

## BOOK REVIEW

**Ioan Chiper:** *Romania and Nazi Germany. Romanian-German Relations between Political Necessities and Economic Interests (January 1933 – March 1938)*, Bucharest, Elion, 2000, 279 p.

The book by Professor Chiper should become an essential work for the scholars of inter-war Romanian or German foreign policy, in particular, and for those specialized in the field of history of international relations between the two world wars, in general.

It represents in fact an updated version of a doctorate thesis written more than two decades ago, a thesis which was itself the result of almost fifteen years of research in Romanian and foreign archives; it forms part of the tendency to give a more thorough treatment to Romania's bilateral relations with significant powers of those years.

Based overwhelmingly on archival sources, it represents a very successful and well-informed attempt to picture not only Romania's reactions to a worsening international context and attempts to counteract the growing German threat, but also Romania's place in the overall German strategy for Eastern Europe and the means the Reich chose to implement the latter.

In the aftermath of the First World War Romanian policy towards different states was determined mainly by their attitudes regarding Romania's new territorial status. Despite early German attempts to lay the foundation of a new relationship with Romania at the end of the war, the conflict which found the two countries in different camps and the Peace Conference that followed left a deep scar on the consequent evolution of bilateral relations. In late 1918 and early 1919 Germany was willing to sacrifice her relationship with Hungary and Austria by supporting the fulfilment of Romania's territorial aspirations in order to preserve the economic advantages gained during the occupation and to build the latter into a bridgehead for Germany's Oriental policy. All these attempts were doomed right from the start.

Despite the reestablishment of diplomatic relations in February 1921, the German-Romanian relationship was a predominantly economic one. The economic clauses and reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty were a constant source of tensions throughout these years and the depression certainly did not help with the improvement of economic relations, which seemed to return to normalcy only in 1928. At the same time the crisis in international trade forced both states to look for new markets, but a return to the prewar relationship proved impossible due to Germany's tensed relationship with France, Poland or Czechoslovakia.

German foreign policy avoided continuously an overt contestation of Romania's new borders. Simultaneously, Germany was not interested in publicly accepting the latter's territorial acquisitions as she feared complications with Hungary and the Soviet Union. Thus, Germany did not have much to offer or did not want to offer much as was the case of the repeated Romanian requests for a German mediation of the Soviet-Romanian dispute over Bessarabia. It was believed in Berlin that an improvement in Romania's international standing could only benefit France and her allies.

Despite this, at the dawn of the Nazi era German South-East European policy was aimed at keeping Berlin's hands free of all engagements. The desire to maintain complete freedom of maneuver in the Balkans would be a primary feature for the Nazi foreign policy, too, although there would be an important difference of emphasis. Central and South-East Europe would have the "privilege" of actually being the target of a highly active German

foreign policy starting with the very first months after the Nazi seizure of power. Its objective: the dismantlement of the Small Entente – as von Neurath confessed in February 1933.

Romania acquired rapidly a double significance for Berlin: as a very important source of raw materials and as a target – if not the *Schwerpunkt* – of the German diplomatic assault against the French system in Eastern Europe. Romania was also the first country to experience the use by the German Government of trade as a political weapon, but the German policy was by no means using only economic pressure. Suggestions regarding the lack of practical German support for the Hungarian revisionism, emphasizing the potential for development of the commercial relations between Germany on one side and Romania and Yugoslavia, on the other, were all part of an arsenal used by the Germans to disrupt the Small Entente and to isolate Czechoslovakia.

On the Romanian side attempts were made to separate German and Hungarian revisionisms, but this kind of efforts were completely ineffective since building a Romanian-German relationship would have also meant building a new Romanian foreign policy.

During the first year and a half of Nazi rule the punitive and rewarding aspects of German economic diplomacy towards Romania alternated, but from this point of view Romania was no longer in the forefront of Berlin's preoccupations, at least not for the moment since Germany at the beginning of 1934 had already concluded a commercial treaty with one of the Small Entente powers – Yugoslavia.

The same period witnessed a further development in German actions: supporting extreme right groups or personalities in Romania predisposed towards a greater degree of cooperation with the Third Reich. Nonetheless, it must be said that this kind of involvement in Romanian politics was on a much smaller scale and certainly with fewer consequences than previously believed.

Despite all these, in mid-1934 Romania consolidated its position vis-à-vis Germany compared to the same period a year before. But bilateral economic relations were at their lowest and the shifting international background imposed a somewhat different approach, especially in Bucharest. Titulescu, though perhaps not the best man for this job, tried to use improvements in Soviet-Romanian relations as a means of putting pressure on the Germans, tried to mediate a rapprochement between France and Germany or to emphasize the common opposition in Bucharest and Berlin towards a restoration of the Habsburgs. All these proved in the end futile because the only sound basis on which a new German-Romanian relationship could be built was for Germany to give up its support for Hungarian revisionism. In fact – the author rightly concludes – even after the fall of the alleged anti-German Titulescu in the summer of 1936, there was no such basis except for Germany giving up the very core principles of its foreign policy.

From mid-1934 till the fall of Titulescu two years later, although a rebound in German-Romanian trade was clearly visible (a commercial treaty was signed in the spring of 1935), political relations remained increasingly tensed as there was talk of a Romanian-Soviet non-aggression pact which would have meant a step further for the involvement of the Soviet Union in the security of Central and Eastern Europe. The importance of Romania increased since after the German-Polish Treaty it remained the only corridor through which Soviet power could be projected in Central Europe.

Feeling its Yugoslav and Polish flanks weakening, Romania reacted as it had done every time it saw the situation in Eastern Europe deteriorating: promoting a greater degree of cohesion inside the Small Entente and trying to consolidate the bonds which connected the latter to the West. Attempting both at the same time was to prove a double-edged sword as the Rhineland crisis was to demonstrate. The very vocal support which Titulescu offered to

France as a spokesman of the Small Entente was very well received in Paris, but it could consequently bring into the open the first serious signs of lack of cohesion inside the Small Entente.

In the meantime the Reich through its various institutions meant to implement the Nazi foreign policy expanded further more its efforts to encourage the creation of a powerful and unified extreme right pro-German political force in Romania and to short-circuit Titulescu's internal position.

Instead, economic relations were bound to improve as the German exchange crisis did not allow Berlin to purchase a series of raw materials from overseas sources for want of hard currency. Instead, Germany preferred to pay prices well over the world levels and buy these products from Eastern Europe, hoping for political gains as well. In the aftermath of the commercial treaty concluded in March 1935 bilateral trade rose steadily, although sometimes tensions mounted to a de facto commercial war at the end of the same year. The gradual improvement in German-Romanian trade found the official circles in Bucharest rather divided about the issue. There is one general tendency, though: the preponderance of the German market must be avoided and exports must be directed to other countries as well.

The fall of Titulescu could not and did not bring a fundamental change in Romanian foreign policy – neither did the Germans expect one, but the year that followed was for Bucharest one of dilemma, of necessary readjustment, of retrenchment, and maybe more important, of transition from a relatively active foreign policy to a reactive one.

Unfortunately, the readjustment had to be made against a constantly changing background. The main question to be answered was if Romania should assume new responsibilities. But it was certainly not the only one: how to find the middle road between preserving the old alliances and improving relations with the new Rome-Berlin Axis? If Romania was to assume new responsibilities, how could their denouncements as anti-German plots be avoided? In what way Romania could respond to the challenges the Anglo-French appeasement posed and what was the worth of a treaty between the Small Entente and France under the circumstances? Was it wise to simply dismiss repeated German offers to guarantee Romania's borders, especially if one kept in mind Germany's growing power?

No wonder that it was very difficult to find the right answer when at the end of 1936 and in 1937 the Axis pressures for the dismantlement of the Small Entente increased dramatically. Simultaneously, Germany extended its contacts with the Iron Guard, gained a decisive degree of control over the German minority in Romania, and in general increased its involvement in Romanian politics with an eye on the elections of December 1937. But even the period after the elections of December 1937 which apparently gave the upper hand to the authoritarian forces did not exclude for Romania the possibility of joining an anti-German combination destined to bar the German eastward drive. As a German official remarked a few days after the Anschluss and as a result of a discussion with King Carol II, "the growth of Germany's sphere of influence did not weakened, but increased" the reluctance of the King in promoting a more pro-German foreign policy.

To sum up, this book is a very useful one as it conveys much fascinating information and a very subtle interpretation. It is also a highly important contribution from one of the great Romanian diplomatic historians of the day in a more general trend to reconsider Romania's external relations in the turmoil of the 1930's.

*Division General (r) Ph.D. Gheorghe Arădăvoaicei, Brigade General Iulian Crăiniceanu, Colonel Ph.D. Dan Niță: Threats, Vulnerabilities, and Risks to the Dignitaries, Bucharest, 2002, 167 p.*

At the international level, the world suffers at this millennium beginning a situation without precedent. It is deeply marked by the irrational actions of some forces, which promote terrorism as a dividing way of international community and as a weakening of the world security.

The worldwide feature of the fight against terrorism became an unwanted component of the globalization, already being an imperative of fight and attitude for all democracies, also in the Romanian case.

The enlargement of the unconventional risks' spectrum, the diversity of the crises and conflicts generate a set of challenges, which needs a reaction based on mobility, diversity, coherence and complementarity on the international and national scale.

The *Threats, Vulnerabilities, and Risks to the Dignitaries* follows specialists' concerns in this field, in order to apprehend all aspects of this complex phenomenon and especially to find efficient ways to control and eliminate such a threat to the individual and human collectivity security.

Advised readers or those who want to know better the terrorism phenomenon might find out in this work about the classical and non-classical threats, the vulnerability's elements of the individual and human collectivity, and also about the risk factor of the contemporary world.

Taking into consideration these facts, the authors offer solutions about the analysis ways and methods of this phenomenon and some possibilities to find solutions to eliminate the risk factor, including at the decisional level. It is important to see that the authors tried to offer practical solutions, beyond theoretical approaches, in order to improve the institutional activities regarding the VIP and the organizations of security and protection.

It might be said that from the experts' point of view, the book represents a practical guide through whom the protection activity can be improved in a security environment characterized by instability and the presence of all type of threats.

The authors' effort is important especially because they see through the actual security of the environment that in the past five years we take part to an exponential growth of the aggression acts. In the authors' point of view, this situation determines important changes in criminality and human traffic prevent and control strategy, which can be applied by all the law forces around the world.

The terrorist acts against the political or military personalities and the existence of a terrorism the targets of which are human individuals or collectivities as well as the using of some sophisticated methods implied the responsible factors to study both the phenomenon and the measures to combat the terrorism.

Because of this, the structures specialized in VIP, public figures and protection of all citizens who can become targets of these violent attacks take regards and allocate important human and material resources. It must be improved the efficiency of investigation and operative instruments and actionable protocols to identify, evaluate and manage the potential violent attacks oriented to a known target, before it takes place.

The threat of using violence toward VIPs, official persons and organizations that can become targets of terrorism is a significant risk. Sometimes a threat can materialize both from the terrorist, if he is decided to accomplish his intention, and from the reduced capacity of the institution that fights terrorist.

This leads to the necessity and the utility of the threat' analysis programs. The authors consider that although the threat analyses represent a decisional act extremely important in

the settlement of the protection plans or security strategies concerning some objectives or institutions which can become targets of terrorism, the specialized institutions in this field haven't had a clear set of procedures and action norms to fight terrorism. On the other side, it is considered that not even the analysis studies made until now can offer a theoretical base, a clear set of principles and norms to shape an expert frame for the practical activity to eliminate threats and vulnerabilities.

In order to fill this conceptual gap, the authors suggested the thoroughness of three important principles, capable to focus any specific step in the analysis of vulnerabilities, threats and potential crisis management in this field.

Regarding the terrorism combat and VIP protection, the authors consider that two reaction levels are accepted: the political and diplomatical level, and the specialized institution level (strategical and tactical level).

For the first level, considering the past years threats addressed to the official and public persons became current facts, it is insisting on preventive actions which represent a very important component of the control strategy of the situation, crucial in avoiding the destructive effects of the terrorist attacks.

Regarding the second level, the operative research on the elaboration and preparation of the protection actions is very important. This activity represents a set of investigation and operative techniques used to identify, to evaluate and project the management of the risk situations, in a violent environment.

It is important to notice that the theoretical research and the practical analysis which the authors do are based on the studying of an important quantity of data from the counter-terrorism field. In order to example, 57 terrorist attacks, crimes and other kind of violent acts which took place in the last 40 years were studied. This real database used by the authors is referring mainly to the attempts with targets as state dignitaries or other public personalities relevant for the structures responsible for the security of the strategic objectives and VIP protection.

Conclusively, it might be said that this work written by Division General (r) Ph.D. GHEORGHE ARĂDĂVOAICEI, Brigade General IULIAN CRĂINICEANU, Colonel Ph.D. DAN NIȚĂ represents an important contribution to the apprehension of the contemporary terrorism aspect and especially a practical guide for those who fight this XXIst century phenomenon.

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