

APPROACHES ON THE INTER-WAR ROMANIAN-POLISH RELATIONS (1919 -1939)

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Rezumat: *Evoluția Poloniei și României s-a desfășurat în cadrul geopolitic al Europei Centrale și de Sud-Est, un teritoriu marcat de mișcările specifice unui spațiu multiethnic și de eforturile inerente construirii unui sistem de securitate regională, subsumat preocupărilor generale ale sistemului securității colective. Paradoxul sistemului Versailles, dar, mai ales, vulnerabilitatea sa, a fost configurat, pe de o parte, de rivalitatea franco-britanică și de teama obsesivă a Franței de un atac german, iar pe de altă parte, de rivalitățile polono-cehoslovace și româno-maghiare, desfășurate în interiorul arealului central și sud-estic european. Anii '30 au corespuns, din păcate, erodării regimurilor democratice și instaurării, pe acest fond, a unor regimuri autoritare, dictatoriale și totalitare într-o serie de state europene, inclusiv România și Polonia, care au slăbit elementele păcii generale europene.*

Pasivitatea și conciliatorismul marilor democrații occidentale, Franța și Anglia, au alimentat și încurajat, evident cu nuanțele de rigoare, acțiunile revizioniste ale Germaniei și Italiei indirect, ale Ungariei, Bulgariei, Croației etc.

Într-o asemenea perspectivă, Uniunea Sovietică a abordat un rol de apărătoare a păcii europene, o înțelegere cu diplomații sovietici fiind vitală în accepțiunea Franței și Angliei pentru realizarea acesteia. În fapt, urmărindu-și propriile scopuri expansioniste, Stalin a putut negocia în secret detaliile funeste ale împărțirii Europei Centrale și de Sud-Est cu Hitler, în paralel desfășurându-se ample negocieri sovieto-franco-britanice pentru încheierea unor înțelegeri menite să contrabalanseze intențiile agresive ale Germaniei hitleriste.

Diplomația română și-a urmărit cu fermitate propriile convingeri reprezentate de politicieni de formație și cu vocație, formați la școala Occidentului, ea dispunând de importante legături în mediile politico-diplomatice apusene. România și-a promovat interesele politice și geostrategice reînnoindu-și alianța sa cu Polonia în 1936, conservându-și opțiunile fundamentate în cadrul Micii Antante și a Înțelegerii Balcanice, neacceptând să participe la anexarea Cehoslovaciei, alături de Polonia și Ungaria, în tragicele împrejurări ale anului 1938.

Interesele româno-poloneze au coincis, în multe din cazuri, însă perioada analizată de noi a relevat și suficiente momente de neînțelegere sau de tensiune. Este vorba de neînțelegerile și tensiunile perioadei 1932–1936, datorate rivalității dintre Nicolae Titulescu și Józef Beck și opțiunilor diplomatice diferite ale României și Poloniei. Dacă guvernarile Sanației au purtat amprenta unui echilibru – în realitate, mai mult un deziderat – între Uniunea Sovietică și Germania, oficializat prin semnarea succesivă a două pacte de neagresiune (în 1932 cu sovieticii și în 1934 cu germanii, în cazul României), linia externă a fost marcată, în pofida unor schimbări politice interne inerente, de aceleași coordonate.

Asimetria relațiilor româno-polone derivând din interesele strategice ale celor state a fost compensată de profunzimea legăturilor culturale reciproce într-o perioadă în care, Nicolae Iorga - prieten personal a mareșalului Józef Piłsudski – membru al Academiei poloneze aureolat cu titlul științific de doctor honoris causa a celor mai prestigioase universități poloneze, mentor spiritual a unora dintre cele mai importante personalități culturale din Polonia (Olgierd Górka, Oscar Halecki) – a depus eforturi practic greu de egalat pe tărâmul apropierei dintre România și Polonia în perioada interbelică. În septembrie 1939 savantul român a declanșat în favoarea

Poloniei o campanie extinsă pe multiple și variate domenii susținută de un uriaș dinamism de care doar Nicolae Iorga era în stare.

Indiferent de unghiul din care este abordată cercetarea – cel al relațiilor româno-poloneze în cazul nostru – este evident efectul negativ ale Pactului Molotov-Ribbentrop asupra destinului României și Poloniei în special, a celorlalte state din Europa Centrală și de Sud-Est.

The relations between Romania and Poland during the two world wars – unofficially, previous to 1919- left the inevitable mark of a common destiny which, in most cases, underlined the necessity of a common approach of the geopolitical problems in Central and Eastern Europe¹. Lying in a geopolitical area obviously marked by the Bolshevik danger, Romania and Poland cooperated closely and fought for their independence and territorial unity². During 1919 the Romanian army will help the Polish army to free Pocuția, an area which was once under Ukrainian occupation³. The military cooperation confirmed on this occasion the similarity between the strategic objectives of the two countries regarding the revisionist interests of the Soviet Russia. Under these favorable circumstances⁴, Romania officially acknowledged Poland⁵ on 17th January 1919. On these conditions, the renewal of the diplomatic relations between the two states – which were interrupted for 123 years because of the division of the Polish state (1772, 1793 and 1795) – took place in June 1919, by coming into being of Romanian Legation from Warsaw, and the Polish Legation in Bucharest⁶. The first interwar decade was obviously decisive for the existence of the Polish state. Thanks to the structure of the Versailles treaties the world powers admitted that the existent borders belonged to Poland but the more complicated and extremely sensitive territorial problems with the Bolshevik Russia and Germany⁷ will leave a permanent mark on its future⁸. As a skilled observer of the geo strategic realities in the early 20s, Józef Klemens Piłsudski, the creator of the Polish state, who meanwhile became Marshal⁹, initiated the idea of establishing a federation of the Eastern states which was to act like a barrier in front of the revisionist plans of Germany and Bolshevik Russia¹⁰. The project failed but Poland will draw a Treaty of Defensive Alliance with Romania on 3rd March 1921, which later became a guarantee treaty in 1926 and it was renewed twice (1931 and 1936)¹¹. As leader of the Polish state he visited Romania several times and during these visits the perspective of drawing some military cooperation projects appeared and at a certain moment the possibility of a dynastic union between Romania and Poland was also mentioned. Sincere friendship arose between J. K. Piłsudski and Nicolae Iorga, obviously the closest friend the second Polish Republic had, an authorized connoisseur of the Polish history, culture and political realities¹². Having similar objectives, Romania and Poland cooperated fruitfully during the Peace Conference

in Paris (1919-1920), in fulfilling their national objectives. Being involved in a series of military conflicts for the final shaping of the borders, Poland was involved during 1920 (25 April-18 October) in a war with Bolshevik Russia. In this context the Big Powers, especially France, tried to make Romania join Poland in this war. The Romanian governments avoided the involvement in this conflict even if the Soviet Russia refused to admit that Bessarabia belonged to Romania.

The Bolshevik diplomacy, led by the skilled Gheoghi Vasilievici Cicerin, suggested to the Romanian part that its noninvolvement in the war would lead to the fact that Russia would agree that Bessarabia belonged to Romania and that the Romanian thesaurus confiscated by the Bolshevik authorities in 1917 could be returned. On this background, the governments led by Alexandru Vaida Voevod (1st December 1919-13th March 1920) and especially Alexandru Averescu (13th March 1920-17th December 1921) had unofficial talks with Moscow diplomats in order to find a peaceful solution to the issues. The interest of the Kremlin, which was according to the evolution of the Polish-Bolshevik military conflict, was reflected by the contents of the peace plans which were presented to the Romanian government, under critical situations for the Bolshevik army¹³. But the Bolshevik already had a secret plan to invade both Romania and Poland, a fact which we found out in the archive of the Foreign Office in Bucharest. (The Romanian Fund, Special Files, vol. 42). Moreover, the massive concentration of troops on the Romanian and Poland border had the obvious purpose to create a psychological constant pressure on the two states. On the other hand, we can state, relying on the same sources from the archives that Romania allowed the military troupe and the military material for the counterrevolutionary forces to transit its territory without getting involved in the Soviet-Polish conflict. The Romanian diplomacy, excellently led by Take Ionescu, was aware of the inconsistency and especially the lack of the juridical support of the Bolshevik suggestions, insisting on the idea of establishing a defensive alliance consisting of five states (Romania, Poland, The Kingdom of Serbians, Croats, and Slovenians-Yugoslavia, Greece and Czechoslovakia), known as The Entente. The authorship of this belongs to Take Ionescu, but the political and diplomatic context made it possible for a similar project to come into being with only three states (Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom) suggested by the Czech diplomat Eduard Benes. Take Ionescu's efforts, circumscribed in order to materialize his initial plan to establish an alliance of five states, were extremely generous, involving true diplomatic tours on the route Bucharest-Paris – Prague-Warsaw. The result was, apart from creating the Entente in three, (alternative suggested by

Benes), the fact that a defensive treaty was signed between Romania and Poland on 3rd March 1921. This treaty is in fact a personal contribution of the outstanding diplomat Take Ionescu. Being aware of the priorities regarding safety, getting over the complexity of the relations between France and England, he managed to finalize negotiations with Poland during 1920, against the background of the Bolshevik-Polish war¹⁴. It was not a coincidence that this agreement chronologically came at the end of this conflict, the strategic events revealing once again the similarity of the geo strategic interest between Romania and Poland. The position of the Soviet Union regarding Bessarabia as well as the its claims over Galitia, Polish territory, inevitably led to the signing of a Romanian-Polish military and political treaty. So, a treaty of defensive alliance was signed in 1921 by which, for the first time, two states guaranteed each other their eastern borders. This alliance which, according to Take Ionescu's plan, was part of a larger one consisting of five states, was renewed every five years and established a close military and political cooperation between Romania and Poland¹⁵. Even if the efforts to make Poland join the The Entente failed, the Polish state will activate together with this alliance in order to maintain a climate of peace and understanding the Central European region. The good relations between Romania and Poland, were also the result of the attitude of the Polish community from Bukovina, a community which, though numerically reduced contributed to the materialization of close relations between the two states. These communities left their mark upon the general background regarding the relations between Bucharest and Warsaw, reflecting with maximum accuracy the complexity of the Romania-Polish ties. It is worth mentioning the participation of the Polish ethnics from Bukovina, who joined as volunteers the Legions of Józef Piłsudski¹⁶, and fought for the reconstruction of the Polish state¹⁷. Later on, the same volunteers fought against the Bolsheviks as part of the Polish army, a phenomenon which was rather warned than encouraged according to the limit, by the Romanian authorities and carefully supervised in the above mentioned neutral manner. Poland, which felt itself threatened by the Bolshevik Russia and Germany, tried to make use of the defensive alliance with Romania in order to eliminate the Germanophilia (for which, in Warsaw's opinion some political leaders from Bucharest were to blame) and also to make Romania guarantee its Western borders, a thing that was not possible. The Romanian diplomacy kept on being loyal to its traditional principles regarding foreign affairs and refused to undertake further commitments towards Poland. The close relation between Romania and Poland came in a natural way, based on the common interest of the two states regarding safety. Both Romania

and Poland had territories which were claimed by the Bolshevik Russia. As far as Romania was concerned the Bessarabian problem was very well known but we have to mention that the statute of this province had been acknowledged by the Peace Treaty in Paris on 28th October 1920, signed by Romania and France, Italy, England and Japan. As Japan didn't ratify this treaty, as a consequence of the discreet Soviet Union pressure, this issue became a vulnerable aspect regarding Romania's international relations. Poland obtained eastern Galitia, also thanks to the support it received from Romania, the two states bordering on each other now but also common responsibilities regarding the defence of their borders against Soviet Union¹⁸. The Treaty of Defensive Alliance, drawn on 3rd March 1921 was a result of this political and strategic basis. Formerly, the Romanian-Polish alliance was only supposed to be a stage within an alliance of five states which also contained Czechoslovakia and Greece. This project had been devised by the Romania diplomat Take Ionescu, who was aware of the fragility of security in Central and Southeast Europe, having the background of anticipated tendencies of revisionism of Germany and Bolshevik Russia. The territorial conflicts between Poland and Czechoslovakia then, the privileged relations on the route Warsaw-Budapest, were an obstacle for the two states to join the The Entente. The Fact that France, during the Peace Conference, was in favour of offering Czechoslovakia a bigger part from Teschen, including the industrial area, was, in our opinion the source of tension between the two states. The special relation cultivated between Warsaw and Budapest, the fact that Poland was still longing to become a regional power prevented it from joining The Entente. The Romanian diplomacy constantly tried to make Poland join the The Entente, but the only progress obtained was restricted to the Romanian-Polish cooperation within the various international events meant to defend mutual interests. The vital role in reshaping the Polish state was played by Józef Piłsudski, the very personality Poland needed during the interwar period, but also a honest friend of Romania at the same time¹⁹. Thanks to his political activity, he meant the internal and external consolidation of the Polish state. Poland managed to quickly get over the stage of the tensed relations with Soviet Union, this in comparison with Romania, which didn't manage to do this, in spite of all the efforts made by the Romanian diplomacy all these years. In addition, Romania had to face many difficulties in order to negotiate a defensive and friendship treaty with France, and when it will succeed in doing this, in 1926, the treaty will have a moral value. If, from a political point of view, we can define the Romanian-Polish relations as being very close, from an economical point of view the level wasn't the same. The low level of infrastructure, the lack of adjacent

industries seem to have been some of the reasons which originated these issues. The two states made considerable efforts to know each other, a fact which was proved by the great number of foundations created in order to popularize reciprocal culture, an additional proof that the cultural relations, unlike the political ones, were intense and deep. Special reference should be made regarding the Polish minority from Bukovina, which played an important part in making the Romanian-Polish relations more profound. The Polish ethnics proved to be loyal towards the Romanian state, and integrated themselves within the new state, becoming loyal citizens of Great Romania. They supported their conational folks during the Soviet-Polish war, while before that they had taken part in reshaping the Polish national state, fighting as volunteers within the Legions of Józef Piłsudski. Gradually, they will consider Romania their second country, being in fact the only minority from Bukovina which accepted the union with Romania without any reserve. This is the reason why the Polish minority didn't organize political parties based on their ethnic background and they preferred play an active rope within the Romanian parties, the liberal or national²⁰. The Romanian-Polish relations had a winding evolution, marked by moments of close cooperation or even passivity. If the period between 1918-1921 can be characterized as a stage when the Romanian-Polish relations were very close, after 1923, when the relations between Poland and Soviet Union start melting, the reciprocal relations were not as intense as they used to be. On the other hand, the perception generated by the activities of the Polish diplomacy after 1923 was that the interest to defend the eastern borders would be replaced by the interest of defending the western border with Germany. This new approach takes place at the same time with the new revisionist policy of the German diplomacy led by Gustav Streseman²¹. Beginning with this moment, it becomes more obvious, in our opinion, Poland's preoccupation to identify a diplomatic formula to strengthen security in the area which was meant to ensure its borders with Germany. Under these circumstances, western countries and especially England, Germany and France seem preoccupied to draw a security agreement intended to ensure European peace. The evolution of the international relations in Central and Southeast Europe must be approached in a close link to the political evolution of Poland. The historiography of the interwar period explains the winding course regarding the international relations among the Great Powers through the complexity of the German-Polish and Polish-Soviet relations. Using the chronological perspective between 1922-1926 to monitor the evolution of the Romanian-polish relations, we must take into account the tendency of the Great Powers, especially England, to remake the balance of powers through the French-

German reconciliation. From this point of view, the English diplomacy initiated, using the German connection (D'Abernon-Stresemann), the coming back of Germany on the European political stage. That referred to the replacement of *the Versailles spirit*, which blamed Germany, with *the Locarno spirit*, which meant giving up differences between the conquerors and the defeated ones. Related to the geopolitical context of the epoch, to the tensed French-German relations, the dispute for supremacy between France and England, Locarno meant an easing of the international relations. The Great Powers made concessions to Germany for the sake of European peace. These concessions started with the Dawes plan, economically speaking, and ended with the Locarno Conference, politically speaking. Indirectly, the feeling shared both by London and Paris was that these concessions made within the area of Central Europe would ensure the peace of Eastern Europe. This was made by ignoring the interests for security of the states within Central Europe, obviously meaning Poland and Czechoslovakia. Indirectly Romania felt threatened and, as a result, initiates procedures to sign a defensive treaty with France, a treaty which was supposed to contain further guarantees for security. If formerly, France agreed with this plan, later, by getting involved in the materialization of a security agreement, Renan decides to postpone negotiations until after it was ratified. After the Locarno Conference, the French diplomacy gave everybody to understand that it abandoned its own interests in Central-Eastern Europe because the treaties drawn with Romania, Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia didn't have a practical, real basis, revealing once again the wish of the French diplomacy to maintain a traditional area of interest rather than the wish to effectively getting involved in ensuring the security of this area. The fact that Józef Piłsudski seized the power meant also an acceleration of the relations between Romania and Poland. Therefore, the alliance from 1921 was renewed, by completing and extending its stipulations, and thus becoming in this new formula a guarantee agreement, by linking its contents to the Locarno spirit. In our opinion, the renewal of the reciprocal alliance between Romania and Poland in 1921 didn't necessarily mean an advantage for Romania, if we report this to the evolution of its relations with the great neighbour from the east. Practically speaking, if, according to the stipulations of the alliance drawn in 1921, the military aid was offered at once in case an attack from the east took place, now, according to the text from the guarantee treaty in 1926, military aid was offered only after all the means to peacefully solve the conflict were used, according to the United Nations Treaty, which also contained several imperfections among which the fact that it didn't stipulate anything in case the attack comes from a state which is not a member of

the United Nations Organization. But, Romania had problems with Soviet Union, a state which was not a member of the United Nations Organization and which would constantly avoid to admit that Bessarabia was a Romanian territory. In the same manner will evolve the Romanian-Polish relations, stipulated in the Guarantee Treaty in 1926, which introduced the term *erga omnes* (towards everybody)²². Theoretically, Romania got involved in guaranteeing Poland all its borders, as well as the Polish state took responsibility of similar commitments. In practice, the alliance was valid only against a Soviet attack, as the text of the technical Arrangement stipulated. In addition, there were scenarios (not at all contradicted by the situation of the international relations), by which, at a certain moment, Hungary declared war on Romania. The Polish military intervention would have been extremely difficult to anticipate, as the relation between the two states was well known meaning that it was based on a common religion and tradition, the kinship between the noble class in the two countries, even on *the conditions which stipulated that the Romanian-Polish treaty signed in 1926 was very clear regarding this aspect*. Very important from this point of view are the diplomatic reports delivered to London by its military attaché Robert B Golden from Warsaw. On the other hand, it was difficult to say if Romania, which was part of the Entente, would have got involved and be on Poland's side in case a military conflict between Czechoslovakia and Poland. With all these, mention should be made that the Romanian-Polish alliance, in fact the first alliance of this type in Eastern and Southeast Europe ensured a reciprocal coordination of the external action of the two states. Therefore, Poland mediated negotiations between Romania and Soviet Union which was to make it possible for the Romanian diplomacy to join the Litvinov Treaty. Even if the treaty itself did not mean a new stage in the Romanian-Soviet diplomatic relations, it reduced the tension of these reports, the result of it being the fact that the diplomats from the two countries began to get in touch with one another. At the beginning of 1930s the Polish-Romanian relations began to cool a bit, and this also coincided with the less amiable relations between Poland and France. The reciprocal alliance between Poland and Romania was still very important within the eastern defensive system according to the political leaders in Bucharest or Warsaw, at a time when Poland considered Soviet Union its biggest enemy²³. This is the background when the Polish-Romanian relations are renewed in 1931 when the procedure was easier than in 1926. The fact that Poland preferred to sign a non-aggression treaty with Soviet Union in 1932, it didn't necessarily mean an obstacle between the two countries but a victory (or the monopoly between certain limits, obviously)²⁴ for

the principles of Nicolae Titulescu regarding the relation with Soviet Union²⁵. It is a fact that this must be associated with Poland's tendency, which was visible especially after Józef Beck became the chief of Polish diplomacy, to consider itself a great power in that area²⁶. It was in fact the practical side of the principle *medmorze* (between the seas), which was equivalent with the space between the Baltic and the Black Seas, where, by tradition, Poland had had a huge influence during the Middle Age²⁷. If the Polish diplomacy meant to be an independent policy (or equal to the distance between Moscow and Berlin), it is also true that the balance will incline towards Berlin²⁸, culminating with the non-aggression treaty with Germany²⁹ in 1934. We find very suggestive the statement made by a French historian, who noticed that Poland didn't have any choice: "it had revived but it was too weak to become a great power but it at the same time it was too big to be pleased with the position of satellite state"³⁰. The climate which described the political and diplomatic relations between 1932-1936 left the mark of the rivalry between Nicolae Titulescu and Józef Beck, two outstanding personalities, united thanks to their common interest regarding the security of their states, but placed in opposed sides because of the different views regarding the international political stage. Nicolae Titulescu, a natural born diplomat and very well known in Europe, a fact confirmed by his upbringing and his views, proved to be loyal to the French policy and to the collective security system, being very interested in signing a non-aggression and mutual treaty with Soviet Union; in this way, he negotiated with Maksim Litvinov, the People Commissary for Foreign Affairs³¹. The steps taken by Nicolae Titulescu – motivated by the hope that Soviet Union would admit that Bessarabia belonged to Romania- did not have his rivals' approval, either for the country or from abroad. The international context in which Titulescu acted characterized its by the failure of the collective security system and the fast ascent of states such as Germany and Italy, which were in favour of revisionism, and which set an unfavorable background for the Romanian diplomat³². Under these circumstances, Romania itself was interested in order to preserve its borders, in a close relation with Germany, a maneuver hindered by the pro Soviet policy applied by Nicolae Titulescu; this policy was seen in Berlin, Warsaw and Rome as a sign of hostility and distrust³³. In Romania, Titulescu's policy was openly criticized by the Leaders of the Legion, starting with Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, together with Gheorghe Bratianu, Octavian Goga, who were in favor of getting close to Germany and, as a result, fierce enemies regarding the Soviet Union³⁴.

Other important personalities of the internal political stage as N. Iorga, A. Vaida Voievod, G. Gafencu, V.V. Tilea, Z. Boila played their own part in doing

away with N. Titulescu. Arciszewski's nimble maneuvers made around Carol II (he himself envious on Titulescu's diplomatic success)-associated with a group of factors-were good reason for the Romanian monarch to dismiss Nicolae Titulescu, on August 29th 1936, by making use of a balcanic maneuver. Practically, Gheorghe Tătărescu's government resigned in order to unite again in the same manner excepting the fact that the Foreign Affairs Portfolio was taken by Victor Antonescu, ex-minister of Romania in Paris. N. Titulescu's dismissal gave way to different discussions – positive ones in Berlin, Varsovia or Rome; negative in France or England. The remaking of the Polish-Romanian alliance after N. Titulescu's dismissal is a certain thing documentary confirmed by the evolution of the posterior politico-diplomatic relations³⁵. In September 1936, Victor Antonescu visited Poland, being very well accepted by the diplomatic and political Polish circles, aspects reflected by the press of this country³⁶. Józef Beck also visited Romania and with this occasion two countries remaking their relatively fundamental defensive strategic options to the great Eastern neighbor. The decision of Warsaw to establish new special relations with Hungary – having as basis some historical traditions and common interests regarding Czechoslovakia – raised suspicion during the political groups from Bucharest. Poland never ratified – because of some reasons already mentioned above. The treaty from Trianon, constantly avoided its duty in guaranteeing the west border of Romania. The Little Entente- association made just on the basis of a defensive policy towards the revisionist activities of Hungary, generated almost entirely during the 30's, comments against this at Versa, feeding, because of this reason, enough speculations among the political groups from Bucharest. Contrary to these aspects, Carol II's visit in Poland (25 June-1 Jule 1937)³⁷, the warm atmosphere and the close friendship relations shown by the population, of the Polish political-diplomatic groups, the laudatory articles from the press addressed to Romania and its sovereign³⁸, reaffirmed the affective part of the Romanian-Polish relations. The Romanian monarch was hosted together with his son, Mihai, at the palace where 15 years ago, received accommodation the royal couple: Ferdinand and Queen Mary³⁹. Dressed in a bright uniform of a Polish colonel, King Carol II was named, on this occasion, the commander of the 57 Infantry Regiment from Poznań⁴⁰. The following evolution of the political European scene proved the existence of some different interests between Romania and Poland, integrated in the general context of political-diplomatic inter-war relations. After Anschllus (the joining of Austria)⁴¹ accomplished in March 1938 by Germany, the revisionist politics of Adolf Hitler was aimed at Sudeti, a region from Chehia, populated by 2 mill. Germans⁴².

The Agreement from Munchen (29-30 September 1938) through which the Sudeti were transferred to Germany illustrated the peace agreement of the Great Powers and the breaking down of the Little Entente which – due to some matters we don't debate on in this paper – wasn't able to make an efficient reaction. Nothing and no one could prevent A. Hitler from making use of the Green Plan⁴³ that meant solving the issue by military occupation of Czechoslovakia⁴⁴. On the 1st of October 1938, 12 o'clock, Poland offered an ultimatum to the Czech government⁴⁵, in order to give up and clear Teschen and Friedstadt Districts⁴⁶. While during the period 1-10 October 1938, the German troops were invading the Sudeth area, on October 2, 1938, Poland occupied Teschen-Friedland area⁴⁷. Hungary took advantage of this situation in order to occupy the Subcarpathian part of Ukraine⁴⁸. Although he was a close friend to the Polish, N. Organ didn't hesitate to disagree with the Polish attitude, noticing the dangerous road the external policy of Poland had gone on, writing the following: "Does anyone believe in Poland (...), that one who took Austria and wants to take Sudation too; will he admit that on a territory which belonged once to the Wilhelm's II Empire⁴⁹."

On this occasion the political and diplomatic Polish groups wanted to have Romania on their side in tearing apart Czechoslovakia, by making use of the interest that the Romanian were showing regarding the matter of apron. 60000 Romanians were part of the community of the Romanians from the Sub Carpathian Ukraine⁵⁰. The intention of the political diplomatic and military Polish groups having Józef Beck as a leader were well known to the authorities from Bucharest place where, 15 years ago received accommodation the royal couple: Ferdinand & Queen Mary. Dressed in a bright uniform of a Polish colonel, King Carol II was named on this occasion the commander of the 57 Infantry Regiment from Poznań. The following evolution of the political European scene proved the existence of some different interests between Romania and Poland, integrated for the general context of politico-diplomatic interwar relations. After Naches (joining of Austria), accomplished in a March 1938 by Germany, the revisionist policy of Adolph Hitler was extended at Sudet, a region from, Czechoslovakia populated by 2mil. Germans.

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On the 1-th of October 1938, 12o'clock, Poland offered on these as a member of the "Little Agreement" tried to build to the disagreement of Varsities, an efficient report against the danger of dissolving C. The problem of having Romania on their side in this action of annexing Sub Carpathian Ukraine represented the reason of the special meeting between King Carol II and Col. Józef Beck at Galati, on the board of Luceafarul yacht⁵¹.

N. P. Comnen, in this position of minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania during the discussion with Beck told him that in care of the joining of Sub. U., the boarder of Romania with Russia – the most important probable aggressor of the Romanian state – was enlarging with aprox. 125Km⁵². Even though the situation of the most important communities from Subcarpatian Ukraine was a major preoccupation for Bucharest except the economical facilities, which would have been the consequence of a probable annexing of their territory, the Romanian government friendly refused the proposal made by J. Beck⁵³.

The insistent requirements of the chief of the Polish diplomatic group to make peace between Romanian & Hungarian didn't have any success, mainly due to the Hungarians who didn't accept to give up their position in the matter which involved Transylvania and the Treaty from Trianon⁵⁴.

The documents were notifying King Carol's II refusal to make alliance with Hungary characterized by the monarch "as an axis to be formed" The Romanian authorities preferred the solution of maintaining Czech's territorial integrity, being unable to do something real to stop it's dissolving admitting the measures taken by the Czech authorities in order to maintain & enlarge the ethnic consciousness of the Romanians from there, including the possibility of giving this area away to Hungary⁵⁵.

On March 15th 1939 with the help of the German troops Czechoslovakia was done away with as an independent country. Making room this way to a good reason of starting a war between Germans and Polish. During the same day, J. Beck was sending a telegram to the Polish ambassador at Bucharest offering his services to mediate the tension existed, among the Hungarian-Romanian relations through R's interest in taking part sharing the Sub. Ukraine, the area to the line Iasina-Sighetul Marmatiei⁵⁶ was given to Romania⁵⁷.

The political diplomatic circles refused to offer- a certain role in this played the position of Hungary- keeping with the lines of traditional commandments, no matter their ideological orientation. Romania also refused the offer made by Augustin Volosin, that of annexing Sub Carpathian Rutenia to the territorial areas

of Romania. Bucharest kept its status and moderation regarding these proposals, which could blow off the whole Versailles System⁵⁸.

A report of the Press Bureau of the Major State of the French of the French army was writing: "Romania is hostile and wants to preserve an union with Prague". After the annexing of that territory by the Hungarian troops (the first agreement from Vienna-November 2nd, 1938), Augustin Volosin took refuge on the Romanian territory being properly treated by these authorities. The perspective of dissolving the Versailles political system and the dissolving of the Czech state amplified, through the lack of an efficient reaction from the Little Entente and of the Balcanic Agreement, the essential partners of France in the Central Eastern Europe, the difficulties Romania had to face, caught among the revisionist interests of Hungary, Bulgaria and Soviet Union⁵⁹. In these circumstances the Romanian diplomatic side decided to grow some close relations with Germany, without letting aside the powerful traditional relations with France and Great Britain, the main supporters of the Versailles system. The aggressive promoting of the revisionist politics of Hungary imposed an extra agreement to the stipulation *erga omnes* from Romanian-Polish alliance in a way that could make possible the intervention of Poland in case of an attack at the west boarder of Romania⁶⁰. Noticing this aspect, R. Franasovici, the Romanian ambassador in Warsaw, suggested Grigore Gafencu⁶¹ on February 3rd 1939- the new chief of the Romanian diplomatic group- to make efforts in order to get Poland's guarantee regarding its border with Hungary⁶². During the spring of 1939, France and England made a suggestion to Warsaw to extend the agreements established by the alliance with Romania- being interested of course in keeping the political status in that area. Poland was against extension in the meaning of *erga omnes* from the basic alliance since March 3rd, 1939; Beck motivated to Grigore Gafencu the fact that this way his country entered in opposition with Hungary, there was an alliance treaty that was keeping them close. Józef Beck kept his position by sustaining that Poland's alliance with Romania was valid just in case of a Russian attack⁶³. The Polish's diplomat response regarding their position in case of a Hungarian attack was unclear. Beck still hoped that, a Hungarian attack on Romania wouldn't take place and in this case Poland's reaction couldn't be anticipated⁶⁴.

In order to change the position of the Polish diplomatic group regarding the matter of the treaty with Romania Grigore Gafencu had a [personal meeting with J.Beck during the evening of the 16th to 17th of April 1939, the location was a train wagon from Cracovia station⁶⁵. During the discussion Józef Beck said that "the support Romania had to offer to Poland, in case the latter was attacked by

Germany, would be illusive, because Romania is forced to have its army at its own borders in order to face any Hungarian or Bulgarian pressure”⁶⁶, by predicting that “an extension of the treaty wouldn’t do any good than upsetting Germany, which would consider this action of circling a unbearable challenge”⁶⁷. The events of 1939- the attacks on Poland on September 1st, 1939 together with the beginning of the Second World War- brought to the limelight once again the common interests of both Romania and Poland, fact that underlined by the debates of the Crown Council reunited at Cotroceni, on September 6th, 1939. The Romanian Government offered shelter to those 60000 military and civil refugees together with the necessary equipment and military technique- this was extremely nice hospitality shown by the Romanians that reflected also their sincere sympathy for the Polish refugees leaded by Ignacy Mosciski, the president of the Polish Republic and Józef Beck, the minister of Foreign Affairs.

The episode of the Polish “flooding” from 1939 correctly mentioned and reflected during the Communism by different historians, replaced the hypothesis of a military intervention of Romania against Germany, as the Romanian-Polish alliance was valid just in case of a Russian attack. This didn’t take too long, but occurring on September 17th, 1939 it couldn’t imply a military involving of Romania against Russia- the Polish state didn’t officially exist any more⁶⁸. What is more, J. Beck himself, being aware of the delicate position of Romania, asked for the replacement of the military intervention with the hosting of the Polish refugees. The analysis of the cases of the Polish diplomats and military men refugeed on the Romanian territory, the majority as accomplices of the Romanian authorities, proves that they left for Occident. This is the case of Ignacy Mosciski – an issue impossible to be analyzed in a space as limited as the present article. Due to this reason we will include the strict financial contribution of Romania till the 1st of August 1945, that was of 2.093.337.156 lei,, as it was discovered after having consulted some documents, found by us during our researches made on the Diplomatic Archives funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Bucharest)⁶⁹. In conclusion, we can call the inter-war Romanian-Polish relations strategically complex, sinuous and shaped by the defending interest towards Soviet Union.

The exact dimension of the inter-war Romanian-Polish implies many sides in different domains: economic, cultural, spiritual difficult to be analyzed in extenso in a restricted number of page as the present ones. The relations between Romania and Poland, reported to the rich, medieval tradition, were very profound in the cultural field, confirming once again the spiritual role they played on the two nations.

NOTE:

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- ² Daniel Hrenciuc, *Relațiile româno-polone în perioada interbelică (1919-1939)*, în "Revista Istorică", București, 2004, pp. 23-35.
- ³ Arhivele Militare Române (în continuare se va cita: A.M.R.), București, fond *Marele Stat Major* (în continuare se va cita M.St.M.), *Serviciul istoric*, dosar nr. 477, f. 25-209.
- ⁴ Edward Kołodziej, *Inventarz Akt Ambasady Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w Bukarescie z lat (1919-1940-1941), (do roku 1938 poselstwa)*, Warszawa, 2002, p. 17.
- ⁵ Henryk Bułhak, Antoni Zielinski, *Pologne et Roumanie (1918-1939)*, „Acta Poloniae Historica”, Warszawa, nr. 41, 1980, p. 171.
- ⁶ Daniel Hrenciuc, *România și Polonia. 1918-1931. Relații politice, diplomatice și militare*, Rădăuți, Ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită, prefață Gh. Buzatu, Rădăuți, Ed. Septentrion, 2003, p. 56-61.
- ⁷ Ioan Chiper, *România și Germania nazistă. Relațiile româno-germane, între comandamente politice și interese economice (ianuarie 1933-martie 1938)*, București, Editura Elion, 2000, p. 31-32.
- ⁸ Daniel Hrenciuc, *Relațiile politice româno-polone. 1918-1934* [Stosunki polityczne rumunsko-polskie (1918–1934)], în vol. *Polonezi și români pe drumul cunoașterii reciproce* [Polska i Rumunia na drodze do wzajemnego poznania], Suceava, Uniunea Polonezilor din România, ed. Stanislaw Iechimowski, Elżbieta Wieruszewska, 2002, p. 67.
- ⁹ Idem, *Józef Piłsudski și renașterea Poloniei independente (1918-1935)*, Rădăuți, Editura Septentrion, 2003, p. 63.
- ¹⁰ Wojcik Włodzimierz, *Józef Piłsudski in history and legend*, „Acta Poloniae Historica”, LXV, nr. 65, 1992, p. 62.
- ¹¹ Arhivele Diplomatice ale Ministerului de Externe (în continuare se va cita: A.M.A.E.), București, fond 71/Polonia, vol. 52, f. 165. *Raport din 28 februarie 1921. Legația României din Varșovia, Al. Iacovaky pentru Ministerul Afacerilor Străine* (în continuare se va cita: M.A.S.).
- ¹² Idem, *Polonia. Politica internă, martie-decembrie 1926*, vol. 16, f. 398. *Raport din 27 octombrie 1926, Legația României din Varșovia, Al. Iacovaky către M.A.S.*
- ¹³ Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (în continuare se va cita: A.N.I.C.), Bucharest, fond *Direcția Generală a Poliției* (în continuare se va cita D.G.P.), dosar nr. 1/1920, f. 114.
- ¹⁴ A.M.A.E., fond *România. Dosare Speciale. R1. Relații cu U.R.S.S.*, vol. 42, f. 20.
- ¹⁵ Take Ionescu, *Mica Înțelegere*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1921, p. 3.
- ¹⁶ Daniel Hrenciuc, Florin Pintescu, *Istoria și tradițiile minorității poloneze*, Suceava, Editura Universității Suceava, 2004, p. 97.
- ¹⁷ *Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale Suceava* (în continuare se va cita: D.J.A.N.S.), fond *Serviciul de Siguranță Câmpulung*, dosar nr. 17/1920, f. 2-15.
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- ¹⁹ Mihail Manoilescu, *Memorii*, vol. I, București, Ed.Enciclopedică, 1993, p. 29.

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- ²¹ „Revista Vremii literare și politice”, București, nr. 13 din 23 septembrie 1923, p. 12.
- ²² A.A.N., fond M.S.Z. dosar nr. 6404, f. 124.
- ²³ Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, *Titulescu, Antonescu și relațiile româno-engleze în anii '20*, Focșani, Editura Neuron, 1996, p. 53.
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- ²⁸ A.M.A.E., fond 71/Polonia. Relații cu Franța 1922-1934, vol. 28, f. 246. *Raport nr.1865, 26 aprilie 1934, Legația României din Varșovia, Victor Cădere către M.A.S.*
- ²⁹ Zygmund J. Gasiorowski, *The German Nonagresion Pact Of 1934*, „Journal of Central European Affairs”, University of Boulder, Colorado, vol. XV, aprilie 1955, p. 5; Daniel Hrenciuc, *Tratatul de neagresiune germano-polon din 26 ianuarie 1934. Unele considerații*, în vol. *Istorie și Societate*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2005, p.175.
- ³⁰ Piotr S.Wandycz, *O istorie a Europei Central-Răsăritene*, București, Ed. All, 1998, p. 226.
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- ³⁷ A.A.N., fond Ambasada Poloniei la București (Ambasada RP w Bukareszcie), *Raport al atașatului militar al Poloniei la București semnat de lt. colonel. Tadeusz Kowalewski*, f. 116-119; Carol al II-lea, *Între datorie și pasiune. Însemnări zilnice (1914-1939)*, Ediția a II-a, vol. I, București, Editura Curtea Veche, 2003, p.188.
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