gather the corpses of the killed Muslims which had been thrown away by the Armenians. Among these innocent victims there were not yet baptised babies, ninety year old women and men, all quartered into pieces”¹.

At the same time, the Powers of the Entente attacked the Strait of Dardanelle, where the Turks, at the cost of 660,000 dead and 152,000 wounded men, succeeded in banishing the invaders. During the war, the same Ottoman Empire sought to find the resources necessary to relocate the Armenians in another region of the realm. Hence, it would be absurd to imagine that the Ottomans could have simultaneously committed a calculated and methodical genocide.

Below we shall find the details of the Decree 1331/163, of May 1915 regarding the conditions of the Armenians’ relocation by the Ottomans:

a) those who were compelled to change their lodgings (dislocated) shall safely move to the zones of their choice with all their goods;

b) until they settle in their new abodes, the subsistence costs shall be ensured by the budget allotted to emigrants;

c) they shall receive lands and housing in accordance with their previous properties;

d) for the needy, the government shall build spaces to live in, and shall provide tools and instruments, as well as seeds necessary to agricultural works;

e) the assets left in their former residence shall be returned to the new location if the said assets are mobile, and if they are immobile, they shall be inventoried and evaluated, and the persons concerned shall be indemnified with the necessary sums;

f) the immigrants’ specialised places, with the exception of the cultures of olives, mulberry trees, vines, oranges, shops, inns, factories, or stores, that generate revenues, shall be sold at open-outcry auction or shall be hired, and the resulting sums shall be recorded in the stores of the property funds to be paid to the rightful owners;

g) all these shall be supervised by a special commission, and separate written orders shall be prepared in this respect.

Apart from the measures taken, the following aspects shall be considered:

¹ Commander of the 3rd Army to the Supreme Commander 13/14 March 1334; Scott Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

- Civilian inspectors were appointed to verify and coordinate the immigrations towards the zones of Anadan, Aleppo, Maraş;
- The “General Direction for Immigrants” was founded in order to provide for any needs related to the immigration process;
- Animals and means of transportation were supplied to the convoys;
- For the aged Armenians, for the people with disabilities, for the wounded, widows, sick, and orphans who are not subject to immigration the state built special locations and bore the expenses necessary to meet their needs;
- The Armenian families that needed protection were not forlorn. It was made known that the families whose men were deported, or in military service, parentless families and the orphans shall live in the villages or communes where no other ethnicities than the Armenian one lived, and the subsistence expenses shall be paid from the allocation for immigrants;
- Those who were subject to migration (relocation) were mutinous Armenians, or deserted the army of the Ottoman Empire to enlist in the Russian army, or who belonged to the Gregorian sect. At the same time, catholic or protestant Armenians who were officers or doctors in the Ottoman army, those who were working in the Ottoman bank, in agencies or on their own, and the Armenian personnel of certain consulates shall not be subject to migration (relocation) as long as they remain faithful to the state;
- Protection of persons and goods subject to relocation; they were to be decided upon by the leaders of the communities along the emigration route; organisation of victuals, drinking and lodging;
- Important budgets were allotted to cover all the expenses related to the immigrants’ basic needs and to the protection of the convoys during both the transportation period and at the destination place. The hospitals along the immigration route received the order to provide warm food and meat, and to attend the sick people that were making up the emigration convoys;
- The routes were chosen according to their degree of security as regards the railways and boats;
- To protect the immigrants against malaria, a widely spread disease at that time, they were administered quinine. It was decided that the already contaminated persons be treated in both military and civilian hospitals;
- The relocated Armenians were allowed to move together with all their mobile goods and animals; it was established how to record and how to take over the securities and real estate left behind and what would become of the lands and harvests on them;
- Measures were taken to prevent the disappearance of goods and fortunes, as well as the attacks of thieves and assassination of individuals;
- Those who were attacking the convoys, who were committing violence or robbery or fraud, or those who had not taken all the necessary measures to

ensure the immigrants' protection were to be referred to Court Martial and punished severely. Those who committed such deeds could even be sentenced to death;

- Orders were given that they be settled in villages or communes, according to the zones they would be relocated, and houses had to be built for them, in the areas indicated by the government.

On the one hand, the Ottoman government spent large sums of money to enforce the Relocation Law, and on the other hand it deferred or even cleared the debts to the state or to private persons of the relocated people. It was decided that the money these people had yet to receive be traced by special commissions and sent to the new locations. Meanwhile, from the United States, American missionaries and consulates sent, with the government's assent, sums of money to be distributed to the Armenian emigrants.

When World War I was over, it was decided that relocated people return to the zones they had been compelled to leave, certainly if they wanted to. Local authorities were instructed in this respect and measures were taken to implement this decision. And it is a reality that in today's Turkey there is an Armenian community, and in Istanbul, for instance, on the banks of the Bosphorus, lies the Armenian district.

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**THE COMITADJI PROBLEM OF THE SOUTHERN DOBRUDJA
AND THE ROMANIAN-BULGARIAN RELATIONS**

*Cătălin Negoita**

Abstract

In 1913, the south of Dobrudja is given to Romania as a consequence of the Treaty of Bucharest' purviews. The military campaign of the Romanian army strained the relations between Bucharest and Sofia. In this territory, which now belonged to Romania, lived an important Bulgarian community, who hostile handled the new administration. In Cadrilater, armed groups of people will appear, which will undermine the Romanian authority within the region. The support that Sofia offered to these groups will constantly ignite the conflict between the two states.

Key words: *Comitadji, Cadrilater, Bulgarian, Romanian, Administration*

Shortly after the Cadrilater became a part of the Romanian state, the Bulgarian authorities, who had exercised their powers in the region until the Peace Treaty of Bucharest in 1913, together with a number of Bulgarian refugees, rushed to establish a *Cultural and Humanitarian Society of the Bulgarian refugees from Dobrudja*, (abbreviated, <*Dobrudja*> *Society*). It was created on 21st September 1913, and if its designation was benevolent, the adopted slogan had the gift to convince everyone about the true intentions of its creation: *No Dobrudja without blood, and no blood without Dobrudja!*¹ The extremely active society organised in 1914 two congresses in the Bulgarian capital, establishing its structure. *The <Dobrudja> Society* had two sections: a cultural one, dealing with *Dobrudja* refugees, (finding housings and jobs), as well as attending to an intense propaganda in favour of maintaining the state of tension in the relations between Bulgaria and Romania.

The second section was the political one, and its goal was extremely well defined. The political wing was called the *Dobrudja* Revolutionary Committee. The leaders of this party intended to form bands of comitadjis, to be sent in Cadrilater, in order to terrorize the Romanian population and authorities in the region.

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¹ Dan Cătănuș, *Cadrilaterul – Ideologie cominternistă și iredentism bulgar*, București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2001, p. 20.

The outbreak of World War launched the irredentist plans. Entered the field on the side of the Central Powers, the Bulgaria had a single purpose: to recover the lost territories as a result of the Peace Treaty of Bucharest and even more than that: the control over the entire *Dobrudja* region.

Trying to find a solution to this problem, the Bulgarian authorities appointed in key functions, in the occupied territory, leading members of the <*Dobrudja*> Society. They had the role to do anything humanly possible to convince the international public opinion and mainly the Great Powers, on the subject of so-called *Bulgarian rights on the entire Dobrudja region*.

At the end of the war, simultaneously with the retreat of the troops and of the occupational Bulgarian administration, the members of the <*Dobrudja*> Society left the region. Some of them however, stayed and continued a hostile policy towards the Romanian state. This state of things had seriously poisoned the relations between Bulgaria and Romania. Bucharest permanently required from Sofia to temper the actions of their nationals, while in the South of Danube, the Bulgarian propaganda constantly presented the *tragic situation* of their nationals in *Dobrudja*.

The withdrawal of the Bulgarian authorities from Cadrilater was a hard blow for the <*Dobrudja*> Society, if we consider how many of its members had held various dignities. The society was reorganised in 1919, the new directives given to the Bulgarians from Cadrilater were not referring anymore to the boycott of the education in Romanian language and to the avoidance of the military service, but instead targeted their integration in the Romanian society with the goal of reaching different key functions, that could be useful to the irredentist cause. Although the <*Dobrudja*> Society tried to pass for a unique leading forum of the revisionist actions, it had, during the early years after the war, an extremely limited control over the comitadji bands that acted in Cadrilater.

The comitadji problem suscitated different interpretations in the Romanian historiography. The term of Turk origin, designated initially the revolutionary organisation members that fought for the freeing the Macedonia from the Ottoman occupation. The close analysis of their actions in Cadrilater shows the fact that for a long time the coordination of comitadji bands, from the political point of view, was inexistent. Many of the comitadji were primarily thieves, outlaws, with little interest in the complex political problems that animated the offices in Sofia and Bucharest. A convincing proof of this statement is the fact that among the victims of the comitadji robberies were Bulgarians from Cadrilater as well. Moreover the bands actions were carried in Bulgaria also, in the villages close to the Romanian border.

The New *Dobrudja* constituted however a safer action field, due to the fact that it was populated by numerous Bulgarian population, little willing to

collaborate with Romanian gendarmes in the capture of the thieves. In addition the Romanian legislation was far more indulgent than the Bulgarian one in such cases. In conclusion, a large part of the comitadji bands activity presented as *revolutionary*, was in fact a form of *modern outlawry*, generated by the post-war troubled times.

The recurrent robberies succeeded in creating a state of terror among the inhabitants of the villages close to the Bulgarian border. A report of the Silistra Safety Brigade shows that “in the townships of Atchioi and Ciose-Abdi, close to the border, due to the repeated attacks of the Bulgarian bands, the inhabitants are terrified and sleep in the fields”¹.

The bands were formed in the small town of Kemanlar, in Bulgaria and acted in Cadrilater, where they stole cattle. The report of the Silistra Safety Brigade also stated that the bands attacked the Romanian gendarmes, when they were intercepted. The Durostor authorities had the information that such bands, which counted from 6 to 200 individuals, were based in Bulgarian villages Iachi, Iusufanlar, Doscilar, Dangilar, Sarai, Cioban Nasuf, Saltidar, Cadaschioi, situated across the border. Contacted, the Bulgarian authorities declared that they were aware about the existence of such bands, but were unable to destroy them. In certain cases, the comitadjis had guns and military uniforms, their heads being dressed in officer uniforms².

Often the robberies were accompanied by murders: in the evening of August 18th 1919, the Bulgarian comitadjis assassinated in Balcic, the street sergeant Nerescu, after which his body was dumped on the Balcic-Bazargic road³.

In the same month of 1919, the Turkish ranger Osman Mehmet, who along with 12 workers, were harvesting wheat in the Cafalcea forest, were attacked by a band of 20 comitadjis. The ranger managed to escape, but the thieves took the cart. The workers declared for the authorities that the bandits were Bulgarians from the village, which fled from Cadrilater at the arrival of Romanian troops. Three days later two gendarmes were attacked by a band of 10 comitadjis, while they moved from a post to another. During the fight, one of the gendarmes was injured⁴.

¹ Serviciul Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale, București (The Service of the Central National Historical Archives), henceforth, S.A.N.I.C., General Directorate of Police Fund, vol. I, dosar nr. 46/1919, f. 72.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Ibidem*, f. 71.

⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 61.

The summer of 1919 proved to be extremely hot. Another policeman was assassinated in Balcic, and from a villager in Ceatlar had been stolen in an armed robbery, 10.500 leva¹.

Taking advantage of the state of uncertainty, resulted from the ending of war, The Bulgarian bands intensified their terrorist activities. The comitadji were organised mainly, around the places where the Bulgarian population was majoritarian. Out of there, their actions were directed towards other villages and townships.

The violence continued in the area, a fact that made the Romanian officials declare that “they will abandon their posts, if urgent measures are not taken”².

Generally the bands controlled a restricted area, hiding in forests and being provisioned with food and munitions by the Bulgarian population. A new report, submitted to the General Directorate of Police, stated that a Bulgarian band robbed the postman Epaminonda Mustață, nearby the Sarsânlar village, and then forced him to kneel, shooting him in the head³. The same day the comitadji robbed three Turk peasants, working in the field, and wounded the forth, shooting him in the arm⁴. The events created panic among the population. The officials from the townships of Atchioi, Chiose Abdi, Tătar Atmagea and Sarsânlar handed their resignations to the prefect, and the postmen interrupted their drives, fearing for their lives⁵.

The terror provoked by the Bulgarian bands reached indescribable levels. The mayors of certain villages received threatening letters, in which they specified when the village would be attacked. The cereals were stolen at night and crossed over the border, and the peasants were beaten and robbed. Therefore a part of the population, especially those of Muslim origin, left their home towns and sought the refuge in the Cadrilater towns⁶.

The comitadjis fired their guns across the border, on the posts of Romanian gendarmes; and the Safety Brigade informers declared that the bandits enjoyed the ample support of Bulgarian officials.

With the near completion of the Peace Conference, following the Great War, the tension grew in Cadrilater. If abroad the Bulgarians were trying to prove, through a vivid propaganda campaign their rights over the *Southern Dobrudja*, at the border thousands of refugees were waiting for a signal to attack the entire border line, in the case that the region would be given to

¹ *Ibidem*, f. 51.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Ibidem*, f. 7.

⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 7 verso.

⁵ *Ibidem*, f. 8.

⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 9 verso.

Romania¹. Simultaneously with this action, the bands from the inside continued to terrorize the population and to attack the gendarmes' posts: in Kiosi Abdi, two dead and two severely injured, in Durostor, a dead and an injured, in Dolmuslar, an injured².

In order to discover on the spot the reasons that generated a so tense state of things, the head of Bazargic Safety Brigade went to the villages situated on the border line. His findings were not encouraging at all: "This whole piece of land looks like a foreign territory, not so much in the inhabitants ways, but mostly through the absence, in certain places, of our authorities, and by the lack of fear and respect towards the Romanian administration everywhere (...), I discovered that the Bulgarian population, due to the propaganda made by different agents, namely sent for this purpose, and who entered illegally the country, is firmly convinced that Cadrilater in general is already recognised by the Peace Conference, as a rightful Bulgarian territory, and that as a result, in the shortest time possible the Bulgarian authorities shall replace the Romanian ones"³.

Although in many cases the comitadji bands acted isolatedly, and the given blows had as purpose the robbery and their revenge on the authorities, the <Dobrudja> Society, reorganized in 1919, tried to coordinate all the anti-Romanian movements, and pass for the unique leading forum of the irredentist movement. A report of the Silistra Safety Brigade showed the fact that in Sofia the <Dobrudja> Society propagandized the retake the Cadrilater⁴.

The situation in the region got more complicated due to the founding in the Soviet Russia of the *Communist International*. The Bolshevik ideas were sometimes joined, due to the circumstances, by a large number of Bulgarians. The Cadrilater Bulgarians were not an exception, here being created a *Revolutionary Dobrudja Committee* that fought for the creation of a *Proletarian Red Army*.

On March 12th 1920, Enciu Atanasov and Gheorghe Portnov, representatives of the *Revolutionary Dobrudja Committee*, representing the <South> Office of the Committee, showed a report related to the committee's activity that was compiled in Varna, and which included five Cadrilater towns and four Bulgarian towns. In the report was specified the creation of the revolutionary committees in Balçic, Silistra, Varna, Bazargic (Dobrici), Ruse, Şumla, Cavarna, Turtucaia, as well as in 38 townships⁵. All these bodies waited

¹ *Ibidem*, f. 71.

² "Chemarea", from 1st August 1919.

³ S.A.N.I.C, General Directorate of Police Fund, vol. I, dosar nr. 65/1919, f. 90-91.

⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 68.

⁵ Dan Cătănuş, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

the soviet offensive against Romania, in order to rise and fight, and overtake the power in Cadrilater.

In the period 1919-1923, as long as the Bulgarian administration was represented by the Stamboliiski government, a government close to France and England, the terrorist and irredentist organisations had not enjoyed any official support. Moreover Stamboliiski declared unequivocally that there are no connections between his government and “the bands that raid Romania; these bands have nothing in common with former comitadjis that fought for the national cause”¹. The bands were however tolerated, and the local authorities and the military units from the border region, allotted them their full support.

The Stamboliiski bankrupt policy, as well as the corruption and the generalised poverty made it possible for a coup d'état to take place in Bulgaria, on the night of June 8th/9th 1923, it was made by a heterogeneous alliance, formed of the old political parties, *the Officers League* and *the Macedonian Internal Revolutionary Organisation* (*Vătrașna Makedonska Revoluționa Organizația*, abbreviated *V.M.R.O.*). *V.M.R.O.* was formed of Macedonian immigrants from the territories that passed into the Greece's and Yugoslavia's composition. From this organisation were recruited the most zealous defenders of the Bulgarian irredentist cause, and also the most violent and the most harsh of them.

Stamboliiski was captured by *V.M.R.O.* and horribly tortured, before being beheaded by his executioners. The new government led by Alexandăr Ţankov displayed a great receptivity towards the irredentist organisations that he funded discretely. Under these conditions in 1923 the armed wing of the *<Dobrudja> Society* was reorganised, the *Internal Dobrudja Revolutionary Organisation* (*V.D.R.O. – Vătrașna Dobrogeanska Revoluționa Organizația*) was created. To the leadership of the organisation was appointed the major in the reserves Nicola Kiamilev, close to the Macedonian circles and a friend of the new Bulgarian Prime Minister. *V.D.R.O.* was in fact a little sister organisation of the feared *V.M.R.O.*

V.D.R.O. tried and succeeded, in a good measure, to coordinate the activity of the comitadji bands. Their heads were attracted by the perspective of receiving some subventions, as well as by another perspective, admittedly far more distant than the first, to fill key functions in the Cadrilater administration, after the *liberation*. The Southern Dobrudja was divided into sectors, each sector being placed under the control of a commander, (*Wayvode*)².

The organisation appealed to the Bulgarian population to support with food and accommodation the revolutionary groups, and to establish the contact

¹ Constantin Iordan, *România și relațiile internaționale în sud-estul european 1919-1924*, București, Editura All, 1999, p. 44.

² Dan Cătănuș, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

persons, the illegal border crossing points, as well as the secret places, for the storage of weapons and munitions. Proving that they were reliable disciples of the feared *V.M.R.O.*, *haloed* by the massacres committed in Macedonia, during the Balkan wars, the members of *V.D.R.O.* compiled black lists with the persons that had to be physically eliminated. On these lists were included the members of the Romanian administration, as well as common people, regardless of their nationality, including Bulgarians, who refused to comply with the irredentist directives.

Since the beginning in the *V.D.R.O.* were outlined several positions, related to the way in which the future of Cadrilater was perceived, and the future of the entire Dobrudja as well. In this dispute the international political context put resolutely its mark. Starting with 1919 inside the *<Dobrudja> Society*, the central-wing group had a strong position.

Consisting mainly of people born in the region situated between the Danube and the Sea, the central-wing group militated for the independence of Dobrudja, considering that the region could constitute a *republic*, and its people could represent a distinct nation¹. This ideal was embraced with might and main by the left-wing grouping, which had however a single amendment: *the Dobrudja Republic* had to be a *Soviet Republic* and had to be a part either of the *Balkan Federative Republic*, or of the U.S.S.R.².

The right-wing of the *<Dobrudja> Society* militated for the incorporation of the region into the Bulgarian state, and the independence formula was, in its eyes, a transitory one.

After the Stamboliiski government fall and the coming of Țancov, the right-wing became more powerful in the *<Dobrudja> Society* and thus in the *V.D.R.O.* However, gradually the organisation fell under the communist influence, especially at the local level³. The three currents collaborated for a while, then their dissensions accentuated, and the end was constituted of a fierce battle for power, resulting with killings on both sides. Preliminary to this outcome, *V.D.R.O.* tried to conduct the known actions, the main problem being the severe lack of money and ammunitions. Considering that the Bulgarian government hesitated to get involved, fearing an international scandal, *V.D.R.O.* found a loophole: the generous stipends from Moscow, which was eager to transform the Dobrudja organisation in an effective tool for causing an uprising in Romania and in Balkans.

The shock was extremely strong for the Sofia government, which could not understand how two organisations with completely opposite orientations

¹ *Ibidem*.

² Marin C. Stănescu, *Moscova, Cominternul, Filiera Balcanică și România (1918-1944)*, București, Editura Silex, 1994, p. 96.

³ Dan Cătănuș, *op. cit.*, p. 24 .

could have been able to join forces, putting the country in an extremely dangerous diplomatic and political situation. Against the *V.D.R.O.*, and more exactly against its left-wing leadership, had been taken drastic measures. The communist leader Docio Mihailov and his lieutenants were arrested by the Bulgarian police, and at the trial each of them got one year in prison, while the weapons received from the *Comintern* were confiscated¹.

The arrest of Docio Mihailov, the leader of the left-wing of the *V.D.R.O.*, did not make his supporters to stand on the defensive. In the autumn of 1925 *V.D.R.O.* split, setting the bases of *D.R.O.* (*Dobrudja Revolutionary Organisation*), which reunited the communist current followers. On the release from prison, in the spring of 1926, Docio Mihailov came to Dobrudja in order to overtake the organisation's leadership. Soon between the *V.D.R.O.* and the *D.R.O.* began a genuine war of extermination.

From the moment of creation of the *D.R.O.* the irredentist activity was structured in two wings. The situation got complicated for the Romanian authorities, who were forced to face a double threat: communist and irredentist. A dark assessment of the situation highlighted that until the re-entry of the Romanian administration in Cadrilater and even up until 1924, there had been shot over 200 Romanian gendarmes². The January 17th 1925, the Silistra Gendarmes Company commander the captain Georgian, concentrated troops in the townships of Bei-Bunar and Cainargeaua Mică, arresting by taking aback the mayors of the two villages, Tone Netcov and Gheorghe Ichimov, who were members of the irredentist organisation. The captain reported to his superiors that all the inhabitants of the two villages were a part of the conspiracy, starting with local authorities and the community guards. An extensive compromising correspondence had been found, 2000 weapons and significant amounts of explosives, and in a nearby forest was discovered a large arms dump. The arrests continued in several villages populated mostly by Bulgarians³.

Despite the efforts made by the Romanian authorities, the irredentist activity increased. The courts of law from all over Dobrudja were suffocated by trials in which were judged individuals of Bulgarian origin, who in one way or another undermined the national security. Among those judged were communists, nationalists or common band members, as well as the persons who offered them food and shelter.

The colonisations undertaken by the Romanian state, both with Aromanians and with people from the Old Kingdom, were perceived by the Bulgarian population as a threat to the ethnic individuality and a sign that the Cadrilater demographic ratio was attempted to be changed. In July 1926, in

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

² "Marea Neagra", from September 1st 1924.

³ "Dobrogea Juna", from February 11th 1925.

Rusciuk, was founded an *information service* of the refugee organisation, which had the task to compile lists with Cadrilater Macedonian colonists, that had to be assassinated. Resulting from the information received by the Romanian Security Agency, the irredentists intended killing all the Aromanian colonists, together with their families¹.

The Cadrilater Bulgarian inhabitants consented, most of them, willingly or out of fear of repercussions, to support the terrorist organisations. I mentioned here the case of a village where even the community guards were *V.D.R.O.* members. In these circumstances the fight against terrorism was led from multiple points of view, as an impression of the *Don Quixote's* life fight. It was impossible to arrest entire villages. In addition, the comitadji bands had their own principle code, if it could be called like that, a code where the word *tolerance* was missing altogether.

The Security agents analysed the bands' activity, the methods of bands' formation, their sustenance, as well as the methods of applying the principle of *perpetual terrorism*:

"A band consists of many persons, depending on the importance of the actions that they have to perform. It has a ruler named *Wayvode*, helped by other sub-wayvodes, as well as action heads, that had under their order more citizens chetniks, meaning revolutionary band people.

All the band members had to live in the villages close to the home of the wayvode, as well as to the place intended for their actions, and only in the case of need the people are called, either all of them, or a part of them.

This is valid for the people living in Bulgaria, because on the territory of our country, there is also an important reserve of people, who matter in the band's structure. The bands are formed of the inhabitants of the villages, where they have to carry on their actions.

These Romanian citizens have the duty to respond to any wayvode's call and his helpers' as well, in order to help and to complete the work, which they came to perform. The Bulgarian state gives munitions and equipment to the bands. Apart from these, however the band members have to have their own means of sustenance, as well as a means for other necessary expenses. In order to be able to support their lives, they and their family members are given land properties, in the townships along the Romanian border, and the product of agriculture serves for the acquisition of food and clothing. There are gathered special funds, that are cashed in with receipts, from different persons from Bulgaria, as well as from our country, which if they are not paid, then the persons should expect as soon as possible the bandits' revenge, a thing that is always carried on with, and never failed to be accomplished. The one who

¹ Dan Cătănuș, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

breaks the rules is immediately executed. These sentences are given without the possibility of appeal and recourse”¹.

Almost all the manifestations of the irredentist organisations were full of invective addressed to Romanians. One of them stated: “guard your colonists and your mosquitoes” bands from the impatient Bulgarian population’s hatred, because the day of retribution is close! We swore to liberate our birthplace with the cost of our blood, and we shall liberate it from the claws of your miserable state, which on the battlefield does not know anything else other than flight, shame and fear. You knew the shame in Turtucaia, and met the glorious and heroic Bulgarian fighter. (...)

The Dobrudja cries and whines, and is disgusted being under the yoke of the one of the most miserable nations ever, who does not know the great battle, who degenerates, and who in its national numbness, seeks to form alliances with the minorities’ blood, assimilating them. Unfortunate Romanian representatives and miserable Romanian people, descendants of the Rome’s thieves and exiled. Bulgarian and Dobrudja conscience and pride do not sleep. We work for our motherland’s freedom, which shall never be yours! Anyone, who from now on, shall stand in our way, shall be gloriously crushed. Your government and your mosquitoes’ bands should take notice, because the retribution day is close”².

In their turn the <Dobrudja> Society’s leaders organised demonstrations, where were shared manifests with irredentist content. One of those manifests, named *The sorrow of the little people of Dobrudja* had the following content: “The sorrow of the little people of Dobrudja knows no limits! We shall seek to free the Dobrudja, and in the future it shall be ours! Dear Dobrudja! We want to belong to you, to live in your lands, where the golden wheat is shining, and where graze the beautiful flocks of sheep! We are from Dobrudja, and we have to live in our motherland! If we won’t get our freedom by peaceful means, we shall fight for it”³.

The irredentist movement put the Romanian policemen in an unprecedented situation. A note of the General Directorate of Police stated: “Through the Bulgarian Legation in our capital are brought Bulgarian cigarettes for the Bulgarians from Bucharest. Inside the cigarettes’ cartons is a wrapper with the mutilated Bulgaria on a map, printed on it. The black parts represent the regions populated by Bulgarians, but overtaken by its neighbours. Under the Bulgaria map the following is written: *Bulgarian, work ceaselessly to destroy the Neuilly Treaty! Wherever you shall be, do not forget this sacred order!*”⁴

¹ S.A.N.I.C., General Directorate of Police Fund, vol. I, dosar nr. 30/1926, f. 245-249.

² M.A.E. Archives, Fund Bulgaria, Dosare Speciale, 1920-1944, vol. 180, f. 76.

³ *Ibidem*, f. 154.

⁴ S.A.N.I.C., General Directorate of Police Fund, vol. I, dosar nr. 56/1934, f. 108.

The Ploiesti Regional Inspectorate of Police obtained data about the bands' concentration points, near the Romanian border, and about the border crossing points: "In the Sofular township, in Bulgaria, was formed a society, that counts up to this moment 45 members. It is a branch of the <Dobrudja> Society. In this township was formed a band that waits impatiently for the warming up of the weather, in order to cross the border. In Mahmuzlia-Bulgaria as well is a band armed with rifles and grenades. This band prepares a raid for the second half of the month of March, when it intends to commit an attack in a single night and then return immediately across the border"¹.

The same police inspectorate brought in attention of the Ministry of Internal Affairs that the Dobrudja refugees "live in Varna, where they were given lands with building plots, by the Bulgarian government. Everyone was forced to enrol as members of the <Dobrudja> Society and to pay a fee of 265 lei annually. The comitadji bands are armed with weapons, munitions and supplies by the Varna military authorities, which give them money in addition. In Varna is situated a military arsenal, which supplies the armament and munitions. These bands are formed solely of refugees, Romanian army defectors, coming from Cadrilater, and all of them are located in the townships close to the border; but not in the immediate vicinity of it"².

The direct threat to the Romanian authorities was represented by the comitadji bands, which continued to be a terror factor in Cadrilater.

In a secret memo sent on November 19th 1936, by the 2nd Section, (2nd Office), of the General Headquarters of the Romanian Army, to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, was stated that "the comitadji bands prepared multiple attacks that had to be performed by the end of October. However, given the fact that, King Boris was at Euxinograd-Varna, the attacks were postponed. There is attached one sketch showing by means of arrows, the entry points to Cadrilater, as well as the road that has to be followed by these bands. There had to be eight bands, each of them having a number of 15-20 people.

The comitadjis are armed with Russian and Romanian weapons, from those captured during the war, and with hand grenades. The main objective of these band attacks seems to be the creation of a state of uncertainty in Cadrilater, as well as the attraction of the attention of the international political forums on the Dobrudja issue"³.

The memo stated that the capture of the bandits is hindered by the fact that these enjoy the support of Bulgarian population, and that these could be immediately announced about the measures taken by the Romanian authorities, by the Bulgarian inhabitants that have permits for the border crossing. The

¹ *Ibidem*, f. 23.

² *Ibidem*, f. 28.

³ *Ibidem*, f. 6.

General Headquarters of the Romanian Army proposed several measures that could stop or mitigate the devastating effects of the comitadji bands raids:

“1. To be provided more difficulties in the obtaining of the border crossing permits, for the inhabitants included into the category mentioned in the paragraph b. for this purpose:

a. to be required the submission of a Bulgarian land ownership certificate annually;

b. to be required the signature of the Bulgarian authorities representatives that issue those certificates, their certification by the Șumla Director, as well as by the Romanian Consulate in Varna;

2. to be established awards for those Cadrilater inhabitants that shall uncover and help the authorities to catch the comitadji bands”¹.

Realising that all these measures would not provide the expected results, a top secret, undated report proposed radical measures: “In order to exterminate the comitadji bands that make these raids on our territory, and which lately were reorganised, the Regional Police Inspectorate propose the following: the unofficial organisation of a volunteers’ band, recruited amongst the Dobrudja colonists, determined and committed people, that should be employed exclusively to exterminate the Bulgarian comitadji bands members, even on the Bulgarian territory. In other words, the initiation of an extermination war by means of common people, in which the Romanian officials would not be involved. To the attack performed on our territory answering by assassinating those who provoked it”².

The year of 1940, “the year of tribulation for the Greater Romania” would start in the same state of permanent tension, but gradually the comitadji armed attacks ceased, as a result of the express provisions of the Bulgarian authorities, who did not want the violence to determine a change in the Germany’s benevolent attitude toward the Bulgarian revisionist claims nor retributions from Bucharest.

A special moment in the reorganisation of the irredentist actions was the appointment as the head of Bulgarian Legation in Bucharest of the minister Stoian Petrov Ciomakov. Soon enough Ciomakov proved to be a high-hand person, conducting the entire activity of the Bulgarian organisations in Romania. He compiled a program, which stated that all the Bulgarian associations should be monitored and directed from Sofia, through his person. The same Ciomakov tempered any bellicose attitude on the part of Bulgarian minorities’ leaders, stating that the resolving of the territorial disputes with Romania would be made exclusively by means of negotiations, with Berlin in the referee role. These would cause a rise of sympathy towards Germany. An

¹ *Ibidem*, f. 7.

² *Ibidem*, f. 13.

informative note from May 1940 stated: "The enthusiasm of the Bulgarian irredentist elements in Cadrilater began to increase along with the reputed success of the German army on the Western Front.

Thus it is reported that during the Sofia Radio Journal and Varna Radio Journal (7,15 and 13,15), the Cadrilater public places are frequented by the Bulgarian minorities, which come to listen the communications related to the progress of the military operations. If those communications are favourable to the German army, the Bulgarians express their contentment by outbursts of exuberant joy, in the same time stating believable the version that once the Reich wins the current war, it will impose the satisfaction of the Bulgarian territorial claims"¹.

The Soviet ultimatum notes from the end of June 1940, the lost of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, increased the intensity of the irredentist manifestations in Cadrilater. An information bulletin regarding the activity of the Bulgarian irredentist movement in Romania, from the period June 15th-July 15th 1940 stated: "The Bulgarian population waits composedly and confidently the hour of its liberation, being ready to execute the expected order from Sofia. The Bulgarians wish to regain their freedom and land in order to reunite their country, even in battle, regardless of the support of the Great Powers"².

However the tensions continued, and the irredentist leaders were convinced that the return of the Cadrilater to Bulgaria is almost done, moreover that the entire Dobrudja would be discussed. The revisionist current leaders even shared between them the future dignities in the Cadrilater administration. However, the moderate circles manifested serious reservations about the enthusiasm of the former, and declared that they do not intend leaving Dobrudja in the case of population exchange.

Despite the efforts of the Bulgarian Legation to eliminate any violent action of the comitadjis until the Bulgarian-Romanian negotiations regarding the Cadrilater are finalised, these continued. The Romanian Security in a new information bulletin, dated August 15th 1940, presented a statistic of comitadjis' actions in the period July 15th – August 15th. On July 24th four individuals, armed with rifles appeared nearby the village of Uzungiorman, from the Durostor County and took the legal papers of a peasant from a nearby township. On the night of August 19th, a comitadji band dressed in military uniforms attacked a ranger in the Ghiurghengic township, from the Durostor County; they took from him one thousand lei and a gun with the cartridge. On the night of August 14th, a comitadji band consisting of 25 persons appeared in the Rahman Aşiclar township, where they attacked three peasants, robbing from them important amounts of money.

¹ Dan Cătănuș, *op.cit.*, p. 267.

² *Ibidem*, p. 273-274.

The Romanian circles in Cadrilater were informed that at the beginning of the August, in Sofia had taken place an assembly of the Dobrudja and Macedonia organisations' leaders, where was decided to send in Southern Dobrudja more comitadji bands, formed of Dobrudja and Macedonia refugees, with the mission to provoke panic and turmoil¹. In parallel, the Sofia government requested to the Bulgarian Legation the elaboration of a report about the historical past of the Bulgarians from Dobrudja and Cadrilater, which had to be translated into the German and Italian languages and sent to Berlin and Rome. The authorities of the country situated south to the Danube awarded a fund of five millions leva for the organising of the Bulgarian minorities in Romania. This country Legation in Bucharest started compiling a table that included Romanian and Macedonian elements colonised in Cadrilater, from 1914 and up until 1939, as well as the properties owned by these elements. The minister Ciomakov communicated to the Bulgarian leaders from Romania that they are required to transmit the instructions and orders received exclusively verbally.

At the beginning of the Romanian-Bulgarian negotiations regarding the Southern Dobrudja issue, the Bulgarian diplomats in Romania announced that the negotiations between the two states would be successful and would evolve in a friendly way. Regarding the preparations made by Bulgarians for the forthcoming solution of the Cadrilater issue, The Security report stated the following: "The Sofia government ordered to the leaders of the Dobrudja refugee centres from Sofia, Varna and Rusciuk to compile tables with the refugees that wish to return to Cadrilater. The mentioned order stipulates that these tables would except, for the moment, the refugees with official functions, in order to avoid the public administration disorganisation. To increase their numbers, the organisations' leaders, the so-called organisations of the *border fighters*, decided to undertake an intense propaganda among the youth of Bulgaria, to recruit a series of new members. The Bulgarian priests, parsons of the churches from Dobrudja and Cadrilater, received an order from Sofia, through the Legation, to pray for the unity of the Bulgarian people from everywhere, during the worship services. As a result of another order from Sofia, the Legation gave orders that all the Bulgarian minority, originated from Cadrilater, residing in other regions of the country, would immediately return to their motherland, where in these communities would be compiled personal files, to be used under the Bulgarian occupation of the Cadrilater"².

September 7th 1940 marked the end of an era of permanent uneasiness in Cadrilater. After 27 years of Romanian administration, (in fact only 25, considering the First World War period) the Southern Dobrudja was restored to

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 290.

² *Ibidem*, p. 296.

Bulgaria. It had been a period of tension, terror, and failure, for the Romanian administration, to establish a normal state of things at the country's southern border.

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THE CORONATION FROM ALBA IULIA, 1922

*Lucian Dindirică**

Abstract

King Ferdinand and Queen Maria's Coronation in Alba Iulia, a city that during those years had become the „capital of all Romanians”, was the most important event of 1922. Festivities in connection with the event were held both in Alba Iulia and Bucharest. Due to the fact that, since the beginning of that year, at the head of the government was set Ion Brătianu, the Coronation was interpreted by some politicians, opponents of the Liberals, as having a strong political tint. In these conditions, Iuliu Maniu and Ion Mihalache, despite the invitation to attend the festivities, they have declined the offer choosing not to be present at the Royal Family's Coronation. The Coronation moment, with all its details regarding the organization, is found, fortunately, in Miron Cristea's memoirs, who, taking in account the political sovereigns' coronation Orthodox tradition, tried to arrogate to himself a much more important role in the ceremony of October 15. Miron Cristea's proposals, as head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, dominant in tradition and in number of believers in the interwar Romania were crossed with Ion I.C. Brătianu's proposals, President of the Council of Ministers, who, unlike the Primate, wanted that at the religious ceremony of the Coronation to serve not only Orthodox priests, but also priests of other religions.

Key words: *Coronation, Primate of Romania, King Ferdinand, Queen Mary, Alba Iulia, Ion I.C. Brătianu*

An important event occurred in 1922, both for the political life of Romanians, in generally, but also for the Transylvanians in particular. It was King Ferdinand and Queen Maria's Coronation at Alba Iulia, which become after the events of 1918 the “capital of all Romanians”. Festivities connected to the event were held both in Alba Iulia and Bucharest. Due to the fact that, since the beginning of that year, at the head of the government was set Ion Brătianu, the Coronation was interpreted by some politicians, opponents to the Liberals, as having a strong political tint. In these conditions, Iuliu Maniu and Ion Mihalache, despite the invitation to participate to the festivities, they declined the offer choosing not to be present at the Royal Family's Coronation¹.

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¹ *Istoria Românilor*, vol. VIII, *România Întregită (1918-1940)*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2003, p. 253.

The announcement regarding the Coronation was made on August 24, at King Ferdinand's birthday celebration by the Prime Minister Ion I.C. Brătianu, who also established the Coronation date – on October 15, 1922¹.

The excessive involvement of the liberal Prime Minister in this symbolic moment for the life of the Royal Family led to Queen Mary's discontent. On receiving news of the coronation, the Queen wrote in her notes: "Thursday, August 24, 1922, Sinaia (...) after lunch, Brătianu gave me the news that our Coronation will take place on October 15. I was very upset and I asked him how can he do this without any warning and how could I prepare myself so quickly for such an important event to us. He answered – the Queen continued – that political considerations have made it so urgent and whereas it has been decided, he hopes that I will help however I'll can. I told him I would consider that"². Despite Queen's formal opposition, the Coronation Day remained established as Ion I.C. Brătianu decided, for the middle of October³.

Nicolae Iorga, in his memoirs, described in an artistic from, the historical perspective of King Ferdinand's Coronation in Alba Iulia: "It was proper for him to put on his head the crown sprayed with a lot of precious blood, to whom fate had given him the unparalleled favor to collect, after three hundred years, the inheriting of Michael the Brave, who was not available for the bands of landowners and who should not be subject to the intrigues around him. The army was cheering for its leader, but the people's soul, the will of the millions of which the army is also a part, was not lit and heated, in that autumn day, when the rays of a pale sun were kissing shyly the glorious rugs of the banners and the cross from the beak of the eagles"⁴.

The same great Romanian historian described synthetically the blending of the religious ritual with the political one in the Coronation Day: "after the blessing of Royal crowns (the famous steel crown once worn by [King] Charles I, and the new one, made of gold, worn by Queen Mary), the sovereigns knelt and Bishop [Metropolitan] M. Cristea [Primate of Romania] began to say the Coronation prayer"⁵.

The crowning moment, with all its details regarding the organization, are found, fortunately, in Miron Cristea's memoirs⁶, who, taking in account the

¹ Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria românilor în timpul celor patru regi (1866-1947)*, vol. II, *Ferdinand I*, ediția a III-a revăzută și adăugită, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2010, p. 121.

² Maria, Regina României, *Însemnări zilnice (1 ianuarie – 31 decembrie 1922)*, vol. 4, București, Editura Historia, 2006, p. 253-254.

³ Ioan Scurtu, *op. cit.*, p. 124 și urm.

⁴ Nicolae Iorga, *O viață de om așa cum a fost*, vol. 3, *Spre înșeninare*, Chișinău, Editura Universitas, 1991, p. 81.

⁵ Idem, *Regele Ferdinand cu prilejul încoronării*, Iași, Editura Porțile Orientului, 1996, p. 14.

⁶ Elie Miron Cristea, *Note ascunse. Însemnări personale (1895-1937)*, Cluj Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1999, p. 62-67.

political sovereigns' Coronation Orthodox tradition, tried to arrogate to himself a much more important role in the ceremony of October 15. Miron Cristea's proposals as head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, dominant in tradition and in number of believers in the interwar Romania were crossed with Ion I.C. Brătianu's proposals, President of the Council of Ministers, who, unlike the Primate wanted that at the religious Coronation Ceremony to serve not only the Orthodox priests but also priests of other religions.

Even before the Coronation, Miron Cristea tried to sketch a new Coronation ritual based, mainly, on the Byzantine tradition, both imperial and inherited by the countries under its influence. "The King Charles I Coronation in 1881 – reading its course, it did not please me as Primate of the Romanian Orthodox Church. I withdraw myself with my director, Dr. Nae Popescu, a good connoisseur of Greek language and historian. We studied together especially the Moldavian chronicles. I knew from the German documents the Coronation from the Russian Tsars. I saw the Coronation of a Hungarian King. I studied after Porphyrogenetos the Byzantine Emperors' Coronation. Based on all these I have written a Coronation typical, which I have found to be very dignify and beautiful for the Orthodox Church"¹.

Even if this document written by the Primate, lately published², has been sent to King Ferdinand in the summer of 1921, the decision regarding the succession of the moments within the ceremony did not belong to the King, but was, as noted above, a reason of dispute, directly and indirectly, between Miron Cristea and Ion I.C. Brătianu. After some direct discussions, the President of the Council of the Ministers sent to Miron Cristea, one by one, the Palace Minister, Artur Văitoianu, the Internal Affair Minister, and, as Miron Cristea had written in his notes, also another member of Brătianu family was sent to him³.

Although, initially Brătianu wanted that during the ceremony „all to say a prayer: Uniates, Catholics, Reformed, even the Rabbi” – according to Miron Cristea's opinion, this proposal being a real “religious hotchpotch” – lately, the liberal Prime Minister wanted even the presence of Greek Catholics. Every time Miron Cristea's answer was outspoken. We remember it, according to his notes, the one offered to Văitoianu: “Our church is not a religious hermaphrodite, but it has an orthodox feature (...) The Orthodox Church is only Orthodox and no other can subdue it. This will also hurt its dignity. No bishop would admit it. He would refuse to go to Alba Iulia; and I would resign (...) we are tolerant, concessions, but today we have a dignity to care for”⁴.

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 62.

² The Central Historical National Archives, Miron Cristea fund, file no. 32, f. 190.

³ Elie Miron Cristea, *op. cit.*, p. 63-65.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 64-65.

Finally Miron Cristea was able to impose his opinion, so, the other cults were present in the church, but were unable to participate at the religious service as clergy, except the Greek Catholics, who never even attended the religious ceremony held at the cathedral from Alba Iulia. Few weeks after the Coronation – November 3/16, 1922 – Miron Cristea wrote, again, regarding to this matter: “now it is curious to be known. Why Mișu [the Palace Minister] and the others insisted so much for the Units to participate at the religious ceremony. I believe that they asked for this at the Royal Court. The Government has learned well to find. They failed”¹. Regarding the Coronation Ceremony, Miron Cristea wrote briefly: “our ceremony was beautiful: 17 bishops, 4 deacons, 4 Anagnosts and 2 priests (Archimandrite and Dean). The choir Carmen had 120 people. It was admirably!”²

In his notes Miron Cristea also keeps the remembrance of November 3/16, 1922, when King Ferdinand visited him and thanked him personally for his contribution to his Royal Coronation. During the visit, the King awarded the Primate with the order „Carol I – the Great Cross belt degree”³.

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¹ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

² *Ibidem*, p. 66.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

**ELECTION PRACTICES IN A CHANGING WORLD: THE CASE
OF PATRIOTIC UNION FROM BIHOR COUNTY (1945-1947)**

*Gabriel Moisa**

Abstract

The political attitude taken by the Bihor County's organization of the Patriots' Union in the first years after the World War II was one that seemed to be xenophobic. However, no one could talk about such thing because the whole situation was caused not by any xenophobic attitude of the local political leaders, Romanians or Hungarians, of the Union of the Patriots – organization of Bihor County. This successful attempt to segregate ethnic formation had joined the effort almost general of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania ceded to Hungary after the Vienna Award, which aimed the preserving of this territory to Hungary. For this, it did not hesitate to separate from the Romanians constituting its own political structures to campaign in this regard. The Hungarian Popular Union was the most important of them, found in a close alliance relationship to the Romanian Communist Party. A Romanian Communist Party dominated in the respective period at the decisional level by ethnic Hungarian and Jewish elements in Transylvania, the latter of Hungarian culture. The very representative Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party sent to Oradea to target the local organization of the Patriots' Union, Tóth Imre, was a Hungarian Jew from Transylvania, as he himself acknowledges. The findings of his report are relevant in this regard. Even he, a messenger of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, suggests the separation on ethnic principles which shows the official line of at least a substantial part of the central management of the Romanian Communists.

Key words: *the Patriots' Union, Bihor County, Romanian Communist Party, Romanians, Hungarians*

Situated in the category of “the traveler fellows” of the communists, the Patriots' Union of Romania played an important role in the effort to conquer the power, along with other such structures as Plowmen Front, Hungarian People's Union, Patriotic Defense etc.

The Union of Patriots was founded by the communist circles in Romania as an illegal organization in the summer of 1942, in order to contribute to finalize a comprehensive internal opposition as against the war unleashed against the Soviet Union. After August 23rd 1944, its work was quickly

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redirected in order to *un-fascism* the country. The Union of Patriots joined the platform draft of the National Democratic Front prepared by the communists and claimed Dr. Petru Groza government installed on March 6th 1945, under which the government had 5 ministries¹. That in the conditions under which one of the party's leader, Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa, said in September 1944 that the Union of Patriots was not "*a political party that splits posts and ministries*"². Since September 1944 the Union of Patriots assignment remained the coordination of the *citizen committees* and *village committees* recently emerged. Structures of the Union of Patriots have been established throughout the country, with the purpose of "*cleaning enterprises, institutions, faculties and schools of Guard elements*"³. In the world of villages, the members of the Patriots' Union joined first the organizations of the Plowmen Front to "share as" the greater properties than 50 hectares. In cities, the "guards" of the organization dealt with "unmasks" within the frame of the "*saboteurs of enterprises, speculators and owners who dose goods*"⁴.

The General Congress of the Union of Patriots in January 10-12th 1946 decided to turn this organization in the National People Party. Among the 120 members of the Central Committee of the new party were among others Dr. Dumitru Bagdasar, Petre Constantinescu-Iasi, Traian Săvulescu, Andrei Oțetea, Alexandru Philippide, George Călinescu, etc. It was passing to a new stage in the conquest of the power by the communists, and they had to be stronger organized, the year 1946 being a decisive year in this respect with regard to runoff election in November.

The first organization of the Patriots' Union in Bihor County was founded on October 15th 1944 in Beiuș even before the total release of Bihor County by the Romanian and Soviet armies, at a setting meeting, followed by a call on the purpose and program exposure of the organization⁵. This meeting was attended by several residents of Beiuș city, the most of them attending out of curiosity rather than of a real interest. The population was not extremely eager to enroll in the new political structure. This can be found also from a report of January 17th 1945, where they were placed 200 members on the lists of Beiuș organization. But only 50 of them paid regularly their membership fee and only one, in the person of the branch president, Alexandru Rițiu, could be considered

¹ The National Bank of Romania, *Restitutio. Viața și opera lui Mitiță Constantinescu*, nr. 4, Martie, 2004, p. 13.

² Gheorghe Onișoru, *Alianțe și confruntări între partidele politice din România (1944-1947)*, București, Fundația Academia Civică, 1996, p. 142.

³ Idem, *De la Uniunea Patrioților la Partidul Național Popular, 1942-1949*, în „Anuarul Societății de Științe Istorice din România. Filiala Prahova”, tom III-IV, 1992, p. 163.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 165.

⁵ Arhivele Naționale – Serviciul Județean Bihor (în continuare, se va cita: A.N.-S.J. Bh.), fond Partidul Național Popular – Organizația Județeană Bihor, dosar nr. 4/1945, f. 1.

active, the other members remaining “inactive”¹. Also, the report mentioned that despite of this situation, the political party supporters were numerous, at least 3000-4000 people, “*closely grouped around the P.U.*”². Given this situation, only a small number of persons of the supporters of the crowd succeeded to be worked in, the document noted that there was “*a defect in the organization*”³; blamed on the “*lack of propaganda and the small number of the held meetings*”⁴. On the other hand, it was specified here, “*the lack of a democratic political party*”⁵ more difficult to organize because people wanted “*to join not the organization but the democratic political parties*”⁶, cause of which it was believed that the “*Plowmen Front would be more successful*”⁷.

Since January 1945 they started the expansion of the Patriots’ Union, moving the party delegates in over than 30 communes and towns of the county area and the organization of some constituent assemblies. Of the 30 localities only 20 were able to begin the organizing of the committees of the Patriots’ Union. In the other region of the county the structure of the organization was in progress.

In the northern part of the county, the Union of Patriots was founded on October 20th 1944, soon after setting free of Oradea. The starting point was the general meeting of the day of November 12th 1944, held in a building in Oradea, 6 no. Theater Street⁸, when it was formed a provisional County Committee composed by 9 members. Two were intellectuals, a clerk, a craftsman and five workers. Also, on this occasion it was set the political line, taking the decision to fight “*against the national chauvinism existing between the cohabitant peoples (Romanian-Hungarian) and against the Nazi-fascist enemy until his final destruction*”⁹. The first initiative in this regard was the exclusion of the two intellectuals who belonged to the provisional committee for that they proved to be “*unhealthy elements, one of them having a fascist past*”¹⁰.

About how to conduct the Union organization in Oradea we find from a report of the local leaders of the party at December 30th 1944: “*The village organization is running slowly and very hard, because the city population majority is Hungarian, in terms of propaganda we should act in two languages, Romanian and Hungarian, and the field of organization of the P.U. is the*

¹ *Ibidem.*

² *Ibidem.*

³ *Ibidem.*

⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁸ *Ibidem*, dosar nr. 5/1945, f. 2.

⁹ *Ibidem*, dosar nr. 1/1944, f. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 2.

*middle population stratum – intellectuals, merchants, craftsmen – and until today they withdraw to enter the political organization. But mostly that withdrawal is felt from the Romanian population, which both intellectual and the rest of the population is tested by chauvinist ideas and we are regarded as communists”*¹. However, in the first month of 1945, the Patriots’ Union organization in Oradea had registered 170 members of whom 30 Romanian, 60 Hungarian, 50 Jews and 30 other nationalities (Germans, Serbs, Bulgarians)².

During this period, the Union of Patriots carried a little more consistent propaganda through the press articles explaining “*What is the Patriots’ Union?*”³ So, according to that “*the P.U. is an organized mass movement. To it can participate and can be joined by all the patriots determined to fight against the oppressor and exploiter Hitlerism and fascism without difference of gender, age, language or religion, being excluded only the enemies of democracy*”⁴. Meanwhile the political line of the Patriots’ Union is defined as one which “*is reflected in its platform of fight and it is alongside the political struggle of the Romanian Communist Party, the most achievable progressive political line*”⁵.

An overview of the political life in the north-central part of our county is presented by Imre Tóth, an activist of the C.C. of the R.C.P. sent from Bucharest to Oradea in February 1945 to organize, control and direct the activities of the Patriots’ Union – Oradea. A few days after his arrival in the city on the Crisul Repede River he found that the political scene was monopolized by the left forces: “*The M.N.S. groups (n.n. Magyar Nepi Szövetség – the Hungarian People’s Union), the Plowmen Front and Union Organization are highly organized, but M.N.S. grouped inside many Hungarian reactionary elements*”⁶ – the activist warned. The conducted survey reveals the exclusiveness practiced by the Hungarian revanchist circles infiltrated in the leftist parties, particularly the communist⁷. This situation is aggravated in his view as the Communists of Bihor sat the Hungarian national interests before those of the party. “*The Communist Party, composed of the Council of 11 persons attending the board: Mikloş Gyarmati, Boroş Janos, Feldman and Balasz Emil lead the N.D.F. organization following their own principles*”⁸, says the report by Tóth Imre. Regarding the

¹ *Ibidem.*

² *Ibidem*, f. 3.

³ *Ce este Uniunea Patrioţilor?*, în „Viaţă Nouă”, an I, nr. 17, 4 februarie 1945, p. 2.

⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁶ A.N.-S.J. Bh., fond Partidul Naţional Popular – Organizaţia Judeţeană Bihor, dosar nr. 4/1945, f. 4.

⁷ Ion Zainea (coordonator), *Democraţie occidentală şi democraţie populară: evoluţia spectrului politic în nord-vestul României (1944-1950)*, Oradea, Editura Universităţii din Oradea, 2004, p. 166.

⁸ A.N.-S.J. Bh., fond Partidul Naţional Popular – Organizaţia Judeţeană Bihor, dosar nr. 4/1945, f. 4.

Union of Patriots, the Romanian Communist Party put its great expectations to attract people on its side; the activist sent from Bucharest noted that *“the line of the Union of Patriots is no existing”*¹.

In the report drawn up on February 13th 1945, Imre Tóth specified that if till that moment the organization had registered 350 members of all nationalities, after that *“it has ceased to be even a democratic mob directly to the Communist Party, with the main influence of Mikloş Gyarmati, who sent a circular to all members of the U.P.”*². The same figure was presenting a bleak picture of the party: *“Their indiscipline (n.n. of U.P. members) led to the disintegration of the Union of Patriots that deliberately dissolved in several ethnic cells. We notify all the members of other origin than Romanian, women, youth, and friends that the organization of Oradea does not accept any more as so far members of any ethnicity – as instructed from the center. So, only people of Romanian ethnic origin can be members of our organization. For this purpose we please the friends – who we are sure they will understand the political deep meaning of this issue – to be enrolled in Madosz³ and Jewish Democratic Union”*⁴.

In a letter on February 12th 1945, concluded with the slogan of FREEDOM! (text broadcast in Hungarian and translated into Romanian), signed on behalf of the Patriots' Union – Oradea organization of Balogh Dumitru, Aranycs M., Szabo Dumitru, Riffod M., Zuh Alexandru, Juhasz G. and Lusztig I., addressed *“To all the members of the ns organization in Oradea of non-Romanian origin”*, it was clearly called on ethnic segregation. It was, clearly, a text and an action of ethnic discrimination, produced, in fact, of political calculations, invoking inexistent provisions whereby the members of the Patriots' Union who were not Romanian, were encouraged to enroll in the Hungarian People's Union and the Jewish Democratic Union. The address asked the Romanian exclusivity of this organization, *“without any justification for those who had registered or intended to join and without any real benefit for the Romanian population and beyond any of its requirements, in the place of this expected justification, just the expressing of the confidence in the friends who we are sure they will understand the political deep meaning of this issues...”*⁵.

¹ *Ibidem.*

² *Ibidem.*

³ It is certainly a confusion, as they are Nepi Szövetség Magyar – Hungarian People's Union Mandosz, as an organizational structure of the Hungarians in Romania has been in the interwar period.

⁴ A.N.-S.J. Bh., fond Partidul Național Popular – Organizația Județeană Bihor, dosar nr. 4/1945, f. 3.

⁵ *Ibidem*, f. 2.

In fact, the measure to forbid the non-Romanians to enter the Union of Patriots, despite the invocation of some provisions received from the higher bodies, was found to be abusive and – in a determined way – local generated by obvious political interests of group.

The conclusions drawn by Tóth Imre led to eliminate from the Union of Patriots in Oradea of all those who were not ethnic Romanian. Therefore, only 40 people remained registered. This fact actually showed something else, the desire of the power to implement a new stage of organization and struggle of the Hungarians, that of regrouping in a single pole of power, of the Hungarian People's Union, which could provide a better coordination of the planned actions, but also the discipline necessary to achieve the final objective¹, namely to keep the Northern Transylvania on Hungary.

In short time, the Union of Patriots – the organization of Bihor County, has become a structure composed exclusively of Romanian ethnics. They have organized a meeting on February 18th 1945, where “*with Dr. Simonca presidency all the ethnic Romanians joined the block and entered the Union of Patriots but without any program, any organization and any instructions given by us with the principles they had from various chauvinist parties. Being a special Romanian party, under the camouflage of the U.P., taking the first meeting, there was divergence between the principles of the U.P. and of the new congeries and, in fact, I wanted to intervene to explain the U.P. line, I was off being Jew...*”². We are here in a paradoxical situation in which after Tóth Imre's report practically prompted the leaving of Hungarians from the organization of the Patriots' Union, it is him who deplores all this in an ostentatious gesture of facade.

On February 18th 1945, in the Heymann cinema hall of Oradea, the general meeting of the Union of Patriots took place, attended, in addition to representatives of the other democratic organizations in the county, about 600-700 Romanians. As we learn of the daily *Viață Nouă* (New Life) “*during this great assembly, the intellectuals and Romanian democratic citizens of the town joined the organization of the Union of Patriots*”³. Also during this meeting, they elected the Union of Patriots County Committee, composed of 7 members, and the Board of Directors of the Union of Patriots of 22 people⁴. On February 20th 1945, the first sitting after the general meeting of the management structure was completed in the following structure: first president – Gheorghe Șimonca (General Attorney), President – Ștefan Lipcei (Lawyer), Executive Chairman –

¹ Ion Zainea (coordonator), *op. cit.*, p. 166-167.

² A.N.-D.J. Bh., fond Partidul Național Popular – Organizația Județeană Bihor, dosar nr. 4/1945, f. 4 and back.

³ *Înainte mării adunări a U.P.*, în „Viață Nouă”, an I, nr. 30, 18 februarie 1945, p. 1.

⁴ A.N.-S.J. Bh., fond Partidul Național Popular – Organizația Județeană Bihor, dosar nr. 5/1945, f. 3.

Virgil Ciacan (Lawyer), First Secretary – Dumitru Balogh (Official), Secretary – Iosif Tăutu (Official), treasurer – Michael Arania (Craftsman) plus two members of the Board – Ioan Magdu (Official) and Teodor Popa (Lawyer)¹.

The Board consisted of: Laurențiu Botoș (Judge), Aron Popoviciu (Court Official), Traian Surducu (Sedra Orphan County Chairman), Teodor Prodan (City Hall First Advisers), Gavril Seleșiu (Senior Official of the Municipality), Ioan Abrudan (T.T.P. Engineer), Petre Fărcașiu (Inspector T.T.P.), Iosif Caba (Conductor T.T.P.), Iosif Pop (Police, retired), Alexandru Pop (Police, retired), Alexander Caloș (Finance Official), Ioan Florea (Finance Official), Ioan Rosca (Bank Director), Dumitru Hera (County School Inspector), Ernestine Tiponuțiu (Official), Ioan Mezei (Trader), Vasile Oraș (Craftsman), Peter Hușca (Craftsman), John Breban (Craftsman), Teodor Bențiu (R.R.W. Official), Traian Leu (Worker) and Dumitru Sabău (Worker)². In the same meeting, there were also elected the members of the organization that would represent the Union of Patriots in the County Parliament of the N.D.F., respectively Simonca Gheorghe, Ciacan Virgil and Aranici Mihai, as the old representation in the person of Mr. Pop Ionel should be changed. As it can be ascertained, the management structures were composed exclusively by Romanian ethnic citizens.

In conclusion, we can say that the whole situation was caused not by any xenophobic attitude of the local political leaders, Romanian or Hungarian, of the Union of Patriots – the organization of Bihor County. This successful attempt to segregate the formation on ethnic criteria had joined the effort almost general of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania ceded to Hungary after the Vienna Dictate, which aimed at preserving the territory to Hungary. This did not hesitate to separate from the Romanians constituting its own political structures to campaign in this regard. The Hungarian People's Union was the most important of them being in close alliance relationship adjunct to the Romanian Communist Party, a Romanian Communist Party dominated in that period at the decisional level of Hungarian and Jewish ethnic elements in Transylvania, the latter of Hungarian culture. The very representative of the C.C. of the R.C.P. sent to Oradea to target the local organization of the Union of Patriots, Tóth Imre, was a Hungarian Jew of Transylvania, as he himself acknowledges. The conclusions of his report are relevant in this regard. Even he, a messenger of the C.C. of the R.C.P., suggests the separation on ethnic principles which shows us the official line of at least a substantial part of the central management of the Romanian communists.

The leaders of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania did not hesitate for a moment during that period being involved in their national interest, to *acquire* communist feelings, hoping that they will come to meet Moscow and Stalin

¹ *Ibidem*, f. 1.

² *Comitetul de conducere al U.P.*, în „Viață Nouă”, an I, nr. 38, 28 februarie 1945, p. 2.

who has not decided yet the fate of the Northern Transylvania, showing be more loyal and more reliable to the Soviet power than the Romanians. Moscow's decision of March 9th 1945, according that Transylvania lost by Romania after the Vienna Dictate is in the composition of the Romanian state has produced disappointment among the Hungarian minority leaders. Their effort to *communize* after in the interwar period they had, as members of the Hungarian Party, an anti-Soviet position had been in vain. They have not however dropped the idea and the examples are numerous in the years following the World War II.

After the return of the Romanian administration in the Northern Transylvania, the Hungarian local political structures have temporarily suppressed their impulses, even if only of surface, bound to accept the international realities of ethnic cohabitation with the Romanians until the arrival of better times.

Locally, shortly after returning of the Transylvanian territories to Romania, on March 18th 1945, were published "The Appeal of the Patriots' Union and of the Plowmen Front to the Romanian Brothers in Oradea and Bihor County" and "The Appeal of the Hungarian People's Union to the Hungarian Population of Bihor County", produced and disseminated in the context of restoring the Romanian administration in the Northern Transylvania, which was urging the citizens to discipline and mutual respect¹.

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¹ *Apelul Organizațiilor democratice de masă ale Frontului Național Democrat adresat populațiunii române și maghiare a județului Bihor*, în "Viața Nouă", an I, nr. 47, 18 martie 1945, p. 3.

**THE INITIATIVE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE EAST
EUROPE DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE ISRAELI FOREIGN OFFICE
FOR ROMANIA TO MEDIATE ISRAEL'S CONFLICT WITH EGYPT
(DOCUMENT. 1971)**

Daniela Osiac^{*}

Abstract

The presented document refers to the request for Romania to mediate the Arab-Israeli conflict, as its position "is closest to the Egyptian point of view (requesting the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories and a solution to the Palestinian problem) as well as the Israeli (recognition of the right to exist for all states in the area)".

Key words: *Romania, Israel, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Moshe Carmil, C. Dumitrăchescu*

During the entire period after the *Six-day war* (1967), Romania maintained a balanced attitude to both sides, supporting an immediate and final cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories and protection for the Palestinian refugees. In Romania's view, a balance was tenable only by a more limited involvement of the major powers in the area and by avoiding the situation what would favour one of the two sides to become more powerful than the other. It is in this context that we can explain the effort put by the Romanian diplomacy in preparing summit meetings both with the representatives of Israel and also those of the Arab states. In these meetings, the main elements of Romania's position on the situation in the Middle East were: the cessation of military operations in the area; the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories; ensuring the right to exist for all states in the region and respecting their territorial integrity; a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the spirit of the Security Council resolution of 22nd November 1967; solving the problem of the Palestinian people in accordance with their legitimate interests, including the establishment of an independent national State if so desired.

Between 1967 and 1973, Romanian diplomacy maintained a permanent dialogue with Israeli and Arab diplomacies, as well as the great powers, in order

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to identify solutions to the conflict in the Middle East¹. Romania's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict was expounded in New York (U.N.) by the chairman of the Council of Ministers, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, who emphasised it was time "to embark on a tempering course which would lead to the creation of an environment conducive to <<reasonable and constructive solutions>>, able to respect the right of all the countries in the region to an independent and secure existence"². All the states interested in solving the conflict in the area were asked to contribute to a similar reorientation. Thus, the various projects formulated by the Great Powers were carefully analysed and a point of view was formulated and transmitted to all interested parties. A relevant example is the so-called "Rogers Plan", put forward by the USA. The "Rogers Plan" – Romanian diplomatic documents emphasised – "is the formula mutually acceptable by both the Americans and the Soviets of putting into practice the provisions of the Security Council resolution of 22nd November 1967, given the fact that each of the two major powers considers these provisions enable it to continue to exercise influence in this part of the world."³ The plan was accepted in principle by Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Libya and rejected by Syria and Iraq; the Palestinians radically opposed any discussions. In keeping with the "Rogers Plan", a complete cease fire between Israel and Egypt came into force on the night of 7/8 August 1970. At the same time, the Swedish ambassador to Cyprus, Gunnar Jarring⁴, resumed his mission – in his capacity of a U.N. representative – of mediating between the warring parties with a view to finding solutions for a peaceful settlement of the dispute⁵. Speaking about this event, the Israeli ambassador to Bucharest, Rafael Benshalom, stated the following: "the recent American initiative concerning a 90-day cease fire and the resumption of the Jarring mission have generated a new situation, which warrants the present optimism to some degree"⁶. He also emphasised that "Israel's acceptance of the

¹ Daniela Osiac, *Conflictul israeliano-palestinian. Proiecte de Pace (1947-2003)*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2013, p. 265-276.

² Apud Ion Calafeteanu, Alexandru Cornescu-Coren, *România și criza din Orientul Mijlociu (1965-1971)*, București, Editura SEMPRESS, 2002, p. 65.

³ Arhiva Ministerului Afacerilor Externe, București (Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest), fond Israel/1970, problema 224, vol. III, f. 170 (hereinafter: A.M.A.E.).

⁴ Swedish professor and diplomat, specialised in Turkic languages, appointed special representative of the U. N. Secretary General in the Middle East: 1967-1974.

⁵ A.M.A.E., fond Israel/1970, problema 224, vol. II, f. 21. It is worth mentioning that during the conflict, the ambassador had put forward a „Jarring Plan” which stipulated the withdrawal of the Israeli armed forces; ending the state of belligerence; free navigation on the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba for Israeli vessels and setting the matter of Palestinian refugees (apud Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, André Kaspi, *Istoria relațiilor internaționale. 1948 – până în zilele noastre*, vol. II, București, Editura Științelor Sociale și Politice, 2006).

⁶ A.M.A.E., fond Israel/1970, problema 224, vol. I, f. 232.

Rogers Plan is a concession, evidence of its government's good intentions for a peaceful solution to the Middle East crisis at all costs"¹.

Romania's foreign policy was gradually more appreciated at the beginning of the 70s. During this period the Israeli authorities applied with Romania to initiate "a mediation mission considering the fact that our country has routine relations with both the Arab Republic of Egypt and Israel"². Hereinafter we present a novel document concerning the request for Romania to mediate the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Annex

MINISTERUL AFACERILOR EXTERNE

Direcția a V-a Relații

05/09200

SECRET

TOVARĂȘULUI CORNELIU MĂNESCU
MINISTRUL AFACERILOR EXTERNE

NOTĂ

Referitor: discuția însărcinatlui cu afaceri a.i. al R.S. România la Tel Aviv cu directorul adjunct al Direcției Europa Răsăriteană din M.A.E. israelian

La 13 decembrie 1971, directorul adjunct al Direcției Europa Răsăriteană din M.A.E. israelian, Moshe Carmil, a solicitat însărcinatlui cu afaceri a.i. al R.S. România la Tel Aviv, C. Dumitrăchescu, o întâlnire în oraș. Cu acest prilej, M. Carmil a spus că: Israelul este extrem de interesat să ajungă la o înțelegere cu Egiptul; în momentul de față președintele Sadat se află într-o situație politică disperată; reluarea acțiunilor militare va fi un dezastru pentru acesta și cei ce caută o cale politică de a ieși din acest impas și, în această situație, Israelul, analizând sub toate aspectele problema rezolvării conflictului și evitarea unei catastrofe militare, a ajuns la concluzia că numai președintele R.S. România, Nicolae Ceaușescu, este în măsură să acționeze în această conjunctură. Președintele Nicolae Ceaușescu se bucură de un mare prestigiu internațional, România a devenit un centru politic important și de aceea Israelul crede că o intervenție a unei personalități de rangul șefului statului român ar fi acceptată de țările în conflict. A arătat că un mesaj al conducătorului statului român adresat președintelui Sadat și premierului Golda Meir, prin care să se propună medierea de către România a rezolvării conflictului arabo-israelian, ar

¹ *Ibidem.*

² Idem, problema 220, vol. I, f. 231.

fi primit cu seriozitate de ambele părți și de către opinia publică internațională. Sunt siguri că egiptenii ar fi bucuroși și ar accepta o nouă inițiativă, iar pentru Israel, aceasta ar fi mai mult decât orice altă acțiune întreprinsă până acum.

La întrebarea diplomatului român, M. Carmil a precizat că propunerea pe care a formulat-o are un caracter particular, însă ea este cunoscută autorităților israeliene. A rugat ca inițiativa sa să fie adusă la cunoștința șefului statului român.

În legătură cu cele de mai sus arătăm următoarele:

1. Din felul în care M. Carmil a pus problema menționată rezultă că este vorba de o tatonare din partea autorităților israeliene, care, în acest fel, caută să mențină o discreție totală asupra acestei inițiative. Formularea ei în alt context ar fi putut determina desconspirarea și, drept consecință, rezerve din partea egiptenilor, în cazul acceptării de către partea română.

2. Inițiativa israeliană poate fi justificată de mai mulți factori:

- Impasul în care se află în prezent misiunea Jarring, medierea S.U.A. – planul Rogers, consultările cvadripartite de la New York și probabil ineficiența contactelor ce există între Israel și Egipt pe căi confidențiale;

- Pericolul reînceperii de către egipteni a operațiunilor militare ca urmare a imposibilității de a fi găsit, până acum, soluții pașnice conflictului;

- Continuarea și chiar intensificarea, din ultimul timp, a livrărilor de armament sovietic, foarte modern, către R.A. Egipt și dificultatea cu care Israelul reușește să obțină avioane și alte tipuri de arme din S.U.A.;

- Perspectiva ca situația din Orientul Apropiat, în contextul apariției și agravării conflictului indo-pakistanez, să treacă pe un plan secundar și astfel, prin îndepărtarea șanselor de rezolvare, să favorizeze tendințele egiptene de a elibera, prin forță, teritoriile ocupate;

- Scăderea numărului țărilor occidentale care sprijină poziția Israelului în conflictul cu țările arabe. În acest sens este semnificativă dezbaterea ce a avut loc, recent, la O.N.U. în problema Orientului Apropiat și rezoluția adoptată cu mare majoritate, favorabilă R.A. Egipt;

- Diminuarea ajutoarelor primite de Israel din partea S.U.A. și a diferitelor organizații evreiești;

- Dificultățile pe plan intern, determinate de efortul prelungit pentru menținerea la un nivel corespunzător a potențialului militar;

- Creșterea curentului de opinie, atât în țară, cât și la evreii din afară, că Israelul trebuie să acționeze pentru rezolvarea conflictului.

3. Autoritățile israeliene s-au adresat României pentru a iniția o misiune de mediere ținând seama de faptul că țara noastră are relații normale atât cu R.A. Egipt cât și cu Israelul și de prestigiul pe care îl are pe plan mondial, datorită principalității politicii sale externe și curajului cu care o promovează.

Desigur, aceasta are în vedere și puternica personalitate, spiritul integru și arta de a trata ale președintelui Consiliului de Stat, Nicolae Ceaușescu.

Credem că s-a avut în vedere și următoarele aspecte:

- Poziția României față de conflictul din Orientul Apropiat este obiectivă și a fost afirmată cu consecvență. Prin conținutul său, poziția țării noastre este cea mai apropiată atât de punctul de vedere egiptean (se cere retragerea trupelor israeliene din teritoriile arabe ocupate și rezolvarea problemei populației palestinene) cât și de cel israelian (recunoașterea dreptului la existență al tuturor statelor din zonă).

- Ameliorarea continuă a raporturilor României cu R.A. Egipt și alte țări arabe, fapt ce ar putea face ca o inițiativă de mediere din partea țării noastre să aibă un ecou favorabil la partea egipteană.

4. Inițiativa menționată se înscrie pe linia dorinței guvernului israelian de a evita, pe cât posibil, o soluție impusă de către marile puteri, Consiliul de Securitate sau Adunarea Generală a O.N.U. și de a se găsi o reglementare a conflictului prin discuții directe cu partea egipteană sau prin medierea unor factori care să nu fie în măsură să impună un anumit mod de reglementare.

15 decembrie 1971

A.M.A.E., fond Israel/1970, problema 220, vol. I, f. 229-232.

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**ROMANIAN-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
AFTER THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS (1978-1979)**

*Cristina Păiușan-Nuică**

Abstract

The paper present the evolution of Romania-Israel diplomatic relations between 1978 and 1979, a dynamic period when most of the previous disputes, mainly the question of the Romanian Jews' emigration to Israel, were settled.

As well, Romania had numerous and significant relations with the Arab states in the area, such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Romania assumed between 1973 and 1978 a prominent role as a possible mediator in the Middle East until the Camp David Agreements. After these Agreement, between 1978 and 1979, Romania play a neutral role between the Israeli and Egyptian Diplomacy and PLO, Syria, Iraq and the Arab State who denied the role of Camp David. The Israeli diplomacy was in permanent dialogue with the Romanian one in order to avoid being isolated from the socialist countries, given the already notorious position taken by Romania in the Middle East conflict.

The involvement of the Romanian diplomacy, followed by Ceaușescu's personal contribution to the mediations in the Middle East, was a strategy beneficial to the development of Romanian state, to maintaining a course that was autonomous from Moscow (who strongly oppose to Camp David Agreements) and to the attempt of imposing a communist regime different from the other members of the Warsaw Pact.

The study uses unpublished archive materials in an attempt to clarify the involvement of Romanian diplomacy in the Middle East.

Key words: *Emigration Agreements, Romanian diplomacy, Middle East Mediations, Peace Initiative, International Prestige*

Romanian-Israeli diplomatic relation developed for six decade with many problems but constantly. The tradition of Romanian-Israeli relations begin in the XIX century, long time before the foundation and the diplomatic recognition of the State of Israel (1948). In the XIX century the first pioneers Jews leave Moldova and went to Palestine.

From 1978 to 1979, the moment of the negotiations of Camp David Agreements and signing of Peace Agreements until 1982, the diplomatic

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relations between Romania and the state of Israel were problematic because the Romanian Jews want to emigrate and the communist authorities didn't allow a massive emigration. Another problem was related the overall impression that the Romanian diplomacy approached the Arab states, in preference to Israel.

A very important episode of bilaterally relations took between April 12 and 17, 1978 when the Romanian president N. Ceaușescu visit Washington DC. This visit caused negative reaction both Arab and Israeli.

A few days before this visit, Soviet Union tried to gain the Middle East, and organized a Communist Party Meeting at Sofia.

Soviet Union offensive – first stop – Sofia

In April 1978 when the American-Egyptian-Israeli negotiations were in deadlock, Soviet Union tried to gain the lost field in Middle East, organizing at Sofia a meeting of East European communist with the Arab one, between April 4 to 5, 1978 – *The Arab Communist Parties Meeting*.

Sofia Meeting wasn't publicized. Romania was a state member at the Warsaw Pact, but Romanian diplomats were not invited. There were only little information about this meeting. The goal of Sofia meeting was to restore the prestige of Soviet Union in face of Arab countries. Among the participants were delegates from Israeli Communist Party, Lebanese Communist Party (the most active), delegates from Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Sudan and for the first time delegates from the Communist Party of Egypt and delegates from Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Saudi and Bahrain delegates requested not to be mentioned in the official press release because it would have been subjected to retaliation in their countries.

In Sofia were discussed the problems of Middle East, convicted the occupation of southern Lebanon. The Arab communist Parties leaders showing solidarity to the Palestinian Patriots from the Israeli prisons.

The soviet leaders want to develop the Communist Parties Diplomacy. They want to discuss the international issues at the level of Communist Parties, not at the diplomatic level. They try to promote a new type of diplomacy and to transform the negotiating process in a communist tool, without meet the diplomacy practice.

Soviet Union lost for the most part the influence upon Arab Countries in the previous decade. Communist Party of Soviet Union wanted to revive the Arab Communist Parties with the Soviet money. The payout came from a Soviet Peace initiative between Israel and Arab Countries.

The result of Sofia meeting wasn't exist.

The Arab Communist Parties were underrepresented in their countries, the echo of Sofia Meeting and Soviet propaganda was devoid of importance.

The final press statement presents the role of Soviet Union and his Communist Party on the international arena. In this press statement Chinese Peoples Republic was attacked for the rift of International Communist Movement. Soviet Propaganda use old Stalinist clichés like “American Imperialism who broke the Arab-Soviet friendship”¹, a clichés out of date even for small Arab Communist Parties.

“Chinese problem” was discussed at the initiative of the Syrian Communist Party, the most loyal to soviet line, who asked that “China show respect to Soviet Union, the first and the most important Communist Country, for the good of the world communist movement”².

The entire Soviet propaganda wanted to connect the recent Israeli attack in southern Lebanon to reinvigorating the Arab Communist Movement in this particular moment of deadlock of American-Egyptian-Israeli peace negotiations.

Ceașescu visit to Washington – a few opinions

In this delicate moment of peace negotiations, when an accord seemed impossible, Romanian leader Ceașescu make an official visit to Washington. The visit was perceived as auspicious for the Israeli-Egyptian mediations.

No matter how little mentions today the specialized literature even the diplomatic documents, in 1978 spring, Nicolae Ceașescu was perceived by the Arab diplomats as the most suitable Defender of the interest of Arabs and particularly of the Palestinians³ in front of the American President Jimmy Carter and influent American politicians.

The Arab diplomats relied⁴ on the independent judgment of Ceașescu and on the very good relations with both parts: Arabs and Israeli. This visit seems to be mediations because American president strongly desired to unlock the peace negotiations.

¹ Diplomatic Archives of Romanian Foreign Ministry, Problem 224 Fund, Middle East, file 2220/ 1978, Arab Communist Meeting in Sofia, 4 to 5 April 1978.

² *Ibidem*.

³ Idem, Israel Fund, Problem 224, Middle East, file 2219/1978, Telegram 033 894 Geneva, 04.13.1978, Ceașescu’s visit to the U.S.

⁴ Washington correspondent of the Egyptian magazine *Al – Mussawar* wrote in the article *Soviet Fugitive guest, Israeli and Carter by means of force: The second news item on the agenda was the visit of President Nicolae Ceașescu of Romania arrived in the fourth visit to America and Carter's first visit It seems that Ceașescu had his fingers gathered some of the threads in the Middle East, because the first one week before Moshe Dayan's visit and meet with Yasser Arafat. Although Ceașescu is considered a friend of Israel, the only leader of the Eastern bloc that it maintains diplomatic relations with Jews in America have got in the way “past service”*, in Ciphred telegram from Cairo no. 027 430 of 22 April 1978, file 2219, Israel Fund.

Jimmy Carter tried during his mandate to join a historical accord between Israel and Egypt.

The Egyptians officials were convinced that Ceaușescu official visit wasn't accidental and they thought in the opinion of "Romanian Comrade" in front of the USA President. Romanian-Egyptian diplomatic and economic relations were very good, also the personal relations between President Sadat and President Ceaușescu. In his memoirs, Anwar Sadat share that Romanian president has influenced his decision to visit Jerusalem and hold a speech in Knesset¹.

As proof of the large interest related of Ceaușescu visit on Washington, the Israeli press had many articles about Ceaușescu, insisting on the good relations of Romanian leader with both side: Israeli and Egyptian, but criticized his attitude toward Palestine Liberation Organisation. Ceaușescu declared that PLO must be received at the peace negotiation round table.

The Egyptian media express trust in the solutions that Ceaușescu can provide. Ceaușescu himself understood that was a very good moment for Romanian mediation on the Middle East problems, mainly for unlocking the current negotiations made under the aegis of US.

Carter administration wanted more than ever the Peace Agreement and a historical reconciliation between Egypt and Israel. The Arabs, as Romanian leader thought that Carter will boost the Israeli to sign this agreement.

Romanian strategy was founded on the good relationship with USA and Israel, but also with Egypt, other Arabs states and PLO.

Nicolae Ceaușescu tried in the 1978-1979s to promote a new political actor Palestine Liberation Organisation and his leader Yasser Arafat.

His American strategic visit supposed to bring a great novelty – PLO was ready to recognise the existence of the State of Israel. This recognition was denied until now because was assume that it was contrary PLO Carther.

Paradoxically this valuable information has not produces the desired effect.

American diplomacy not wanted to recognize the legality of PLO, his role in leadership of Palestine population because PLO was an organization with a history of terrorist also his leader Yasser Arafat.

This major shift front of PLO, this change of perception carefully prepared by Ceaușescu failed and with her the desire of Romanian leader to become one of highly reputed negotiators of the moment in Middle East.

President Carter wanted to be the Initiator and the principal actor of the Peace Agreements between Israeli and Arabs. Carter was in a double way – the

¹ Anwar Sadat, *A la recherché d' une identité*, Paris, Edition du Seuil, 1984.

diplomat – strategist and the President of USA, and an almost unknown President beyond the Iron curtain not supposed to undermine its major success¹.

The disappointment of Ceaușescu who wanted to be great diplomat and a global negotiator was huge. He had left Bucharest with an ace in his sleeve, conquered after long negotiations –the recognition of State of Israel by PLO and the American reaction ruined any merit and any role even small in Peace process negotiation in the Middle East.

Without a doubt Romanian leader enjoy the sympathy of American diplomats who used the Romanian channel of negotiation, but without an official role.

It was the fourth visit of Ceaușescu at Washington, first in Carter administration. This visit had been preceded by the Bucharest visit of Anwar El Sadat (February 11-12 1978) and Moshe Dayan (April 2-5, 1978).

Romania was in a special relationship with USA, a communist state who was good relations with US diplomacy. Romanian state was the insubordinate pawn of Warsaw Pact, almost independent from Soviet Union, with good relations with China. Capitalizing this advantages, Ceaușescu want to obtain an small role in Israeli-Egypt Peace Negotiations.

Ceaușescu communist regime had an important problem in the relations with US, Isral and Arab States, the emigration of Romanian Jew to Israel. If the Arab want that Romanian Jews to stay in Romania, American Jews, the Israeli official want that the emigration to continue and all the Romanian Jew to joint Israel. A few day before Ceaușescu visit to Washington, 66 U.S. Senator present to president Carte a note of protest against the Romanian leader policy toward the Romanian Jews violating the human rights. They claimed that all the Jews from Romania to leave this communist country for Israel soon as possible.

Ceaușescu assure Carter that in time all the Romanian Jews will be able to leave Romania for Israel, but without any propaganda that could alter relationship between Romania and all the Arab States.

After the Camp David Agreements, Carter administration moderate discourse front of PLO, without a major change but opening possible negotiations.

Restarting bilateral negotiations US – Israeli ² and US – Egypt, witch have become trilateral J. Carter, M. Begin and Sadat leading up to the

¹ An interesting paper published in New York in 2008, the Hebrew lobbying influence on U.S. foreign policy, John Mearsheimer, Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.

² Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, *Israel and the Peace Process, 1977-1982. In search of Legitimacy for Peace*, New York, 1994, p. 22-36.

conclusion of historical Camp David Agreements (September 5-17) and the next year to signing at March 26, 1979 of the Israeli-Egypt Peace Treaty¹.

Soviet Union action at United Nation Organisation

After the Camp David Agreements, unexpected Agreements who bring the glory of US President Jimmy Carter, a few Arab states protest against compromise made by Egypt. This protest has at the beginning secretly headed by Soviet Union who was excluded from negotiations and had a great strategic failure in front of Middle East states.

Soviet Union want that UN General Assembly discussed the role of Camp David Agreements and the result of the first Arab-Israeli Agreements in modern history.

In mean time, Israeli diplomacy wanted that, in the name of good relations between Romania and Israel, Romanian delegation at UN oppose to Iraqi project that provide for an embargo on arms delivery for Israel² This idea was debated in General Assembly of UN. Israel protest saying that is devoid of defence because all the Arab state buying arms and guns and ammo around the world.

In same time, at UN was debated the problem of Palestinian refugees and the most important problem financial contributions to support United Nation Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)³.

The voice of Palestinian was heard at the UN by Palestine Liberation Organisation, who participate at UN General Assembly debates in October 1978 when "the Palestinian Problem" was the main topic. The representative of PLO asked that in UN General Assembly to be officially recognised as delegate of Palestinian people⁴.

The Palestinian offensive at UN was suggested by soviet diplomacy with the help of Non-Aligned States to diminish the importance of Camp David Agreements made under American patronage. The goal of Soviet Union was to avoid the danger of an Peace Treaty between State of Israel and Egypt and to create the preceding.

It was the first time in UN history when the debates were focused on the Middle East issues. At UN has put the issue of foundation of a special Office of UN Secretariat for the Palestinians.

¹ For a short chronology Egypt-Israel relations <http://www.middleeastmonitor.com/resources/fact-sheets/2018-egyptian-israeli-relations-1948-2011>.

² Diplomatic Archives, Problem 224 Fund, Middle East, file 2221/ 1978, Telegram no. 076 575 Tel Aviv 26.10.1978.

³ *Ibidem*, Telegram no. 060 750 New York, 4.11.1978.

⁴ *Ibidem*, Telegram no. 060 854 New York, 29.11.1978.

American UN delegation intervened in force to block adoption of an resolution inspired by PLO. US protest against a political intervention in the issue of social assistance granted by UN, especially through United Nation Development Programme.

US diplomats protest against what they call “an effort utterly unacceptable to politicize the assistance provide by UN”. The Americans were the most generous contributors from these funds with 230 millions of dollars.

Theirs repeated pressures led to procrastination of those issues, because US block his contribution at UNDP and all the money allocated to help Palestinians were much more than the existing budget.

But the UN Resolution was however voted, Romania being among the countries that have backed it up. The effect of this Resolution were non-existent.

1979: the tensions prior to the Peace Agreements

This context has extended tensed in 1979. From January until March 26 1979, the time of signing Peace Agreement between Egypt and Israel, the negotiating process pass through multiple phases.

Soviet Union didn't restore the direct diplomatic relations with State of Israel, relations broken in June 1967, a disable soviet policy in the area. State of Israel and USA were interested to increase distrust of Arab countries in Soviet Union and to diminish the Arab-soviet pressure against Egypt.

1979, Egypt was in a critical moment both economic and foreign policy. Egypt had to chose between the Arab countries loyalty and the Israeli Accord base on a massive economic aid by US.

The Americans want to force the signing of the Peace Treaty, they made considerable pressures upon both countries: Egypt and Israel.

The Defence Ministers Harold Brow tours in the Middle East area was part of American strategy. Harold Brow visit Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Egypt, all the states who need American arms. Receipt of weapons was conditioned of breaking the isolation of Egypt and of signing of Peace Agreements.

The tension was increase by the events of Iran, the Islamic revolution. US lose an allied like Iran and his Shah. The new Iranian regime of Ayatollah Khomeini was enemy for US policy and a few Arab states joint his Islamic ideas.

March 1979, US President Jimmy Carter opens the final round of negotiations between Egypt and State of Israel. President Carter make visit in the two countries. Carter need a spectacular achievement on US foreign policy after de normalising relations with China.

American force diplomacy paid off, both side Egyptian and Israeli reach an agreement after Carter visit to Jerusalem and Cairo even a few days ago a new round o negotiation at Camp David failed.

At March 26 1979 was sign the Peace Agreements between Egypt and State of Israel, taking by surprise entire international public opinion. Those Agreements normalizes the relationship between Egypt and Israel and open the a new negotiation process in Middle East.

American coup de theatre was greeted with waves of soviet protests.

US diplomacy lose his influence in Iran, but won Egypt and an historical Peace Agreement and example for all the Arab States.

Soviet diplomacy circulated the existence of a secret agreement between USA, Egypt and State of Israel. Soviet Union accused USA that will force an Peace Agreement between Jordan, Syria and Israel. Soviet diplomacy asked for an urgent start of Geneva International Reunion on the Middle East issues.

After Camp David, a few European states were viewed as potential mediator in Middle East area: from Western Europe: France, West Germany and maybe United Kingdom, for Easter Europe: Romania and Yugoslavia.

In 1979 autumn Soviet Union continued his offensive at UN. General Assembly discussed the situation of Middle East area, the Palestinian Refugees issues. A Resolution was propose against the colonization of the occupied territories as a result of 6 day war.

The colonies made by the Jews changed the demographic balance of the Jerusalem area, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights and occupied part of Sinai Peninsula.

At Camp David, Egypt and Israel agree upon the retreat of Israeli Army from Sinai Peninsula and also the retreat of UN troops of peace keeping¹.

Soviet Union strategy was totally outdated. Soviet diplomats protest at UN against the Camp David Agreements and tried to cancelled at UN those agreements. Soviets and a few arab delegation boycotted the 1979 Peace Agreements. They insisted that the Agreements aren't real only a force of Egypts workforce.

In mean time the abuses made by Israeli authorities in occupied territories, the deportation of Palestinians, fields, dispossession of Arab populations, cause the reaction of General Assembly against State of Israel and the adoption of a UN General Assembly decision, judgment passed by the Soviet, Arabs and for the first time by Western countries. Romania was voted to adopt the decision.

Soviet diplomats proposed a UN resolution condemning the Camp David Agreements, but the other state refuse to sign it.

¹ Raymond Cohen, *Culture and Conflict in Egyptian-Israeli Relations: A Dialogue of the Deaf*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1990, p. 73-85.

Soviet efforts focused on convening a Middle East peace conference under UN, headed by US and USSR conference that virtually nullify the efforts and achievements of the Carter Administration. Romanian diplomats at the UN have maintained a balance between the two camps: Arabs and Israeli. Romania was more nuanced as part of the preliminary negotiation which led to signing of Camp David Agreements, and now he could not disavow.

A few days before the signing of Peace, on March 15 1979, arrived Hosni at Bucharest Mubarak, special envoy of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. His official mission was to thank President Ceaușescu for tireless work and support given by Romania. But the real purpose of the visit was to consult on the Peace Agreement, Romanian and European states position. This visit demonstrated the importance of Romanian counselling for the Egyptian actions.

In 1978, Romanian-Israeli diplomatic relations were normal, an notable event was the visit of Vasile Pungan al Tel Aviv, special envoy of president Ceaușescu. It wasn't the first visit o Pungan in Israel, each time when Ceaușescu must discuss a sensitive issue urgent. August 79 Pungans visit in Israel echoed around the world, talk of Ceaușescu "new peace initiative" after Camp David based on Romanian – Syrian negotiation. Novelty has that Syria would be willing to make peace with Israel, given that it would withdraw from the Golan Heights.

Pungan Israel visit came in the context of Ceaușescu meetings in August 1979 (August 13 to 17) with Syrian President, but also with Yasser Arafat (August 16). Arafat was in Syria when Romanian President visit it¹.

In „Journal d'Israel”, Israeli journalist David Kraft wrote than Romania wanted to help establish a dialogue between Israel, Syria and the PLO as contributed to the start of direct negotiations between Israel and Egypt. Pungan mission in Israel was linked to an old mission – September 1977, when Pungan meet Menahem Begin to tell that Ceaușescu obtain the consent of President Sadat for a face to face meeting.

Pungan was perceived as “land devoted Ceaușescu abroad”, he often visited the Arab countries was close adviser of the President, and the key moments Pungan was sent to a tournament more or less secret².

President Ceaușescu was one of the negotiators in the Middle East, having a role in reaching the Camp David agreements. Although it never received the recognition of this role, Ceaușescu wanted to remain a negotiator, even small-scale, continuing involvement in the area.

¹ During the period 13 to 17 August 1979, Ceaușescu visited Syria, where Syrian President discussed both and with Yaser Arafat.

² Diplomatic Archive, Problem 220 Fund, file 1622/1979, Report on the visit of Comrade N. Pungan the Middle East.

In 1979, as in previous years Romanian President struggle for its international prestige

September 3 1979, „Jerusalem Post” wrote about Pungan s visit saying that Romanian diplomat was sent to organize a meeting between Hafez al Assad and Menachem Begin.

Article criticizing Romanian changing attitudes towards the Arab-Israeli conflict in favor of Arabs.

In summer of 1979, international press made a parallel between Romania and Switzerland, saying that Romania was among the few countries that could influence the position of Arab countries and the Palestinian problem solving Palestinian problem, Switzerland can not play this role because of “pressure exerted by influential Israeli circles the federal authorities”¹.

Romanian leader wished to strengthen its position in the Middle East, relying on a new problem, namely the recognition of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But Ceaușescu's diplomatic ambitions hit the divergent interests of the great powers.

American diplomacy used Romanian channel, however, given Romania's membership in the Soviet bloc.

Romania's credibility against Arabs was the strength of the Romanian policy in Middle East. At the moment, the Romanian diplomacy and the Romanian state had benefits material and image, but in time and with the help of Soviet manipulation, efficiency Romanian negotiations faded, not even mentioning².

Romanian-Israeli diplomatic relations have been little or no work dealt reference policy analysis examines the Israeli-Egyptian peace³. Primarily due to the lack of concern of Romanian historiography to this subject, and because existing studies have not been written or translated into foreign languages, hence the total ignorance of the role of Romanian diplomacy and difficulties for the researcher of this area find external approaches Romanian positions.

¹ *Ibidem*, Telegram No. 021 455 Bern, 8.09.1979.

² In the paper published a few days of Larry Wats, *The First will be Last. Romania and the Cold War*, București, Editura RAO, 2013 that the role played by Ion Mihai Pacepa, his defection and change the American position towards Romania, this time claiming that Romania is Pacepa Trojan horse of Soviet and that “Romania would be deceived Israel and all the moderate Arab states involved in the peace process in the Middle East. Bucharest, claimed he worked hand in hand with Arab terrorists, terrorist Yasser Arafat subordinate [...] his allegations string serving almost perfectly goals pursued by the Soviet active measures and the Warsaw Pact to Romania – the destruction of the Romanian-American Disrupting the peace and compromise Romania's relations with its Western partners and key actors in the Middle East”, p 121.

³ Some exceptions mention the work of Charles Enderlin, *Paix ou guerre. Les secrets des négociations israélo-arabes, 1917-1995*, Paris, Edition Fayard, 2004.

Except for a few volumes of memoirs¹ (Menahem Begin, Moshe Dayan, Ismail Fahmy, Anwar Sadat) and analyzes focused exclusively on the road from historic visit to Jerusalem until the actual signing of the peace agreements, any recollection even involvement Ceaușescu and Romania are extremely difficult to find.

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¹ Moshe Dayan, *Breakhrought. A Personal Account of the Egypt-Israel Peace Negotiations*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1981; Ismail Fahmy, *Negotiating for Peace in the Middle East: An Arab View*, London, Crom Helm, 1983; Anwar Sadat, *A la recherché d' une identité*, Paris, Edition du Seuil, 1984; Menahem Begin, *Revolt*, Iași, DAB, 1993, etc.

**AGRICULTURE, AGROFORESTERIE ET DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE À L'EST-CAMEROUN (1960-2000)**

*Etamane Mahop Alain Thomas**

Résumé

La situation de l'agriculture et l'agroforesterie en Afrique subsaharienne est souvent considérée comme catastrophique, réclamant des actions immédiates afin que la production alimentaire et l'aménagement durable puissent continuer à répondre aux besoins d'une population de plus en plus nombreuse, d'éviter la famine et de lutter contre la pauvreté. Les performances agricoles du Cameroun, enregistrées depuis les dix à vingt dernières années contredisent ce morne constat. Car, depuis le milieu des années 80, les productions vivrières du pays ont largement pu répondre aux besoins croissants résultant de la croissance démographique et permis d'augmenter significativement les disponibilités alimentaires par habitant. Certes, si les techniques et méthodes culturales appliquées restent traditionnelles et modernes, elles nécessitent toutefois une attention particulière pour améliorer la qualité des rendements et la protection de l'environnement à l'Est Cameroun. A partir des sources orales et écrites sélectionnées auprès des informateurs, l'objectif de cette analyse est de mettre en évidence la place de l'agriculture chez les populations de l'Est Cameroun d'une part et d'autres parts, de montrer comment l'agroforesterie reconfigure ou transforme le paysage local.

Mots clés: *Agriculture, Agroforesterie, Développement durable, Est Cameroun*

Depuis plus d'une décennie, accompagnant la globalisation des grands enjeux sociaux, environnementaux et économiques, l'agriculture est soumise à un fort questionnement sur sa contribution au développement durable et sur sa flexibilité¹. L'agriculture doit en effet répondre aux deux défis majeurs que sont la réponse des agriculteurs au doublement annoncé de la demande de produits agricoles d'origine végétal d'ici 2050 et l'accroissement concomitant de leurs impacts sur l'environnement et le tissu social. Du fait de son empreinte marquée sur l'espace et de son fort interaction avec les écosystèmes naturels, l'agriculture est particulièrement soumise à des impératifs à l'Est Cameroun avec d'autres activités². C'est dans ce cycle d'association et de succession de

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¹ Boiffin et al, *Agriculture et développement durable. Enjeux et questions de recherche. Alimentation agriculture environnement*, Paris, INRA, 2004, p. 11-12.

² Chaumet et al, *Agricultures et alimentations du monde en 2050: scénarios et défis pour un développement durable*, Paris, INRA, CIRAD, 2009, p. 2-4.

cultures qu'apparaissent des systèmes agroforestiers traditionnels pratiqués d'une façon plus ou moins consciente et ayant pour seul but la sécurité alimentaire du paysan. Ainsi, si les systèmes agroforestiers sont anciens dans la région de l'Est Cameroun, l'agroforesterie quant à elle est récente et se propose de corriger ou de prévenir les dégâts que pourraient causer à la longue les pratiques d'une agriculture itinérante sur brûlis. Qu'entend-on par agroforesterie ? Quelle incidence peut revêtir les différentes pratiques agricoles sur les ressources naturelles de l'Est Cameroun ? La présente étude entend mettre en relief l'évolution de la production agricole, les différents systèmes de production leur impact sur l'environnement et enfin, les pratiques agroforestières spécifiques par zone écologique.

Evolution de la production agricole

L'Est Cameroun a toujours été une région agricole. Ses caractéristiques climatiques et sa qualité du sol ont permis le développement des cultures de rente et vivrières.

Les différentes cultures de rente: le Cacao et café

Le cacao

Il suffit d'un passage, même rapide à travers diverses localités de l'Est Cameroun pour mesurer la place importante que le cacao occupe dans la vie des habitants. Les structures agricoles sont donc profondément marquées par la présence du cacaoyer. Ici, le cacao demeure une des chevilles de la vie des paysans. Introduit vers 1924, il va se diffuser sur l'ensemble des régions et jouer un rôle important dans la hiérarchisation des classes économiques purement rurales¹. La photo ci-dessous illustre une cabosse en maturité.

Photo 01: Culture du Cacao dans la région Batouri



Source: photo Etamane, Batouri le 15.09. 2013.

¹ J. Mani Olongo, *L'économie cacaoyère dans la région d'Okola* (Cameroun), Mémoire de D.E.S en géographie, Université de Yaoundé, 1975, p. 10-30.

Le cacao nécessite une main d'œuvre abondante. L'Est-Cameroun répond à cette exigence. Une enquête de l'ONU en 1969 dénombrait près de 42.915 habitants pour une densité générale de 48 habitants au km² dans une zone de forêt du Sud-Cameroun prédomine la culture du cacao¹. Cette importance est traduite par la hausse des prix de l'outillage du planteur au cours de l'année 1965 à 1975. Le tableau ci-dessous l'illustre dans ce sens.

Tableau 01: L'outillage du planteur de cacao

Années Nomenclature	1965	1975
Lime	100	350
Panier	150	600
Machette	200	850
Ebranchoir	200	450
Plantoir	300	1000
Hache	500	1350
Pelle	550	1200
Pulvérisateur	10.000	15.000
Total	12.000	30.800

Source: J. Mani Olongo, *L'économie cacaoyère...*, p. 45.

Avec la stagnation relative des revenus cacaoyers, beaucoup de planteurs ne peuvent se procurer des outils dont les prix flambent régulièrement. Alors, les planteurs sont contraints d'emprunter constamment. Cela a comme conséquence le ralentissement de la production. La culture du cacao a bouleversé la répartition traditionnelle des tâches au sein du groupe élémentaire de production. Elle a alourdi le rôle de femme rurale qui doit participer au travail. L'Est-Cameroun possède plusieurs plantations de cacaoyers qui varient selon leur taille.

Le café

L'intégration du café à l'Est-Cameroun n'est pas un fait isolé. Elle s'intègre dans le passé de la diffusion de la caféiculture au Cameroun². Son avènement à l'Est fut sans doute un événement important pour les populations des régions attachées à leurs valeurs traditionnelles des cultures vivrières. L'avènement du café entre 1920 et 1922 allait bouleverser les us et les

¹ J. Mbangoe Mbélé, Délégué Régional de la Chambre d'Agriculture de Bertoua, 47 ans, entretien à Bertoua le 11.09.2013.

² L. Lissie, *L'agriculture camerounaise entre «culture de rente et culture vivrière» cas de la province de l'Ouest-Cameroun (1924-1994)*, Mémoire de Maîtrise en Histoire, Université de Yaoundé I, 2008, p. 8-9.

coutumes des peuples de cette partie du Cameroun¹. Les français avaient intensifié cette culture dans le Haut-Nyong. Au cours de l'année 1953, on dénombrait 946.456 pieds de caféiers robusta². Le Lom et Djerem, la Kadey et plus tard dans la Boumba et Ngoko³ présentaient ces caractéristiques favorables à sa culture: climat tropical, sols bruns. Les premiers essais avaient eu lieu dans le Haut-Nyong et s'étaient étendus dans d'autres localités. La photo ci-dessous illustre la culture du café à Ndemba II.

Photo 02: Culture du café à Ndemba II dans le Lom et Djerem



Source: Etamane Ndemba II, le 14.09.2013.

Le tabac

Pendant la période allemande au Cameroun⁴, les cultures telles que: la banane, le cacao, le café, l'hévéa, le coton furent expérimentées et développées. En 1907, les colons allemands expérimentèrent pour la première fois la culture du tabac de cape au Cameroun⁵. Ces différents essais allaient plus tard contribuer. À mettre en place de grandes plantations qui, au lendemain de la défaite allemande au Cameroun en 1916⁶ allaient voir le jour en 1919 sur le

¹ ANY, APA1185/B, Rapport d'activités de la région du Haut-Nyong en 1936, p. 1-10.

² ANY, 2AC491, Abong-Mbang, Rapport annuel de la Subdivision (1953-1955).

³ J. Assounou, *Agriculture d'exportation et bataille du développement en Afrique tropicale*, Paris, Editions Delatage, 1977, p. 185-187.

⁴ R. Onomo Etaba, *Histoire de l'Eglise catholique du Cameroun*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2007, p. 23-24.

⁵ MOUNGAM à Ribouem, *La tabaculture en pays kaka: l'antagonisme entre la Société Camerounaise des Tabacs et le milieu rural dans l'Est-Cameroun*, Thèse de Doctorat du 3^{ème} cycle en géographie, Yaoundé, Université de Yaoundé, 1989, p. 41.

⁶ Kette, Directeur général de la Fédération des planteurs de tabac et autres cultures vivrières du Cameroun, 55 ans, entretien à Bertoua, le 08.09.2013.

chemin de fer du Nord, à Penja d'une part, Njombé de l'autre. La France appelée après la seconde guerre mondiale à assurer la tutelle du Cameroun va poursuivre cette entreprise en s'investissant dans la production et la commercialisation à l'échelle industrielle¹. Cette appareil de production que la France installa dès les premières années de sa tutelle au Cameroun exigeait pour son développement de vastes terres fertiles et un terrain et se diffuser à l'Est-Cameroun². La SEITA allait donc s'installer en 1945 dans la circonscription de Batouri érigée en 1935 en région Lom et Kadey³. En 1960, après l'accession à l'indépendance du Cameroun, les pouvoirs publics signèrent avec la France plusieurs accords qui ouvraient la voie à une gestion par les camerounais des sociétés jadis dirigées par les français à l'instar du SEITA. Ce qui explique le fait qu'en 1962, l'appellation SEITA fera place à une dénomination qui indique la présence du Cameroun dans la gestion. Et en 1962, est créée la SITAC (Société Internationale des Tabacs du Cameroun). La création de la SITAC avait ouvert une nouvelle page dans les relations entre Cameroun et la France. Toutefois, la SITAC n'hésita pas longtemps et en 1963, un protocole d'accord relatif à la création de la SFCT (Société Franco-camerounaise des Tabacs) fut signé le 09 octobre 1963 entre la République Fédérale du Cameroun représentée par le Ministre du Développement Industriel et Commercial et le SEITA représenté par son Directeur général Pierre Millet⁴. Le capital social divisé en actions normatives était reparti entre le gouvernement camerounais représenté par la BCD (Banque Camerounaise de Développement)⁵ et le SEITA. En 1973, après 10 années de fonctionnement, on assista à la création d'une nouvelle société la SCT (Société Camerounaise des Tabacs)⁶.

La SCT s'occupait de l'encadrement des planteurs, de la distribution des semences, de l'achat et de la vente du tabac. Les pouvoirs publics camerounais allaient donc déployer tous leurs efforts pour lutter contre les aléas naturels au plein épanouissement de la culture du tabac. Son action se traduisait par

¹ E.L. Assambele, *La production et la commercialisation du tabac à l'Est-Cameroun: du SIETA à la SCT (1945-1998)*, Mémoire de Maîtrise en Histoire, Yaoundé, Université de Yaoundé I, 2007, p.3.

² En dehors du SIETA, plusieurs autres sociétés s'étaient lancées dans la culture du tabac où elles vulgarisèrent cette culture dans d'autres régions du Cameroun. A l'Ouest et au Nord, la SACTA, filiale du groupe Bastos s'était lancée dans la culture du tabac de coupe. Ce qui a permis au Cameroun de devenir acteur économique au niveau du marché mondial.

³ ANY, APA1185/B, Circonscription de Batouri: Monographie du Lom et Kadey, 1935, p.1.

⁴ Assambele, *La production et la commercialisation...*, p. 20.

⁵ La BCD était une sorte de gestionnaire du portefeuille de l'Etat. Elle finançait tous les projets où l'Etat était engagé. Elle s'attela alors à financer l'achat des tabacs et tous les frais jusqu'à la vente à Paris.

⁶ La SCT était une société d'économie mixte où le Cameroun était représenté par la SNI (Société Nationale d'Investissement) qui fut créée par décret n°64/DF/52 du 1^{er} février 1964 crée la Société Nationale d'Investissement.

l'encadrement des planteurs¹. La SCT formait des moniteurs qui à leur tour étaient dirigés par des cadres de la société qui avaient suivi une formation technique à l'institut du tabac. Ici, les enseignements étaient orientés sur la conduite de la culture². Chaque moniteur pouvait avoir à son actif un nombre bien limité de planteurs qu'il encadrait. A Bertoua par exemple, un moniteur encadrait environ 39 planteurs contre 40 planteurs dans la région de Batouri. Par ailleurs, la SCT s'occupait aussi de la distribution des semences. A l'Est-Cameroun, elle comptait 11 centres de traitement et de fermentation des tabacs. Le matériel végétal provenait de la station de production et recherche de Batschenga où on sélectionnait les semences en vue d'améliorer la qualité des productions. Les semences étaient gratuites et les planteurs devaient d'abord les ensemercer en pépinière et transplanter les nouveaux plants dans les champs suivant des techniques appropriées³.

La culture du tabac quant à elle suivait un procédé bien déterminé. Ici, le choix du terrain à cultiver était très déterminant. Le planteur dans la quête du terrain à cultiver était dirigé par les agents de la SCT qui s'assuraient que le terrain n'était pas accidenté et qu'il existait un point d'eau. C'est ce qui explique le fait que, un terrain cultivé pendant une année devait être laissé en jachère de 7 ans afin de favoriser la fertilisation du sol cultivé auparavant. Après avoir déterminé le choix du sol, on le défrichait, le labourait pour accueillir les premiers semis en pépinières. La pépinière était la première étape de la culture. Un planteur pouvait avoir 6 planches réparties en 3 semis. Les premiers semis s'effectuaient du 1^{er} au 15 janvier. L'espacement entre les différents semis était de 10 à 14 jours; l'apport des engrais dans la lutte phytosanitaire était donc indéniable⁴.

Les cultures vivrières

Le Cameroun s'est toujours proclamé pays essentiellement agricole, même après la découverte du pétrole sur son territoire. L'importance primordiale de l'agriculture et du monde rural a été reconnue depuis longtemps, comme en témoignent la proclamation de 1965 « *année du paysan* »⁵. L'agriculture occupait donc un secteur clé de l'économie au lendemain de l'indépendance. La production végétale traditionnelle est dominée par l'association des cultures qui s'explique par les habitudes agricoles des

¹ T. Mvondo, *La production du tabac de cape dans l'Est-Cameroun: l'œuvre de la SCT*, Mémoire de ESII, Université de Yaoundé, 1974, p.5-15.

² *Ibidem*, p. 5-15.

³ Mvondo, *La production du tabac de cape dans l'Est-Cameroun ...*, p. 16-25.

⁴ Assampele, *La production et la commercialisation du tabac...*, p. 20-30.

⁵ Dongmo, *Importance relative des cultures vivrières et des cultures de rente à travers les plans de développement des Etats Africains: le cas du Cameroun*, in "Annales de la Faculté des Arts, Lettres et Sciences Humaines, série Sciences Humaines", Vol. I. n°2 Juillet 1985, p. 29.

communautés villageoises. L'origine de ces pratiques est lointaine et obéit aux formes d'économie traditionnelle basée sur la recherche de la sécurité alimentaire. En observant les parcelles de cultures des champs à l'Est-Cameroun, on a l'impression qu'il se pose ici, un problème de terre. C'est peut être valable pour les parcelles cultivées dans les zones urbaines et périurbaines de Batouri où l'espace est réduit¹. Mais, dans les zones rurales où les terres sont abondantes, et libres, cette explication est difficilement soutenable lorsqu'on sait que, la présence des terres fertiles à l'Est-Cameroun favorise le développement des cultures vivrières. Le paysan pour faire face aux nombreuses imprévisions climatiques et autres aléas dont est souvent victime la production agricole, éprouve le besoin de cultiver une gamme variée de culture dans une même parcelle et la taille de l'exploitation varie en fonction des besoins de chacun. Rey Capot souligne: "la taille de l'exploitation est en relation étroite avec la situation du Chef de l'exploitation"². Il espère ainsi faire face à ces facteurs et s'assurer la récolte au moins d'une culture au cas où les autres viendraient à être détruites. Il a également la conviction que, certaines cultures ne peuvent pas réussir quand elles sont seules. Cette explication est pertinente voire délicate. Elle est valable pour l'association maïs-haricot par exemple. Le premier servant de support au second qui est une plante rampante. Mais si l'on considère un type d'association très pratiqué en pays Bakoum celui macabo-manioc, l'explication s'annule. Le maïs est cultivé en zone de transition où il est beaucoup utilisé pour la fabrication des boissons alcoolisées locales. Sa production varie entre 10.000 et 25.000 tonnes³. Le macabo et le manioc sont des plantes tubercules qui, toutes deux ont besoin d'espace dans la terre pour bien grossir⁴. La culture itinérante sur brûlis est dans les secteurs forestiers de la région et dans certaines régions de savane comme à Bétaré-Oya, Garoua-Boulaye, Gadji, Bazama⁵.

C'est une des caractéristiques de cette agriculture traditionnelle avec des jachères pouvant durer 3 à 4 ans. C'est le cas des communautés des Lontimbi. Cette pratique est favorisée par l'abondance de vastes étendues de terrain due à

¹ Bouko, planteur, 60 ans, entretien à Bandongwé le 14 octobre 2013.

² R. Capot et al, *Les structures agricoles de l'Ouest du Cameroun Oriental*, Yaoundé, Secrétariat d'Etat au Développement Rural, 1965, p. 23.

³ R. Nyindie, *La maïsiculture dans l'évolution socioéconomique et culturelle chez les Tikars 1954-2000*, Mémoire de Maîtrise en histoire, Université de Yaoundé I, 2008, p. 35-47.

⁴ C. Onana, *Agriculture vivrière dans la région d'Okola*, Mémoire de DIPES II, ENS, 1997, p. 20-30. Cf, J. Ongala, *Etudes économiques de la production vivrière dans la zone d'intervention de Yemessoa*, Yaoundé, Rapport ENSA, 1973, p. 12-25.

⁵ J.P. Lanly, *Agriculture itinérante*, UN, FAO, 1985, p. 3-10.

une faible occupation de la terre¹. A l'Est-Cameroun, on cultive des tubercules tels, le manioc. C'est l'aliment de base des populations. De son nom scientifique *Manihot Esculenta*, il est la principale culture. La photo ci-dessous représente une plantation de manioc à l'Est-Cameroun.

Photo 03: Monoculture du manioc à Toungou dans le Lom et Djerem



Source: Etamane Alain, Toungou le 07.09.2013.

Il occupe près de 75% des surfaces cultivées. La quantité produite varie entre 50.000 tonnes 80.000 tonnes par an². Son adaptation à toutes sortes d'environnement et de système d'exploitation en fait une culture très appréciée et pratiquée partout. Ses rendements restent cependant très bas à cause des techniques culturales rudimentaires dans les régions de forêt de Kosso, Mbang, Njolempoum, Mimdourou, Salapoumbé, Gari-Gombo, Kagnol, Djemion, Boquedja³. Les boutures du manioc sont enfouies dans la terre après le défrichement et le feu de brousse sans aucun autre aménagement. La racine se heurte parfois à la dureté des sols. Parfois on remue la terre avec la machette. Ce système réduit la capacité de grossissement des tubercules qui, le plus souvent sont effilées et très allongées. En savane, il est planté sur des sols plats ou sur des buttes bien aménagées. Les boutures destinées à la plantation ne sont pas soumises à une sélection rigoureuse. De plus, le bouturage se fait en toute saison. Le tableau ci-dessous représente les différentes plantes cultivées à l'Est-Cameroun.

¹ F. Kamajou, *Aspect socio-économiques et institutionnel de l'amélioration de l'agriculture itinérante en Afrique tropicale*, Yaoundé, ORSTOM, *Bulletin pédologique de la FAO*, 1987, p. 15-25.

² M. Yondo, *La mise en valeur de la région de l'Est*, in "Bulletin des Etats d'Afrique Centrale", Juin-Juillet 1975, p. 5-9.

³ Zoambe Camille, ancien Secrétaire d'Etat-Civil à la Marie de Mindourou, 64 ans, entretien à Mindourou le 10 09, 2013.

Evolution de la production en zone de savane et forêt

Le cacao est produit dans les départements du Haut-Nyong, de la Boumba et Ngoko, dans le Sud du Lom et Djerem et celui de la Kadey. En 1971, la quantité commercialisée a été de 14.676 tonnes alors qu'en 1974, on a atteint une production de 18.998 tonnes, soit un accroissement de 29% par rapport à 1971¹. Le pourcentage élevé du cacao de bonne qualité témoigne de l'effort déployé par les paysans et surtout les agents du Ministère de l'Agriculture et des organismes d'encadrement de l'agriculture. En 1972/1973, les planteurs du cacao de l'Est-Cameroun ont perçu 1.200.000.000 de FCFA.² Par ailleurs, les données recueillies nous permettent de plafonner la production du cacao à un niveau appréciable au cours de la période 1981 à 1984.

Tableau 02: Evolution de la production du cacao par départements de 1981 à 1984

Régions	Années	Cacao	Cacao	Cacao
		1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984
Lom et Djerem		242,168	251,607	188,654
Haut-Nyong		3142	3284	2203
Kadey		471	402	356,301
Boumba et Ngoko		---	----	---

Source: Rapport avant-projet du VI^e plan région Est 1981-1985, p. 4.

Au regard de ce tableau, on constate que, la production du cacao à l'Est-Cameroun a été nette croissance en dépit des maladies rencontrées qui détruisent les cultures.

La région a produit près de 5.819 tonnes en 1981-1982, 669,793 tonnes en 1982-1983 et 5.525 tonnes en 1983-1984. Bien que l'évolution de la production du cacao s'est faite en dent de scie, les objectifs du Ve plan ont été largement approchés soit un écart de 2.866 tonnes. La croissance observée est dû aux multiples efforts entrepris par les ZAPI pour relancer ce secteur d'activités. L'action d'accroissement de la production porte sur la lutte contre le coxage, la pourriture brune, les capsides et la mobilisation des planteurs pour la reprise des plantations abandonnées. On pourrait donc affirmer qu'en 1981-1985, le taux de couverture des luttes phytosanitaires par rapport aux objectifs du V^e plan a été largement atteint comme l'indique le tableau ci-dessous.

¹ A. Lom, *Evolution de la situation économique et sociale de la province de l'Est 1971 à 1975 et perspectives de développement*. Rapport établi au Conseil Technique pour la préparation du 4^e Plan quinquennal à Bertoua le 18/04/1975, p. 2.

² Yondo, *La mise en valeur...*, p. 382.

Tableau 03: Pourcentage des couvertures de lutttes phytosanitaires

Année Nomenclature	1981-1982		1982-1983		1983-1984		1984-1985	
	Réal	Prév	Réal	Prév	Réal	Prév	Réal	Prév
Taux de lutte phytosanitaire sur le cacao anti capsides et anti pourriture brune	85%				94%			
Taux de lutte phytosanitaire sur le café anti scolyte	45%				80%			

Source: Rapport avant-projet du VI^e plan région Est 1981-1985, p. 3.

L'analyse de ce tableau montre qu'au cours de l'année 1981/1982, près de 85% des objectifs du taux de lutte de lutte phytosanitaire sur le cacao et 45% du taux de lutte phytosanitaire sur le café ont été atteints.

Au cours de l'année 1983/1984, l'action des pouvoirs publics a été intense dans la région. C'est ce qui traduit cette nette augmentation soit 94% contre 45% des projets réalisés. La photo ci-dessous illustre une cabosse de cacao en maturité.

S'agissant du café, Au de son accession à l'indépendance, l'Etat camerounais avait inscrit dans un programme de développement durable la filière café. Le café robusta est produit dans la même zone que le cacao, le Haut-Nyong détenait plus de la moitié de la production.

La production caféière avait évolué en dents de scie. Ainsi, 8670 tonnes avaient été commercialisées en 1970. En 1972, la production plongeait à 4.251 tonnes pour plafonner en 1974 à 8.604 tonnes.¹ Cette évolution oscillatoire s'explique par le repos cyclique des caféiers, le vieillissement des plantes, l'attaque des plantes et même l'exportation frauduleuse en RCA. En 1972/1973, la production du café à l'Est Cameroun a rapporté 750.000.000 FCFA². De 1981 à 1984, les indicateurs montrent que, la production du café dans les différents départements était en nette croissance. Comme l'indique le tableau ci-dessous.

¹ Lom, *Evolution de la situation économique et sociale de la province de l'Est-Cameroun 1971 à 1975 et perspectives de développement*, exposé fait au Conseil technique pour la préparation du 4^e plan quinquennal à Bertoua le 18.04.1975, p. 2-15.

² Yondo, *Mise en valeur de la région Est...*, p. 383.

Tableau 04: Evolution de la culture du Café dans les quatre départements de l'Est-Cameroun de 1981 à 1984

Années Nomenclature	Café		
	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984
Lom et Djerem	415978	777.666	155.924
Haut-Nyong	5.188	8.416	2.106
Kadey	101.449	4.800	4.595
Boumba et Ngoko	----	-----	-----
Total en Tonnes	8.156,129	13.224,9	2.516

Source: MINPAT, Rapport primaire..., p.4.

Au regard de ce tableau, on constate que la production des différents départements s'est faite en dents de scie. Les objectifs du V^e plan sont en dessous des prévisions. Soit 5.576 tonnes d'écart brut pour le café. Or, le tableau ci-dessous indique l'évolution de la production et les écarts par rapport aux objectifs.

Tableau 05: Evolution de la production et écarts par rapport aux objectifs

Années Produits	1981-1982		1982-1983		1983-1984		Ecart brut
	Production	Prévision	Production	Prévision	Production	Prévision	Par rapport aux objectifs
Café en Tonnes	815.129	9.240	13.224,4	9.966	2.516	10.265	-5.576

Source: MINPAT, Rapport primaire..., p.4.

Au regard de ce tableau, on constate que, malgré la nette progression enregistrée dans la filière cacao, beaucoup restait encore à faire au niveau du café. S'agissant du tabac, le tableau ci-dessous illustre l'évolution de la production de 1960 à 1990.

Tableau 06: Evolution de la production du tabac à l'Est-Cameroun 1960-1990

Années Nomenclature	Production en tonnes
1960	883
1965	1050
1970	1720
1975	2187
1980	1468

1985	2190
1990	844

Source: Synthèse des documents d'archives du SEITA,
SCT de 1950 à 1990.

L'analyse de ce tableau montre que, la production allait croissante depuis le SEITA à la SCT. En 1975, elle atteint des sommets soit 2187 tonnes. Cette hausse vertigineuse était due aux efforts conjoints menés par les agents de la SCT d'une part, les planteurs de l'autre. Et à la création de la section tabac de coupe. La baisse sensible des années 1980 est consécutive à la fermeture des centres de Mindourou et de Gribi. Par ailleurs, en 1985, la production est en nette augmentation. Ceci était dû au flux massifs de planteurs qui avaient été recrutés. On était passé de 5548 planteurs en 1980 à 7225 planteurs en 1985. en 1990, la production est à son plus bas niveau ceci était dû à la crise économique de 1987 qui avait touché ce secteur du point de vue de l'espace, l'activité agricole représente environ 1,4% des terres cultivables. Ce qui est encore faible pour constituer une menace. En comparant les deux taux, on remarque que la pression agricole est relativement plus grande en savane 2% qu'en forêt 1,4%. Ceci est le fait de l'augmentation de la population en zone de savane. D'une manière générale, on remarque qu'en 2010, l'évolution a été constante, les productions et les superficies ont sensiblement doublé. L'activité agricole occupe que 2,8% des terres cultivables de la région, ce qui du point de l'occupation spatiale ne sera pas encore très préoccupant.

Analyse des différents systèmes de production et leur impact sur l'environnement

Les systèmes de production

Les productions de l'Est-Cameroun se résument en seul: le système traditionnel. On n'a affaire à une agriculture extensive ou l'association et la succession des cultures sont des caractéristiques principales des pratiques culturelles qui sont itinérantes sur brûlis, la terre n'étant pas un facteur limitant ici. Les pratiques culturelles sont similaires dans toute la région avec cependant quelques variantes observées lors de la préparation du terrain et sur la durée de la jachère. C'est ainsi qu'en zone de forêt, l'ouverture d'une parcelle commence toujours par les défrichements du recru forestier et l'abattage des arbres à la machette, à la hache et souvent la tronçonneuse. Cette activité se pratique par les hommes. Les arbres abattus sont grossièrement ébranchés, sciés puis brûlés sur la parcelle. Il ne reste sur le pied que les gros arbres et ceux présentant un intérêt alimentaire ou économique pour le paysan à l'instar du Moabi pour l'huile qu'il procure, du manguier sauvage pour ses fruits. Par contre en zone de

savane, le feu est le seul mode de défrichement utilisé pour nettoyer la parcelle. Cette opération se fait en pleine saison sèche, soit par les agriculteurs pour préparer les champs, soit par les éleveurs pour régénérer les pâturages.

En forêt comme en savane, il n'y a pas de labour proprement dit. Par exemple nettoyage à la daba, les femmes nettoient la parcelle qui seraensemencée. L'association des cultures est la tradition dans la région. Plusieurs cultures sont entretenues dans la même parcelle de façon quasi permanente, il s'agit de: maïs, arachide, manioc, macabo, plantin, cacaoyer, caféier. Quelques fruitiers vont cohabiter entre 2 à 3 ans avec les arbres naturels épargnés lors du défrichement. En forêt tout comme en savane, le maïs est majoritaire dans les associations au 1^{er} cycle cultural 97% et le manioc 79% pendant le second cycle¹. Les récoltes sont échelonnées dans le temps et dans l'espace. En effet, les cultures à cycle court comme le maïs et l'arachide laissent progressivement les cultures annuelles et pérennes telles que macabo, manioc, bananier plantain et les cultures de rente. A la deuxième et troisième année les cultures annuelles ne sont plus entretenues et la parcelle est laissée en jachère pour une durée variant entre 3 à 25. Notons que l'exploitation vivrière n'aboutit pas toujours sur une caféière ou une cacaoyère².

La durée de la jachère est très courte en zone de savane d'autant plus que chaque année, à la saison sèche toutes les savanes sont rasées par le feu de brousse et de ce fait, le couvert végétal éprouve beaucoup de peines à se reconstituer. Par contre, en zone de forêt, la jachère est assez longue à cause des difficultés rencontrées pendant l'ouverture de l'espace forestier. Outre la jachère, aucun autre moyen de restauration de la fertilité des sols n'est pratiqué dans la région. Les restes des récoltes: chaumes de maïs, fanes d'arachide etc... sont mis en tas en bordure ou sur le champ et brûlés au moment de la mise en culture. Seules les cultures maraîchères pratiquées dans les zones péri-urbaines bénéficient d'un amendement de fumier fabriqué à partir de la bouse des vaches. Chaque année, une nouvelle parcelle est créée et ne sera abandonnée en jachère qu'après 2 à 3 ans de culture lorsqu'elle est jugée épuisée. L'objectif de l'agriculteur n'étant pas d'optimiser de système cultural, mais plutôt le système alimentaire³. Il convient de souligner qu'en dehors des zones péri-urbaines et de savanes où la densité de la population est assez élevée et la pratique des feux de brousse fréquente, le paysage de l'Est Cameroun est caractérisé par un taux

¹ R. Letouzey, *Notices sur la cartographie du Cameroun au 1/500.000*, IRA, Institut de la carte Internationale de la végétation, Toulouse, FASC, 1985, p. 1-5. Cf. P. Christy, *Inventaire ornithologique de la réserve du Dja*, Rapport ECOFAC/Cameroun, 1994, p. 12-30.

² L. Debroux, *L'aménagement des forêts tropicales fondé sur la gestion des populations d'arbres: l'exemple du Moibi dans la forêt du Dja Cameroun*, Rapport Ecofac/Cameroun, 1998, p. 2-16.

³ Aubreville, *Caractéristiques techniques des principaux bois du Cameroun. Le Cameroun agricole, pastoral et forestier*, n°168, Yaoundé, Janvier 1979, p. 11-36.

d'exploitation faible 1,4%. Aujourd'hui, cette situation a certainement beaucoup évolué avec le regain d'intérêt des cultures vivrières auprès des populations et la remontée des cours des cultures de rente, maïs. Ce taux ne dépasse guère les 3%. C'est ce qui semble expliquer la tradition d'itinérance des populations de la région.

L'impact des systèmes de production sur l'environnement

Le défrichement

La conséquence immédiate du défrichement est l'élimination du couvert végétal et la mise à nu du sol qui dès lors est soumis aux agressivités climatiques en l'occurrence la battance des pluies avec tout ce que cela entraîne comme risque d'érosion à cause des eaux de ruissellement surtout dans les terrains en pente. Néanmoins, la pratique des cultures associées minimise souvent les effets de ces eaux de ruissellement. Une étude menée par Sieffert et Truong en 1992 sur l'évolution des terres défrichées dans trois villages de pris dans trois zones écologiques de l'Est montre que l'ensemble des terroirs desdits villages est passé de 1524 ha en 1989 à 1824 ha en 1999, soit une progression de 16,44% en 10 ans¹. Ce résultat permet de comprendre que même faible, la disparition du couvert végétal est évidente et qu'il faudrait craindre une évolution progressive de la savane vers la forêt qui sera accentuée dans les prochaines années par les migrations prévisibles des populations des régions denses du pays vers les moins peuplées de l'Est.

Le brûlis

C'est la pratique qui, de loin menace à la fois la survie des espèces végétales et la quantité des sols, surtout en savane où le feu ravage à chaque saison sèche, des vastes étendues de savanes. En savane, on note de plus en plus la disparition des espèces végétales pâturables au profit des espèces indésirables tel: *Eupatorium Odoratum* ou Eupatoire. A cause du feu, il y a combustion totale du carbone et de l'Azote contenu dans les matières végétales limitant ainsi le processus humification, ce qui se traduit à la longue par une dégradation progressive de la structure du sol et partant, de sa fertilité. Cette zone est la plus menacée dans sa biodiversité à cause des feux de brousse². En forêt, les troncs d'arbres et les résidus végétaux enflammés mettent long à se consumer sur la parcelle, ce qui a pour conséquence d'éliminer les microorganismes actifs dans

¹ W. Del vintg, *La gestion forestière en bordure de la réserve de faune du Dja*, Rapport ECOFAC/Cameroun, 1994, p. 30-35.

² C. Onana, *Agriculture vivrière dans la région d'Okola*, Mémoire de DIPES II, ENS, 1997, p. 20-30. Cf. J. Ongala, *Etudes économiques de la production vivrière dans la zone d'intervention de Yemessoa*, Yaoundé, Rapport ENSA, 1973, p. 12-25.

le processus d'humification. On aboutira ainsi à la fragilisation de la structure des sols forestiers¹.

La gestion de la matière organique

De façon générale, les agriculteurs ressentent une baisse de la fertilité des sols, d'où l'itinérance, mais ils ne l'attribuent ni au défrichement, ni au brûlis². Le seul moyen de restaurer la fertilité du sol épuisé est la jachère naturelle de longue en zone de forêt, en raison de la densité faible de sa population 3,8 hab./km², elle se raccourcit de plus en plus en zone de savane et de transition à cause non seulement de la densité relativement grande, mais des feux de brousse³.

La culture itinérante

Ce système se caractérise par le déplacement des champs au fur et à mesure de l'épuisement du territoire assorti d'une période de jachère plus moins longue. Le risque de cette pratique à la longue est la diminution progressive de la quantité, voire de la qualité des terres cultivables⁴. C'est pourquoi il serait indiqué d'envisager déjà des méthodes culturales visant à stabiliser l'agriculture itinérante telle l'agroforesterie, l'utilisation du compost ou du fumier etc. cet effort est poursuivi depuis 1988 par le programme national de vulgarisation et de formation agricole, mais l'abondance des terres et l'outillage agricole encore rudimentaire n'incitent pas encore au changement des moteurs⁵.

Impact des systèmes de culture sur les rendements

En zone de forêt, les rendements de maïs entre 1984 et 1988 sont passés de 1,93 tonne à l'hectare à 1,40 tonne à l'hectare avec des variétés traditionnelles, alors que le rendement théorique est de 2,5 tonnes à l'hectare; tandis qu'en savane les rendements passaient de 2,03 tonne par hectare à 1,79 tonne par hectare en 1988 sans atteindre les 2,5 tonnes/ha en zone de savane. Ainsi, ces baisses relativement faibles par rapport aux rendements traditionnels mais assez grands par rapport aux rendements théoriques des cultures sont l'œuvre des pratiques culturales rudimentaires sans respect de

¹ A. Amougou, *Etude botanique et écologique de la vallée inondable du Nyong*, Thèse de Doctorat en géographie tropicale, Université de Yaoundé, 1986, p. 15-30.

² S. Gartlan, *La conservation des écosystèmes forestiers du Cameroun*, UICN, Gland, 1989, p. 5-7.

³ B. Apiane Génies, Ingénieur agroéconomiste, Délégué régional de l'Est de l'Agriculture et du développement rural, 57ans, entretien à Bertoua le 07.09.2013.

⁴ J.P. Lanly, *Agriculture itinérante*, UN, FAO, 1985, p. 3-10.

⁵ F. Kamajou, *Aspect socio-économiques et institutionnel de l'amélioration de l'agriculture itinérante en Afrique tropicale*, Yaoundé, ORSTOM, *Bulletin pédologique de la FAO*, 1987, p. 15-25.

l'environnement¹. Si d'ailleurs, ces rendements se maintiennent encore à ce niveau, ce n'est encore que le fait de la création de nouvelles parcelles chaque année sur des terres neuves.

Evolution des pratiques agro-forestières dans les systèmes de production

Les systèmes agroforestiers dans la région de l'Est, n'ont pas connu une évolution notable, tant et si vrai qu'ils sont pratiqués dans une manière quasi-inconsciente. Le seul objectif du paysan étant de maximiser le facteur alimentaire au détriment de la productivité. Par ailleurs, les forêts étant encore généreuses, les traditions de cueillette et de ramassage sont encore très vivaces dans les mœurs, ce qui n'incite pas les populations à planter des arbres. Néanmoins, parmi les systèmes agroforestiers traditionnels pratiqués dans la région, on rencontre plus couramment:

- Les jardins de case quelques plants de fruits sont associés aux cultures vivrières pendant les trois premières années de culture. Ces plants servent exclusivement à l'alimentation;

- L'association cacaoyer ou caféier et cultures vivrières pendant les trois premières années de culture et les arbres épargnés lors du défrichement. Dans ce cas, le jeune cacaoyer ou caféier bénéficie des divers sarclages effectués sur les cultures vivrières.

- Les jachères naturelles où cohabitent la végétation naturelle et des cultures comme le manioc, le macabo et le bananier plantain pendant 2 à 3 ans, le temps que ces cultures soient récoltées².

De tous ces systèmes agroforestiers, le souci du paysan n'est ni de restaurer la fertilité du sol, ni d'intensifier ses méthodes culturales. C'est dans ce but de trouver les voies et moyens de stabiliser l'agriculture itinérante sur brûlis que le projet d'aménagement piloté par Dimako a entrepris un vaste programme de recherche sur l'agroforesterie dont les objectifs sont les suivants:

- Déterminer les zones d'occupation de la terre l'activité agricole actuelle et future compte tenu de l'évolution des systèmes de production et de l'effet des migrations futures;

- Mettre au point des techniques acceptables de production agricole et agroforestière maintenant la production et la fertilité des sols et réduisant la durée des jachères³.

Plan de zonage des terres

Le territoire affecté au projet API couvre une superficie de 1.300.000 hectares reparti en trois zones A, B et C de 270.000, 270.000 et 250.000

¹ *Ibidem*.

² M. Mbono Samba, *Géographie: le Cameroun, l'Afrique et le monde*, Paris, Hatier, 1997, p. 9.

³ J. Criaud, *Géographique du Cameroun*, Yaoundé Saint Paul, 1976, p. 26.

hectares respectivement. Le plan de zonage qui suit doit être complété par les limites exactes des terroirs après négociation avec les populations¹. Si ce plan venait à prendre corps, la pression de la population sur les ressources naturelles diminuerait et il permettrait de développer des techniques agroforestières sur environ 30,5% des terres vouées à l'intervention agricole. Par ailleurs, il pourrait être étendu sur l'ensemble de la région, voire du pays.

Développement des systèmes agroforestiers

Plusieurs systèmes ont déjà été entrepris ou sont en cours avec la collaboration des organismes spécialisés (IRA, CIRAD, CRRBP). Les paysans sont associés dans le cadre de ces essais en milieu réel. On peut citer:

- Les essais comportementaux d'arbres fruitiers sélectionnés;
- Les tests d'influence des cultures de plantes fixatrices d'azote en couloir sur le rendement de plantain de la variété sombre et sur la fertilité des sols;
- Etude de la filière des produits de cueillette;
- Tests d'association agriculture-élevage en milieu paysan².

Le projet API de Dimako a mis en pépinière une collection de sept espèces (Pamplemousse, Mandarine, Orange, Citron, Manguier, Goyavier et avocatier) regroupant 21 variétés et 06 espèces exotique (Jacquier, Mangoustier, Cerisier des Antilles etc...)³. L'adoption des cultures fruitières par une grande frange de la population pourra à la longue limiter les feux de brousse et l'érosion des sols. A ce jour, 66 plants ont déjà été utilisés auprès de 27 planteurs répartis sur 4 villages à raison de 1000 FCFA le plant. Ici, les produits qui font la convoitise des populations dans la forêt afin de les domestiquer. Ceci limiterait la pression des populations sur les ressources naturelles. Toutefois, le développement de l'agroforesterie est confronté à plusieurs obstacles:

- La pression anthropique faible et relativement stable à l'exception des zones périurbaines n'incite guère les populations à une démarche d'intensification des systèmes de production;
- L'existence d'une mentalité d'itinérance ancrée dans les mœurs des populations rend plus aléatoire la stabilisation de l'agriculture traditionnelle;
- Les méthodes culturales, plus particulièrement celles susceptibles d'améliorer la productivité des sols et donc de réduire la durée des jachères sont quasiment inexistant.

¹ E. Boserup, *Evolution agraires et pression démographique*, Paris, Flammarion, 1970, p. 170.

² J. Weber, *Les interventions planifiées: les techniques de développement, les modèles d'intervention et leurs objectifs*, communication au colloque sur la maîtrise de l'espace agraire et développement en Afrique au Sud du Sahara. Logique paysanne et rationalité technique, Paris, ORSTOM, 1978, p. 9.

³ T. Defo, *L'intégration de la production dans la stratégie de développement en Afrique tropicale*, cas du Cameroun, Thèse de doctorat 3^{ème} cycle en Droit et Sciences Economiques, Université de Yaoundé, 1984, p. 268.

- Le système foncier encore flou et basé sur la solidarité villageoise n'incite pas les populations à l'appropriation individuelle.

Stratégiques spécifiques par zone écologique

Dans le contexte actuel de pression anthropique faible sur un espace varié, l'adoption de pratiques plus intensives demeure une vue de l'esprit. L'intensification est d'abord le fruit de la pression démographique et ne sera pratiqué que lorsque toutes les possibilités du système extensif auront été testées et prises en compte. A ce sujet, il existe chez les agriculteurs des stratégies qui traduisent un exemple intéressant de pratiques extensives bien que maîtrisant l'intensif. Les mesures visent à intégrer dans la problématique du développement de la région Est, aussi bien celle de la stabilisation de l'agriculture itinérante une approche zonale fondée sur des spécificités de chaque unité écologique.

La zone de savane

Elle couvre les arrondissements de Bétaré-Oya, Garoua Boulai, Batouri, Kette et Ndélé¹. C'est la zone pastorale par excellence et vouée à l'agriculture itinérante sur brûlis. En raison des feux de brousse fréquents, la notion de jachère est très mal maîtrisée. Par ce fait, elle constitue un fort intérêt du point de vue de l'environnement. Dès lors, la menace de la disparition d'espèces végétales pâturables et de dégradation des sols est très grande dans la zone. Par ailleurs, les savanes périforestières ou les populations Bororo trouvaient des parcours de saison sèche, connaissent des nouvelles conditions d'exploitation. La privatisation des pâturages du Nord Cameroun, les populations nomades voient leur cycle traditionnel de transhumance remis en cause et tendent une certaine stabilisation dans les savanes de notre région. Ce phénomène aboutit à :

- Une surexploitation des pâturages;
- Une mauvaise reconstitution des terres en jachère par l'érosion provoquée et les feux de brousse;
- Les dégâts de culture;
- Les conflits pasteurs-agriculteurs.

¹ Contrairement aux zones forestières, cette région de contact forêt savane a exercé depuis toujours un attrait certain sur divers courants de peuplement qui se sont succédés dans la région. Batouri le chef-lieu de la région a joué un rôle dans le passé après la vieille bourgade de Doumé qui abrita le poste militaire allemand dans la région de l'Est autour des années 1910. En outre, et à cause de la fertilité de son sol, son immense pâturage et à ses gisements d'or et de diamant, ce département qui constitue une zone de transit vers la République centrafricaine ne manque pas d'atouts susceptibles d'exerce sur les migrants étrangers et nationaux un certains attrait très souvent découragé ou atténué par le caractère enclavé de la province.

Dans ces conditions, les mesures ou les stratégies à envisager doivent avoir l'adhésion et la participation à tous les niveaux. On pourrait recommander pour cette zone: traditionnels:

- L'amélioration des systèmes agroforestiers traditionnels;
- L'introduction de l'arabo culture fruitière dans les associations de cultures celle-ci aurait l'avantage d'apporter aux paysans une source alimentaire, limitant l'érosion des sols.

La zone de forêt

Elle couvre les départements du Haut-Nyong et de la Boumba et Ngoko c'est le domaine de l'exploitation industriel du bois. Comme nous l'avons montré plus haut, l'agriculture actuelle menace peu l'environnement dans cette zone, mais il faudrait déjà envisager des stratégies visant à améliorer les techniques culturales et à limiter la pression anthropique sur la forêt. Les mesures suivantes sont envisagées:

- l'établissement des zones tampons autour des massifs forestiers tout en respectant le droit d'usufruit des populations sur un certain nombre de produits de cueillette. Un tel plan de zonage permettrait de circonscrire chaque type d'activité dans une unité forcément on aboutirait à l'intensification des techniques;
- La mise à profit des expériences agroforestières actuelles menées par le projet API et dont les avantages sont multiples: la domestication des espèces fruitières sauvages. L'enrichissement du sol et la protection contre l'érosion;
- La vulgarisation des techniques d'exploitation forestière contrôlée;
- La vulgarisation des techniques de défrichement sélectif de la couverture végétale. A cet effet, le Programme National de Vulgarisation et de Formation agricoles (PNVFA) doit être impliqué dans le processus;
- L'encouragement des populations à la création des forêts par les communautés et les particuliers.

La zone de transition

Cette zone à la particularité d'être une cohabitation savane-forêt. Le problème majeur de cette zone est la savanisation progressive des galeries forestières sous l'impact des cultures vivrières et les feux de brousse. Les terres sous galeries forestières sont considérées comme les meilleurs et subissent aussi l'assaut des populations sans ménagement sur la fertilité et la reforestation. Ce phénomène est très marqué dans les zones périurbaines de Bertoua, Batouri, Abong-Mbang et Dimako suite à l'augmentation de la densité de la population

due aux mouvements migratoires des campagnes vers les villes¹. En effet, les zones périurbaines souffrent d'une assez forte anthropisation marquée par des défrichements inconsidérés et d'une coupe indiscriminée de bois de feu. D'une façon générale, les stratégies énoncées ne peuvent être appliquées que s'il y a eu au préalable un changement minimum de mentalités des populations et ceci est un préalable qui ne passera que par la sensibilisation de celles-ci à prendre conscience des menaces que font peser leurs pratiques sur l'environnement. Ainsi, il faudrait engager une stratégie globale visant à confier progressivement la gestion du terroir aux utilisateurs en les responsabilisant sur les problèmes de conservation.

Conclusion

L'agriculture joue un rôle fondamental dans l'économie et la société du Cameroun. Riche en ressources naturelles et humaines nécessaires à un développement agricole soutenu et continu, l'Etat camerounais a placé l'agriculture en tête des priorités pour le développement du pays. Cependant, si la situation de l'agriculture est souvent considérée comme peu performante en dépit des améliorations connues ces dernières années, elle contribue tout de même à éradiquer les déséquilibres alimentaires. S'agissant de la protection de la biodiversité, certains des indicateurs agricoles, montrent l'importance des cultures de rente et vivrières pour les populations de la région. L'agroforesterie à l'Est Cameroun, s'inscrit donc dans les politiques publiques de demain qui peuvent être liées à des choix favorisant une diversification des revenus et une transition douce d'activités agricoles vers des activités non agricoles.

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¹ M. Abah, *Dynamique des paysages au contact de la forêt et de la savane dans la région d'Obala-Bafia*, Thèse de Doctorat du 3^e cycle en géographie, Université de Bordeaux III, 1984, p. 7-12.

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Apiane Génies, Ingénieur agroéconomiste, Délégué régional de l'Est de l'Agriculture et du développement rural, 57ans, entretien à Bertoua le 07.09.2013.

Bouko, planteur, 60 ans, entretien à Bandongwé le 14 octobre 2013.

Mbangoe Mbélé, Jacques, Délégué Régional de la Chambre d'Agriculture de Bertoua, 44 ans, entretien à Bertoua le 11.09.2013.

Kette, Directeur général de la Fédération des planteurs de tabac et autres cultures vivrières du Cameroun, 55 ans, entretien à Bertoua, le 08.09.2013.

ROMANIAN-POLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

*Magdalena Filary**

Abstract

Today we can look back and see that historically Romanian-Polish diplomatic relations have been promising and exemplary. However as a result of the invasion of Poland by the Soviet Union on the 17th September 1939, the Polish government in exile and thousands of Poles found shelter on Romanian territory.

This paper presents an overview of the Polish-Romanian diplomatic relations which over the years became closer and more fruitful and now takes the form of the Polish diplomatic mission in Romania and the Romanian mission in Poland. The role of these missions and other institutions is to bring closer the peoples of these two countries in various fields: politics, economics, culture. Furthermore, a number of academic and cultural institutions contribute today to the strengthening of bilateral relations by promoting each other's culture and organising courses of Polish language in Romania and Romanian language in Poland.

Key words: *Diplomatic Relations, Poland-Romania, Diplomatic Mission, Legation, Refugees*

The diplomatic relations between Romania and Poland were established almost 95 years ago. In October 1918, Polish Regency Government decided to establish a representation in Romania whose head should be Dr. Marian Linde (chargé d'affaires), established in Bucharest. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, led by Prime Minister Ignacy Paderewski confirmed the nomination in January 1919. At the same time, the Polish National Committee (PNC) appointed Stanislaw Kozminski its delegate to the Romanian government. However, the Romanian government did not give accreditation to any of delegates¹.

Finally, the Polish-Romanian diplomatic relations were established on February 9, 1919 at the beginning in the rank of temporary representative, as a result of signing the letter of accreditation of Aleksander Skarzynski by Józef Pilsudski, where he was appointed Extraordinary deputy and Plenipotentiary minister and nominated for prime-chief of the Polish Legation in Romania. Afterwards, on May 31, 1919, it was raised to the rank of legation,

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¹ H. Walczak, *Sojusz z Rumunią w polskiej polityce zagranicznej 1918-1931*, Szczecin, Wyd. Naukowe US, 2008, p. 53-54.

and then on May 31, 1938 they became embassies. The first diplomatic documents were signed on March 3, 1921, renewed afterwards with other cultural, economic, commercial agreements. Between 1940 and 1945, diplomatic relations were suspended, although during the war, the relations between the two countries remained alive and demonstrated their true value¹.

As we know, Poland was attacked from three sides: from Germany, Czechoslovakia occupied by Hitler and the Soviet Union in accordance with the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. In this situation, on 17 September 1939, the Polish government exiled in Romania, together with the treasure of National Bank of Poland and cultural assets of the National Museum of Wawel Castle in Krakow. In the same way took also a number of units of the Polish Army, as part of the civilian population. About 100.000 people found refuge on the Romanian territory². After the Second World War, Poland (People's Republic of Poland) and Romania (Socialist Republic of Romania) restored diplomatic relations on August 13, 1945 in the rank of embassies, and in April 1946, the diplomatic representatives of the two countries started their activity.

During the war, in Romania, especially in Craiova, families of Polish officers and ordinary civilians found shelter. The Museum of Art in Craiova, the former palace of Jean Michael³, became the center of the Polish Provisional Government, headed by Edward Rydz-Smigly. Later, even the President of Poland, Ignacy Moscicki, lived in the palace of Jean Michael. Together with the Polish Government was detained Jozef Beck – Minister of Foreign Affairs, one of the closest collaborators of Jozef Pilsudski, who died in Romania in 1944. On December 25, 1939, the President managed to escape to Switzerland thanks to Romanian's help. Romanians have risked more, first of all peace to save the Poles expelled from their own country. Polish treasure travelled throughout Romania, finally arriving in Constanta from where it was shipped away. Two days after the departure of gold from the port of Constanta, the President of Poland and the entire government asked for asylum in Romania⁴.

It is important to mention that in the interwar period Poland had a common border with Romania of 349 km. Romania in the years 1918-1939 was the only neighbor of Poland (except Latvia and Hungary for a short time) that remained in friendly relations with Poland.

¹ A. Herman Łukasik, B. Janicka, K. Szczepanik, red., *Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski informator*, tom 1, *Europa 1918-2006*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Askon, 2007, p. 362-365.

² G. Labuda, W. Michowicz, *Historia dyplomacji polskiej X-XX*, Warszawa, Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2002, p. 139.

³ One of Romanian's richest people in the interwar period.

⁴ M. Kornat, M. Morzycki-Markowski, *W rumuńskiej pułapce*, Gdańsk, Wyd. Oskar, 2011, p. 93-95.

The first historian who wrote about the Polish-Romanian relations was professor Nicolae Iorga, Prime Minister of Romania in the years 1931-1932, who is the author of the study entitled: *Polonais et Roumains. Relations politiques, économiques et culturelles*. The *Convention of Defensive Alliance* signed at Bucharest by Poland and Romania on 3 March 1921 was an inspiration for him to write this study. Another outstanding personality who should be mentioned is Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, who paid several visits to Romania on different occasions and was a close friend of the Romanian royal family. The monument unveiled in 2012 in Bucharest commemorates his close and strong relations with Romania. On June 24, 1923 the king Ferdinand I and his wife Maria came to Warsaw for an official visit. Prince Michael (brother of King Charles II) visited Poland to strengthen and improve Polish Romanian relations. It took place also a number of consultations and ministerial visits. On October 15, 1935 in Bucharest took place the meeting of foreign ministers: from Poland – Józef Beck and from Romania – Nicolae Titulescu. On November 17, 1936 Victor Antonescu – Romania's foreign minister from that period came to Warsaw and on March 4, 1939 – Grigore Gafencu – his successor visited Poland. During the Polish-Romanian alliance and friendship, Romania King Carol II and the big voievode Michael also visited Poland in 1937¹.

In the space of almost 100 years, Poland and Romania signed a number of documents on bilateral cooperation in various fields. The most significant agreements are: Trade Convention, Agreements on Trade of goods, Consular Convention, Agreements on cultural, scientific and tourist cooperation.

Within the framework of the visit of the President of Romania in the Republic of Poland, in July 2001, Presidents Advisory Committee was created and the Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Republic of Poland regarding The fight against organized crime, terrorism and other offences was signed and, respectively, Convention between the Government of Romania and the Republic of Poland regarding cooperation in the field of plants protection.

At present, the Polish-Romanian diplomatic relations are based on the 22 bilateral documents in force. Among them, an important role plays Strategic Partnership, signed in 2009, later supplemented by an *Action Plan* signed in 2010. Today, diplomatic relations translate into Polish diplomatic mission in Romania and the Romanian in Poland. In Bucharest there are: Polish Embassy, Department of Trade and Investment Promotion, Consular Section, Polish Cultural Institute and Honorary Consulate of Poland in Campia-Turzii and non-governmental organizations like the Union of Poles in Romania. Romanian

¹ A. Herman Łukasik, B. Janicka, K. Szczepanik, red., *op. cit.*, p. 371-378.

foreign missions in Poland are the following: Romanian Embassy in Warsaw, Romanian Cultural Institute and three honorary consulates in Białystok, Kielce, Poznań. The role of these missions and institutions is to bring closer the peoples of the two countries in different fields: economic, political, cultural. The accession of the two countries to the EU raised the frontier barriers, opened the free exchange of goods, has enabled mutual investment. To strengthen Polish-Romanian relations contribute also fact that currently in Poland one can study Romanian at three major universities: “Adam Mickiewicz” University in Poznań (Department of Romanian Language and Literature), Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Warsaw University, as well as Polish which can be studied at University of Bucharest, University “Babes-Bolyai” in Cluj-Napoca, University “A.I. Cuza in Iasi” and University of Craiova. Year 2010 was declared in Poland “Year of Romania”. In the context of celebrating 20 years of the Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and Romania was chosen the “Logo of Polish-Romanian Friendship” that was used by Polish and Romanian institutions in official correspondence between diplomatic missions throughout 2013.

Over the years, diplomatic relations have established and developed contributing to the development of cooperation between the two countries on national and European level. Taking into consideration the importance of historical relations and common goals of the two countries and the current political situation, the fact that both countries are members of the European Union, NATO and UN, Romania and Poland can be considered valuable and strategic partners in creating a common European policy.

Polish diplomatic representatives in Romania¹:

Stefan Wengierow – chargé d'affaires a.i. (8.IV.1946 – 14.VIII.1947)

Piotr Szymański – ambassador (14.VIII.1947 – 13.II.1951)

Wojciech Wrzosek – ambassador (13.II.1951)

Jan Izydorczyk (1900-1974) – ambassador (10.VI.1955 – 5.XI.1957)

Janusz Zambrowicz – ambassador (5.XI.1957 – 26.IV.1963)

Wiesław Sobierajski (1913-1986) – ambassador (26.IV.1963 – 13.II.1968)

Jaromir Ochęduszek – ambassador (13.II.1968 – 15.XI.1973)

Władysław Wojtasik – ambassador (15.XI.1973 – 12.V.1979)

Jerzy Kusiak – ambassador (12.V.1979 – 22.I.1981)

Bolesław Koperski – ambassador (22.I.1981 – 19.V.1988)

Jerzy Woźniak – ambassador (19.V.1988 – 29.VII.1990)

Zygmunt Komorowski – ambassador of the Republic of Poland between 1991-1992 (his father Bronisław Komorowski – at present President of Poland)

¹ Data from the inventory of Polish Embassy in Bucharest, Naczelną Dyрекcją Archiwów Państwowych, Warszawa, 2002.

Bogumił Luft – ambassador RP (21.I.1993 – 30.VI.1999)
Michał Klinger – ambassador RP (17.VIII.1999 – 30.VIII.2003)
Jacek Paliszewski – ambassador RP (25.IX.2003 – 31.VII.2008)
Wojciech Zajączkowski – ambassador RP (07.IX.2008 – 29.X.2010)
Marek Szczygieł – ambassador RP (13.VI.2011 – present)

Romanian diplomatic representatives in Poland and the date of starting the mandate:

Richard Franassovici – ambassador (31.V.1938)
Gheorghe Grigorcea – ambassador (VIII.1939)
Ion Raiciu – ambassador (4.IV.1946)
Athanasie Joja – ambassador (27.V.1949)
Niculae Dinulescu – ambassador (2.VIII.1951)
Constantin Nistor – ambassador (17.X.1953)
Maryn Florca Ionescu – ambassador (19.III.1955)
Nicolae Z. Ionescu chargé d'affaires a.i. (28.V.1959)
Dumitru Praporgescu – ambassador (13.VIII.1959)
Gheorghe Diaconescu – ambassador (15.IX.1961)
Tiberin Petrescu – ambassador (28.IV.1966)
Maryn Mihai – ambassador (9.VI.1971)
Aurel Duca – ambassador (20.IX.1973)
Ion Cozma – ambassador (24.V.1978)
Ion Tesu – ambassador (30.X.1984)
Ioului Dobroiu – ambassador (8.V.1990)
Ioan Grigorescu – ambassador (5.X.1993)
Constantin Budianu – chargé d'affaires a.i. (16.III.1999)
Romeo Stanciu – chargé d'affaires a.i. (5.XII.1999)
Ireny Comaroschi – ambassador (25.X.2000)
Gheorghe Istode – chargé d'affaires a.i. (20.II.2005)
Gabriel Constantin Bârtaș – ambassador (7.II.2006 – V.2008)
Gheorghe Predescu – ambassador (27.II.2009 – IV.2012)
Ioana Gabriela-Costache – chargé d'affaires a.i. (VII.2012 – V.2013)
Ovidiu Dranga – ambassador (19.VI.2013 – present)

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**CONSTRUCTIVIST CONSIDERATIONS ON STATE SOVEREIGNTY,
IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL NORMS**

*Radu-Cristian Petcu**

Abstract

Changes in international actors' behaviour and relationships can be explained not only in terms of balance of power, but also as effects of cultural interaction and influences which shape interests as well as individual (self-standing) and collective identities. In a constructivist perspective, interests of states transform over time in the institutional context of established or emerging norms, while international and domestic environments, especially in a multilateral or regional integration setting, shape state identities. State interests are socially constructed through the interplay of rational actors by means of processes of mutual definition, recognition and configuration: the structure shapes agent identity to the extent that the agent also responds to and shapes the structure and its rationale.

The present article contends that the institutionalization of cooperation in the international community can be advanced through learning interaction and social meaning sharing regarding the scope, contents and purpose of international norms.

Key words: *Constructivism, International Norms, Institutions, Sovereignty, Identity*

State Sovereignty and International Norms

State sovereignty is central to the freedom and recognition of acting as legitimate international actor, the possibility of conducting war according to interests, and to the complete control over domestic affairs. In a framework proposed by Krasner, the concept of "sovereignty" is defined as: *international legal; Westphalian; domestic; and interdependence type*¹. *International legal sovereignty* indicates mutual recognition; *Westphalian sovereignty* refers to exclusive authority over internal affairs and the prevention of interventionist measures on the state's internal decision-making processes; *domestic sovereignty* describes the effective exercise of authority within the borders of the national territory; and *interdependence sovereignty* stresses the ability to regulate developments counter to national security as deriving from

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¹ S.D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1999.

globalization. According to Krasner's realist theory, sovereignty is a global norm, yet international institutions (in spite of their acknowledged influence on state behaviour) cannot impose exclusive meaning to it and states retain power to interpret it as it fits their interests and aims, which are considered as given. Since the primary concern is to ensure national security for the reason that the state can only rely on itself, states shall continue to consider it necessary to avoid constraints on sovereignty, to allow for justifiable unilateral action rather than depend on the governance and mediation of international institutions.

State interests revolve around national identity, sovereignty, international influence, authority assertion, power maximization, in a context where competition, cooperation, negotiation, accommodation, and compromise co-exist. This entails that a state's behaviour reflects correspondences between its best interest (for itself) and both context-determined and foreseeable potentials in the social environment the state is acting in, which may account for continuity as well as change in state interest construction. However, a state will not necessarily follow established norms, even when deliberately negotiated and/or promoted. Any change in established norms can carry adverse effects on the balance of the statu-quo in security policies leading to perceptions of greater threat within the international community. Based on evaluation of actions expressing the level of commitment to norms and mutually confirmed expectations, states will act rationally for their own protection. Norms are paramount in warding off particular state interests of influence and power maximization which are often followed through at the expense of common interests (preservation of balance, order and peace-keeping), due to the norms' inbuilt mechanisms for establishing acceptable behaviour and regulation of transgression by means of patterned conflict management and resolution.

Nevertheless, sovereignty may also be understood as a key ingredient in the constitutions of international society, in the sets of norms embodied formally in international documents (declarations, accords, treaties) which reflect on state behaviour legitimacy of practice, even if not necessarily enforced¹. International norms are not always observed as binding rules imposed by a supranational authority, especially when they present constraints on national interest, a situation when state behaviour changes to become less guided and regulated by international norms. States are acting, therefore, as either norm promoters, norm takers or norm-challengers, with sovereignty as the central domestic norm, despite increasing difficulty to defend its traditional Westphalian concept in global affairs context.

Norms act as guidelines to be followed in a certain situation or environment. However, not all norms are followed. International norms have

¹ D. Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 21-22.

different strength and compliance levels, and there is historical experience of competing, contending or contradictory norms: emerging versus old (internalized to current practice). In terms of national security policies, norms can shape and reform actions and policies of states. Norms in the international system can shape state expectations and behaviours which are, in turn, associated with state identity. Norms can be defined as either constitutive (rules defining an identity) or regulative (standards and effective enactments relating to defined identity) and both are institutionalized via shared values internalization, into cooperative behaviours in the international society¹. In this context, international cooperation may be seen throughout “learning” interaction: institutions and norms assist and become accepted in the process of interest and identity formation and development.

Sovereignty, then, as a key concept in international relations, can relate to the ongoing process of identity and interest self- and inter-subjective definition and construction in historical interpretation, such as ideological constructs of sovereignty and democracy which are also socially and culturally determined.

A Constructivist Approach to Sovereignty, Identity and International Norms

Questions of identity, interest and value refer to self-representation and construction, requiring an approach which is not positivist, yet which can still make sense of common rules, of developing norms and institutions related to the formation, change and evolution of national societies and international community.

Identities shape and define state interests. Norms, culture, environment and behavior must be explained in order to understand the transformation of states’ identities and, according to Wendt, it is by collective understanding that changes in state identity can explain security interests². Transitions to democracy may alter ideological tenets and focus in order to gain trust, and state interests may switch priority in order to change state identity for security concerns as well as for recognition, membership and participation in the international community. Norms, culture, or identities are presented in causal arguments about national security, defining *recursivity*: state policies reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure³. Power, agency, and identity

¹ Peter Katzenstein, *Alternative Perspectives on National Security*, in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security*, New York, Columbia, 1996.

² A. Wendt, *Identity and structural change in international politics*, in Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil (eds.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner, 1996, p. 47-48.

³ Peter Katzenstein, *Alternative Perspectives on National Security*, in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security*, New York, Columbia, 1996.

are key elements in the structure on the international system in understanding the establishment of a political practice based on a principle or set of values, how that particular practice has extended beyond domestic borders, how it has been adopted by other states and institutionalized as international norm; the practice is in such a case authoritative and legitimate enough to change both interests and identity and act as international guideline.

The international cultural environment in which national security policies are developed consists of three layers: *formal institutions*; *world political culture*; *international patterns of amity and enmity*¹. The first layer is made up of security regimes such as alliances and strategic partnerships. The second layer is not as widely recognized as the first; it includes rules of sovereignty and international law, norms for the enactment of sovereign statehood, standardized social and political technologies, transnational political discourses². The third layer has valuable cultural dimensions: “cultural environments affect not only the incentives for different kinds of state behavior but also the basic character of states – what we call state *identity*”³. This claim contradicts neorealists’ and neoliberals’ argument that state defining properties are intrinsic (rather than socially contingent). But the relationships between states, between their behaviours, whether predictive of conflict or cooperation, does not always fit the template of power distribution. Wendt emphasizes the role of ideational factors such as shared knowledge in the formation of relationships between states, their participation in formal institutions and security regimes⁴.

From a constructivist perspective, interests are ideas and perspectives which not only describe a reality, but also construct it, and this applies to collective understandings of identity and legitimacy⁵. In this respect, sovereignty and national interests are no longer given, but rather constructed concepts through social understanding and meanings within norms, constituting identities to which national interests relate in content⁶. Sovereignty and its elements (territory, national identity and authority) are not absolute constants, but variables which change and evolve depending on society, since the origins

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

⁴ A. Wendt, *Collective Identity Formation and the International State*, in “The American Political Science Review”, 88:2, June 1994.

⁵ F.V. Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms and Decisions*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

⁶ E. Adler, *Constructivism and international relations*, in W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse and B.A. Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations*, London, Sage, 2002, p. 103.

of sovereignty are historically contingent and interdependence is relative to norms rather than to balance constraints¹.

Concluding Remarks

In a constructivist perspective, states are not merely passive recipients of norm contents according to which they behave and perform, but are “learning” to develop dynamic, inter-subjective knowledge about the world of international politics through own perspectives (lens of specific national, sovereign interest) and socially shared meaning making (lens of common goals), adding value, which leads to norm interpretation and re-design as well as to shaping behavioural changes as part of the cooperation learning process.

The international community is thus a learning community of practice offering collaborative platforms of social exchanges in the processes of identity re-definition through membership. Developing an identity as a member of the international community (learning, interpreting, networking, contributing to its contents and meanings), enhances the interactive environment, cooperation and international community building; this helps reduce the distance or gap between “core” and “periphery” states as they all share in the interdependency benefits. Globalization has also facilitated cooperation by bringing values and standards closer by means of cultural interaction rather than cultural homogenization, and new governance models emerge emphasizing socially shared values, and thus leading to the further institutionalization of cooperation.

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¹ C.E. Ziegler, *Conceptualizing Sovereignty in Russian Foreign Policy: Realist and Constructivist Perspectives*, in “International Politics”, 49, July 2012, p. 400-417.

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NOTES AND REVIEWS

Oana-Andreia Sâmbrian, *Convergențe româno-spaniole de la Renaștere la Modernism (The Romanian-Spanish Convergences from Renaissance till Modern Times)*, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2013, 247 p.

Well-known for her interests in the domain of imaginary and the history of ideas, Oana-Andreia Sâmbrian is focused, in this volume, on the presentation of Romanian-Spanish relations from Renaissance till Modern Times.

Divided into nine chapters *The Romanian-Spanish Convergences from Renaissance till Modern Times* is followed by a rich bibliography which defines the seriousness of her research, proved also, by a section of unpublished sources.

The *Spanish Golden Age* is presented by the author between theory and concept, updated from the perspective of the Spanish, French and British historiographical contributions and reflected by the main theories and, even sets a firm periodization regarding the period.

In chapter II, entitled *Achievements and Challenges of the Romanian Historiography regarding The Romanian-Spanish Relations (16th-18th Centuries)* - (pages 17-27) are reminded the economical contributions by The Romanian Countries and Spain of the Romanian researchers, such as: Eugen Denize, Valeriu Papahagi, Octavian Iliescu, Ivan Raul Neacșu, Ana Maria Velter, Constanța Știrbu and others.

Extending the area of her scientific domain, Oana-Andreia Sâmbrian prolongues the presentation till the 18th century, when the circulation of the Spanish books in the Romanian territories is intensifying, notion confirmed by Mario Ruffini and Corneliu Dima-Drăgan's studies about the library of Constantin Mavrocordat, Nicolae Iorga and Vasile Mihordea's study about the Mavrocordat's library, which contained Spanish books, like *The Clock of Princes*. Further more, there are presented important achievements of the Romanian hispanists: Alexandru Popescu-Telega, Alexandru Ciorănescu, Paul Alexandru Georgescu and George Călinescu's views on Spanish literature.

Focusing her attention on the Spanish geographical area and on the historical evolution of Spain between 16th and 17th centuries, Oana-Andreia Sâmbrian underlines in chapter III, the beginnings of the Spanish colonial empire and the context of Charles I ascending to power, using with propensity the contributions of well-known historians, such as: Bartolomé Bennassar and Joseph Pérez.

Interesting as structure and information, the next two chapters: *The International Politics of Spain and the Relations with the Romanian Countries* (pages 37-58) and *The Image of Gabriel Bethlen* (pages 59-81) refers to the Spanish-Romanian military relations during Charles I reign and the importance of the Jesuit Alfonso Carillo's information about the realities of 16th century Transilvania.

The author capitalizes the interpretation of Duke Diego de Estrada's narations, who had come to Bethlen's court of Alba Iulia as his favourite, where he remained from 1628 to 1630.

Completing de Estrada's information with other sources of that time, the author veraciously retraces the elitistic atmosphere from Bethlen's court *full of glitter, picturesque and cheerful, which fully integrates in the tradition of Western Royal courts* (page 73).

In chapter VI, entitled *The Image of the Romanian Countries in the Travel Notes and Commentaries of Spanish Intellectuals*, enhances the description made by Diego Galán of the battle of Călugăreni from 1595, in which he participated, as well as the information of Renaissance architect Alfonso Chacon about The Column of Emperor Trajan, part of a work entitled *The history of the two wars with the Dacians of Emperor Trajan*, Rome, 1616. There were also, accounts from Pedro Cubero about Transylvania, from which we find interesting sequences of everyday life and the studies of the linguist Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro, about the Latin origin of the Romanian language.

In chapters VII and VIII, Oana-Andreiă Sâmbrian refers to the *Image of the Romanian Countries in the Spanish Historic Plays, regarding the 16th and 17th century Romanian chroniclers*, where are mentioned the Romanians in Lope de Vega's play, as well as Transylvanian prince Sigismund Báthory and John Huniades, the last mentioned as a *famous captain*. Also, in the works of Moldavian's chroniclers Miron and Nicolae Costin and Dimitrie Cantemir, intellectuals of European range are found precious information about the Spanish historical evolution. The last part of the chapter includes the so-called minor chronicles, with very little information about Spain: *The Chronicle of Azarie*, Grigore Ureche, Constantin Cantacuzino, Ioan Neculce and Radu Popescu.

The last chapter, *The Reception of The Spanish Cultural Model in the Romanian Countries during the 18th Century* (pages 184-210), contains the first Romanian translation of a Spanish novel, the *Clock of Princes* by Antonio de Guevara, partially translated into Romanian by Nicolae Costin at the beginning of the 18th century, considered to be *the book of a generation..., which is regarded as an infinite source of cultural background and of great interest* (page 194). To this sub-chapter are added another two interesting ones. In the first one, *The Clock of Princes* is compared to the *Advices of Neagoe Basarab to His Son, Teodosie*, due to the moral character of both works. The comparison led to the exposition of the vices and virtues that were common to both Occidental and Oriental culture (pages 195-205). The second part of the chapter focuses on a detailed description and interpretation of the Spanish books found in the library of Constantin Cantacuzino, as well as of their authors and the way the books ended up in Cantacuzino's hands (pages 206-210).

The *Conclusion* (pages 211-212), the *Bibliography* (pages 213-224) and the *Index of names* (pages 237-246), naturally completes a very well structured work, supported by the scientific authority of the two referents: acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop and Phd. Prof. Nicolae Panea.

Certainly, this work is an original contribution on the study of Romanian-Spanish international relations from the 16th to 18th centuries.

Constanțiu Dinulescu

Marusia Cîrstea, *Proiecte româno-britanice privind construirea unei baze navale la Marea Neagră. Documente (1929-1939)*, [Romanian-British Projects for the Construction of a Naval Base on the Black Sea. Documents (1929-1939)], Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013, 220 p.

The book entitled *Romanian-British Projects for the Construction of a Naval Base on the Black Sea. Documents (1929-1939)* covers important areas of interest for Romanian historiography and for a better understanding of the Romanian state's new role in the European geopolitical equation in the context of the fourth interwar decade. The *Introduction* – an ample study which makes a complete investigation on the dynamics of international relations after the First World War – offers the key to a profitable reading and interpretation of the 70 documents which the author has selected.

After the Great Union of 1918, Romanian military planners faced a dilemma in defining the set of measures which would grant content and solution to the so-called “*Romanian strategy issue*”. The new frontiers were far more extensive and more exposed, including terrestrial areas, rivers, seaside, so defending them all required efforts in preparing and equipping all categories of military forces: land, sea and air. Financial considerations encumbered and delayed for a long time the modernisation of the Romanian military body; the war victors' military industry had enough outlets in their own countries so they were in no hurry to answer the justified requests of the Romanian state. Bucharest officials' policy of regional alliances and reliance on the League of Nations bodies proved inefficacious and delusive. It is only ten years after the signing of the peace treaties that the great Western democracies conceive to redefine their interests and, in midcourse of the *appeasement* policy, but, unfortunately also in a global economic crisis, they discover Romania's strategic importance. It is the moment when the real concerns of the Romanian officials meet British and French interests in the Straits and the Black Sea. Associate professor dr. Marusia Cîrstea was also inspired in choosing to research and make use of this body of documents – only apparently highly specialised – because they reveal the real intentions of British politics, the means and methods of implementation, the huge size and capacity of the London industrial military complex.

Undoubtedly, global reality had changed after 1918, but the perception of British supremacy on the seas and oceans still survived, and the influence of the Admiralty over the policy of the government in London was obvious. That is why perusal of the documents chosen by the author allows the reader to appreciate not only the value of negotiations regarding a project of British-Romanian military partnership, but even London's perspective on the Black Sea area on the eve of events which the British Admiralty strategists had generally been anticipating for at least a decade. In this context, the *Introduction* – a complex study, accompanied by a remarkable critical apparatus – is highly useful.

There is a wealth of information that remains after reading the documents in this book. Most of them have already been mentioned by the author in the *Introduction*. I shall only insist on some of them.

Firstly, we remark the merits of the two Romanian navy military attachés who successively carried out diplomatic missions in London. They could only have been chosen from Romania's military elite, which is obvious when one examines the reports they sent to Bucharest. Their military, but also technical and political-diplomatic knowledge is worth taking notice of. Commander Gheorghe Niculescu's mission overlapped the event which electrified European political life after Hitler's attainment of power in Germany (January 1933), and Commander Gheorghe Dumitrescu proved his value after describing with extraordinary accuracy the British perspective during the Czechoslovakian crises (September 1938 and February-March 1939). We also notice the reports written by military attaché Matila Costiescu Ghyka, as well as those by N. Titulescu, for their observations and suggestions placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Defence or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following the Conference of Montreux, the two notice that interest in a naval base on the Romanian seashore has risen.

Secondly, the documents disclose an extension of the dispute outside the domain of naval business between the British and the French who were now competing for the same project: *the construction of a naval base on the Black Sea*. The Romanian diplomats sensed that France's engagement in this project was intended rather to chase the British away from the area than move forward with an enterprise for which they did not have enough financial recourses.

Thirdly, we notice the British wider interest in the Romanian sea and river lines of communication. The British intended to either take advantage of the planned naval base facilities or dispose of their own base for logistic necessities or a company they could use for oil transport. Interestingly, they envisaged the building of the naval base in Tașaul or Tăbăcărie together with the construction of a navigation canal from Cernavodă to Constanța.

The book is also very useful for those interested in the continuing geostrategic importance of the Dobrogea Corridor. From the introductory study – as well as the selected documents – one can easily draw conclusions to date regarding Great Britain's interests in this area, which are still consistent. Today we witness a reconfiguration of the *“European strategic issue”*, when several E.U. member states insist on solutions in establishing their own military components, potential partners with the NATO alliance (yet separate from it!). It is obvious that the Romanian seashore is of great interest for European partners and especially for military planners in all the important countries (mainly the U.S.A.), including Great Britain. From this perspective, the book is a very useful tool available for institutions which have obligations and responsibilities in ensuring Romania's security. Thanks to the author's ability to select and offer readers a set of documents, mostly unpublished in their full composition, the book shows, in a new light, the efforts made by the Romanian state to modernise its military body in the fourth interwar decade. The project of a Naval Base in Tașaul couldn't materialise for reasons that appear very clearly in the study, but the book includes a set of ideas, analyses, demonstrations and conclusions which impress through their political, geostrategic, professional and technical importance and value.

Alexandru Oșca

Mihaela Cristina Verzea, *Partidul-Stat. Structuri-politice (1948-1965)*, [*Parti-État. Structures politiques (1948-1965)*], Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013, 486 p.

L'historiographie roumaine a porté peu d'attention aux institutions politiques et administratives. Il y a une explication pour cette coutume: la faible institutionnalisation et la forte personnalisation de la politique roumaine, qui font l'impression que les institutions sont tout à fait insignifiantes. Même dans ces circonstances, les ignorer ne peut conduire qu'à une histoire lacunaire – comme elle l'est fatalement – et parfois erronée.

La situation est généralement valable pour les époques moderne et contemporaine, mais surtout pour le régime communiste qui semble une gigantesque hécatombe, avec Gheorghiu-Dej et Ceaușescu au centre, entourés d'un grand nombre de plus petits personnages. On s'intéresse très peu aux statuts formels de ceux-ci (y compris les deux leaders). Les seules institutions mentionnées sont le Parti et la Securitate, mais sans insister sur les détails concernant l'organisation et le fonctionnement. D'ici, une mauvaise compréhension des faits et une certaine impression d'absurdité.

Ces dernières années, on peut compter plusieurs recherches concernant les institutions communistes, les plus connues étant celles de Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură. Le plus complet et systématique des travaux jusqu'à présent nous paraît le mémoire de doctorat de Mihaela Cristina Verzea, paru l'année passée. Le livre est organisé en trois chapitres portant sur le parti, l'État et les structures politiques impliquées dans la transformation de l'économie roumaine.

Dans son prologue théorique, l'auteure montre, à partir des thèses de Lénine, que le parti unique n'était pas une trouvaille utilitaire ou un accident, mais un élément essentiel du régime. Puis, à la suite d'une revue de l'historiographie occidentale, elle place le cas roumain dans le contexte des „démocraties populaires” est-européennes. On voit qu'il y a eu une „uniformisation institutionnelle” après le modèle soviétique: „du point de vue de la structure organisationnelle, tous le pays avait le même squelette, avec de petites différences” (p. 55). Toutes les constitutions (en Roumanie, celles de 1952 et 1955) ont stipulé le rôle dirigeant du parti, qui était „à la fois institution exécutive et législative” (p. 56) et tendait à transformer l'État en annexe. Mais on a pu observer des différences importantes en ce qui concerne le contrôle du parti et les possibilités des organes représentatives d'exprimer des opinions sinon de prendre des décisions. De ce point de vue, la Roumanie a connu, selon Leslie Holmes, une des situations les plus graves.

La plupart du travail est consacrée aux structures et aux mécanismes des organes du parti et de l'État. On voit un Bureau politique et un Secrétariat, „en compétition plus ou moins consciente”, dont les rapports étaient plutôt informels, résultés de la „pratique du travail” (p. 92). Le Comité central était soumis aux deux organes restreints, mais ses sections, directions ou commissions doublaient et contrôlaient les organismes gouvernementaux.

Aux niveaux des régions, des districts („raioane”) et des localités, il y avait des comités du parti („copies fidèles des organes de l'appareil central”) (p. 189). L'organe législatif national était La Grande Assemblée Nationale qui se réunissait rarement et avait un rôle décoratif: pendant les premières cinq années (1948-1952), par exemple, elle a eu 13 sessions (un total de 48 jours) et elle a adopté 36 lois et 428 décrets (p. 219). L'exécutif, le Conseil des Ministres, a été complètement soumis au parti et il a connu beaucoup de remaniements et changements de structure (huit cabinets en 18 ans) (p. 249).

Cette recherche comble sans doute une lacune de l'historiographie roumaine, mais elle doit être continuée et approfondie. Bien que l'étude des institutions politiques et administratives soit assez technique et peu attractive pour les historiens, elle est essentielle pour l'histoire moderne et contemporaine de la Roumanie.

Mihai Ghițulescu

Alexandru Oșca, *Revoluția Română din Decembrie 1989 (The Romanian Revolution from December 1989)*, București, Editura IRRD, 2012, 198 p.

After 23 years from the revolutionary events from December 1989, it has appeared for the first time in Romania, an academic course exclusively dedicated to this ample and disputed subject. The recent work belonging to professor Oșca (who has written other books regarding the revolution, also) comes to occupy a gap in the list of academic works which debate the contemporary history of Romania.

The Romanian revolution from December 1989 shapes some debates even today and still produces multiple feeling. The ones who have lived those winter days live with the impression that they have participated to a major event or they are disappointed by the postrevolutionary situation. The youngest ones live, though, under the information empire, much of whom are being eroded, denatured, exaggerated, etc. Therefore the prof. Alexandru Oșca's intercession, a recognized authority in the domain, is worthy of appreciation and summoning.

This appeared under the aegis of the Institution of Romanian Revolution from December 1989 (IRRD)

The pieces of information reunited in this volum have both shape of courses and of scientific studies. Remarkable is the lack of the critical apparatus, so specific for the academic works. But it contains a bibliographie for the thoroughness of the persons interested in this theme.

The book is structured in eight courses starting with the integration of the revolution in the field of changes from the socialist countries and it describes the development of the events and it is ended with the echo of these in the "free world". Every course ends with a set of questions for the seminary. In this case can be both professed, and studied but in the same time only read as well. Every single course contains here and there photos or suggestive images, for reliving the interest of the reader.

Going in an incursion through this school book, the author leads us through: *The Romanian Revolution- side of the radical changes from the Central and South-East European countries* (Course I), *Premises of the Romanian Revolution* (Course II), *The Gating, Evolution and Victory of the Revolution* (Course III), *The Revolution from Timisoara* (Course IV), *The Gating and the Evolution of the Revolution from Bucharest* (Course V), *The Diversion – Modality of Retort of the former Communist Structure against the New Authorities* (Course VII) and *The Echo of the Romanian Revolution in the Abroad* (Course VIII).

Regarding the genesis of this volum, prof. Osca writes: “The idea of this course holder has been launched by mister Claudiu Iordache, General Director of the Institute of the Romanian Revolution from December 1989. The arguments used in the assertion of this endeavour are very pertinent: the students from today know form an indirect source the events and the deeds from 1989-1990, the perception regarding these events is fragmentary, influenced by the spectacular and subjective lectures. As history teachers or professionals in various domains of social sciences, they feel the need of an organized study of this periode of time, which can assure checked information and competences in their interpretation” (p. 7).

I would go even further. The elementary sources which have been available for the author, the experience and the authority in this domain of the Romanian Revolution study – the author has been working as a secretary of the scientific council of IRRD – make him more believeble than other authors whose interpretations are subjective most of the times. Moreover, the author doesn’t issue judgements, but he only analyses deeds and events.

Due to the fact that it has been written in a free and easy way, it is a cosy lecture, too. It is not that flavour of a accademic work, scientific, although the text has the figure of an authentic story. The scope is, of course, to be an accessible, efficient, interesting and exciting course holder. Every young man interested in the year 1989, finding myself here, too, can find the necessary data for creating an assembly image regarding the Romanian Revolution. On the other side I am feeling sorry that at the time when I have had him as my teacher, this school book has not existed. Therefore the sudents from today of His Worship shoul be thrilled and interested in this school book.

The volume has been rolled out on 3rd of June 2013 at the Christian University Dimitrie Cantemir, where the author works as a teacher. The ones who have had a speach are: Ion Iliescu (President of the National College of IRRD), Univ. Prof. Dr. Corina Dumitrescu (Rector of the Cantemir University), Univ. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Mazilu (member of the National College of IRRD), Mr. Claudiu Iordache (General Director IRRD), Univ. Prof. Dr. Ion Calafeteanu (Deputy Manager of IRRD) and the author.

Gleaning some affirmations of their interventions about the book, we turn to Mr. Ion Iliescu who said: “This book represents a synthesis, a condensate presentation of a remarcable moment from our contemporary history!”. Prof. Mazilu names this book “a real message about the Revolution!”. Mr. Claudiu Iordache refeared to the postrevolutionary situation, so debated nowadays, saying: “If our generation hasn’t managed well the revolution, it is not the Revolution’s fault!” Prof. Calafeteanu said in

closing: “The Revolution from 1989 is an event which blazes our existence and history”, and its oppression “means showing your disbelief along your own nation!”¹. As we easily can find out, the salutary opinions are plausible, positive and encouraging.

Of course that this time will appear revilers who will deny the work and will support other thesis, more or less fundamental. But, it does remain an usefull work, efficient and, due to the systematic way of written, easy to use.

Prof. Osca held courses about the Romanian Revolution at the University of Craiova, Hyperion Univeristy and Cantemir University. He also held more scientific communications, being the author of many other studies and books dedicated to the Revolution. These qualify him as the right person to write this book, but also recommend him due to the accuracy and seriosity of this subject.

I appreciate the involement of the Institute of Revolution for enlightening the events and the realities from the end of 1989, too. The labour of editing the book and magazines exclusively dedicated to the Revolution, as the present case, enriches the Romanian historiography on this chronological segment.

I can close only congratulating the author, waiting for other books of His Worship. His seriosity in the sudy of history, his amability and kindnes which describe him, the availability for working with students make him beloved and appreciated by these ones. And if the teacher is beeing apreciated, the school book will be much more.

Bogdan Emanuel Răduț

Revista „Analele Universității din Craiova. Istorie” apare de două ori pe an și este publicată sub egida Departamentului de Istorie al Universității din Craiova.

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