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ROMANIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF THE 1918

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Abstract

The beginning of 1918 was difficult for the whole of Eastern Europe, as it began with a strong imbalance in the system of power balance, through the disappearance of the former Tsarist Empire following the "Russian failure of 1917", as Marshal Al. Averescu, the chaos and the expansion as a scourge of Bolshevism among the soldiers on the front, still in the Entente camp, still alongside the Romanian army, on the front of Moldova, in front of the Austro-Hungarian army. Following the military anarchy, the revolt against the Russian commanders, and even their killing, resulted in the breaking of the front, the Romanians allies being themselves assaulted, so only a chance made this state of affairs no opportunity for the Austro-Hungarians to dismantle the Romanian state. A tough year for Romania, which had lost some of its territory and was blackmailed to choose between a territory that had been unjustly abducted in 1812 - Bessarabia and another territory that belonged to Dobrogea - was recovered in 1877. In addition, on January 13, 1918, the state of war with Soviet Russia was established. On the other hand, international relations presuppose arguments and justifications as the basis of discussions and negotiations, and these were offered not only by history but also by the actual decisions and actions taken by the King and the country, by its men, the military, the people politicians and diplomats.

Keywords: 1918; Eastern Europe; international relations; power balance; Romania;

1. INTRODUCTION

In full war, the international, political, diplomatic and military international context of 1918, was particularly complex for Romania, not only because it had lost 2/3 of its territory in the previous year, but also due to developments in Russia (about events in Russia: Figes, 1989 and Vengoa, 1995) allied in war and whose army bodies were disposed along the eastern slopes of the Oriental Carpathians, as well as on the front line of Southern Moldova, on the Focşani-Tecuci lineage, Galaţi, a total of 50,000 people (Gorun, 2015, 37). Thus, in October 1917, after the Bolshevik coup, Tsar Nicholas II was removed and V. I. Lenin took over the power, establishing a Bolshevik regime.

Romania entered the war in 1916, according to the Treaty of Alliance between Romania, on the one hand, and France, the United Kingdom, Russia and Italy, on the other hand, and the Military Convention signed in Bucharest on 4/17 August 1916 (Ionaşcu, Barbulescu, Gheorghe, 1975, 410-412), signed, thanks to I.I.C Brătianu on an equal foot, after two years of neutrality, under the pressures of

France and Great Britain following the exhortations of Tsarist Russia (Gorun, 2015, 37), with whom he had good relations in 1914, when Tsar Nicholas II had visited Constanța in June (Popa, 1969, 69), but who was interested in Constantinople and the straits Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and could not accept the collaboration with the Romanian army on the Bucovina front in 1916. At the end of the war, as imposing the principle of US President Woodrow Wilson, all the secret treaties to which the United States did not participate were considered to be null, the Treaty of August 2016, as well as the one signed in April 1915 before Italy, would be declared null (Bold, Ciupercă, 2000, 27) has freed the two great powers, France and the Great Britain from any obligation, the texts being used only as a basis for discussion. He will be reproached by Romania and the separate signing of a separate peace, but the reconstruction of the Romanian state's journey between 1916 when he entered the war and 1918 - when the Treaty of peace of Bucharest was signed in May, demonstrates that he had no alternative. At the same time, the fear of blasphemy and the expansion of the extreme left-wing ideology towards Europe, as well as the inability to effectively support the Eastern Front (endowment and effective armed support), so that Romania was in a critical situation, would have been sufficient reasons France and Britain to take responsibility.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Romania's entry into war has occurred under difficult conditions, due to the presence of a European Danube Commission exercising its rights on both sides of the Sulina-Ulm river (Cârțână, Samoilă, 2010, 27) with powers of authority and domination (Bold, Ciupercă, 2001, 45), plus the German capital that dominated the economic market after the Turkish occupation of the straits Dardanelles and Bosphorus (October 1914), already affected by the export prohibitions, which had limited the possibilities of purchasing raw materials, machinery, machines needed for war techniques. (Cârțână et al., 2011, 19). As a result, the industrial branches (oil, forestry, milling etc.) narrowed their activity, so some barely reached 25-20%. At the same time, the entry into the war was to be sustained, according to the promises made, by the Franco-British aid in terms of providing the army, which would be granted intermittently and incompletely (Rudeanu, 1989, 307 ss.). Although they were organized several between the Allies conferences that had the agenda and this issue. The talks during the conferences will highlight a franco-British rivalry for the influence in Romanian space, while Russia had announced its impossibility (Gorun, 2013, 339), as well as the actions on the front and in 1916 and 1917 it had been left alone. At the same time, let us not forget that around, Romania's neighbors claimed territories: Bulgaria- Cadrlater (Durostor and Caliacra counties in Southern Dobrogea) or owned territories inhabited by Austro-Hungarians - Transylvania and Bucovina (including Banat, Crișana, Maramureș and Satu Mare), Russia - Bessarabia. In addition, the Bulgarians could not forgive the Romanian diplomacy the involvement in the Second Balkan War in 1913 (Nastovici, 1968, 132). Moreover, after the Turtucaia disaster (Marghiloman, 1927, 99 ss.), the Romanian soldiers taken prisoners will go through very difficult conditions. One of the causes of the defeats of 1916 and 1917 was undoubtedly the lack of heavy artillery pieces, as well as a concordance between the army's equipment of the armed forces of the Central Powers and those of the Romanian army.

The year 1917 was marked by the entry into the war of the United States of America and the sudden outbreak of war in Russia (by the Truce of Brest-Litovsk, 26 November / 3 Dec 1917), and Romania was the most affected immediately by the decision Bolsheviks. Thus, not only the fifth front was destabilized by the outbreak of Bolshevik Russia during the war, but moreover V.I.Lenin had sent Bolshevik agitators to remove the Russian army from the war (the peace talks commencing on December 22, 1917 at Brest-Litovsk), as was Semen/Semion Rochal, commissioner on the Romanian front at the beginning of 1918. The latter had the task of trying to overthrow the government and reward King Ferdinand I, having quite a lot of experience, though very young (21 years old) , being the one that, in the summer of 1917, had created the Republic of Kronstadt, the Baltic Sea island fortress that defended the entrance to the Neva River Estuary, so the sea route to Petrograd. In Kronstadt being the seat of the Russian military navy, and their victory made Trotsky call him the "pride and glory of the Russian revolution." (Figes, 2016, 98) The officers, including the admiral of the fleet, were executed and the power passed to the sailors, who later have fraternized with Lenin's Bolsheviks. Fabrizio Giulietti (2015,

80) considers that the Third Revolution, after the first of March 1917, against the Tsarism and the second against the democratic bourgeoisie, took place here, culminating in October 1917.

Also, S. Rochal was involved in the annihilation of the General Headquarters of the Russian Army (STAVKA) at Moghilev, which was to assassinate on December 3, 1917, his last commander, General Nikolai Duhonin, who had opposed him V.I. Lenin. The new government of Petrograd appointed S. Roshal as the commissioner of the Russian troops on the Romanian Front. (Serge, 1999, 128)

I.V. Lenin did not have a coherent program, a theoretical basis for what he had set out, and then he staked on propaganda, misinformation and manipulation by promoting a peace that would have brought Russia out of the whirlpool of foreign interests to the interests of the Russian people. The Russian workers' demonstrations took place under the slogan: "Peace, Bread and Liberty," and the first decree signed by the new power was the Decree of Peace. (Vengoa, 2017, 34) The consequences of these action on the front were described by the political man I.C. Brătianu as follows: "The Russian armies became unmanageable gangs, violently poisoned by anarchy, incapable of holding the front and incapable of organizing demobilization for retreat, which without supply is itself a devastating work itself."

On the Romanian front, the Russian armies refused to listen to the orders of their direct general commander, Dimitrie Grigorovici Scerbacev, whose general district was in Iași (Socola). Under these circumstances, General Scerbacev sent a telegram to the German Field Marshal August von Mackensen and Austrian Archduke Joseph, on November 20 / December 3, 1917, proposing "an armistice with the Russian and Romanian troops on the Romanian front". With this initiative, the commander of the Russian troops put Romania in a very complicated situation, as he remained alone in front of the Central Powers. As a result, the next day, November 21, the government of I.C. Brătianu decided to send delegates to Focșani, to negotiate the armistice (Scurtu, 2017, 47). Thus, on November 26 / December 9, 1917, Romania and Russia signed in Focșani the armistice with the Central Powers, whereby the two combatants ensured each other to observe "the obligation not to resume the hostilities except by prior denunciation of the armistice with 72 hours before and with reserve, for the Russians, to consider it provisionally until the issue of war or peace is decided by the Constituent Assembly of Russia. "The Romanian side stated that it was "imposed by a case of force majeure and that it would be purely military." (Antonescu, 1990, 50-51). Russia's exit from the war had also closed the supply capabilities through the Node as well as the Black Sea through the ports of Arhanghelsk, Semenova and Alexandrovsk.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the present study we wanted to analyze, based on sources, in what political, diplomatic and military context, Romania had to make the decision signing a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

In Galați, the Russians from the Siberian IV Corps (Păltânea, 2008, p. 267), led by the praporgic (lower officer) Anghelof, participated in battles with a torpedo, a cavalry squadron, a heavy artillery battery and six machine guns, two well-trained and well-equipped machine guns (12,000 people) who fought in the Russian-Japanese war (1904-1905).

The memory of this important event that marked the beginning of 1918 and the southern front of Romanian space was removed by the Communist authorities, who demolished in 1962 the monument raised by the inhabitants of the city as a tribute to those who had joked in those days of January 1918, opposed not only to the rebellious Russian soldiers who wanted to destroy the city, but also to the bolshevism of this space. Fortunately, we can reconstruct these moments on the basis of a Memorandum signed by Captain Musateanu, the 21st Infantry Regiment, kept in archives (A.M.R., Military Clergy Inspectorate, file 5, f.43-44).

The Romanian Army on the Galați line was headed the Military Commander of Covurlui County, Captain Commander Constantin Niculescu Rizea, who had received the order to defend the city (Păltânea, 2008, 267), helped by the other officers, Commander of the operative troops for defending

Galati ", the 8th Infantry Brigade belonging to the Fourth Division of the Romanian Army - Colonel Bucur Bădescu, Commander Puricescu and the crews of the four stars and the cruise ship equipped with machine guns, as well as by the Coast Guard Marine Battalions, the pilots of Squadron Farman 5 Recognition and Bomber of the 3rd Aeronautical Group, and of the Nieuport Squadron of Group 2 Aeronautics, photographer lieutenant observer Grigore Gafencu, militaries 21th Infantry Regiment under the command of Colonel Maxim, representing the maneuvering squad, the 27th Infantry Regiment, headed by Major Vulcănescu, the 6th Infantry and Mihai Viteazul "Military Regiment" headed by Major Milicescu, belonging to the 2nd Battalion, the 64th and 50th Military Regiment, the two cavalry squadrons and the 50th Regiment under the command of Colonel Genureanu and, last but not least, the Fire Company of the City.

For the defense of Galați, heavy battles took place on 7-8 January 1918, and the Russians were finally defeated and pushed to the Barboși railway station and the bridge over Siret (Păltânea, 2008, 267). They fell into battle 26 Romanian soldiers and 70 were registered injured (Kiriteșcu, 1989, 207-210). Let us not forget that the city was the southernmost point on the front line in 1918, located on the border with Russia, through Bessarabia, occupied in 1821 by the Tsarist Empire.

6. FINDINGS

Captain Mușățeanu, writes about the events of early 1918:

"... As of 1 January, the situation is changing: the Russians are starting to leave the front row and gather together in the villages on the left bank of the Siret to pass to Russia. Preventive measures are being taken, but without any result, as they gather about 8,000 people - a half and a half, with 2 artillery regiments and 80 machine guns.

They were allowed to come to the Ivești-Galați national slate - to Barboși-Movileni, and here they were surrounded by our regiment: a battalion from Galați, two companies from Filești, Lake Calica and the rest of six companies from Șendreni-Sardar to the west.

In the second line came the 6th Mihai Viteazul Regiment, 50 Putna Regiment, 5 Călărași Regiments and 1 Siret, and as artillery, we had 4 cannons (Russians over 100) 75 from the 2nd Artillery Regiment, some large cannons of the navy, located on the western edge of the city, plus the stars on the Danube.

The Russians had their Siret bridge on the back, and the Barboși hills with the second-line trenches in front - being very well sheltered. The struggle began on St. John on 4 pm. And he kept all night and all day 8 until the evening of 7, when it ended with the total defeat of the Russians who began to cross the Siret to the Germans.

However, on the 8th, at 10am, we were in great danger from Galați, for they had rejected our band up to 300m from Țiglina, threatening to enter the city, with the occasion of taking two companies prisoners with the commanders their. But by entering the battle and the stars on the Danube and ours starting again to attack, they flee and take them down to the railroad.

On the morning of 9, our victorious troops were at the Siret bridge, disarming the Russians who had not come to surrender to the Germans-and this only the infantry, for artillery had not returned. Our regiment had 12 wounded and one dead in this fight, although it was in the first line.

On January 12 we moved to Galați, our regiment occupying a sector in front of the town, in Dobrogea and over Siret, in front of Brăila, in Vădeni. "(Nicolescu, Dobrescu, Nicolescu, 2000, 149-150) After the victory of the Romanian army, not only the front was rescued, but also the bolshevization for the moment of other Russian army bodies (with a staff of about one million people) and even the attempt, through pressure from the other points, Pașcani and Spătărești - Fălticeni, to bolshevise the space of Moldova. Approximately 500 Romanian soldiers managed to defend the city of Galați despite numerical inferiority, the ratio being 1/10, and to honor their memory, Galați municipality ordered the construction of a monument, in 1925, known as "The defenders of Galați - 7 -9 January 1918 ", a work done by the Galați sculptor Ioannis N. Renieris.

For their heroism, Commander Nicolae Rizea was decorated by Russia with the Order "Stanislas" with commander swords, Colonel Bucur Bădescu will be decorated with the Order of "Mihai Viteazul" by the

Romanian state, and the city will receive "The War of the Cross of Italy "At the command of King Victor Emanuel III of Italy by General Pietro Badoglio, Chief of the General Staff of the Italian Army, who came personally to Galați (1921) and the" War Cross of France "by General Henri Mathias Berthelot, the former head of the French Mission in Romania, who also personally came to Galați (1922).

7. CONCLUSIONS

Despite all the pressures made by the Entente to speed up Romania's entry into war, the latter did not receive the promised support during the campaigns of 1917, nor as regards the endowment of the army. The conditions in which Romania was forced to conclude the Focsani Armistice and then the peace in Bucharest were very difficult. As a result, France and the United Kingdom should have assumed at the Peace Conference some of their responsibility for taking decisions in May 1918 of Romania.

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