

ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN INTERNAL COMPONENTS OF THE BLACK SEA SECURITY SYSTEM – THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF ROMANIA THROUGHOUT THE 20TH CENTURY –

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Internally, immediately after the end of the Cold War, the Black Sea region appears configured as an unstable region, on whose territory economically weakened states were in competition, affected by a pandemic corruption that was eroding the basis of newly established democratic political regimes, descendants of totalitarian regimes that had recently succumbed. Most of the vigour of these states was consumed in a series of sterile political controversies, in a fragile legislative framework, which had replaced the ossified structures of the former so-called popular democracies. The parliaments of these states were also, in turn, wired by corruption and characterised by a lack of interest in the real and, especially, the serious problems of the population. Despite these realities, the population was overwhelmingly in favour of integrating those states into NATO and the European Union.

The former Soviet republics, Georgia, Ukraine and Armenia, also began to show, in turn, the germs of a European orientation, timid, indeed, but remaining dependent upon residual communist reminiscences specific to the mentality perverted by the totalitarian regime. In these circumstances, it seemed certain that at least another generation would have to pass for these states to change their mindsets deeply rooted in communist reality.

Keywords: community space; Black Sea; communism; Warsaw Treaty Organisation; interwar period;

INTRODUCTION

Due to its geographical position, the Wider Black Sea Region covers a territory that includes many states, a puzzle of Western, Islamic and Orthodox civilisations. Romania's position in this context raises the issue of both its and the other states framing in a regional archetype from a geographical and civilisational point of view. As a method of analysis/research, when establishing the position of a state, we will analyse the architecture of the present forces and their activities on the geopolitical scene, taking in consideration the major objectives and targets of the region. The identification and analysis of state geostrategies, of the tools through which states are involved in order to achieve the proposed goals are useful methods, necessary to complete this analysis.

Geopolitics addresses the goals of cooperation and the elimination of tensions between states, as well as the use of force to conquer military supremacy. It encompasses the concerns of actors on the international stage, regardless of who they are, government officials, diplomats or NGOs. Public opinion is extremely sensitive when it comes to the protagonists' plans that reflect the heterogeneity of space and natural, historical and religious conditions. From this point of view, the post-Cold War international context was extremely favourable for Romania, because it offered the possibility to play a very important role, that of a bridge between East and West, as well as the turntable of intra-European connections between the old continent and the neighbouring regions.

The problem of establishing Romania's position could be determined, to a large extent, taking into account the interests of the great powers in the region, as well as their impact on the region. The hierarchy of the states of the region, the predominant cultural and spiritual values and the security approach of the issue by each state could complete this picture. In the extremely tense period following the collapse of communism, there was a clear process of polarisation between political, military and economic powers and, from another perspective, between world, continental, regional and sub-regional powers. There were also states that were too weak to make their views known on the process of ongoing international events.

Contextualising the above considerations, we still have to analyse to what extent the zonal actors really wanted to transform the security environment, but, especially, to what extent and at what cost was the United States of America willing to counteract Russia's interests in the region. Other topics of utmost importance also remain open to our analysis, such as the manner in which the European Union wants to involve itself in the region and, especially, what is the extent of the geographical areas in which Russia wants to restore its old empire. Will this be limited only to the former union republics or will it give way to the pan-Slavic barrier and proceed to the conquest of new territories belonging to independent states which, from an administrative point of view, were never part of the former Soviet Union?

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE POSITION HELD BY ROMANIA IN THE REGION AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR

Making an analysis of Romania's position on the international stage, we conclude that its role must be approached in terms of its sensitive position in the region. In its double capacity as NATO and EU member state, it fulfils a defensive mission for Europe. To the same extent, Romania also fulfils a defence role for the Black Sea region, through its defence and international policies. Romania has thus become a regional exporter of security and stability¹. Romania's integration into European organisations will transform the eastern Black Sea coast into an area controlled by the Western allies. Thus, the entire process of European integration ensures NATO's rapid and efficient access to the Middle East, and the entire region will move from the Kremlin's orbit into the sphere of Western influence.

The Euro-Atlantic area is a European institutional area that is neither cultural, nor ethnic, nor geographical. The American idea of creating a free and united Europe practically means projecting the Western framework (represented by NATO and the EU) to the East. The eastward advance of the western borders structured the space of the Wider Black Sea Region on two axes, representing two connotations,

¹ According to Romania's national security strategy of 2006, "national security is ensured through its own forces and through cooperation with allies and partners, in accordance with its own strategies and strategic concepts of the Alliance and the strategy of the European Union. It provides for the harmonisation of national efforts with international commitments and the identification of ways of working to prevent and counteract threats in a timely manner. Efforts are also aimed at promoting democracy, peace and stability in the neighbouring region and in areas of strategic interest, reducing vulnerabilities, building adequate national capacities, and profoundly transforming security institutions". (A.N.).

one geopolitical (economic and strategic) and one political, referring to the East-West and North-South axes.

The East-West axis includes the Caucasus and the Caspian region, its much-needed energy resources for the West, and the Black Sea extends this axis.

The North-South axis includes Russia, Armenia and Iran. At the crossroads of these axes are Azerbaijan (a key security region), Georgia, and Armenia. The Asian energy corridor is a rather unsafe access route in the region, located in northern Transnistria, passing through Odessa and Sukhumi. The reason for the fragility of this access route is given by the frozen conflicts that intensify the insecurity of the region and that must be resolved before reaching the serious situation of their expansion and spread in states where the problems that triggered them do not exist. Hypothetically, Romania is framed by four geostrategic sub-regions of Central and Eastern Europe. The first sub-region includes the Central European states, Poland, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Baltic States, the sub-region being positioned in the western part of Romania.

The second region, that of Southeast Europe, consists of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey. The Black Sea riparian basin consists of Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova (it is a state without a seacoast, but the port of Giurgiulești gives it access to the Black Sea), Russia, Turkey and Georgia.

It is useful for our analysis to take into account the specific, geographical, spiritual, economic and historical particularities of the states positioned in the four areas. Certainly, the significant geopolitical events of the Black Sea region (evolutions, involutions, as well as the full range of events that define the Eastern strategic climate) are the result of the advance of the Euro-Atlantic border towards Asia. This phenomenon is part of the global geopolitical evolution, as a result of changes in the poles of power worldwide. However, the problems in Eastern Europe are the result of the indecision of Western European bodies to set a sufficiently large border to include the countries and nations wishing to be part of the Western security system in the sphere of Western influence.

From a geographical point of view, the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube are landforms that, at first sight, represent a geographical border between Europe and Romania. However, we consider, these natural obstacles are not major elements that could create the illusion that Romania would be part of a geographical area

other than the European one (Huntington, 1997, pp. 145-146)². Therefore, from this point of view, Romania can be placed in the first region, which includes the states of Central Europe, along with Germany, Hungary, Poland, Austria Czech Republic, Slovakia and Baltic States. From a historical perspective, there is a long common past with these states over the centuries. The communist experience turned Poland, Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia, the former German Democratic Republic, Romania into Soviet satellites. An apparent block solidarity contributed to the rapprochement of these states during the Cold War, even if it was a façade solidarity, imposed by the canons of proletarian internationalism. That is why, after the fall of communism, this false rapprochement disappeared, and the states became seen by the West as serious competitors.

In the period immediately following the disappearance of communism (a situation perpetuated to the present day), the economic factor is what separates Romania in a decisive way from the other states that escaped from the yoke of Moscow³. Led by the existence of an immature political class, affected by the highest rate of corruption in the community, by an increased rate of emigration, Romania certainly did not meet the expectations of this group of states in the period immediately following the great geopolitical changes after the fall of communism. If we add to the equation the issue of Romania's belonging to Orthodoxy, given that the other states are Catholic, we find, at the end of this summary analysis,

² According to Samuel Huntington, Romania is considered a non-European state, due to the great historical line that separates the Western Christian peoples from the Orthodox and Muslim peoples. The fault line, according to the same author, divides Romania into two, Catholic Transylvania on the one hand, and the old Kingdom on the other, together with Moldova and Dobruja, which are predominantly Orthodox. A few remarks are required, however. First of all, today's Euro-Atlantic Europe is an institutional space, but not a civilisational or cultural one. In any case, Europe's institutional borders do not coincide with geographical, cultural and civilisational ones. On the other hand, Transylvania is a region of Romania, which is a sovereign, independent, national, unitary and indivisible state, according to the Constitution. The Hungarian or Catholic elements do not exceed the figure of 2.4 million inhabitants throughout the country, which includes 21 million inhabitants. Even in Transylvania, which is predominantly Orthodox, the Hungarian element is a minority. In these cases, Huntington's statements raise questions about the true political purposes of this division. Being a Latin state, belonging to Western civilisation, and identifying with Western cultural and spiritual values, it represents a happy ambivalence of Romania, demonstrating the permanence of this Latin country in a Slavic sea, at the eastern borders of Europe. (A.N.)

³ The process of integrating Romania and Bulgaria into the European Union placed the two countries in the first place in the top of poverty at EU level. The first criterion of this ranking is the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Romania and Bulgaria, it represents only 34% of the level of European countries. These states rank first in terms of unemployment, mortality, and last in terms of fertility, birth rate, number of people with higher education. Romania, together with Bulgaria, ranks last in terms of living standards, with 37% of the average of the community states. (The data was obtained from the journal "Guardian", dated 03.01.2007, and is the result of a study prepared by the National Commission for Long-Term Forecasts) (A.N.).

that Romania does not have enough affinities and elements of connection with Central European states, as they were configured.

Regarding the states belonging to the second group, Hungary's attitude towards Romania has been repeatedly nuanced, and it has never overlooked the territorial losses it suffered as a result of the entry into force of the provisions of the Treaty of Trianon, by which Transylvania, the cradle of the Romanian people, was returned to its rightful owner. After 1989, Hungary chose its own path to the West, being also one of the artisans of the Visegrád Treaty, to which Romania was not invited.

As for the relations between Romania, and the other central European states mentioned above, we are very far from finding linguistic, cultural and historical rapprochements. From an economic point of view, the European states have a major economic ascendancy over Romania. Its explanation lies in the fact that the communist regime did not prove to be as harsh as it proved to be in Romania. It allowed the basis of a market society/economy, along with an economy/nationalised and planned according to the socialist model. Although it is not part of the region, Yugoslavia, another former socialist confederation located in Eastern Europe, can be an example in this regard. It is well known that Marshal Tito encouraged his own citizens to work across the border, an initiative that pumped added value into the Yugoslav economy from the money of Yugoslav workers across borders.

After the euphoria aroused by the courage to face the communist regime in December 1989, Romania was placed, by the Western media, through an intense press campaign, at the top of the communist states, benefiting from a huge capital of sympathy and solidarity. Later, however, as elements that would highlight the dark and somewhat blackened parts of the Romanian revolution began to emerge, this capital of sympathy gradually faded as the truth came to light. If we add to these causes the intolerance and violence that characterised the ethnic conflicts in Târgu-Mureş, the series of miners' rampages, the decline of the economy, we can notice that Romania's laudable intentions to join were deeply discredited, and the integration process proved to be much delayed.

From this perspective, immediately after the fall of communism in Europe, it became clear that both Romania's long common past with these states and the suffering they endured together during cohabitation under the umbrella of the Warsaw Pact were of little value in the new zonal security configuration, and Romania's economic decline was one of the major reasons for its removal from the states of this last group of Central Europe.

Starting with 2000, the year Vladimir Putin took power, it became clear that the great hegemon of the East, once the geostrategic “*attractor*” of the socialist member states of the sanitary cordon deployed in front of the Western states, began to tread the path of restoring its imperial status. Russia’s path to the goal is that of geographical expansion in all directions. If during the Tsarist Empire, this desideratum was hidden under the coattail of “*Pan-Slavism*”, in the era of the Soviet Union under that of the “*export of the proletarian revolution*”, in the 21st century, Dughin’s Eurasianism⁴ is for Putin the ferment necessary to initiate his policy of conquest, the first result of which was the annexation of Crimea.

ROMANIA – KEY STATE AND PLAYER IN THE WIDER BLACK SEA REGION. THE MAIN FEATURES OF ROMANIA’S NATIONAL SECURITY THROUGHOUT THE 20TH CENTURY

Romania is, without a doubt, one of the main geostrategic actors in the region. Due to its geographical location west of the Black Sea, through its demographic, military and economic potential, Romania is able to position itself in the group of powers bordering the Black Sea, such as Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Turkey. From a cultural point of view, Romania is the only Latin state in the area, but the beneficiary of a dual identity, both Western and Eastern⁵. As mentioned, the country is located at a crossroads of the region, being, throughout history, the first European bastion with the mission to block the advance of migrating nations to the west. Thus, Romania’s security values are not recent at all, having their roots in Antiquity. Bivalent ancestry, western and eastern,

⁴ Alexander Dughin (born 7 January 1962), Russian political analyst and strategist with close ties to Kremlin power circles and Russian military circles. His father was a GRU general. He is a graduate of the Moscow Aviation Institute, but did not get his diploma. Organiser of the National Bolshevik Party, the National Bolshevik Front and the Eurasia Party. Author of over 30 books, among them, *Foundations of Geopolitics* and *The Fourth Political Theory*. Promoter of the theory of neo-Eurasianism. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aleksandr_Dugin, retrieved on 28.10.2020.

⁵ According to French professor Catherine Durandin, “*there is no recent history of Romania in French. After December 1989, I saw an audience mad with images of violence, those of the Revolution of December 1989, Romania belonging to the oriental space, that of orthodoxy, that of the history of the periphery of the Russian space, then Soviet. It belongs to a Western European field, which has its origins in the Springtime of the Peoples of 1848, as well as the western attitude of Romania, that of non-intervention, in August 1968, during the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops. A dismembered state, obsessed with an identity crisis, Romania had lived and survived all the hurricanes and storms throughout history, claiming to have invented a specificity outside of history. It is a state marked by a duality of history, being pushed, throughout history, both to the west and to the east. Today, the same country, which Westerners tend to blame for being a liar, opts globally for some kind of modernity that pushes it toward Western Europe*, on the website <http://www.franceculture.com/oeuvre-histoire-de-la-nation-roumaine-de-catherine-durandin.html>, retrieved on 28.03.2020.

is an asset for Romania, but also for the West. Trained in Western schools, Romania's top leaders have contributed to the transformation and development of modern Romania, knowing how to combine the Western spirit with the traditions of Eastern civilisation, in a way capable of allowing social progress in this part of the world.

National security has always concerned the political class of modern Romania. Unfortunately, until the end of the Cold War, national debates in this area were compromised by a detrimental policy inherent in totalitarian regimes. Throughout history, Romania has had to reshape its national strategy according to the different regional hegemonies that have operated in this part of the world. These changes have been driven by major changes in the global security environment that have affected the regional security framework.

The preliminary period of the Great War was marked by a dangerous underestimation of the national security policy. A political class subservient to clan interests often placed its own interests above national interests. Romania was, at that time, in the situation of a dismembered state, having large portions of territory under Russian (Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina), Hungarian (much of Transylvania) and Bulgarian (Southern Dobruja) occupation. In 1914, Romania had to endure the pressures of the Great Powers, in order to enter the war on the side of one camp or another. However, following its cultural and historical affinities, but especially as a result of the promises from France that it would support, after the war, the unification of Romanians from all provinces, Romania opted for the Allies camp to the detriment of that of the Central Powers. The decision was a wise one, considering that, after the war, the country found itself in the camp of the "winners", and the historical process ended with the Great Unification on 1 December 1918.

The interwar period marked a stage of important economic growth for a unified Greater Romania, thanks to the national consensus and the euphoria after the First World War. In the interwar period, the isolation on the international stage of Romania's old allies (France and Great Britain) generated great threats against Romania, which saw itself alone in front of two great enemies: the Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Thus, in 1940, with the help of the two great enemies, as well as of two neighbouring states, the great territorial amputations happened through which Romania, defenceless, ceded Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union, the part of northern Transylvania to Hungary and the Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria.

In 1940, Romania opted for a conjunctural alliance with Hitler's Germany, renouncing the guarantees of more and more abandoned Western powers

on the international stage, a decision that could not prevent territorial amputations. The decision to fight alongside the Axis powers turned out to be bad for the country because, at the end of the war, it was on the side of the defeated. Although it regained Transylvania through the Paris Peace Conference, Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, as well as the Southern Dobruja remained lost, it seems forever, for Romania. The return of Transylvania to the Motherland proved to be the beginning of a long period of territorial disputes between Romania and Hungary. Although the communist ideology apparently froze the subject of Romanian-Hungarian confrontations, there was never any silence on this subject, and the end of the Cold War reopened this old wound, a subject of dispute between the two neighbouring states.

The establishment of communism in Romania sanctioned the confinement of the country in the *"camp of the states of popular democracy"*. Officially, the country's independence, sovereignty and integrity were guaranteed by the new *"popular"* Romanian armed forces and by its faithful ally, the Soviet Union. The process of communisation of the Romanian Armed Forces brought the cadres of the old Royal Army into a dramatic situation, many of them being massively placed in reserve and thrown into the sinister communist prison by the *apparatchiks* and *politruks* of the new communist army. The communised Romanian armed forces represented, themselves, the greatest risk to Romania's national security, because, in the event of a Soviet invasion, in the early years of the establishment of communism, no Romanian military would have opposed the invading troops⁶. The equipment, training and procurement of the Romanian Armed Forces left much to be desired, while military commanders were trained in large numbers in Soviet military academies, where most of them were recruited by the GRU (Main Intelligence Directorate). Consequently, the feeling of belonging to the national values of the Romanian Armed forces was almost non-existent in the society of that period.

⁶ Obviously, our reasoning refers to the first years of the communisation of the Romanian Armed Forces, a period when it was effectively reconciled with the soldiers of the *"Horia, Cloșca and Crișan"* and *"Tudor Vladimirescu"* Divisions, the famous large units formed by Romanian volunteers, indoctrinated with communist ideology after their fall into captivity in the USSR. To these elements are added the political officers (*apparatchiks* and *politruks*) in charge of indoctrinating the military personnel. This situation radically changed after the takeover of power by Nicolae Ceaușescu, a national leader who, at that time, moved away from the Russians through his nationalist policy.(A.N.)

The Warsaw Pact enacted the presence of Soviet troops in the national territories of the communist member states. Romania's national security was subordinated to the doctrinal and politico-military concepts of the Soviet Union. The Romanian communist regime, enslaved to the Kremlin, proclaimed the supremacy of communist ideology, Soviet military strategy and doctrine. The development of a national defence strategy as well as a national defence doctrine were impossible to achieve at that time. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania in 1958 and the takeover of power by Nicolae Ceaușescu in 1965 completely changed the data of the problem. On that occasion, the nationalist-communist zeal replaced proletarian internationalism, and this changed Romania's image in the Treaty, from a faithful and obedient ally of Moscow to a "rebel", whose marginalisation in decision-making at the level of the organisation became more and more necessary, as Bucharest's attitude proved more and more critical towards the Pact.

The essential component of the new Romanian foreign policy adopted by Nicolae Ceaușescu consisted in the emancipation of Romania from the political tutelage of the Soviet Union. The Romanian leader considered that it was essential for Romania to create its own path of development, sanctioning as fundamental principles of the Romanian foreign policy the mutual respect and equality between states, within the international relations. On that occasion, a new defence doctrine was developed, and new and promising perspectives opened up for the national defence industry, with the ultimate goal of total elimination of Soviet imports of equipment and weapons. However, the practical application of that desideratum proved to be extremely difficult, due to the complexity of the activity, the high standards to be observed in military production, as well as the lack of a skilled labour force in the field.

The decade of the '70s and '80s marked an important step for Romania's national security. The concept of "*battle of entire people*" was transposed by the communist regime in a scientific structural framework for the first time in the history of Romania. A new national military doctrine was developed. Thus, practically, every member of the Romanian society, every citizen of the Socialist Republic of Romania was obliged to participate in the effort to defend the socialist state since an extremely young age. For the first time, Romanian cities were spoken of as "*cities of work and defence of all people*". The participation of all workers, peasants and intellectuals in the paramilitary formations of the Patriotic Guards was mandatory, becoming a mass phenomenon. The children of socialist Romania were enrolled

from the age of five in the political organisations of the “*Fatherland’s Falcons*”, nurseries of pioneer organisations and communist youth. Thus, the militarisation of Romania had become total.

CONCLUSIONS

Although Romania was a full member of the Warsaw Pact, defence plans were drawn up by communist leaders in a multidirectional manner, in compliance with the new national doctrine according to which a possible attack on Romania could occur from any geographical point, including from the Warsaw Pact allies. This proved to be a unique case among the members of the Treaty. The official doctrine of the latter, drawn up by the Soviet Union, provided that an attack on socialist states could only take place on the part of NATO member states, predominantly the United States of America, considered the supreme enemy, not on the part of the socialists, but this fact was refuted by reality⁷. As a result, the war plans of the private voluntary organisations (WTO)⁸ were designed taking into account the foreseeable directions of a massive offensive launched by NATO against the socialist prison. Of course, each member state of the Warsaw Pact was assigned specific tasks in the case of overall missions.

Given the national peculiarities of Romania (its geostrategic position) as the only socialist state surrounded only by socialist states, its obsolete military equipment, as well as its reputation as a “*rebel*” within the organisation, its role in the defence device was of the second rank, the Romanian troops being destined to perform missions within the second echelon of the military device, acting with small numbers.

This strategic duality of Romania (the existence of a defensive national doctrine in which the enemy could also be a socialist state, as well as its role of power of the second rank within the Warsaw Pact) made Romania a particular case in the region. From the same perspective, the inconstancy and duplicity of the Romanian communist leaders weakened Romania’s overall position during the Cold War. Bucharest could no longer rely on the solidarity of the other socialist states in the same camp, and for them, Romania was an unfaithful, unstable, recalcitrant ally, which asked awkward questions at every WTO meeting, with obvious outbursts of nationalism. At the end of the communist era, Romania represented,

⁷ See the cases of the uprising in the German Democratic Republic (1953), the uprising in Hungary (1956) and the case of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the socialist states (except Romania) in 1968 (A.N.).

⁸ Abbreviation for Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

for the Westerners, a closed country, totally isolated from the international community, led by a tyrannical regime. For the other socialist leaders of the pre-transition to capitalism period, Ceaușescu was the “scapegoat” for the deplorable situation in Romania before the events of December 1989, which put an end to that regime. Although the Romanian Revolution managed to overthrow a criminal regime, on the other hand, it created a breach in Romania’s national security.

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