

Abstract

Frontiers and National Minorities – Salient Factors for the International History of Europe in the 20th Century

After almost 25 years of academic career at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (1992-2017), including a seven year diplomatic interlude within the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2005-2012), I feel ready to rise to the occasion as coordinator of a Ph.D. program. Therefore I have written a dissertation for revealing my endeavours to enhance Romanian historical research.

This thesis contains three chapters: the first two are focused on the results of scientific research already done, some of them being in the aftermath of my Ph. D. dissertation on the relationships between Romania and Hungary during the first inter-war years, and the others dedicated to somehow different topics, such as national minorities within Romanian and European history of the 20th century, aspects of collective security during the inter-war period, or political and diplomatic arrangements at the inter-allied meetings during the course of the Second World War, and the like. The third chapter, a smaller one, comprises my desiderata, expectations, and intents in the matter of scientific inquiry and academic career.

The first two chapters are composed of some small syntheses of the aspects that I consider as my personal contributions to historical research. The two sections are, actually, a highly subjective enumeration of my additions to the level of knowledge for some issues. The list is as follows: the question of Romania re-entering the Great War in November 1918; the reintegration of Romania within the Allied camp in order to participate in the Peace Conference; which were the reasons of the Ion I. C. Bratianu's position in the front of Supreme Council; which country attacked in April 1919, Romania or Hungary?; why Ionel Bratianu did not trust the system conceived for protection of national minorities; why Romania was so defiant toward the Paris Peace Conference during the summer of 1919; the problems of the Romania military occupation in Hungary (August 1919-May 1920); why the Romanian occupation in Hungary needs to be rewritten; the contest between a Czechoslovakian-Yugoslav-Romanian alliance and a

Polish-Hungarian-Romanian one in August 1920; the tribulations of the Little Entente (of five states); the real establishment of the Little Entente in June 1921; the plans for unification between Romania and Hungary; the minorities in inter-war Transylvania – questions regarding schools and public administration; why the Paris Peace Conference has had such an undeserved fate?; why the League of Nations failed as peace keeper?; what the "spirit of Locarno" does mean?; a reassessment of controversial decisions adopted at Casablanca Conference in January 1943; why the so-called "Percentages Agreement" (Moscow, October 1944) is somehow misunderstood?; the myth of Yalta.

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The endeavour to continue my scientific research on Romanian-Hungarian relations in the inter-war years will be kept alive by the new sources discovered and the experience accumulated. I intent to improve and complete my books and articles in this respect as well as to extend the interval of analysis to the entire inter-war period and even after World War II.

My main interest in the field of historical research is focused on the issue of national minorities after the First World War and I have collected a huge amount of unknown and unpublished documents. Eventually, after a projected research stage at the archives of the League of Nations in Geneva, I hope I'll be able to write some articles and at least a book on Romania's embroilment within the system for protection of minorities of race, language and religion. I am also interested in the local history of minorities and I believe that such an interest will proceed.

As a director, since 2013, of the Centre for the History of International Relations in Iasi, I am coordinating a volume on the Romanian foreign ministers (1862-1989). After finishing it, we shall devise a dictionary of Romanian diplomats.

I have already published some papers on the history of Cold War and I think I'll find out new opportunities to explore the frantic developments of such unusual kind of war. Although it is a new preoccupation for me, I'll concentrate some of my research energies into the theme of European integration.

Finally, considering my life, bookish and research experience, I really believe that a historian or a professor of history has to write down some syntheses, useful not only for a small group of experts, but for a larger audience (all kinds of students and even

common people interested in history). Therefore I shall write the second volume for my book entitled *An International History of Europe in the 20th Century*.