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STUDIES AND ARTICLES

Romanian-Bulgarian Political-Diplomatic Relations during Bulgarian Agrarian Government (1921-1923)

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Abstract:

The study investigates the Bulgarian-Romanian relations based primarily on the Bulgarian works and analyses, especially on the theses of the Bulgarian historiography. The territorial modifications after the Bucharest Treaty of 1913, the lack of confidence and the diplomatic tensions framed the beginning of interwar Bulgaria's relations with Romania. Prime Minister Stamboliyski took actions to enhance Bulgarians' relations with the neighbouring and Western countries. Stamboliyski's visits to Romania were part and parcel of the efforts the Agrarian government undertook to improve the international standing of the country after the defeat suffered during the First World War. On the other hand, the Agrarian leader pursued two other objectives: to have a closer relationship with the Peasant Party of Romania in order to establish a Green International and a project of dynastic inter-marriage binding the Royal House of Romania and that of Bulgaria.

Key words: Romanian-Bulgarian relations, Agrarian government, Aleksandăr Stamboliyski, Southern Dobrogea, minorities.

Romania's main goal during the interwar period was the consolidation of its national state by maintaining the territorial and political terms as established in the 1919-1923 peace treaties. To achieve this, Romania has created a network of politico-diplomatic and military alliances. Diplomatic relations with Bulgaria were resumed in December 1920, one year after the signing of the Treaty of Neuilly, but they were dominated, when veiled, when openly, by the revisionist claims of Bulgaria on Quadrilateral/Cadrilater (Southern Dobrogea) or even the entire Dobrogea. „Romania was in no hurry to re-establish diplomatic relations with Bulgaria” as Antonina Kuzmanova concludes. The Romanian envoy Constantin Langa Rășcanu presented his credentials to Tsar Boris only on September 17, 1920. For most of this period, the Romanian foreign policy leaders have organized and conducted extensive media and diplomatic campaign concerning the attacks allegedly staged by Bulgaria against Romania.

The Romanian diplomacy officially announced the simultaneous concentration of bands and military training at the borders of Romania by Bulgaria and Hungary and the prospect of a Bulgarian-Hungarian invasion. In reality, there has been no such risk then or later.”¹ The Bulgarian researcher undertakes a brief parallel between the revisionist policy of the two states dissatisfied with the provisions of the peace treaty, both harbouring territorial claims against Romania. But there were also key differences.

The Hungarian policy in the `20s and `30's of the last century was characterized by dynamism, which lacked in Bulgaria, a country surrounded only by enemies. Between Bulgaria and Hungary common interests existed, but the two governments never completed

¹ Antonina Kuzmanova, *Ot Nioi do Craiova. Văprosăt na Iujna Dobrogea v mejdunarodni otnošenja* (Sofia, 1989), 67.

an actual political and military alliance.² It was not Bulgaria the one that was plotting with Hungary to attack Romania, Kuzmanova underlines with a reproachful tone, but Romania had joined the anti-Bulgarian campaign in Greece, a country which was seeking a pretext for war with Bulgaria in order to shift the Bulgarian-Greek border in North Thrace.³ The simultaneous action of Romania and Greece against Bulgaria, to which Yugoslavia also joined shortly, offered not particularly encouraging prospects to Bulgarian foreign policy.

Regarding Bulgaria's pre-World War II diplomacy, the priority was „to revise the Treaty of Neuilly through peaceful means, in accordance with Article 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, calling for the review of a peace treaty.”⁴

In the first chapter entitled „Bulgaria in European politics after World War” of his work „Bulgaria in the Balkans and Europe”, academician Ilcio Dimitrov outlines the main features of Bulgarian revisionism in the interwar period. It encompassed the reducing and removing of financial and other obligations, which was an unbearable burden on the weakened Bulgarian economy, full restoration of national sovereignty by liquidating foreign control and freeing from the military terms interdictions; avoidance of any complications that might lead to armed conflict (after the two national catastrophes of 1913 and 1918, the Bulgarian military euphoria had evaporated, and the majority of Bulgarians were against stepping in another conflagration, which may have relegated their country back to the camp of defeated), avoidance of political commitments which would have hampered the freedom of action

²This issue was highlighted by historian K. Gärdev in his work entitled *Bulgaria and Hungary 1923-1941* (Sofia, 1988), which was initially presented as a Ph.D. dissertation. The author, a Hungarian speaker, uses archives, published documents and works from Hungary for the documentation of his work.

³Apud. Kuzmanova, 68; *Cehoslovaški izvori za bałgarskata istoria*, Sofia, 1985, Vol. I, no. 21, 50.

⁴Kuzmanova, 63.

and recognition of the Bulgarian legitimate rights to a climate of understanding in the Balkans.⁵

Despite these above-mentioned peaceful traits of Bulgarian revisionism, others were also coming out which sowed the seeds of potential aggression: a lenient attitude of Bulgarian officials and ties with the Komitadji gangs, the obviously revisionist doctrine of the Bulgarian Army, the share of military expenditure in the country budget, allocation of disproportionately large amounts of money to the army, despite the restrictions imposed on the country at Neuilly and the modernization of roads and railways. Although these actions were known to decision-makers in Bucharest, Nicolae Titulescu opined in 1934 that Bulgarian revisionism cannot get as far as undertaking armed aggression.⁶

Dissatisfied with the terms of the Treaty of Neuilly, the Bulgarians were expecting a favourable context for an ample and lasting revisionist approach. Until then they relied on the Bulgarian minorities from the territories lost to neighbours but unclaimed publicly as yet. In order to achieve this goal, Blagovest Niagulov⁷ explains, well acquainted with Romanian language and history, a devoted researcher of Dobrogea and this province's ethnic issues, it was necessary that the Bulgarian population from neighbouring states maintain its ethno-demographic and socio-economic weight, its cultural-linguistic identity and primarily its Bulgarian national consciousness.⁸

⁵Ilcio Dimitrov, *Bălgaria na Balcanite i v Evropa* (Sofia, 1983), 5-21.

⁶Apud. Kuzmanova, 63

⁷Atanasov Blagovest Niagulov. Born in 1957 in Sofia. Graduate of the Faculty of History at the University of Sofia. (1983). PhD in History (1988). Specializations in Geneva and Bucharest. Researcher at the Institute of History, Bulgarian Academy. Scientific secretary of the magazine „Istoriceski pregled“ since 1995. Author of studies, volumes of documents, monographs devoted to Bulgarian-Romanian bilateral relations, the issue of the Bulgarian minority in Romania's Dobrogea and Banat (Romanian and Serbian) and Bessarabia.

⁸Blagovest Niagulov, *Văprosăt na Dobrogea v konteksta na ciujdestranata politica preamo Bălgaria 1926-1931*, BHR, 1990, № 1, 3 - 20.

Throughout the interwar period, feebler, and sometimes more substantial efforts were made both from Bulgaria and Romania, as to improve relations by developing economic, cultural, parliamentary and governmental level visits.

The outcome of First World War surprised the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha Bulgarian dynasty in an extremely awkward situation both due to the alliance with Germany and the reaction of the public opinion, strained after the failed attempt to recover the lost territories. The damages caused by war, hunger, poverty, inflation generated tension in Bulgaria. Tsar Ferdinand, assuming the responsibility of the country's disaster, abdicated on October 3, 1918 in favour of his son Boris III. The young tsar aged 24, inexperienced, was forced to deal with much roughness. The Neuilly Peace Treaty was signed by Prime Minister Todor Todorov whose cabinet was also joined by Agrarian Aleksandŭr Stamboliyski.⁹ From May 1920 Stamboliyski

⁹Aleksandŭr Stamboliyski (1879-1923). Born in the village of Slavov, Pazargic County. Studies at the School of Agriculture at Sadovo, Graduate of the School of viticulture and viniculture in Pleven (1897), where he was introduced to agrarian movement ideologue I. Zabunov. He participated at the founding congress of the BZNS (Bulgarian Agrarian National League) in late December 1899, in Pleven. He studied philosophy at Hale and agronomic studies at Munich, but is forced to discontinue in 1902 due to advanced stages of tuberculosis. After returning to Bulgaria, he is actively involved in BZNS, and since 1904 is the editor of the Agrarian mouthpiece „Zemedelsko Znamea”. He polished the class ideology of the League, drew up the first program of agrarians in 1905 and became their undisputed leader. Several times MP, he rejected the pro-monarchical changes in the Constitution. He was against the participation of Bulgaria in the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Because of its antiwar activity he was sentenced to life imprisonment, but remained the BZNS leader. He was granted amnesty after the breaking of the Dobro Pole front in September 1918, and assigned the mission to negotiate with rebel soldiers to return to the front. He was proclaimed President of the Republic of Radomir by Raiko Daskalov, an agrarian MP, on 27 September 1918, but refused to participate in the uprising. From January 1919 he became a member of T. Teodorov coalition cabinet and of the delegation dispatched to Paris Peace Conference. In June 1919, he was elected officially BZNS leader and develop a new program of the League. Under his leadership, BZNS won the elections in August 1919 and he formed a coalition cabinet with the People's Party and the Progressive Party. He was the one who signed the Treaty of Neuilly and started applying its provisions. Stamboliyski suppressed en force the large strike of transport workers. BZNS decided to dissolve the coalition, the government dissolved the parliament and held new elections. On May 21, 1921, the new government was composed solely of BZNS. As Foreign Minister (1920-1923),

authoritatively ruled the country and blackmailed Boris III with the proclamation of the republic. In the elections of April 1923, the Agrarians achieved considerable success, with 212 MPs, the opposition totalling only 33 seats.

After strengthening his power internally, Stamboliyski channelled his efforts towards removing Bulgaria's insulation. The Bulgarian Prime Minister, who also held the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led an active policy aimed at improving and developing the bonds with neighbouring countries, seeking to distract public attention from the Bulgarian defeat. The diplomatic tour of 100 days in European capitals, which Stamboliyski conducted in late 1920 and early 1921, was part and parcel of this effort. Everywhere, but especially in Paris and London, the man who broke the pen with which had signed the Treaty of Neuilly stated firmly „I accepted the terms of peace, convinced that they will be reviewed in maximum three years”, gave assurances that Bulgarian politics had entered a new path of faithful fulfilment of the provisions of the Treaty, despite all difficulties. Stamboliyski tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain the consent of England and France for Bulgaria's access to the Aegean Sea.¹⁰ The issue of Dobrogea and the situation of the population in Dobrogea, an essential theme in the agrarian government's policy, were addressed on several occasions during the 100-day tour.

During talks in Prague (December 12 1920), Stamboliyski thanked Romanian Prime Minister General Averescu for the opening of

Stamboliyski headed the Bulgarian delegation at Genoa and Lausanne conferences. He pursued a policy aimed at overcoming Bulgaria's international isolation and improving relations with Turkey and Yugoslavia and wanted to obtain access to the Aegean Sea. This led to denial of Macedonian aspirations of nationalists and conflicts with VMRO. Stamboliyski was the originator of all reforms of agrarians. On June 9, 1923 a coup occurred, Stamboliyski's government is overthrown by the military and National Understanding. Stamboliyski led an insurrection against the coup in the Pazargic region. But the uprisings were suppressed, his followers killed or arrested. Stamboliyski is captured, tortured and killed near his home village!

¹⁰VI. Topalov, *Poseštenieto na Aleksandăr Stamboliyski vāv Velikobritania*. In: *Vāšnata politica na Bālgaria 1878-1944* (Sofia, 1978). See also Aleksandăr Stamboliyski, *Jivot, delo, zaveti* (Sofia, 1980).

several Bulgarian schools in southern Dobrogea.¹¹ In Warsaw, the agrarian leader explored the possibility of solving the problem Dobrogea in favour of Bulgaria. Stamboliyski tried to win over the favour of Polish diplomacy, assuring Foreign Minister Prince Sapieha that he can count on Bulgaria in case of Bolshevik danger, on the condition that Polish diplomat intervened with the Romanian government for the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria. Sapieha declined Stamboliyski's proposal, answering that „Poland has enough conflicts at its own borders to meddle in other countries’.¹²

From Warsaw, Stamboliyski headed to Bucharest. In his first official visit to Romania, from 9 to 13 January 1921, the agenda of the Bulgarian Prime Minister consisted of several topics. In an effort to improve Bulgaria's image, Stamboliyski, immediately after his arrival in Bucharest, gave an interview to Romanian journalists at Athénée Palace, where he was accommodated, highlighting the Romanian hospitality, a host country of Bulgarian emigration during Bulgarian National Revival: „Without the help and hospitality of Romania on the land of which the first Bulgarian organizations were set up, and the Bulgarian propaganda books were printed, we would have lost the memory of our history.”¹³ In the same spirit, Stamboliyski divulged the aims of the agrarian reforms which his government had initiated: „social equality, material satiety and moral satisfaction of the masses to form a bulwark against the invading Bolshevism”.¹⁴ He called for discernment, arguing that „the past should be forgotten, I never alluded to the Cadrilater, but I enjoyed the Romanian government's decision to open Bulgarian schools, which dissipated the atmosphere of hatred. I hope the bridge over the Danube will be built.”¹⁵

¹¹Stefan Ancev, *Dobrogeanskiat vāpros v politiceskia jivot na Bālgaria (1818-1923)* (Veliko Tārnovo, 1994), 113.

¹²Apud. Kuzmanova, 70

¹³„Țara nouă”, 15 January 1921.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Apud Dimităr Sazdov, *Dunāv most – 100 godini politika I diplomația* (Sofia, 2006), 92.

During a meeting on 10 January 1921 with General Averescu, the President of the Council of Ministers and Take Ionescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the following topics were addressed. We will list them according to the importance the Bulgarian historiography confers them. If for the Bulgarian side, the primary issue was the condition of the Bulgarian population in Dobrogea, and the return of refugees, for the Romanian foreign policy, the most neuralgic issue was the relations with Soviet Russia. In Bucharest, where the fear of Soviet actions in order to recover Bessarabia was particularly high, any rumour about a Bulgarian-Soviet rapprochement evoked concern. Stamboliyski brought calmness, saying that if the Bolsheviks would attack Bessarabia, and even if they „would give Dobrogea to Bulgaria on the platter, Bulgaria would refuse it without delay.”¹⁶

The second issue Romanian government raised was that of the Komitadji gangs. Bulgarian Prime Minister firmly committed his government to take steps to guard the border so that the gangs would not infiltrate into Dobrogea. Moreover, Bulgaria’s proposal to establish a joint commission of inquiry of the Romanian-Bulgarian border line incidents was accepted.¹⁷ The works of the committee were held during the spring of 1921, and completed on April 26. The report of 9 May of vice-chairman, Colonel Pecigargov, emphasized “that all protocols (55 in total) clearly show that the Romanian criticism is unfounded”. The committee also documented incidents that clearly unmasked a Romanian commander of a company of guards, guilty “of lies and provocative actions”. According to the report of Colonel Pecigargov “people with aggressive behaviour from which both countries’ border guards suffer, smugglers and thieves are unavoidable present in any border areas. But in most cases offenders are poor refugees from Romania to Bulgaria, Romanian Army defectors and refugees settled in Bulgaria, who for one reason or another cannot return voluntarily in Dobrogea, struggling to

¹⁶Apud Kuzmanova, 71.

¹⁷Ibid.

assuage the alertness of the border guards and sneaking in to see their families.”¹⁸

Analyzing the causes of the Komitadji phenomenon, the Bulgarian envoy accredited to Bucharest, Todor Nedkov, reveals that the roots of this phenomenon are “internal, not external.” “A large number of Dobrogea people, Bulgarian refugees, had been condemned to suffering, misery and despair, which turned them into dangerous elements for the order and civic peace. But they, and this is the final conclusion of the Bulgarian diplomat, are citizens of Romania, whom the unjust fate drove away, and for their deeds Bulgaria cannot be held liable, not in the least.”¹⁹

Shortly before the Bulgarian-Romanian commission had completed its work, on April 11, 1921, the Romanian, Yugoslav and Greek governments dispatched a collective note to Bulgaria which demanded it „to prevent the passing of Bulgarian gangs onto the territory of neighbouring states and also to end the Bulgarian propaganda which was directed openly against the order and safety and caused unrest in the border areas.”²⁰ Bulgaria, fearing that the collective action of the three neighbouring countries might lead to military intervention denied the accusations. Compared with Yugoslavia, which displayed a pugnacious attitude, the one of Romania was reasonable.

Stamboliyski’s promises were not in vain, and in September 1921, the “*Law to condemn the acts against public order and safety of goods and people in foreign countries*” was enacted, which contained nine articles and provided the imprisonment of 8 to 15 years for gang bosses and 3 to 5 years for police inaction.²¹ Despite the law enacted, the agrarian leader did not seek to fully dissolve the Komitadjis. Versed politician with duplicitous conduct and authoritarian governing style,

¹⁸Ghencev, „Văzvrăştane na Iujna Dobrogea kăm Bălgaria prez 1940,” In *Istorigeski pregled*, kn.6, 1969, 61

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

Stamboliyski juggle with skill both the „scarecrow” of Bolshevik threat, and the terror gangs maintained by Komitadjis.

In June 1922, considering that the Komitadji gang question had not been resolved satisfactorily, the three states issued a second note addressed to the Bulgarian government. From the rostrum of the League of Nations, the Romanian diplomat Titulescu accused Bulgaria of the Komitadji attacks, amalgamating these attacks in the definition of aggression.²²

The priority of Stamboliyski’s first official visit to Bucharest was the condition of the Bulgarian population of southern Dobrogea and the replevin. The Bulgarian Prime Minister wanted to know to what extent he can count on Romania’s contributions as a mediator in order to bring forth a Bulgarian-Yugoslav rapprochement. During discussions, he highlighted the importance of leaving an access to Aegean Sea to Bulgaria and the construction of a railway to the sea under the control of the Great Powers. Take Ionescu declined Bulgaria’s first proposal of intermediating between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, but promised to write personally to Nikola Pašić, reassure of Stamboliyski’s honesty and his desire to do everything in its power to improve the Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations. In terms of Bulgaria’s access to the Aegean Sea, the Romanian Foreign Minister gave no concrete answer.²³

It was also decided to form a joint commission to investigate the Romanian-Bulgarian differences, the ostensible „outstanding problems” arising after the annexation of southern Dobrogea.²⁴

The Bulgarian historiography considers that the formation of the two committees was an undoubted success of Bulgarian diplomacy. The commission of border issues helped clarify the real causes of banditry in southern Dobrogea. And so it would prove false the allegations against the Bulgarian population in the area, the Dobrogea migrants and their organizations in Bulgaria, and the

²²Ancev, 230.

²³Apud Kuzmanova, 72.

²⁴Ghencev, 61

Bulgarian government as well as the accusations of complicity in order to support the rout in Dobrogea. The advantage of the second committee for „outstanding issues” was that the Bulgarian population’s situation and problems of southern Dobrogea were decided on the international arena, even if only within the confines of the Romanian-Bulgarian relations.

Following the meeting in Bucharest, King Ferdinand and Queen Maria invited Stamboliyski to Sinaia. The Bulgarian guest’s image appears in the daily notes of Queen Mary and the evocations of the outstanding memorialist never lacking in sarcasm, Constantin Argetoianu.²⁵ In a note dated January 11, 1921, the Queen described the Bulgarian official as follows: “Stamboliyski is an ardent patriot and so sincere in his desire to restore his country as to make an impression wherever he goes. A man of tremendous energy, of peasant origin, who has only the minimum manners needed to be accepted into a salon. Bulky, solid and broad-shouldered, one immediately feels his strength, though he has a pleasant face. He does not speak any language apart from his mother tongue.”²⁶

In the grotesque portrait which the Interior Minister Argetoianu makes to Bulgarian Prime Minister on an official visit to Sinaia, Stamboliyski appears “as a bouncer man, greasy, with dishevelled hair with orangutan paws, black nails, dressed in rotten clothing / ... / a bestial appearance”²⁷ “with manners that stir disgust”, he eats with his fingers, put the knife in his mouth, grab his fork with his fist clenched as a fist. He only spoke Bulgarian and did not understand a word of any other language.”²⁸

Unfortunately, Argetoianu did not recount anything about the content of political and diplomatic discussions, only incidentally is mentioned the project of possible dynastic marriage between Tsar of

²⁵Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*. vol.VI, 1919-1922 (București, 1996).

²⁶Maria, *Regina României, Însemnări zilnice*, vol.III (Bucharest: Historia Publishing House, 2006), 23

²⁷Constantin Argetoianu, *op.cit.*, p.192.

²⁸*Ibid.*

Bulgaria and one of the daughters of King Ferdinand and Queen Maria. The Romanian-Bulgarian dynastic marriage would not materialize, and Tsar Boris III found his bride in the revisionist camp, marrying Princess Giovanna di Savoia, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy on October 25, 1930. This politico-dynastic marriage represented a triumph for Sofia diplomacy considering the rise of Italy in an international context while Italy gained strategic influence in the Balkan Peninsula.

In contrast to the impressions of boyar Argetoianu those of the Bulgarian envoy to Bucharest, Hristofor Hesapciev stress Romanians' arrogance towards the Bulgarian complexes so as to outline why the Bulgarian and Romanian interests failed to intersect for an effective resolution of "outstanding issues". "In early 1905 I was appointed as envoy in Bucharest - Hesapciev confesses. This appointment - promoting did not make me happy at all. In Bucharest - unknown leaders with very different mentality, grandstanding political leanings out of touch with their state and a full self-conceit about Romania's cultural supremacy over the neighbouring Bulgaria."²⁹

The Bulgarian historians look for elements that helped create a negative image of Romania and Bucharest's supercilious officials also in the westerners' records of that period. A case in point is the diary of English lords Noel and Charles Buckstone discovered and edited by Bulgarian historian Ivan Ilchev³⁰.

During his first visit to Bucharest, besides the attempt to create a favourable image and the exposed concrete objectives, Stamboliyski also met the leaders of the Peasant Party, Ion Mihalache and Virgil Madgearu, seeking to establish links between BZNS and the Peasants' Party of Romania in order to found the Green International.

Analyzing the results of Stamboliyski's visit to Romania, the Parisian newspaper *Le Temps* (January 30, 1921) reached the following gloomy conclusion: "Neither Romania has forgiven nor Bulgaria has

²⁹Hristofor Hesapciev, *Slujba na Bălgaria v ciujbina. Voennodiplomaticeski spomeni/1899-1914* (Sofia, 1993).

³⁰Misia na Balcanite (Sofia, 1987).

ceased to dream of Southern Dobrogea.”³¹ However, *Le Temps* continues, “the Romanian-Bulgarian relations improvement is real and substantial”. Among the causes that have influenced this improvement it was noted that “Romania itself, facing the Bolshevik threat, is more interested than any other Balkan country in keeping the balance in the area.”³²

And, indeed, the Romanian-Bulgarian relations have witnessed an upward trend. In March 1921, the Romanian government agreed with the principle of return of refugees. Excluded from this category were those inhabitants who had fought in the Bulgarian army and were considered guilty of war crimes.³³ More difficult to solve turned out to be the issue of seized assets. In August 1921, the Romanian government gave the option to those concerned to sale and liquidate their assets to the Romanian state within three months. Then, in October, Take Ionescu proposed to General Ficev, the Bulgarian envoy recently accredited to Bucharest (July 7, 1921), the principle of liquidation by substitution. In the absence of a firm position of Sofia, Ficev did not respond promptly, and the new government led by Ion I.C. Brătianu, through the Romanian Interior Minister jurist-consult, informed Ficev of the obsolescence of the former government’s proposals.³⁴

Stamboliyski did not seem satisfied with the remedies of the condition of Bulgarian residents in Dobrogea. The agrarian newspaper *Zemedelsko Znamea*, whose editor was Stamboliyski himself, published on July 7, 1921 a speech of the Bulgarian Prime Minister, according to whom two were the fundamental conditions for a stable Balkan Peninsula: first, the right of the inhabitants of the disputed territories to decide their own fate, and as an example the Kominternist principle of the right to self-determination was quoted;

³¹Apud. Kuzmanova, 71.

³²Ibid.

³³Ancev, 138.

³⁴Ibid., 190-191.

the second, the guaranteeing of minority rights under international control.³⁵

In November 1922, Stamboliyski undertook the second diplomatic tour. During the visit to Bucharest (4 to 8 November 1922), he declared that Bulgarians did not seek territorial expansion, their only desire being to live in peace and tranquillity. He also addressed the Bulgarian community in Bucharest, accusing the former Bulgarian leaders of the lack of political vision and deploring the fact that the Balkan peoples are a stranger to each other. The Romanian-Bulgarian talks on the Thrace problem formed the core of conversations. The settlement of the Thrace dispute, proposed by the Romanian side, the autonomy of a Bulgarian corridor to Aegean Sea was rejected by the Bulgarians.³⁶ At Stamboliyski's meeting with Ion I.C. Brătianu and I.G. Duca, the situation of minorities, the issue of seized assets, the land confiscation of Romanians in Bulgaria, and the Romanian-Soviet relations were approached.³⁷ The only satisfactory achievement of the second visit of senior Bulgarian officials was the establishment of a joint commission to settle the Romanian-Bulgarian „outstanding issues”. Before the overthrow of Stamboliyski (June 9, 1923) there were three rounds of negotiations of the commission in January, April and May 1923. In the first round, the Bulgarian side asked: the replevin of all Bulgarian possessions, the granting of Romanian citizenship to all Bulgarians residing in Romania and the return of refugees to their homes. The Romanian side claimed for the replevin 250 million lei while the Bulgarians were prepared to settle for as little as 19 million lei.

As far as the work of the commission is concerned, the Bulgarian envoy in Bucharest, General Ficev reported to Stamboliyski on December 13, 1922, at Lausanne: “The Romanian-Bulgarian commission works out for two weeks, but the results are poor. The Romanians have a bunch of new claims raised in connection with the

³⁵Kuzmanova, 151.

³⁶Ancev, 257.

³⁷Ibid. 257-258; see also Kuzmanova, 83-84.

Treaty of Bucharest... Business is difficult because the Romanian representatives ask many things that we cannot meet."³⁸ In order to lift sequester from Bulgarian properties, Romania demanded a sum of 500 million. In addition, Romania claimed additional amounts as compensation for damages caused to Romanian citizens by Bulgarian military administration during the war.³⁹

The Paris Conference on the Statute of the Danube of July 1921 created the atmosphere of a rapprochement in the bilateral Romanian-Bulgarian relations, and the new regime of Danube with all its limitations meant a breakthrough for the riparian states. Thus, the Convention signed on July 23, 1921 proclaimed the freedom of navigation and the equality of all flags on the navigable river, the right to perform technical work, levy taxes, prepare regulations and their enforcement, police territorial waters, administer the Iron Gates which were returned to Romania and Yugoslavia, etc.⁴⁰

A milestone in international relations, but not in the Romanian-Bulgarian rapprochement, was the European Economic Conference summoned in Genoa (April 10-May 19, 1922). Romania was represented by a delegation led by Prime Minister Ioan I.C. Brătianu, and the head of the Bulgarian delegation was Premier Stamboliyski. Driven by the interest to improve relations with Soviet Russia and to earn the recognition of the union of Bessarabia with Romania, Brătianu took steps in this respect, but the Soviet delegation rejected all proposals. Romania did not get positive answers at Genoa from the Bulgarians either, when Brătianu asked Stamboliyski if Bulgaria would adopt a neutral position in case of „military complications” at the Bessarabian Romanian border. The Bulgarian Prime Minister simply departed from the subject. He obviously realized the trump card he possessed in this regard and wanted to play the card of

³⁸Apud. Kuzmanova, 83

³⁹Penakov, *Sekvestărăt v Rumânia vărhu bălgarskite podaniți*, Sofia, 1931, 23.

⁴⁰*Politica externă a României*. Dictionar cronologic, coord. Ion Calafeteanu, Cristian Popișteanu, Bucharest, 1986, 178., see more in Iulian Cîrțină, Ilie Seftiuc, *Dunărea în istoria poporului roman* (Bucharest, 1972).

neutrality in a difficult time for his country, exactly as Romania used the Komitadji issue to constrain Bulgaria.⁴¹

On April 18, 1922, the Bulgarian delegation submitted a memo to the President of the Conference, in which it exposed in all details the Bulgarian refugees' issue, the link to the Komitadji issue and its impact on relations with neighbours. As the only means of resolving the Komitadji gangs issue, the following measures were proposed: 1. A general amnesty by all the Balkan countries be proclaimed so as the refugees would return to their homes; 2. Goods to be returned to refugees; 3. The clauses of the peace treaty on the rights of minorities be applied as soon as possible.⁴²

Stefan Ancev complements the presentation of Antonina Kuzmanovic about the Bulgarian attempts to achieve positive results in Genoa with the moment when Stamboliyski raised the issue of minorities. The Romanian, Polish and Czechoslovak representatives informed Lloyd George of their willingness to consider the wishes of the Bulgarians, but also the decision to leave the room if the Hungarians would raise similar issues. Momčilo Ninčić said he would raise the question of the issue of minorities in Italy.⁴³

It is noteworthy that in Genoa, Stamboliyski met, on several occasions, with Dr. Krăstiu Stancev Rakovsky, a known precursor of socialism in Europe, party activist, politician and diplomat, eventually a tireless fighter against Stalin and his totalitarian socialism. In this regard, it is to be mentioned the recent monograph of Mihail Stanchev, Dr. Krăstiu Rakovsky – “statesman, politician and diplomat”⁴⁴, which is based on unpublished documents discovered in archives in Russia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, Switzerland, Germany, France and England.

In his *Recollections* Aleksandŭr Stamboliyski record Krăstiu Rakovsky's outstanding qualities: “The most competent of the

⁴¹Kuzmanova, 79.

⁴²Ibid., 80

⁴³Ancev, 201.

⁴⁴Mihail Stanchev, Dr. KrăstiuRakovski – dărjavnik, politik, diplomat (Sofia, 2004).

Russian delegation – the Bulgarian Rakovsky. / ... / Chicherin, Rakovsky, Lenin, Trotsky - they are the leading diplomats of modern Russia". The contacts that Rakovsky maintained in Genoa with the Bulgarian delegation gave rise to several Western media fabrications. After returning to Kharkov from Genoa, Rakovsky recalled, the Romanian press published a telegram allegedly received from London, stating that he had signed a treaty with the Bulgarian government and, later, incognito, left with Stamboliyski for Sofia.⁴⁵

Summing up, the conference in Genoa ended in failure. The European powers were not able to find a common denominator to their conflicting interests, the Romanian-Soviet relations remained strained, Bulgaria categorically rejected the solution of an outlet to the Aegean Sea through Greek territory, while Romania and Bulgaria continued, unremittingly alternating the roles, to play the cat and mouse game.

The Lausanne Conference took place between 22 November 1922 and 24 July 1923 with the participation of 12 countries, including Romania and Bulgaria. The Bulgarian delegation led by Stamboliyski again and again tried unsuccessfully to secure a territorial connection of Bulgaria to west Thrace area. Both the European powers as well as the Balkan states refused to support the ambitions of Bulgaria. Before leaving for Lausanne, Aleksandŭr Stamboliyski made a stop in Bucharest to get the support of Romania at the incoming conference for access to the Aegean Sea and Thrace's autonomy. The Bulgarian diplomacy had worked hard to create a favourable atmosphere for the visit of the high Bulgarian official. At that time, cultural attaché in Bucharest was a great Bulgarian writer, Jordan Iovkov, the minstrel of Dobrogea. Stamboliyski himself confessed to Langa Rășcanu: "We do not give up our claims at Thrace and our Aegean Sea outlet. I will not hide from you that our only goal and all our efforts are directed towards the south."⁴⁶

⁴⁵Ibid., 85.

⁴⁶Kuzmanova, 83

Stamboliyski's foreign policy was always criticized by political enemies of the agrarian cabinet, the invoked populist reason being that Bulgaria's efforts ended in failure everywhere. Considering the situation of Bulgaria, brought to its knees following the two national disasters, the main policy goals could not be other than the revision of the Treaty of Neuilly through peaceful means. Neutrality and non-partisanship were key features of the policy of Stamboliyski as outlined by the Bulgarian historiography. During the time of BZNS governing, the foundation of the Bulgarian foreign policy was laid, which all Bulgarian government would follow in footsteps until the beginning of World War II. However, the subsequent governments have failed to pursue agrarian political line with the same foresight and in the same rhythm as Stamboliyski so brightly initiated. On June 9, 1923, the coup led by General Rusev commenced. The grand bourgeoisie, fascist squads, and the army with the consent of Tsar Boris III toppled the agrarian government. The agrarian ministers were arrested, Stamboliyski's followers are imprisoned and killed, uprisings repressed all over the country, and the Prime Minister, who was when the rebellion broke out at his villa at Slavovitsa, his native village, despite the staunch opposition he showed when captured, was terribly tortured and killed. Prime Minister becomes the extremist Alexandar Tsankov. On hearing the news of Stamboliyski's overthrow the king of Romania exclaimed "Stamboliyski was the person whom, at least, we could rely on."⁴⁷

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⁴⁷Apud.IlcioDimitrov, *Bālgariavevlopeiskata*, 45.

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Historical Landmarks of the Romanian's Migration to Germany

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Abstract

The external migration of Romanians after the fall of the communist regime was one of the processes that most influenced the social and economical landscape of our present. But even before 1990, there was a type of external migration, that of the ethnics, that lead hundreds of thousands of Romanian citizens outside the borders of our country. The aim of this paper is to highlight some historical moments that marked the departure of the German ethnics from Romania, and also to introduce the role of the migration networks in this process. Starting with a brief presentation of the origins of the Romanian communities with German origins, we intended to present the three waves of migration that characterise the path of the Romanian emigrants in Germany: the first wave, immediately after the Second World War, the second one during the communist regime, and the third one – after 1990.

Key words: *migration, networks, Germany, history, ethnicity.*

The way the population is spread around the world has been influenced by the numerous changes occurred by the evolution of natural, military, political or economic factors. The Roman Empire period coincides with vast human mass deployments made deliberately; the late fifteenth century coincided with the discovery of America, and significant migration processes to this new world; the

slave trade was encouraged by the need for cheap labour, as were the approximately 12 million people brought from Africa. Later in the nineteenth and twentieth century's migration flows were amplified. In less than a decade, only from Romania emigrated 14,070 people.¹

In the European countries that were part of the communist bloc, since 1990, started a new era of migration resulting in fundamental economic and social implications. Additionally, in Romania, after the fall of the communism, a strong international migration process has developed, with certain features by the end of 2000, when the freedom of movement in the European space is granted: starting from very low international mobility, under the constraints of the totalitarian communist regime, but with the training provided by commuter type internal migration, Romanians rediscovered long-distance migration, once the borders were opened. After 1989 Romanians preferred multiple destinations depending on several factors: regional, economic and institutional².

The peace treaties of Neuilly, Trianon and St. Germain after World War I, opened for Romania the path to being a nation state. If before that, the population was - with few exceptions - almost entirely homogenous, by the collapse of the dual monarchy and territories acquired in the 1913 after the Balkan war and now enshrined in the Treaties, there was a diversity of national viewpoint. After the Hungarians, the Germans now formed, with a share of 4% of the total population, the second largest group of national minorities. The Germans, however, were not united. The Germans' external linkages between the various parts of the country were the formation of the Great Romania. The oldest group of German people who settled in South-Eastern Europe was the Transylvanian Saxons. In the 12th century, they followed the call of

¹Institutul Național de Statistică (National Institute of Statistics), *Anuarul Statistic al României/Romanian's Statistics Yearly Book*, Bucharest, 2003, p. 89.

²Dumitru Sandu, *Barometru de Opinie Publică*, Fundația pentru o Societate Deschisă/The Foundation for an Open Society, Bucharest, November 2001.

the Hungarian King Geza II who promoted the colonization of East Germans "Land beyond the Forest" (Terra Ultrasilvana) to protect themselves from the invasions of Mongols and Tartars. The name "Saxons" is not a clue about the origin - geographically - of the first immigrants. Their origin cannot be established clearly and accurately. It seems that they are, however, mostly natives of Rhenish-Franconian region of the empire.³

After the final collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians decided on the 1st of December 1918, in Alba Iulia, the annexation to the Romanian Kingdom. In the so-called "Resolution of Alba Iulia" big promises were made to the National Minorities ("*every person will study, manage and judge in its own language, by individuals of its own*") but which, in the periods that followed, had not been complied with by the governments of Romania. However, the Germans and the government have reached a fair coexistence⁴. At the 1930 census, 745.421 inhabitants of Romania declared themselves as German. The catastrophe of the Nazi regime and the consequences of its policy and of the World War II shook the existence of the German minority in Romania. As a result of the treaties between Hitler's Germany and the Soviet Union, since 1940, thousands of Germans in the border regions of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia were forced to leave their homeland, being taken "home in the Empire". Romania's surrender in August 1944 and the entry of the Soviet Army in Romania meant, for thousands of ethnic Germans, the need to seek refuge. The inhabitants of entire villages in Transylvania, Banat and the region of Satu Mare were leaving as refugees in long columns heading towards the West. In January 1945, the deportation to the Soviet Union started for many of those who remained in Romania. There were over 75,000 people affected; many of them have not returned home.

³Mihaela Stănescu, Terra Saxonis - opt veacuri de amintiri, Revista "Descoperă", 26.06.2009.

⁴for detailed information about the German minority in Romania, see also http://www.bukarest.diplo.de/Vertretung/bukarest/ro/06/seite_minderheiten.html, retrieved 15.09.2013.

For the German ethnics in Romania began demanding decades full of needs. While taking advantage of the general measures of liberalization in the sixties, the pressure on minorities regarding assimilation increased. External migration trends have become clearer, also due to economic conditions in the country. In the 70s and 80s, about 14,000 ethnic Germans left the country annually. After the fall of communism in 1989 and the recently acquired freedom of movement, the number suddenly exceeded 100.000.

The changes in Romania after 1989 brought with them not only an improvement in the bilateral relations between Germany and Romania (The Friendly Cooperation Treaty in April, 29th, 1992), but also a clear improvement and a new quality of framework conditions for the existence of the German minority. Their cultural, social and political integrity is now assured. Romanian Government recognizes through its laws and ordinances that modern protection of minorities insured is legally and politically required. In the new Romanian Constitution of 1991 the "national minorities' right to preserve, develop and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity" is ensured. A "ministerial Council for the protection of minorities" is responsible for compliance with the new policy - in some respects even exemplary - towards minorities, and an undersecretary of state in the Romanian Government is responsible for the issues of the German minority.

Immediately after 1989, the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (DFGR) appeared as a representative of the interests and as an organized union of the German minority. The Forum is present throughout the country, with a national structure with five regional forums and the local forums and centre. The community has German Youth Union (GYU) based in Sibiu, with organized youth groups and associations across the country. Moreover, the Evangelical Church and the Roman Catholic Church play an important role in the community of Germans in Romania, the majority of who belong to this minority.

In the census of the spring of 2002, more than 60.000 inhabitants of Romania declared themselves as Germans. The ethnic Germans who remained in Romania stand as a bridge and play an important role in the relations between Germany and Romania. The federal government consistently supports the minority in its mission in the cultural, economic and political education.

Although the late twentieth and early twenty-first century have brought a great increase of migration in terms of size, the migration of Romanians in Germany is not a phenomenon exclusive specific to the contemporary Romanian society; this migration route existed even in the communist period, and even prior to that, considering the significant communities of Romanian citizens of German origin living in Transylvania and Banat.

Three cases of ethnic migrations originating in Romania are relatively well documented in the literature: Jews, Germans and Hungarians, the first two cases even gaining certain notoriety due to the role played by the representatives of the communist regime in managing migration. Both the emigration of Jews and that of Germans were financially driven. And it was not just economic assistance (as claimed also by the Polish state to let the Germans leave) but the amounts paid per capita for each immigrant, amounts that always came through official channels, even enriching certain private accounts⁵.

The fact is that significant segments within both ethnic groups, in different periods, forms and contexts were treated unfavourably by the authorities on the basis of ethnicity. In both cases, the nation countries had a proactive immigration policy, which values the formal and institutionalized ethnic descent, and assist in effectively integrating the departure and destination. Moreover, for Israel, the Zionism was a relatively widespread pro-emigration ideology and assumed by significant segments of the population. In practical terms, the emigration of Jews ended up in the late 80s, and the one of

⁵István Horváth, *Migrația etnică din România: între exil și căutare*, in "Sfera Politicii", no. 137.

the Germans in the early 90s, after the fall of communism and the suppressing of the Romanian state control over emigration.

The period of the Second World War and the years immediately following its conclusion represented a turning point in the evolution of the Germans in Transylvania. From a demographic perspective, during this period the first wave of emigration occurred. Based on the specialists' estimation, following repatriation, refugees, imprisonment and deportation between 1940 and 1950, a total of 250,000 ethnic Germans left Romania which means a lot, if we consider that in 1941 their number was 49,640⁶.

In the decades following the war, the German community in Romania had witnessed many transformations, particularly in terms of traditions and habits. Their traditional way of life has dissolved under the impact of the communist regime, and land expropriation, nationalization of property, forced industrialization and urbanization had cut the "root" of many Germans in Romania.

The trend of "homogenization", national assimilation, affected their cultural and spiritual autonomy, and all these combined with precarious living conditions of life, which contrasts with the image of a prosperous democracy represented by West Germany, prompted, on the backdrop of their consciousness of their German identity, massive emigration attempts. If there were restrictions that kept them from leaving during the communist era, with the removal of these barriers, since 1989, most ethnic Germans have left Romania, creating a major disruption in the socio-cultural and economic equilibrium of the areas in which they lived⁷.

Suggestive for the presentation of the extent of the migratory flows between Romania and Germany are the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, which show the total number of Romanian immigrants who settled in Germany in the two analyzed

⁶Anneli Ute Gabanzi, *Exodul germanilor din România: cauze, fapte, consecințe*, in „Xenopoliana”, V, 1-4-1997, p. 229.

⁷Cosmin Budeancă, Florentin Olteanu (coord.), *Sfârșitul regimurilor comuniste*, Argonaut Publishing House, Cluj Napoca, 2011, p.168.

time frames, that is the period 1980-1989 and respectively 1990-2003. We also considered appropriate to calculate the percentage that is the total of all these emigrants, just to show that the number of those who chose Germany as a country of destination was much higher than that of those who chose other destinations, even within the 1980-1989 period, representing more than half of all migrants.

Table 1. Permanent emigration of Romanian citizens by country of destination (1989-2003)

	Total	Germany	SUA	Hungary	Canada	Italy	Austria	France	Israel	Sweden	Greece	Australia	Others	
Total 1980-1989	Nr.	287753	149544	33931	27250	7495	3128	9275	4593	14629	4909	3131	3646	26622
	%	100	52,0	11,8	9,5	2,6	1,1	3,2	1,6	5,1	1,7	1,1	1,3	9,3
Total 1990-2003	Nr.	251681	81434	31748	25372	24894	19920	17683	12618	4882	3200	2450	2217	25263
	%	100	32,4	12,6	10,1	9,9	7,9	7,0	5,0	1,9	1,3	1,0	0,9	10,0

Source: TEMPO data bases, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2013 www.insse.ro (consulted in 14.01.2013).

As seen from the data above, during 1980-1990 the number of Romanian immigrants who had established residence in Germany was superior to that of Romanian citizens who chose another country of destination, representing 52% of all migrants. Although in the next analyzed time interval the percentage had a significant fall to 32.4%, Germany remains the main migration destination for Romanians. This decrease is due primarily to the fact that after the fall of the communism in 1989, Romanian citizens were granted the freedom to travel abroad, freedom that did not previously exist and thus the possible destinations have diversified. Since 1989, there have been three periods corresponding to three trends of migration: the period between 1990 and 1994 was influenced by the migratory movement abroad; the period 1994-2000 was dominated by labour migration, and there are numerous cases of political asylum and underground; after 2000 there occurred a normalization of the movement of migrants¹. Before 1989, Romanian citizens of German origins benefited from a special regime regarding the possibility to leave Romania on an indefinite term, with the purpose of settling down in Germany.

During the communist period, Germany had the largest share in terms of the destinations of migratory flows (in the early 1980s the two main destinations, Germany and Israel, represented approximately 80% of the total external migration)². This fact was not the effect of an individual act of decision upon the migratory act, but rather the consequence of the "commerce" practiced by the communist regime willing to grant Romanian citizens of German origins the right to migrate, in exchange for a financial reward, paid by the German government to the Romanian state.

By the fall of communism, ethnicity was a factor structuring the Romanian migration space. This is explained by the immigration

¹Remus Gabriel Anghel, Istvan Horvath (coord.), *Sociologia migrației. Teorii și studii de caz românești*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2004. p. 46-57.

²Sorina Folea, *Fenomenul infracțional în Europa*, Craiova, Beladi Publishing House, 2009, p. 256.

laws formulated by the German Federal Republic and Israel, in postwar political context, which aimed to support and accommodate the migration of Jews and Germans from the communist states. This binds to the same extent to the migration status of the ethnic minorities in the communist and post-communist Romania, where the existence of ethnic minorities has been officially recognized: ethnic minorities have been mobilized in migration processes, which actually generated an instrumentalization of ethnicity.³

A large number of people of German origin, also known as the "Swabian", lived in Banat, being brought here by the Habsburgs in the eighteenth century. Since the 1980s, Banat Germans began to leave for Germany; however, most of the exodus occurred after 1989. Although there were many villages where there were significant communities of ethnic Germans in the Banat region, in others there were only a few such families, which caused a large variations in the number of emigrants to that destination⁴.

In general, migrant networks facilitate migration by reducing the costs of such a process. New migrants are helped to cross the borders, to find a shelter and a job at the destination and to adapt in a foreign country. Being part of a migration network diminishes risks of such "adventures". Nonetheless, the absence of such networks does not eliminate migration. Their place is occupied by institutions that support the migration, which as well as networks, improve access to resources within an institutional framework. However, it is important to note that when referring to migration networks, the resource availability depends on the participation in such a network, and the distribution of information is much higher for the institutions that aim to help migrants.

The development of Saxon migration movements is all the more obvious as the Saxons' history is marked as sedentary, unlike the

³Remus Gabriel Anghel, Istvan Horvath (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁴Dumitru Sandu (coordinator), *A Country Report on Romanian Migration Abroad: Stocks and Flows After 1989*, study realised for the Multicultural Centre in Prague, available at www.migrationonline.cz, 2004, p. 23.

Romanian migrant groups that have a long tradition of domestic or international mobility. Mass emigration to West Germany, which started in the mid-twentieth century, is nothing like any ancient practices. Currently, the Saxons' mobility is created by the movements between Romania and Germany, a movement founded on migration networks that they have built between the two countries⁵.

Currently, the main destination for migrants from these areas is Germany. Those who have emigrated in the first wave (identified as the early 1990s) went through Austria, and spent some time living with people they previously knew. Later, few went to Germany without a formal contract of employment, because the preparation of the necessary documents was very difficult. Because people did not know each other, or they were not aware of other neighbours who migrated to Germany, it is difficult to estimate the intensity of this migratory phenomenon. However, it seems that in this area, it is not a mass phenomenon.

If in the first wave of migration to Germany the groups were relatively small, consisting of 2-4 friends, now migration is an individual phenomenon. Those who migrated to Germany in the first stage had difficulties finding a job, because they had no acquaintances that would recommend them to potential employers. As a consequence, the "safe" migration through recruitment companies is now preferred. When leaving under a contract of employment, the place of residence is known, as well as the period, work, pay, and all the other aspects. People get in contact with companies that mediate the link between companies abroad and workforce in the country, and migrate based on a contract. Therefore, the main methods used for migration by the population in this area are by companies located in Timisoara that facilitate contracts for work in Germany for 2-3 months. The jobs offered are in agriculture, construction or care for the elderly. The advantage of emigration

⁵Remus Gabriel Anghel, Istvan Horvath (coordinators), *op. cit.*, p. 93.

under contract is the fact that if for those who migrate on their own or as part of a social network the Schengen Act imposes an obligation to prove the existence of means of financial support, in the first case workers receives a work permit, so such obligations do not apply. On the other hand, there are no contact persons at destination, unlike in the situation of migration networks. Migrants get to meet and know each other only when they get to their destination.

People claim that the lack of migration networks is based on individual characteristics, such as selfishness: "People from the region of Banat do not help each other...people are very envious around here" (A. I., 43 years old, and engineer at the Jiblea City hall). For example, according to the statements of people in the region, one of those who emigrated but constantly returned to the town has not helped anyone else migrate to Germany, and, even more, does not want to say where he lives and pretends not to know anyone else in the county. They also say that the impossibility to migrate without contract also has to do with the lack of money. It is impossible (some say) to migrate on your own to Germany, because in order to leave you need money.⁶

The Germans from Transylvania and Banat have disclosed to their fellow citizens an entire ideology about "how and where to emigrate". Their migratory behaviour, their networks and their livelihood (such as the marginalization they were suffering in German society), their success, their destinations in Germany, their European ideas will be reflected in the mobility projects of hundreds of thousands of Romanians who began to cross Europe in the early 1990s⁷.

Regarding the typology of the migration of Romanians, it was found that they travel within informal transnational networks which are used to exploit every available branch of the activity of migrants. Meanwhile, ethnic migration has turned into a circulatory one, already being proved that the migration of the ethnic Germans

⁶Dumitru Sandu (coord.), op. cit., p. 24.

⁷Remus Gabriel Anghel, Istvan Horvath (coord.), op. cit., p. 87.

from Transylvania to Germany in the early 1990s has become a circulatory movement, the periods of activity in Germany are interspersed with periods of living in Romania⁸.

Studying the arguments underlying the choice of Germany as a country of destination, the specific factor is the migration of ethnic lineage linked historically to this country. Concerning the citizens of Romanian origin who migrated to Germany, the reasons for their selection are similar to those of the ones choosing other states as destination.

Between the fall of the Ceausescu regime in December 1989 and the spring of 1990, half a million Germans left Romania for West Germany, in what can be called the most amazing modern ethnic migration in Europe. In the seven cities and 250 houses in the Saxon Land, in Transylvania, not less than 90% of Germans have packed up and left behind eight centuries of history, taking the road west to a country very few knew. This return was metaphorically called "return to the fatherly earth" by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, a German politician⁹.

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⁸John Salt, Current International Migration Trends, CDMG, 2001, p. 20.

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Two Visits to Romania which never took place: **Robert Kennedy (1968) and Leonid Brejnev (1969)**

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Abstract

In a new document discovered at the Central Historical National Archives (Romania), there are some details of U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy's intention to make a trip to several countries in Eastern Europe, in January 1968. On that occasion, the members of the Permanent Presidium of the C.C. of R.C.P. agreed at the meeting held on October 31st, 1967 that Corneliu Bogdan, Romania's ambassador in Washington, should inform the Senator Robert Kennedy that he was welcome in Romania.

R. Kennedy's intention shows that American politicians were interested in Romanian authorities' actions. This idea became obvious after one and a half year, when President Richard Nixon arrived in Bucharest (August 2nd-3rd, 1969) and Leonid Brejnev postponed his visit to Romania and the signing of the new Treaty of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Socialist Republic of Romania.

Key words: Leonid Brejnev, Nicolae Ceaușescu, communism, Robert Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Romania, the Soviet Union, the United States of America.

On October 27th 1967, George Macovescu informed Nicolae Ceaușescu of the fact that Robert Francis Kennedy, brother of ex-president John Fitzgerald Kennedy (assassinated on November 22nd 1963, during a visit to Dallas), intended to undertake a journey to certain states in Eastern Europe, in January 1968. On that occasion, the American senator-Democratic Party candidate in the presidential election which were to take place in the USA in November-also wished to visit Romania, together with his wife, Ethel Skakel.

In an unpublished document found in the Central National Historical Archives, there are a number of details concerning Robert Kennedy's intentions, as well as the opinion of the Romanian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs regarding the visit in question. On the basis of this document, the members of the Permanent Presidium of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party approved the Foreign Office's proposal during the meeting on October 31st 1967, the Romanian Ambassador in Washington, Corneliu Bogdan, being "authorized to inform the senator R. Kennedy of the fact that he was welcome in Romania" (our underlining)¹.

Unfortunately, the information on Robert Kennedy's planned tour of Eastern Europe, in which Romania was included, ends here because American senator's major concern consisted in entering his name in the campaign for the presidential election in the autumn of 1968. His public hesitation concerning the start of the campaign ended at the moment when the Viet Cong forces triggered the "Tet Operation" in the Southern Vietnam (January 30th 1968).

Robert Kennedy's attempt to become number one at the White House suddenly came to end in the night between the 5th and the 6th of June 1968, when Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, a 24-year-old Palestinian, fired at him with a revolver, wounding him to death. The former General Prosecutor of the USA died in the "Good Samaritan" hospital in Los Angeles, 26 hours after the attempt on his life.

¹The Central National Historical Archives (from now on C.N.H.A.), fund of C.C of the R.C.P., The Office, the file no. 153/1967, f. 21.

Robert Kennedy's intention to visit Romania proves the fact that American politicians were interested in the internal and international actions taken by the Romanian authorities. This aspect became obvious one and a half year after Robert Kennedy's assassination, when Richard Nixon, Republican Party winner of the presidential election of 4 November 1968, arrived in Bucharest (2nd/3rd of August 1969), while Leonid Brejnev postponed his visit to Romania as well as his signing the new *Treaty of friendship, collaboration and mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Socialist Republic of Romania*.

As it is well known, during the meeting of Corneliu Stănescu and Leonid Brejnev (Moscow, 9th of April 1969), the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union gave the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs the impression that he had in view to accept Nicolae Ceaușescu's invitation made at the Budapest conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (17th of March 1969), to participate in Bucharest, in June or July 1969, at the ceremony of renewing the *Treaty of friendship, collaboration and mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Socialist Republic of Romania* – as a sign of reconciliation between Romania and Soviet states respectively, after the dramatic events of the night between the 20th and the 21st of August 1968, which resulted in the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet, East-German, Polish, Hungarian and Bulgarian military units, as well as the harsh blaming expressed by R.C.P. supreme leader for that operation².

A month later, the members of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the P.C.R. decided that the meetings of the 10th Congress of the R.C.P. should be held during the 4th-9th August 1969 and obviously it was planned that Leonid Brejnev should attend those meetings. The discussions about that subject were held on 13th of May 1969 in the following way: “*Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu*: Concerning the Congress there is the proposal that we should settle on the period of 4th-9th of August, taking into account that on the 23rd of August

²Cezar Stanciu, *The War of the Nerves. Disputes Ceaușescu-Brejnev (1965-1971)*, Cetatea de Scaun, Publishing House, Târgoviște, 2011, pp. 169-171; 194.

there will be the 25th anniversary of our homeland liberation and we will have state delegations and therefore we need an interval so that we can make preparations.

So, this is the proposal regarding the state of [holding] the Congress.

Comrade Gheorghe Stoica: If this is the reason for other bourgeois states [delegations] to come too.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: We considered inviting other states too; still we have a national holiday, within the anti-Hitler coalition there were also the French, the English and the Americans, so that we will invite some of these, too. For this reason, we proposed in this sense to do like this. It is good that we should finish the Congress and have time to rest a little and make the other preparations too, and the prime secretaries should be able to go to their counties to make the necessary preparations.

Agreed?

(All the comrades agree)³.

After the discussions of Leonid Brejnev and Nicolae Ceaușescu (Moscow, 16th of May 1969), the Romanian leaders received through Aleksander Vasilievici Basov, the U.S.S.R. ambassador to Romania, a letter signed by the Secretary General of the C.P.S.U. and by Aleksei Kosâghin (24 June 1969). In this way, the Soviet leaders announced their agreement about understating their state visit to Romania, in order to participate in the ceremony of signing the *Treaty of friendship, collaboration and mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Socialist Republic of Romania* (event scheduled for the 15th of July 1969). Nicolae Ceaușescu insisted that the visit should last longer and in agreement with Moscow, he managed to settle on the reception of the two Soviet guests in Bucharest for the period 15th-16th July of 1969. According to a statement made by Paul Niculescu Mizil, during the talks of a delegation led by Ion Gheorghe Maurer with the Prime Minister Zhou Enlai and Li Xiannian (Beijing, 7-8 September 1969), the

³C.N.H.A., fund of the C.C. of the R.C.P.- The Office, file no. 69/1969, f. 43.

Romanian and Soviet Treaty had already been prepared several months before the visit to Romania planned by Leonid Ilici Brejnev and Aleksei Kosâghin, only the signing of it being necessary⁴.

The situation changed radically after the president Richard Nixon publicly confirmed his intention to reach Bucharest (28th of June 1969). Two days before that notification, Nicolae Ceaușescu sent to Moscow a message in which he announced the visit of the American quest to Romania. The reply of the leaders in Kremlin arrived two weeks later (9th of July 1969), in a letter in which Leonid Brejnev and Aleksei Kosâghin informed that they were involved in solving important matters and were bound to postpone their visit to Romania. Consequently, the ceremony of concluding the Romanian and Soviet treaty was called off *sine die* and the Soviet Prime Minister signed it a year later (Bucharest, 7th of July 1970)⁵.

In a meeting on the 16th of July 1969, the members of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. discussed for an hour the results obtained at the twenty extraordinary conferences of the party organizations of the counties (held on 12th and 13th July 1969). Throughout the country people were debating the Theses of the C.C. of the R.C. P. and the project of the „Directives of the 10th R.C.P. Congress regarding the five-year plan for the years 1971-1975 as well as the leading directions of the national economy for the period of 1976-1980”.

During the same meeting, Nicolae Ceaușescu presented the conclusions resulted from the visits he had undertaken in the counties Cluj, Maramures, Satu Mare, Bihor and Arad. At the same time, the party leader informed the members of the Executive

⁴Romanian-Chinese Relations 1880-1974. Documents, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Archives of Romania; coordinator, the ambassador Romulus Ioan Budura, “The Official Monitor” Autonomous Management, Bucharest, 2005, p. 950.

⁵Cf. Joseph F. Harrington, Bruce J. Courtney, Romanian-American Relations, 1940-1990, The European Institute, Iasi, 2002, pp. 276-278; Adam Burakoqski, The Dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989). The Genius of the Carpathians, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2011, pp. 127-129; Lavinia Betea, Cristina Diac, Florin-Răzvan Mihai, Ilarion Țiu, 21 August 1968 - Ceaușescu's Apotheosis, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2009, pp. 254-257; Cezar Stanciu, op. cit., p. 195.

Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. about the fact that at the beginning of the following week they were to receive his draft report for the 10th Congress of the R.C.P. and an Executive Committee meeting was planned for the same week with the view to discussing and approving that document. Besides, Nicolae Ceaușescu suggested and the participants in the meeting agreed to postpone the visit of the Soviet Union party and government delegation to Romania until the autumn of that year.

During the discussion of 16 July 1969 Emil Bodnăraș insisted that they should reply to the Soviets proposal for setting the period of the visit, so that we should not give an “impression of resentment”. Nicolae Ceaușescu agreed to Emil Bodnăraș’ idea, and the meeting of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. ended without any sign of the surprise that was to come⁶.

The next day, the program of Richard Nixon’s future visit to Romania having been completed (and approved during the Permanent Presidium meeting of 7 July 1969), Nicolae Ceaușescu summoned an urgent meeting of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. in order to approve a two-day delay of the R.C.P. 10th Congress. How was that decision adopted, how long did the discussion last and who insisted on changing the starting day of the congress? These are questions that can be answered by means of the protocol and the shorthand record of the extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. on 17 July 1969 (which we display in the Annex no. 2).

The importance of the visit to Bucharest undertaken by Richard Nixon was mentioned by him at the end of October 1969, during the meeting at the White House with the Apollo 11 astronauts (who reached the Moon in July 1969). Craig Nelson, ex-vice-president of the publishing house “Harper & Row, Hyperion and Random House”, wrote about that event as follows: “The men returned to the United States, first stopping at the White House where Pat Nixon

⁶C.N.H.A., fund of the C.C. of the R.C.P.- The Office, file no. 98/1969, f. 2-3; 5-14.

gave them a tour of her husband's collection of historic gavels, and the president commented that night at dinner that Romania's President Ceaușescu had finally agreed to a state meeting in wake of Apollo 11, a diplomatic breakthrough that Nixon believed was worth the cost of the entire space program"⁷.

In his turn, during the discussions with Zhou Enlai and Li Xiannian (Beijing, 7th-8th of September 1969), the Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer declared the following things about President Richard Nixon's visit to Romania: "Comrade Ceaușescu informed you through your ambassador [in Bucharest] about the content of this visit. But I told the ambassador that there were aspects which could be better clarified during a direct discussion and that is why I am going to deal with this visit. Of course, during this visit a whole range of issues were discussed, because the talks with Nixon were fairly long. Some of them, such the European security, may not be of much interest to you; others are more familiar to you. First of all, Nixon unconditionally expressed his wish to find a way of normalizing the relation with China. He dearly spoke and asked us to give him the helping hand that we can give him (smiling); we told him that what we could do was to inform the Chinese leadership about this discussion. But we also told him that apparently there were a series of issues on which the Chinese leadership had already made a position and to which you had better find solutions and maybe while looking for solutions to these problems, you will find a way to tight and normal relations with China". One of these issues is Taiwan (Zhou Enlai laughed).

Certainly, we did not go into details about what should be done in the case of Taiwan and what should not be done; it is not our business to discuss it. If this is ever to be discussed, the talk will be between you and them, but the man expressed this wish.

Our impression was that wish was sincere, namely it corresponds with certain American interests which these people appreciate. Which

⁷Craig Nelson, *Rocket Men, The Epic Story of the First Men on the Moon*, VIKING Penguin Group, New York, 2009, p. 321.

are these American interests corresponding to these wishes, we were not able to figure out. We know for sure that in the American public opinion the wish for normalizing the relations with China has been present for a long time. We have been told about this wish several times. At a certain moment, through [John Kenneth] Galbraith, we received the expression of Robert Kennedy's wish, when he was alive, to come and discuss with us this matter too, among others: what our opinion was about this situation. The visit did not take place then on account of certain circumstances; after that it did not happen because of [Robert] Kennedy's tragic end).

In the discussions with [William Averell] Harriman I found this concern to establish normal relations with China. I had a fairly long discussion with Harriman. [...].

In relation to this, the sharpening conflict between China and the Soviet Union was also discussed. Nixon definitely stated that by no means would he intend to support the Soviet Union if this had any aggressive plan against China"⁸.

In conclusion, Nicolae Ceaușescu's decision - approved by all the participants in the Executive Committee meeting on the 17th of July - had an obvious anti- Soviet propagandist character, though the Romanian leader tried at the same time to avoid a mounting of his disputes with Moscow authorities. For the first and single time congress of a European Communist Party was delayed on account of an official visit undertaken by the „No. 1 public enemy” of communism to a country belonging to the Soviet bloc. For the political and military leaders in Kremlin, the changing of the date of the R.C.P. 10th Congress was another proof of the fact that Nicolae Ceaușescu represented a danger to the unity of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and Leonid Brejnev was forced to call off his visit to Romania planned for the summer of 1969. Later on, the Soviet leader's attitude demonstrated that he did not agree to a number of important opinions and actions taken by Bucharest authorities in the

⁸Romanian-Chinese Relations. 1880-1974. Documents, ..., pp. 945-946.

field of foreign policy, postponing for a very long time any kind of travel to Romania. During the same period, Nicolae Ceaușescu on various occasions tried to convince Leonid Brejnev of his good faith and of the Romanians' spirit of understanding, because several U.S.S.R. institutions repeatedly blocked the economic cooperation between the two countries, using various excuses.

Annex No. 1

27th of October 1967

A note of proposals drawn up by George Macovescu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and sent to Nicolae Ceaușescu, regarding the intention expressed by the American senator Robert Francis Kennedy to visit Romania in January 1968, together with his wife.

THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA *STRICTLY SECRET*
THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
17/002220/1

The Archives of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P
No. 2893/14. XI. 1967

The Office of the C.C. of the R.C.P. *No. 3392/28. X. 1967*

[Resolution]: *At the Presidium*

[Handwritten record:] *I-1 C*

NOTE OF PROPOSALS

Regarding: Senator Robert Kennedy's visit to Romania

On the occasion of a visit undertaken by the ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Romania to Washington to the senator Robert Kennedy, the latter expressed his intention to visit Romania during a journey around the Eastern European countries, together with his wife.

The visit might take place in January 1968, immediately after the winter holidays.

R. Kennedy mentioned that he would like to have some political discussions, meet personalities, visit a university and possibly talk to students.

Concerned with the possibility of running for President of the United States, R. Kennedy adopted a political line similar to that of the former president John Kennedy, which attracted the support of the American Democratic Party's liberal circles, as well as of other political factors with moderate orientation, being also the favourite representative of certain intellectual and syndicate circles.

Proposing a more flexible policy to correspond to a larger extent to the internal and external evolution, as well as trying to avail himself of certain political circumstances not favourable to the Administration, R. Kennedy often found himself in public contradiction to president Johnson both on some international issues (the war in Vietnam, the intervention in the Dominican Republic, etc.) and on domestic policy issues. Regarding Vietnam, R. Kennedy is in favour of stopping the escalating events and increasing the efforts meant to find a political solution.

Taking into account Senator Robert Kennedy's political personality, we propose:

1. The ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Romania to Washington is to be authorized to inform Senator R. Kennedy that he is welcome to come to Romania and that the Romanian party would like to receive specifications concerning the planned visit with a view to drawing up a suitable plan.
2. After setting on the period of R. Kennedy's visit to our country, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is to draw up the programme of the visit.

20st of October 1967

ss. George Macovescu

The note was sent to:

the members of the Permanent Presidium of the C.C. of the R.C.P.;

CC of the RCP Section for Foreign Relations.

C.N.H.A., found of the C.C. of the R.C.P. the Office, file no. 153/1967, f. 21-22.

Note:

1. The document was stamped and registered at the Office of the C.C. of the R.C.P. and the Archives of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P.. The resolution belongs to Nicolae Ceaușescu. In order to display these details, we used italics.

Annex No. 2

17th of July 1969

The protocol and shorthand record of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P. on 17th of July 1969, during which they decided that the opening of the proceedings of the R.C.P.'s 10th Congress should be held on the 6th of August 1969, as a result of the American president Richard Nixon's planned visit to Romania for the period 2nd-3rd of August 1969.

THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1787/1969

*The Archives of the Executive Committee
of the C.C. of the R.C.P.*

No. 397/21. 07. 1969

Protocol No. 28

of the meeting of the Executive Committee [of the C.C. of the R.C.P.] of 17th of July 1969

The following comrades participated: Nicolae Ceaușescu, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Chivu Stoica, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Maxim

Berghianu, Constantin Drăgan, János Fazekas, Petre Lupu, Manea Mănescu, Leonte Răutu, Gheorghe Stoica, Vasile Vîlcu, Ștefan Voitec, Iosif Banc, Petre Blajovici, Dumitru Popa, Dumitru Popescu, Mihai Dalea.

The following comrades did not attend the meeting because they were in the territory in order to prepare the conferences of the party organisations in the counties: Gheorghe Apostol, Emil Bodnăraș, Virgil Trofin, Ilie Verdeț, Florian Dănalache, Gheorghe Rădulescu, Dumitru Coliu, Emil Drăgănescu, Mihai Gere, Vasile Patilineț.

The meeting started at 11.00 a.m. and ended at 11.30 a.m.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu presided.

At comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu's proposal, the Executive Committee [of the C.C. of the R.C.P.] decided that the opening proceedings of the RCP's 10th Congress should take place on the 6th of August 1969, at 10.00 a.m.

Concerning this, it was settled that during the 17th of July current year, the members of the Executive Committee and of the Secretariat of R.C.P's Central Committee who had not participated in the meeting, as well as the members and the substitute members of the party's Central Committee should be consulted.

At the same time, measures will be taken to announce the opening date of the RCP's 10th Congress to all the foreign parties and organisations invited to participate in the Congress proceedings.

ss. Nicolae Ceaușescu

The Archives of the Executive

Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P.

No. 1398/21. 07. 1969

The shorthand record of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the R.C.P.'s C.C. of 17th of July 1969

The following comrades participated: Nicolae Ceaușescu, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Chivu Stoica, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Maxim Berghianu, Constantin Drăgan, János Fazekas, Petre Lupu, Manea Mănescu, Leonte Răutu, Gheorghe Stoica, Vasile Vilcu, Ștefan Voitec, Iosif Banc, Petre Blajovici, Dumitru Popa, Dumitru Popescu.

Comrade Mihai Dalea was invited.

The meeting started at 11.00 and lasted for 10 minutes.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: Look, comrades, why I wanted us to have this short meeting.

As for the congress, we summoned it for 4 August. Maybe we [should] have a delay of a few days. I have been thinking of two options. To set it closer to 23rd of August, but several problems aroused. This would be one option. Another option would be to postpone it by two days, instead of 4th of August it could start on 6th of August, because [Richard] Nixon will be staying here for two days and it will be difficult for us to meet the delegations for the congress. Besides, there is also the problem of decorating.

Comrade I. Gh. Maurer: Maybe we had better postpone it by three days.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: Two days is enough. The delegations from the neighbouring countries are to come on Monday and Tuesday. The Yugoslavs, for instance, have already announced that they will come on the 3rd [August], so they will arrive on 5th of August.

Of course, [Richard] Nixon's visit calls for decorating, but we will decorate for the congress only on Monday and Tuesday.

First we should inform all the parties invited to the congress about this postponing.

Besides, I suggest that the other members of the Executive Committee should be consulted and today we should consult, on the phone, the members of the Central Committee. And the notification should sound like this: it was settled that the congress should start on the 6th of August, at 10.00. So, we also give the hour.

Do you agree, comrades? (all comrades agreed).

Comrade Petre Lupu: Without giving a reason, just saying that the Central Committee has decided.

Comrade Chivu Stoica: It is good like this, because we do everything little by little.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: And we can also announce the foreigners, there is no problem.

The Chinese told us they had decided not to send delegations to congress any longer. Furthermore, they said that would create a difficult situation, because the Soviets will also be here. Of course, it would not be easy for them, but it would not be easy for us either.

Comrade Chivu Stoica: As for the delegations coming to the congress, are we going to invite them to the anniversary [of Romania's national day too]?

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: Only the socialist countries should stay for 23rd of August, because if we invited some of the people, an infinite number of problems would arise.

Comrade I. Gh. Maurer: I also definitely [agree] to the idea of inviting only the socialist countries [to the anniversary of Romania's national day], because, otherwise, problems may appear; even if the Chinese and the Albanians do not come, the others will.

Comrade Chivu Stoica: The Albanians may come to the 25th national anniversary of Romania.

Comrade I. Gh. Maurer: Maybe.

Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu: All these being told, we close the meeting.

Note:

1. The documents have been stamped and recorded at the Archives of the Executive Committee of the C.C. of the R.C.P.

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Can a Regional Mediator Sort out the Israeli Palestinian Conflict: Turkey on Stage

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Abstract

President Obama's recent visit to Israel, the Palestinian Territories and Jordan attempted to jump-start the stalled peace negotiations and made a very bold point by first resolving the dispute between Turkey and Israel. Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey maintained a good relationship with both the Israelis and the Palestinians and is a strong candidate for the role of mediator in their protracted conflict. Some qualities that support her bid include a good economic, commercial and military relationship with Israel; historic, cultural and religious ties with the Palestinians; a supportive Sunni majority; a strong alliance with the US and NATO membership and willingness to act as a mediator to reinforce its position as a regional power.

Key Words: Israel, Palestine, Turkey, mediation, negotiations, Ottoman Empire

Background of Relations in the 20th Century

After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War, the Republic of Turkey underwent a very fast and profound process of reform of the state, including establishing

governing principles of secularism and representative democracy, along with comprehensive legal, economic and land reforms, language, literacy and even family names or clothing. The Turkish society, in decay for centuries and finally defeated with the Allied Invasion of Istanbul in 1920, was now again, under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, on a path of progress and affirmation, first at home and then in the regional and international arena.

In this context, the emerging Turkish Republic prioritized strategic interest and economic development over nostalgia or paternalistic affiliation for the population and problems of Palestine as an ex-colony. This policy of disengagement, before and after the take-over by the British Empire in the form of their Mandate for Palestine (1919-1947) was just the natural position of a defeated empire, trying to redesign itself as a regional power. All its subsequent actions in the Middle Eastern platform, and especially with regards to Israel and Palestine have to be understood in this context.

The reciprocal positioning of modern Turkey and the State of Israel since its declaration of Independence on the 10th May 1947 have some important thresholds for the subsequent relation between each of them and the Palestinians, as well as for the Palestinian – Israeli conflict. For the *statu nascendi* which Palestine is claimed to be, it is important when regional powers or the late and the new colonial powers talk, in what terms and what they talk about. And it matters for the whole world, because the Israeli-Palestinian struggle for land and peace is no longer a local or regional conflict. Since the Palestinian problem was put on the Global Agenda in 1988 with the *Declaration of Independence of Palestine*¹ and increasingly with the First

1 Avnery, U., (07/07/2012) „Poisoning Arafat” from Uri Avneri’s Column <http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/avnery/1341587176> retrieved 2/12/2012 and The Speech of Yasser Arafat at the United Nations General Assembly, Geneva, 13th December 1988 available at <http://mondediplo.com/focus/mideast/arafat88-en> retrieved 2.12.2012

and Second *Intifadas* or the deaths of Yasser Arafat², Yitzhak Rabin and other leaders – recently and notably Ahmad Jabari³ – the Middle East conflict is a compulsory statement in Western elections for candidates to leading positions, as was patent in the last US elections.

The current changes in the relationship between Turkey and Israel have to be understood in the context of the cyclical frost and thaw they have experienced since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Turkey was the first Muslim majority country to recognize Israel and since then relations improved – broadly speaking – until the end of the Cold War. In the early 1990s the disappearance of the USSR from the bipolar structure of power and the re-ordering across regional axes offered both Turkey and Israel the opportunity to affirm themselves and leave aside occasional antipathies for strategic and economic gains. Cagri Erhan and Omer Kurkcuoglu (2010: 868-871) outline five principal reasons for the thaw in relations, ranging from ideological and diplomatic to military and economic:

1. The desire to affirm and increase their regional power in the prospect of a new regional order with the Peace Process in the Middle East seemingly advancing.
2. The Turkish effort to attract the support of the Jewish lobby, primarily in the US, but also in several European countries, for a range of issues such as the continuous Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus or the standing towards the alleged Armenian Genocide.
3. The natural alliance between two democracies who both had tensions with Syria, Iran and Iraq (Turkey because of the Kurdish issue, Israel for geo-strategic, political and religious reasons).

²Ibid. 1 Avnery notes: “[B]eyond personal considerations, Arafat was the man who was able to make peace with Israel, willing to do so, and – more importantly – to get his people, including the Islamists, to accept it. This would have put an end to the settlement enterprise. That’s why he was poisoned”.

³ Israel’s targeted killing of 14/11/2012 gave rise to a 12 days war between Israel and Hamas, killing 5 Israelis and 148 Palestinians, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/why-did-israel-kill-jabari.premium-1.482224> retrieved 28/11/2012

4. In its assiduous drive to modernization and westernization, Turkey felt closer ties with Israel, embarked on a similar accelerated development project, than with other autocracies or dictatorships in the Middle East, which opened numerous formal and non-formal cooperation paths between the two.
5. Both were attracted to contributing to the US-led New World Order in the Middle East in order to ensure for themselves the best positions possible. This drive was fueled, in the case of Israel, by the historical special relationship, and for Turkey through the increasingly pro-active approach of the US for reaching this goal (through soft and hard-power measures, classical and public diplomacy as well as military intervention). As a member of NATO from 1952, but also following an extended collaboration with the US, it was only natural for Turkey to approach Israel, itself an aspiring member of NATO, but already having the most significant military, technological and economic cooperation with the USA globally.

Highlights of the Turkish-Israeli Relation

Historically, the relationship between the two regional powers has been tighter in secrecy than it was shown to the media and the public. The first *Intifada* (1987-1993) triggered the condemnation of the Turkish Grand National Assembly towards "the violent actions of the Israelis against the Palestinians living in the occupied territories and the inhuman violation of Palestinians' human rights"⁴. Furthermore, Turkish foreign minister Mümtaz Soysal announced in 1994 that what Israel calls terrorism is in fact Palestinians "trying to defend their rights"⁵. Another incident which rose eye brows and upset Tel Aviv was the 1994 visit of Prime Minister Tansu Çiller to the Palestinian leadership, without Israel's authorization.

⁴Gruen, G. "Dynamic Progress in Turkish-Israeli Relations," *Israel Affairs*, Summer 1995, p. 50

⁵Cumhuriyet News Agency, Nov. 5, 1994; quoted in Amikam Nachmani, "The Remarkable Turkish-Israeli Tie," *Middle East Quarterly*, June 1998, p. 22.

Notwithstanding these minor incidents, most of them in response to Israeli misconduct vis-à-vis Turkey, the decade of the 1990s saw a flourishing of political and economic cooperation. The 2000s, however, started badly, with an April 2000 decision of the Israeli government to introduce information in textbooks about the Armenian Genocide, denied by the Republic of Turkey. In response, no member of the Turkish cabinet attended the customary Israeli National Day Reception in Ankara on the 10th May 2000. Another severe blow was dealt by the Gaza Freedom Flotilla incident on the 31st May 2000, when the Israeli Defense Forces attacked a humanitarian aid convoy sailing to Gaza, in which eight Turkish and one American citizens were killed⁶. Prime Minister Erdogan requested an official apology and compensation for the bereaved families from Israel, which were never received, as well as an end to the blockade of Gaza. Since Israel was unwilling to do so, the mutual boycott of celebrations and suspension of diplomatic relations continued and intensified between the two states⁷ until Obama's last-minute intervention in March 2013.

Another unpopular episode both with the Turkish public and the Islamic government of Erdogan (in power since 14/05/2003) was the US-led elimination of Saddam Hussein. Although a NATO member since 1952, Ankara declined involvement in the invasion of Iraq, for reasons of regional, religious and popular apathy.

The trigger for the major deterioration of relations between Israel and Turkey was the 2008-2009 Israeli invasion of Gaza, which resulted in the death of 1,407 Palestinians and 13 Israelis, as well as

⁶Palmer, G.; Uribe, A; Itzhar, J. C.; Sanberk, S. Ö. (2 September 2011). "Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident". United Nations, retrieved 1/12/2012, available at http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/middle_east/Gaza_Flotilla_Panel_Report.pdf

⁷Ravid, B. (01/11/2012) Diplomania Column in Ha'aretz Newspaper, available at <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/diplomania/the-latest-casualty-of-strained-turkish-israeli-relations-independence-day-ceremonies.premium-1.473844> Retrieved 1/12/2012

the destruction of more than half of the infrastructure in Gaza⁸. Turkey saw this aggression as highly detrimental for the peace process in the Middle East and conditioned the resumption of diplomatic relations by a full state apology and comprehensive compensation for the Mavi Marmara Flotilla victims, as well as lifting the blockade in Gaza. It was only in March 2013 that US President Barack Obama managed to persuade Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to comply with Turkish demands – not yet implemented, which are based on standard norms of international law, confirmed by the UN both for the flotilla and for the Gaza blockade, and thus resume full diplomatic relations.

What can Turkey Bring to the Negotiating Table?

A balanced historic relation with both Jewish-Israelis and Arab-Palestinians. Even if the main consideration remains strategic interest and the desire to consolidate its regional power position, Turkey is no outsider to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Turkish UN Delegate illustrated the balanced position that was to be Turkey's foreign policy on the Israel-Palestine question in an address prior to the 1947 Partition vote: both in the Middle Ages and during the Second World War, the Jewish community lived prosperously and in full possession of all civil liberties in the Palestinian Territory⁹. The double sided interest was expressed as the preference of Turkey that the Jewish Agency remained a community, rather than a state and at the same time, "the Turkish nation sincerely desires to see the new Arab states happy and prosperous"¹⁰. For this as well as other considerations, such as the fear of a strong left-wing and pro-Russian inclination of a

⁸From the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights Press Release No. 36/2009 <http://web.archive.org/web/20090612193512/http://www.pchrgaza.org/files/PressR/English/2008/36-2009.html> retrieved 15/04/2013

⁹Speech of Huseyin Ragip Baydurx, 54th meeting of UNGA, 12 May 1947, United Nations General Assembly Official Records, 1st special session, Vol. 3, 1947, plenary meetings and committees, p. 259.

¹⁰Ibid.

possible Jewish state, Turkey eventually voted against the UN Partition Plan for Palestine¹¹.

Good economic ties. Although the Welfare party in Turkey is traditionally more suspicious of Zionism, and therefore of close ties with Israel, Ankara has been trying to increase, rather than halt cooperation and solidarity with Islamic countries. Nonetheless, two important agreements were signed with Israel as early as 1997, while the Welfare Party was in power. Despite diplomatic tensions, trade increased from \$449 million in 1996 to more than \$1.2 billion in 2002. This remarkable acceleration continued with bilateral trade increasing 14.6% per year, on average, from 2002 to 2008. From 2010 to 2011, trade increased by 30.7%, far surpassing the growth that occurred during the height of Turkish-Israeli ties.

On the Palestinian side, in addition to in-kind contributions of food of \$6.6 million, Turkey also provides financial support to UN Relief and Works Agency. Since 2009, the Turkish Government has more than doubled its contribution to the agency, reaching an annual sum of \$1.25 million in 2012¹². Turkey also chairs the Working Group on Financing UNRWA in New York, and is a member of the Advisory Commission comprising UNRWA's major governmental supporters, thus extending a helping hand whenever possible.

Participation in International Bodies for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Between 1948-1962 Turkey was a member of the Palestine Conciliation Committee, a last minute cover-up body created by the British Administration before withdrawing (Eran, 2002:126). This Committee ultimately failed to achieve any of its goals, but it was still the first indication of a desired active neutrality from Turkey.

¹¹For a detailed analysis of the bilateral relation between the Jewish Agency and the Ottoman Empire / the Republic of Turkey see Patten, H. (July 2008) "The Genesis of Turkish Views on Partition and Conciliation", Israel Affairs, Vol.14, No.3, pp.538-551.

¹²UN News Service, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2012/08/mil-120802-unnews04.htm> retrieved 26/11/2012.

The extensive collaboration with Israel visibly impacted Turkey's relationship with the other Arab states, but Ankara's policy of balance was reinstated by a rapprochement towards the Palestinians during and after the Second Intifada in 2000. It was formalized as president Suleyman Demirel became a member of the UN Investigation Committee appointed to look into the uprising, which produced the Mitchell Report¹³: Ariel Sharon's visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque on the 28th September 2000, escorted by over 1,000 police officers fueled intense protests from Muslim believers in Turkey¹⁴, as well as a bold diplomatic message from leaders of Islamic states¹⁵.

A further action aimed at regaining its essential neutrality for any significant role in a mediation process is the 7 October 2000 Turkish vote in favor of UN Security Council Resolution 1322 against Israel, condemning the above-mentioned incident. Turkey then hardened its position during 2001-2002.

Mediation efforts. After the election of Ariel Sharon on the 6th February 2001, the Turkish effort for mediation was stepped up, with Foreign Minister Ismail Cem, commuting between Israel, the Palestinian Territories and Egypt, trying to resume a policy of neutrality and resolve the problem of fluctuating relations with Israel and the Arab world, which was creating increasing tensions with both.

After the election of Hamas in Gaza, in what were widely regarded as free and fair elections, Erdoğan declared: "Hamas must be disarmed [...] Hamas had some habits. But these are old. Hamas has to give up old habit and attitudes, because they will manage a

¹³Mitchell, G., Demirel, S., Jagland, T., Rudman, W. and Solana, J. (20 May 2001). "Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee", available at http://www.mideastweb.org/mitchell_report.htm Retrieved 1/12/2012.

¹⁴"Turkey Condemns Israel's closure of Al-Aqsa", Retrieved 1/12/2012 from <http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2009/10/06/turkey-condemns-israels-closure-of-al-aqsa/>.

¹⁵Tunisia, Morocco and Qatar severed their relations with Israel, Egypt and Jordan recalled their Ambassadors, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait pledged funds for the Palestinians and many Arab countries airlifted injured Palestinians to their hospitals. Maddy-Weitzman, B., "The Arab World and the Al-Aqsa Intifada" Tel Aviv Notes (23/11/2000).

country now!¹⁶ Ankara recognized the unrest caused by the emergence of a Hamas government in Tel Aviv and again offered to mediate: "Turkey can carry the role of mediator between Israel and Palestine in the new era"¹⁷. This offer has not greatly inspired any of the parties, since no major ensuing activity is reported.

After the successful UN bid for upgrading Palestine's status to non-member state, Recepp Erdogan offered himself to Israel, Palestine and the international community as a mediator, with no response as yet. He considered the voting so important, that he sent the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu to convey the message: "It is not an option but an ethical, political, strategic and legal obligation for the international community to recognize the right to self-determination and the right to a state granted to the people of Palestine by a resolution adopted by the United Nations in 1947"¹⁸. Thus he also recalled the basis of international law upon which the Turkish help would be based.

The vision presented by Ankara offers "a flexible, but values-based strategy since the beginning of the process and presents a common vision to parties of a dispute"¹⁹ Furthermore, Turkey pledges competence on all dynamics of the problem and long-term commitment, which is congruent with all the arguments presented above.

16 Zaman News Agency, Erdogan offers Hamas and Israel to mediate, from http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=251095 retrieved 19/11/2012.

17Ibid .

18 The minister further added: "the non-member observer state status is just an initial step and that the oppression and injustice having been imposed on the people of Palestine for decades will not be considered as complete until the flag of the Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital, waves, as a full member, in the United Nations among the other flags, on the basis of a two state solution reached through peace within the borders of 1967". Retrieved 20/11/2012 from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/foreign-minister-davutoglu-it-is-not-an-option-but-an-ethical.en.mfa>

19 Resolution of Conflict and Mediation Chapter on the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa> retrieved 19/11/2012.

Turkey's efforts to increase their know-how in mediation and global awareness on its importance for the conduct of international relations include initiating the first UN resolution on mediation (2010), organizing the "Friends of Mediation Group" under the auspices of the UN (with 42 members as of June 2012) and a series of international conferences entitled "Enhancing Peace through Mediation"

According to the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey attaches special importance to preventive diplomacy, pioneers a great deal of mediation attempts in a wide geography and endeavors actively for the peaceful settlement of disputes. [It considers preventive diplomacy to be] the most effective and economic method in terms of settlement of disputes, but also from the reality that reduction of potential disputes and conflicts will directly contribute to Turkey's development²⁰.

Its portfolio of mediation efforts have included conflicts in Iraq, Lebanon, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan. Furthermore, Turkey has an ideally suited location at the crossroads between Asia, Africa and Europe, with participation in fora and councils belonging to these three continents and beyond. Due to all this experience, regional peace interest, as well as its common history with Jews and Palestinians, Turkey can be the ideal mediator between Israelis and Palestinians.

Similar problems. The Turkish problems with the Kurds were at their height in the 1990s, and the military, diplomatic and economic collaboration with Israel was seen as an attempt by the two powers to exchange not only tactics, but possible solutions to the problems. However, the nature of the historic, religious and cultural relationships was different, as were the military power and the aims and visions of sustainability of the two states regarding the groups under their control or occupation²¹. Nevertheless, Turkey has

20 Ibid.

21 For a detailed analysis of the parallels between the PKK and PNA's relationships to Turkey and Israel respectively see "Turkish Foreign Policy 1919-2006", Oran, 2010.

managed to deal with its issues in a quite satisfactory manner, whereas Israel has been unable or unwilling to reach an end to their conflict with the Palestinians. In the wake of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, Ankara found out that Tel Aviv was arming and training the Kurdish rebels in Northern Iraq. Turkey was shaken and very troubled by the news, and severed diplomatic ties further.

A series of high-level meetings and official visits were exchanged by the Turkish and Palestinian leaderships in 2012: Prime Minister Erdogan received a *Doctor Honoris Causa* PhD from Al-Quds University of Jerusalem²² and President of the PNA Mahmoud Abbas addressed the Turkish Parliament²³. In the midst of harsh criticism that it should give and do more for the Palestinian cause²⁴, Turkey was fast to offer 6.6 million USD for food aid.

Conclusion

Turkey was the first Muslim state to formalize relations with the State of Israel upon its creation in 1948. Since then, the relations between these two only 'democratic' and 'non-Arab' states in the region (Ergemir, 2010:25) have evolved, both in substance and in their influence on regional forces. At the same time, Turkey has good relations with the Palestinians and other nations in the Middle East. But Israel's reaction to the Palestinian UN bid for an upgrade of status, as well as the pre-emptive aggressions on Gaza left the relations between the two regional powers limping again.

Aware of their part of guilt, Mark Regev, a spokesman for the Israeli prime minister, declared since 2011, in an interview with Maclean's: "Israel deeply regrets the deterioration in our relationship

22Andalou News Agency reports "Erdogan said Turkey considered Jerusalem a city of Tolerance" 21/09/2012 available at <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/83753--al-quds-university-decorates-turkish-premier-with-honorary-degree>.

23Andalou News Agency reports <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/109919--palestine-president-to-address-turkish-parliament> retrieved 10/12/2012.

24Rossett, C. (10/12/2012) "Turkey's two faceted aid" researched for Forbes Europe available at <http://www.forbes.com/2010/06/04/turkey-gaza-humanitarian-untied-nations-opinions-columnists-claudia-rossett.html> retrieved 9/1/2009.

with Turkey. We want to try to turn things around, and we hope that the Turks will be a partner in that effort"²⁵.

There seems to be a pattern of proportionality in the responses of Israel and Turkey to each-other's actions, which seems to be a special treatment, "only for friends" that Israel doesn't share with other states in the area. Its intrusive and excessively violent attitude towards other states is inversely proportional to their size and power. This was the Israeli mode of interaction in the South Sudan secession, 1982 Lebanon invasion, Jordan, Egypt and others. But the enduring economic relations and strategic alliance have maintained the friendship with Turkey. Such friendship is an excellent base for a mediator in the conflict, and this article has presented some economic, geographic, historic and strategic aspects of this cooperation, as well as a pallet of arguments in favor of Turkey mediating between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Turkey has been softly making the statement, gathering points and building its CV as a mediator, but it is probably time that it made a direct bold and assertive offer, and an indirect point to international actors. Turkey can show explicitly the great potential for making significant advances in the conflict-resolution process through its involvement at such a delicate moment in the existence - in the end last days - of the two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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²⁵Petrou, M. (10/3/2011) *Israel Alone* Maclean's, Vol. 124, Issue 38.

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The regionalization process in Peoples Republic of Romania

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Abstract

After the 1944 coup d'état, setting of the communist government on the 6th of March 1945 and the pseudo-elections organized in 1946, the year 1947 represents the terminus of communism instauration epos in Romania. Throughout this period, the communist leaders were assisted, coordinated, controlled and manipulated from Moscow. They were dictated orders and "suggestions" from Kremlin, all executed without hesitation. The end of 1947 brought to Romania a complete change of regime both political and constitutional. More precisely, unconstitutional. The Constitution of 1923 was suppressed, the king had no longer any role, than the former king of Romania; historical parties were already history, the Parliament was now consisting of a single room and was called the House of Representatives, where the communists controlled any decision and the executive management of the state was exercised by a five-member Presidium, totally subservient to the new regime. Romania was no longer a kingdom, but a popular republic. Concerning the administrative - territorial division, the new constitution stipulates a new delimitation of local authorities' competences and of the territories under their administration. The new constitution passed unanimously in the Grand National Assembly on September 24st 1952. This constitution brings substantial changes on administrative level as well. It was the turn of new realignment, after all the

legislative and constitutional changes, organizations and reorganizations of recent years, copies of the Soviet model, put into practice without any sense.

Keywords: Communist Regime in Romania, Soviet model, administrative-territorial evolution, constitutional changes, A.I. Vișinski, Petru Groza, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Nicolae Ceaușescu, Nikita Brejnev, USSR.

The study of public administration history has a double importance today. Firstly, although somehow neglected so far, the administrative organization is essential for a better understanding of the political history of Romanians, the administrative organization being at the same time a determinant factor and a result of political evolutions. Secondly, during the debates regarding a possible administrative-territorial reorganization, knowing the administrative evolution of the Romanian state can only be useful for the elaboration of future projects.

If the administration during constitutional monarchy was the subject of some research— even if still insufficient—, the administration during communist regime represents a field hardly explored. Fact valid, moreover, for all those representing the institutional side of the regime. Certain aspects captured the attention of historiography, aspects of high impact, as repression, propaganda, struggle for power or international policy, other elements, no less important, being treated summarily or ignored.

After the 1944 coup d'état, the installation of the communist government on the 6th of March 1945 and the pseudo-elections organized in 1946, the year 1947 represents the terminus of communism instauration epos in Romania. Throughout this period, the communist leaders were assisted, coordinated, controlled and manipulated from Moscow. They were dictated orders and “suggestions” from Kremlin, all these executed without hesitation.

Andrei Ianaurevici Vișinski – Prime Deputy Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of the USSR who “convinced” the king to accept Petru

Groza government, best represents the working method of the Soviets in Romania.

The end of 1947 brought to Romania a complete change of regime, both political and constitutional, and more precisely, unconstitutional. The Constitution of 1923 was suppressed, the king had no longer any role, than the former king of Romania; historical parties were already history, the Parliament was now consisting of a single room and was called the House of Representatives, where the communists controlled any decision and the executive management of the state was exercised by a five-member Presidium, totally subservient to the new regime. Romania was no longer a kingdom, but a popular republic.

The control over Parliament was the factor that could speed up the communization of society, economy, and law and, not least, the constitutional order. A first step is done by amending the electoral law regarding legislative elections by lowering the age to 20 years for electors and 23 years for candidates.

A sole party, unitary and imposed by the Eastern partners, appears at the beginning of 1948: Romanian Communist Party (PCR) merges with Romanian Social Democratic Party (PDSR) and form Romanian Workers Party (PMR) during the 6th Congress of PCR (thus becoming the I Congress of PMR), held between the 21st and 23rd of February in Bucharest¹. The communist political satellites underwent reorganization processes: on January 30st, what was left of the National Peasant's Party (PNT) – the one led by Anton Alexandrescu – merging with the Ploughmen's Front.

From this point, things start to take place at breakneck speed for a normal socio-political life: on February 24th the House of Representatives dissolves itself summoning legislative elections a

¹At the meeting held on February 22, Teohari Georgescu launched a harsh attack against Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, Minister of Justice, naming him „exponent of the bourgeoisie”. Thereafter, on 24th February he is abusively dismissed from the government.

month later, on March 28th, in order to elect a new legislature, with a Constituent Assembly role.

On February 27th, the People's Democracy Front was founded (FDP), a new electoral organization, tailored to the Communists in order to simulate the exercise of democratic and peaceful assembly.

The communist machine, to which the force state institutions and governmental elements were "pulling" at, simulated the democratic election campaign without arousing political passions of yesteryear's voters, accustomed with the 1946 elections. The Election Day was extremely calm, without any major incidents. The results, published the following day, were overwhelmingly in favour of FDP: 93.2% - representing 405 seats. 7 seats were won by National Liberal Party by Petre Bejan (PNL) and 2 by the Peasant - Democrat Party Dr. N. Lupu). A new Presidium is elected², its leadership having more or less the same structure as the preceding one: Constantin I. Parhon - as president and 3 vice-presidents: Mihail Sadoveanu, Ion Niculi and Petre Constantinescu-Iași. A new government also led by Petru Groza is voted.

Shortly after, on April 13th the House of Representatives votes the new constitution of the republic, after only 2 sessions of debates, in fact a copy of the Stalinist constitution of 1936: "Soviet Russia sealed the door of the prison that has become Romania with a new Bolshevik constitution"³. Nothing was accidental, "to legitimize the changes, especially those prepared (...) the primary objective of the constitution was to provide a legal framework for implementing the Soviet model"⁴.

The very first article of the new Constitution presents Romania as a "popular state", and the second one stipulates that the republic was formed as the result of the working class and the struggle of people against "fascism, reaction and imperialism". All the civil rights and

²Consisting of 19 members.

³Reuben H. Markham, *România sub jugul sovietic* [Romania under Soviet yoke], Bucharest, Civic Academy Foundation, p.439.

⁴Gheorghe Sbârână (coord.), *Constituțiile României: studii* [Romania's Constitutions: studies], Târgoviște, Cetatea de Scaun, 2012, p. 67.

freedoms were granted, the elective age was lowered once again to 18 years, and women were given full and equal rights to men. Although rights⁵ „in all fields of state, economic, social, cultural, political and private law” were proclaimed in the constitutional text, these were not granted. A constitutional novelty was represented by the establishment of constitutional Presidium of the Grand National Assembly which had the role of a chief of state (a president, three vice presidents, a secretary and 14 members). The „supreme executive” body was the government.

As far as the administrative – territorial division is concerned, the new constitution stipulates a new delimitation of local authorities’ competences and of the territories under their administration. Thus, the new entities are: communes, *plăși* (sg. *plasă*)⁶, counties and regions. Locally, the people’s councils exercised the power. Territorial redistribution was not immediate, but became effective the following year.

Law no. 17 dated January 15, 1949⁷, established, transitorily, the new organs – the popular councils, coordinated by a „stat commission” functioning in addition to the Council of Ministers. The popular councils functioned in communes, *plăși* and counties (art. 1).

The communes were rural or urban (art. 5), the rural ones were represented by villages and hamlets (art. 6) and the urban ones were „population centres”, established by the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, residence or not of the county (art. 8).

The *plăși* were formed by villages (urban or rural) and were not the residence of the county (art.10). Several *plăși* formed a county. Territorial – administrative units with common interests formed the *plăși* and counties (art.10, 11).

⁵„Freedom of conscience and religious freedom”, „individual freedom and of a citizen is guaranteed”, „the domicile is inviolable”, „freedom of the press, of speech, of assembly, of rallies, convoys and demonstrations are guaranteed”, „right to associate and organize”, „citizens have the right to education”

⁶A new and original administrative-territorial unit, a subdivision of a county.

⁷Published in Monitorul Oficial [The Official Monitor], Part I, No. 12/15 January 1949.

Communes, *plăși* and counties were led by the People's Councils consisting of municipal deputies, *plăși* representatives or county ones, and the leadership that is the Executive Committee, was provided by a president, vice presidents, secretary and members. The number of executive members depended on the represented entity: 11 in the capital of the republic, 5 for counties and urban communes county residences and 3 at the districts of the capital and rural communes (art.20-22).

A year later, on the 23rd of July 1950, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (CC of PCR) and the Council of Ministers uphold a series of directives, comprised in a mutual decision where as stipulated "the guiding principles for the conduct of territorial organization in order to meet local requirements and tasks that the local state power was called to fulfil"⁸.

In order to create strong administrative, economic and social units, "to ensure appropriate progress" in the fall of 1950 the Parliament votes the Law concerning the administrative-economic zoning the territory of Romanian People's Republic⁸; the law was voted on September 6, published on September 8⁹ and entered into force the same day.

The new law completely changes the existing administrative order, dividing the territory into regions, cities, districts and communes in order "to ensure the development of industry and agriculture, with the purpose of constructing socialism and raising the living standards of working people and to facilitate as much as possible the closeness of the State and of the working people, to help ensure fullest political leader role of the working class and strengthen the alliance of the peasantry with the working class" (art.1).

The regions were economic-administrative units on which the central state organs directly supported (art.3). The regions were

⁸Mihai T. Oroveanu, *Organizarea administrativă și sistematizarea teritoriului Republicii Socialiste România* [Administrative-territorial zoning of the territory of Socialist Republic of Romania], Bucharest, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1986, p. 212.

consisting of districts and cities of regional subordination. The residence city of the regional People's Council region was the regional centre (art.4). 28 regions were mapped and their capitals established (art. 9):

1. Arad with the capital at Arad City.
2. Argeş with the capital at Piteşti.
3. Bacău with the capital at Bacău City.
4. Baia-Mare with the capital at Baia-Mare City.
5. Bârlad with the capital at Bârlad City.
6. Bihor with the capital at Oradea.
7. Botoşani with the capital at Botoşani City.
8. Bucureşti with the capital at Bucureşti City.
9. Buzău with the capital at Buzău City.
10. Cluj with the capital at Cluj City.
11. Constanţa with the capital at Constanţa City.
12. Dolj with the capital at Craiova.
13. Galaţi with the capital at Galaţi City.
14. Gorj with the capital at Târgu-Jiu.
15. Hunedoara with the capital at Deva.
16. Ialomiţa with the capital at Călăraşi.
17. Iaşi with the capital at Iaşi City.
18. Mureş with the capital at Târgu-Mureş.
19. Prahova with the capital at Ploieşti.
20. Putna with the capital at Focşani.
21. Rodna with the capital at Bistriţa.
22. Severin with the capital at Caransebeş.
23. Sibiu with the capital at Sibiu City.
24. Stalin with the capital at Stalin City (former Braşov, renamed after soviet leader).
25. Suceava with the capital at Câmpulung-Moldovenesc.
26. Teleorman with the capital at Roşiorii-de-Vede.
27. Timişoara with the capital at Timişoara City.
28. Vâlcea with the capital at Râmnicu-Vâlcea.

There were three types of cities: of republican subordination⁹, of regional subordination¹⁰ and of district subordination¹¹. The capital was divided into 8 city districts, corresponding to today sectors, among which we mention: 1 Mai, 23 August, Nicolae Bălcescu, Lenin, Grivița Roșie.

The raion was "an economic, political and administrative operational territorial unit, consisting of district subordination towns and villages (...) directly subordinated to region" (art. 7). The law organized 177 raions. From the administrative point of view, the raion was subordinated to the region.

The commune was "made up of one or more closed villages (...) directly subordinated to the district". Law no. 5/1950, changes the 58 counties, 424 *plăși* and over 6000 communes, with 28 de regions, 177 raions, 148 cities and 4052 communes.

The local bodies of state power, the people's councils were made up of deputies of "working people" elected for 4 years, which could take decisions and draw up provisions. Moreover, at the end of 1950, under the signature of Constantin I. Parhon, president of the Presidium of the National Assembly, and Teohari Georgescu, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and the State Commission for implementing the Law of Popular Council, Law no. 17 of 15th of January 1949 radically changed, by Decree no. 259/1950, all the duties, responsibilities and obligations of the People's Councils being redefined. Their constituency and structure was also redefined.

⁹ A city which is "economically and politically of particular importance for Romanian People's Republic (...) directly subordinated to the central organs of the State" - Law no. 5/1950, art. 5. These 8 cities were: București, Brașov, Cluj, Iași, Constanța, Galați, Ploiești and Timișoara.

¹⁰ A city which is "economically and politically of particular importance for the entire region" - Law no. 5/1950, art. 5. These 14 cities were: Brăila, Câmpina, Giurgiu, Lugoj, Mediaș, Piatra-Neamț, Predeal, Reșița, Roman, Satu Mare, Sfântu Gheorghe, Târgoviște, Turda, Turnu-Severin.

¹¹ A city which is "economically and politically of particular importance for the entire district" - Law no. 5/1950, art. 5. These were 103 cities (Mihai T. Oroveanu, op. cit, p. 218).

The law no. 5/1950 was modified, throughout time by the laws 5/1956, 3/1960 and decrees no. 331/1952, 289/1955, 12/1956, 548/1956, 652/1956, 413/1958, 431/1958, 164/1959, 423/1959, 431/1959, 297/1960, 299/1960 and 310/1960¹².

A series of external political events, such as the disagreements between the USSR and Yugoslavia caused by Tito's "deviations", the blockade of Berlin and the worsening international situation, when a new world war seemed imminent, determined the Soviet leaders to focus their efforts on strengthening the influence in areas controlled by the communist parties and securing the already exercised control over the decision factors of the socialist camp in South East Europe. Everything to prevent dissidents and doctrinal heresies, for a rapid Bolshevization of the communist parties! This meant that any measure taken by Kremlin should have been implemented in all countries under Soviet control.

Alongside these measures, Romanian communism sees its way undisturbed, under the direction of Moscow. After the nationalization of industry in 1948, March 1949 represented the start of forced collectivization of agriculture as the result of a decision of Plenum of the PCR following the model already experienced in Soviet Russia.

Since the juridical and legislative framework rapidly changed, transgressing existing constitutional basis, the requirement of adopting a new Constitution became extremely necessary. Hungary and Poland had already achieved these goals in 1949, and, respectively, in 1952.

At the level of public discourse, Romanian communist leaders argued that change is necessary because that of 1948 was already exceeded „because of the revolutionary changes the country went through”¹³.

The new constitution passed unanimously in the Grand National Assembly on September 24st 1952, being in fact a project submitted by

¹²Mihai T. Oroveanu, op. cit, note 276, p. 213.

¹³Gheorghe Sbârna, op. cit., p. 79.

PMR in the summer of the same year. This new constitution replaced that of 1948, focusing on ideology, history and especially on how the communist regime is legitimate in relation to historical realities and the USSR. It also contained an introductory chapter where all these components were clearly defined and presented. This constitution brings substantial changes on administrative level as well. It was the turn of new realignment, after all the legislative and constitutional changes, organizations and reorganizations of recent years, copies of the Soviet model, put into practice without any sense.

The articles 18-21 presented the new administrative-territorial organizing system. First of all, the regions number is reduced to 18, „creating economical stronger administrative units”¹⁴: Arad, Bacău, Baia Mare, Bârlad, București, Cluj, Constanța, Craiova, Galați, Hunedoara, Iași, Oradea, Pitești, Ploiești, Stalin, Suceava, Timișoara and Hungarian Autonomous Region (art. 18) .

In fact, the major change is related to the establishment of the Hungarian Autonomous Region, although there is no such legal entity in the constitutional or administrative Romanian tradition, created based on ethnic criteria. The Hungarian Autonomous Region assigned 3 (art. 19-21) of the 4 constitutional articles. It was located in territory inhabited by Hungarians in Transylvania and the Sekler region and was ruled by local elected bodies.

Regarding the local management bodies, Article 51 could only confirm what already existed and was put into practice. The only change is represented by the name of the entity: the Popular Council is turned into People`s Council, thus resembling, with The Soviet. The Constitution is strengthened with regard to the administration, by Decree 331/27 of September 1952¹⁵. This would be modified by Decree no. 12/1956¹⁶ that stipulates the increase of the districts number from 183 up to 192, of communes` number from 4098 to 4313

¹⁴Mihai T. Oroveanu, op. cit, p. 215.

¹⁵Among others, the number of raions raised from 177 to 183, the municipalities number raised from 4052 to 4096 and established 27 regional cities.

¹⁶Buletinul Oficial al Marii Adunări Naționale[Official Gazette of National Assembly], year V, no. 1/ 10th of January 1956.

and reduces the regions number to 16 „because they do not represent distinct economical units”¹⁷:

1. Bacău with capital at Bacău City.
2. Baia Mare with capital at Baia Mare City.
3. București with capital at București City.
4. Clujwith capital at Cluj City.
5. Constanța with capital at Constanța City.
6. Craiova with capital at Craiova City.
7. Galați with capital at Galați City.
8. Hunedoara with capital in Deva.
9. Iași with capital at Iași City.
10. Oradea with capital at Oradea City.
11. Pitești with capital at Pitești City.
12. Ploiești with capital at Ploiești City.
13. Stalin with capital at Stalin City.
14. Suceava with capital at Suceava City.
15. Timișoara with capital at Timișoara City.
16. Hungarian Autonomous Region with capital in Târgu Mureș.

Law no.5/1956 dissolved Arad Region and divided it between Banat and Crișana Regions and also stipulated that the territory of Bârlad Region would be divided between Galați, Iași and Bacău Regions.¹⁸

The Decree no.12/1956 is modified again in August 1960, when its annex is “renewed” by Decree no. 297/1960 (several communes and villages are dissolved, their number being reduced to 4259)¹⁹. A few months later, Law no. 2/27 of December 1960 would replace Law no. 5/1950; it establishes the rule that, in the future, administrative-territorial division be made by laws that would take into account „the economic, social-political, geographical, historical and local national conditions, in order to ensure multilateral development of socialist

¹⁷Mihai T. Oroveanu, op. cit, p. 215.

¹⁸Gheorghe Sbârnă, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁹Buletinul Oficial al Marii Adunări Naționale[Official Gazette of National Assembly], year IX, no. 17/ 26 August 1960.

society and bring the state apparatus closer to the masses and ensure their wider participation of all state and public activity”²⁰. Law no. 3/1960 decreased the districts number to 142. Another two decrees bring changes to the Romanian administration in September 1960, as follows: Decree no. 299/1960²¹ dissolves several communes and Decree no. 300/1960²² moves Fetești district from the Region of Constanța to the Region of București (art.1).

Perhaps the most important legislative change in the second half of 1960 in terms of administration is represented by Law no.1/1960²³ that modifies the constitutional stipulations from 1952. These are not substantive changes, but formal ones. In naming the regions, the historical origin of their names is reused (by amending art. 19 of the Constitution):

1. Argeș
2. Bacău
3. Banat
4. Brașov
5. București
6. Cluj
7. Crișana
8. Dobrogea
9. Galați
10. Hunedoara
11. Iași
12. Maramureș
13. Mureș – Hungarian Autonomous
14. Oltenia
15. Ploiești
16. Suceava

²⁰Mihai T. Oroveanu, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

²¹Buletinul Oficial al Marii Adunări Naționale [Official Gazette of National Assembly], year IX, no. 18/ 8 September 1960.

²²*Ibidem.*

²³*Idem*, no. 27/27 December 1960.

Decree no. 177/1964 brings several changes to the annex of Law no. 3/1960 by dissolving a part of the communes²⁴.

The "premature" disappearance of Stalin and internal struggles to designate a successor (the winner being Nikita Sergheevici Hrușciov) caused, as a domino effect, reactions and disorders in all Eastern European countries under Moscow control. Hrușciov, in a war with Stalin's legacy, prefers to expose the regime's atrocities in order to portray himself in a positive light, a providential one, launching a furious attack against all the characters enforced by Stalin in various positions not only within the USSR but also in the communist parties led by loyal leaders. This fact became obvious along with the start of de-Stalinization process opened by the presentation of Hrușciov's secret report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Feeling concerned by the changes initiated in Moscow, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej turns towards the Western countries adopting several national strategies in order to strengthen his internal position. The Romanian leader manages to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet troops stationed in Romania enjoying "the prestige he had obtained in the eyes of Hrușciov" after the fail of the Hungarian Revolution in 1958²⁵.

The Chinese-Soviet differences, the tensions between the USSR and China, and Romania's position as a mediator in this conflict have made possible the independence manifestations of our country within the Communist bloc without fear of repercussions coming from outside. The Declaration of April, as it is known in history, claimed that no other Communist Party could impose "its model and that relations between the communist countries should be based on respect for the independence and non-interference in internal affairs"²⁶.

The estrangement of Moscow's policy and ideological changes led to the change the constitutional framework and its adapting to the

²⁴Idem, year XIII, Nr. 5/20 April 1964.

²⁵Gheorghe Sbârna, op. cit., pp. 90-93.

²⁶Ibidem, p. 93.

new political realities. Grand National Assembly elected on March 7th 1965 ordered the establishment of a commission that would revise the Constitution of 1952.

The Party Plenum approved the Constitution revision project on June 28. The constitutional project is assumed and voted at the 4th Congress of PMR, which becomes the 9th Congress of PCR, the Party changing its name into Romanian Communist Party (PCR). Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej had already died (19th of March), and the leader of the party was elected Nicolae Ceausescu, his protégé.

The New Constitution is voted on the 21st of August 1965 and promulgated the same day. The name of the state is changed again into the Socialist Republic of Romania (RSR). Concerning the local administration, the 5th Title reiterates the powers and duties of local administration, of people's councils, still composed of a president, vice presidents and members.

In the administrative area, the first change is made on February 16th, 1968 in Law no. 2/1968²⁷. The Central Committee Plenary of PCR held between 5th-6th of October 1967 proposed new principles for the administrative - territorial reorganization of the country, the changes being adopted at the National Conference of PCR held between 6th-8th of December 1967.

Once adopted, the law brought along important changes; but the most important change of all is the dissolution of regions and districts, reorganized as traditional counties. The villages and cities would be led by mayors and municipalities are reinstated. The territory of Romania was divided into 2706 communes, 189 cities, 47 municipalities, 39 counties and Bucharest with 8 districts.

Amended several times during 1948-1965, Romanian territorial-administrative system was one of the most difficult issues that interested the leaders of People's Republic of Romania. Modelled on Soviet standards, the provisions of the laws in this field have introduced political and administrative realities for constitutional

²⁷Buletinul Oficial al Marii Adunări Naționale [Official Gazette of National Assembly], Part I, year IV, no. 17-18/17 February 1968.

tradition in our country. The implementation of the regions and districts as administrative units and the creation of the Hungarian Autonomous County Region (1952) represented foreign legislative innovations of the previous Romanian political and administrative before the installation communist regime. Amended and updated several times, the political and administrative structure of the country reflected the relationship that our state has with the USSR. When these relations were normal, Romanian legislators faithfully transposed Soviet organization, and when relations worsened, leading ultimately to a genuine distancing, certain provisions are abandoned. Thus, up to Law no. 2/1968 Romania remained faithful to the model outlined by the USSR. This law represents the foundation for the large-favourable trend, close to our spirit and tradition in terms of administrative-territorial organization.

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ACADEMICS & BOOK REVIEWS

2nd International Conference Politics. Diplomacy. Culture Craiova, 10-13 of June 2015 -

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„Alexandru and Aristia Aman” County Library, together with „Alexandru and Aristia Aman” Foundation as organizers, and The Romanian Academy, „C.S. Nicolaescu Ploșor” Social-Humanist Sciences Institute - Craiova, Scientists Academy of Romania, the Archaeological and Historical Sciences Department of the University of Craiova, the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences - Social Sciences Department, as partners, organized during 10th - 13th of June 2015 the second edition of the International Conference Politics. Diplomacy. Culture. The works of the conference lasted two days, 11th -12th of June, and were held at „Alexandru and Aristia Aman” County Library of Craiova, Romania.

The conference was organized into four sections, integrating communications and studies from different research fields: political sciences, international relations, cultural studies, history, economy, European studies, philosophy, archaeology, cultural patrimony, diplomacy, law, political parties, sociology, religion and church history, education, media and communication. The event addressed to members of the Academy, professors, researchers, PhDs, MAs, students and all others interested in the fields mentioned above.

The Conference was held in Romanian and English, simultaneous translation being provided. The articles and communications will be published in *Journal of Humanities, Culture and Social Sciences* or in “*Românii în Istoria Europei*” (*Romanians in Europe’s History*), vol. III.

There were no taxes for participation and publication!

The second edition of the Conference *Politics. Diplomacy. Culture* gathered over 130 participants. The works and papers presented in plenary sessions, discussions and debates which resulted from last hour interpretations and analyses represent a benefit and a salutary fact for each participant. The 13 volumes launched during the conference brought to the attention of the public titles in areas regarding media, history and diplomacy on the one hand, and theology and culture on the other. The event was highly reflected in local and national media. Moreover, the event itself was granted wide spaces in written and online press, and several professors that took part at the conference works, were invited to TV shows organized by TVR Craiova, and Digi 24 Craiova.

The opening of the „Cultural Craiova” photography exhibition, made by one of most talented photographers – a Romanian journalist, came alongside the traditional sections of the conference, the effective panels and the 13 book launches. The exhibition displayed over 30 photographs, mostly snapshots, taken during cultural events held in Craiova.

The conference was included in a series of events and cultural manifestations organized in Craiova, in support of the city’s candidacy for the title of European Cultural capital in 2021. As part of these important cultural events, the conference received the support of the Dolj County Library and Municipality of Craiova. Thus, the County Library is not only the host of the event, but also one of the local institutions that endeavours to generate cultural projects each month and each day.

Ovidiu Cristea, *Puterea cuvintelor: știri și război în sec. XV-XVI [The Power of Words: News and War in the 15th and 16th centuries]*, Târgoviște, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, 2014, 390 pp.

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How did the news appear? How did it travel, from who to whom and what route did it take? How much did it cost? How was it used to manipulate people? These are just a few questions that the author Ovidiu Cristea addressed in his book suggestively entitled *Puterea cuvintelor (The Power of Words)*, a book dedicated, as can be read in the subtitle, to the news about the war that circulated in the 15th and 16th centuries, on the territory of the Romanian countries and the Ottoman Empire and on the Italian territory, especially in Venice. Except for the introduction and the conclusions, the book has three extensive parts – the first part is dedicated to the information/news as a historical subject, the second part analyzes the way in which the mechanism of producing, distributing and receiving news functioned, highlighting its functional segments, and the third part contains several case studies that prove very useful for the better understanding of this subject. The book seems to have been written not only for the reader interested in history, which finds in the second part of the book an excellent synthesis of the elements that are comprised in news and that activate it, but also for the researcher who, in the third part of this book, appreciates the elaborateness of

the manner in which the information about the wars is presented and the carefulness in analysing the sources.

As the author declares in the introduction to this book, the research for this topic was difficult because of „several important handicaps”, the first one being represented by the sources (p. 20). Ovidiu Cristea makes several references to the sources, trying to comprehend what the sources actually transmit; thus, referring to a letter dated 9 July 1480, in which Stefan cel Mare/Stephen the Great tried to find out from the inhabitants of Brasov as many information as possible about a potential Ottoman attack, the author does not only reproduce the information contained in the document, but “asks” himself some questions: „Why did Stephen ask the inhabitants of Brasov when, as he confessed, had spies in the Ottoman country? Did he have more trust in the information received from the Transylvanian fortress? Was he trying to test their loyalty? Did he want to compare this information with the news he got from his men?” Since, as it was the case in many situations, the reply of the inhabitants of Brasov was not found, the historian does not venture in offering an ambiguous answer, pointing to the fact that to all the questions asked „there is any possible situation or even all these situations put together” (p. 67).

Alongside the correspondence of Stephen the Great with Brasov and Sibiu, the letter exchange between the rulers of Wallachia and the same German towns in Transylvania is dealt with extensively in the first part of the book. This letter exchange has several characteristics: the absence, in many cases, of the replies to the letters of the Wallachia princes, the researcher being exposed to only “half of the dialogue”; the partial or integral vocality of the message sent by the Wallachia princes („many of the letters contain, regardless of the one in power at the time, the stereotyped formulation: «And what [messenger] tells you, you’d better believe it, because these are the true words of my lordship»”); establishing the chronology and identifying exactly the authors of the epistles; the different commercial orientation of the two Transylvanian towns („Brasov

seems better placed for the commercial activities with Wallachia and Dunărea de Jos/Lower Danube, while Sibiu was better oriented towards Central Europe") (p. 89-90).

The reader is gradually acquainted with the way in which the news was collected, following the couriers, their routes and the receptors, and finding out about the information price. „Our spies”, „my scouts” or *explorator secretus* are just a few of the words used to designate those who in the Middle Ages were involved in collecting and transmitting information. For the future historians, a test of their professionalism and skill is to identify „the spies”, because „the signs they had left in the documents are rather confusing [...] sometimes impossible to identify, since a genuine spy does not leave any marks, or even worse, leaves misleading proof” (p. 164). The profile of a spy is a complex one: people sent with clear missions to obtain information, merchants that transported goods, but also news from the countries they were passing through, or even artists (as the Spanish painter Velázquez, which was suspected by the Italian ambassadors in Madrid of deeds that were not related to painting). On other occasions, the face of the informant was hiding under „a conspirative name”, as was the case of the town of Ragusa, which sent to the Western world information about the Ottomans, under fictive identities, Tarquinio Sanctone or Lucio Pisone were only two of the names used. It should not be neglected the „diplomatic scandal” generated by spying; thus, in 1492, at the order of Baiazid II, Girolamo Marcello had to leave the Ottoman Empire, being accused of disclosing secret information.

Ovidiu Cristea underlines the importance of news from a humane perspective, a perspective which involves a complicated network of people. „An informant is the one who gives life to the news, but the courier offers it mobility, assures the reach of the destination. The courier’s worst enemy seems to be the distance, and the space domination is the main concern of the news” (p. 177-178). The world of the couriers is a world of records – 150-200 km could be covered in one day by a western riding courier (p. 178), while in the

east, a certain Baraka had travelled 300 km in one day and one night (p. 184). Having to cover long distances, the pedestrian couriers from the Ottoman Empire were often seen as possessing super-human qualities; contemporary western chronicles stated the fact that they could „run in high speed and had the skin of their feet so thick that, some say, if they were to shoe themselves like horses, they would not have felt the pierce of the nail” or that „during their childhood, their spleen had been removed so that not to feel any pain or exhaustion while running”. (p. 184)

An interesting conclusion regards the routes that had been taken to transmit information during the time and in the space of the centuries discussed in this book. „Thus, the geographical representation of the route of the news would not be a continuous line, but a succession of segments of variable lengths. Sometimes, the route seems to be a straight line, but most of the times it is a broken line.” The Romanian territories were part of the so-called infrequently used information routes. In this case, „the news circulation seems more like a relay race, in which the one that receives the information takes the responsibility to transmit it further” (p. 194). „The end of the line” of the news is „the addressee of the letter”. „In reality, this is in many cases just a new moment in the life of the news.” (p. 197)

In order to estimate the price of the news, the historian gives two examples referring to Venice: that of Piero Bragadin, present in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent („expenses during peace time”) and that of Piero Pasqualigo, the ambassadors of the Marciana Republic in Hungary, during the war between the Venetians and „The League of Cambrai” („expenses during crisis”). The thorough investigation of the archive documents, led to the conclusion that Bragadin had used 15.82% of his yearly expenses for the payment of the messengers who transmitted various news. Even if for Pasqualigo the percentage of the sums spent for communicating information could not be established, since the sources were not as accurate and comprehensive as in the case of Bragadin, the conclusion was that

„Pasqualigo had spent in the first six months of his first year of his mission at the Ottoman Porte almost as much as his homologue in Istanbul had spent in one year.” (p. 217)

The work ends with five case studies, which are symbolically introduced in a „story bag”. In the chapter entitled *Cacealmaua/The Bluff*, the author describes the way in which the Ottomans had managed to launch certain news so that to mislead the Venetians in the second half of the 15th century. Ovidiu Cristea brings forth two events in order to describe how Venice was manipulated by the Ottoman Porte – the Turkish-Venetian conflict started in 1462 and the Moldavian-Polish confrontation in 1497. The Turkish-Persian confrontation at the beginning of the 16th century, ended with the battle of Chaldiran, is the subject of the second „story”. „«The battle of words» between the Ottomans and the Safavid, before, during and after the campaign in 1514, doubled the military conflict and, as in the case of the latter, the battle of words, declarations and gestures seemed to have been won by Selim the Grim.” (p. 289)

The chapter *Si e fatto Turcho: o poveste neobișnuită/Si e fatto Turcho: an unusual story* deals with the „Turkishization” of a Moldavian prince at the middle of the 16th century, called Iliăș Rareș, the son of the better known Petru Rareș; the events are told by Bernardo Navagero, a Venetian bail at Constantinople during that time. One by one, all the „phases” of Iliăș’ passing to the Islamic religion are related, starting with the audience at the Grand Vizier Rustem Pasha, during which the Moldavian prince expressed his desire to become a Muslim and ending with the position of Beg of Silistra, given to the one who was to be named Mehmed. Navagero concluded sadly that – the former Moldavian prince had become „from rich, poor, from master, a slave” (p. 310). Regarding the last two cases, these are „dedicated to the first two years of Wallachia’s participation in the «The Long War» (1593-1606)” (p. 32).

Half a millennium ago, people seemed very much interested in obtaining information that foretold the outburst of a conflict. Both Venice, „the capital of the news during medieval and modern times”

(p. 219), and the Romanian territories, at an informational level not very well developed, had constantly monitored and tried to forecast the „movements” of the Ottoman Empire; the Turks, on the other hand, had paid particular attention to everything that happened around them. This complex relationship has been analysed from many angles in the book written by Ovidiu Cristea, a book which, as the author admits, „has taken the entangled route of the news in the 15th and 16th centuries” (p. 372).

Lucian Boia, ed., *Maria, Regina României, Jurnal de război: 1916-1917. Precedat de însemnări din 1910-1916 [Mary, Queen of Romania, War Diary: 1916-1917. Preceded by notes of 1910-1916]*, translated from English by Anca Bărbulescu, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2014, 502 pp.

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Romanian history is not very rich in feminine characters. Surely, there are ladies and princesses of all time, but their role is rather decorative and their notoriety, quite low. Moreover, in the 20th century, negative myths were surrounding the women of those times (e.g., Elena Lupescu and Elena Ceaușescu). One character is nonetheless the exception: Queen Mary. Sometimes, lately, it seems that she is overrated. For example, a few years ago, almost all contributors of a feminist texts collection mentioned her as a model of socially and politically involved woman. This is true, but not really feminist! I will explain on request. Like any great character, the one called Maria is as complex as it is prone to simplifying reception. That's what the war diary reveals.

Some "technical" clarifications are necessary. First, the main merit belongs to Lucian Boia, a declared fan of the Queen, to which he paid tribute in his previous book, *Balchik. The little paradise of Great Romania* (Humanitas, 2014). But, with all my admiration for Professor Boia's work, I think that, on the cover page, it would have been more appropriate to mention "on an idea by", instead of "edited by". The *Foreword* is mainly short and summarized; the explanatory notes are

pretty frail and they leave plenty of characters and situations in fog. Certainly, *hard* historians or document editors have many reproaches. But, the pleasure of reading is not seriously affected. The text has something special, different from the Queen's souvenirs (covering the period up to 1918 and published under the title *The story of my life*, first in the interwar period, then in several editions since 1989) and the daily diaries (so far ten volumes, from different publishers, during 2006-2013). Talent is obvious everywhere. But the *Diary* of 1916-1917 (when the myth aroused) lacks, sometimes, "self-censorship", as Lucian Boia remarked in the *Foreword*. Maria said things more "directly" than in her other writings (p. 6).

Even more spectacular than the diary itself are the autobiographical notes (written between 1910 and 1916) preceding it. Maria recounts her childhood fairytale and her dramatic first years in Romania. The main source of sorrow was the loneliness of the 17 year girl, cut off from family and forced to live in the oppressive Romanian Royal Palace. Outside the new home, everything looked strange to her: from the elites' habits to the fact that the few trees were cut without a care. The portraits of her relatives are memorable. Carol I, the "uncle", that she sincerely and increasingly appreciated, is described as "a man who lived solely for his work" (p. 73), but he was inclined to tyrannical behaviour and sometimes had the air of a vaudeville character. The "reluctant" Ferdinand (Nando) was just the opposite, allowing the old King to dominate him, though, often, he did not agree with him. In the princely couple, things were not rosy. Between the two, there seemed to be a physical and psychological incompatibility. He "was not the man to awaken interest in a young girl" (p. 61); she was "a young girl innocent as a newborn lamb and almost as stupid as one" (p. 58). The first pregnancy seemed something "horrible, horrible, almost monstrous" (p. 70).

But the relationship went forward, willingly needed. The two came to the throne in complicated times. The years 1916-1917 were, probably, the hardest of their lives as royalty and as humans. Maria was no longer the "baby" from the beginning, but a strong woman

who would make history. Her life was marked by the death of little Prince Mircea (October 20/ November 2, 1916), her youngest son. It added the refuge in Iasi, after the occupation of the south, with the bleak prospect of exile in Russia. But Russia was seized by the revolutionary buzz, and Mary became concerned for the fate of her sister, Ducky, married to Grand Duke Kirill (considered later the "Tzar in Exile"). Altogether, the Queen shows herself as a normal woman, with all common activities, thoughts, pleasures. She was involved in arranging a residence in Iasi, talked to the ladies around, walked etc. Occasionally, she even noted: "I washed my head." Ferdinand, with his many duties, is an episodic appearance. She has quasi-permanently two men around, two pillars: Colonel Ernest Ballif (royal adjutant) and the legendary Barbu Știrbey (at that time, the administrator of the Crown Domains). The woman had several crises of jealousy and possessiveness. For example, when she felt that "my good Ballif" fell under the influence of another woman: "I am the most gentle person in the world, but what's mine is mine" (p. 300), "I would rather give up to ask any service, no matter how significant it would be for me, than to know that I'm not the only one he serves" (p. 302). It is a well-known legend that Barbu Știrbey was an "intimate friend" of the Queen. The *Diary* does not bring anything sensational. "Barbu" appears next to her day by day, especially in delicate moments. "Barbu came to tea" is a leitmotif of the story.

Due to her public activity during the war, Maria earned the nickname "Mother of the Wounded". In Bucharest, she patronized a hospital. In Iasi, she could not do this, but she spent most of the time visiting and bringing aids (including cigarettes) in many hospitals and camps. She also wrote in the newspapers many articles of encouragement. At one point, she found that some soldiers "drew the letter M on their buttons, with pen, or they scribbled my name". And she wrote: "I cannot deny that the news gives me great pleasure, as it is a sign that my words have reached the hearts" (p. 374).

However, the humanitarian activity is not the only source of Mary's legend. She had gone beyond the traditional role of wives of

monarchs. Unhappy with the men's actions (Ferdinand, Carol, various politicians and officers), she sought to intervene in political and military matters. Status and context forced her to backstage action (especially through the same Știrbey). For our history, it is important to report the discussion with the Prime Minister of the time, Ionel Brătianu, who "knows he's stronger than me, but also knows that I'm the only force that might cause grief" (p. 68). She wanted more; she wanted to exercise power directly. The "supreme exclamation" (Lucian Boia, p. 9), retained by almost all who presented the book, is: "I would like to be King - I might be wrong, but I would not allow anybody to tell lies on my account, I would compel everyone to do their duty from morning to night, with harsh words and harsh facts, if needed ... "(p. 139). Hence, a certain tension between the two crowned heads: "... the situation of the two houses (mine and Nando's) is not at all simple, natural jealousies arise and the other side, materially stronger, tries to tease our side which is recognized as morally superior" (p. 441).

Beyond Queen's expressive writing - or perhaps because of it - there is a danger, the danger of too firm conclusions. The *Diary* feeds the widespread prejudice of a weak King, sustained or substituted by a powerful Queen. It seems she was almost everything and he was almost nothing. But we must keep in mind that things are presented from one single perspective. If the attention is focused on a character, it does not mean that the other does not matter. There are still many things to be studied. In the next issue of this journal, we will present the other two volumes of the *War Diary*, covering the years 1917 and 1918.

Ablonczy Balazs, *Transilvania reîntoarsã 1940-1944 [Transylvania regained 1940-1944]*, translated from Hungarian by Anna Scarlat, Iași, Institutul european, 2014, 356 pp.

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On December 1, 1918, as a result of the Resolution adopted at Alba-Iulia, Transylvania became an integrated part of Romania. This event marked the beginning of the "Great Romania". The Trianon treaty, signed two years later, offered the juridical basis for forming the "Great Romania", Hungary finding itself in the position of having to consent to the cession of this part of its territory. This important event put a strain on the subsequent relations between the two countries. Both Romania and Hungary would come to strongly disagree in the next decades, in numerous aspects, such as the unequal treatment received, the policy and the measures applied to minorities, Romanian or Hungarian, depending on the case.

Far from being written in a vengeful manner, the work, signed by the historian Ablonczy Balazs, comes with the proposal of examining much more carefully the Magyars' projects on contouring the destiny of Transylvania. Hungary's provincial administration tried to create a concept in the population's collective mentality during 1940-1944: Transylvania - "a small Magyar universe" (p.15). These are the aspects that the author studies and writes about. Regarding the title of this book, the word "regained", as the author emphasizes, doesn't cover all the historical aspects of this problem. It is just a means of highlighting the feeling of the majority of Hungarians. It was an act

of historical adjustment - the expression of a higher authority and higher purpose, in which the natural order was re-established (p. 14).

Dedicating an entire chapter to the Magyars' conditions, living on Romanian territory during the inter-war period, the Hungarian historian presents - not very grimly - the (proven or unproven) abuses of Romania against the Magyar community living in Transylvania. It is worth noting that the Hungarian ethnic group was counting, after the Trianon episode, up to 1661000 people, namely 31.61% of the total population living on Transylvanian territory of Romania (p. 31). The political, economical and cultural discriminations were the main subjects of no less than 103 petitions released by the Magyar minorities to the League of Nations from Geneva between 1922 and 1939 (p. 41). The reclamations never achieved their purpose.

Referring to the decision of the German-Italian arbitral court, on August 30, 1940 - the Vienna Dictate- the author insists on the state of mind and spirit of the Hungarian representatives - one of satisfaction - an atmosphere that strongly contrasted with the despair existent in the souls of Romanians. Mihail Manolescu clearly summarizes the pain he had felt when reading the document which stipulated the tearing apart of Transylvania from Romania: "As I looked in all the horror of Transylvania's disintegration, I understood that my already weakened powers were leaving me completely. In that moment, I lost my consciousness". (Dictatul de la Viena/ Memorii iulie-august 1940, București, Editura Enciclopedica, 1991, p. 212).

The arrival of the Magyar troops in Transylvania, starting with September the 5th, generated strong reactions. The Magyar ethnics welcomed Hungarian soldiers with joyful manifestations (p. 64), whereas the Romanians' attitude was, naturally, a desperate one, close to helplessness. Most of them decided to hide in their homes, leaving to the church representatives the responsibility of welcoming the new leadership (p. 66). A new adjustment of the existent order came for the Magyar locals. Thus, there were numerous cases where priests, teachers, accountants - all Romanian- were victims of violence

(p. 75). As for the author's manner of presenting the Magyars' persecutions against the Romanians, it must be pointed out that even though he does not deny the atrocities committed by the soldiers and by the locals, he does indeed present it in a relative and simple manner. The method is quite easy: the justification of their actions.

What follows next is quite intuitive, but harder to accept. Along with the public employees brought in the territory, the Magyar authorities started an extensive process of Magyarization of the Transylvanian society. Out of the 56 Romanian newspapers existent before the annexation of the territory, only 9 remained afterwards (p. 85). There were measures adopted meant to change the style of ornamenting the Romanian houses (p. 92). Not even the churches – both orthodox and Greek catholic – escaped from the Magyars' revenge. Out of the 400 churches existent before 1918 – 1940, the majority of them have been attacked, destroyed, or deteriorated by the Magyar locals (p. 185). The schools and the educational system in general, has been the subject of a drastic transformation. The main objective was straightforward: the Magyarization of the teachers. In the school year 1942-1943, out of the 114 elementary schools functioning, only 8.1% of them had Romanian students (p. 191). During 1940-1944, this percentage was gradually decreasing, reaching a point of only 5% (p. 195). The number of teachers was also low. In the north of Transylvania, there were only 35 teachers. Moreover, another dooming anti-Romanian political measure cannot be overlooked. Born from the fear of Romanization and almost becoming an obsession, the only solution seems to be the transferring of the population. The place of the Romanian residents was meant to be occupied by the Magyars. The stopping of Romanization was thus energy consuming. It is also worth mentioning that annually, approximately 1600 persons were adopting a Magyar name (p. 210).

All in all, there were also many advantages too, as far as the legacy of the Magyars in north of Transylvania is concerned, the offer managing to render a more optimistic and opened view. The infrastructure, an eternal problem, became stronger during the

Magyar occupation. Railroads, streets, bridges, roads – all of these implied a lot of effort and money invested by the Hungarians. Tourism was also a sector to which the Magyars paid much attention to, so visiting the north of Transylvania became more like a patriotic duty (p. 240). The printing of touristic materials, the promotion of hotels and balneoclimateric resorts, such as Sovata, Borsec, Tusnad became a state policy. Obviously, the Jewish and Romanian hotels were sanctioned or closed. Hungarians, mostly the ones living beyond Tisa, were encouraged to visit the Transylvanian cities. The outcome was a positive one: “Transylvania has never been more present in the public opinion of Hungary than now.” (p. 254). The sanitary assistance of population, a troubling aspect up to now, had also been reformed. The protective Magyar spirit was felt as the treatments with “palinca, dried cow excrements and spider webs” (p. 269) were soon to be changed. The infantile mortality dropped and the perspectives seemed more optimistic.

Thus, there were further calculations, preparations and elaborations of new strategies and reforms. All of them were, though, to be abandoned. The Act of August 23, 1944, would end all of these futuristic projects. Only two months later, in October 1944, Transylvania in its entirety would be regained by Romania.

Juicy and well researched, written with talent and semi-objectivity to say the least, the work of the Magyar historian is not only the work of a drama (for Romanians), but also a thorough examination of a dynamic and complex society - Transylvania in times of war.

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