

BUCOVINA. HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHT

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Abstract: *This subject, approached in today's political context of the war between Russia and Ukraine, requires, above all, a good knowledge of the history – older and newer – of how the relations between Russia and the states in its western neighborhood have evolved, as well as with the Powers whose interests clashed in this geographical area. Knowing the facts, the events that marked this evolution, directly involves Romanian interests throughout many centuries.*

It goes without saying that the space limits of a journal study allow only a specific approach to this issue, namely regarding the fate of that part of the North of the Principality of Moldova – "The Upper Country" – which was caught up in the whirlwind of political events starting with 18th century. At the same time, however, this issue can neither be approached nor understood if it is separated from the wider context of the relations of the Principality of Moldova with the great neighboring powers whose interests were aimed at grabbing its territory, the domination of the Danube mouths, the navigation on the river, the access to Black Sea.

Before proceeding to recount the facts, the morality of history obliges me to bring back to the memory of my contemporaries – who are trying to discern – with more or less skill – the correct path of history, the analysis and value judgments presented by Ion I. Nistor – "the greatest historian of Bucovina" as characterized by Nicolae Iorga –, in his work *Problema ucraineană în lumina istoriei (The Ukrainian Problem in the Light of History)*, published in Chernivtsi in 1934, under the auspices of the Institute of History and Language of the "King Carol II" University, work dated Chernivtsi, October 1933. "The present work is the result of long studies and research in the field of contemporary history - writes I. Nistor in «Foreword». In its pages I have tried to highlight one of the most controversial political and national issues that preoccupy minds today to a very large extent and are waiting to be resolved. For its just appreciation, however, it is required that it be removed from the maelstrom of political struggles and passions and raised to the heights of an objective historical

analysis. In the midst of national struggles, passionate statements were made, unfair exaggerations were resorted to and unjustified claims were raised"¹

"I insisted – Ion Nistor announces in this preface – on the old empire of Kiev and the principality of Halici, then on the famous *Bârladene Diploma* and on the origin of the cities on the Danube, in order to prove the unfoundedness of some assertions regarding the alleged Slavic dominions over parts of Romanian land. An entire chapter was dedicated to Romanian foundations in Poland and Ukraine, to highlight the contribution of the Romanian Church to the spiritual life of the Ukrainian people under foreign rule. It was then shown how Romanians have always proved to be friends and protectors of Ukrainians everywhere /... / The connections between Ukraine and Moldova from the time of Bogdan Hmielnitski, Doroshenko and Mazepa are treated on the basis of the rich historical information that we find in the contemporary chroniclers Grigore Ureche, Miron and Nicolae Costin, Ion Neculce and Dimitrie Cantemir/.../ Throughout the Cossack era, the good neighborly relations between Romanians and Ukrainians were the most sincere and cordial as the Dniester border between the two peoples was not contested by anyone. On the contrary, it was recognized even in official documents. The words « Inter nos et Valachiam ipse deus flumine Tyras² dislimitavit» remained to determine until today the conditions of friendship and good neighborliness between Romanians and Ukrainians". (emphasis added V.M.)

Ukraine's territorial claims in Bukovina and Bessarabia have contributed to the tightening of relations between the two peoples. "The dissensions increased greatly during the world war when the Russian Ukraine raised claims to Bessarabia and the Austrian one to Bucovina or a part of it. Then, the Council of the Country in Chisinau and the National Council of Bucovina in Chernivtsi vigorously protested against such unfounded claims, asserting loudly and loudly the inalienable rights of Moldova over the old Romanian land up to the Dniester.

"These unanimous protests" – says I. Nistor – "lead the head of the Ukrainian mission in Bucharest to declare on behalf of his Government that

¹ Ion I. Nistor, *The Ukrainian problem in the light of history*, Society for Romanian Culture and Literature in Bucovina, edited by Ștefan Purici. Argument by Gheorghe Buzatu. Septentrion Publishing House, Rădăuți, 1997, p. 12.

² Tyras = Dniester.

«Ukrainians consider the Dniester as the definitive border between both countries». Through this declaration, the basis of a lasting understanding between the two neighboring countries was laid, which only some reckless agitators are trying to disturb with their machinations /.../"³ (emphasis n.s. V.M.) And, for those of today, a judgment that comes from across the ages, has a topicality beyond any comment: "Enlightened Ukrainians from all sides are always stirring up the national question and imperiously demanding its solution. It is their national duty to do and no one can take them in the name of evil for agitating or matter that interests them and touches them so closely. However, it is no less true that the nations and states neighboring the Ukrainians are given to follow closely the unfolding of this problem, contributing as much as they can to its just and equitable solution." "Especially we, the Romanians"– states the author – "neighbors at Ceremuş and Dniester with the Ukrainians, hundreds of kilometers away, are obliged to carefully follow the evolution of the problem in all its details and this all the more closely as the historical development brought with it as a fraction of the Ukrainian nation to settle between Romania's borders, namely in the old Moldavian provinces of Bucovina and Bessarabia as well as in Maramureş. Therefore, we cannot be indifferent to the way in which the Ukrainian problem are to be solved!"⁴

I think it necessary to include in this short but useful – I think – introduction, the objective and very welcome assessments today, of the well-known historian Gheorghe Buzatu, who left us early, the signatory of the "Argument" to the recent edition of I. Nistor's book: "Investigating the realities of the past, Ion Nistor consistently returns in the text to their meanings for the present. Based on historical and ethnic data, the historian reveals the extent of Romanian rights in Bucovina and Bessarabia, rebutting in counterweight, the imperialist claims of the neighbors from the East, Russians and Ukrainians, in the past and today. At the same time, they insist on the Romanian claims, which have never crossed the Dniester line. But, let's re-read the great historian: «The entire historical past is a witness that the Romanian people have always been animated by the best feelings of friendship and good neighborliness towards the Ukrainians. The Romanians never craved territorial conquests beyond the Dniester... »⁵ .

³ I. Nistor, *op.cit.*,p. 13.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*,p. 217.

We have to admit that such a conclusion - rightly emphasizes Gh. Buzatu–formulated more than half a century ago, proves its complete relevance"⁶.

The truth contained in these words is confirmed by the entire history of the Romanians, and his objections, not few, direct and indirect, could never be argued. He is part of the perennial truths of Romanian history.

1775

The names "Bucovina" and "Bessarabia" – attributed to so-called independent political-territorial and ethnic entities of Moldova, never existed as such. These names appeared after the annexation of these parts of the autonomous Principality by the Habsburg Empire in 1775 and, respectively, by the Russian Empire in 1812; the names mentioned belong exclusively to these Empires that wanted to separate from Moldova - at least theoretically, by name, of the annexed territories.

The area in the south-eastern part of the Principality of Moldova, with the cities of Chilia and Cetatea-Albă, was known as the Bessarabian Kingdom, because, before the establishment of the Principality of Moldova, it was under the control of the Bessarabians, a ruling dynasty in the Principality of Wallachia (Wallachia). After the establishment of its centralized state, Moldova expanded to the South and East; during the time of Voivode Alexandru cel Bun (1400-1432), Moldova stretched from Ceremuș and Hotin to the mouth of the Dniester and the Black Sea, also ruling Cetatea–Albă and Chilia (after the death of the Wallachian Voivode Mircea the Elder). The southeastern area of Moldova has kept its old name of "Bessarabia", but it has never been an independent administrative unit⁷ within the Principality of Moldova. On the other hand, the historian Gheorghe Brătianu, in the study written under the sign of territorial seizures from 1940, states that "the borders of the Moldavian Principality were drawn since the time of its foundation"⁸. In the year 1392, Roman Voivode

⁶ Gh. Buzatu, Argument, inserted before the text of I. Nistor's book. It is dated: Iasi, September 9, 1996, signed Gh. Buzatu.

⁷ Bessarabia Bucovina Transylvania. Documents. . Annotated and introductory study by Prof. Univ. Dr. Viorica Moisuc. Department of Public Information. Editorial office of Publications for Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, 1996, p. 6

⁸ Gheorghe Brătianu, *La Moldavie et ses frontières historiques*, Imprimerie Semne, 1995, p. 95. In this study. Gh. Brătianu refers extensively to the extent of

Musat was entitled "Lord of the Country of Moldavia from the mountain to the sea". During the time of Alexander the Good, the entire course of the Dniester had been reached.⁹

In this area of problems, an important document is the Treaty of Alliance from 1711 between Tsar Peter the Great of Russia and Voivode of Moldavia Dimitrie Cantemir. Article 11 of this document specified the old borders of the Country of Moldova: "Moldova's borders, according to ancient rights, are those formed by the Dniester, Camenita, Bender / White Castle/ with the territory of Bugeacul /south–east of Moldova/, the Danube, Wallachia, Transylvania and Poland after the delimitations that were made". This Treaty also stipulated the obligation for the Russian troops to liberate the territories they had occupied in Moldova; also included in the Treaty was the prohibition for Russians to obtain and hold property on the territory of Moldova¹⁰. In time, The Russian Empire forcibly extended the name of the area in South–Eastern Moldavia, Bessarabia, to the entire annexation of the land between the Prut and Dniester. Austria's territorial acquisition had no name either. At first it was called "Austrian Moldova"; later it was resorted to the development of the word buk=beech, from the old Slavonic, used by such chroniclers to name the beech groves that covered the hills and hills of Upper Country: "large bucovines" in the region between the Prut and the upper Ceremuş valley, and "small bucovines" in the region between the Prut and the Dniester. This is the origin of the name "Bucovina". Cârliǵătura, Roman, Vaslui; Tutova, Tecuci, Putna-Covurlui, Fâlcu, Lăpuşna, Orhei and Soroca. Upper country with 7 lands: Hotin, Dorohoi, Hârâu, Cernăuţi, Suceava, Neamţ, Bacău. Bessarabia with 4 lands: Bugeac, Cetatea-Albă, Chlia, Ismail¹¹. It should be noted that the Prut was not the border between these lands, nor did it delimit any of them.

the Moldovan state throughout its history, to the changes that occurred in the context of the events that followed in the centuries following the establishment of the centralized state.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 99. It should be noted that this last provision was identical to the one contained in the Ottoman Hatiserifs: the Turks were not allowed to own any kind of property on the territory of the Romanian Principalities, they did not have the right to build mosques, they did not have the right to cross the Danube to sell their goods, the exchange was made in the Danube ports with Romanian merchants, etc.

¹¹ *Basarabia Bucovina Transilvania...*, p. 6-7.

In the 18th century, Moldavia was actually the Principality of Moldavia and consisted of three administrative units: Lowland with 12 lands: Iași, severely affected by the conflicts of interests between Russia, Habsburg Austria and the Ottoman Gate. The first partition of Poland in 1772 between Austria-Russia-Prussia was far from reconciling the conflicting interests of these Powers.

For scientific accuracy and understanding of the course of events, I reproduce below the value judgment of Mihail Kogălniceanu, brilliant historian, politician and Romanian diplomat¹², to whom we owe the discovery, in the secret archive of the Imperial Court in Vienna, of the documents relating to the onerous transaction of The upper lands of Moldavia between the three empires - Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian: "Austria always craved the incorporation of Moldavia and Wallachia. When it was not in her power to seize everything, she was content to take a part or even the part... For the complete incorporation of the Principalities, the Court of Vienna found opposition in Russia; that is why we see the ministers of Austria either proposing to the Cabinet from Saint-Petersburg the division of the Principalities or, on a good occasion, seizing a part of Romania. The parts that especially whet Austria's appetites were those localities that would have put the Carpathians under their control on both

¹² Mihail Kogălniceanu (1817-1891), leader of the Revolution of 1848, professor at the University of Iași (in 1843 he opened the course on the History of Romanians, stating that the "Homeland" is all the territory inhabited by Romanians); he had special merits in the events that materialized in the Union of the Romanian Principalities on January 24, 1859; he was Minister of Foreign Affairs under the reign of Charles I, ; his name is linked to two other historical events: the proclamation in the Romanian Parliament of state independence on May 9, 1877 and the support of Romania's rights at the Berlin Peace Congress in 1878. Together with Prime Minister Ion C. Brătianu and Carol I, supported resistance to Tsarist Russia's attempt to occupy Romania and turn it into a "gubernia" after the end of the Russo-Romanian-Turkish War of 1877-1878. In 1875, on the anniversary of the abduction of Upper Country (Bucovina) of Moldavia by Austria, Mihail Kogălniceanu published the documents discovered in the secret archive of the Imperial Court in Vienna regarding the Austro-Turkish negotiations of 1774-1775 conducted under the benevolent eyes of Russia, treaties whose objective was the annexation of Northern Moldova by the Habsburgs. See these documents in the work: Viorica Moisuc, *The Ordeal of Romanians in the Struggle for Liberation and National Integration*, vol. I, Publishing House of the România de Maine Foundation, Bucharest, 2010, ch. XIV, p.197-210

sides. These were in Wallachia, the Banat of Craiova, in Moldova, the lands stretching from Ceremuș to Milcov".¹³

This is evidenced by the secret treaty between Austria and the Sublime Gate of July 16, 1771, by which Austria promised its support to Turkey in the war it was waging with Russia. Instead, "The Sublime Gate to give evidence of its full gratitude and full gratitude to the generous proceeding of Their Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesties, will willingly leave them and give them as a gift the whole Part of the Principality of Wallachian Banat, on the which borders on a on one side with the borders of Transylvania and the Temisan other with the Danube and the Olt River, with the Imperial Court having the right of superiority over the Olt River".

I remind you of an essential thing: the Ottoman Gate had no right over the territory of the Romanian Principalities. Their autonomous status under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire precluded their labeling as Turkish provinces. The status of autonomy declared and recognized by the Port through numerous official documents signed by the sultan, did not allow the suzerain any kind of interference in the internal affairs of the Principalities, even more so it excluded any desire of the suzerain to dispose of the territory of the vassal state at will. This was a universally accepted rule in vassal-suzerain relations in medieval Europe. The suzerain obliges himself, through his contract with the vassal, to defend his territory in case of aggression.

The above-mentioned Austro-Ottoman agreement of 1771 did not materialize. But, the division of Poland and the annexation by Austria of a part of the territory of this state, specifically Galicia and Pocuția ("fatal event"— says Kogălniceanu), opened the appetite of Empress Maria-Tereza for claiming a "road" to her new annexations. This "road" had to be cut through the north of Moldova! Explains M. Kogălniceanu: "But the Vienna Court, in order to become master of this land / Galicia and Pocuția / needed a pretext - she, who had no right -. This pretext was found. Maria-Tereza had become the sovereign of Pocuția. Maria -Teresa had the right to complete the boundaries of Pocuția. Upper Moldova, with its old residence Suceava, with the Orthodox bishopric of Rădăuți founded by Alexandru the Good, with the monasteries of Putna, Sucevița, Voroneț,

¹³ M. Kogălniceanu, *The kidnapping of Bucovina according to authentic documents*, 3rd Edition, Introduction by Petre V. Haneș, Ed. Socec & Co., S.A.R., Bucharest, 1942. According to Viorica Moisuc, op. cit., p. 201.

Dragomirna, with the city of Cernivtsi¹⁴, whose administrators appeared in all the charters, in all the laws of the country, from the "dismounting"/foundation of the state/¹⁵.

The execution of the territorial abduction from the body of Moldova was the result of secret understandings between the three empires: the Sublime Gate, Austria and Russia. The documents researched by Kogălniceanu in the Secret Archive of the Vienna Court are revealing. I reproduce the document of July 3, 1775: "The account of the extraordinary secret expenses that were made by the Austrian imperial representative at the Gate, Thugut, on the occasion of the signing of the Convention regarding the cession of Bucovina on May 7, 1775":

To the dragoman of the Costachi Moruzzi Gate,	
After the promise given	10 000
piastres	
Since this amount, for greater secrecy, it was counted in	
2500 yellow bottoms; they paid off for each	
yellow bottom an agio of 5 paraleas.....	312.20"
	Total... 10,312 20"

At the Gate Chancellery

To Beilikei Effendi, 200 ordinary Turkish guildens,	
piece of 3 piastres 3 parallels.....	620
To Amedji Effendi also.....	620"
Secretary Raschid Mehmed Effendi who	
the Convention prescribed, 100 yellows.....	320"
Copies of various maps	50"
To Tahir Aga, the commissioner of the Gate	
at the demarcation, 1000 ordinary yellows.....	3100"
	Total.....15,012 20"

Which makes (Turkish piastre 16.71/2kr) in Caesaro-Royal coin 16,889 florins 31/2 kr

Signed, Thugut
Constantinople, July 3, 1775¹⁶

¹⁴ Documentary attestation of the city of Chernivtsi exists since 1408 and is represented by an act of commercial privileges granted by the Voivode of Moldavia Alexander the Good to merchants from the Polish city of Lwow

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The above account does not include the reward given to the Russian Field –Marshal Rumiantsev for the support given to Austria in the completion of this transaction, namely: 5000 guildens and a gold snuffbox encrusted with diamonds.

As it turns out, gold, diamonds, Spanish knives with precious stones, mirrors from Venice, porcelain vases from Sèvres were more powerful than the justice of Moldavia.

The theft of "Bukovina" was an accomplished fact and recognized by the Ottoman Porte and Tsarist Russia. The Governor of Moldova, Grigore Ghica, supported by the Divan, vehemently opposed this transaction, trying, until the last moment, to save the country's land. His fate was also decided by Vienna and Stambul: he was assassinated. Mihail Kogălniceanu's conclusion at the commemoration of a century since this theft: "After a hundred years of oblivion, the secret archive of the Court in Vienna was tasked with bringing to light the old Romanian virtue! When the virtue of our ancestors will revive among us, sweet Bucovina will also return to us; for falsehood, corruption, and abduction can never constitute a right; for righteous causes, just like God's justice, never perish!"¹⁷ (emphasis added V.M.) Prophetic words with resonance across the ages.

The transaction completed in May 1775 between Habsburg Austria and the Sublime Gate, embodied in the Deed of Cession signed in Palamutca, on the Dniester (north of Hotin) on July 2, 1776, established, after the drawing of the new borders, that Austria came into possession of 278 localities with a total area of 10,441 square kilometers, and a population of 70,000 inhabitants, most of whom are Romanian.

The Convention of Palamutca of 1776 between the Ottoman Porte and the Habsburg Austrian Empire concerning the cession of Upper Moldavia to Austria, as well as the Convention of Bucharest of 1812 between Tsarist Russia and the Sublime Porte concerning the cession of Moldavia between the Prut and Dniester to Russia, were null and void and not acquired from the start, because the Ottoman Gate disposed, without any right, of territories that did not belong to it. The mentioned conventions have kept this character until today.

¹⁶ Apud Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁷ Ibid.,p. 209-210.

1917-1918

At the outbreak of the First World War, the Romanian nation, for the most part, was under foreign rule: Tsarist Russia ruled the eastern part of Moldova – the region between Prut and Dniester – Bessarabia; Austria–Hungary controlled a much larger Romanian territory: Banat, Bucovina and Transylvania. Therefore, the Empires being part of two opposing political–military Alliances ruled Romanian territories. Hence the problem of Romania's option.

The Kingdom of Romania, with national-state unification as its major objective, opted for the Entente, with which it saw possible the liberation of the Romanian territories held by Austria and Hungary. Alliance with the Entente Powers was established de facto only in the summer of 1916 through the Political Convention and the Military Convention signed in Bucharest by the representatives of France, Russia, Italy, and Romania. In a short time, Romania went to war only against Austria-Hungary with the declared aim of liberating the territories inhabited by Romanians and ruled by this empire.

In the conditions of the war and the deepening of the political and social crisis in the multinational empires, the struggle of the oppressed nations for national and political self-determination became radicalized. In the Romanian provinces under Habsburg and tsarist occupation, the national struggle became intertwined with the objective of unification with the Motherland.

The phenomenon was not only specific to the Romanians, but also to the other nations of the Empire that rejected the idea of perpetuating the dualist state, even if reformed¹⁸. The mass desertion of Romanians from

¹⁸ In the context of the deepening of the political, social, national crisis in the dual monarchy, of the manifestation of Hungary's separatist tendencies, the reformist current was asserted, promoted and supported by politicians, philosophers, ideologues, not only in Austria, but also abroad. Archduke Franz-Ferdinand, the heir to the Habsburg Throne, an open opponent of the ultra-conservative policy of Emperor Francis-Joseph and the militaristic circles around him, became the leader of the action aimed at reforming the Empire through federalization and granting a wide autonomy to all the nations that were composing. Romanian Aurel C. Popovici, leader of the Romanian national movement in Transylvania, author of the work *Die Vereinigte Staaten von Gross-Österreich*, Leipzig, 1906 (translated and edited into Romanian by Petre Pandrea

the Habsburg imperial army and their enlistment in the Romanian army or in the army of Romania's allies also occurred during these years. A large number of Romanians campaigned for the national cause, in various forms; in France, the Romanian National Committee was established under the leadership of Tache Ionescu; *La Roumanie* magazine was the platform where the national cause of all Romanians was supported. In the United States, a large number of Romanians coming from Transylvania and other parts of the country organized demonstrations, public gatherings in which the situation of the brothers from Austria-Hungary was explained, the only goal pursued by Romania by entering the war being the liberation of the brothers and the unification national – state. In Italy, the legion of Romanian volunteers (former prisoners from the Austro –Hungarian army) was established, supported by the government of the Italian government. In Russia, Romanian soldiers from the Austro-Hungarian army taken prisoner made up the Transylvanian volunteer corps that got involved in supporting the revolutionary movement in Bessarabia. It is also important to underline the fact that leaders of the national movement from Austria –Hungary established national committees abroad, collaborating closely with each other, in these years the cause of all was the abolition of the Austro – Hungarian colossus and the national liberation.

The fall of tsarism and the development of the revolutionary movement in Russia created favorable conditions for the liberation struggle of the Romanians from the Bessarabia governorate. The strong national

in 1939 under the auspices of the "King Carol II" Foundation for Literature and Art, edition republished in 1997 under the care of Constantin Schifirnet), was among the archduke's close collaborators. The essence of the reformation of the dualist empire in the vision of Franz-Ferdinand and his collaborators was actually the saving of the empire and the House of Habsburg, granting an illusory freedom and autonomy to the nations, the "reformed" state preserving and even extolling the prerogatives of the emperor, who concentrated the powers in his hand legislative, judicial, political, military. In Romania, despite the good relations with the heir to the Habsburg throne, the idea of this so-called "reformation" of the Empire was not shared - which did not renounce the annexationist policy, did not recognize the right of nations to self-determination and constitution of their own states or unification with already existing national states; Popovici's book, although highly appreciated for the vastness of the documentation, was not accepted either by public opinion or by political circles. See this issue in detail in *Calvarul...vol II*, chapters XXX, XXXI, XXXII; XXXV, pp. 261-349; 374-401.

movement spoke out for the self – determination of this province, which was decided by the Council of the Country – the representative body of the new state, the Moldavian Democratic Republic – on December 2, 1917. The new Romanian state, declared independence on January 24, 1918, in the midst of a bitter struggle with the Russian Bolshevik authorities, with groups of the Red Army sent to liquidate the new Chisinau Power and establish the Soviet regime. Two months later, the Council of the Land, convened in Chisinau, decided with a majority of votes the Union of the former Bessarabia with Romania: it was March 27, 1918. The Russian and Ukrainian deputies from the Council of the Land spoke against this reparative act, the Poles and the Germans welcomed the act Unions. Thus, the old Principality of Moldavia was completed with a part of the region between the Prut and the Dniester, annexed a hundred years ago by Tsarist Russia¹⁹.

The Romanian national self-determination movement in "Bucovina", a part of Moldavia under Austrian occupation since 1775, also faced a very complicated situation. It should be noted that. In spite of the official Declarations of the Bolshevik leaders at Petrograd – I mean "self-determination up to the separation" from Russia of the nations under imperial occupation, of the "liberation of all living things" and the like, the Bolshevik Power never for a moment intended to accept the loss of territories annexed throughout the Empire. And not only that. The Russian Soviet state continued to pursue the acquisition of new territories - Romanian lands being one of the objectives.

The authorities in Kiev (Central Rada) addressed to the Romanian Government, in Iași, on April 1/13, 1918, an official protest against the decision of the Council of the Country of March 27 raising claims on some regions of Bessarabia that should have been "joined to the Republic of Ukraine"²⁰. The Romanian Government responded to this official protest on April 9/22, 1918 with a written Note, handed to the diplomatic

¹⁹ *Basarabia Bucovina Transilvania...*, doc. nr. 18, 24,25, 26, 35, 39, 46, 49, 51, 61, 90, 92.

²⁰ Ibidem, doc. no. 97, p. 303-304. 1/13 April 1918, Kiev, Government of the Republic to the Government of the Kingdom of Romania. Protest against the decision of the Council of State in Chisinau from March 27 on union with Romania. Signed by Golubovici, President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ukraine (the original in the Archives of the Romanian Academy Library, (in account A.BAR), fund XIV, file 656, f. 59-60).

representative of Ukraine, Galip, a member of the Rada. Rejecting the accusation brought against it that "Bessarabia was annexed by Romania"²¹, the Romanian government specifies that "Bessarabia united willingly with the Motherland in the virtue of an almost unanimous vote." At the same time, regret is expressed that "today, politics tends towards conquests that neither the history of the past nor the principles of law legitimize", emphasizing: "Bessarabia is a Romanian land from a historical and ethnic point of view, which belonged to the Moldavian Crown, since the formation of this Principality in the 14th century and until the kidnapping committed by Tsarist Russia in 1812. This kidnapping will not be repeated, neither in whole nor in part, by the Democratic Republic of Ukraine, in defiance of

²¹ Allusion to the fact that, following the repeated aggressions of the Russian Bolshevik gangs against the independent Republic of Moldova, sent to Chisinau to "liquidate" the Council of the Country and proclaim Soviet power, the representatives of the Council of General Directors (the government of the Republic) arrived in Iasi and asked for help Romanian government. General Ernest Broșteanu, at the head of units of the Romanian army, arrived in Chisinau, the attacks of the Bolsheviks led by Naștarum Kaabak were repelled and order was restored, so that the State Council could resume its work. See Op. cit., doc. no. 51, p. 188: January 13/26, 1918, Chisinau, telegram from the Chief of Staff of the Red Army in Chisinau, Kaabac, addressed to the Odessa Soviet. We mention that the Ukrainian Bolshevik authorities in Odesa, led by Rumcerod, were not recognized by those in Kiev (Central Rada). In the Universal of January 12, 1918 of the Rada, by which the independence of the Republic of Ukraine was proclaimed, its western border was established on the Dniester. Moreover, it should be noted that in the Treaty signed in Brest-Litovsk between the Central Powers and Ukraine, on February 9, 1918, specifying the territorial extent of Ukraine, Bessarabia was not listed as belonging to Ukraine in any way. Moreover, in the Treaty between the Central Powers and Soviet Russia, also signed in Brest-Litovsk on March 3 of the same year, the latter undertook to immediately make peace with the Republic of Ukraine, recognizing its borders fixed in the Treaty of February 9, borders that did not include Bessarabia.

However, the two countries, Russia and Ukraine - an independent republic - raised claims on the Romanian territories beyond the Dniester, namely at a time when the former governorate of Bessarabia already existed as an independent and sovereign state. It is no coincidence that on exactly the same date of January 13/26, 1918 - Lenin and Stalin signed the Decree to break diplomatic relations with Romania, arrest the Romanian diplomatic staff in Petrograd and confiscate the "Romanian gold fund".

justice and legal norms"²². However, the Rada of Kiev did not stop claiming Bessarabia. On April 22 / May 5, 1918, the Ukrainian government made serious accusations against Romania regarding the so-called "annexation of Bessarabia" by military force following an "ultimatum". The argument for claiming Romanian lands was conceived as follows: "For more than a century, Bessarabia was part of the Russian Empire and had close political and economic relations with its neighbor, Ukraine. At the time of the establishment of the Republic of Ukraine in November 1917, the government believed that because of the federative link between the Republic of Ukraine and the other parts of the former Russian Empire, it should retain this link with Bessarabia. After the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, the Ukrainian government, not admitting a definitive rupture between Ukraine and Bessarabia, proposed to establish closer ties with the Republic of Moldova, granting it the right of political autonomy. The Government of Ukraine insists on this even though it is known that Moldovans do not constitute the majority of the population in Bessarabia/./ Currently, the Government of Ukraine, firmly refusing to recognize Romania's rights over Bessarabia, claims its own rights over this region/./ It is obvious that the vital interests of Ukraine - strategic and economic - require the Government of Ukraine to insist on the annexation of Bessarabia"²³ (emphasis added by V.M.)

The ridiculousness of the Kiev government's "argument" is obvious. I would only ask one question: in what capacity did this government "grant political autonomy" to an autonomous state (December 2, 1918) already recognized by the Entente powers?

It is necessary to specify, however, that Ukraine's claim to annex an independent and sovereign state - the Democratic Republic of Moldova - seen as still a Russian province, based on considerations devoid of any morality, took place in the context of the conclusion of the separate peace with the Central Powers, implicitly the separate exit from the war of Russia and Ukraine, a peace that had laid the foundations for the collaboration of

²² Op. cit., doc. no. 100, pp. 306-309. April 9/22, 1918, Iasi. Response note of the Romanian Government to the Declaration of April 1/13 of the Ukrainian government in Kiev. Signed C.C. Arion, Minister of Foreign Affairs. (the original in A.BAR, Fund XIV, file no. 1010, vol. 1.)

²³ Ibid., doc. no. 105, p. 317-320. Note no. 2928 of the Government of Ukraine, Kiev, May 5, 1918, signed Dorosenski, to the Romanian Government, Iasi (A.BAR, fund XIV, file 1010, vol II.

the two countries with the German and Austro-Hungarian empires; for Romania, this abandonment of the Romanian-Russian front, betrayal of the old allies, renegeing on all the commitments made through treaties and conventions signed by the official Russian representatives, had catastrophic consequences on the military, political and economic level; the separate "peace" imposed on Romania by the Central Powers in connivance with Bolshevik Russia, under conditions of total isolation of the country (territorially reduced to a small part of Moldova) - all this stimulated Russian and Ukrainian aggression. The division of Romania between the new allies seemed to loom in the very near future.

In these extremely difficult conditions, when the German empires were exerting ultimate pressure on the Romanian government in Iași, and the Russian Bolshevik power was organizing terrorist actions on the territory of Moldavia and Bessarabia, barely out of Russian tutelage, this government had the determination, on May 6/19 1918 to give a firm and comprehensive answer to Note no. 2928, full of aggression and insults of the Kyiv Rada, sent to Iasi on May 5.

An exposition of the history of Moldova up to the first division of its borders in 1775, a detailed analysis of the circumstances in which the Russian Empire annexed half of the autonomous Principality of Moldavia (naming this half, between the Prut and the Dniester – "Bessarabia"), an argumentative exposition but synthetic, spread over 14 pages, finally refers to Rada's "justifications" in claiming Bessarabia. I repeat, for the always current interest of the judgment made by the Romanian Government now for well over a century, these words: "As regards strategic and economic needs, the Royal Government has the honor to state that, in the absence of any other plausible reason, these have always been the final argument invoked to justify all usurpations and conquests. Until recently, tsarist policy had no other arguments to justify its monopoly claims over the Bosphorus and the Black Sea, and today, the Republic of Ukraine cannot, except by openly aligning itself with the principles of imperialist policy, support the same well-known reasons , to raise claims regarding a territory over which he cannot prove any right/...!"²⁴

²⁴ Ibid., doc. no. 108, p. 344-357: 6/19 June 1918 Iași, Answer of the Government of Romania to Note 2928 of May 5, 1918 of the Government of Ukraine. Signed C.C. Arion, Minister of Foreign Affairs (the original (in French) in A.BAR, Fund XIV, file 1010, vol. II.)

The succession of events during the war years influenced Austria – Hungary's policy in the east. The defeat of the Austrian army in Galicia, Romania's entry into the war against the Centrals, the death of Emperor Francis–Joseph led Vienna to accept the proclamation of the Polish kingdom on November 5, 1916. In this context, the new emperor, Carol de Habsburg, abandoned the illusory project of proclaiming Habsburg Great Ukraine from the Carpathians to the Caucasus.

In the last months of 1917, the relations of Kiev Ukraine with Austria present interesting aspects. Engaged in separate peace negotiations with Vienna, the Rada raised claims over Bucovina, Galicia and Subcarpathian Russia. Ottokar Czernin, the imperial foreign minister who dealt with these new demands with the Ukrainian delegation, recounts in his memoirs the confrontations that took place in Brest-Litovsk on this issue, Austria's interests being affected by Ukraine's demands. However, the matter was resolved by the signing of a secret Convention between Austria and Ukraine which stipulated the ceding of Bucovina to Ukraine in exchange for its provision of a large amount of grain and other foodstuffs to Austria.²⁵

The disintegration of the dualist empire in the last months of 1918 also stimulated the Ukrainian national movement. In the assembly in Lwow on October 19, 1918, the independence of the Ukrainian territory from Austria-Hungary was proclaimed. This entity included Eastern Galicia, Bucovina with the cities of Cernăuți, Siret and Storojineț and the land of North – Eastern Hungary; it was named "West Ukrainian National State" annexed to Austria (mit Anschluss an Österreich), according to the decision of the Lwow Assembly. On November 15, 1918, the Kyiv Rada proclaimed the "Western Ukrainian Republic". The national movement of Romanians from Bucovina vigorously protested against these decisions in which the Romanian territory of Bucovina was targeted by imperialist plans of Austria, Ukraine, and Russia. In the Vienna Parliament, the Romanian deputies spoke about the immense damages brought to the Romanian nation in Bucovina by the secret arrangements between these powers. The Romanian press stood up in defense of the Romanian cause; The newspaper "Viața Nouă" from Suceava wrote on August 18, 1918: "Bucovina is a historical and geographical unit; it is Romanian clean land, not only from Suceava to the Prut, but also from Vatra –Dornei to the Dniester. Bucovina has remained our heritage as it is, in its entirety, from

²⁵ Ottokar Czernin, *Im Weltkrieg*, Wien, 1919, p. 396-409.

our forefathers and we owe it to keep it intact for future times"²⁶. The national movement in Bucovina has openly stated its desire to reject any interference by Ukraine, Russia, Austria in terms of liberation from the yoke of Austria and Union with the Country.

On January 21, 1918, the National Committee of Romanians emigrating from Austria-Hungary was established, which published its program and decisions in the newspapers: "Romania Mare", "Lupta Transylvania" and "Romania Noua"²⁷ from Chisinau; together with "Cuvânt Moldovenesc" and other newspapers and magazines, these media bodies reflected the entire process of national and political emancipation of Bucovina and Bessarabia, they supported the desired Union of these two parts of Moldova with the Motherland.

The declaration of Romanians emigrating from Austria-Hungary launched by the above-mentioned Committee, on October 6, 1918, in Iași, in which it was said: "The Transylvanian and Bucovina Romanians living on the territory of the Romanian kingdom, on behalf of us and our subjugated brothers at home, whose conscience is suppressed and therefore unable to express themselves freely, we declare the following:

1. We ask to be freed from the yoke of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and we are determined to fight by all means and in all ways, so that the entire Romanian nation is constituted in a single national and free state under the domination of the Romanian Dynasty

2. We do not recognize An important moment in the development of the action of self-determination and union with the country, is the Austro-Hungarian monarchy's right to take care of the fate of the Romanians from Transylvania and Bucovina, because for centuries it has kept us in the most shameful bondage All attempts at federalization by the House of Habsburg

²⁶ *Basarabia Bucovina Transilvania...*, doc. nr. 110, p. 360-363, nota 2.

²⁷ With the initial name of "Ardealul" and then "România Nouă" newspaper of Transylvanian refugees in Bessarabia, it appeared from the beginning in Romanian, printed in Latin letters. A group of Transylvanian leaders, refugees in Romania, led by Onisifor Ghibu, Octavian Goga, Sever Bocu and others, turned this newspaper into a forum for the struggle for the revival of Bessarabia. The published articles made an exceptional contribution to the development of national consciousness in Bessarabia, to the spread of Romanian literature, to the knowledge of the history of Romanians from all over the vast land inhabited by them.

are desperate gestures of a kingdom doomed to disintegrate and perish.../...

3. We demand that the entire territory of the Habsburg monarchy claimed by the Romanian state, recognized and guaranteed by the alliance treaties concluded by Romania with the Entente Powers (Entente) be released and united with the Motherland²⁸

The document was signed by
Al. Lapedatu (President) and Octavian C. Tăslăoanu (secretary).

The situation in Bucovina continued to be unclear. Vienna did not give up the idea of getting directly involved in the action of forming a large Ukrainian state that would also include Bukovina. In Galicia, the representative of Emperor-King Charles, Archduke Wilhelm of Habsburg was organizing the Ukrainian National Army in collaboration with the authorities in Lwow. Several units were deployed in Chernivtsi and Rădăuți, in the valley of Bistrița where they occupied the Romanian territory which, by virtue of the Bucharest peace treaty of May 1918, was to be ceded to Austria.

In Chernivtsi, the Austrian Governor of the "duchy" of Bukovina, Count Etzdorf, received, on November 6, 1918, the delegation of the "National Rada of Ukraine" from Lwow, to which he handed over the power of government over the country of Bukovina; The minutes of November 6 were drawn up upon the completion of this onerous transaction on Bucovina. On the same day, the Ukrainian Rada in Lwow launched a Manifesto announcing that, "given the fact that the old Austrian government has perished of its own accord", it is "obliged to take over the leadership of the city of Chernivtsi"²⁹.

²⁸ Under the name of Memoir, the Declaration was sent to King Ferdinand I; the document was accompanied by a separate text that stated: "The Transylvanian and Bucovina Romanians broke all ties with the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; as citizens and soldiers they are ready to make any sacrifice for the political Union of all Romanians and for the Romanian dynasty. , inextricably linked to the destinies of our entire nation " (Bessarabia Bucovina Transilvania..., doc. no. 113, p. 367-368).

²⁹ I. Nistor, op. cit., p. 210. see also annex no. 16, 268-269: The minutes by which Count Etzdorf transfers to the delegation from Lwow the "power of government" over Bucovina

The situation became even more complicated because the Romanian Aurel Onciul, in agreement with the Ukrainian Emelian Popovici, collaborating with the Lwow authorities, set themselves up as "national commissioners" of the Romanian and Ukrainian peoples and announced that "the imperial government in Vienna entrusted power to Bucovina"; the city of Chernivtsi remained under dual Romanian-Ukrainian administration, and the "commissioner of the populace and urban commissioner for Chernivtsi was appointed by the Rada from Lwow, Osip-Bezpalko³⁰. It would have been a so-called Romanian-Ukrainian condominium over the capital of Bucovina.

These events unfolded while, on the one hand, Emperor-King Charles of Habsburg's attempts at a separate peace with the Allies (England, France, Italy, USA) were an irreversible failure³¹, and on the other hand, on October 27, 1918, the National Council of Bucovina proclaimed itself Constituent and unanimously voted "in the power of national sovereignty" the integral Union of Bucovina with the other Romanian countries in an independent national state and will proceed towards this goal in full solidarity with the Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary.". The Constituent Assembly resolutely rejected "any attempt to destroy Bucovina"³². At the same time, groups of the Habsburg imperial army made up of Ukrainians, together with the "Ukrainian national army" carried out terrorist actions on Bukovina territory in support of the plan to join Bukovina to Ukraine. Although he had transferred the leadership of the duchy to the Rada of Lwow, Etdorf was at the center of these actions, coordinating them. The National Council of Bucovina tried to remove the danger of the division of Bucovina through direct discussions with Etdorf. These discussions took place on November 4, in the house of Professor Alex. Hurmuzachi, between the President of the Council, Iancu Flondor and the former Austrian governor, Etdorf³³. In the face of the latter's adamant position, Flondor declared that Romanians do not concede anything from the October 27 Declaration of the Constituent Land of Bucovina and totally

³⁰ *Ibidem*

³¹ See this issue in detail in Viorica Moisuc, *Calvarul*, vol II, chapter XXXV, p. 374-403.

³² *Bessarabia Bucovina Ttransivania...*, dock no. 124, p. 392-393. Note from the National Council of Bucovina addressed to the Romanian Government, Chernivtsi. on November 2, 1918. (A.BAR, Fond XIV, file 1010, vol 9, p. 101-102.)

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 397, note no. 1.

disapprove of any attempt to divide Bucovina, which is entirely Romanian land.

As a result, the units of the Ukrainian army present in Chernivtsi started reprisals against the Romanians. On November 6, the headquarters of the National Council of Bucovina were devastated, leaders of the Romanian national movement were arrested, armed Ukrainian gangs occupied the headquarters of the Council, located in the National Palace.

The order was: the liquidation of the Romanian national movement, preventing at all costs the union of Bucovina with Romania. Faced with this situation, which endangered the work of the National Council of Bucovina, it decided to request urgent help from Romania. The representative of the Council, deputy Bodnărescu, leaves for Iași where he is received by the prime minister gen. Coandă (head of the Government since November 5). He orders the emergency movement of General Iacob Zadik, commander of the Royal 8th Division, to Bucovina. The newspaper "Glasul Bucovinei"³⁴ reported in several consecutive issues, the triumphant reception of the Romanian army in Bucovina, the great assembly in Chernivtsi, the speech of Iancu Flondor, the President of the National Council, the Proclamation of General I. Zadik. On October 4, Charles of Habsburg had tried to sensitize the US government, presenting it with an offer of peace and collaboration for the security and peace of Europe by keeping the Empire in the form of a federal state, within which there would have been autonomous national formations; it should be mentioned that it relied on the acceptance of the perfect similarity of this formula with the "14 points" launched by Wilson which, in truth, in the initial form, had specified the granting of the status of autonomy only to the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. However, following protests from all these nations who wanted self-determination up to the point of secession and the establishment of their own states, independent, without any kind of guardianship, old or new, the President, through the head of the State Department, Robert Lansing, had announced the radical modification of that provision. So, Emperor Carol received the appropriate response from President W. Wilson: "The President is no longer in a position to recognize only the autonomy of these peoples as a basis for peace and is forced to insist that they and not him be the judges, judging that no action of the Austro-Hungarian government could satisfy the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 398, note no. 2

peoples' aspirations and conception of their rights and determinations as members of the family of nations."³⁵

In those hot days at the end of November 1918 when the fate of the war was being decided, the US State Department addressed, on November 6, a letter to the President of the Romanian National Council based in Paris, Tache Ionescu, in which he showed that the Government of the United States "deeply sympathizes with the Romanian people", he was "a witness to the Romanians' struggles, their sufferings and their sacrifices in the cause of liberation from the yoke of their enemies and oppressors, in a spirit of national unity and according to the aspirations of Romanians everywhere", engaging to use "all his influence so that the just political and territorial rights of the Romanian people are obtained and secured against any foreign aggression"³⁶.

On November 11, the foreign minister of Great Britain, A.J. Balfour gave the same assurances to the Romanian National Council.³⁷

On November 10, 1918, King Ferdinand I gave the Proclamation to the soldiers in which he announced Romania's re-entry into the war alongside the Allies for "the realization of our dream from all time: the Union of all Romanians"³⁸. The resumption of the armed struggle for the liberation of the national territory took place after a break of half a year, imposed by the dictate of the "peace" from Bucharest, May 1918, a period when relations with the Allies were formally interrupted.

It was the time when the struggle for national liberation had entered its final phase throughout the vast territory that had been under Austro-Hungarian domination.

In Transylvania, the Romanian National Council - established on the night of October 30 to 31, 1918 launched, on November 6, the historic Manifesto Towards the Romanian Nation announcing that only this body "represents today the entire Romanian Nation from Transylvania and Hungary and is recognized by the Great Powers of the World"; the document is signed by St. Cicio-Pop³⁹.

³⁵ Ditto, doc. no. 121, pp. 384-385. Wilson's reply to the Emperor Charles Note was read on 22 October 1918 in the Austro-Hungarian Parliament by Prime Minister von Hussarek "in glacial silence".

³⁶ *Ibid.*, doc. nr. 125, p. 393-394.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, doc. no. 131, p. 401-403 (A.BAR, fund XIV, file no. 42).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, doc. nr. 130, p. 400-401.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, doc. nr. 126, p. 394-396.

On November 28, 1918, the General Congress of Bucovina, meeting in the Synodal Hall of the Metropolitan Palace in Chernivtsi "embodying the supreme power of the country and being the only one endowed with the legislative power, in the name of national sovereignty, we decide: The unconditional and eternal union of Bucovina, in the old their borders up to Ceremus, Colacin and Dniester, with the Kingdom of Romania". The Polish and German deputies also then declared their adherence, without reservations, to the Congress Decision. Representatives from Bessarabia (Pantelimon Halippa, Ion Pelivan, Ion Buzdugan, Grigore Cazacliu) were present and greeted this historic act; from Transylvania and Hungary (Gh. Crișan, Victor Deleu, Vasile Osvadă). The minutes of the meeting of November 28 were drawn up and signed by Dr. Iancu Flondor (President of the Congress) George Băncescu (Director of the Presidential Office), Dr. Iancu Sbiera (Secretary of the Congress)⁴⁰.

This was followed by the Great National Assembly of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary, held in Alba-Iulia on December 1, 1918, where the process of the national and political unification of Romanians from all over the land inhabited by them ended. Then the unique objective of Romania's entry into the war was fulfilled: the liberation of the Romanians and the land inhabited by them, which was under the occupation of Austria and Hungary.

AFTER 1918

So, at the end of 1918, the Romanian people re-established their sovereignty over the lands that had been torn from the body of Moldavia by the Habsburg and Russian Empires in 1775 and, respectively, in 1812. The Dniester was now, until it flows into the Black Sea, the state border. basically, the historical border between Romania and Ukraine. Transylvania - in its entirety - and Banat had reintegrated, along with the other Romanian provinces, into the same unified state.

However, the Soviet power, Russian and Ukrainian, did not give up the old claims: Bessarabia and Bucovina. On May 1, 1919, Cicerin and Cristian Racovski, the Commissioners of Foreign Affairs of Russia and

⁴⁰ Ibid., doc. no. 148, pp. 483-496. Minutes of the debates of the General Congress of Bucovina. The motion adopted by the Union with Romania.

Ukraine, respectively, addressed to the Romanian Government an accusatory, demanding Note having an ultimatum character⁴¹:

- Romania "invaded Bessarabia at the end of 1917, destroying the conquests of the Russian revolution and establishing the hated regime of the landowners...

- The imperialist governments of the Entente, supporting the annexation actions undertaken by Romania, made official statements regarding the provisional character of the occupation of Bessarabia⁴².

- He accuses the Romanian Government of not respecting the "agreementw" whith Russia (referring to the Averescu-Racovski letter exchange of March 5, 1918) which "provided" in art. 1 that Romania "withdraw from Bessarabia within a period of two months"⁴³...

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, doc. nr. 159, p. 581-585 (original A.BAR, Fond XIV, file 1010, vol II, f. 53-58).

⁴² It refers to the official Note sent to the Russian Soviet government, on February 21, 1918, by the Italian minister in Romania, Fasciotti, on behalf of the diplomatic representatives of the allied countries, which stated that "the intervention of the Romanian troops /in Bessarabia/ has no political character

⁴³ It is a deliberate distortion of some documents known as the "Exchange of Averesu -Racovski letters) from February 20-23/March 5-8, 1918; On February 11/24, 1918, the Rumcerod from Odesa (the Ukrainian authority) sent a Note to the Romanian Government in Iași, with the following requests: 1/ "The Romanian Government undertakes to make a formal statement regarding the progressive evacuation of Bessarabia from the Romanian armies of occupation. First of all, the evacuation of Bender and Sebriani. The Romanian army of occupation must be reduced, within two months, to a detachment of 10,000 men whose service will consist of guarding Romanian warehouses and railroad lines. ...As the evacuation of the Romanian army takes place, the Russian military forces will occupy the evacuated points" Also at this point it was demanded that the local militia be subordinated to the Russian police, etc. It is interesting that in this letter, he returned to an older "offer" of (tsarist) Russia that the Romanian army led by the king, the royal house, the Parliament, the government, etc., should take refuge in Russia, an offer rejected by Romania at the time. The letter was signed by Yudovski, Brașevan and Voronski. Submitted to the head of the Romanian Government, General Alexandru Averescu, he put the following resolution on the document in question: "All conditions are accepted, except for the first one. "The official response of the Romanian Government sent to Rumcerod contains in point 1, literally, the resolution gen. Averescu. It should be added that the documents that followed, including the last one dated March 5, 1918 signed by Dr. C. Rakovski, the President of the Autonomous Superior College, ignore the

- The Romanian government "tried to achieve the forced and violent Romanianization of the population /of Bessarabia/ through terror, executions, arrests, torture, confiscation of goods, the organization of pogroms against Jews, robberies set up by the corrupt and greedy Romanian bureaucracy"

- "More than 100 railway workers were executed...thousands of peasants were shot, villages burned or razed to the ground by the army forces...2000 people were shot in Northern Bessarabia..."

- "The Romanian feudal government ... set out to overthrow the power of the Soviets in Hungary ... Romanian troops are attacking the Soviet Red Army in Hungary from all directions ... etc."

In the last part of the Note, the ultimate Russian-Ukrainian demands are formulated, in the form of "proposals!":

"1/ Romanian armies, officials and agents from Bessarabia to immediately evacuate this territory

2/ The authors of all the crimes committed against the workers and the entire population of Bessarabia should be tried immediately by a People's Court

3 All military property belonging to the army of Russia and Ukraine illegally stolen from Romania to be returned

4/ The inhabitants of Bessarabia should be put back in possession of the goods that were stolen or confiscated from them.

specification contained in Averescu's resolution. This led to the transformation of these documents into a non-existent Romanian-Soviet "agreement" regarding the withdrawal of the Romanian army from Bessarabia, falsely taken over not only by Russian diplomats in the subsequent negotiations with Romania, but also by Russian historians, published as such in the collections of Russian documents after the revolution. (We also encounter this way of falsifying documents for the well-known Soviet ultimatum of June 26, 1940, transformed into a Romanian-Soviet "agreement", in order to preserve, in the peace treaty of 1947, the Molotov-Ribbentrop border with Romania.) See the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Fund 71/USSR, vol 131. Apud Bessarabia Bucovina Transylvania..., doc. no. 77, p. 243-249. These letters remained without object because on February 27/March 12 the German troops were in front of Odessa, the Rumcerod and the other revolutionary organs no longer existed. (See the report of the aviator captain C. Andreescu to the MFA on March 15 from Odesa, in Arch. MFA. Fond URSS, vol 131. f. 328)

The Soviet Socialist Governments of Russia and Ukraine will wait for 40 hours, beginning on May 1st at twenty-two in the evening, for a clear and precise answer to these proposals; in case this answer will not come, they reserve the right as they see fit in what what concerns Romania". The final note is signed by: Cicerin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republics; Rakovsky, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

A commentary on this ultimative Russian-Ukrainian Note addressed to Romania on May 1, 1919, would require dozens of pages. I try to summarize this comment in a few sentences.

The union of Bessarabia with the Country was achieved through plebiscite acts that expressed the will of the Romanian nation - the majority in this part of historical Moldova. The Romanian Army, expressly called by the Council of the Country and the General Council of Bucovina in the context of the commission of terrorist acts by Russian and Austro-Ukrainian armed gangs in order to liquidate the representative bodies of the two Provinces and annex them to the neighboring Powers, did not did nothing but restore order so that the two governing bodies could carry out their work. At that time, there were no "administrative" institutions of Romania, neither in Bessarabia nor in Bucovina. There was no Russian-Romanian "agreement" that provided for the withdrawal of the Romanian army from Bessarabia. Armed gangs have never been formed on the territory of Romania for the purpose of attacking Soviet Russia.

Regarding "Romanization", this thesis requires some clarifications. It is part of the package of "arguments" used by the former Russian occupiers to justify the annexation of Romanian territories considered to have been inhabited by Russians or Ukrainians who were violently Romanianized. However, the policy of denationalization, forced Russification of Romanians and other nations kept under terror was never recognized, with all the known arsenal - deportations, arrests, mass executions, pogroms, etc. Regarding the war of 1919, cataloged as a "war of intervention" against the Hungarian revolution of the Councils, this fact is also a false history. The aggression was not of the Romanian army, but of the Hungarian Red Army; the Bela Kun-Lenin connivance is too well known to dwell on it any longer. Under the the slogan of the world revolution aims at the destruction of Romania and the settlement of the Hungarian-Soviet

border on the Carpathians⁴⁴. Moreover, Hungary, although it signed the Trianon Peace Treaty (June 1920), did not ever recognize the plebiscite act of December 1, 1918 from Alba-Iulia, the "Mourning" of the Trianon worn by Hungary for more than a hundred years, proves the perpetuation of the "Holy Crown" myth.

Finally, I emphasize that the so-called Ukrainian "proposals" included in the Note addressed by Soviet Russia and Ukraine to the Romanian government on May 1, 1919, is an ultimatum. 40 hours are allowed for completion "proposals"! If not....

In the short period that there was a free Ukrainian regime in Kiev, it was oriented towards the establishment of normal relations with Romania. On July 26, 1919, the Government of the Republic of Ukraine announced the Romanian government's decision regarding bilateral relations: to establish "the most friendly relations between Ukraine and Romania, based on mutual non-interference in internal affairs, the Ukrainian government saying that he does not want to discuss the current border between the two in any way, considering the Dniester as the definitive border between them and wanting to establish this one border the best neighborly relations".... "to ask for Romania's support in the talks with the Entente countries in connection with the permanent supply and organization of the Ukrainian army..." . In the conclusion showed the precariousness of the situation of the Ukrainian state: "currently the Bolsheviks threaten once in plus with the destruction of Ukraine, as a result of which all the neighboring states with the Bolsheviks, in the first place Romania and Poland will have to suffer the shock that weakened the resistance of the Ukrainian people". In the consequence, "immediate aid with munitions of war, and especially cartridges, and shells...". Sign this document of great importance, the Head of the Diplomatic Mission Ukrainians in Romania, C. Matzievici, Delegate of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Army, Army General Serghei Delvig. To add another important fact that announced a real cooperation on multiple levels in this area of Europe just emerging from a long era of suffering. On August 27, 1919, through a letter addressed to the President of the Council of Ministers of Romania, the two diplomats of Ukraine inform that an extraordinary Ukrainian mission led by Dr. Filipciuc has been sent to Poland

⁴⁴ See in detail Viorica Moisuc, *The Premises of Political Isolation of Romania 1919-1940*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1991, part I-a, chapter III; Calvary..., vol. II, chapter XXX.

"to conclude an agreement between the two countries"; The Polish Seimas recognized the government of Ukraine and is in favor of concluding an agreement that "would aim to fight against Bolshevism"⁴⁵.

The intentions expressed by the government of the Republic of Ukraine were not successful. Soviet Russia, fighting for the "recovery" of lost territories, he seized Ukraine, placing it among the Soviet, socialist republics of the Russian Federation, for many decades. At the beginning of this brief account of some aspects of Romanian history from the turning years 1917 - 1918, I formulate some findings of wider interest.

Regarding Bessarabia and Bukovina as "Russian possessions" the views of the Bolsheviks and of the representatives of the former empire, were identical. Throughout the preparation of the Peace Conference, of the development of its works and in the years that followed, these positions did not change. A study on these matters could benefit from a very rich documentation. I now mention one document from October 1919, namely the informative report no. 587 of October 5, 1919 originating from the army group of General Lupescu, addressed to the Prime Minister of Romania. It shows in that report that General Denikin was spreading, through his agents on the left of the Dniester, "proclamations and manifestos by which he promised Bukovina to Ukraine. In Bessarabia, , in the Bender area, and other cities, his agents Denikin declared that after he finished with the Bolsheviks, he would turn to Romania in a friendly way forcing Bessarabia to the Russian Empire and, in case of refusal, they will intervene with armed force to fulfill the purpose"⁴⁶

Gheorghe Brătianu again focused on the history of the two Romanian provinces in 1940, after that the ultimatum of the USSR of June 26 addressed to the Romanian government stated, among other things: "Bessarabia, populated mostly by Ukrainians belonged to Ukraine ". Russian radio stations spread new stories: " Moldovans are a Slavic population, of the same origin as Russians and Ukrainians, speaking a dialect close to Russian".

The great historian dismantled all the forgeries that the aggressors thought they could base their theft on territories and people. At the end of his demonstration, he writes: "History is a perpetual beginning. We are not in a position to examine the present, still less to scrutinize the future.

⁴⁵ Bessarabia Bucovina Transylvania, doc. no. 160, p. 585-588.

⁴⁶ Idem., doc nr. 162, p. 589-590.

Romanian unit consolidated at the crossroads of dead empires, she had to suffer through revival imperialism. The old specter of invasion appeared again, from the steppe, and Moldova endured hard trials. But he knows from the lessons of history that permanent values have never been achieved. The tide has come from the East, countless times over the centuries, but it has turned back, always designating, at the borders of Moldova, the limits Europe, its spirit, its civilization. If it is true that proverbs are wisdom peoples, there is no more expressive one that summarizes the millennial experience of the people of Moldova and from anywhere: Water passes, stones remain!"