

The Romanian-German Relations (1940-1944) Reflected Within the Documents From the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania

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The work (as a Ph.D. in History, University of Craiova, 2007) is structured on four chapters, which are completed by the conclusions, the documentary annexe and the bibliographical list. The choice of the theme presented here – "The Romanian-German Relations (1940-1944) Reflected within the Documents from the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania" – can be motivated, on one hand, by the necessity of an objective approach concerning "a top subject" from the period of development of these relations immediately previous and during the second world war, and, on the other hand, by the necessity of a synthetically and analytically publishing of certain extremely important documents in order to debate upon them. My attempt has been equally facilitated and burdened by the abundance of information, works, studies, articles published over the time on this theme. Consequently, within the first chapter of the work – "The History of the Problem. Approaching and Using the Sources from the Archives" – I inserted the subchapter "Romanian-German Relations – History and Historiography" as a fundament for approaching though the documents from the diplomatic archives concerning the topic in discussion. What I consider that there should be stressed from the very beginning is that the works until December 1989 should be consulted and analysed very critically, but for the evident politicizing of the discourse and for the utility of the documents of archives, either Romanian or from abroad, often incomplete, but interpreted in a distortional manner. Concerning the literature after 1989, there could be noticed a curious abstention from treating this period in a distinct and exhaustive manner, even through the primal sources, the memoirs, abundantly permit this approach. We refer here, first of all, to the

archives, to the collections including the contemporaries' memoirs, to the writings of the ones which that had been both partners to the overrunning for a short period and enemies for ever, to the official documents of the time, all of them nominated and analysed – within the limits of the work contained by this chapter. The second chapter represents – I can affirm this at the very moment of my work – a first attempt in inspecting and analysing the main funds of the archives, owned by the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, which refer to the problem of the Romanian-German relations during the second world war; therefore, I appealed to a classification, even if this might be found arbitrary, subjective, in order to clarify at least from a methodological perspective the limits of the new movements within the mentioned problem. At a first stage, I made the general presentation of the funds of the archives: for creating a global image of the extremely complex problem related to the Romanian-German relations during 1940- 1944, I studied the funds that could be integrated within the category "main", but also a series of "secondary" (adjacent) funds, and in what concerns the documents within these funds – I classified and analysed them into the subchapters "Categories of Documents" and "Categories of Problems". In order to accomplish a general frame of the development of the relations between the two states there might be taken into account especially "the by-monthly tolls" edited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the secret "informative analyses", the daily ones made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and "the weekly memoirs". From the perspective of the question included within these papers, trying to make a classification as efficient as possible, in order to form, in this way, a base for the whole analysis of the respective relations, I came to the following

sorting of the problems, without its possibility of constituting an immutable fact: political, military and of espionage, economic, cultural, territorial/ethnic/of the minorities. As a methodology, it is necessary to study on the whole a problematical or chronological segment of the data mentioned or deduced from the context, of the similarities or of the resolutions on the papers, the connection of the documents located on different funds, or which can be found within the synthesis made at the end of the studied period. I would make a special mention concerning the extremely complex problem of the theme in discussion, but not sufficiently or exhaustively, and which could be finalised through a monograph, by using the documents to which I refer now: "The Romanians beyond the Borders within the Context of the Romanian-German Relations". At the same time, less taken into account was the cultural dimension of the Romanian-German relations. In attempting to present, under the light of the documents, the complex of the Romanian-German relations, I preferred to refer to this question rather thematically than chronologically. Thus, Chapter II refers to "The Romanian-German Economic Relations"; for a better comprehension and a larger orientation of their real sense, I made an analysis of their history during the interwar period, beginning with the agreement on the Protocol related to the liquidation of the German financial debts to Romania, on November 10, 1928, including the "Protocol on the Romanian-German Collaboration to accomplishing a plan for 10 years in order to recover the Romanian economy", signed on December 4, 1940: seen within the pre-Decembrist literature as a total economic subjugation towards the Nazi Germany, the consequences of this on the Romanian economy should be re-evaluated, through the documents of the archives. The direct consequence of this Protocol, within the so well-known international context, caused our country's integration within the economic system of the Axe, an aspect which I treated within the subchapter with the same name. The integration was set out by numerous official acts signed between the two parts, and which I also consider that have not been sufficiently analysed in the works edited so far. Consequently, I introduced a special subchapter – "Economic Romanian-German Agreements", beginning with the one signed in December, 1940. Although it is a

subject which has been discussed in numerous works, among which the ones of reference are Professor Gh. Buzatu's, in order to record a complex frame of the mechanisms which determined the development of the Romanian-German relations, I considered it necessary to insert a subchapter referring to "The Fuel's Problem"; during the campaign from the East, the fuel's problem – as I have already mentioned – was constantly on the agenda of the Romanian-German relations. Under the new circumstances, Berlin and Bucharest came to certain important agreements. There was no arbitrariness that all the known Romanian papers mention the fact that the bilateral agreements were advantageous for Germany. The firm position of the Romanian diplomacy within this question is very clearly expressed by one of the documents from the diplomatic archives – "Instructions for the negotiations from Berlin" – sent by the leader of the Romanian diplomacy, Professor Mihai Antonescu, on **December 21, 1942, but also** "The Note on the Romanian-German Economic Relations from October 1, 1940 until 1942", which represents, in fact, a synthesis of the Romanian-German economic relations during the respective period. The documents of the archives also emphasize a quite important aspect of the policy of economic independence that Romania tried to sustain in front of Germany: placed within the sphere of German influence and adapting to the new politico-military realities, Romania acted in such a manner that it would not lose the contact with the old partners of affairs, so that it succeeded in maintaining the commercial relations with more than 35 European, African and Asian countries. Following the approaches of the problem also from the perspective of the documents enumerated in the introduction, Chapter III takes into discussion the "Political Romanian-German Relations" from the viewpoint mentioned above. The national fundament of these relations is very clearly stressed in all the studied documents: beyond the general politico-military context which determined Romania's adhesion to the system of the states from the Tripartite Pact, there was Ion Antonescu and his close partners' desire to recover the Romanian territories lost after the arbitrary decisions of the summer of 1940. The analysis of the Romanian-German political relations, based on the historical works but also the re-evaluations of the sources of the archives

can lead to only one conclusion: Romania was not an occupied country, but it had the statute of an allied country. The 91 official documents between the Romanian Government and the German one between March 23, 1939 and February 9, 1944 prove once again the fact that the economic agreement took place between the allied states, where each of them promoted and protected its interests, by accepting only those concessions ordered by the logics of supporting a common war. Moreover, the politico-diplomatic papers, beginning with the one that used to certify Romania's integration within the political system of the Axe, the notices of the Romanian-German discussions, the analyses and the syntheses accomplished by the Romanian representatives to Berlin, all these come to prove once again the special position of Romania concerning its relations on all the plans with the German Reich. "Romania's Position within the New German Order" is the title of the subchapter where I analysed the variants taken into account so far by the Romanian and the foreign historians: either an allied country or an occupied one! The historic controversies on this theme date from the years of the war and they are subscribed, in most of the cases, to certain political interests. Romania's inclusion among the countries occupied by Germany was a constant of the allies' politics during and after the Second World War. The official politics of the United Nations guided on the same criteria as the USA that, in October, 1940, after the German Military Mission Troops came in Romania, they disposed to block the Romanian goods from their territory, on the reason that our country would have become, from that moment, a territory occupied by Germany. Passing over the statements – often dictated by the momentary political or personal interests, manifested on both sides – there should be taken into account the data from the documents of the archives and analysed the works on this theme, in order to draw some coherent conclusions. The analysis of the agreements, of the protocols and of the conventions excludes the acceptance of the assertion that focuses on the idea of a certain army of occupation which might have come to Romania on October, 1940. All is sustained by the content of the subchapters "The Fundamental Coordinates of the Foreign Affairs of Romania within the German System" and "The Romanian-German Disputes"; from the very beginning, the

relations between the two parts proved to be pretty sinuous, marked by numerous problems which either asked for a rapid solution, from the point of view of the Romanians, or could be postponed, from the German perspective, the latter taking into consideration "the general situation and the great common interests": the Romanian-Hungarian disagreement, the problem of Danube, the problem of the Romanians from the Balkan Peninsula, the problem of the Legionaries, and, not the least, Germany's intrusion within Romania's internal affairs. Normally and necessarily for a period of war, the analysis of the Romanian-German relations also includes the component of the military relations established between the two parts. Chapter IV, "The Romanian-German Military Relations 1940-1944", begins with the analysis of the causes of their coming to Romania, of the collaborations and of the disagreements established between the troops of the German Military Mission from Romania and of the Romanian troops. Besides the support it would offer, the German Military mission represented, at the same time, one of the points of divergence between the authorities of the two countries, especially concerning the supply and the illegalities made by the German soldiers on the Romanian territory. Concerning the behaviour of the German Military Troops in Romania, the documents reveal the existence of numerous abuses and conflict between these and the population or the Romanian troops. The subchapter "The Commandment Relations" takes into account Romania's integration within a coalition of the second conflagration as an inevitable act, with the mention that, from 1940 to 1944, unlike the First World War, there was neither any convention nor any agreement that would have regulated the politico-military relations between Romania and Germany; the problems concerning the operative leading of the troops were solved by the personal discussions between Ion Antonescu and Hitler, which left to both of them a certain freedom of action, by which there was taken profit according to the evolution of the military and political situation. From a military perspective, Germany assumed from the very beginning to lead the ops, the possibilities of the national commandments to influence, the decisions being reduced. The errors of the German commandments reverberated negatively on the allied armies, the concrete

example being the one of the battles from 1942-1943 on Don and Volga rivers, when the Romanian Armies 3 and 4 suffered serious defeats. The ops which took place on the battlefields from Basarabia and Bucovina, in the summer of 1941, distinguished the collaboration between the Romanian and German commandments and troops. But the serious problems started with the ops from Don to Stalingrad. The problems which turned up at the level of the commandments were part of the ones with general character which characterized, from the very beginning, the Romanian-German collaboration on all the plans. The leading forums from Bucharest interfered, with the occasion of all the meetings, at the highest level, or at the level of the ministers of resort, for regulating the disagreements appeared but for the common military actions, but also because of the way in which the German authorities would understand by respecting the agreements and the treats with Romania. In this sense, it is significant – in fact a summary of all these aspects – the Memorandum settled by Mihai Antonescu on January 9/10, 1943. The last subchapter is entitled "The Deterioration of the Romanian-German Military Relations". Even though there could be especially noticed after the ops from the winter of 1942, the discrepancies manifested within the Romanian – German military relations had existed from the beginning of the collaboration. Initially, they had not had such proportions and they had not affected in a sensitive manner the military relations established between the two parts. From the winter of 1941, the situation began to deteriorate, because of the way of subordination of the Romanian units. The intrusion of the

German commandments within the leading of the great Romanian departments generated unacceptable situations for the Romania part, such as: the non – observance of the prerogatives of the great Romanian units; the great German units on the battlefield, instead of subordinating to the Romanian army which acted in the region, took the command of the Romanian units and, through measures and orders, provoked "confusions and troubles", aspects revealed through the notes, the reports and the informative syntheses, which can be found through the diplomatic archives. The initial examination through the diplomatic documents or the ones which are under the custody of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ample and difficult due to the large number of the archived sources and of the complexity of the subject whose historic basis should have been confirmed or should have been, on its turn, the basis for a possible re-interpretation of certain facts, events, relations almost intangible from an historiographic perspective, might lead to a series of preliminary conclusions which, partially, confirm the assertions I have already referred to, and partially nuance the facts that had been already known or supposed, stressing a series of data and, finally, coagulating an image not quite clear upon what represented the Romanian-German relations in the period 1940- 1944. Mentioning the fact that the whole image we refer to cannot be naturally obtained unless we use the connected documents found not only through the diplomatic archives, but also through the ones from the Military Archives, the National Archives or the German Archives, as far as the access to them is permitted or possible.