



ORIGINAL PAPER

Great Romania under the Menace of the European Extremism and Revisionism

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Abstract:

In this article, there is presented the way in which the adversaries of Great Romania made efforts to fight for its dismemberment, immediately after 1918. The Great Union coincided with the revolution from 1917, and the reinvigoration of revisionism, due to the degree of permissiveness in the Peace Treaties from Paris-Versailles, 1919-1920. The actions meant to destabilise Romania were carried out both from the interior and exterior. There were subversive, violent actions, coordinated by the Soviet and German secret services.

Romania did not manage to have a position on the international plan for counteracting the effects of the German and Soviet proximity, which had been foreseen by the diplomat Nicolae Titulescu. In the 22 years, the period Great Romania resisted, there could be seen how complex the evolution of the internal and external politics was, promoted by the decisional factors from Bucharest. The conclusion is that the degradation of the international political system, the ascension of the revisionism, the lack of a coherent dialogue between the representatives of the Romanian political currents, the emerging and the evolution of the extremes represent the causes that led to the collapse of Great Romania, in the summer of 1940.

Keywords: *right extreme; left extreme; Germany; USSR; revisionism*

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Introduction

In the present article, there is to be presented the way in which the Great Union from 1918 was influenced by both the internal and external context. Undoubtedly, the strongest influence was that of the revolution from 1917, which took place in Russia, and changed the ratio of forces from the Eastern Europe, and determined Romania, along just a year-long period, to pass from the agony created by its disappearance as state, to the euphoria of the Great Union.

In historiography, there is the general perception that the Great Union from 1918 represented the result of the common fight of all the political forces from Romania. Although the Great Union was saluted and celebrated as the most significant event that put an end to the modern era of Romania, as a major success that would be experienced after centuries of aspirations on addressing the national unity and the independence, this significant event had numerous adversaries, which became noticeable during the following political evolution. Romania transformed into a middle-sized state, with a population of 18 million dwellers. Its natural resources and the agricultural production made Romania, during 1918-1920, a country that showed great potential. Nonetheless, Great Romania did not know how to consolidate its status, and how to advance on the way of the democracy. The responsibility of the failure cannot be attributed exclusively to the internal political background. Unquestionably, it played a determined part. But it ought not to be neglected the external context. It must not be forgotten that the spectre of extremism imposed itself in states with a richer democratic tradition than that of Romania. It is certain that a conflict occurred between the right and the left extreme was being orchestrated by Germany and USSR. The civil war from Spain is an extremely important example for this respect.

The system of Versailles had been “a Napoleonic peace with Wilsonian clauses”, as it was briefly put by Ionel Brătianu. This politician had imposed his will for the recognition of the historical rights and the Great Union (Moisuc, 2007:97). He resigned, as a protest against the fact that Romania was about to not be acknowledged as winning state, bringing forward reproaches on addressing the separate peace with the Central Powers from May 1918. Romania defended its point of view, the Great Union was acknowledged, but the problems did not stop there. It was needed, immediately after 1920, an active Romanian diplomacy and an equally responsible political class. The revisionism was born almost immediately after the Treaties from Paris-Versailles from 1919-1920. Furthermore, the extremist agitations sustained by Germany and USSR contributed to the erosion of the basis on which Great Romania had been founded, starting with 1921-1924.

Gradually, Germany escaped of the initially draconic conditions, but it assured its alliance with USSR, which had not been yet acknowledged. After 1933, although different as ideologies, Germany and USSR began a very close collaboration, especially military, owing to the fact that Germany had been forbidden the arming. USSR was looking for the right moment when it would enter the international arena, on the place that had been once occupied by the Tsarist Russia.

Generally, the historians and the political scientists have the tendency of omitting an essential element: the fact that the Great Union took place in the midst of the Russian civil war, unleashed after the success of the Bolshevik counter-revolution from the 25th of October/ 7th of November 1917. In the summer of 1917, Romania was heroically defending its severely affected national structure, yet, after the Soviet Russia had made

separate peace with the Central Powers in 1918, Romania, with the agreement of the collaborationist government led by Marghiloman and installed on the 5th of March 1918, realised, on the 27th of March/ 9th of April 1918, the union of Bessarabia with Romania, at that time reduced territorially to Moldova. On the 24th of April/ 7th of May 1918, Romania also concluded a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers, signed at Buftea/Bucharest, but never ratified by the Parliament from Iași, a peace annulled after the re-entering to the war, on the 10th of November 1918 (Neagoe, 2007: 441-446).

The War for National Reunion Revolution from 1917

The year of 1917 was finding the Kingdom of Romania and the Russian Empire on the same side. Romania had sent the national thesaurus in the Tsarist Russia, whose dominating dynasty, that of the Romanov, was kindred to Queen Mary, the wife of King Ferdinand. Queen Mary was the niece of Queen Victoria, but also the first cousin of tsar Nicholas II. In April 1917, when the tsar had already abdicated and the Kerenski government had been installed, Romania was continuing sending certain parts from the thesaurus in Russia. The Kerenski government was carrying on fulfilling the obligations expressed by the tsar, to continue the war, but the Bolshevik revolts were also present. In April 1917, Lenin had arrived in Sankt Petersburg, presenting his well-known “Theses from April”, but they did not have the expected success and he had to seek refuge again, waiting and fuelling the dissatisfaction of the population on addressing the continuation of the war.

Thus, the Romanian-Russian cooperation on the eastern front was seen as a milestone for Romania’s surviving, on one side, and for the triumph of Lenin’s ideas, on the other side. Romania, through its Royal Court was seen as an enemy in 1917.

After the 25th of October/ 7th of November 1918, Vladimir Ilici Lenin sent to Iași, in Romania, one of his trustworthy men, Simion Grigorievici Roșal (Mitican, 1983:184,185), with the purpose of organising a base for a revolution, and to take the control over the Russian troops, that were to be made Bolshevik. S.G.Roșal was leading a group of 80 fighters that captured the military unit, quartered at Socola. There, Roșal planned, along with Christian Rakowski, an assault upon King Ferdinand. Moreover, with Rakowski, Mihail Gheorghiu Bujor, Ion Dissescu and Alecu Constantinescu were intending to form a Romanian Bolshevik government.

On the 22nd of December 1917, with the agreement of the Entente, and also that of the Central Powers, the Romanian troops entered in Bessarabia. The new declared Moldavian Democrat Republic, on the 2nd of December 1917, through its leadership, the Council of Directors, had asked the Romanian Army to interfere for avoiding the annexation to Ukraine (Poștarencu, 1998: 162-163).

At Iași, the negotiations between S.G. Roșal and general Dimitri Șerbacev, the commander of the Russian troops that were activating in Romania, carried out in Iamandi’s house from Copou quarter, on the 9th of December 1917, ended with the arresting of the Bolshevik by the Ukrainian guard, led by general Șerbacev. The Russian general asked for the support of the Romanian Army, and the Romanian prime minister, Ionel Brătianu, granted it. The Bolsheviks surrendered, without opposing any major resistance, and they were arrested, and later expelled, over Prut.

The Bolshevik government, on the 26th of January/ 8th of February 1918, ordered the confiscation of the thesaurus, and the ceasing of the diplomatic relationships with Romania. That meant the fact that Romania had, at the beginning of 1918, an external

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enemy, the Central Powers, but an internal one too, the former ally, Russia, which, at that moment, had its army in total disorder (Hobsbawm, 2003:99).

Negotiations and misunderstandings between the Kingdom of Romania and the Soviet Russia

After Soviet Russia signed the Peace Treaty from Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers and the preliminaries of the peace treaty with the Central Powers, from Buftea, that Romania signed on the 20th of February/ 5th of March 1918, the Russian troops left the Railway Station from Socola, on the 24th of February/ 9th of April 1918.

All these events determined the Bolsheviks to declare, on the 23rd of January/ 5th of February 1918, the state of war between Romania and the Autonomous Superior Council (RUMCEROD) from Odessa (the nearest city to Romania, controlled by the Bolsheviks) and to arrest the Romanians (civilians and soldiers) from the Odessa colony.

After the Peace Treaty from Brest-Litovsk, from the 3rd of March 1918, Romania was at the Central Powers' mercy. The Russian soldiers committed acts of indiscipline and even tried an intense Bolshevik propaganda in Moldova. In this context, general Alexandru Averescu also attempted an agreement with the Bolsheviks, a decision which might have been fatal for his career, equating with a betrayal. It is the infamous "Rakowski-Averescu Agreement", signed between the 20th of February/ 5th of March and the 23rd of February/ 8th of March 1918, considered to be an agreement between Romania and RUMCEROD from Odessa, signed by the Romanian prime minister and the ministry of the external affairs, general Alexandru Averescu and the RUMCEROD representative from Odessa, Dr. Christian Rakowski (Andone et al., 2013:222-225).

It has been speculated greatly on addressing this document, on the fact that it could be interpreted as a consent regarding the retreat of the Romanian troops, which, already in Bessarabia, on the 25th of January/ 7th of February 1918, had occupied Bender (Tighina), trying to cross the Dniester. Practically, General Alexandru Averescu would have promised the evacuation of Bessarabia, in two months (excepting 10 000 Romanian soldiers that would assure the guard of the Romanian storehouses and the security of railway transport), a fact that that was presented by I.G.Duca in his Memoires.

The politician I.G.Duca had been right, the Soviets denounced that Romania had infringed the agreement. General Alexandru Averescu had justified the signing of the document with the intention to avoid the conflict with the Central Powers, and Soviet Russia too, and "*the Romanian occupation from Bessarabia*" was taking it into consideration, from the tactical and military point of view, while the Soviets were regarding it as a political acceptance. The Soviets affirmed that the union of Bessarabia with Romania would have been influenced by the presence of the Romanian Army in Bessarabia, a fact strongly contested by the Romanian historiography that was declaring the State Council decided the Union, without the influence of the Romanian Army.

On the 27th of February/ 12th of March 1918, the RUMCEROD representatives from Odessa fled due to the entering of the Central Powers troops, according to the agreement from Brest-Litovsk, and the Romanians signed the preliminary agreement from Buftea with the Central Powers, on the 20th of February/ 5th of March 1918. The Moldavian Democratic Republic did not take part in this agreement, and this fact, owing to the circumstances (the fleeing of the Bolsheviks and the agreement of Romania with the Central Powers) became null by right (Otu, 2009:218).

Ionel Brătianu would use Constantin Argetoianu, who was thought to have advised Alexandru Averescu to sign the act, in order to determine Averescu to join

politics. The terms “*the retreat of the Romanian troops from Bessarabia*”, in two months, and “*Romanian occupation in Bessarabia*” would later constitute two faults registered in the military and political file of Averescu, with the possibility to send him before the Court Martial. General Averescu had enjoyed the unanimously acknowledged popularity on the battle field, and the necessary time, after 1918, to make the agrarian reform, could have been shortened, until PNL, led by Ionel Brătianu, would have removed the consequences that the war had generated on the party’s popularity.

The incidents from Socola and the “Averescu-Rakowski Agreement” did not represent the only challenging moment during 1918, the year of the Great Union.

The influence of the internal and international political background, on the evolution of Great Romania

The socialists from Romania were protesting against the difficulties generated by war, a war which they had condemned previously, even if it had been fought for the reunion of Romania. On the 13th of December 1918 there had been several strikes in Bucharest, amongst them, being remarked the strike of the typographers, for better working conditions, and for the obtaining of rights through legislative regulations. One of the marking leaders of the party, was the activist I.C.Frimu. In December 1918, PSDR transformed into the Romanian Socialist Party.

In Hungary, the collapse of the dualist monarchy led the country on the threshold of a revolution. The Bolshevik agitators had managed, taking advantage of the anarchy caused by the Austro-Hungarian collapse, to create a coup d'etat, which had as a consequence the proclamation of the Republic of Councils from Budapest, and Bela Kun became the ministry of the external affairs, and Garbai Sandor became the leader of Hungary, on the 21st of March 1919, Mihaly Karoly and Berenkey Denes being removed from the positions of president and, respectively, premier.

It is obvious that, for the Hungarian communists, the union of Transylvania with Romania was not one of the point they would agree with. Banat was occupied by the French, and had proclaimed its independence, most of it becoming Romanian in August 1919, while another part had been attached to Hungary, and a significant one to Serbia.

The former Austro-Hungarian armies were supposed to retreat progressively, according to a line of demarcation on the river Mureş, positioned by the French general Franchet D’Esperey, internationally regulated until the signing of the peace treaty with Hungary. The Bolshevik government from Budapest was encouraging unjustified delays in the retreating pace of the troops from over Tisza. On the 24th of June 1919, a coup d’etat, planned by Antal Dovcsak, introduced “the red terror”. The Romanian troops, with the expressed agreement of the Entente, stopped the Hungarian attack on the 25th of July 1919, and counter-attacked, occupying Budapest, and, later, overthrown the Bolshevik government, on the 6th of August 1919. The Treaty of Trianon from the 4th of June 1920 would definitely sanction the union of Transylvania with Romania (Kirişescu, 1923: 238).

In a previous article I have mentioned that the socialist movement in Romania had a relatively short and eventful existence. Disadvantaged by the electoral legislation, unpopular due to the connections with the socialists and the communists from Russia, the Romanian socialist movement seemed advantaged by the transformations that had occurred in the Soviet Russia.

On the 28th of October 1920, there was signed “The Protocol of Bessarabia”, but USA did not ratify the Treaties from Paris Versailles, and Japan did not sign the protocol.

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Practically, the regulation of the Romanian-Soviet frontier was the responsibility of the two states, in a later stage, after they had re-established the diplomatic relations.

On the 8th of May 1921, in Romania, there was found the Romanian Communist Party, a branch of the Third Communist International. The Bolshevik activists, as Christian Rakowski and Lev Trotsky, had come in Romania and had tried to identify the possibility to extend “the export of revolution”. At Moscow, Nikolai Ivanovici Buharin had already expressed, in rude in unrealistic terms, his opinion about Romania, which he was considering “*the dungeon of the peoples*” and “*the creation of the imperialist circles*” from the Occident. We might justly wonder: what determined the Soviet communists to see an enemy in Romania, and, implicitly, a target for the “extension” of the revolution?

In 1924, PCdR was banned, due to the agitations that were attempting to dismember Romania, agitations occurred in Bessarabia, and also in Quadrilateral. The communist activists were told to cause damages, especially in the infrastructure.

Naturally, there emerges the following question: why did Romania, during the inter-war period, estranged from its traditional allies, France and England? Paradoxically, these powers showed little interest in maintaining good diplomatic relations with Romania. In 1921 and 1934, Romania had created the Little Entente and the Balkan Agreement, two regional alliances, which, nonetheless, did not enjoy the effective support of the great powers. Revisionism had thrived in Europe, with the help of Germany and USSR, and Italy, former winning power, was dissatisfied with the Treaties from Paris-Versailles. Bulgaria, Hungary, and even Poland, had certain dissatisfactions, related to the frontiers of the neighbouring states, a situation that led to the ascension of the revisionism. The publishing, in 1926, of “Mein Kampf”, the book-programme of Adolf Hitler, was demonstrating that Germany wanted to obtain “the vital space”, and, for it, the state was encouraging other states too, to fight for the revision of the treaties. On the other side, USSR, founded in 1922, after Stalin had taken the political control, continued to encourage the Bolshevik agitations. Stalin had adopted the “communism in one country” thesis, but he did not know that the communist agitations could weaken those states. The Great Recession from 1929-1933 contributed greatly to the degradation of the European and world political situation, which led to the collapse of the world and stock market. Unemployment was ravaging, the factories were closing, and people were going on strike in all the European states. The extremist political currents that were militating for “the new order”, both on the right and the left of the political spectre, were very popular in many of the European states, with great opportunities to take the leadership, and sometimes even succeeding in it.

Romania was surrounded by revisionist neighbours: USSR, Bulgaria, Hungary, which were waiting for the appropriate moment. USSR was continuing to support the agitators from Bessarabia and the Quadrilateral.

In Bessarabia, the Soviet propaganda had an intensive character. For NKVD, the informative and subversive operations could be more easily performed, owing to the fact that the population was speaking Russian, and had connections with the Russian space. Yet, the Romanian population did not become involved in these actions, supporting the Romanian administration. During the treaties from Vienna, between the Romanians and the Soviets, in 1924, the Soviets asked for a plebiscite in Bessarabia, invoking the fact mentioned before, that of the union between Bessarabia and Romania, realised through the presence of the Romanian Army. The Soviets were invoking the agreement between Rakowski and Averescu too, which led to the suspending of the negotiations, on the 2nd of April 1924 (Muşat&Ardeleanu, 1986:1037-1038).

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The Soviets wanted to take subversive actions in the Southern Bessarabia. The agitators started to cross the Nile by boat, and to attack the frontier guards' posts. The leader of these actions was the Soviet commissary Andrei Kliușnikov, called "Nenin", also helped by Iustin Batiscev. There was founded a revolutionary committee that initiated actions of destruction of the phone lines, of plundering, crimes against the local authorities from Tatar Bunar, in September 1924. Similar incidents took place in Galilevca, Nerușai, Cișmele. On the 12th of October 1924, USSR founded, on the left bank of Dniester, in the Soviet Ukraine, the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldavia, to use it as a future basis for its actions. Until 1925, at Chișinău, there was judged the "Process of the 500", against the authors and the participants to the rebellion from Tatar Bunar. There were sentenced 85 participants, Iustin Batiscev being sentenced to life hard labour, while the rest received sentences starting from six months, two years, six years, and going to 15 years of prison. Practically, from the 85 convicted, in this political trial, none was of Romanian origin.

The Quadrilateral, that is the south of Dobruja, the inter-war counties of Durostor and Caliacra, was considered, by the Bulgarians, as the cradle of "the Slavic-Bulgarian state", a significant centre in the fight of Bulgaria for independence. The fact that Dobruja was given to Romania, in 1878, caused dissatisfaction amongst the circles in Sofia, and the promising that Romania would get territorial compensations in the south of Dobruja, after the lost of Southern Bessarabia, caused agitation. In the Romanian Dobruja, there had been living many Bulgarians, at Tulcea being a "Leading and Propaganda Committee" (Tonev, 1962: 18). This committee later moved to Bazargic, in the Quadrilateral, before being taken, in 1913, by Romania, after the peace treaty from Bucharest. In that context, Mihai Moruzov, the founder of the Romanian secret service from the contemporary era, began his activity of secret agent.

After 1913, the Bulgarians from the Quadrilateral, most of the left side intellectuals, founded "Dobruja Society". The World War I was the moment when the Bulgarian propaganda became more intensive. On the 7th of January 1918, 286 Bulgarians from Dobruja requested the Central Powers, in a memoir, attributed to "Dobruja Central Committee", the acknowledgement of the so-called historical rights of Bulgaria, on Dobruja. On the 7th of May 1918, the Quadrilateral and the territory from the south of Constanța would become Bulgarian, while the Central Powers would occupy Dobruja, and Romania had access to the Sea, on a commercial road. Constanța would become a free city, and Bucharest-Cernavodă-Constanța railway, and the silos from the Port of Constanța, would be given to Germany.

The defeating of Bulgaria enhanced the discontentment that led to radicalization. The communist propaganda, supported by doctor Christian Rakowski, made the Bulgarian Bolsheviks talk about the "state from Dobruja". Although Bulgaria signed the armistice from the 29th of September 1918, the retreat of the Bulgarians from Dobruja was completed on the 23rd of December 1918, from the last region, Caliacra. NKVD and GRU, the two components of the Soviet espionage, decided they could support a lot of the subversive actions, generically called "popular insurrections", agitations that would destabilise the Quadrilateral. Thus, the so-called "komitadji", organised as groups that were informatively coordinated, according to tactics specific to the guerilla troops. The "komitadji" would attack the Romanian authorities, the frontiers guards' posts, and even the Romanian military units. The Soviets founded a section of espionage and agitation in the Balkans, called "Zacordat". On the territory of Dobruja, there were two subversive organisations that were acting, called DRO-The Revolutionary Organisation from

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Dobruja (whose beginning can be traced after 1878), and V.D.R.O.-The Internal Revolutionary Organisation from Dobruja, founded in 1925 (Roman, 1935:17-21).

The fact that PCdR had been outlawed, on the 11th of April 1924, accentuated the turbulences, and the ascension of the right extreme was determining the increase of menaces, on addressing the integrity of Romania. The relation with USSR was practically neglected, until 1934, although, in 1924, at Vienna, there had been carried out negotiations. Romania waited for USSR to tighten its relations with France, Great Britain, and, this way, USSR would join the Society of Nations, which Germany would abandon in 1935, introducing the mandatory military service.

In the 1930s, the numerous Bulgarian komitadji escaped the Stalinist purges, seeking refuge in Romania. We mention here Iordan Dragan Rusev (Petar Borilov or Petre Borilă, the future in-law of Nicolae Ceaușescu), Dimitar Ganev, Ghiorgghi Crosnev. Boris Ștefanov an influential Bulgarian activist, a good friend of Alexandru Iliescu, the father of the former president Ion Iliescu. Alexandru Iliescu managed to escape the Stalinist purges, being noticed as an efficient contact person of the Bulgarian komitadji, from DRO.

In 1928, there took place the 4th Congress of PCdR, and “Lupta de clasă” newspaper, from September-December 1928 was writing that, among the decisions made by the congress, there was adopted the one of “self-determination and nationalities from Romania” (Scorpan, 1997: 131).

In Romania, the anti-Russian feeling had reappeared as intense as after 1878, due to the behaviour the Bolshevik Russian soldiers had on the front line. The liquidation of Romanov dynasty in the Soviet Russia produced a strong impression at Bucharest. We should bear in mind that Queen Mary of Romania was first cousin with Tsar Nicholas II, executed by the Bolsheviks at Ekaterinburg. Moreover, after the union of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Transylvania with Romania, at Bucharest, there was constituted a new political class. They were politicians, extremely active in the fight for the right of the Romanians from the occupied provinces, who, at that moment, needed to build a new society, to accomplish the institutional, political, administrative, economic and social union of Romania. Moreover, there were huge differences of infrastructure, and even mentality. The populations, once privileged, were now the minority, and the country needed laws to integrate them into the political, social and economic life of Romania.

Furthermore, the politicians from Transylvania, Bukovina, Banat, or Bessarabia were sometimes regarded with certain reservations by their Wallachian colleagues, owing to the fact that they would become competitors in the political act. The Conservative Party disappeared in 1922, and the void it left on the political stage, would have never been practically filled, and no other new emerged party succeeded in dealing with the entire range that it had been specialised in.

The agrarian reform from 1924, and the Constitution from 1923 tried to offer the background for the later development of Romania. Yet, the adhesion of the peasants and workers to the communist movement was rather reduced after 1924, although, on the occasion of the strikes from Grivița, the Romanian communists were rather vocal, a proof of that being the political processes after 1933, and the prisons from Caransebeș, Doftana, Târgu-Jiu, where there were taken the arrested communists.

Practically, in Great Romania, the adhesion of the peasants and workers to the communist movement was more reduced than the adhesion of a lot of students (in theology, law, education), clerks, priests, but also workers, or peasants to the Iron-Guardist Movement, founded by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. The right extreme from Romania had the advantage of being supported by notorious people, such as A.C.Cuza,

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Nicolae Iorga, Octavian Goga, whereas the communist movement did not have highly educated leaders, and the dependence of the communists on Moscow was more evident than the dependence of the right extreme on Berlin. The communists were promoting the proletarian internationalism, which meant even the dismembering of the Romanian state, while the right extreme was talking, in its propaganda, of nation, religion, state and individual, which was perceived as being much more attractive, but which was hiding an anti-Semitic rhetoric, later become viral, which was trying to subordinate Romania, economically and politically, to the German interest (Constantiniu, 2011: 341). If the communist movement was declared illegal, in 1924, the Romanian right extreme resisted to the many attempts of banning it, in 1923, in 1938-1939, the last being in January 1941. The right extreme was noticed inclusively through violent actions, against the political adversaries, and even those who had decided to leave the organisation, which led to the diminishing in popularity. The ascendancy of right extreme was due to the approaching to Christian values, especially important in the rural regions, while the communists were promoting the atheism.

Germany, wishing to please Soviet Union, Hungary and Bulgaria, agreed, in 1940, on cutting Great Romania in parts, which the right extreme accepted, because they wanted to enjoy the support of Germany.

In Bulgaria, besides the communist revolutionary committees, the right extreme was also extremely active. The Bulgarian “Komitadji” were initiating actions that would weaken the civil and military administration from the Quadrilateral. After the loss of southern Dobruja, in 1940, of Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina, in the same year, the communist agitators grouped more actively in Romania, but they could not act too easily, because of the dictatorship of Antonescu and the Iron-Guard, and Antonescu. Yet, the revisionist behaviours of Hungary and Bulgaria was neglected inexplicably. Might it have been due to the fact that the Romanian politicians, led by the King Carol II, thought that the Versailles system would be defended?

Not only the external climate was unfavourable for Romania. After 1927, the year when the prime minister, Ionel Brătianu, died, Romania became a stage for the fight over power. The Regent Prince, Nicolae, who was ruling instead of his minor nephew, Mihai I, who became a king when he was just 6 years old, and the Regency, assisted to the repositioning of the political parties. PNL, and the newly found PNT, along with the other smaller, but with greater ambitions parties, had an attitude that contributed to the erosion of democracy.

The ascending on the throne, on the 8th of June 1930, of King Carol II, returned from the exile, after dethroning his son Mihai, was the first step towards the destruction of the democracy, and the erosion of Romania's prestige. Carol II was intending the establishment of a regime of authority, built around himself, with only one party, with a devoted government, and a permissive constitution.

The diplomatic Romanian-Soviet relations were to be revived in 1934. In 1936, the treaties from Montreux, between Maksim Litvinov and Nicolae Titulescu were failing. The Romanian diplomat had tried to introduce the Dniester as line of demarcation between the Romanian and the Soviet army, which could be equated to the acknowledgement of the frontier between the two states.

In August 1936, Nicolae Titulescu was reshuffled, King Carol preferring Victor Antonescu for the Ministry of the External Affairs. USSR, which did not wish the continuation of the Litvinov-Titulescu treaties found the pretext, after the dismissal of Nicolae Titulescu, to consider that the attitude of Romania meant the end of the treaties,

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on addressing the establishing of the Romanian-Soviet frontier. Nicolae Titulescu said that the Soviet-German relation would be a reality, and that the purposes of this connection would be unfavourable for the superior interests of Romania.

Gradually, after 1936, there occurred a closed relation of Romania and Germany, a fact that would have been inconceivable in the first years of the inter-war period. The relation with Germany was much more obvious than the relations with the Soviet Union.

King Carol II achieved his goal, on the 11th of February 1938, instituting the authoritarian monarchy. King Carol II positioned himself against the right extreme, even if he had initially wanted to subordinate it to his intentions. Great Romania was getting closer to the collapse from the tragic summer of 1940.

Conclusions

Great Romania was a geopolitical reality at the end of 1918, although this year did not start, for Romania, under the most favourable auspices. Although Romania had conquered, on the battle fields from Mărăști, Mărășești and Oituz, the right to its existence as state, it was trapped. In front of it, there was the enemy represented by the Central Powers, and behind, there was the ally, Russia, which rapidly became potential enemy, and then the effective enemy.

Both Soviet Russia and Romania had to conclude separate treaties of peace with the Central Powers. Yet, Romania re-entered the war and managed to impose its point of view, at the Peace Treaties from Paris-Versailles, as winning power, and to be acknowledged, not without emotions, the acts of union from 1918. Thus, the question of Bessarabia was to be tackled through the Romanian-Soviet bilateral cooperation, after the states would have begun again their diplomatic relations, interrupted in 1918.

In Great Romania, the political debate overpassed the background of the modern age. There occurred a constitutional transformation of the legislation, in all the areas, yet, unfortunately, the politicians of the era did not understand the fact that they needed to cooperate, and to think beyond the regional differences.

Romania became, through the union, Great Romania, but it was the unification that created the most serious problems. Great Romania did not manage to become an integrated part of a system of alliances with the Great Powers. The Romanian diplomacy preferred to remain faithful to the commitments from Paris-Versailles, when the signers of the treaties preferred to accept their infringement, and even their revision.

The Romanian authorities met numerous political problems in Bessarabia and the Quadrilateral, caused by the subversive actions, orchestrated by the Soviet Union. Yet, these realities did not manage to influence the political factors of decision from Bucharest, in order to take measures for the strengthening of the Romanian international diplomacy.

Great Romania faced the spectre of totalitarianism, right and left extremism, but it also experienced the democratic form of government. The Great Depression and the erosion of the democracies, in states with tradition in this respect, also contributed to the revival of revisionism, whose victim Romania was in 1940.

Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, Hertsa, the Quadrilateral, the North-West of Transylvania were taken, Romania losing approximately a third of the territory, and a quarter of the population. Great Romania was, undoubtedly, the most significant achievement of our generation of politicians, from the modern era. Unfortunately, in the complicated international context from the inter-war period, and due to the internal political dissensions, the Romanian politicians that came after the generation that had achieved the Great Union, and even the politicians who had achieve it, did not manage to

consolidate Great Romania, or to keep its territorial integrity, in the 22 years that passed, between 1918 and 1940.

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