

New explanations for Romania's detachment from Moscow at the beginning of the 1960s

Elena DRAGOMIR¹

Keywords: Cold War, 1960s, Romanian foreign policy, Romanian-Soviet relations, perceptions

Abstract

During the first years of the 1960s Romania defined its so-called independent foreign policy doctrine. Although the causes and motives of its 'deviation' from Moscow's line have been largely studied, the findings of the previous research seem questionable in the light of the data offered by the new archive documents. While the previous studies used exclusively an objectivist approach and focused on the actors' motives and the external pressures to explain the 'deviation', the newly available archive documents suggest that the decision was heavily influenced by the way the Romanian decision-makers perceived the external environment and identified threats. The paper is structured in two major parts. The first one presents in short the scholarship in this field and reveals its methodological problems: the objectivist approach and the misuse of the archive sources. The second one, on the basis on the new archive documents and using a perceptual approach, presents some new explanations for the Romanian detachment. In analyzing the leaders' perceptions, I use the so-called representational model, which assumes that inferences may be drawn directly from the subject's statements. I focus on one attribute: perceptions of the Soviet Union's aggressive intentions/threats against Romania. I conclude that at the beginning of the 1960s the Soviet Union was perceived in Bucharest as a direct and imminent threat to the Romanian state and, to some extent, to the communist ideology. These perceptions are highly responsible for the adoption of the so-called 'Romanian independent foreign policy doctrine' developed in the 1960s. The study brings into attention the relevance the ideology (perceptions, ideas, beliefs, norms) had in the decision-making process during the Cold War. It also reveals the need for further research on the role of the Romanian communist leaders' perceptions of the 'others' in adopting one decision or another.

¹ Associated Researcher, The Finnish Graduate School for Russian and East European Studies, Helsinki University, elena.dragomir@helsinki.fi.

References:

A. Archives:

1. National Historical Central Archives, Folder Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (CC of RCP), Section Foreign Relation, File 6/1955
2. Archives of the Ministry of National Defense, Documentation Folder, No G63a/1958

B. Newspapers:

1. *Orbis* (1976)
2. *Viata Economica*, 24, II, (12 iunie 1964),

C. Books and Articles:

1. Anton, Mioara. *Iesirea din cerc. Politica externa a regimului Gheorghiu-Dej*. Bucuresti: INST, 2007.
2. Banu, Florian and Liviu Țăranu. *Aprilie 1964. 'Primăvara de la București. Cum s-a adoptat 'Declarația de independență a României'*. București:Enciclopedica, 2004.
3. Betea, Lavinia. *Partea lor de adevar. Alexandru Barlaneanu despre Dej, Ceausescu si Iliescu, Convorbiri. Maurer si lumea de ieri. Convorbiri despre stalinizarea Romaniei. Convorbiri neterminate cu Corneliu Manescu*. Bucuresti : Compania, 2008..
4. Budura, Romulus Ioan, ed. *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974*. Bucuresti, 2005.
5. Budura, Romulus Ioan, ed. *Politica Independenta a Romaniei si relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1954-1975. Documente*. Bucuresti: Arhivele Nationale ale Romaniei, 2008.
6. Constantiniu, Florin. *O istorie sincera a poporului roman*, 4th revised edition. Bucuresti: Univers Enciclopedic, 2008.
7. Crampton, R.J. *Eastern Europe in the twentieth century*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
8. Deletant, Dennis. *Romania Under Communist Rule*. Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1999.
9. Deletant, Dennis. *Communist terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the police state, 1948-1965*. London: Hurst&Company, 1999.
10. Feher, Ferec, Arato, Andrew, eds. *Crisis and reform in eastern Europe*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991.
11. Frank, Nicoleta. *De la Iasi la Geneva, de la Bablui la Leman. Amintiri*. Bucuresti: Fundatia Academia Civica, 2000.
12. Frucht, Richard C. *Eastern Europe: An Introduction to the People, Lands, and Culture*, Edition: illustrated. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2005.
13. Funderburk, David B. *Pinstripes and Reds: An American Ambassador Caught Between the State Department and the Romanian Communists*. Washington, DC: Selous Foundation, 1987.

14. Gallagher, Tom. *The theft of a nation : Romania since communism*. London: Hurst, 2005.
15. Lavigne, Marie. *International political economy and socialism*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
16. Niculescu Mizil, Paul. *O istorie trata*, vol. I. Bucuresti: Enciclopedica. 1997.
17. Ninkovich, Frank. *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900*. University of Chicago Press, 2001.
18. Retegan, Mihai. *In the shadow of the Prague spring. Romanian foreign policy and the crisis in Czechoslovakia, 1968*. Iasi-Oxford-Portland: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2000.
19. Retegan, Mihai. *Razboiul politic in blocul communist. Relatii romano-sovietice in anii saizeci. Documente*. Bucuresti: Rao, 2002.
20. Tismaneanu, Vladimir, *Stalinism pentru eternitate. O istorie politica a comunismului romanesc* (Iasi: Polirom, 2005)
21. Tismaneanu, Vladimir. *Gheorghiu-Dej and the Romanian Workers' Party: From De-Sovietization to the Emergence of National Communism*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Cold War International History Project Working Paper Series, Working paper no 37, Washington, D.C.: May 2002.
22. Sen, S.N. *Contemporary world*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2006.
23. Staar, Richard Felix. *Communist regimes in Eastern Europe*. Stanford, Calif. Hoover Inst. Press, Stanford Univ. Press, 1984.
24. Szawlowski, Richard. *The system of the international organizations of the communist countries*. Sijthoff International Publishing, Leyden, 1976
25. Ungureanu, Traian. *Despre Securitate: România, Țara 'Ca și Cum'*. Bucuresti: Humanitas, 2006.
26. Zwass, Adam. *The economies of the Eastern Europe in a time of change*. Armonk, NY: Sharpe, 1984.
27. Zwass, Adam. *The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance: the thorny path from political to economic integration*. Armonk, NY: Sharpe, 1989

D. Encyclopedias

1. Carlsnaes, Walter, Thomas Risse-Kappen, Beth A. Simmons, Thomas Risse. *Handbook of International Relations*. London: SAGE, 2002.
2. Van Dijk, Ruud, ed. *Encyclopedia of the Cold War*, Volume 1&2. New York and London: Routledge, 2008,

E. Internet

1. Open Society Archives, <http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/108-5-181.shtml>