



**BLACK SEA,
ROMANIA AND
GREECE**

REVIEW OF MILITARY HISTORY



rmh



ROMANIAN - HELLENIC SPECIAL ISSUE, 2008

CONTENTS

• Preface – <i>Lieutenant General NICHOLAS MASTRANDONIS, President of the Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	2
• Preface – <i>Major General (Ret) Dr. MIHAIL E. IONESCU, Director of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History</i>	3
• The Black Sea and the Beginnings of Hellenic Geopolitics – <i>Dr. PANAGIOTIS FOURAKIS, Historian and Collaborator of the Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	5
• Greek Cities in the North-Western Pontus – <i>Dr. SERGIU IOSIPESCU, Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History</i>	8
• The Greeks of the Euxine (Black Sea) in the Ancient and the Middle Ages – <i>Dr. NICHOLAOS SOL. DEPASTAS, Historian-Archaeologist, Sc. Collaborator and Ex Member of the HCMH/HNDGS, Director of the 3rd Office AHD/HAGS</i>	16
• The Byzantine Expansion in the Black Sea Area – <i>Dr. ALEXANDRU MADGEARU, Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History</i>	22
• Romanians and Greeks in the XVII th Century – <i>Dr. MIRCEA SOREANU, Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History</i>	32
• The French-German Antagonism in the Balkans before World War I. Finance and Armaments. The Case of Romania and Greece – <i>Professor Dr. IOANNIS ANTONOPOULOS, Associate Member of the Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	37
• Treaty of Bucharest. The Role of Romania in the End of Balkan War II – <i>Dr. EFPRAXIA S. PASCHALIDOU, Historian, Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	44
• The 534 Hellenic Air Squadron in Southern Russia (1919) – <i>KAISAROU-PANTAZOPOULOU TRIANTAFYLLIA, Historian of the Hellenic Air Force History Museum, Member of the Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	51
• Romania, Greece and the Issues in the Black Sea (1919-1939) – <i>Dr. PETRE OTU, President of the Romanian Commission of Military History</i>	55
• Historical Development of the Legal Regime of the Straits and Access to the Black Sea (Euxinos Pontos) – <i>Rear Admiral Dr. STYLIANOS POLITIS, Vice President of the Hellenic Commission on Military History</i>	63
• The Participation of Romania and Greece at BSEC. Cooperation Theory and Practice in the Balkans – <i>ȘERBAN FILIP CIOCULESCU, Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History</i>	73

FRONT COVER: *The training ship ‘Mircea’, a symbol of Romanian Military Navy, was often a bridge between the romanian and greek sea shores*

BACK COVER: *The transfers and the bases of operation of the 534 Hellenic Squadron in the Allied South Russia Campaign (1919), the Asia Minor Campaign (JUL 1919-AUG 1922) and the river Evros Front. The Red Arrow indicates the route of the Spad XIII in the 534 Squadron’s first mission of transporting the French plane from Odessa to Brăila. The inset shows the flight’s intended course to the Brăila airfield and the plane’s forced landing at Sulina (see the article by Kaisarou-Pantazopoulou Triantafyllia)*

PREFACE

Lieutenant General NICHOLAS MASTRANDONIS ***President of the Hellenic Commission on Military History***

It is a great pleasure and a privilege for myself to preface this second joint Hellenic-Romanian publication under the general topic: "The Black Sea, a Link between Greece and Romania".

In the framework of the "Military Cooperation Programs" between Greece and Romania, that have been in effect since the year 2000, the Hellenic Commission on Military History (HCMH) and the respective Romanian Commission, as well as the Romanian Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History set out to collaborate on the study of military history issues. The first successful attempt of cooperation was a special Romanian-Hellenic issue on the "Review of Military History", in the year 2001.

Last year, continuing on our fruitful cooperation, we reached the decision for a new joint publication. The Black Sea, an important area for both Romania and Greece, was selected as the general topic around which the articles were going to develop.

The Black Sea, or Euxinus Pontus is an area of vital importance for SE Europe and the surrounding countries. It is connected to the Mediterranean Sea by the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, the Dardanelles straits and the Aegean Sea. For the Greeks, the Black Sea is a well-known region since antiquity. It constituted the centre of gravity for the ancient Greek mythology and the centerpiece of the Greek colonization and the maritime commerce. Constantine the Great in the year 330 AD chose Nova Roma, or Constantinople as the new capital for his Empire, at a point dominating the entrance to the Euxinus Pontus. The wars of Russia against the Ottoman Empire, in the framework of the Eastern Question, had always as their main goal the Russian aim for a way out to the Mediterranean Sea through, or around the Black Sea.

The Dardanelles straits that dominate and control the entrance to the Sea of Marmara constituted and continue to be a cause of conflicts and constantly altered agreements amongst the Great Powers, Russia, Turkey and the rest of the Black Sea coastal countries. In the beginning of the XXIst Century, the pipelines through and around the Black Sea lend a new dimension to the economical dispute in the whole area.

The scientific historical articles by the distinguished Romanian and Greek researchers, who cooperated and worked on this joint edition, make a multilateral analysis of the role that the Black Sea played on the relations of our countries. I believe that this form of cooperation contributes to a better understanding and ameliorates our relationship. For this reason, I would like to express my appreciation to all of them.

Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to the Director of the Romanian Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History, as well as to the President of the Romanian Commission on Military History for their interest and concern, so that today we are able to have our second joint edition.

PREFACE

Major General (Ret) Dr. MIHAIL E. IONESCU
Director of the Institute for Political Studies
of Defense and Military History

The Hellenic and the Romanian Commissions of Military History, together with the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, after seven years, are dedicating a new issue of the "Review of Military History" to the history of political-military relations between our countries, with a Pontic connotation this time.

A people of navigators and merchants, the old Greeks „discovered" the Black Sea by the expedition of Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece (XIIIth Century B.C.), annexed it to the written history, firstly through Homer and Hesiodus, than in much circumstantiate manner, together with the entire basin of the Danube, thanks to the work of Herodotus. But, by the Hellenic influence to the development of the autochthonous civilization, the historical relations between old Greeks and the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic regions and their inhabitants, the Geto-Dacians, date back from more than three millennia.

Although the Black Sea is a part of the Eastern Mediterranean basin, being considered as its prolongation, the possession of the Straits is the key for the geopolitical understanding of the history of Pontus, of the political relations between the inhabitants of its shores and Greece.

The possession of the Straits is essential not only for the developement in the Aegean, but also for the Black Sea. The Greek possession of Dardanelles and Bosphorus in the ancient world explained the Greek colonization on the Pontic shores, afterward being challenged by the Persians.

On the eve of the Christian era the Roman expansion in the Pontic basin, the development of the Roman Empire and the transformation of the Black Sea into a "Roman lake" were possible by the strong control over the Straits. Their exceptional geopolitical significance is proved by the translation to Constantinople of the capital of the Roman Empire and its survival, the Byzantine Empire. By the function of the Black Sea as a "Byzantine lake" and of an "Imperial Danube" until the IVth Crusade (1204), were possible the spreading of the mediaeval Greek civilization and the implementation of political forms, essential for the incipient organization of Romanian statehood.

During the „Turkokrateia" and the locking of the „Ottoman lake" – even if the Black Sea navigation and trade relations between the Greeks and the Romanian Principalities have remained vigorous, the Greek sailors and merchants being the main instrument of the naval communications –, the Ottoman control over the Straits mediated or prohibited all political connections. But even in these conditions, in the XVIth -XVIIIth centuries, the influences and the flourish of the Greek culture were important for the building of the modern civilization in the Romanian Principalities.

The Peace of Adrianople (1829) started a new era for the Romanian - Greek relations, by opening the Black Sea and the Danube to the great world trade and also by the emergence of a Greek state. The important commercial partnership between Romania and Greece, the presence of colonies of Greeks merchants in the Danubian and Pontic harbors influenced the development of the modern Romanian urbanism.

Greece and Romania were involved in the Balkan crisis of 1912 – 1913 ended with the Peace Treaty of Bucharest of 1913. The two countries were finally on the same side during the WWI and Greek units participated at the second French mission of General Berthelot in Romania (1919), in the North-Eastern Black Sea.

If, after 1923, the Greek political interest was focused on the East Mediterranean, we assist to a strong Balkan dimension of the Romanian-Greek relations, by purpose to conserve here, with the Yugoslavian alliance, the Versailles system, and, with Turkey, the status of Black Sea. Predominantly

Greek geographical attention has been monopolized by Eastern and Central Mediterranean Sea, according to the geopolitical law that who owned the Straits has a possibility to connect the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.

After WW II, the Montreux convention (1936) and the Soviet Union naval predominance in the Black Sea were the pillars for the codification of its connection with the Mediterranean Sea.

After the fall of Soviet Union and of its domination over the Black Sea and East Europe, our countries are involved in a new frame of cooperation, BSEC being a suggesting example. Of course, in the actual geopolitical situation of the Black Sea basin we can emphasize an East-West axe, a strategic communication of Europe with Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, but for Romania and Greece their new pattern of evolution as members of European Union and allied countries in NATO, there are complementarities of common interests in Black Sea and in East Mediterranean basin.

The present number of the "Review of Military History" was worked out through the joint Romanian-Hellenic efforts. Dr. Panagiotis Fourakis placed the beginning of the Greek geopolitics in relation with the Argonauts expedition in the Black Sea in search of Golden Fleece (XIIIth Century B.C.). The archaeological and historical sources concerning the Greek colonisation in the Black Sea and especially in its North-West basin are presented by dr. Nicholaos Sol. Depastas and dr. Sergiu Iosipescu. The phases of later Roman and Byzantine Empire expansion in Black Sea (IVth -XIIth centuries) are reconstituted by dr. Alexandru Madgearu.

The contributions of dr. Mircea Soreanu, dr. Ioannis Antonopoulos, and dr. Efpraxia S. Paschalidou as well are consecrated to Modern Age, concerning the influences of the Greek culture in the Romanian Principalities, in the XVIIth Century, the financial and weapons exports aspects of the competition for Balkans between France and Germany, the Peace Treaty of Bucharest of 1913, with important documentary contributions from the Greek archives. Events of this longer South-Eastern European conflagration, from 1912 to 1920, are also analyzed by Triantafyllia Kaisarou-Pantazopoulou. Rear Admiral dr. Stylianos Politis presents the question of the Straits since the Peace of Adrianople (1829) until today.

Finally, to the contemporaneous epoch are dedicated the ample studies of colleagues dr. Petre Otu (Romania, Greece and the Issues in the Black Sea. 1919-1939) and Șerban Filip Cioculescu, the last one treating the present role of Greece and Romania in BSEC.

The interest of the topics and the accuracy of the analysis give us high hopes for the future of our collaboration. In an united Europe, in which both our countries have rediscovered each other, these Romanian and Hellenic studies represent a contribution in the research of a common military past of our continent, dreamed by Jacques LeGoff, as a foundation for building its future.

THE BLACK SEA AND THE BEGINNINGS OF HELLENIC GEOPOLITICS

Dr. PANAGIOTIS FOURAKIS

***Historian and Collaborator of the Hellenic Commission
on Military History***

The roots of Hellenic Geopolitics are found in antiquity, both History and Mythology, and demonstrate the significance of the sea in the continuous endeavors of the Greeks to rule the known, by that time, world.

At the beginning of the second millennium B.C. in the wider space of Aegean Sea, two geocultural systems were established: the civilization of Cycladic islands and the civilization of the Northeastern Aegean Sea. Concerning the first, it must be pointed that it developed the maritime trade as an important factor for its further prosperity. The island of Milos has been a pioneer to such kind of development and really opened way for all kinds of trading exchanges between the Cycladic islands and the southern coasts of continental Greece. However, this activity contributed the most to the development of the civilization of the Northeastern Aegean Sea where many significant commercial and maritime centers flourished such as the Heraion of Samos, the Emporion of Chios, Thermi fo Lesbos, Poliochni of Lemnos and Troy in the Asia Minor northwestern coast. Especially Poliochni exploited its significant strategic location at the island of Lemnos, just outside the Straits of Hellespont and therefore, managed to examine high surveillance in the navigation of the maritime space of northeastern Aegean Sea. The above mentioned islands developed their maritime trade to such a point that the social, political and financial differences between them and the coastal areas were enormous.¹ The sense of power that those islands established, very soon led them to the understanding that the full political and economic control of the wider northern Aegean Sea and the Straits was of high priority for the continuation of

their prosperity. The most obvious example is the case between Poliochni and Troy that according to archaeological excavations shared a deep cultural relation.² However, the inequality that the two cities appeared at all levels leads to the conclusion that Troy was controlling the navigation of the Straits but only in order to serve best the interests of Poliochni.

The time that the Greeks demonstrated their interest for the Black Sea was the Expedition of the Argonauts (XIIIth century B.C.). The age of the Argonauts is one phase of Hellenism that the management of the Aegean space and of the wider Eastern Mediterranean Sea commenced granting itself new dimensions due to the fact that the Mycenaean world extended their dominance from Crete to the Black Sea. However, it was the Argonauts that led the Mycenaean world to the northern coasts of the Aegean Sea, which is the Black Sea. The Argonauts have been the first social group of Hellenism which, according to tradition, struggled for the fulfillment of certain geopolitical goals of high significance in the beginning of Hellenic History.

Thucydides did not mention anything in his History (especially the first book known as "Archeology") concerning the Expedition of the Argonauts because he considered it to be a part of Hellenic mythology³ that he could not verify with facts and eye-witnesses. However, contemporary science concludes that the Expedition of the Argonauts has historically been the outcome of brave ventures of Greek seamen in their effort to create colonies in the Black Sea.

According to Herodotus, the Expedition of the Argonauts has been only a part of the conflicts

between Greeks and Asians that culminated with the Greek-Persian wars of the Vth century B.C. It followed the kidnapping of Europe from the Cretans and preceded the Trojan War.⁴

For the Mycenaeans, their expansion to the Black Sea was imposed by both geostrategic and geoeconomic reasons. Their prime at the second half of the second millennium B.C. was basically the outcome of the Aegean prime and the Black Sea was considered to be a geostrategic part of it. Behind the legendary venture of the Argonauts hides the historic reality of the geopolitical development of the Mycenaeans in the wider Black Sea space until the Caucasian coasts. The Golden Fleece symbolizes the will for adventurism and danger which are elements that almost always are found at the beginnings of every powerful naval dominion, such as the Mycenaean. The very same description of the Golden Fleece is nothing more than the granary of the Black Sea coasts which was considered quite vital for the survival of the Mycenaeans⁵ and later the Athenians. But the whole structure of the Argonaut legend symbolizes the geopolitical (both strategic and economic) unification of the wider Aegean space and the Black Sea. This unification is the cultural consequence of the transformation of the Aegean Sea into a “close” Mycenaean sea which is based on two factors: the first is the maritime power which is established through the development of trade that transfers agricultural products such as olive oil and wine and ceramics. The second factor is clearly geopolitical: it aimed at the complete control (economic, political, military) of the Aegean Sea.⁶

The colonization of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, which was systemized from the IXth century B.C. and onwards, contributed to the intensiveness of trade due to the fact that from the VIIth century and onwards all the coastal areas of the known ancient world were inhabited by Greek cities that kept very close relations with their metropolis.⁷ This trade intensiveness transformed the very deep nature of the way the trading was held: from the exchange of goods to the monetary trade. This cultural development led to the creation of a new social class, the middle class which started questioning the traditional rights of aristocrats to

govern the cities. That resulted to the outbreak of civil wars inside the city-states of the archaic world (VIIIth – VIth century B.C.) and the appearance of tyranny. It is true that tyranny supported the middle classes and opened way for democracy that culminated in the Vth century B.C.⁸ Thucydides, though he considered tyranny to be an authoritarian political system, connected it with the building of the first triremes,⁹ the ancient war ships that secured Athenian domination and sea power.¹⁰

The most prestigious of the Athenian tyrants was Peisistratos who was aiming to transform his city into the center of all Aegean developments and for that reason he built a sacred temple to the island of Delos in the honor of god “Apollo Patroos” (“fatherhood”). At the same time, he sought the economic and military development of Athens by the creation of colonies that were controlled by the metropolis. One of those main strategic steps was the (re)colonization of Sigeio, that was located at the Straits of Hellespont. Thus, Athens secured the supplying of wood for the construction of the triremes and silver,¹¹ and at the same time controlled the Black Sea navigation.

The social and political reforms of Peisistratos were followed by Kleisthenis who basically laid the foundations of Democracy.¹² The Greek-Persian Wars of the early decades of the Vth century (490 and 480-479 B.C.) demonstrated the Athenian naval superiority and established the Athenian / Delian League which aimed at the prosperity of the people of Athens and the assumption of leadership of Hellenism. Themistocles’ naval program has been the crucial factor for that purpose.¹³ The military structure of the League, which was divided into administrative peripheries (“phoroi”), was very strict and each city-member had certain economic or other obligations. Such an administrative periphery was the one of Hellespont which controlled the Black Sea navigation. Thus, the Athenians managed not only to transform the Aegean Sea into a “mare nostrum” but also to prevent any ill will against their wider geopolitical interests in the Black Sea that was now considered to be part of the Aegean Sea.

Pericles, the leader of Athens who culminated the glory of his city in the middle of the Vth century

B.C., promoted a dynamic plan that basically aimed: a) to unify the two seas into Athenian geopolitical fields of comprehensive defense against any possible future Persian expansion to the west and b) to establish them as the base for the development of their economic program towards the wider Mediterranean Sea. The Black Sea granary was of high importance for the Athenians and therefore, the control of the Straits was crucial for them. Thus, the transformation of the Aegean Sea into an “Athenian lake” without the simultaneous control of the Hellespont navigation was pointless. Despite their efforts, the Athenians did not manage to control the southern seas, such as Cyprus and Egypt, since the Persians with their Phoenician allies dominated Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Thus, the control of the Aegean and the Black Seas was vital. It is worth noticing that Athens supplied corn from the Black Sea granary to all her allies and thus secured their obedience and loyalty to the League, even though it is true that she never hesitated to use military force in order to preserve order.

The importance of the Hellespont Straits according to the Periclean geostrategy, was proved in the third phase (413-403 B.C.) of the Peloponnesian War (431-403 B.C.) when the Spartans, being assisted by the Persians, transported the conflict to the Aegean Sea and the Straits. The definite naval battle of the Aigos Potamoi of the Hellespont Straits in 405 B.C. surprised the Athenians and led to their defeat.

Concluding, the Black Sea has always been of high significance for the Greeks in antiquity. It is important to conclude that Hellenic geopolitics commenced and realized at the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea has always been considered to be its northern coast. For the Greeks the sea was an endless path of wealth and expansion that had to be discovered and dominated at all costs. If the Aegean Sea was their home, the Black Sea was their courtyard and therefore, it had to be preserved carefully.

¹ I. Loucas, *Aegean Sea, History and Geopolitics of Hellenism from Pre-History to the Alexander era*, (“Aigaio Pelagos, Istoría kai Geopolitiki tou Ellinismoy apo tin proistoria os tous Alexandrinous chronous”), Athens, Papazisis, 1993, p. 32-57.

² L. Bernardo-Brea, *Poliochni. Citta preistorica nell’ isola di Lemnos*, Roma, L’ Erma, 1964-1976 (Monographie della scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente).

³ Concerning the legend of the Argonauts see Roussos E., entry “Argonautiki Ekstrateia” in *Pagkosmia Mythologia, Ekdotiki Athinon*, Athens, p. 56 and onwards.

⁴ See Herodotus, I, 1 and onwards.

⁵ I. Loucas, *Aegean Sea, ed. cit.*, p. 65 and onwards.

⁶ I. Loucas, *Geopolitical Trilogy of Hellenism, Part One: the Brotherhood of Argonauts and the Clash of Civilizations* (“Geopolitiki Trilogia tou Ellinismou, Logos Protos: I aderfotita ton Argonauton kai I sygkrousi ton politismon”), Athens, Esoptron 2003, p. 118.

⁷ See H. Bengson, *History of Ancient Greece* (“Istoría tis Archaías Elladas”), Athens, Melissa 1979, p. 80 and onwards. Also, Wilcken U., *Ancient Greek History* (“Archaia Elliniki Istoría”), Athens, Papazisis 1976, p. 118 and onwards.

⁸ I. Loucas, *Geopolitical Trilogy of Hellenism*, *ibid*, p. 144.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 153-4.

¹⁰ Thucydides, I, 13.

¹¹ U. Wilcken, *Ancient Greek History, ed. cit.*, p. 153 and onwards.

¹² See H. Bengson, *History of Ancient Greece, ed. cit.*, p. 126 and onwards. Also, U. Wilcken, *Ancient Greek History, ed. cit.*, p. 154 and onwards.

¹³ For Themistocles’ naval program, see G.S. Maridakis, *The Law of Themistocles on naval armament* (“O nomos tou Themistokleous peri thalassiou exoplismou”), Athens, 1963.

GREEK CITIES IN THE NORTH-WESTERN PONTUS¹

Dr. SERGIU IOSIPESCU
**Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies
of Defense and Military History**

When the first „citizen of the world” – after Proclus – son of river God Meles, and of nymph Cretheis, the great Homer was telling the story of the Trojan War and of Odysseus’s wanderings, Greek navigators had already reached the Pontus. The *Poet* knew about the Euxinos lands, the Istros and the people in the neighborhood, or even because of the prejudices “he shifted (...) toward the Ocean the happenings from Pontus, thinking that people (...) would accept them easier”.² However, near the mouths of Istros is located the rocky island Leuce (White), surnamed of the Achilles’,³ where, later on, the sailors from Milet will build a temple dedicated to pontarch Achille, under who’s auspices were placed the navigation and commerce in Pontus.⁴

Through an extraordinary chance, the most valuable geographic work of the classical antiquity is due to a scholar from the shores of the Black Sea, Strabon (69 B.C.-19 A.D.) of Pontic Amaseia. Thus, the information of the illustrious geographer about the region of the Lower Danube and Pontus are of prime rank, his conception combining the data of cartography with those of anthropogeography.

Strabon focused his description of the North-Western Pontus on Istros, which had seven mouths at that time. Sailing along the “left” (western) shore of the Sea, the first mouth was the Sacred one, where entering one could reach, after a floating of 120 stadia, the island Peuce. From the seventh mouth of Istros to Tyras there were 300 stadia, on this shore being located two lakes, one of which being opened as a harbor, further on the river Tyras being navigable. Between the Istros and Tyras was the “Getic desert”, less inhabited because around the last river were living the Tyrageis.⁵

According to Eratosthenes, the left bank of Istros, around the river mouths appeared as a swam, which gave the name of Salmydessos and those sand banks formed in the Sea by the waste brought by waters and named by sailors “chests”.⁶ From

the Sacred mouth, Strabon enumerate the settlements of: Istros, Milesian colony, Tomi, the town Callatis, colony of Heracleia, then Bizone “a part of which sunk due to earthquakes”, Crunoi, Odessos, Milesian colony, Naulochus founded by Mesembrians and beyond the Haemus mountains, Mesembria, Megarian colony, and Apollonia, Milesian creation.⁷

To Strabon’s enumeration must be added, on the Peuce branch upstream of Histria, the city Orgame/Argamum, the first to be mentioned in a narrative source – *Europe* by Hecateos of Milet (Centuries VI-V B.C.).⁸ There should be also added, in the Christian era, the Stratonis pyrgos (Straton’s tower) between Tomis and Callatis, Amlaidina, Parthenopolis, and beyond Callatis, Gerania.⁹

If Strabon limits his description to the Pontic shores, another great geographer of classical antiquity is preoccupied with the course of the Danube.

Famous in its time, the *Geographical guide* by the great Alexandrian Claudius Ptolemeus from the IInd Century A.D., based on the not less valuable longitude and latitude calculations made by Marinus of Tyr, comprises the succinct description of the North-Western Pontic shore and of the last part of the Danube. Along this river, Ptolemeus recorded Durostorum, Transmarisca, Sucidava, Axiopolis – downstream of which the great river was named Istros – Carsium, Troesmis, Dinogetia, Noviodunum, Sitioenta/Aigysoenta, in fact Aegyssus. From the city of Noviodunum, Istros separated its waters, flowing into Euxinos Pontos through numerous mouths named from North to South: Thiagola or Pylon, Boreion, Naracion, Pseudostomos, Kalon, Peuce or Sacred. After this mouth it was following a promontory, Pteron, than the cities Istros, Tomi, Callatis, Dionysopolis, promontory Tiristis, Odessos and beyond the mouths of the river Panyosos, Mesembria. North of the Danube’s delta, the *Geographical Guide* enumerates the city of Harpis/Carpis, the village of Hermonact, Tyras city at the mouths of the hom-

▪ **Aerial view of the ancient city of Dolojman Cape (Orgame/Argamum on the Danube's branch Peuce)**



onym river, Ophiussa and Niconium,¹⁰ the last, probably a colony of Istros after the multitude of Histrian coins and the type of ceramics remains.

But, beyond navigation and commerce, foundation of Hellenic settlements in the Mediterranean basin looks to be due to internal causes, a congenital crisis of Greek cities, “stenahoria” – word entered into the Romanian language in the XVIIIth Century – the increasing population in the first urban centers which became crowded. Favored by a mild climate, taming the winters especially in the Pontic zone, imposed by the inner crisis (*stasis*), between “interests groups”, colonization followed naturally the paths of navigation and commerce, and the establishment took into consideration with preponderance the maritime accessibility, possibilities of defense and the attitude of inhabitants, water resources and the quality of soil, eventually.

Recent researches tend to consider the archeological material discovered in the fortification from Dolojman cape the oldest Greek settlement in the North-Western Pontic basin and to identify it with Orgame. Despite it was the first city to be mentioned by Greek sources at the edge of the VI/V Centuries B.C.,¹¹ it appears only in the epigraphic monuments of the Roman epoch. However, as the official cadastre of Histria, in the year 100 A.D., indicates the neighboring territory of the Argamenses, the result of archeological excavations seems to find such support, since probably only the existence of boundaries prior the establishment of the Milesian city could impose. In the silence of the written sources, archeological dis-

coveries, starting with those by Paul Nicorescu¹² (1926-1932), and especially those after 1965 by Maria Coja and collaborators revealed the life of the city in the VIIth Century B.C., until the beginning of the second Christian millennium. As, otherwise, the first researcher of the site, Paul Nicorescu did, the evolution of the Greek polis must be connected with the fortification from Bisericuța, on the littoral island in front of Dolojman cape. Even if in the absence of some stratigraphic circumstantially determinations a correlation between the two sites can not be made, suggestion by the former professor of the University of Iași is important because it draws the attention upon the old hydrographic configuration favoring the location of the first Greek colony on Istros at Dolojman cape. The position was dominating the lake Halmyris and, of course, the temptation of having a fortified correspondent on the opposite shore at Bisericuța must have appeared early.

If the last mention of the city is found in the work of Procopius of Caesarea, *On buildings*, where „Argamo” appears among the strongholds “along Pontus Euxinos and river Istros”, erected by Justinian (527-565), archeological researches of the last years revealed both the Hallstattian inhabitation (X-VIII Centuries B.C.), that preceded Greek implantation, and the sporadic medieval presence until the XIth Century and thereafter; the discovery of an engolpion cross in a tomb at Bisericuța¹³ demonstrates the Byzantine presence in these ruins. But, urban life in Argamum, as in other Greek polis of Scythia Minor ceased in the first half of the VIIth Century, under still unclear circumstances.

An exceptional importance for the reconstitution of Greek life in North-Western Pontus had the excavations started in 1914, at Histria, by Vasile Pârvan (1882-1927), the founder of Romanian scientific archeology.

Istros or *Istropolis* – the city on the river Istros by excellence – *Histria* or *Histros* for Romans, was according to tradition a colony of Miletos, established after Eusebios-Hieronimos, in the year 657 B.C. With less precision Pseudo-Scymnos dated the moment in the second part of the VIIth Century B.C., thus allowing the archeological support of ceramic pieces of Ionic imported poteries¹⁴ as well.

For the impact of the Milesian implantation in these lands the burial ceremony is very significant, since the VIth Century B.C. in tomb necropolis around Histria of some Getic leaders.¹⁵ This is a proof of the normal relation with Getic population, of leaders' aspirations towards the Hellenic civilization, visible also under other Pontic horizons. However, the growing prosperity of the Milesian colony in the next two centuries after establishment is explained by the active commerce with natives and by the possibility of relatively peaceful exploitation of the rural domain (*chora*), which gradually the city succeeded to take over. Oil, wines, handicrafts imported or manufactured by Istros colony penetrated further the great river,

being profitably traded for cereals, honey, furs, skins, slaves, and especially fish, articles extremely necessary to Greece and Ionia.

This first stage of evolution was marked by the great Persian expedition of King Darius, against the Scythians (513 B.C.), to which were associated the devastation traces in the archeological sectors of the Sacred and X zones from Histria. This supposition is sustained by some funerals in Histrian necropolis and also by the narration of the Iranian expedition, the construction of the transdanubian ship bridge taking place, according to Herodotus, at the mouths of the Danube, and the army of Darius marching Peuce island toward the North Pontic steppes.

Reconstruction will not delay, toward the year 480 B.C. the city released its first coins, obvious sign of a prosperous economic life. It was not exempt of internal shakings provoked by the accumulation of notable wealth in hands of a few families of merchants, ship-owners, bankers, and land owners, an oligarchy that understood to take over the political leadership as well. Instauration of democracy took place under these conditions with violence and sustained probably by Athens, organizer during the Peloponnesian war of the known maritime *periplus* of Pericles in Pontus (436 B.C.).

The IVth Century had to be perturbed, after its first half, both by the penetration into Dobroudja



■ A part of the Northern precinct of Callatis

of some Scythic tribes, under the rule of Ataias, and by the reaction of Macedonian kings, eager in the same measure to stop the invasion and to impose their authority upon Greek cities of the Left Pontus, as well.

In this context, *The History of Philippos* includes the episode of the resistance opposed to Scythys by “Histrians”, led by a “Histrianorum rex”.¹⁶ The absence of such dignity in Histria excludes the possibility of a “King” of Histrians, but enhances the conviction of Getic presence on the right shore of Istros and of contacts with the Hellenic civilization of the Pontic colonies.

The expedition of King Philippos the IInd of Macedonia against the Scythys of Ataias in 339 B.C. succeeded not only to cast them out of Dobroudja, but also to take under protection the realms toward the Danube mouths, the final conquest stage of the eastern part of Balkan Peninsula, after the annexation, two years earlier, of the Thracic Kingdom of Odrys.

Under Lysimachos, the successor (*diadoch*) of Alexander the Great, ruler and next King of Thracia (323-281 B.C.), the protectorate was transformed into an oppressive domination, against which the Greek colonies will rise in arms in 313. The war ended with a victory of the diadoch, Histria being among the first of his conquests.

Despite the Macedonian king was defeated by the Getic leader Dromichaites (approx. 292 B.C.), his attempt to influence somehow the status of the Greek colonies on the North-Western-Pontic littoral failed, and the effective mastery of Lysimachos continued until his death.

On an indeterminate date, in the first part of the IIIrd Century B.C., the *college of Synedroi* in Histria proposed the hiring of an architect, thus a messenger of the city sent to Byzantium brought Epicrates. The architect, son of Nikoboulos of Byzantium, not only took appropriate measures for work leasing, but also, during the war with “Olats” – unknown people otherwise – zealously prepared the defense of the city, than led the construction of the town walls for two years, remaining for more years in Histria and proving spotless behavior and exquisite diligence. His remarkable merits were rewarded by his coronation in the theatre with the golden wreath at the time of Thargelia feast, by allotting a bonus and the rightful wage, awarding the quality of proxen, citizenship, cooptation amongst the devotees of Apollo sanctuary, as well as the right to enter and exit the harbor during peace or war time, access to Council and People



■ An ancient ship from an inscription of Istros/Histria

right after the holy problems are discussed. The stone with the architect’s inscription, put in the sanctuary of Apollo, reached in unknown conditions at Monastery Dragomirna, its date and provenience being cleared by Professor Dionisie M. Pippidi.¹⁷

Epicrates’s activity in Histria was connected with the reconstruction of a portion of the Hellenistic wall – archeologically ascertained¹⁸ – following the first riot of Pontic cities against Lysimachos.

By the year 260 B.C. Histria joined Callatis in the attempt to dispute with Byzantium the port of Tomis. Callatians seemed to want to ensure their exclusive control upon the Tomisian Emporium, while the Byzantines sustained its opening. Although, both parts called for the support of Pontic Heracleia, Callatis metropolis did not intervene with other than reconciliatory advices, and finally the victory of Byzantium was decisive.¹⁹ Histria did not suffer like her allied which, according to Memnon – could not restore after this defeat.²⁰



■ **Callatis – Northern part of the Roman-Byzantine city**

In fact, the respite for reconstruction was short because since the end of the IIIrd Century B.C. the Eastern-Carpathian and Istro-Pontic territories were invaded by Bastarns – Germanic people, ulteriorly settled on the Peuce island, in the immediate neighborhood of Histria. The situation will get complicated with the Celts' invasion in the Balkans, the establishment of Tylis Kingdom in the East of the Peninsula – the coins of these kings, imitations of Alexander the Great's tetradrahms, being discovered on Danube's fords at Giurgiu and Oltenița. Under these circumstances, the Istropolitan leadership had to focus its efforts to obtain protection from the Getic King Zalmodegikos. The inscription that notices the memorable moment of a messenger's mission was discovered exactly near the altar of Zeus Polieus' temple, among few inscriptions, fallen off and found not far to the place where had been put. The inscription acknowledges the exceptional merits of the messengers Diodoros of Thrasykles, Procritos of Pherecles and Clearchos of Aristomachos, who had obtained from King Zalmodegikos both the return of hostages (more than sixty), and his approval that the city revenue be restituted. Must be emphasized that in order to arrive at the Getic leader the messenger traveled "through enemy country", and that both the hostages' capturing and restoration of Histria's revenue sources by King Zalmodegikos, did not mean anything else, but the preexistence of an agreement between Istrians and Getae that had to bring back to Hellenic city the means for its prosperity. Of course, all these ensured an efficient protection to allow exploitation of the rural territory and continuation of navigation and commerce on Istros.²¹

Situation will continue further on, as clarified by a Histrian inscription, the decree of council and people in honor of Agathocles of Antiphilos; on the edge of centuries III/II B.C., Agathocles, descendant of a family of benefactors of the city, had proven his skillfulness first by leading the archers and other paid soldiers, in turbulent times, when along with internal discord, Thracians were attacking the city and the territory ("chora"), exactly at harvesting time. With his troops Agathocles guarded the territory "giving time to everyone to harvest their crops without harming". Then, during the siege of city Bizone by the Thracians, he had negotiated with them and with their King, Zoltes, twice to redeem the city and crops facing their invasion in Scythia Minor against "Greek towns under King's Rhemaxos protection". Finally, when Thracians broke agreements, attacking again, Agathocles formed a group of volunteers "among the citizens and barbarians settled in the city", guarding the field, crops and herds until King Rhemaxos passed across Istros. In his messages to the King and to his son "Phradmon", Agathocles obtained first support of 100 cavalry men, and then, after their run away, 600 horsemen with whose help the forces of Zoltes were finally defeated.²²

The inscription presents the difficult circumstances of Greek cities in Scythia Minor, which the far away transdanubian protection by King Rhemaxos could not secure in front of the Thracians' invasions, despite the tribute paid. As Scarlat Lambrino, the discoverer and first editor of the marble inscription for Agathocles sustained, and as demonstrated by D.M. Pippidi, Rhemaxos must have been one of the Getic kings, whose

mastership extended, based on coins discoveries, in regions Buzău and Putna.²³ Demonstration was also sustained by the contemporary testimony by Trogus Pompeius/Iustinus of another Getic King – Oroles²⁴ – whose domination was on the path of Bastarns. In a large view of Centuries III-I, the professor did not restrain to affirm the existence of a “Pontic policy” of the Getic kings.²⁵

Whether, as the inscription shows, in the great policy, Histropolitans were looking for the support of Getic kings from across Istros, valorization of rural territory was based on cohabitation with “Barbarians”, local Getae, sheltered in the city in hard times and ready to enroll volunteers for common defense.²⁶ This reference enabled Professor D.M. Pippidi to reject the opinion, of Marxist-leninist origin, of the rural territory of Greek cities exploitation with numerous agrarian slaves.²⁷

The virulent Thracian threat at the edge of centuries III/II was not followed by a calm period, Scythia Minor being probably the path that connected some Bastarnic tribes with the Kingdom of Macedonia so that these put themselves in service of kings Philippos V, Demetrios II and Perseus.

The same Bastarnic pressure at Istros would have pushed toward South Scythic tribes, whose leaders are known as “kings” according to their coins: Ailios, Kanites, Sariakes, Tanusa, Akrosas, Charaspes. Probably, more important of them was Kanites, mentioned also by a decree in Odessos, in the IInd Century, regarding the Greek commerce in the lands controlled by him.²⁸ It is not to be excluded that to these times of domination by these Scythic leaders be attributed some archaeological discoveries of the important settlement in Albești, in the Callatian chora.

The interdependency between Pontic Greek cities, resulted from the economic unity of the Black Sea, more and more accentuated in the Hellenistic age, appears also during the serious conflict that broke out in the first half of the IInd Century B.C. between Apollonia and Mesembria upon the port Anchialos. Thanks to the alliance, concluded one century prior, between Apollonia and Histria, the Milesian colony was called for help when Mesembrians, without any war declaration, occupied the territory and the city Anchialos. Built by Apollonians, the stronghold and the borough were meant to ensure their control upon Burgas Gulf, natural outlet of some commercial roads in the Balkans. Intervention by Istropolitans did not delay. Long ships under the command of admiral Hegegoras of Monimos

cooperated with Apollonians in defending the territory, the city and the ports. Ulterior, through common efforts by other unnamed allies, the enemy fleet that was defending Anchialos was defeated – a naval fight where Histrian admiral evidenced by capturing one ship with its entire crew. Following this victory, the allies landed under the city assaulting and completely destroying it, Hegegoras was excelling through his courage and skillfulness in leading the fighters on this occasion. His merits were rewarded not only by coronation with the golden wreath on the feast of Dionysos, but also through construction of his bronze statue, presenting him armed at the ship’s bow, placed in the temple of Apollo Medicus (the Healer), the decree that sanctions the facts being fixed on the base. Apollonians’ acknowledgement was also recorded in Histria through an inscription on a marble stone, discovered during the archeological excavations in 1958.²⁹

Fruitful affinity between Greek cities in North-Western Pontus, martially illustrated by the above named decree, is also registered in other epigraphic testimonies from Histria. Here appeared inscriptions in honor of some Tomitans, Callatians, Apollonians, and of one inhabitant of Byzantium and Cyzic.³⁰ A decree from Tomis was rewarding the merits of one inhabitant of Tyras for sustaining the interests of Tomitans in his city.³¹ Moreover, Tomitan merchants were welcomed in Odessos.

Despite Memnon’s testimonies, picking probably an information contemporary to events, the confrontation between the Callatian-Histrian alliances with Bizantium, in the first half of the IIIrd Century B.C., did not provoke the definitive collapse of city Callatis. On the contrary, in the IInd Century its economic role is dominant, clearly outrunning Histria. Benefiting by an impressive perimeter and by a not less secure port, the businesses of merchants from Callatis flourish, different testimonies attesting this at Tyras Olbia, Tauric Chersones, Dyonisopolis, Apollonia, Byzantium, Parion in Troada, Mytilene, Delos, Delfi, and Alexandria. In the same measure are edificatory, for the knowledge of commercial relations of the Greek cities, the archeological discoveries of some handcrafted products, whose provenience can be dated based on seals or inscriptions. Among the most precious of these testimonies there are the sealed amphorae attesting imports from the great centers of production – Sinope, Thassos, Rhodos, Cnidos, Cos, of these useful pots, especially for oils, wines and other products transported by ships.

At Histria, Tomis and Callatis, where numerous inscriptions reveal the most varied aspects of the Pontic civilization, are not missing the news about cultural life, connections with great “universitary” centre of the Greek world from Cyzic, theater performances and even the quality of the language spoken and written by inhabitants, carved into stone by lapicids.

The decisive event at the end of the IInd Century, with unexpected consequences, was, of course, occupation of Cimmerian Bosphorus by the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI Eupator (132-63 B.C.). Based on older ties, the king of Pontus, a persistent adversary of Roman Republic, extended his domination upon Greek North-Western-Pontic cities Olbia, Tyras, Histria, Tomis, Callatis, and Apollonia. Establishment of garrisons by the Pontus King, attested on an inscription from the last city, must have been generalized for the others, since the neighboring kings, Scyths and Thracians, were comprised in the system of alliances of Mithridates VI.

The circum-Pontic domination by great king would crush under Roman blow, the Rome’s eagles appearing in the years 72-71 B.C., in the Left Pont. The Roman governor of Macedonia, M. Terentius Varro Lucullus, succeeded, through campaigns deployed in the Left Pontus, to subjugate all Greek cities previously under dominance of King Mithridates, from Apollonia to the mouths of Istros: Messembria, Odessos, Dyonisopolis, Bizone, Callatis, Parthenopolis,³² Tomis, and Histria. It is significant that later, a historian, L. Annaeus Florus (I-II Centuries A.D.), associates these campaigns to the overflow of Thracian people and their arrival at river Tanais (Don) and Meotic lake (Azov Sea).³³

According to a Callatian decree, between Rome and the Greek cities in North-Western Pontus, seems that treaties of alliance (foedera) have been established, which taking them out of the circum-Pontic system of King Mithridates, associated them to the Republic.³⁴

Situation did not maintain both due to the excessive Roman exploitation and very probably due to the beginning of a new factor of power.

From the first point of view, in the years 62-61 B.C., the Governor of Macedonia, C. Antonius Hybrida, known for his immorality, succeeded to provoke a riot that ended with the defeat of Roman forces by the walls of Histria, under the strike of a Greek-Getic alliance and the run away of the commander to Dyonisopolis.

Under the second angle of examining the sources of events of those years, is prefigured the

authoritarian intervention “by the greatest king ever dominated Thrace”, Burebista (approx. 70-44 B.C.), in the Left Getic Pontus, that begun through the attack and occupation of Olbia (55 B.C.). Resistance opposed by this and by Histria and Messembria as well, was harshly sanctioned, the consequences being archaeologically attested at Histria through a level of fire at the middle of the Ist Century B.C. Moreover, a decree for Aristagoras shows that, practically, fortifications were not able anymore to defend the remaining inhabitants, others being captive or hostages and “Barbarians occupying the Histrian territory”. Occupation, which according the letter of the decree, lasted for more than three years and its conclusion seems to be due to an agreement negotiated by the same benefactor Aristagoras.

According to another inscription dating from the edge between the pagan and the Christian era, through an enormous effort and with the support of a large number of citizens, the city could revive, talking about “the second establishment/construction of the city”, after the death danger which it had surpassed.³⁵

Reconstruction of Histria and other cities which were affected following the domination of King Burebista could be achieved especially with the return of Romans in the Left Pontus.

Concerning the moment of the entrance of Greek colonies of Scythia Minor in the Roman Empire, through computerized methods³⁶ were determined the years 29-28 B.C., during the campaigns of Licinius Crassus against the Getae of King Dapyx. But, careful examination of Dobroudjan inscription formulation reveal the possibility of an interval rather between 27 and 8 B.C. Significance of the first date is the triumph “ex Thraciae et Geteis” for Crassus (after 4 July 27), and of the last, the beginning of Ovidius’ exile at Tomis. The former independent Greek colonies of Scythia Minor were united in a ἐπίσημή under the power of Rome.³⁷

If at the time of Ovidius’ exile at Tomis the situation in Scythia Minor was still precarious – under the reign restored of “the alliance” once concluded by Lucullus – formation of the province Moesia under Emperor Tiberius (14-37 A.D.), would be accompanied by the set up of a *praefectus orae maritimae* or *praeses laevi Ponti* with administrative attributions upon the Greek cities. Further on, they will share the fate of the Roman Empire with a flourishing period until the IIIrd Century, followed by a lent decadence, in the end of which, a renaissance, – in the VIth Century under the reign of

Justinian – had nothing else remained than to announce the total collapse, less than one hundred years later.

*

In a brilliant communication at the Romanian Academy dedicated to the Hellenic penetration into Carpathian basin and included later in *Dacia. In outline of the Early Civilizations of the Carpatho-Danubian Countries*, Vasile Pârvan recomposed, based on researches and discoveries at the time the remarkable influence of the Greek presence in the Left Pontus upon development of the Geto-Dacian society. The establishment of the huge “arhé” (“empire”) of Burebista, and after of Dacia of King Decebal, can be considered, on the background and with autochthonous interpretation, the last reflexes of the Hellenic civilization and military art. Doubtless, along with the massive colonization of Roman Dacia with elements from *Magna Graecia*, the Greek cities in North-Western Pontus played a role of prime rank in the formation of early Romanian civilization. The persistence of Greek element in the Left Pontus, in the VIIth-XVth Centuries, remained a catalyst of Romanian evolution, the provincial Byzantium from Dobroudja and from the Lower Danube being the factor that *directly* contributed to ecclesiastic-cultural and military state organization of the Romanian Principalities.

¹ Essential bibliography in John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas. Their Early Colonies and Trade*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1980, a Romanian edition by Maria Alexandrescu Vianu and Petre Alexandrescu, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest 1988, with a Black Sea dossier by Petre Alexandrescu, pp. 409-428. For the Greek colonies on the Romanian seashore, cf. D.M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, second edition, Bucharest, 1967; idem, *I Greci nel Basso Danubio dall'eta arcaica alla conquista romana*, Milan, 1971; idem, *Scythica Minora. Recherches sur les colonies grecques du litoral roumain de la mer Noire*, Amsterdam-Bucharest, 1984 and idem, *Studii de istorie și epigrafie*, Bucharest, 1988.

² Strabon in *Fontes ad Historiam Dacoromaniae Pertinentes* (infra *FHDR*), vol. I, Bucharest, 1964, pp. 217-218.

³ Pseudo-Scymnos in *FHDR*, vol. I, p. 173.

⁴ Philostratos, *Heroicos*, in *FHDR*, I, pp. 658-661.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 241-243

⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 218-219.

⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 248-251.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 724-725, 398-399.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 548-555.

¹¹ “Orgame city on the Istros” (Hecataios, in *FHDR*, pp. 8-9).

¹² Paul Nicorescu, in *În memoria lui Vasile Pârvan*, Bucharest, 1934, p. 222; idem in “Buletin de la Section Historique de l'Académie Roumaine”, 25, 1944, pp. 95-101.

¹³ Paul Nicorescu, in *În memoria lui Vasile Pârvan*, pp. 223-226.

¹⁴ Marcelle Lambrino, *Les vases archaïques de Histria*, Bucharest, 1938, pp. 12, 352; Petre Alexandrescu, in *Histria.*, vol. IV, *La céramique d'époque archaïque et classique*, Bucharest, 1978, pp. 19 and following.

¹⁵ Petre Alexandrescu, in “Klio”, XII, 1963, p. 257.

¹⁶ *FHDR*, vol. I, pp. 352-353.

¹⁷ D. M. Pippidi, *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine*, vol. I, *Histria și împrejurimile*, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 180-185.

¹⁸ Idem, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, pp. 107-111; C. Preda, O. Doicescu, in *Histria. Monografie arheologică*, vol. II, Bucharest, 1966, pp. 295-334.

¹⁹ D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, pp. 33-34.

²⁰ *FHDR*, I, pp. 510-511.

²¹ D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, pp. 167-185.

²² Idem, *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine*, pp. 82-93.

²³ C. Preda, Gh. Constantinescu, in “Studii și Cercetări Numismatice”, IV, 1968, pp. 39-45.

²⁴ *FHDR*, I, pp. 358-359.

²⁵ *Din istoria Dobrogei*, I, Bucharest, 1965, p. 231.

²⁶ D. M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*, pp. 120-166; idem, *Scythica Minora*, pp. 65-80.

²⁷ Idem, *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine*, I, p. 92.

²⁸ G. Mihailov, *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, vol. I², Serdicae, p. 42.

²⁹ D. M. Pippidi, *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine*, I, pp. 172-175.

³⁰ Idem, in *Din istoria Dobrogei*, vol. I, p. 237.

³¹ Gr. Tocilescu, in “Archäologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn”, XI, 1884, p. 41.

³² *FHDR*, I, p. 367.

³³ *Ibidem*, pp. 522-523.

³⁴ D. M. Pippidi, in *Din istoria Dobrogei*, I, pp. 277-280.

³⁵ D. M. Pippidi, *Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine*, I, pp. 325-331.

³⁶ Alexandra Ștefan, *Application des méthodes mathématiques à l'épigraphie*, in “Studii Clasice”, XIII, 1971, pp. 29-45.

³⁷ D. M. Pippidi, *Studii de istorie și epigrafie*, pp. 174-178.

THE GREEKS OF THE EUXINE (BLACK SEA) IN THE ANCIENT AND THE MIDDLE AGES

Dr. NICHOLAOS SOL. DEPASTAS
Historian – Archaeologist,
Sc. Collaborator and Ex Member of the HCMH / HNDGS,
Director of the 3rd Office AHD/HAGS

*In memory of my beloved wife
Katherine Gheorghiou – Depastas (1952-2007),
Professor of Hellenic Literature – History
«Post tumulum vita est»*

The name “*Euxinus Pontus*”¹ refers to the far stretching internal sea that extends between Europe and Asia and borders with the Maeotis (Azof) Lake to the north and with Propontis, by means of the Bosphorus, to the south. The above sea and its shores have been bound to the Greeks by an age-old bond that is traced as far back as the *Argo Expedition*. While being surrounded in myth, the *Argo Expedition* has an historical core. It constituted a sea operation that was carried out by 60 noble and selected young Greeks headed by Jason, the nephew of King Pelias. The campaign set off from the city of Éolkos in Magnesia and ended up in Colchis (place of Colchs), where the *Golden Fleece* was kept. Jason literally seized the Fleece from the temple of Ares (Mars). Evidently, the myth underlies the real aim of Jason’s expedition that was the exploration of the Euxine. Until then, a generation before the Trojan War (1194-1184 BC), the Euxine still remained unknown territory (to the Greeks). The outcome, of that expedition was the establishment of Greek colonies along the Euxine coast.²

According to Strabo,³ the Euxine was famed for the severe cold weather in the winter and the ice covering the inlet into the Maeotis Lake. The Euxine was also known by the names *Black Sea*, or *Black Bay*. The first of these became internationally accepted (Ἰάγνηç ÈÜëáóóá, mer Noire,

Schwarzes Meer, Black Sea).⁴ These names and the Argonauts action lead to the conclusion that the Euxine has been a Greek sea since the ancient times by means of the regular contact of our sea farer ancestors with the Euxine coast the inhabitants of which, according to Homer, were covered by the fog and the clouds and the sun rays never reached them.⁵

The Ancient Greeks had a limited and insufficient knowledge of the geography of the Euxine. Thus it was conceived that because of its vastness, the Euxine was an interminable Ocean that was connected to the Adriatic by means of the river IstRus (Danube).⁶ The Euxine inland was better known thanks to the land routes. In contrast, the coast was far less known, since in reality the Euxine was a hard sea to sail.^{6a} For that reason, it was originally named *Áíáέίηò*, or *Axenus* (meaning inhospitable or hostile). The original name owes not only to the harsh weather conditions in the winter but to the ferocity and the fierceness of the barbaric – mainly scythic – races that were inhabiting the Euxine coast and that had no reservation to slay every foreigner, eat his flesh up and use his skull as a drinking glass.⁷

Despite the early conceptions, gradually in time, the originally *çíá(é)ίηò Dùìòìò* meaning

Inhospitable Pontus was renamed into *Áγίαέτιι*, or *Euxinus* (Hospitable) ‘*by way of euphemism*’. Another view holds that the well known half God Hercules managed to eliminate everything inhospitable in the area «*έάέ άέò Áγίαέτιι ίάόό έάòÚόάέ όίί έίάίίί*», that is “turning the Inhospitable into a hospitable sea”. However, the most likely interpretation is that the renaming was due to the Ionians that were very active in establishing several city - colonies along the coast of the Euxine.⁸ The Milesians were the most prominent among the Greeks in establishing colonies along the Euxine coast.⁹ They were dedicated to this task and they carried it out with great zeal turning the inhospitable shores of the past into noteworthy urban centers, in which the *Hellenic Diaspora* progressed and prospered.¹⁰

Truly, the Milesians can be considered as the pioneers of the colonialism in the Euxine coast. Since 750 BC and thereafter, the Milesians were the leaders in establishing financially and socially prosperous colonies. Thus Miletos founded Sinope and Trapezous in the south coast of the Euxine, Odessos (or, Odessople), Tomis and Pantikapaion in the northwest coast and Phasis in Kolchis, or the east coast of the Euxine.¹¹ During the VIth cent. BC, the Milesians founded even more settlements¹² in the Euxine. These colonies served to supply them with large quantities of wheat, fisheries, cattle, various metals and slaves.^{12a} The most recent of the Milesian settlements were Istria, or Istros, Apollonia and Krounoi in the west coast of the Euxine (around the end of the VIIth century BC and through the VIth century). Along the coastline north of the river Istros (Danube) and up to the Crimean Peninsula, the Milesians founded the prosperous settlements of Tyra and Borysthene (in the outfalls of their namesake rivers) as well as Olbia (at the end of the VIIth or the beginning of the VIth century BC). Following the establishment of Panticapaion, Theodosia, Karkini and Hermonnassa (between 550 and 500 BC), Miletos founded the colony of Phanagor(e)ia (around 540 BC) on the Crimean peninsula as well.

Finally around 558 BC, the Megareans founded Herakleia in the south coast of the Euxine. Subsequently, that colony became the metropolis of yet other settlements. The oldest of them was Kallatis founded around 500 BC in the west coast between

the Milesian settlements of Tomis and Krounoi. Another Megarean colony was also Mesembria, south of Odessos. It should be noted that although the sources place the establishment of the oldest colonies in the middle of the VIIIth century BC, archaeological findings that came into light through excavations date the colonies approximately 100 - 150 years later. Most likely that is due to the fact that the specific colonies suffered extensive damages and destruction by the Cimmerian’s raids. Those were barbaric warriors that were living as nomads in Ukraine and that looted and destroyed the colonies since 650 and thereafter. Thus, the above findings (mainly pots) belong to the time and phases of reconstruction of the colonies that occur in a later time than the raids.¹³

The establishment, the longevity and the prosperity of the Greek colonies of the Euxine serve to demonstrate the determination, the daring, the insistence, the vitality and the multidimensional activity of our ancestors in those distant shores. For several centuries, those tireless seafarers following on Jason’s and the Argonauts vision, they founded new colonies transferring and expanding the Greek civilization along with the commercial cunning.^{13a}

Long afterwards, since the VIth cent. AD, the Euxine played an important part in relationship to the Middle Ages Hellenistic State that is the **Byzantine Empire**. In the year 549 and in the reign of Justinian I the Great (527-565) a war broke out between Byzantium and Persia in the area of **Lazica**, in the East coast of the Euxine. The war lasted until the year 557. **Lazica** had great political and financial implications for the relationships of the Byzantines and the Persians alike with the Caucasus people. Thus the region was strongly contested by the both the Persians and the Byzantines (that was an “*apple of discord*” between them). After several bloody operations by the Justinian’s generals, Lazica was reconquered by the Byzantines. A truce was agreed in 557 and around the end of 561 representatives from the two sides signed a peace treaty lasting for 50 years.¹⁴ The treaty was signed in the fortified city of Daras, NW of Nisibis (Nusaibin today) in the Upper Mesopotamia (the broader region of today’s Iraq).¹⁵

In 582 the Avarians, a barbaric race coming from Mongolia and Manchouria that had settled in the plains of Pannonia three years earlier, occupied Sirmion that was lying in the European border of the Byzantine Empire since 437.¹⁶ Since that time, the Avarians along with their Slav allies literally ravaged the Byzantine territory lying between the junction of the rivers Istros and Savus and up to the west coast of the Euxine. Those barbaric races carried out several operations in the west coast. From the winter of 599 until April 600 laid siege to the city of **Tomis** (the ancient colony of Tomi) thus posing a threat even to Constantinople. At the end, a peace treaty was signed thus reconstituting the north borders of Byzantium.¹⁷

A little later and in the first years of Heraclius' Reign (610-641), a mass settlement by Slavic races took place in various regions of the Balkan peninsula and the prosperous old colony of Istria, in the West coast of the Euxine.¹⁸ The Slavs, due to the primitive civil and military structure and the division in small groups did not constitute a serious threat to the Byzantine Empire. Things deteriorated when the Bulgarians, a barbarian Asian race that came from the mixing of Huns and Ogours and they were inhabiting the North of the Euxine, started to press on the Slavs as they settled hither to the Danube.¹⁹

The many disturbances and the frequent raids of Bulgarians in Byzantine territory constituted a severe threat to Byzantium. The Emperor Constantine V (741-775) confronted the Bulgarian threat in repeated campaigns, with foremost the battle in the plain of **Anchialos**, a prosperous Greek city on the West coast of the Euxine (June 30, 763). In that battle, the Bulgarians were defeated and their remnants were forced to disorderly retreat.²⁰

The cities of Anchialos, Debeltos and several other cities in Thrace, near the Euxine coast suffered new raids by the Bulgarians in the spring of 812, a year after Emperor Nicephorus I (802-811) was heavily defeated by the numerous forces of Kroumos. Following that victory, Kroumos spread the fear and terror in the inhabitants of those cities, killing several of them and forcing others in exile.²¹

During the VIIIth and the IXth centuries, the Empire's administrative institutions were re-

formed and the **Theme system** was developed in an attempt to further reinforce the self-government of the provinces. The Themes were military districts that were originally formed in Asia Minor and subsequently in the European territory of the Byzantine Empire during the middle period of the Empire.²² The oldest Theme was the Armeniacum Theme, founded in 667. Subsequently, the Anatolic Theme (of the Eastern provinces) was founded two years later and the Opsikian Theme in 680. The first Themes in Europe were the Thracian Theme (between 680 and 685) and the Theme of Hellas (695).²³

During the first half of the IXth century, the need to defend the Greek cities along the Euxine coast more effectively called on the one hand, for the reinforcement of the defence in those areas²⁴ and on the other for the reorganization of the Theme system.

Thus and in order to achieve the more effective defence of the south coast of the Euxine, the coastal section of the Boukellarion Theme, lying south of the river Alys, was sectioned to form the Paphlagonian Theme, with Gangra as its capital. Also, from the sectioning of the North-western section of the Armeniacum Theme, the Chaldion Theme was formed having Trapezus, the previously mentioned old Milesian colony²⁵ as its capital. The generals of these new Themes took part in the victorious battle by the river Lalakaon (September 3, 863) that was fought in the context of the Empire's war against the Arabs.²⁶

The establishment of the above Themes is most likely attributed to the Emperor Theophilus (829-842)²⁷, that he took care for the military reconstruction and the further fortification of the Empire's territories in the north coast of the Euxine and more concretely in the ancient Taurica peninsula, where he founded the Cherson Theme in 833, or 834. The construction of the Sarkel fort in the lower route of river Tanais (today Don) is connected to and it was carried out in the context of the establishment of the above Theme. The fortification was constructed by Byzantine engineers after the order of the Emperor Theophilus and it contributed the most to the defence of the Kingdom of the Khazars, old allies of the Byzantium against a possible invasion by the Patzinaks, or the 'Rus'.²⁸

In the autumn of 927, approximately five months after the death of Bulgarian sovereign Symeon (on May 27th) who by means of constant wars had literally devastated the Aimos peninsula and he had “cropped” by sword the inhabitants of the Greek cities in the peninsula²⁹, a peace treaty was signed between Byzantium and the Bulgarians. By means of that treaty, the cities in the west coast of the Euxine and among them Anchialos and Mesembria came under the Byzantine rule.³⁰

In the meantime, the Byzantine lands in the previously mentioned Cherson Theme prospered politically, economically and culturally during the Xth century. The Rus after being defeated in the three unsuccessful sea campaigns against Byzantium through the Euxine and the Bosphorus (860, 907 and 941) signed commercial agreements with Byzantium. The above-mentioned territories of the Byzantium developed an intensive action in converting the Rus. Empress Olga that along with several others had in the meantime become Christian officially visited Constantinople in 957. The Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus offers a very vivid account of the “Welcome of Olga of Russia”.³¹

The Hungarians went through a similar course. After three unsuccessful campaigns against Constantinople (934, 959 and 961) came into a treaty with the Empire and as they settled in the northern coast of the Euxine, they were subjected to the deep cultural influence from Byzantium.³²

During the Xth century, the seashore centres of the Euxine reached a prosperity that is reminiscent of the prosperous colonies of the VIIth and VIth century BC. Thus, Cherson having been strengthened by the founding of the namesake Theme developed financial and cultural relationships with the people of South Russia and the Caucasus region, while Sougdaia, another city of the Chersonesus Taurica grew into an important trade center. In the south coast of the Euxine, Trapezus developed into a prosperous customs port that was contributing significant income to the Empire from the collection of duties. The cities of Kerasus, Amisos, Sinope and Amastris were very wealthy centers as that is deduced from recovered seals demonstrating the great economic activity in those cities.³³

In the early XIIIth century, in 1202, two years before the Crusader’s raid of Constantinople, the

Empire of the Great Comnenoi Dynasty was founded in the Trapezus region (in the old Chaldion Theme). Since the “inauspicious day” of 13th April 1204, Latinocracy started lasting for 57 years, the above mentioned Komnenoi stabilized their rule, so as to later lay claim the Emperor’s Throne in Constantinople. When in 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259-1282), the founder of the Palaiologoi Dynasty managed to restore the Byzantine Empire relying on the reconstructive action of the Nicaea Emperors (Laskaris and Vatatzis), Komnenoi were forced to abandon their claims on the Throne of the one time powerful Byzantine Empire. Since that time and particularly from 1325 and thereafter when West Asia Minor was taken over by the Turks, the Trapezus Emperor was carrying the title “Loyal King and Emperor of the Entire East (Orient), the Iberians and Perateias”.³⁴

In time the Komnenoi Dynasty extended its rule up to Sinope to the West and up to Lazica and the river Phasis to the NE. At the same time, thanks to its strategic position, the Trebizond Empire developed extensive trade covering almost the entire Euxine coast, while its merchants were transporting products from the Indies. Its competitors were not only the Selchuk Turks but the Genovese as well. Komnenoi confronted the one with military operations and the other with commercial agreements with Venice.

Trapezus thanks to its notable state structure, the competent training and sufficient (ample, supple) armament of its army, the strong faith in the Christian Orthodox Church, the hard work of its citizens and its persistence in following the example of the old and glorious Byzantine Empire succeeded to endure until 1461 when it was taken over by Mehmet II. Although the prosperous Hellenism in the far end of Asia Minor, in the south coast of the Euxine was subjugated, it never let go from memory the national and cultural identity and the brightest periods of his glorious history.³⁵

The Greeks of Trapezus, preserving and continuing the action of their ancestors – the settlers of the VIIth and VIth centuries BC – came to know times of glory and fall, went through hardship and exhilaration, times of hopefulness and despair and thus kept the values and traditions of the Hellenic Race up to our times.

¹ The term Pontus means the open and far stretching sea: Hom. Il. VI 29, Hom. Od. III 158. Pontus (meaning Euxinus): Herod. VII 147, Aesch. Pers. 878, Aristoph. Vesp. 700. Euxinus Pontus: Herod. I 6, Thuc. II 96, Eur. Iph. Taur. 123.

² For a detailed account of the Argo Expedition see: Pind. Pyth. 4, 117-187, Schol. Apoll. Rhod, Arg. 1, 20 sqq. Apollod. 1, 111-113. Also see: K. Meuli, *Od. und Argonautika*, Berlin 1921, I.R. Bacon, *The Voyage of the Argonauts*, Methuen 1925, R. Roux, *Le problème des Argonautes*, Paris 1949, H.V. Geisau, *Argonautai (Ἀργοναυτοί)*, LA 1 (1979) 537-539. Ðñâë: M. -M. Simpsas, *The Navy in Greek History, I* (in Greek), published by the Hellenic Navy General Staff, Athens 1982, 45-47.

³ Strab, Geogr. 7 3, 18.

⁴ S. E. Lykoudes, *The Euxine (Ἀγίαεἶρος Δυϊοῖος)*, MEE 11 (1929) 756.

⁵ Hom. Od. ×É 15 - 16. As Strabo (7 3, 8) states, Apollodoros accuses Homer of presenting false evidence as true due to ignoring the actual elements of the geography of the Euxine.

⁶ Strab. 7 1, 1 The maximum length of the Euxine is 980 km and its maximum width between Herakleia and the mouths of the river Hypanis is 530 km. See: Chr. Danoff, *Pontos Euxeinos*, LA 4 (1979) 1051. More about Euxine see idem, *Pontos Euxeinos*, RE Suppl. IX 866-1175.

^{6a} B.W. Labaree, *How the Greeks sailed into the Black Sea*, AJA 61 (1957) 29 sqq.

⁷ Apollod. De navium, II (= Strabo 7 3, 7). E.H. Minns, *Scythians and the Greeks*, Cambridge, 1913.

⁸ Dion. Perieg. I. 146, Scymn. Ch. Peripl. I. 734, Eust. Pearch. in Dion. Per. I. 146.

⁹ Scymn. Ch. Per. I. 733.

¹⁰ J. Berard, *La colonisation grecque*, Paris 1957². Also R. Drews, *The Earliest Greek Settlements on the Black Sea*, JHS 96 (1976) 18-31.

¹¹ Chrys. P. Kardara, *Introduction into Ancient History. The creation and development of Greek Cities (1200 - 500 BC)* (in Greek, ἈεοάαυαΡ ἀεο οçí Ἀñ-áβáí Ἐοοῖñβáí. Ἀçìεἰοññáβá εáε áíṾðððἰεò οὐί ἀεεççíεεβί ðüεäüí 1200-500 ð. ×.), Athens 1981, 104. For a very detailed account of the relevant elements see El. K. Petropoulos, *Ancient greek Colonies in the Black Sea*, I - II, BAR, Oxford 2007.

¹² Markedly, Constantine Paparrigopoulos in his classic work "History of the Greek Nation" «Ἐοοῖñβá οἰð Ἀεεççíεεἰý ,εἰἰðð», I, Athens 1925³, 521 classifies the Euxine colonies as 'Milesian Institutions (Colonies)'.

^{12a} T. S. Noonan, *The grain Trade of the Northern Black Sea in Antiquity*, AJPh 94 (1973) 231-242.

¹³ Michael Sakellariou, *The prosperity of Ancient Greeks* (in Greek, Ç äεἰð οἰð Ἀñ-áúεἰý Ἀεεççíεοἰý),

IEE, II, Athens 1971, 244-245 and 275. About Cimmerians see: Ann Kammenhuber, *Kimmerier*, LA 3 (1979) 210-211.

^{13a} El. K. Petropoulos, *Aspects of the Early History of the Euxine* (in Greek, ἰáñεεýð ððð-ýð οçò ðñβείçð εοοἰñβáð οἰð Ἀðíáβἰἰð Δυἰοἰð), journal «Ἀñ-áεἰεἰáβá» 76 (2000) 61-64.

¹⁴ D. A. Zakythinos, *History of the Byzantium (324 - 1071)* (in Greek, ἈçεáἰοεἰΡ Ἐοοἰñβá (324 - 1071)), Athens 1972, 73.

¹⁵ K. Karapli, *Daras, a city-fort in Upper Mesopotamia (6th - 11th century)* (in Greek, ἈṾñáð, ἰεá ðüεç - ðñýñεἰ óóçí çἰú ἰáοἰðἰοáἰβá (6^{ἰο} - 11^{ἰο} áε.), *Kletorion, in memory of N. Oikonomides*, Athens - Thessalonica 2006, 147-8.

¹⁶ J. - R. Palanque, *La préfecture du prétoire de l' Illyricum au IV^e siècle, Byz. 21 (1951) 5 sqq.*

¹⁷ Ibid, Zakythinos, 96.

¹⁸ Concerning the Slavic activity in connection to Istria based on the archaeological evidence see: E. Condurachi, *Histria à l' époque du Bas - Empire d' après les dernières fouilles archéologiques*, Dacia (N.S.) 1 (1957) 245 spp. Also see: Ion Nestor, *L' établissement des Slaves en Roumanie à la lumière de quelques découvertes archéologiques récentes*, Dacia 5 (1961) 429 sqq.

¹⁹ Concerning the origin of the Bulgarians and their relationships with Byzantium and the Slavs see: Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, I, Berlin 1958², 108 sqq.

²⁰ G. Ostrogorsky, *Histoire de l' état Byzantin*, Paris 1956, 198. Also see: Kath. Christophilopoulou, *Byzantine History* (in Greek, ἈçεáἰοεἰΡ Ἐοοἰñβá), II 1 (610 - 867), Athens 1984², 126 - 127.

²¹ Christophilopoulou, *op.cit.*, 166-177 and 180.

²² Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, 134.

²³ A. Pertusi, *La formation des thèmes byzantins*, Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten - congress München 1958, 26 sqq.

²⁴ The Byzantines, already from the time of Heraclius to reinforce the defence of the north shores of the Euxine formed an alliance with the nomadic race of the Khazars, that in time manage to establish a kingdom in the North of the Caucasus. Thanks to that alliance, the Empire managed to obstruct in the Arab's expansionist aims and tendencies to the north coast of the Euxine through the Caucasus. Around the end of the VIIth and the start of the VIIIth century, the relations between Byzantium and the Khazars worsened because of their intentions to limit the Empire's control over the Climates in Crimea. Since 711 and thereafter the relations of the Byzantines with the Khazars improved again. See: Th. Noonan, *Byzantium and Khazars : a special relationship?* In the collection J. Shepard - S. Franklin (ed). *Byzantine Diplomacy*, Variorum Reprints 1992, 220-241.

²⁵ Christophilopoulou, *op.cit.*, II 1, 293.

²⁶ Theoph. Contin. p. 181. Most likely, the battle took place to the west of river Alys, in the border of the Armenian Theme and Paphlagonia. See: H. Grégoire, *Études sur neuvième siècle*, Byz. 8 (1933) 534-536.

²⁷ See Zakythinos, *op.cit.*, 213-4.

²⁸ Theoph. Cont. p. 122. Also see: Christophilopoulou, *op.cit.*, II 1, 234-5.

²⁹ Io. Sakkellion, *King Romano's of Lakapinos Letters* (in Greek, *Νῦναιτίϋ Ἀάόέέϋϋò òĩð Ἐάέάðçίϋ ἄðéóòĩέβ*, ἈΕἘἌ 1 (1883) 659 sqq.

³⁰ See: Zakythinos, *op.cit.*, 278-9.

³¹ Constantine Porph. Exposition of the Kingdom's Order I (in Greek, ἔεἰάéò ðçò Βάóéέἄβĩð Ὀὔĩἰἰò Ἀ') Bonn Publication (Edition), 594 sqq.

³² G. Moravcsik, *Hungary and Byzantium in the Middle Ages*, CMH, IV1, Cambridge 1966, 568.

³³ See: Zakythinos, *op.cit.*, 304. Also see: M. G. Nystazopoulou, *The city of Sougdaia in Chersonesus Taurica from the XIII to the XV centuries* (in Greek, *Ç ἄĩ Ὀĩðñέέϐ × ἄñòĩĩϐòϋ ðũέéò Ὀĩðἄἄἄἄἄἄ ἄòĩ òĩ ἘἌ' ïϋñé òĩ ἘἌ' ἄé.*), Athens 1965, 14 and on. Hel. Antoniadou – Bibikou, *Recherches sur les douanes à Byzance. L' "Octava", le "kommerkion" et les commerciaires*, Paris 1963, 201, 101, 225 and on. Con. Io. Amantos, *History of the Byzantine State* (in Greek, *Ἐóðĩñḃ ὠð Ἀðçἄĩðéĩϋ ἘñὈĩðò*), II, Athens 1977², 231.

³⁴ Hel. Ahrweiler – Glykatzi. *The Trapezus (Trebizond) Empire* (in Greek, *Ç Ἀðòĩñḃἄòĩñḃ ὠçò Ὀñἄðἄçĩĩðĩðĩð*, ἘἌἌ, Ἐ', Athens 1979, 326-7. In the author's view the term «Ἐὔòἄ Ἀĩἄðĩέϐ» (“Entire Orient”) means the Asia Minor Heritage of Trapezus. The mention of Iberians, that is the Georgian Kingdom

underlies the long standing friendly relationships of Trapezus with the Iberians (= Georgians) and Peratea means the occupations of Trapezus in the opposite coast of the Euxine and more concretely in the Crimean peninsula.

³⁵ Complete picture of the Trapezus Empire by view of the historical and cultural perspective is offered in A.E. Vasiliev, *The Empire of Trebizond in History and Literature*, Byz. 15 (1940-1) 316-377.

ABBREVIATIONS

AJA : American Journal of Archaeology.

AJPh : American Journal of Philology.

BAR : British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1675.

Byz. : Byzantion. Revue Internationale d' Études Byzantines.

CMH : Cambridge Medieval History.

ἈΕἘἌ : Bulletin of Histor. and National. Society (in Greek, Ἀἄéðβĩĩ ðçò Ἐóðĩñéέϐò éἄé Ἀéĩĩéĩἄéέϐò ἄðἄéñḃḃḃḃ).

IEE : History of the Greek Nation (in Greek, Ἐóðĩñḃ ὠð Ἀéççĩééĩϋ ,éĩĩðò), ὕἔἄ. «Ἀéἄĩðééϐ Ἀéççĩĩ».

JHS : Journal of Hellenic Studies.

LA : Der kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike in 5 Bänden.

MEE : Great Hellenic Encyclopaedia (in Greek, ἰἄἄὐἔç Ἀéççĩééϐ Ἀἄéðééĩðἄéἄḃḃḃ), ὕἔἄ. «Ἐðñòúò».

RE : Real – Encyclopädie der Classichen Altertumswissenschaft.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank: – The President of the Hellenic Commission on Military History Lieutenant General Nicholas Mastrandonis for the honour to include me in the authors of the present issue. – My Director in the AHD/HAGS Lieutenant General Panaghiotis Konstantopoulos who approved the design of the diagram of the Euxinus Pontus based on an own sketch of the Euxine. – My colleague Dr. Pighi Kalogherakou for her assistance in compiling the bibliography. – The designer of the AHD Mrs Alexandra Stamatopoulou for the preparation of the diagram. – The translator Loucas Michaelis for his contribution in the English translation of the work.

N.S.D.

THE BYZANTINE EXPANSION IN THE BLACK SEA AREA

Dr. ALEXANDRU MADGEARU
***Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies
of Defense and Military History***

The Byzantine Empire never mastered all the Pontic seashores, but it fought from the age of Constantine the Great to the 4th Crusade to preserve the hegemony, either by direct domination, either by alliances with the powers who controlled other seashores. At the beginning of the 4th century, the frontiers of the Black Sea provinces were set on the Lower Danube in the northwest, and on Acampsis (Choroki / Čoroh) in the southeast. The empire continued to keep the enclave from Crimea, Cherson (Sevastopol). A Roman garrison is attested there after 375 and at least until 488.¹ This means that the empire embraced around a half of the Black Sea shores.

The first step of the Byzantine expansion in the Black Sea, which meant in fact the recovery of the positions previously held by the Early Roman Empire and lost in the 3rd century, was represented by the conquest of Lazica (the present regions of Abkhazia, Mingrelia and Adjara), a small kingdom disputed between Byzantium and Persia for its high strategic value (it was a barrier in front of the invasions of the northern nomads). Byzantium and Persia fought several times for domination in the Caucasian region, by conquests or by the establishment of buffer states like the Armenian principalities, Iberia and Lazica, used against the rival empire or against the northern nomads. The eastern shores of the Black Sea were thus involved in the long conflict between these empires. The Byzantine domination in Lazica was restored by war in 378, but Persia preserved Iberia (the eastern part of present Georgia).² Roman forts were built at Sebastopolis (Suhumi) and Pityus (Pitsunda), but as enclaves in the kingdom of Lazica.³ Lazica entered again in the Persian sphere of influence between 470 and 522, but when the kings Tzathes I of Lazica and Gourgenes of Iberia became subjects of Justin I (518-527), the Byzantine Empire acquired a new opportunity to strengthen the domination over the eastern shore of the Black Sea.⁴

Since the very beginning of his reign, Justinian I (527-565) followed a policy of restoration of the lost

western provinces combined with the containment of the rival Persian power in the East. The struggle with the Persians entered in a new phase in 527, when the emperor Kavadh I attacked Mesopotamia and Armenia. His heir Khusro I agreed to close peace in 532 and to return the forts that were occupied in Lazica and Armenia. Iberia remained under Persian rule, but the shore of Lazica was firmly defended by the Byzantine army. The ancient fort of Petra (Tsikhisdziri, northeast of Batumi) was occupied in 532.⁵ In the same year, the three vassal Armenian principalities were included in the Byzantine Empire. The conflict was resumed by Khusro I in 540 by the invasion of Lazica, at the request of king Gobazes II. The Black Sea became thus, as said Procopius of Caesarea, a target for Persia in the war of 540-545.⁶ Petra was conquered by the Persians and the fights continued in Lazica until 557. The Byzantine-Persian treaty of 562 specified that Lazica will be included in the Byzantine Empire.⁷ The expansion continued under the emperor Maurikios (582-602). In the Persian war ended in 591, the western parts of Iberia and Armenia were annexed at the Byzantine Empire,⁸ but the campaigns of 607-612 led by Khusro II established again the Persian domination in the Caucasian region, opening the way to the Black Sea, as Khusro I wished before.⁹

Another region of the Black Sea area recovered by Justinian I was Crimea. This peninsula had similar strategic value as Lazica, because from this place were watched the steppe peoples movements. The city of Cherson was continuously preserved by the empire, but the inland Bosporan kingdom fell under the Gothic and next Hunnic dominations, between 234 and the middle of the 5th century. In 528, this kingdom was occupied by the Byzantine Empire, after a combined naval and field campaign.¹⁰ In this way, the Byzantine domination was extended over the entire Crimea, directly or through the surviving small Gothic subjected principalities.

Major changes occurred in the first half of the 7th century. The most part of the European

provinces of the Byzantine Empire (a Greek speaking state from then on) were conquered by the Avars and Slavs, while the East was again assaulted by the Persians. But the most grave and enduring threat was represented by the rise of Islam, which replaced the Persian Empire in the dispute for Caucasus. In 627 was restored the eastern frontier of 591 after the wars of Heraclios,¹¹ but after few years, in 642-651, the Arabs conquered Armenia and Iberia. The Pontic eastern seashore remained outside their expansion. The frontier between Byzantium and Islam became stabilized on a strip that began around 50 km east of Trebizond.¹² In the eastern part of the Black Sea, the Byzantine Empire was challenged not only by the Arabs, but also by a new emerging small power, Abasgia (Abkhazia). This region was detached from Lazica by the end of the 6th century. In Abasgia, the Byzantine domination was installed in 686, but lost in 697, when this kingdom accepted the Arabian domination. Justinian II tried to recover the region in 711 with the aid of the Alans living to the north and east of it, but Abasgia remained free. The rest of Lazica and next Iberia entered in this kingdom, that was finally recognized by Byzantium around 880.¹³ So, a century after the climax of the Byzantine expansion in the Black Sea area (the peace with Persia in 591), the empire lost the last possession on the eastern shore.

In the period of the decline of their power following the rise of Islam, the Byzantines made significant efforts to regain the control over the Black Sea, not only for military reasons, but also because this space became vital for the wheat supply of Constantinople after the Arabian conquest of Egypt (641). The Pontic policy of the Byzantine Empire after Heraklios, applied by military and diplomatic means, was designed to defend Constantinople and to support the trade from north-west and north with the aid of a larger security space that included all the regions from which the city could be attacked by sea or by field. With this purpose the emperors tried to keep or to recover the Danube's mouths, Lazica and Crimea, by the control exerted over some the strategic points, or by alliances based on the principle of *divide et impera*, whose target was the diminishing of the power of the nomadic peoples.

On the western seashore, the settlement of Protobulgarians led by Asparuh in Moesia in 680 added a new danger, but the harbors of Anchialos

and Mesembria were preserved in the 7th and 8th centuries, as naval bases in the wars against Bulgaria led by Constantine V (741-775).¹⁴ For Callatis¹⁵ and Tomis,¹⁶ the archaeological researches suggest a settlement continuity for some decades in the 7th century, but there are no proofs for a survival until the 10th century, when the urban life revived. On the Danubian sector close to the sea, it is possible that Noviodunum remained a harbor for the Byzantine ships along the 7th century.¹⁷ Against this new danger (the Bulgarians) was established in 687 the first European theme of the Byzantine Empire, Thrace. The command was exerted from Arkadiopolis (Lule Burgas, Turkey). In the 8th century, the theme extended to inland, and in 789 its western part was transformed in the theme of Macedonia, with the residence at Adrianople.¹⁸

Some historians sustained that the state created by Asparuh has included Dobrudja since the very beginning,¹⁹ but there is no proof for that. This happened only during the reign of Krum (803-814), when took place the first large expansion of Bulgaria. The seal of a dignitary called Kyriakos found at Nufăru and dated in 696-697 shows that the fortification was still under Byzantine control after the Protobulgarian settlement.²⁰ Bulgaria acquired the region between the Balkan Mountains and Burgas (Zagora) in 705 as a reward for the help given by Tervel to Justinian II to regain the power. The treaty of 717 specified that the frontier was between Mileone (Jabalkovo, reg. Haskovo) and Emona; the cities Anchialos (Pomorie), Mesembria (Nesebăr) and Develtos (Burgas) remained in the Byzantine Empire. The lost positions were recovered during the wars of Constantine V. After the victory of Markellai (Krumovo, 7 km west of Karnobat) of 756, the empire advanced to the Balkan range. The following wars until 775 strengthened the new frontier, extended in 784 up to Anchialos and Mesembria, but the Bulgarian victories of 792 and 796 established the old frontier of 717, and led to the conquest of Varna.²¹ During the wars of 760, 763 and 765, Durostorum was occupied again for a while. Only in this way can be explained the discovery of some lead seals issued by Byzantine officers dated in the 8th century. One of them, belonging to a strategos called Phokas, shows that at Durostorum was an officer who was receiving orders from a theme commander.²²

The second stage of the Bulgarian expansion to south took place in 812-815. By the peace treaty of 816, the Byzantine Empire has lost Anchialos and Mesembria, but received Sozopolis, Ranuli (Ropotamo) and Agathopolis (Ahtopol). Develtos was divided between the two states.²³ The western coast was now entirely lost for Byzantium, except the theme of Thrace.

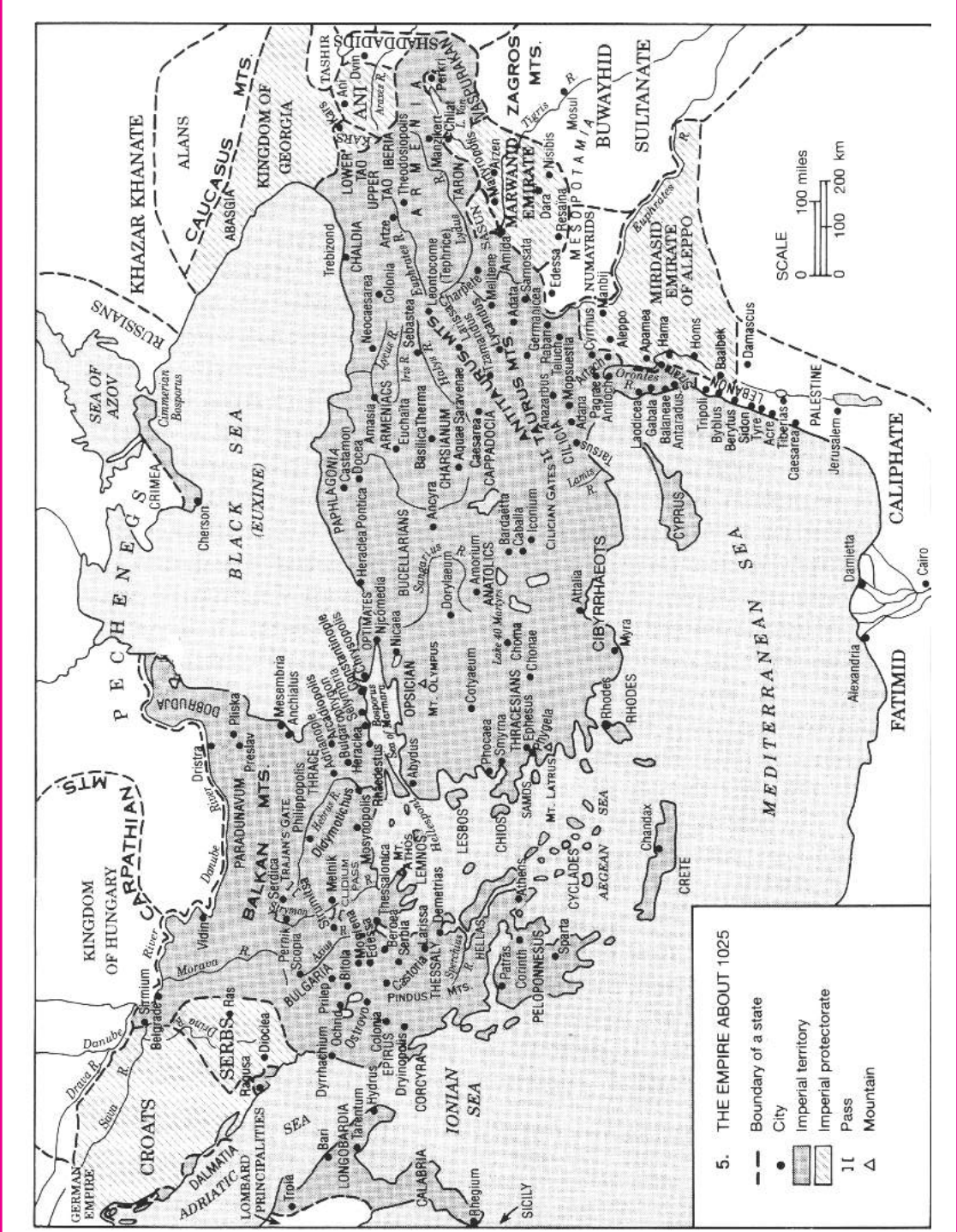
In the North-Pontic space, a significant change in the balance of powers was caused by the rise of the Khazars in the region between Dnieper and Volga, after the second third of the 7th century. The Khazars became the main power north of the Black Sea, and Cherson entered under their control in 711. Theoretically, this city remained in the Byzantine Empire, but the real authority was exerted by Khazarian governors,²⁴ as well as in Bosphoros (Kerch) and Phanagoria (Tamatarkha), the cities located on the both sides of the Kerch Strait.²⁵ In this way, the Byzantine monopoly in the Black Sea turned into a power sharing with the Khazars. The rise of the Khazars affected the Byzantine positions in Crimea, influencing the strategy applied in the northern space of security of Constantinople. As long as the Khazars were still powerful, the Byzantines avoided any conflict with them, especially during the wars against the Arabs, their common enemies. The Byzantine-Khazarian power sharing enabled the return of a real imperial administration in Crimea, in the form of the new theme of Cherson, created in 841 by emperor Theophilus.²⁶ Kerch was not a priority for the Byzantines as long as the Khazars were still powerful.²⁷ A recent interpretation suggests that this harbor was recovered by the Byzantines before 873,²⁸ but the Khazarian rule came back in unknown circumstances, since it is sure that Kerch was a Khazarian possession in 965, when it was conquered by the Russians.²⁹

In 860, Constantinople suffered a surprise attack caused by a fleet of 200 ships with 8000 warriors arrived by the Black Sea from the far north. The invaders, called *Rhos* in the Byzantine sources, ravaged the suburbs, taking a rich booty.³⁰ The Rus' (Vikings mixed with Slavs) were a potential danger not only for Cherson, but also for other Byzantine regions, including the capital, and also for the Khazars. The defence against them required the strengthening of the Byzantine positions in Crimea and the prevention of future attacks by new and effective alliances. At

Constantinople, a new military district secured the defence of Bosphorus.³¹ The new danger which emerged north of the Black Sea was counter-balanced by the alliance with the Hungarians established in 863. Their location between Don and Bug was suitable for the prevention of the Russian attacks. They were also in good position to strike the Khazars, and to attack Bulgaria and the Frankish Empire. For more than three decades, the Hungarians, took the place of the Khazars as the warrants of the North-Pontic space security, with the difference that they did not intend to control the Crimean harbors as did the Khazars.³²

A good defence against the Russian maritime attacks required also the control over some strategic points on the western and northern shores of the Black Sea. The recovery of the western harbors was necessary because they were on the way of the Russian raids. In the war against Bulgaria launched in 863, the emperor Michael III (842-867) reconquered Develtos, Anchialos and Mesembria.³³ At Mesembria was created after 864 a *kleisura* (small frontier district). The seals of its commanders are dated through the archaeological context between 864-917. Another *kleisura* was established around 840 at Sozopolis.³⁴ It followed the reestablishment of some positions on the Danube. The existence of a Danubian theme called Lykostomion was inferred from the dedication of Patriarch Photios' *Lexikon*, made for a certain Thomas, *protospatharios* and *archon* of Lykostomion. Hélène Ahrweiler has supposed that this 9th century Lykostomion is the same with that recorded in the Danube Delta in the 13th-15th centuries.³⁵ The hypothesis was endorsed by several historians³⁶, but denied by Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova, who supposed that this Lykostomion was in Thessaly.³⁷ However, the location on an island at the mouth of the Chilia channel, at Periprava, could be taken into consideration, since the existence of a Byzantine headquarter on the Danube in the 9th century is now supported by the seals of two Byzantine dignitaries found at Isaccea.³⁸ The base of Lykostomion was a stop in the coast navigation to Chersones.

The new defensive system created after 863, based on the harbors of Anchialos and Mesembria and on the port of call of Lykostomion, ensured the security of the capital against the Rus' and Bulgaria, while the alliance with the Hungarians secured the stability in the north. It was a well



The Byzantine Empire in 1025
 (after Warren Treadgold, *Byzantium an its Army, 284-1081*, Stanford, 1995, p. 38, fig. 5)

developed system, composed from two themes (Cherson and Lykostomion), and an allied people (Hungarians), inserted between Bulgaria and the latent dangerous steppe region. It is very likely that the last operation in which the fleet of Lykostomion was involved was the transshipment of the Hungarians in Bulgaria during the war of 894-896. The failure of the campaign led also to the end of the ephemeral Danubian theme. Mesembria was also lost.³⁹ After the war of 917, Anchialos entered again under Bulgarian domination, together with the harbors of Mesembria, Develtos, Sozopolis and Agathopolis. The Byzantine domination in the western Pontic space was seriously damaged. The peace treaty of 927 has reconfirmed for Bulgaria the possession of Develtos, Sozopolis, Agathopolis, Anchialos and Mesembria (it seems that the latter remained free for the Byzantine navy).⁴⁰

In the first half of the 10th century, the Byzantine Empire broke the alliance with the Khazars, no more useful, because their power declined. When the Pechenegs evolved toward a potential supremacy in the North-Pontic steppes, it was necessary to stop this trend by supporting their rivals, the Rus'. It is true that they were potential enemies of the Byzantine Empire, but they were not able to launch offensives toward the Black Sea if they were held back by the Pechenegs who controlled the Dnieper cataracts. By this reason, it was imperative to keep the hostility between Russians and Pechenegs.

A persecution of the Christians launched by the Khazars was the alleged reason for a Byzantine maneuver, which was intended to oppose two potential enemies, the Khazars and the Rus', in Kerch Strait area. At the request of Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944), knyaz Oleg started a war against Tmutorokan, around 940. The city was captured, but the commander of Kerch, a certain Pesah, was able to start his own campaign against Cherson. After the conquest of this city, he continued the war against the Rus', defeating them and requesting them to attack Constantinople. The invasion took place in June 11th, 941, under the common command of Oleg and Igor. A fleet composed of 1000 small boats sieged the capital and destroyed the suburbs like in 860, but it was finally defeated with the intensive use of the "Greek Fire".⁴¹ The Byzantine intrigue failed this time, but the idea of using the Rus' as an instrument

in the north Pontic policy was resumed after few years. The Rus' launched in 943 another attack against the Khazarian fortresses Sudak and Tmutorokan. This fact gave to the Russians the opportunity to settle their control over one side of the Kerch Strait. Next, the Russians planned a new inroad in the Byzantine Empire, in alliance with the Pechenegs, but the invasion did not take place, because the Byzantines payed knyaz Igor to stop the war. Igor was thus convinced to close a treaty with the Byzantine Empire, in 944 or 945. He obliged himself to defend the isthmus of Crimea against the "Black Bulgarians" settled north of the Azov Sea and against the Pechenegs, and to do not occupy the Dnieper mouth. In the same time, the treaty allowed to the "Black Bulgarians" to attack the Khazarian territories in Crimea, because this matched the Byzantine interests.⁴²

The Russian attack of 941 made necessary the improvement of the fighting capability of the navy. The emperor Romanos I Lekapenos, its former commander, acted in this direction.⁴³ It was supposed that in these circumstances was restored the port of call from Tomis, recorded in the sources with the new name *Constantia* (*De Administrando Imperio*, c. 9). The Byzantine ports of call had in the same time commercial and military functions.⁴⁴ It was already emphasized the increase of the amount of Byzantine coins at Constanța in this period, that could reflect the revival of the port of call (another one was perhaps at Mangalia).⁴⁵ Taking into account the peaceful Bulgarian-Byzantine relations reestablished after 927, the settlement of some Byzantine ports of call in Dobrudja would be not excluded, but we think that the few archaeological and numismatic remains can not surely support this hypothesis. From *De Administrando Imperio*, c. 9 results that, around 953, Bulgaria mastered Dobrudja up to the Danube's mouths, and that Constantia belonged to Bulgaria. The Russians who navigated along the coast reached Selinas (the Sulina channel) and from that point they entered in Bulgaria, a land that included the next branch of the Danube (Sfântu Gheorghe) and Constantia.

For the time being, the Rus' remained an useful ally for the Byzantines, if they were able to contain the Pechenegs and to fight against Bulgaria. The Russian hegemony in Crimea was perceived by the Byzantine Empire as a way to surround Bulgaria, which became again an enemy when tzar

Peter refused to impede the Hungarian inroads that crossed his state. The anti-Bulgarian common war proposed by Nikephor Phokas to Svyatoslav in 966 was intended to give to the Rus' a field for action that was also convenient for the Byzantine interests, but the treachery of Kalokyres, *strategos* of Cherson, transformed this campaign into a war against the Byzantine Empire (he suggested to Svyatoslav to support him as pretender against Nikephor Phokas). With his forces of 40.000 men, Svyatoslav crossed the Danube in the summer of 968, conquering a part of Bulgaria, including Preslav. Svyatoslav decided to keep Bulgaria for himself, in order to profit from the intensive trading with Central Europe fulfilled on the Danube. Only the strong offensive led by the next emperor John Tzimiskes has succeeded to defeat Svyatoslav at Durostorum, in 971. By the peace agreement, Svyatoslav engaged himself to do not attack Cherson in the future.⁴⁶

In 971 were created three provinces, Preslav (renamed Ioannoupolis), ruled by a *strategos*, Dristra (renamed Theodoroupolis), ruled by a *katepano*, and the Western Mesopotamia (in the northern Dobrudja).⁴⁷ At Anchialos was organized a strategy after 971⁴⁸, and at Mesembria was restored the *kleisura* lost in 917. The seals of its commanders Alexios and Pankratios are dated by the end of the 10th century.⁴⁹ The danger from north has disappeared for a while along the Danube, but it was replaced after few years by another one, from south. The Bulgarians rebelled against the Byzantine occupation in 976.⁵⁰ In 986, the most part of the Danubian region was again in the hands of the Bulgarians, but the Byzantine Empire continued to preserve the region of Dobrudja north of the line Cernavoda-Constanța. The lost territory was recovered in 1001.⁵¹ In the new organization decided by Basil II, the Preslav and the Western Mesopotamia provinces were attached at Dristra, renamed Paradunavon after 1059.⁵² A part of this theme rebelled in 1072-1091 under the rule of the Pechenegs, but the victory of Alexios I against these warriors restored the control over the entire province in 1091.⁵³

The victory against the Rus' was a stimulus for a new Byzantine expansion in Crimea, beyond the narrow area around the city of Cherson. In the first years after 971 was created the function of *strategos* of Bosphoros (Kerch). This means that Kerch was took from the Rus' in the aftermath of

the victory over Svyatoslav. The extension of the Byzantine domination over the Kerch Strait indicates the involvement of this naval power in the trade fulfilled by the Azov Sea, hence the beginning of a new stage in the commercial policy of Byzantium. The area of the Cherson theme was too extended over the Gothic settlements, among whom Doros was the most important.⁵⁴ The need for a better maritime defence against future Russian attacks could explain the appearance of a new function, most probable just after 971: the *strategos* of Pontus Euxinus.⁵⁵ However, the fate of Cherson remained uncertain as long as the Rus' were able to threaten it. When Basil II (976-1025) asked the new Rus' ruler Vladimir (980-1015) to help him in the civil war against Bardas Phokas, the city of Cherson was destroyed by the Rus', because it was on the side of the rebels. It is true that Vladimir offered the city to Basil II after he married with Anna, the sister of the emperor,⁵⁶ but the Russian devastations from 990 had harsh consequences for Cherson. The city will remain the residence of a theme, but deprived of the previous prosperity.⁵⁷ The Byzantine Empire annexed all the eastern Crimea, leaving to the Russians the port placed in front of Kerch. After few years, in 1021, the region east of Tmutorokan rich in oil (*naphta*), the raw material for the "Greek Fire", Zichia, was too included in the empire. In this way it was established a kind of Byzantine-Russian condominium over the Kerch Strait (the city of Kerch was Byzantine, while Tmutorokan was Russian). In another campaign (from 1021), the Byzantine Empire occupied Iberia (Georgia).⁵⁸ After 1030 was conquered another strategic point on the Iberian seashore, Anacopia (Novyi Afon).⁵⁹

This was the climax of the Byzantine domination in the Black Sea, and the end of a long struggle to achieve the security of the Black Sea space, by two kind of strategies. The first one was to ensure the stability of Crimea. The Byzantine Empire preferred to leave the interior of the peninsula in the hands of the barbarian peoples (Khazars, Hungarians, Pechenegs, Russians), in order to protect what was really important, the harbors of Chersonesus and Kerch. For the Byzantines, Crimea was a fulcrum for the control over the Black Sea and a region of trade transit. The Byzantine hegemony on the sea remained undisputed despite the Russians maritime attacks. All the North-Pontic powers were orientated toward the mainland, not

to the sea. The second strategic direction of the Pontic policy was the containment of the Bulgarian expansion, whose ultimate act was the annihilation of this state. The target was accomplished in most cases by a combination of field and naval operations, sometimes with the cooperation of the northern allies. It is nevertheless true that these alliances with the barbarians were not efficient. They were defeated (the Hungarians in 894-896), they abandoned the fight (the Pechenegs in 917), or they betrayed (the Russians in 967). The Byzantine Empire had strong reasons to resort to such unsure alliances, because the conflicts in the Pontic space often took place at once with the wars against the Arabs, that remained for a long time the main concern for the grand Byzantine strategy.

The Christianization of the Bulgarians and Russians brought their states in the Byzantine Commonwealth. It also enabled the restoration of the Byzantine supremacy in the Pontic space, when the new Christian rulers were not tempted by imperial ambitions, like Symeon and Samuel, who fought against Byzantium because they wished to transform Bulgaria in a rival empire shaped after the Byzantine pattern. Unlike them, the Russian Christian rulers did not manifest such aspirations before 1453. By this reason, with some not significant exceptions (such as the naval attack of 1043), Russia was in the 11th-12th centuries a faithful partner of the Byzantine Empire in the North-Pontic area, oriented toward the mainland and not toward the sea, in the same way like the Khazars. Jonathan Shepard remarked that Vladimir “succeeded in making his realm the “Number One Ally” of the Byzantine Empire north of the Black Sea, replacing the Pechenegs in that capacity”.⁶⁰

The last movement of expansion of the Byzantine Empire in the Black Sea, before the collapse of 1204, took place during the reign of Alexios I Comnenos. A speech of Manuel Straboromanos remembers that this emperor took again “the lands located near the Cimmerian Bosphoros”.⁶¹ This could concern the region recovered by a group of English knights who were in the service of the Byzantine army, sent in 1082 in Zichia, in order to protect this area against the neighboring barbarians (the Cumans, perhaps). The location of the territory conquered by these knights proposed by J. Shepard in 1974 was denied by some scholars, but the existence of some place-names of obvious English origin in the area is a decisive proof for it.⁶²

Nicolae Bănescu supposed that the seal of a certain Michael, *archon* of Matracha (Tmutorokan), Zichia and Khazaria, belonged to a Byzantine dignitary whose mission was the defence of the entire area of the Azov Sea and the region west of Bosphoros, and that the Russian prince Oleg Svyatoslavich abandoned Tmutorokan in 1094 to the Byzantines.⁶³ In fact, the seal belonged to this prince, also called Michael. Another seal, also known to Bănescu, with the inscription *Theophano Mouzalonissa archontissa Rhosias*, belonged to his wife. In this case, we should admit that the Byzantine Empire took Tmutorokan in a later moment, perhaps after the death of Oleg Svyatoslavich, in 1115.⁶⁴ Even so, this extension was auspicious for the development of the Byzantine trade with the north. It is very significant that the privilege granted in 1169 by Manuel I Comnenus to the Genoese merchants specified that they can trade freely all over the Byzantine Empire, but with an exception: not also in ‘Russia’ and Tmutorokan (*praeter Russiam et Matracham*).⁶⁵ This Russia could be identified with a city from the eastern part of Crimea.⁶⁶ The exception clause did not mean that the access beyond Kerch was forbidden, as it was considered before, but only that the Byzantine Empire preserved the right to take customs taxes for the merchandise arrived from the Azov Sea.⁶⁷ A Genoese document from the same time remembered that the Genoese and Venetians are making trade at Tmutorokan,⁶⁸ while the existence of a Byzantine customs service is attested in the same point around 1180.⁶⁹

This concern for the Byzantine monopoly in the Azov Sea denotes that the Byzantine state was aware of the importance of the Kerch Strait for the connection with the northern trade routes. In a similar way acted the Genoese in 1269, when they forbade to the Venetians the access at Tana by the Azov Sea (*quod non iretur ad Tanam*), in order to preserve only for themselves the profit took from the trade with oriental products arrived on the Silk Road.⁷⁰ Like in the 8th-9th centuries, the Byzantine Empire preferred to keep the control over the most important points in Crimea, leaving to the barbarians the inner part of the peninsula. During the 12th century, most of Crimea entered under the domination of the Cumans. The cities from the peninsula paid tribute to them. The Cumans established trade relations with Byzantium, by Sudak.⁷¹ However, the relations with them

were not always peaceful. The analysis of a speech in honor of Manuel I Comnenus has demonstrated that the Byzantine army launched a campaign against the Cumans settled near the Azov Sea, around 1152-1153.⁷² The reason of this war was probable the defence of the positions acquired by the Byzantine Empire near the Kerch Strait.

Another change of the extent of the Byzantine domination in the Black Sea area was a consequence of the military reform applied by Alexios I after the beginning of the 12th century. The function of *katepano* of Paradunavon disappeared, and the defence, in order to be more effective, was moved on the line of the Balkan range. On the Danube were left only some outposts at Isaccea, Hârșova, Axiopolis and Dristra, used to block the most important fords and to support the navy.⁷³ The new military structure that provided the forces for defence was the theme of Anchialos, detached from the theme of Thrace. The harbors Mesembria, Sozopolis and Develtos belonged to it.⁷⁴

On the eve of the fragmentation of the Byzantine Empire caused by the 4th Crusade, the Black Sea area continued to be in its most part dominated by this state. After 1204, one of the successor states, the Empire of Trebizond, became the master of the Pontic area.

¹ M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *L'administration locale de Cherson à l'époque byzantine (IVe-XIIIe s.)*, in *Eupsychia. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler*, vol. II, Paris, 1998, p. 568-571.

² R. C. Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy. Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius*, Leeds, 1992, p. 34-38; D. Braund, *Georgia in Antiquity: A History of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia, 550 BC-AD 562*, Oxford, 1994, p. 260-261.

³ C. Zuckerman, *The Early Byzantine Strongholds in Eastern Pontus*, "Travaux et Mémoires, Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation Byzantines", Paris, 11, 1991, p. 531-535; W. Seibt, *Westgeorgien (Egrisi, Lazica) in frühchristlicher Zeit*, in *Die Schwarzmeerküste in der Spätantike und im frühes Mittelalter*, ed. R. Pillinger, A. Pülz, H. Vettors, Wien, 1992, p. 139; D. Braund, *Georgia...*, p. 265-266.

⁴ Procopius, *Wars*, I, 12, 6-19; W. Seibt, *Westgeorgien...*, p. 139-140; D. Braund, *Georgia...*, p. 271-273, 276-277, 283-284, 290; R. C. Blockley, *East Roman...*, p. 70, 73-74, 84-85; A. Carile, *Il Caucaso e l'Impero bizantino (secoli VI-XI)*, in *Il Caucaso: cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia (secoli IV-XI)* (Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 43, 1995), Spoleto, 1996, p. 9, 14.

⁵ W. Seibt, *Westgeorgien...*, p. 140, 143; D. Braund, *Georgia...*, p. 287, 291, 294.

⁶ Procopius, *Wars*, II, 15, 17, 28; VIII, 7.

⁷ D. Braund, *Georgia...*, p. 297-302, 305-311; J. A. S. Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power*, London, 1996, p. 158, 166-168.

⁸ R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie des origines à 1071*, Paris, 1947, p. 251-253; A. Carile, *Il Caucaso...*, p. 47; R. W. Thomson, *Armenia in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. XIV. *Late Antiquity: empire and successors, AD 425-600*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 673-674.

⁹ R. Grousset, *Histoire...*, p. 270-272; W. E. Kaegi Jr., *Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2003, p. 67-69, 111.

¹⁰ V. F. Gajdukevič, *Das Bosporianische Reich*, Berlin, 1971, p. 500-514; Y. G. Vinogradov, *The Late Classical Bosphorus and Early Byzantium (in the Light of Dated Bosphoran Inscriptions of the Fifth Century)*, "Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia", 5, 1998, 3, p. 245-269.

¹¹ R. Grousset, *Histoire...*, p. 273-276; W. E. Kaegi Jr., *Heraclius...*, p. 112-118, 122-132, 141-144.

¹² B. Martin-Hisard, *La domination byzantine sur le littoral oriental du Pont Euxin (milieu du VIIe-VIIIe siècles)*, "Byzantinobulgarica", 7, 1981, p. 143, 146; G. Dédéyan, *Les Arabes au Caucase: les relations des rois bagratides d'Arménie avec le califat abbasside de Bagdad (de 884 à 1055)*, in *Il Caucaso...*, I, p. 169-170, 175.

¹³ R. Grousset, *Histoire...*, p. 307, 514-516, 537-538; C. Toumanoff, *Caucasia and Byzantium*, "Traditio. Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought, and Religion", 27, 1971, p. 119, 127; B. Martin-Hisard, *La domination...*, p. 147-148, 155-156; A. Carile, *Il Caucaso...*, p. 41.

¹⁴ V. Gjuzelev, *Die mittelalterliche Stadt Mesembria (Nesebär) im 6.-15. Jh.*, "Bulgarian Historical Review", 6, 1978, 1, p. 51-52; Idem, *Anchialos zwischen der Spätantike und dem frühen Mittelalter*, in *Schwarzmeerküste...*, p. 24-25.

¹⁵ Gh. Mănușu-Adameșteanu, *Aspecte privind circulația monetară la Mangalia în secolele X-XI (969-1081)*, "Pontica", 28-29, 1995-1996, p. 287.

¹⁶ Idem, *Tomis-Constantia-Constanța*, "Pontica", 24, 1991, 299.

¹⁷ There are many 7th century seals (I. Barnea, *Noviodunum în lumina sigiliilor bizantine*, SCIVA, 48, 1997, 4, 354).

¹⁸ R. J. Lilie, "Thrakien" und "Thrakiesion". Zur byzantinischen Provinzorganisation am Ende des 7. Jahrhunderts, "Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik", 26, 1977, p. 20-21, 34-35, 41-45.

¹⁹ P. Koledarov, *Administrative Structure and Frontier set up of the First Bulgarian Tsardom*, "Études Balkaniques", 14, 1978, 3, p. 133; D. Angelov, *Die Entstehung des bulgarischen Volkes*, Berlin, 1980, p. 84.

²⁰ I. Barnea, *Sigilii bizantine din nordul Dobrogei*, in *Simpozion de numismatică dedicat împlinirii a patru*

secole de la prima unire a românilor sub Mihai Voievod Viteazul, Chișinău, 28-30 mai 2000, București, 2001, p. 107-108, nr. 5.

²¹ V. Gjuzelev, *Forschungen zur Geschichte Thrakiens im Mittelalter. I. Beitrag zur Geschichte der Stadt Konstanteia*, "Byzantinobulgarica", 3, 1969, p. 164; K. Gagova, *Bulgarian-Byzantine Border in Thrace from the 7th to the 10th Century (Bulgaria to the South of the Haemus)*, "Bulgarian Historical Review", 14, 1986, 1, p. 67-69; V. Gjuzelev, *Anchialos...*, p. 24-25; R. Panova, *Mesembria: Une ville frontière a deux visages*, in *Les villes frontière (Moyen Âge-Époque Moderne)*, Paris, Montreal, 1996, p. 69; R. Rašev, *Varna, une ville frontière de trois empires, ibidem*, p. 82-83.

²² I. Barnea, Șt. Ștefănescu, *Din istoria Dobrogei*, vol. III, București, 1971, p. 15; O. Damian, *Despre prezența politică bizantină la Dunărea de Jos în secolele VII-X*, in *Prinos lui Petre Diaconu la 80 de ani*, Brăila, 2004, p. 290-291..

²³ V. Beševliev, *Die protobulgarischen Inschriften*, Berlin, 1963, p. 190-206 (the treaty of 816); K. Gagova, *Bulgarian...*, p. 70-72; V. Gjuzelev, *Forschungen...*, p. 165-167; H. Dimitrov, *Bulgaria against the Byzantine Empire for the Mastery of the Black Sea Coast in the First Half of the Ninth Century*, in *Bulgaria Pontica Medii Aevi*, vol. III, Sofia, 1992, p. 43-45..

²⁴ A. A. Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1936, p. 75-76, 81-87; O. Pritsak, *The Khazar Kingdom's Conversion to Judaism*, "Harvard Ukrainian Studies", 2, 1978, p. 264-265; Th. S. Noonan, *Byzantium and the Khazars: a special relationship ?*, in *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. by J. Shepard, S. Franklin, Aldershot, 1992, p. 112-113.

²⁵ O. Pritsak, *The Khazar...*, p. 264.

²⁶ M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *L'administration...*, p. 572-574; N. Oikonomides, *Le "système" administratif byzantin en Crimée aux IXe-Xe s.*, "Materials in Archaeology, History and Ethnography of Tauria", Simferopol, 7, 2000, p. 321; C. Zuckerman, *Two notes on the early history of the thema of Cherson*, "Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies", 21, 1997, p. 210-222.

²⁷ Th. S. Noonan, *Byzantium and the Khazars...*, p. 130-131.

²⁸ C. Zuckerman, *Les Hongrois au pays de Lebedia: Une nouvelle puissance aux confins de Byzance et de la Khazarie ca. 836-889*, in *Byzantium at War (9th-12th c.)*, ed. by K. Tsiknakis, Athens, 1997, p. 68-73. N. Oikonomides, *Le "système"...*, p. 321 agrees that the Byzantine administration returned in the eastern Crimea in the second half of the 9th century.

²⁹ Th. S. Noonan, *The Khazar-Byzantine World of the Crimea in the Early Middle Ages: The Religious Dimension*, "Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi", 10, 1998-1999, p. 209-210.

³⁰ S. Franklin, J. Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus. 750-1200*, London, New York, 1996, p. 51-53.

³¹ H. Ahrweiler, *L'escale dans le monde byzantin*, "Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin", 32, 1974 (Idem, *Byzance: les pays et les territoires*, Variorum, London, 1976, VI), p. 168.

³² S. Nikolov, *The Magyar Connection or Constantine and Methodius in the Steppes*, "Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies", 21, 1997, p. 79-92.

³³ N. Oikonomides, *Mesembria in the Ninth Century: Epigraphical Evidence*, "Byzantine Studies", 8, 11, 12 (1981, 1984, 1985) 1985, p. 269-273; V. Gjuzelev, *Anchialos...*, p. 25.

³⁴ I. Jordanov, *Corpus of the Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria, vol. 1: Byzantine Seals with Geographical Names*, Sofia, 2003, p. 119-120, 159-160.

³⁵ H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles*, Paris, 1966, p. 89-90.

³⁶ For instance: P. Ș. Năsturel, book review at H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance...*, "Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes", 4, 1966, 3-4, p. 649-651; I. Barnea, Șt. Ștefănescu, *Din istoria Dobrogei ...*, p. 12; P. Diaconu, *Sur la présence des Byzantins au Bas-Danube (IXe-XIVe siècles)*, RESEE, 32, 1994, 3-4, p. 368.

³⁷ V. Tăpkova-Zaimova, *Quelques observations sur la domination byzantine aux bouches du Danube - Le sort de Lykostomion et de quelques autres villes côtières*, "Studia Balcanica. 1. Recherches de géographie historique", Sofia, 1970, 82-86.

³⁸ I. Barnea, *Noviodunum...*, p. 355.

³⁹ J. D. Howard-Johnston, *The De Administrando Imperio: a re-examination of the text and a re-evaluation of its evidence about the Rus*, in M. Kazanski, A. Nercessian, C. Zuckerman (ed.), *Les Centres proto-urbains russes entre Scandinavie, Byzance et Orient*, Paris, 2000, p. 342-354; V. Spinei, *The Great Migrations in the East and South East of Europe from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century*, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 52.

⁴⁰ V. Gjuzelev, *Die mittelalterliche Stadt Mesembria...*, p. 52; I. Božilov, *À propos des rapports bulgaro-byzantines sous le tzar Symeon (893-912)*, "Byzantinobulgarica", 6, 1980, p. 73-81; H. Dimitrov, *Die frühmittelalterliche Stadt Develtos zwischen Byzanz und Bulgarien von Achten bis ins Zehnte Jahrhundert*, in *Die Schwarzmeerküste...*, p. 40-43; K. Gagova, *Bulgarian...*, p. 74-76.

⁴¹ Th. S. Noonan, *Byzantium and the Khazars...*, p. 115-116; S. Franklin, J. Shepard, *The Emergence...*, p. 113-117; Th. S. Noonan, *The Khazar-Byzantine...*, p. 210-211.

⁴² A. A. Vasiliev, *The Goths...*, p. 118-122; F. E. Wozniak, *The Crimean Question, the Black Bulgarians and the Russo-Byzantine Treaty of 944*, "Journal of Medieval History", 5, 1979, 2, p. 115-126.

⁴³ H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance...*, p. 106.

⁴⁴ Eadem, *L'escala...*, p. 163-164.

⁴⁵ Gh. Mănuclu-Adameșteanu, *Tomis...*, p. 304-308; Idem, *Aspecte privind...*, p. 289-290.

⁴⁶ I. Barnea, Șt. Ștefănescu, *Din istoria Dobrogei...*, p. 72-73; S. Franklin, J. Shepard, *The Emergence...*, p. 88-89, 145-150; A. Madgearu, *Organizarea militară bizantină la Dunăre în secolele X-XII*, Târgoviște, 2007, p. 22-28.

⁴⁷ N. Oikonomides, *Problems of Chronology and the Seals of Preslav*, "Studies in Byzantine Sigillography", Washington DC, 7, 2002, p. 7; A. Madgearu, *Organizarea...*, p. 29-34.

⁴⁸ J. Nesbitt, N. Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, vol. I. *Italy, North of the Balkans, North of the Black Sea*, Washington DC, 1991, p. 168-169, nr. 73.1.

⁴⁹ N. Oikonomides, *Problems...* p. 7. The seals are published by I. Jordanov, *Corpus...*, p. 119-120, 47.1, 47.4.

⁵⁰ J. V. A. Fine Jr., *The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the late Twelfth Century*, Ann Arbor, 1991, p. 188-189.

⁵¹ I. Barnea, Șt. Ștefănescu, *Din istoria Dobrogei...*, p. 87-88; I. Jordanov, V. Tăpkova-Zaimova, *Quelques nouvelles données sur l'administration byzantine au Bas-Danube (fin du Xe-XIe s.)*, in *Géographie historique du monde méditerranéen* (sous la direction de H. Ahrweiler), Paris, 1988, p. 121-122; P. Diaconu, *Sur la présence...*, p. 369; A. Madgearu, *Organizarea...*, p. 37-41.

⁵² A. Madgearu, *Organizarea...*, p. 52.

⁵³ I. Barnea, Șt. Ștefănescu, *Din istoria Dobrogei...*, p. 135-152; P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier: A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900-1204*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 99-100; A. Madgearu, *The Periphery against the Centre: the Case of Paradunavon*, "Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta", 40, 2003, p. 49-56.

⁵⁴ N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de présence byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, Paris, 1972, p. 363; N. N. Alekseenko, *Un tourmarque de Gothie sur un sceau inédit de Cherson*, "Revue des Études Byzantines", 54, 1996, 275.

⁵⁵ N. Oikonomides, *Les listes...*, p. 266, 267, 358.

⁵⁶ D. Obolensky, *Byzantium, Kiev and Cherson in the Tenth Century*, "Byzantinoslavica", 54, 1993, 1, p. 110-113; S. Franklin, J. Shepard, *The Emergence...*, p. 162-163.

⁵⁷ J. Shepard, *The Russian Steppe-Frontier and the Black Sea Zone*, "Archeion Pontou", 35, 1979, p. 221-222.

⁵⁸ N. Bănescu, *La domination byzantine à Matracha (Tmutorokan), en Zichie, en Khazarie et en 'Russie' à l'époque des Comnènes*, "Bulletin de la Section

Historique de l'Académie Roumaine", 22, 1941, 2, p. 59, 63, 66, 70-74; G. G. Litavrin, *À propos de Tmutorokan*, "Byzantion", 35, 1965, 1, p. 230-234; S. Franklin, J. Shepard, *The Emergence...*, p. 200; T. Lounghis, *Über die zwei gegensätzlichen Richtungen der byzantinischen Außenpolitik im osteuropäischen Raum im 10. Jahrhundert*, in G. Prinzing, M. Salamon (ed. by), *Byzanz und Ostmitteleuropa 950-1453. Beiträge zu einer table-ronde des XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Copenhagen 1996*, Wiesbaden, 1999, p. 38, 40.

⁵⁹ J. Shepard, *Emperors and Expansionism: From Rome to Middle Byzantium*, in D. Abulafia, N. Berend (ed.), *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, Aldershot, 2002, p. 75.

⁶⁰ Idem, *The Russian Steppe-Frontier...*, p. 221.

⁶¹ G. G. Litavrin, *À propos...*, p. 226-230; A. P. Kazhdan, *Some Little-Known or Misinterpreted Evidence about Kievan Rus' in Twelfth-Century Greek Sources*, "Harvard Ukrainian Studies", 7, 1983, p. 345.

⁶² J. Shepard, *Another New England? Anglo-Saxon Settlement on the Black Sea*, "Byzantine Studies", 1, 1974, 1, p. 18-39; A. Madgearu, *Despre "Noua Anglie" de la Marea Neagră (secolul al XI-lea)*, "Revista istorică", SN, 14, 5-6, p. 137-144.

⁶³ N. Bănescu, *La domination...*, p. 57-77. His opinion was shared by Gh. I. Brătianu, *Marea Neagră. De la origini până la cucerirea otomană*, ed. V. Spinei, Iași, 1999, p. 229 and A. P. Kazhdan, *Some Little-Known...*, p. 353.

⁶⁴ A. V. Soloviev, *Domination byzantine ou russe au nord de la Mer Noire à l'époque des Comnènes?*, in *Akten des XI Internationalen Byzantinisten Kongresses (München, 1958)*, München, 1960, p. 576-580; G. G. Litavrin, *À propos...*, p. 226-234.

⁶⁵ A. A. Vasiliev, *The Goths...*, p. 144-145; N. Bănescu, *La domination...*, p. 64; M. E. Martin, *The First Venetians in the Black Sea*, "Archeion Pontou", 35, 1979, p. 115.

⁶⁶ A. V. Soloviev, *Domination...*, p. 573.

⁶⁷ M. E. Martin, *The First...*, p. 114-116.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 114.

⁶⁹ A. P. Kazhdan, *Some Little-Known...*, p. 348-353.

⁷⁰ Ș. Papacostea, "Quod non iretur ad tanam". *Un aspect fundamental de la politique génoise dans la mer Noire au XIVe siècle*, "Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes", 17, 1979, 2, p. 202-203.

⁷¹ D. Obolensky, *The Crimea and the North before 1204*, "Archeion Pontou", 35, 1979, p. 132.

⁷² A. P. Kazhdan, *Some Little-Known...*, p. 344-347; V. Spinei, *The Great Migrations...*, p. 264.

⁷³ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's...*, p. 103-105.

⁷⁴ H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance...*, p. 188; J. Nesbitt, N. Oikonomides, *Catalogue...*, p. 169; H. J. Kühn, *Die Byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert. Studien zur Organisation der Tagmata*, Wien, 1991, p. 168.

ROMANIANS AND GREEKS IN THE XVIIth CENTURY

Dr. MIRCEA SOREANU

**Senior Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies
of Defense and Military History**

After the falling under ottoman domination, in the XVth Century, of great centers of Byzantine power Constantinople, Mistra and Trebizond, Byzantium did not vanish, as political, religious system, or as civilization – harmoniously combining the Hellenic intellectual inheritance, Roman law and the orthodox religion, still perennial elements in the Balkan Peninsula and in Romania. In these findings resides the syntagm of genial inspiration by Romanian scholar Nicolae Iorga *Byzance aprcs Byzance*.¹ In the commemoration speech, entitled *Despre Mihai Viteazul (About Michael the Brave)*, given at the Romanian Academy on November 21, 1919, Nicolae Iorga emphasized that the Byzantine Imperial idea found refugee and lived sheltered to the north of Danube, where “princes put a purple monogram on their charters, wove the golden eagle on their clothes and appeared imperially crowned on the walls of the churches”.²

Byzantine continuity is pointed out in Occident, from Venice to Paris and from Genoa to Germany through the emigration of scholars, due to ottoman expansion, such as teachers, editors, text commentators, grammars, who had an impact upon Renaissance.

Constantinople was repopulated after the violence of the final assault by sultan Mehmed IInd Fatih (the Conqueror) itself, which ensured the continuity of the strongest spiritual authority of Eastern Europe, over the centuries, respectively Ecumenical Patriarchy of the Orthodox Church. Byzantine aristocracy, refusing to convert to Islam, succeeded through commerce and land leasing to revive their power, having representatives more and more influential in the Ottoman Empire businesses, like Mihail Cantacuzino,³ surnamed for his skillfulness Şeytanoglu („son of Satan”).

For the Romanian Lands, despite that in the XVIIth century they were paying tribute to the sultan, the Danube kept its significance as border of the Empire. Princes, aristocracy and clergy were

all Christians, building of new churches and monasteries constituting a title of honor, as compared to Balkans where army, administration and judicial system were Muslim, Christian churches could not be built unless exceptionally, and those existing could be rebuilt only by using old materials from the initial construction. In the Balkans, non Muslims were not allowed to ride horses, and Christians were called to religious service through the sound of bell board, as compared with the territories north of Danube where all free people were practically riders and worshiped God in the sound of bells.

For the Greeks in the Constantinople, especially in Pera and Galata, but also in those in islands – Greek archipelago –, the Romanian Lands constituted a strong attraction for their wealth and for their large autonomy toward the Porte, but at the same time, the rays of Greek Renaissance in the XVIIth century extended their shine north of Danube, firstly through the agency of theologians, and also through that of scholars, historians, rhetoricians and poets. Thus, Greek influence in Wallachia and Moldavia was political, cultural as well and economical, of course.

Michael the Brave (1593-1601), the prince of the first unification of Romanian Lands had around him at the beginning of his prince, as great dignitaries, the Greeks Dumitraki the spathar (sword bearer), Pankratis the treasurer, influential Cocea, Cantacuzino or Mihalcea Caragea, married to a relative of the ruler.⁴

After Ottomans regained their authority upon Romanian Lands the princes appointed by them, Radu Mihnea⁵ (1611-1615; 1620-1623) in Wallachia, than in Moldavia (1616-1619, 1623-1626), Alexandru Iliaş (1616-1618 and 1627-1629 in Wallachia, 1620-1621 and 1631-1633 in Moldavia) and Moise Movilă (1630-1631 and 1633-1634) in Moldavia have brought numerous Greeks in their suite. A great influence had Ianake Catargi (Catergi), Scarlat saegi (oxen



▪ **Vasile Lupu, the prince of Moldavia (1634-1653)**



▪ **Matei Basarab, the prince of Wallachia (1632-1654)**

merchant), the father-in-law of Alexandru Coconul – son of Radu Mihnea –, prince of Wallachia (1623-1627) and of Moldavia (1629-1630). Between 1621 and 1631 *de facto* rulers of the Wallachia were Necula of Ioanina treasurer and his relatives Trufanda, Vasile the treasurer, Necula Catargi. Tutor of Alexandru Coconul was Bartolomeo Minetti, a brother-in-law of Radu Mihnea. Alexandru Iliș was educated in Levant and married Elena, the daughter of Ianaki Catargi, and Moise Movilă married the sister of Alexandru Coconul.⁶

The reaction of land noblemen against the new comers surfaced during the prince of Leon Tomșa (1629-1632) in Wallachia, surnamed Stridia (Oyster) after the trade that enriched him. Through the solemn act of 1631 he was forced to expel those Greek dignitaries – his co-nationals – who produced abuses, resorting to sensible increase of tribute and lending large amounts of money with exorbitant usury necessary for claimants of throne to buy the Porte's benevolence.⁷ The Greek monk Matei of Mirelor, the abbot of Monastery Dealu, was calling the abusive Greek dignitaries – “do not infuriate Romanians through your insatiable greed”, because “they feed and respect us”, thus “let's love and honor them as our brothers”, warning that otherwise they will be punished by “God with eternal punishment”.⁸

The prince of Moldavia Vasile Lupu (1634-1653), a Graecized Albanese, had among his closest Alexandru Rosetti celebi of Constantinople, kapukehaia Iorga, Trufanda the treasurer, Necula, Iordaki and Toma Cantacuzino, all Greeks. Even the land princes needed the support of Greeks at the Porte, and their financial resources. Thus, Matei Basarab (1632-1654), the prince of Wallachia had Rumeliot Ghinea Tzukalas (1651-1653) as treasurer. Constantin, the son of Andronic Cantacuzino, was his dignitary. Constantin Șerban, prince of Wallachia (1654-1658), maintained the great court official Constantin Cantacuzino, and second treasurer Gheorghe Caridi. The same politics was followed by the prince of Moldavia Gheorghe Ștefan (1653-1658, 1661).⁹

After the takeover of great vizierate by the “dynasty” Köprülü,¹⁰ on the throne reach Graecized Albanians like Gheorghe Ghica, prince of Moldavia (1658-1659) and of Wallachia (1659-1660), than his son Grigore Ghica, prince of Wallachia (1660-1664, 1672-1673), or Greeks like Dumitrașcu Cantacuzino, prince of Moldavia (1673, 1674-1675, 1684-1685), Gheorghe Duca, prince of Moldavia (1665-1666, 1668-1672, 1678-1683), and of Wallachia (1673-1678), Antonie Ruset, prince of Moldavia (1675-1678), Iliș Alexandru, prince of Moldavia (1666-1668), Radu Leon, prince of Wallachia (1664-1669), supported

by the exceptionally influential great drogman Panayotis Nikoussios.

To make an idea about the amounts paid to the Porte, at thrones auction, with the help of money lenders, Greeks more often, the price for appointing of Radu Leon was, after Ricaut, 800 purses or 400 000 scuds, approximately 200 000 golden coins.¹¹ During this prince the conflict between boyar fractions burst out again, Băleni's side which supported the Levantine princes and their Greek clientele and Cantacuzino's side – Greek themselves – who led the “national party”.¹² Reveal of the plot crafted by Necula Sofialis, and Balasake Muselim, through which these advisers of Radu Leon aimed physical liquidation of great land boyars,¹³ the population of Bucharest revolted on December 3, 1669. Same as his father Leon Tomşa, proceeded in 1631 to save his throne, Radu Leon



■ **Constantin Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia (1688-1714)**

gave a charter (December 9, 1669) against abuses by Greeks in his entourage and especially against his two favorites. During the prince of Antonie Vodă of Popeşti (1669-1672), Necula Sofialis will be hanged.¹⁴ More paragraphs of the December 9, 1669 charter are similar to that of 1631,¹⁵ which

means that we encounter conflictive relations of the same nature, namely who is actually to possess the power in the country. After eliminating his favorites, Radu Leon was constrained to accept that abbots of monasteries devoted to Grand Lavra of Levant stop being Greek monks, but Romanians.¹⁶

After the treason in the battle between Ottomans and Imperials of Levice (1664), in nowadays Slovakia, when Grigore Ghica has left the battlefield,¹⁷ the prince not only gained Porte's forgiveness, but also was reappointed on the throne of Wallachia (1672) with the help of great drogman Panayotis Nikoussios, who proved this way, once more, his great influence in the Ottoman politics.

Another Greek prince was Gheorghe Duca, in Wallachia (1673-1678) and in Moldavia (1665-1666, 1668-1672, 1678-1683). His son, Constantin Duca will also be prince in Moldavia (1693-1695, 1700-1703).

A Cantacuzino, Şerban, was also prince of Wallachia (1678-1688). His kapukehaia was another influential Greek, Iannaki Porphyrita.

The follower of Nikoussios as great drogman became a well known doctor and translator, Alexandros Mavrokordatos, surnamed Exaporiton (Ex Aporriton).¹⁸ His son, Scarlat „Celebi” married in 1698 Ilinca, the daughter of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia (1688-1714), who honored his son-in-law with the dignity of great cupbearer.

The Greek cultural influence was more and more visible in Moldavia and in Wallachia, flourishing during the princes of Şerban Cantacuzino and Constantin Brâncoveanu.

At the Romanian princes courts will reach Greek patriarchs¹⁹, such as Cyril of Alexandria, future patriarch of Constantinople, the Cretan Cyril Lucaris²⁰ (1572-1638), who in 1614-1615 and 1620 was at the court of Radu Mihnea, in Wallachia.

Another personality who wrote chronics in prose and in verses and religious booklets was Matei of Mirelor²¹ (about 1550-1624), abbot of Monastery Dealu.

In the second decade of the XVIIth century, metropolitan bishop of Wallachia was the Cypriot Luca.²²

In 1632, logothet Eustratie translated from Greek *Pravila aleasă*, a compilation made from papers on civil and canonic law, creations of Ioan Zonaras, Th. Valsamon, Matei Vlastares and Constantin Armenopol. He also participated, during the time of Matei Basarab in writing down the code *Îndreptarea legii* (1652). For Vasile Lupu he translated *Carte românească de învățătură de la pravilele împărătești și de la alte giudeațe* (1646), which will be comprised in *Îndreptarea legii*.²³

Ignatie Petritzes and Pantelimon Ligaridi (monk Paisie) of Chios translated from Greek *Îndreptarea legii*.²⁴

At the school established in 1640 by Vasile Lupu at the Monastery „Trei Ierarhi” of Iași studies were in Greek, Romanian and Slavonic.²⁵

Sons of princes were educated by Greek scholars, such as Ioan Comnen and Spandoni in the case of Gheorghe Duca's son, or sons of prince Constantin Cantemir (1685-1693), the future princes Antioh Cantemir (1695-1700, 1705-1707) and Dimitrie Cantemir (1710-1711), who will become member of the Berlin Academy – students of Jeremias Cacavelas hegumen of Plăviceni Monastery in Wallachia, during the prince of Șerban Cantacuzino, and known as translator of an anonymous work in Italian regarding the second siege of Vienna (1683) by ottomans.²⁶

Dosoftei (Dositheu) Notaras, patriarch of Jerusalem, colleagues of patriarchy, scholars and Greek pedagogues such as Ioan Karyophilos were found at the court in Bucharest during the time of Șerban Cantacuzino and Constantin Brâncoveanu. Constantin Cantacuzino opened a Greek school in Bucharest. Patriarch Dosoftei and his nephew Hrisant Notaras²⁷ have contributed to the apparition of some books at the Greek typography, led by monk Antim Ivireanu, who became metropolitan bishop of Wallachia.

Since the XVIth century, Greek merchants, especially those from Venice possessions, were found in Walachia and Moldavia, developing commerce with Poland. In the next century, they represented a significant factor in trade of the Romanian Lands.²⁸ From Ottoman Empire or Venice they brought luxury merchandise, fabrics, glass, jewelry, paper, cosmetics, and from Romanian Countries they exported honey, wax,

butter, caviar, sturgeon, horned cattle leather.²⁹

In conclusion, the political contradictions between the boyars from Romanian Principalities and the rulers from Constantinople imposed by Sublime Porte were not determined by de Greeks who lived in Romanian Lands, but by the ones from the suite of the new princes, considered „bad Greeks”. The last were combated also by the Greek boyars who lived in principalities, the stake being to become dignitaries, that meant very rich.

The affluence of Greek theologues and scholars was for the Romanian Orthodoxy's and for the identity of Romanians' benefit and contributed to the flourishing of the culture in those times. Through the trade with Greek merchants, the Ottoman commercial monopoly was often evaded, which helped the Romanian Principalities to continue the relationship with Western Europe.

¹ N. Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance*, Bucharest, 1934; reedited in Bucharest, 1971, with an afterword by V. Căndea, Romanian version ed. Liliana Iorga-Pippidi, Bucharest, 1972 (afterword V. Căndea).

² Idem, *Portrete și comemorări*, Publishing House of Library „Universala” Alcalay&Co., Bucharest, f.a., p. 40.

³ Idem, *Despre Cantacuzini*, Bucharest, 1902.

⁴ A. Veress, *Epistolae et acta generalis Georgi Basta (1597-1607)*, 1, Budapest, 1909, p. 39.

⁵ Cf. I. Ionașcu, *Date noi relativ la Radu vodă Mihnea în Țara Românească*, in „Studii” RdI, t. 14, no. 3, 1961, p. 699-720.

⁶ Cf. N. Iorga, *Istoria poporului românesc*, ed. Georgeta Penelea, Bucharest, 1985, in special chapter III, entitled „Influența grecească”, from p. 387 et passim.

⁷ Cf. V. Al. Georgescu, *Hrisovul din 15 iulie 1631 al lui Leon Vodă Tomșa în Țara Românească și problema „Cărților de libertăți”*, in RdI, XXIX, no. 7, 1976, p. 1013-1029; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, B, vol. XXIII, p. 412-414.

⁸ N. Iorga, *Istoria poporului românesc*, p. 392; idem, *Manuscripte din biblioteci străine relative la istoria românilor (O nouă cronică în proză a lui Matei al Mirelor)*, Bucharest, 1899; idem, *Considerații istorice asupra documentelor prezentate de domnul Marcu Beza*, Bucharest, 1935.

⁹ Cf. S. Iosipescu, *Pe marginea unor documente de la Gheorghe Ștefan, domnul Moldovei, 1653-1658*, in RdI, t. 29, no. 1, 1976, p. 114-117; I. Corfuss, *Pe urmele*

lui Moise Movilă și ale lui Gheorghe Ștefan, in AIIAI, XV, 1978, p. 297-305.

¹⁰ Mircea Soreanu, *Marii viziri Köprülü (1656-1710). Relații politice și militare între Țările Române și Imperiul otoman*, Bucharest, 2002.

¹¹ (Paul) Ricaut, *Histoire de l'état présent de L'Empire ottoman*, Amsterdam, 1671, p. 159.

¹² N. Iorga, *Despre Cantacuzini*, p. XCIII and follow.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. XC.

¹⁴ N. Stoicescu, *Dicționar al marilor dregători din Țara Românească și Moldova, sec. XIV-XVII*, Bucharest, 1971, p. 242; I. Ionașcu, *Mari dregători în domnia lui Antonie Vodă din Popești (1669-1672)*, in RA, IX, no. 2, 1966, p. 41-48.

¹⁵ N. Iorga, *Istoria poporului românesc*, ed. Georgeta Penelea, p. 409, no. 76.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 395.

¹⁷ A. Veress, *Pribegia lui Gligorașcu vodă prin Ungaria și aiurea (1664-1672)*, in AARMSI, 1924, IIIrd series, tom II, p. 282, 283.

¹⁸ N. Camariano, *Alexandre Maurocordate, le grand drogman, son activité diplomatique, 1673-1709*, Thessalonik, 1970. A.C. Sturdza, *L'Europe orientale et le rôle historique des Maurocordato*, Paris, 1913.

¹⁹ Cf. Gh. I. Ionescu-Gion, *Patriarhi, mitropoliți și episcopi greci la Bucuresti*, Bucharest, 1897. See also, N. Iorga, *Domni români Vasile Lupu, Șerban Cantacuzino și Constantin Brâncoveanu în legătură cu patriarhia Alexandriei*, Bucharest, 1932. M. Braniște, *Patriarhi din Constantinopol prin țările române în a doua jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea*, in „Mitropolia Olteniei”, X, no. 1-2, 1958, p. 45-61.

²⁰ Cf. Gh. Arvanitidis, *Chiril Lucaris (1572-1638)*, Atena, 1939 (in Greek). N. Popescu, *Chiril Lucaris și ortodoxia română ardeleană*, in „Biserica Ortodoxă Română”, LXIV, no. 7-9, 1946, p. 431 et passim. I. Pulpea Rămureanu, *Legăturile patriarhiei din Alexandria cu țările române*, in „Studii teologice”, IInd series VIII, no. 1-2, 1956, p. 64 et passim. G. Hagiantoniou, *Protestant Patriarch. The life of Cyril Lucaris (1572-1638) Patriarch of Constantinople*, London, 1962.

²¹ N. Iorga, *Manuscripte din biblioteci străine relative la istoria românilor*, in AARMSI, XX, 1897-1898. D. Simonescu, *Le chroniqueur Mathieu de Myre et une traduction ignorée de son Histoire*, in RĚSEE, IV, no. 1-2, 1966.

²² Cf. I.C. Filitti, *Vlădica Luca (†1629) strămoș al poetului buzoian Cârlova (1809-1831)*, Bucharest,

1935. H. Chircă, *Un document din 1625 al mitropolitului Țării Românești Luca*, in RA, VII, no. 2, 1946-1947, p. 382-385.

²³ N. Iorga, *Istoria poporului românesc*, ed. Georgeta Penelea, p. 411, n. 97.

²⁴ V. Papacostea, *Originile învățământului superior în Țara Românească*, in „Studii” RdI, t. 14, no. 5, 1961, p. 1139-1167. Idem, *Les origines de l'enseignement supérieur en Valachie*, in RĚSEE, IV, 1966, no. 1-2, p. 115-146, no. 3-4, p. 413-436. Gh. Cronț, *Dreptul bizantin în țările române. Îndreptarea legii din 1652*, in „Studii”, RdI, t. 13, no. 1, 1960, p. 57-82.

²⁵ Cf. Ariadna Cioran-Camariano, *Acemiile domnești din Bucuresti și Iași*, Bucharest, 1971.

²⁶ F.H. Marshall, *The Siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683. Translated into Greek from an Italian work published anonymously in the year of the siege by Jeremias Cacavelas*, Cambridge, 1925. Ariadna Cioran-Camariano, *Jéremie Cacavela et ses relations avec les Principautés*, in RĚSEE, t. III, no. 1-2, 1965, p. 165-190.

²⁷ Cf. C. Dima Drăgan, *Patriarhul Ierusalimului Hrisant Notaras și cultura română. Contribuții documentare*, in „Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei”, LI, no. 9-12, 1975, p. 699-704.

²⁸ Paul Cernovodeanu, *Comerțul Țărilor Române în secolul al XVII-lea*, in RdI, vol. 33, no. 6, 1980, p. 1071-1098.

²⁹ Cf. Cristian Luca, *Țările Române și Veneția în secolul al XVII-lea. Din relațiile politico-diplomatice, comerciale și culturale ale Țării Românești și ale Moldovei cu Serenissima*, Bucharest, 2007.

ABBREVIATIONS

AARMSI = „Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice”, București

AIIAI = Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie „A.D. Xenopol”, Iași

RA = „Revista Arhivelor”, București

RdI = „Revista de Istorie”, București

RĚSEE = „Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes”, București

THE FRENCH-GERMAN ANTAGONISM IN THE BALKANS BEFORE WW I FINANCE AND ARMAMENTS THE CASE OF ROMANIA AND GREECE

Professor Dr. IOANNIS ANTONOPOULOS
***Associate Member of the Hellenic Commission
on Military History***

In the beginning of the 20th century the historical circumstances in the Balkan region were under the influence and the antagonism of the Great European imperialist Powers, which competed to advance their political and economic hegemony at the global level.

The special interest of the European policy for the Balkans was further emphasized by their strategic position that unites West and East. Among the European powers, Germany and France were particularly interested in the Balkan region.

Both considered the region as the means for their geopolitical expansion, while the chronically weak economies of the Balkan states offered significant prospects for their economic and commercial expansion.

From the Balkan states of that era, we shall focus our interest on two countries occupying the two ends of the peninsula, Romania and Greece. We shall study particularly their importance at the international relations level mainly in matters concerning the influence and the antagonism of France and Germany over these two countries in the area of the military armaments.

After Bismarck's downfall in 1890, Germany remained the centre of gravity of the European politics. Germany was indisputably the leading continental European power until 1914. Its dominant role was recognized by all its neighbouring countries and the rest of the European world. That predominant role came from Germany's demographic importance and the economic potential based on a powerful heavy industry and the innovative commercial methods that made the German Empire the great competitor of the most powerful country of that time, that is Great Britain.¹

In the same twenty-year period, France

declined from the second to the fourth place among the European Powers. Having low birth rates and an industry that suffered from the shortage of raw materials and coal in particular, France could not industrially surpass Germany in the early 20th century.²

In the early 19th century France was the most powerful European state. However, a century later France was no longer the wealthiest state in the continent and its economy was the least developed of the economies of the rest of the Great western powers.³

However, throughout the 19th century France contributed to the economic and cultural development of Europe by means of its cultural, social and administrative influence, the spread of its technology and certainly – and that is particularly important – the export of capital.⁴

On the other hand, in the end of the 19th century the socio-economic situation in the Balkan states remained that of a solidly agricultural and small factory region despite the important changes that had taken place throughout the century, especially in the second half. Except for the limited and belated development of some fundamental infrastructure, like the introduction of the rail network and of the public service in the larger cities, the industrial production with the exception of the mining of certain metals was absent from the economies of the Balkan states during that period.

In what has to do with industrial production including the products, the know-how as well as the capital and the investments, those came primarily from abroad. We should not though miss the fact that the larger part of the foreign funds that were

placed in the Balkans, predominantly since the last quarter of the 19th century and thereafter had to do with state loans to the respective governments. Thus, the problem was that the foreign capital did not serve to promote development but mainly to pay off for the state debt and the military expenditure and organization.⁵

From all the Balkan states, that is Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, the European section of the Ottoman Empire, Greece was entering the 20th century nationally shattered after the unfortunate outcome of the 1897 war against the Ottoman Empire and financially devastated after the state's bankruptcy in 1893 that led to the imposition of the International Monetary Control by the Great Powers in 1898.

Until then the German financiers held the greatest part of the Greek public sector debt amounting to approximately 250 million francs. Apart from the state debt, the French contribution of capital started gradually to grow by the investments in the railway and the banks.

In the beginning of the 20th century the French and British funds started to dominate in Greece (the loan of 1908, the railway loan of 1902-1906) while a large number of Greek state bonds were passed from the German to the French money market.⁶

Thus in the beginning of the century the competition between France and Germany in the Greek space will mainly focus on the procurements of arms and railways materials.

Since 1905 and thereafter, an especially fierce and often back staged competition will break out between the two powers in connection to the procurement of army materials for the Greek army. The French company **Schneider-Creusot** and the German **Krupp-Essen** as the immediately interested parties, the respective governments and various credit institutions in from both the sides of Rhine will be involved in the case. The French side will demanded for comparative tests of the material while the German side having the support of the Greek heir to the throne Prince Constantine, who was also the chief of the Greek Army aimed to maintain its dominance. The French diplomacy intervened and stated to the Greek government that French funds would not be available to Greece for as long as the country did not place its orders with the French industries.⁷

The already strong competition further intensified in 1907. The German government that was actively supporting Krupp used every means to confront the French lobbying. Underlying the industrial-economic competition was an intense political antagonism at all levels.

The two sides accused one another for paid articles in the Athenian press that became involved in the affair and used every means to advance their case. The German lobbying to the Greek King, the Princes, the Prime Minister intensified while the French industrialist Schneider visited Greece himself. Finally, after several tests the French material (mountain and field machine gun) was judged the most appropriate and the order was given to the French despite the intense German reaction.⁸

To the point the German newspaper "Tägliche Rundschau" wrote that the political interests gave the victory to the French canons⁹.

The French success in Greece in the particular matter of the artillery in 1907 had political and industrial repercussions. The French government believed that Greece was turning to the French side and influence while the whole case tended to have negative consequences for certain products of the German military industry.¹⁰

Since 1909 and thereafter, the Franco-German antagonism in Greece was weakened to a degree although not substantially by the opposition of the German government to the inflow of German Banking Funds to Greece through the loans that the Greek government was seeking to contract in the European markets. The main reason was the intention of the Germans not to disaffect the Turkish side that was against every form of economic, or military aid to Greece by a Great Power during that period.¹¹

Thus the issue of the dispatch of a military committee of higher rank officers to supervise the reorganization of the Hellenic Army as well as the loan of 150 million gold francs to the Greek government were both rejected by the German government leaving the space open for the French side. Despite the concerns for the political instability in Greece (Officer's Revolt in 1909-1910, The Cretan Question in turmoil), the French government authorized the French banks and particularly **Comptoir National d'Escompte de**

Paris that along with the British bank **Hambro** proceeded to finance part of the debt until the year 1911 by the process of “advance payments”.¹²

Based on these funds the Greek government made orders of military material of approximately 48 million francs mainly to France .

On the eve of the Balkan wars, Greece enters the French sphere of political, industrial and economic influence with all the consequences that may entail in the political level. Germany having avoided to adopt a more aggressive stance and refusing to send officers and to finance the Greek debt because of her priority to influence the Ottoman Empire leaves the field open to the French politics for the control of Greece. Apart from the financial, the Banking and industrial interests, political motives as well were decisive in shaping the decision-making of the Great Powers.

With the end of the Balkan wars (summer of 1913) the issue of the contract of a new loan to finance the war expenses is initiated by the Greek government. The German Ambassador in Greece is in favour of a generous contribution. However the German financial market is in no place to respond, due the general financial situation regarding the applications for the placement of capital abroad. The German government finds difficult to exert pressure to the German banks to respond to the Greek request.¹³

The inability of the German side to compete in the financial sector against the French leads to the establishment of the French in Greece since the Greeks can only find finance in the French markets. The Germans are forced once again to leave Greece to the French economic power with all that may mean in the political and diplomatic level.

In early 1914, the first half of the 500 million francs loan is financed by a group of French and British Banks. Thus, until the outbreak of the Great War the influence of the French Funds in Greece is indisputable. As the German Ambassador in Athens states the German banks have no means to break “the iron enclave that the French (funds) have formed around Greece”.¹⁴

In contrast, in the naval armaments, the German side gains points from among other things the inability of the French companies to adjust to the requirements of the Greek side, the greater cost of the specific products and the inexplicable

delays in deadlines. Thus the German company **Vulkan-Stettin** will receive an order to build two destroyers, six torpedo boats and a Battleship (which however will only partially be carried out).¹⁵

At the end of 1913, a French naval attaché is appointed in the French Embassy in Athens aiming to promote the French naval material and as far as possible to weaken the German influence in that sector.¹⁶

In January 1914, Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos visits Paris seeking to strengthen the country with French finance and promises the French government the order of one more Battleship that the Hellenic navy is in need.¹⁷

In the end and despite the pressure by the German government in favour of the shipyard Vulkan, the Greek government signs a contract with the French shipyard Penhoet of Bretagne for the construction of a large Battleship costing approximately 50 million francs.¹⁸

The issue of military and naval armaments constituted the fundamental element of the French-German competition in Greece in the eve of World War I. Thanks to the sympathy of the court of King Constantine I to Germany from 1913 and onwards a total of 40 million francs of procurements was given to German companies even though the Germans had not participated in financing the Greek debt.¹⁹

The French side however, will further strengthen its stance in the matter of financing the debt forcing the Greek government particularly in light of the financial requirements from the Balkan wars not to place any orders with the German industry. Once again the German side realizes that her inability to finance with the necessary capital the Greek debt brings her to disadvantage as regards the army and other industrial orders by the Greek government.

On the other hand, Romania and primarily the country’s pro-European elite were under the intellectual and cultural domination of France. Thus, it was natural for the country to turn to France at the end of the 1850s decade when the issue of the unification of the country’s two main provinces, Walachia and Moldavia came up in the European diplomacy. The government of Napoleon III and in general the French foreign policy actively

supported the Romanian demand for the unification of the two provinces. The French government financed the first two Romanian loans in the Paris money markets in 1864 and 1866 and also that of 1875 that would serve to support financially the newborn state.²⁰

Since the Berlin Convention in 1878 and thereafter, the political orientation of Romania became principally pro-German because of the country's border with the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the reign of King Charles I in Romania who was of German descent. In 1883, Romania joined the Triple Alliance.²¹ In the economy, the building of the fundamental infrastructure around the end of the 19th century led to the development of other sectors of the Romanian economy. The food, forestry and minerals sectors started to be developed by large foreign companies, mainly British and German.²²

From the 1870s decade to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Romania remained largely controlled by the German capital and products. The German Banking group **Disconto-Gesellschaft Bleichröder** relying on its close ties with the Romanian Court²³ was the one that essentially directed the negotiations with the Romanian government each time.²⁴ On the other side, the French banks **Paribas, Société Générale** and **Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris** acting either separately, or as a group managed to gain some participation in the placements of capital in Romania along with the German Banks but always lagging behind and under the lead of their German counterparts. Thus the French participation in six of the twelve loans that Romania contracted from 1880 until 1910 totalling approximately 1.5 billion francs amounted to 20% of the total capital.²⁵ Naturally, the primacy of the German banks had commensurate consequences in the German exports to the country. The German side gained the lion's share in the Romanian armaments as well as the rest of the industrial products. When in 1901, the Romanian Government repeatedly approached the French Banks to contract a 250 million francs loan in the French money market, the French Foreign Ministry (Foreign Minister Delcassé) initially adopted a negative stance. Not only because of the country's political ties with the Triple Alliance but also because Romania looked for its orders of military material and machine-guns elsewhere – principally to Germany. Despite

everything, the French side had no intention to abandon Romania in the German hands. The German Ambassador in Bucharest stressed the special interests of French financiers and businessmen who anxiously sought to expand their corporate interests in Romania.²⁶

Since 1902 the French government adopted the harder core policy that the French Banks should negotiate directly with the Romanian government and not in collaboration with the German Banks, as members of a French-German group. Thus, the French side would be in a better position to impose its terms, principally in relationship to the condition that industrial and military orders should necessarily be tied up to the placements of capital. The competition between the companies Schneider and Krupp became intense with the German side though finally prevailing.²⁷ Respectively, in a correspondence between the French bank **Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris** and the German **Disconto**, the French side implied that its hands were tied by the French government in regard to a French - German collaboration in Romania. The reasons were mainly political and industrial.²⁸ Certainly, the German side protested that in contrast to what was happening in Greece, the German funds in Romania were used to feed the French industry as well.²⁹ The French government's stance identified mainly with the efforts by French companies to secure orders from the Romanian army and seize them from the German Krupp. For that reason Schneider as well as Saint-Chamond directly approached Romanian officers for the procurement of a large number of machine-guns. The French Foreign Ministry even considered the possibility of a compromise between the particularly competitive Schneider and Krupp so as to win even a partial order.³⁰ At the same time, the French banks participated in the placement of a fraction of the 1903 loan in the French money market. However, the order of 450 machine guns would be given to the German Krupp for an amount of approximately 25 million francs.³¹

Similar incidents would more or less be repeated on the occasion of the contract of the large Romanian **conversion loan** of 1905 between the German and French Banks and particularly in the case of a parallel loan of 100 million francs, 40% of which was meant for the payment of orders to Krupp. The minor French contribution and the

credit opening by the French capital market went through, although not for that part of the loan that was meant for the payments to the German industry.³² Thus, the German primacy regarding the military orders went on in Romania. The French side was constrained to the lesser orders of two cargo ships, steam engines for the Romanian railways and textiles for military uniforms.³³

In the next years the contribution of French funds in the 1908 and in the 1910 loans fell well below the German contribution. Nevertheless, that contribution was not insignificant amounting for approximately 1/3 of the collective loans.³⁴ Despite the constant lobbying to the Romanian government by the French Foreign Ministry for a more favourable treatment predominantly of the French military industry, the German Krupp secured new war orders. As Comité des Forges (the principal syndicate of the French metals industry) states, since 1905 the German industry and primarily the military German industry received orders for military materials exceeding the amount of 45 million francs while the respective orders to the French industry did not exceed 1 million francs for the same period.³⁵

The Balkan wars with the financial costs that these brought about in the participating countries forced them in search of funds from abroad. Already since January 1913, Romania sought to contract a loan of 300 million francs in the European money markets. This time, the Romanian government started talks with the already known German banks that it was traditionally collaborating. At the same time though, it turned to the French side that seemed favourably disposed at the government's level for political reasons as well. The main aim of France was to break the hold on Romania by the Triple Alliance.³⁶ The loan should though be financed exclusively by the French capital market excluding any German contribution.³⁷ However, despite the **Reichsbank's**, that is the German Central Bank's reservations to authorize the financing of any large fraction of the loan, Disconto financed the entire loan in the form of interest bills. Given the French Foreign Ministry's opposition to the formal placement of Romanian bonds in the French money market by German Banks, the French banks were forced to decline any participation in this case. The French banks "should avoid facilitating the placement in the French money markets of state bonds or

interest bills of Balkan countries having close ties with Banking groups belonging to forces hostile to the Triple Agreement".³⁸

Thus, since 1913 and thereafter the Franco-German Banking cooperation in Romania started falling apart mainly due to political pressure. In the future, the French capital market would be favourably disposed to Romanian loans under the country's offering guarantees in foreign policy matters, particularly in its relations with the Central Powers.³⁹ After the end of the Balkan wars, Romania having been worn out by the war as the other Balkan countries sought to boost its public finance with a new loan. Again the French diplomacy appeared favourably disposed for a placement of the loan - amounting to 300 million francs - in the French money market since the country seemed to have switched her foreign policy in a direction favourable to the Triple Agreement. At the same time the Romanian Finance minister had stated that he intended to proceed with orders of industrial and military material from France amounting to at least to 50 million francs.⁴⁰

The French side though was uncompromising on the requirement that the loan should be undertaken by French banks and raised exclusively in the French capital market. On the other hand, the Romanian side owed to place significant orders with the French industry and to re-examine its duties to French imports in the country.⁴¹ While the Romanian Finance minister (Marghiloman) was negotiating with the French (Bankers and politicians) in Paris, at the same time he was collaborating with representatives of the German banks with which he finally came to agreement signing a contract for a loan of 175 million francs.⁴²

Despite the Romanian offer to place the remaining amount in the French capital market and the French Banks original acceptance of the settlement, the French government denied categorically any settlement in that direction insisting on the placement of the whole loan in the French market.⁴³ In the end, despite the difficult situation of the German capital market, Disconto managed to finance the entire loan. The Banks management stressed that used every means to raise the capital because of the special interest that it constituted for the German - Romanian relationships economically and politically.⁴⁴ Despite the absence of French funds in Romanian loans in

this period, the French military industry struggled to secure some orders. Thus, since the spring of 1913 Schneider-Creusot intensified its efforts to secure in her favour orders of machine guns from the Romanian government and against the German Krupp. It coupled that effort by financing various campaigns in the Romanian press against the German products.⁴⁵

Another French company Saint-Chamond struggled to secure an order for 4 Romanian destroyers in her favour and against Krupp.⁴⁶ On the eve of World War I the competition between the French and German military industry goes on relentlessly in the country. However, the German primacy in the arms sector is indisputable. The possibility of selling to the Romanian army 10 artillery units by the French Schneider in June 1914 cannot be considered as success when the reorganization of that army demanded the buying of 120 artillery units that would be ordered to German industry.⁴⁷

Conclusion

A few years before the World War I, the military industrial and generally the political antagonism of France and Germany in the Balkans and particularly Greece and Romania consists an important chapter not only for the European historical reality, but also for the local history of Southeast Europe.

This antagonism besides its political and diplomatic formation that, of course, originated from the French-German collision of 1870-71 and the creation of the Bismarck system in Europe took, from the end of the XIXth century and particularly the beginning of the XXth century, a more concrete financial and also industrial economic shape.

Apart from the fact that the foreign policy of the two countries, France and Germany, was not always considered identical with the policy of the financial credit and banking cycles of these countries, which of course pushed forward common efforts and initiatives for mutual benefit, soon this financial weapon was to be used directly or indirectly for its promotion, as well as for specific economical interests.

The value of this weapon was known to both governments. Their capability to provide or deny the permit for investing foreign bonds in their national money market gave them the power to

embody this factor as a crucial element of their foreign policy. Thus, the permit could be followed by the desire of obtaining economic advantages and political exchanges.

In the case we have reported but generally also in the matter of foreign borrowing, as much as in the Balkans as in the Ottoman Empire, the collaboration between the banks of the two sides for pure technical reasons – particularly that is the protection of the clients-investors from probable risk of bankrupt of the borrowers – was accepted by both governments.⁴⁸

This collaboration was of course as it appeared especially in the case of Romania, mostly desirable from the bank foundations of both sides that were also involved for reasons of common financial profit.

However, from the end of the XIXth century, the promotion of industrial orders started to play a more significant role in the contracts of foreign loans. The German banks, which were closely connected with certain industrial centers of their country, were trying to push forward and ensure more orders for their national industry from the countries that borrowed.

The financial weapon would be used by the French with a particularly pressing way and mainly with the stimulation of the French Foreign Affairs Office and it is obvious that this tactic proved itself quite effective in many cases. The principal doctrine: the orders must be made to the industries and companies of the country that covered financially the loan.

The harsh antagonism of the two important war industries – the German Krupp and the French Schneider – as much as in Turkey as in the Balkans and of course in the countries that have caught our interest, the support of the correlating governments and the implication of bank cycles consists a characteristic example.

For several years prior to World War I, Greece and Romania became the theater of this strong political-military and economical antagonism.

From the beginning of the XXth century, Greece enrolled gradually in the French influence sphere due to the French capital, that flooded the country and by the principle of “coherent loan”, meaning as mentioned previously, the obligation of the country that borrows to order industrial products from the lending country’s industries, a great number of military materials purchases were made in France.

On the contrary, Romania traditionally under the financial and economic influence of Germany would turn to the latter for covering her military

orders. The political connection between the two countries would not withdraw significantly despite the French efforts after 1913, to pull off the country out of the hands of the Triple Alliance.

Finally, the cases of these two Balkan countries, on the eve of 1914, demonstrate through this intense antagonism the formation that the West-European imperialism had taken this period, which linked the investment of capitals with the promotion of political pursuits but also industrial and military interests.

The Balkan countries were eventually obliged in order to be able, as far as this was possible, to improve their substructure and modernize their societies, to adapt to the demands of the powerful European states.

- ¹ Bernstein-Milza, 1977, 247.
- ² J. Ganiage, 1982, 46.
- ³ R. Cameron, 1969, 397.
- ⁴ Ibidem.
- ⁵ G. Ranki, 1986, 90-91.
- ⁶ Athens to Paris 16-4-1904, F.M.F.A., Greece, N.S., v.15.
- ⁷ Athens to Paris 9-3-1905, 17-4-1905 and 25-1-1906, F.M.F.A., Greece, N.S., v.36.
- ⁸ I. Antonopoulos, 2007.
- ⁹ R. Poidevin, 1969, 563.
- ¹⁰ Paris to Rome, 30-10-1907, F.M.F.A., Greece, N.S., v.37.
- ¹¹ Berlin to Paris, 16-2-1910, F.M.F.A., Greece, N.S., v.17.
- ¹² I. Antonopoulos, 1994, 286.
- ¹³ R. Poidevin, 1969, 684.
- ¹⁴ Ibidem, 685.
- ¹⁵ Athens to Paris, F.M.F.A., Greece, 30-6-1912, 27-7-1912, N.S., v. 42.
- ¹⁶ F.M.F.A., Greece, 8-10-1913, N.S., v.44.
- ¹⁷ F.M.F.A., Greece, 16-26/1/1914, N.S., v.19.
- ¹⁸ F.M.F.A., Greece, 1914, General N.S., v.45.
- ¹⁹ R. Poidevin, 1969, 687.
- ²⁰ Cameron, 1969, 393.
- ²¹ Bernstein, Milza, 160.
- ²² EEE, 1990, 250.
- ²³ Kastris, 1921, i
- ²⁴ Poidevin, 1969, 57.
- ²⁵ Thobie, 1976, 102.
- ²⁶ Poidevin, 1969, 208-309.
- ²⁷ F.M.F.A., Romania, 1-3-1902, N.S., 10.
- ²⁸ Poidevin, 1969, 309.
- ²⁹ Ibidem.
- ³⁰ F.M.F.A., Romania, 7-5-1902 and 29-5-1902, N.S., 23.
- ³¹ Poidevin, 1969, 310.
- ³² F.M.F.A., Romania, 5-10-1905 and 11-10-1905, N.S., 12.
- ³³ Poidevin, 1969, 311.
- ³⁴ Ibidem, 576.
- ³⁵ F.M.F.A., Romania, 19-7-1910, N.S., 24.

- ³⁶ F.M.F.A., Romania, 6-1-1913, N.S., 12.
- ³⁷ F.M.F.A., Romania, 16-1-1913, N.S., 12.
- ³⁸ F.M.F.A., Romania, 29-1-1913, N.S., 12.
- ³⁹ F.M.F.A., Romania, 14-4-1913, N.S., 12.
- ⁴⁰ F.M.F.A., Romania, 11-9-1913, N.S., 12.
- ⁴¹ Poidevin, 1969, 673.
- ⁴² F.M.F.A., Romania, 6-10-1913, N.S., 12.
- ⁴³ F.M.F.A., Romania, 8-10-1913 and 9-10-1913, N.S., 12.
- ⁴⁴ Poidevin, 1969, 674.
- ⁴⁵ F.M.F.A., Romania, 3-1-1914, N.S., 25.
- ⁴⁶ F.M.F.A., Romania, 4-5-1914, N.S., 25.
- ⁴⁷ Poidevin, 1969, 675.
- ⁴⁸ Ibidem, 811.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Records of French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (F.M.F.A.)

1. Nouvelle Serie-Greece Volume 15, 17, 19, 36, 37, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46
2. Nouvelle Serie-Romania Volume 12, 23, 24, 25

Antonopoulos J.: *Les relations franco-helleniques de la fin du XIXe siècle au début du XXe siècle (Finance et politique en Grèce 1897-1914)* Thèse de Doctorat, Paris 1994

Antonopoulos J.: *εἰδιόα ἐαέ Ἀέδευιὰδβὰ ὀδçi Ἀέεῦᾶά οὐι ἀñ=βί οἰῶ 20^ο αέβρία, ἀδέεἀρñçό «ἈΕÇΙΑ», Ἀέβρία 2007*

Bernstein S. Milza P.: *Εὐοἰñβὰ ὀçò Ἀδñβçò, Ç Ἀδñυδὰυέβ Ὀοἰοἠβὰ ἐαέ ç Ἀδñβç οὐι Ἀέἰβι 1815-1919, ἈΕἶἈἶἈἶἈἶἈἶἈἶ, Ἀέβρία 2000*

Cameron R.: *La France et le développement économique de l' Europe 1800-1914*, Paris, 1971

Damianov S.: „Aspects économiques de la politique française dans les Balkans au début du XXe siècle”, *Revue d' Etudes Balkaniques* No 4, Sofia, 1974

Ἀέεçἰέεβ Ἀέδὰεᾶᾶδὀδέεβ Ἀᾶεδὀεἰδᾶβᾶᾶέᾶ-Ἐᾶᾶεἠοἰέᾶ Εὐοἰñβὰ, Ἴἵδἰᾶἰβὰ, Ἀεᾶἰδὀέεβ Ἀεçἰβἰ, Ἀέβρία 1990 (EEE)

Ganiage J.: *Les Relations internationales de 1890 à 1914*, Centre de Documentation Universitaire, Paris, 1980

Kastris D.: *Les capitaux étrangers dans la finance roumaine*, Paris, 1921

Loulos É.: *Ç Ἀñἵᾶἰέεβ δἰεέδὀέεβ ὀδçi Ἀεῦᾶά 1898-1914, Ἐᾶδᾶᾶβçò, Ἀέβρία 1990*

Poidevin R.: *Les relations économiques et financiers entre la France et l'Allemagne de 1898 à 1914*, Paris, 1969

Ranki G. : *Ἐᾶñεὐᾶñᾶεᾶέῦὸ Ἀδñυδὰυέῦὸ ἰεῆἵἵἵἵἵἵἵἵἵ 19^ο-20^οᾶέ., Ἀñἵἵἵἵἵἵἵ Ὀῦἵἵἵ 1989*

J. Thobie: „A propos des intérêts financiers et économiques français en Roumanie à la veille de la premier guerre mondiale”, *Relations Internationales* No 6, Paris, 1976

TREATY OF BUCHAREST THE ROLE OF ROMANIA IN THE END OF BALKAN WAR II

Dr. EFPRAXIA S. PASCHALIDOU
Historian, Hellenic Commission on Military History

From the first moment of the declaration of Balkan War I against the Ottoman Empire, Greece sought to confer with its allies on a just partition of the territories, which would be liberated from the Ottoman rule. However, the allies – especially Bulgaria, which pursued the vision of creating a *Great Bulgaria* – were unwilling to discuss the matter. She adopted the same stance towards Serbia's demand for a revision of the Treaty of 1912, under which they had settled territorial issues between them. For this reason, Serbia conferred with Greece and the two countries exchanged relevant draft agreements. Long discussions on the agreements followed and finally, on 22 April 1913, the Greek Minister of Foreign affairs and the Serbian Ambassador to Athens signed a preliminary alliance protocol, which was complemented by a military agreement on 1 May 1913. After further discussions, the preliminary protocol led to a final treaty of alliance, which was signed on 12 May in Thessalonica. On the same day a revised military treaty was also signed. The treaty and the military alliance provided for a ten-year defensive alliance between Greece and Serbia, which thus united, would confront Bulgaria's excessive territorial demands. The same treaty specified the Serbo-Bulgarian and Greco-Bulgarian borders that the two countries would propose; in the event that Bulgaria refused to accept them, they would seek arbitration. If Bulgaria were to resort to arms, the two countries would act in common to crush their opponent. The treaty and the agreements were sanctioned by the Greek government in Athens, on 8 June 1913 and were immediately implemented.

Greece and Serbia never ceased to seek a peaceful solution of their differences with Bulgaria,

but they always met with intransigence: Bulgaria had already decided to launch a surprise, simultaneous attack in Macedonia. Putting their plans into effect, they moved the bulk of their forces opposite the Greek and Serbian armies, the redeployment completed by mid-June. At the same time however, in an attempt to counter the threat, Greece and Serbia advanced their strategic concentration. While carrying out their strategic concentration, the Bulgarians adopted delaying tactics in the ongoing negotiations with Greece and Serbia to settle their differences. At the same time, the Bulgarians avoided any major dispute that could cause a war at such a critical point in time and endanger their strategic concentration.

On 27 June, the Ministry of the Army informed the General Headquarters that Romania would declare war on Bulgaria on the following day, and that the Bulgarians were seeking ways to come to an understanding with Serbia and Greece for the termination of hostilities. The General Headquarters reported to the Government that, according to information provided by the Greek liaison officer at Serbian Headquarters, the Romanian army had crossed the Danube 1913 and was advancing within Bulgarian territory. Furthermore, on the same day, the Ottoman army once again began war operations against the Bulgarians in eastern Thrace.¹ Romania wanted to be present in the decisive moments of the Balkan Peninsula, as being a neighbor of the Balkan allies having social and economic interests for keeping a constant balance.

At length, faced with the Romanian invasion and the possibility of Bulgaria's annihilation, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Sazonov,

supported by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon, invited the Greek and Serbian Governments to cease hostilities, to conclude an armistice and to send delegates to St. Petersburg to settle the dispute through Russian mediation. This invitation was unwelcome to Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, who had always suspected that the increased Russian influence over a conference held in St. Petersburg would benefit Bulgaria. On his return from Nish, where negotiations were taking place, Venizelos found a message from the Romanian Minister of Interior Take Ionescu, asking him to prolong the war by opposing the Russo - Austria-Hungarian wish to leave Kavala to Bulgaria. On 29 June, only two days after the Romanian invasion from the north, Ottoman troops had begun an advance into Thrace; they proceeded unhindered, the Bulgarians retreating to the north-east. Military disaster and disillusionment with Russian support, had forced the formation of a new Government in Bulgaria, with Genadiev as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The new administration adopted the Russian advice to profit from the presence of the Greek and Serbian Premiers at Nish by sending delegates there in order to negotiate an armistice and to appeal to Romania for a cessation of hostilities.

The General Headquarters was also informed for the occupation of Vratsa by the Romanians. At the same time, the Romanian government sent the confidential note to Venizelos that also advised Greece to take a more conciliatory tone so that Greece's aspirations would not act against its territorial claims. On 7 July, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Lambros Koromilas, announced to the King Constantine the following telegram, concerning the confidential announcement made by Ionescu, to Venizelos: *"...It is known that England more than any other Great Power will oppose the annexation of Kavala by Greece and it will be of benefit to all if the Balkan States agree to peace in a spirit of reconciliation, otherwise Europe will intervene emphatically and impose its own terms that include the idea of autonomy for Macedonia. Today Bulgaria proposed to Romania to draw up a peace accord and will concede territorial lines to Romania, but Romania*

*refused. The position of Romania has been somewhat uncertain for days now, and it is still undecided whether its Army will advance as was previously announced by a Romanian Major. I suppose that Mr. Ionescu is following the same policy as before, subject to proposals made by Russia."*²

On 8 July, Genadiev asked the Romanian Prime Minister T. Maiorescu and Minister of Foreign Affairs, directly for a cessation of hostilities to be followed by peace negotiations and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria sent a personal message to King Carol of Romania to the same effect. The Romanians halted their advance and sent a delegation to Nish. Meanwhile, it was proposed that the peace conference should be held in Bucharest. The plan had the support of Austria-Hungary and Germany, who wielded considerable influence in the Romanian capital. Venizelos agreed that the peace conference could be held in Bucharest, insisting nevertheless that the preliminaries should first be signed at Nish. All the belligerents, with the exception of Greece, agreed to sign an armistice. Venizelos, who feared that the reoccupation of Adrianople by the Ottoman troops and rumors that Greece and the Ottoman Empire were contriving to proclaim the autonomy of Thrace would invite European intervention, was eager to begin negotiations. King Constantine's reasons for refusing to sign an armistice were both strategic and political: an armistice would allow the Bulgarian army to recuperate, whereas total victory would enable Greece to increase her territorial claims so as to include Alexandroupolis (Dedeagach). Besides, King Constantine feared, an armistice would give the Great Powers the opportunity to intervene. Russia, Austria-Hungary and Romania were making representations against the strangulation of Bulgaria, while France was urging the Greek Government to moderate its claims, as a lesser evil compared to Austria-Hungary's intervention.³

On 10 July, Maiorescu invited the Serb Prime Minister Pashich and Venizelos to send their delegates to Bucharest for the peace preliminaries, while the armistice would be signed at Nish.

Pashich, who feared that Maiorescu would conclude a separate peace, immediately accepted the invitation, but Venizelos was prepared to accept only on condition that the peace delegations would sign both the armistice and the peace preliminaries in the Romanian capital. On the same day, Venizelos informed King Constantine that Russia had expressed a strong desire to end the war and that the King of Bulgaria had contacted the King of Romania requesting termination of hostilities. He added that Romania accepted the truce and that Serbia would probably bow to the pressure exerted by Russia for a truce and recommended that Greece should also assent to it. Romania had agreed to the conclusion of an armistice, which Serbia, yielding to Russian pressure, probably would accept: *“Mr. Demidov came to inform me of Mr. Sozonov’s telegram expressing his strong desire for the signing of an armistice. He also informed me of King Ferdinand’s telegram to King Carol, requesting that the advance of the Hellenic-Serbian troops cease, otherwise Sofia will be threatened with a crisis that Demidov interprets as a danger of dynastic overthrow. I explained to Mr. Demidov the reasons why we cannot agree to an armistice without the signing of preliminary peace conditions, as well as how distrustful I am of the sincerity of Ferdinand’s fears. Nevertheless, Romania accepts the armistice and I do not know whether Serbia will withstand Russian pressure till the end. In any case, I was thinking that, considering the sacrifices caused by the gradual contestation of the territory as well as the dangers from cholera, it would be opportune perhaps to state that we accept an armistice where Romania undertakes to support our territorial and other claims, so that it is henceforth in solidarity with the rest of the allies. Securing this solidarity would be sufficient compensation for the losses due to the armistice; besides, before the armistice we could demand the concession of several positions of the Bulgarian Army. The issue of armistice is definitely, for the time being at least, purely military and therefore it is up to Your Majesty to notify me of your decisions thereupon.”*⁴ Obviously, he left the final decision in the hands of the Commander in Chief and King, due to the purely military nature of the matter.

The King however, refused the arrangement of a truce, as he wanted a more complete military imposition against Bulgaria and the continuation of all operations until the signing of the preliminary accord for peace: *“I am surprised the Ambassador of Russia should inform us of the telegram of the King of Bulgaria to his counterpart of Romania begging for the cessation of the advance of the Hellenic and Serbian armies. I have no relation either with the King of Romania or with Russia. If King Ferdinand is threatened with a crisis because of our advance, he can telegraph directly to the King of Serbia and myself; whether Romania agrees to an armistice is completely indifferent to us; it plays no role in the present war. I know of Bulgaria’s bad faith from bitter experience and I have no intention to give it a new opportunity to flaunt itself once more. Serbia cannot sign an armistice without our approval and not appear unfaithful. The sacrifices caused by our advance are not excessive; on the contrary, they are equal to the object we are pursuing and only one percent of our troops fall victim to cholera. Therefore, these are not strong reasons for the cessation of hostilities. Finally, please tell the Ambassador of Russia that under no circumstances do I accept armistice. Should Bulgaria consent to sign preliminary peace on the battlefield, accepting my conditions, then I shall accept immediate armistice.”*⁵

Despite Russia’s failure to prevent war between the Balkan states, St. Petersburg never ceased pursuing a policy to put an end to it, especially after the initial defeats of the Bulgarian forces. Austria-Hungary and Romania also made overtures to end the hostilities. On 11 July 1913, Austria-Hungary proposed an armistice and the opening of negotiations in Bucharest for the signing of a peace treaty. The belligerent countries accepted the Austro-Hungarian recommendations for negotiations without the cessation of hostilities and dispatched delegations to Bucharest. Venizelos had also informed the King that the Austro-Hungarian ambassador had conveyed to him a telegram from his government recommending that representatives of the belligerents be sent to Nish for the conclusion of an armistice, while negotiations for

peace would be conducted in Bucharest. Following this, the Prime Minister expressed the opinion that it would be advisable for Greece to accept the conclusion of the armistice, leaving the final decision to Commander in Chief, King Constantine, because of the clearly military nature of the issue:⁶ *“The Ambassador of Austria-Hungary informed me of the telegram sent by Count Berchtold, who after setting out the proposal made by Romania that delegates be sent to Nish to conclude peace and that peace negotiations be held in Bucharest, added to Baron Brown: - Please insist on the Romanian proposal being accepted and make the observation that a refusal shall not improve the position of the two allied states. We shall be obliged to see in an eventual refusal the proof that Greece and Serbia seek to suffocate Bulgaria, which we shall not permit - I told Mr. Brown that his proceeding is so serious that I cannot give an official reply before I consult with the Ministerial Cabinet and receive the King’s approval. However, I cannot but protest over the perception that we seek to suffocate Bulgaria since we aim at nothing else than securing the equilibrium and we simply refuse to be deceived by Bulgaria. The thoughts of the Ministerial Cabinet shall be conveyed to Your Majesty by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.”*⁷

Telegrams, sent by Koromilas and the General High Command, regarding Greece’s representatives for the peace talks in Bucharest, followed the same day: *“A short time ago the Romanian Ambassador informed me as to the following telegram⁸ sent by the Romanian Government. It made no mention of the meeting of the Prime Ministers in Bucharest, but we telegraphed Mr. Alexandropoulos to report that Mr. Venizelos would gladly travel there if Mr. Pashich would also be prepared to make the trip. I replied to Mr. Filodor that our representatives would travel to Bucharest to resolve all the issues that arose from the war, both political and territorial as well as military, and that the truce would automatically follow the drawing up of the preliminary peace accord. During the timely verbal announcement made to me by the Serbian Ambassador, Mr. Pashich, he made it known that it would be possible for him to accept*

*the proposal by Russia and Romania on condition that the two conferences be carried out concurrently and that the ceasing of all hostilities would not take place at the Conference at Bucharest until it was indubitably proved that Bulgaria truly and sincerely wanted peace.”*⁹ The following day, 11 July, the Minister of Foreign affairs once again informs the King after a meeting with the Romanian Ambassador and asks for his orders concerning the Greek delegation to Bucharest: *“...After some time he showed me the invitation from the Romanian government to the Prime Ministers of Serbia, Montenegro and Greece asking them to travel to Bucharest. Mr. Panas will again be the second representative. Mr. Papadimantopoulos will not take part in the conference. The officers who will be appointed by Your Highness will be obliged to travel there as technical representatives. We decided to send the military officers to Nish so as not to become involved in any new issues. I await Your Highness’ decision concerning the officer who will accompany and be under the command of Captain Rangabe. I must receive your reply as soon as possible so as to prepare the proxies.”*¹⁰

Nevertheless, the diplomatic thoughts and the background hidden behind the above mentioned decisions seemed to be rather complicated. Deciding on the scope and tactics to be followed in Bucharest proved exceedingly difficult. For King Constantine, the Bucharest conference was an opportunity for Greece to secure a durable peace based on the balance of powers and on a closer understanding between Greece and Romania, the two non-Slav states of the peninsula. He believed that, in a spirit of reconciliation, Pashich was likely to renounce his claims to the zone south-east of the rivers Struma and Nestos. If this happened, Constantine’s claim to Alexandroupolis (Dedeagach) would appear even more excessive. It would cost Greece, not only the support of Serbia, but also the desired rapprochement with Romania. He proposed that Greece should reduce her claim from Alexandroupolis to that of Porto Lagos. If, however, military operations continued and Bulgaria sustained a crushing defeat, Greece might increase her claims. Venizelos’ insistence on a conciliatory

attitude was founded on his fear that Serbia and Romania would sign a separate peace. To avoid isolation and to gain Romanian support, Greece must accept an armistice, a policy which Constantine rejected out of hand. He agreed to the Porto Lagos line only if negotiations in Bucharest reached a deadlock.

Finally, on 12 July, when Maiorescu expressed the wish that he might attend the conference, Venizelos decided to head the peace delegation, which included N. Politis, A. Pallis and D. Panas, who was to join them at Belgrade. Venizelos left for Bucharest on 13 July, dissatisfied with his arrangement with Constantine on the question of the armistice. He intended to communicate the Greek peace terms to the Bulgarian delegation upon his arrival. If the Bulgarian reply left room for hope, he would instruct Alexandropoulos and Rangabe, who had remained at Nish, to sign the armistice.

After having refused for eighteen days to accept an armistice, on 15 July, King Constantine instructed Venizelos to sign it. As soon as Venizelos arrived in Bucharest on the 16 July, he communicated to the Bulgarians his intention. He had also informed the Commander in Chief that Maiorescu had agreed to propose in the first session, which was to take place that day, the signing of a five-day suspension of hostilities, which would take effect the following day. On 17 July, the first plenary session of the conference accepted Venizelos' proposal of a five-day suspension of hostilities.

On the next day, the peace delegations in Bucharest agreed to have separate private meetings with the Bulgarians, so that only irreconcilable differences would be brought to the conference. The Bulgarians and Romanians had no great difficulty in reaching an agreement. By 18 July, most of the points of their agreement had been settled and Bulgaria was hoping for a separate Bulgaro-Romanian peace treaty. Maiorescu, however, declared to the conference that the agreement between the Romanian and Bulgarian

delegations was not a separate treaty, but only the first step towards a general settlement.

The major obstacle of the conference was the question of Kavala and owing to its importance as the center of tobacco commerce, this question aroused international interest. On his arrival at Bucharest, Venizelos discovered that none of the Great Powers would support him actively on the question of Kavala. In order to gain use of Kaiser Wilhelm's influence on King Carol, Queen Sophia of Greece, telegraphed Constantine's request for '*ein gutes Wort*' about Kavala to her brother Kaiser Wilhelm and he, in turn, communicated it to King Carol. The Romanian King offered to mediate for a frontier beginning between Kavala and Porto Lagos, which was acceptable to Venizelos.

The conference meeting of 22 July coincided with the end of the five-day cease-fire. King Constantine, although dreading the possibility of a renewal of hostilities without Serbian and Romanian support, was not prepared to grant Bulgarian demands or to ask for an extension of the cease-fire. To do this, he believed, would expose the weakness of his position. He hoped that the other belligerents would have failed to reach an agreement with the Bulgarians and that one of them would propose the extension of the cease-fire. At the meeting, however, Maiorescu announced that Bulgaria and Romania had reached an agreement and that at the expiry of cease-fire the Bulgarians hoped to continue the war against Serbia and Greece. He hastened to explain that Romania would not sign a separate treaty, but would support her cobelligerents. He then communicated the Austria-Hungarian and British communications concerning Kavala and proposed the extension of the cease-fire for three more days. Maiorescu's declaration concerning the conditional character of the Romano-Bulgarian agreement shattered Bulgarian hopes of isolating Greece and Serbia. The Bulgarian delegation accepted the renewal of the cease-fire.¹¹

The Greek delegation to Bucharest encountered fierce resistance to its territorial demands,

and the Prime Minister informed the King that it was not possible to satisfy the Greek demand for a boundary east of the river Nestos. In reply, the King approved the line of the Nestos River as Greece's minimum position. Meanwhile, some of the Great Powers, especially Austria-Hungary, insisted that Kavala ought to be adjudged to Bulgaria. The Greek side was unyielding on the issue and succeeded in gaining the support of France and Germany and, a little later, Italy.

Venizelos responded immediately to Măiorescu's show of solidarity in the question of Kavala. On 23 July, without prior consultation with either the King or his government, he granted Măiorescu's request concerning the autonomy of Vlach¹² schools and churches and the creation of a Vlach bishopric in the territories annexed by Greece. Romania was given permission to subsidize these institutions. Though the concession had been recorded in an exchange of informal letters¹³ between the two Premiers and remained inoperative, the mere recognition of Vlach minority rights aroused strong criticism in Greece. Venizelos was accused of having created a non-existent question. The recently appointed Governor General of Macedonia, Stefanos Dragoumis, resigned in protest.¹⁴

Venizelos, however, was in particular hurry to obtain a favorable decision by the Balkan peace conference of Bucharest. On 24 July, he had yet another fruitless discussion with the Bulgarian delegates. At the conference meeting which followed, Măiorescu announced the conclusion of the Serbo-Bulgarian agreement and stated that, if Bulgaria rejected the Greek claim on Kavala, Romania and Serbia would cancel their agreements and would resume hostilities. Subsequently, the Romanian prime minister proposed the suspension of the sessions and the holding of bilateral talks between the Greek and Bulgarian delegations. The Bulgarians withdrew for one more private talk with Venizelos. They told him that, if they secured a small concession along the northern frontier, they would give in. Venizelos rejected this offer professing that to accept it would exceed his instructions. At that moment, the French Minister

Blondel, who arrived to ask about the progress of the conference, supported by Măiorescu, implored Venizelos not to prolong the war unnecessarily. As a result of the mediation of the Romanian delegate General Coandă, Venizelos accepted a small rectification of the eastern frontier, in order to facilitate Bulgaria's railroad connection to Porto-Lagos. In the afternoon, when the meeting was resumed, Măiorescu announced the conclusion of the Greek-Bulgarian agreement, which secured Kavala for Greece.¹⁵

On 25 July, the above-mentioned agreement was initialed and three days later, on 28 July 1913, the peace treaty ending the state of war between the Balkan states was signed.¹⁶ On 30 July, a mutual assistance protocol was signed in Bucharest, providing for military and diplomatic cooperation between the four Balkan allies (Romania, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro).¹⁷

Prime Minister Venizelos mainly depended on personal connections and secret negotiations. His presence in Bucharest and his intimacy with Take Ionescu, contributed to the success of the Greek diplomacy. It is a tribute to the stability of Greek politics that he was the only Balkan premier who both prepared the 1912 agreements and remained in power to witness their consequences through to the Treaty of Bucharest. On 30 July the Greek delegation departed from Bucharest and returned to Athens.

¹ Hellenic Army General Staff / Army History Directorate, *A Concise History of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913*, Athens 1998, p.p. 265, 269, 275, 297.

² Telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Athens 7-7-13, to His Majesty the King – General High Command. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1420.

³ Helen Gardikas-Katsiadakis, *Greece and the Balkan Imbroglio, Greek Foreign Policy, 1911-1913*, Athens, 1995, p.225-230.

⁴ Telegram from the Prime Minister Venizelos: Athens 10-7-13, to His Majesty the King, General Headquarters. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1524.

⁵ Telegram from the King Constantine, Commander in Chief: Livounovo 10-7-13, to the Prime Minister Venizelos, Athens. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1525.

⁶ HAGS / AHD, *Concise...*, o.c., p. 309

⁷ Telegram from the Prime Minister Venizelos: Athens 11-7-13, to His Majesty the King, General Headquarters. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1563.

⁸ A copy of the telegram sent from Bucharest to the Romanian Embassy: "In the name of the Romanian Embassy could you please invite the Hellenic government to send its representatives to Bucharest to discuss preliminary peace terms and the final peace accord? With respect to the truce, it is advisable that with respect to the serious situation in Sofia we should previously discuss in Nish all the preliminary and urgent military measures with the other representatives of the warring nations. Our Colonel Christesko is today already in Nish and will be followed the day after tomorrow by General Coandă; they are our representatives for these measures." Maiorescu.

⁹ Telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs: Athens 11-7-13 to His Majesty the King, General Headquarters. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1623.

¹⁰ Telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs: Athens 12-7-13 to His Majesty the King, General Headquarters. AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1623.

¹¹ Gardikas, *Greece...*, o.c., p. 236-238.

¹² More about *vlach*, see some of the basic bibliography, in Greek: Katsougiannes M. T., *The Vlachs in the Greek Regions*, Thessalonica, 1964; Keramopoulos Antonios, *Who are the Koutsovlachs*, Athens, 1939; Aravantinos P., *A Study of the Koutsovlachs*, Athens, 1905; Krystalles C., *On the Vlachs of the Pindos*, Averoff Evangelos, *The Political Aspect of the Koutsovlach Issue*, Athens, 1948.

¹³ In Bucharest, 23 July (5 August) 1913. T. Maiorescu to E. Venizelos: As was agreed during the negotiations, I have the honour of asking Your Excellency to respond to my announcement and to verify that: Greece agrees to grant autonomy to the Koutsovlach School and Church that are situated in lands that will revert to Greece in the future and to permit the establishment of an Episcopate for the Koutsovlachs, as Romania will cede the prescribed present and future religious and educational institutions under the supervision

of the Hellenic Government. As President of the Ministerial Council, please be so kind as to accept my esteemed regards.

E. Venizelos to T. Maiorescu: *In response to the note delivered to me today from Your Excellency, I have the honour of confirming to Your Excellency that: Greece agrees to grant autonomy to the Koutsovlach School and Church that are situated in lands that will revert to Greece in the future and to permit the establishment of an Episcopate for the Koutsovlachs, as Romania will cede the pacifistic present and future religious and educational institutions under the supervision of the Hellenic Government. As President of the Ministerial Council, please be so kind as to accept my esteemed regards.* AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1926.

¹⁴ Gardikas, *Greece...*, o.c., p. 239.

¹⁵ HAGS / AHD, *The Greek Army in the Balkan Wars 1912-1913, Military Operations against the Bulgarians*, vol. III, (in Greek), Athens 1992, p. 293-297.

¹⁶ AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1923, 1927.

¹⁷ AHD Archive, F. 1699b/A/1928a.

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Hellenic Army General Staff, Army History Directorate, Archive of the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

• Hellenic Army General Staff / Army History Directorate, *The Greek Army in the Balkan Wars 1912-1913, Military Operations against the Bulgarians*, vol. III, (in Greek), Athens, 1992.

• Hellenic Army General Staff / Army History Directorate, *A Concise History of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913*, Athens, 1998.

• Gardikas - Katsiadakis Helen, *Greece and the Balkan Imbroglia, Greek Foreign Policy, 1911-1913*, Athens, 1995.

THE 534 HELLENIC AIR SQUADRON IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA (1919)

KAISAROU-PANTAZOPOULOU TRIANTAFYLLIA
Historian of the Hellenic Air Force History Museum
Member of the Hellenic Commission on Military History

The 534 Reconnaissance and Light Bombing Squadron was founded in early October 1918. The Squadron was based in the Lebet airfield, NW of the city of Thessaloniki and it was placed under the Eastern French Air Command. Thus, the Squadron's first commander was French.¹

The flying staffs of the Squadron were exclusively Greek, while the technical staff included French nationals as well. Specifically, the Greek force consisted of twelve officers and two Non-Commissioned aviators, a reserve medical second lieutenant and approximately two hundred Non-Commissioned officers and soldiers having technical and other skills.²

The new Squadron was formed to operate in the Eastern Thrace front. In the end, it didn't take part in those operations due to Turkey's armistice.

At that time, the allies decided the Russian campaign, aiming to aid the Tsar's troops in suppressing the Bolsheviks Revolution. The Allied

Expeditionary Force was composed of: the A~ Hellenic Army Corps, a French Division, units of the French and British Fleet, two Squadrons of the French Air Force including a "Base" and the 534 Hellenic Air Squadron.³

In early March 1919, the 534 Air Squadron, under the command of the French Captain Rigon and the Lieutenant Petro Oikonomako as commander of the Greek staff was boarded on a Greek cargo ship in the Thessaloniki port. The Squadron had only been supplied with the stuff for settling and accommodating itself in an air base. Aeroplanes and in general, aviation material and automobiles would be provided to the Squadron from the French "Pool" in Odessa.

One day after its departure, the Air Squadron reached Constantinople. Approximately four days later, the Squadron disembarked in the Odessa port from the steamship "Engineer Artandof" and settled in the Odessa airport, in the city outskirts (*see Back Cover*).

▪ **The Spad XIII was one of the most successful fighter planes of WWI. The 531 Fighter Squadron of the Hellenic Army Flying Corps possessed eight of these planes and used them in operations during WWI and in the Asia Minor Campaign**





■ **Sergeant Ioannis Meletopoulos is shown on the left front side of a reconnaissance Dorand AR-1 biplane that was extensively used by the HAFC Squadrons as a trainer**
(The picture is from the archives of the Hellenic Air Force History Museum)

The 534 Squadron stayed in the Odessa airport for a week, waiting for the delivery of aeroplanes from the French “Pool”. In the meantime however, the Bolsheviks took over and the Allied Force started to retreat towards Romania.⁴

On the eve of its departure, the Greek Air Squadron was ordered by the French to pick up a Spad XIII aircraft, due to its pilot’s illness and to transport that plane “by flight” to Bessarabia, where the entire Allied Expeditionary Force was soon expected to retreat.

The task was assigned to Sergeant Ioannis Meletopoulos, a competent aviator of fighter planes. However, there was no map of the region in the airport and despite the personnel’s efforts, it was not possible to find even a plain school map of the region⁵.

It should also be noted, that the plane should be regarded as having no chance to complete its journey. The plane’s flying range was so limited, that it was almost certain to run out of fuel. Moreover, there was no time to transport the plane by ground.

Despite the adversities, Sergeant Meletopoulos took off on March 24, 1919, the day that the allied troops left Odessa, heading towards the Romanian city of Brăila. His only aid in that enterprise were the advice of peers and the directions by the French officers of the Squadron in an area sketch that was roughly drawn from memory.

After several hours of flight, he attempted to land the plane in the border between Bessarabia and Russia, so as to be supplied with fuel. At the time of the landing, he was attacked by Russian peasants that most likely were revolutionaries. He was forced to take off again in the midst of a snowstorm and to fly speculating on the course and constantly looking for the Brăila airport.

In that aimless wandering, the Sergeant aviator run out of fuel and he was forced to land the plane in Romanian territory, specifically close to the region Sulina. The plane suffered several damages and the aviator appealed to the allied authorities, as to have the aircraft repaired and transported to the Brăila airport. Subsequently, Meletopoulos went to Galatsi Romania, where his Squadron arrived as well a few days later.⁶

As it has already been mentioned, the 534 Squadron had been given a single aircraft. After the aircraft’s departure, the 534 Squadron moved with great hardship to the Odessa port. The squadron had seen no war action during its 20-day stay in Odessa. It boarded on the German transoceanic vessel “Korkovado”⁷, with final destination the Constantinople port, by the way of Sulina, where the French Air units disembarked. The Russian expedition of the 534 Squadron lasted approximately 27 days.

During the 534’s stay in Constantinople, the two French officers of the Squadron were

transferred to a French unit and the command of the 534 Squadron was assigned to the Lieutenant Petros Oikonomakos by order of the “Middle East” and the “Danube” Air Commands. The Squadron was ordered to abandon its material and to depart by steamship for Galatsi, Romania⁸.

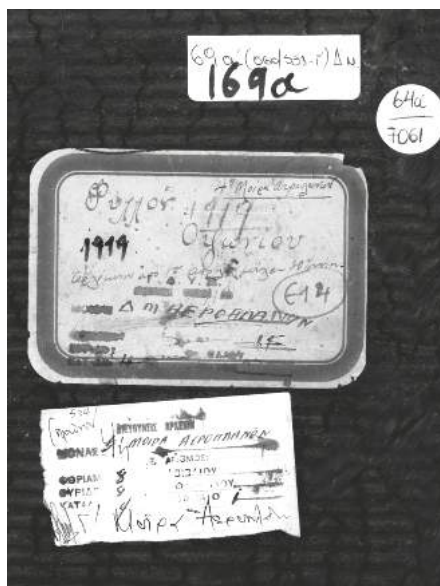
There, the staff of the 534 Squadron was accommodated in the roughly arranged stables of a Romanian cavalry unit’s camp, near the airport. The squadron was supplied with money and goods for its everyday operational needs from the Galatsi base. For the transfer and the transportation of the Squadron’s officers, a personnel automobile had been disposed (to the Squadron).

Under these circumstances, the activities of the 534 Squadron were reduced to the submission of the regular reports to the Air Command and the watch of the test-flights of the planes that were delivered from France at a very slow pace. Also the lower rank staff went through everyday

training and the attendance of schools that, among other things served to reinforce the discipline.⁹

Near the end of April 1919, the French Air Force suffered a fatal accident. In the course of a test-flight, a fighter plane crashed, due to the engine fault. The plane’s pilot was killed in the crash. That was a great casualty for the “Danube Air Force”. After the religious ceremony in the Galatsi Catholic Church, the Commander of the 534 Squadron, Lieutenant P. Oikonomakos decorated the dead pilot with the Hellenic “War Cross”. Following a petition by P. Oikonomakos,¹⁰ the “War Cross” was awarded by the Army Corps I that was stationing in the city under the command of the Lieutenant General Nider.

That act was appreciated by the French officers and served to improve the relations between Greek and French officers that had been disaffected after the appointment of the Lieutenant P. Oikonomakos as the sole commander of the 534 Squadron.



Επίμαχο	Επίμαχο	Επίμαχο	Επίμαχο	Επίμαχο
10/11/19	11/11/19	12/11/19	13/11/19	14/11/19
15/11/19	16/11/19	17/11/19	18/11/19	19/11/19
20/11/19	21/11/19	22/11/19	23/11/19	24/11/19
25/11/19	26/11/19	27/11/19	28/11/19	29/11/19
30/11/19	31/11/19			

■ The Cover page (left) and the first pages of the 534 Squadron’s «Ὀὔεἰί ἰῶῦἰἰῶ», or Payroll Book. The foreground page is signed by the 534 Squadron’s commander Lieutenant Petros Oikonomakos. The background pages show the entries in the 534 Squadron’s Payroll Book recording the monthly salary («xῆciáóééÿð Ἄðἰἰ-ÿð») and the ‘bread allowance’ of each member of the 534 Squadron during its stay in Galați (The document is from the archives of the HAFHM)

The Greek commander of the Squadron, taking advantage of the fact, he requested and received by the Army Corps I four more “War Crosses”, that he then awarded to French officers with first among them the commander of the Air force “Base”. Since then and until day the 534 Squadron was ordered to move to Asia Minor, where the Greek troops were advancing, the delivery of vehicles (motorcars and trucks) and aeroplane spare parts, engines and automobiles was carried out at a much faster pace.

At the end of July 1919, the 534 Squadron departed for Smyrna. However, before disembarking, a new mandate was recalling the Squadron to Thessaloniki, as to operate in the Thrace front. The reasoning was that the 534 Squadron had no planes and the aviators needed further training since they had no flights for a five-month period.¹¹

The Squadron soon departed from Thessaloniki to Drama, except from the flying staff that reached Drama three days later along with the aeroplanes that they received from the Air Force “Base”. Thus the 534 Squadron stopped from being the “534

Squadron with no planes”, since it now possessed aeroplanes and it was renamed as the “C” Squadron, abolishing the allied numerical prefix (534).¹²

In the mid January 1920, the “C” Squadron departed again for Smyrna by steamship from the Thessaloniki port; and in early February, the flying staff with its planes departed for the Kazamir airport, SE of Smyrna.

The spare parts that the 534 Squadron had been supplied in Romania served not only the operational needs of the “C” Squadron. A new Air Force “Base” was formed in Asia Minor that technically supported the three Squadrons (“B”, “C” and “D”) throughout the Asia Minor campaign.¹³

Since its planes arrived at the Kazamir airport, the “C” Squadron retaining its ground personnel and being reinforced with some new aviator officers and Non-Commissioned officers started its war action in Asia Minor. According to the progress of operations, the “C” Squadron continued on its war operations from other airfields and bases as well until August 1922, when it departed from Asia Minor to be based in the river Evros front.¹⁴

¹ The 534 was the fourth in sequence Squadron of the Hellenic Army Flying Corps (HAFC). The Squadrons 531, 532 and 533 had already been formed during the World War I and those had been operating under the French Air Command, *Hellenic Wings: An Illustrated History of the H.A.F and its precursors*, v. 1 1908-1944, published by the Hellenic Air Force History Museum, pp. 38, 42.

² P. Oikonomakos, *Limited Action. The 534 Squadron with no Planes in Russia*, p. 7.

³ *Ibid*, p. 8.

⁴ *History of the Hellenic Air Force*, Volume II, published by the Hellenic Air Force History Museum, 1998, second edition, p. 9.

⁵ P. Oikonomakos, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

⁶ *History of the Hellenic Air Force*, Volume II, *ed.cit.*, p.10.

⁷ The steamship “Korkovado” had been seized by the allies soon after the declaration of the war, *History of the Hellenic Air Force (1908-1935)*, published by the Ministry of the Air Force, E. Brontakis, p. 169.

⁸ P. Oikonomakos, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 45. The author remarks that in general, the Hellenic Army was very well regarded by the Romanian citizens of Galatsi. Besides, the commander of the Romanian Air Force of the region was of Greek origin, like several other officers of the Romanian Army and Navy who spoke fluently the Greek language, pp. 46 – 48.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 50.

¹¹ That reasoning is refuted by the Squadron’s commander (the Lieutenant P. Oikonomakos)... because by the time the Squadron settled in the Smyrna air base, that is in a few days time, the Squadron’s aviators would have been able to return to Smyrna with their planes”, P. Oikonomakos, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

¹² Register No. 94088/12-12-1919/General Staff, *History of the Hellenic Air Force*, Volume II, *ed.cit.*, p. 22.

¹³ P. Oikonomakos, *The Hellenic Air Force until 1941*, Athens 1970, p. 65.

¹⁴ P. Oikonomakos, *Limited Action. The 534 Squadron with no planes in Russia*, p. 61.

ROMANIA, GREECE AND THE ISSUES IN THE BLACK SEA (1919-1939)

Dr. PETRE OTU

President of the Romanian Commission of Military History

During the interwar period, the relations between Romania and Greece were among the finest, both countries becoming part of the same alliance – the Balkan Pact, whose treaty was signed in Athens by the foreign ministers of Romania, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia on February 9, 1934. The intense bilateral collaboration during the interwar period was facilitated by the geographic location, both states sharing the same Balkan space, by the historical traditions and by the community of interests between the two states and the two peoples.

In this framework, the Black Sea represented a point of convergence, this area being strongly connected to Eastern Mediterranean, a maritime area of high interest for Greece. History even showed the existence of several geopolitical constants between the two stretches of water. The hegemonic power in the Black Sea has usually tried to assert its control over the Eastern Mediterranean, thus dominating the entire area and gaining access to the world ocean. The most eloquent example is the Russian Empire in the first half of the XIXth century, which strongly pursued to extend its control beyond Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits. The Treaties of Hünkâr İskelesi (1833) and of London (1841) mark the climax of the Russian policy of controlling the Black Sea and, concomitantly, the Eastern Mediterranean. Reversely, the great powers which appeared in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East extended their domination in the Black Sea area, especially on its western and northern shores. This is how the Achaemenid Empire, the Greek poleis, the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman empires have all acted in various historical periods.¹

The First World War brought important changes in the Black Sea and Mediterranean areas through the disappearance of two major competitors – the Russian and the Ottoman empires. The Russian

empire was the first to disappear, as a consequence of the revolution from February-March 1917, at the end of which the czar abdicated and, in November same year, the Bolsheviks seized power at Petrograd. It is worth mentioning that Soviet Russia only became a littoral state at the Black Sea later on, in 1921-1922, after the end of the civil war and the annexation of Ukraine and Georgia.

The disappearance of the Ottoman Empire was a similarly complicated process, which put Greece in the position of an important actor in this geographic area. Between 1921 and 1922, the Greco-Turkish War took place, which ended with the victory of the forces led by Mustafa Kemal and with the armistice of Mudanya signed on October 11, 1922.²

During this conflict, the Romanian government had a policy of non-interference, as long as it took place outside Europe. Simultaneously, the Romanian authorities, through Nicolae Titulescu, rejected the suggestions made by Great Britain and Greece, in September 1922, to send military forces in the Straits region. At the same time, the Romanian government shaped its position concerning this issue, which basically had two major goals – ensuring the free circulation on the Straits and the demilitarization of the Black Sea through naval disarmament. It was the historical experience from the recently ended First World War that determined Romania to adopt such a stance. The Ottoman Empire, once it entered the war along Central Powers, blocked the Straits. This action, together with the occupying of the entire Serb territory by the troops of the same coalition (1915), isolated Romania from its western partners. The only supplying line was from Russia, a very long and unsafe route.

The end of the Greco-Turkish war made the Treaty of Sèvres inoperable and called for the convocation of an international conference in order



▪ **Eleftherios Venizelos**

to solve the complicated issues from the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The Entente powers decided that the conference will take place in the Swiss city of Lausanne.

The Conference of Lausanne took place between November 20, 1922, and July 24, 1923, with the participation of 12 states, among which Romania and Greece. The Romanian delegation, led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I.G. Duca, included Constantin Diamandy, Constantin Coșescu and Colonel Toma Dumitrescu. The Greek delegation was led by Eleftherios Venizelos and included Demetrios Caclamanos, Nicoláos Plastiras and Ioánnis Politis.³ The Romanian delegation did everything it could so that the free circulation in the Straits and the demilitarization of the Black Sea to become norm and to be accepted as international law. This was not easy, taking into consideration the diverging opinions among the great powers themselves and among them and the smaller countries.

In practice, all the discussions during the reunion evolved around two fundamental theses – the British one, which satisfied the Romanian demands, and the Soviet one – enjoying Turkish support –, which demanded the closing of the Straits. The British thesis, skillfully supported by Lord Curzon, chief of the delegation and head of the special Commission for territorial affairs, pursued the

demilitarization and the free circulation in the Straits, so that the access of non-littoral states would not be restricted. The Soviet position pursued the maintaining of the hegemony in the Black Sea, hidden under Turkish neutrality, thus Moscow becoming a defender of Turkey's rights. Therefore, the situation reached a point that seemed unconceivable before the start of the First World War, given the two century of old rivalry for hegemony in the Black Sea between the two powers.

Turkey eventually accepted the British proposals, which also enjoyed the support of the former Allies. Therefore, the British position triumphed because of the changes in Turkey's position, which, with some reservations, agreed to the solutions offered by the Allies. If the Turkish delegation proved itself open to concessions in what concerned the Straits, in all the other issues it was inflexible, making the negotiations more difficult. On February 4, 1923, the proceedings of the Conference were halted; they resumed on April 23, 1923, and continued until July 24 same year, when the peace treaty was signed.

During the talks, the Romanian and Greek delegations had frequent consultations on various issues, including on those related to the consequences of the recently ended Greco-Turkish war. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, I.G. Duca, told Venizelos that "we are very interested that Greece be consolidated and powerful and I assured him of our support".⁴ However, the situation in which both countries found themselves at the conference was not easy. Romania had a vital interest in the status of the Straits and, consequently, was willing to treat Turkey leniently, as its help was essential in reaching the proposed goals. This is the reason why the support given to Greece by the Romanian diplomats could not be complete and unconditional. On the other hand, the military defeat and the internal unrest created an unfavorable environment for Greece at the talks in Lausanne, being therefore forced to moderate its claims and to seek to minimize the losses as much as possible.⁵ However, in what the Straits were concerned, the Greek delegation supported the Allies' (British) point of view and, implicitly, the Romanian position, which contributed to the finalizing of the talks.

The peace treaty of Lausanne, signed on July 24, 1923, contained important provisions for stabilizing the situation in the Balkans and in the Near and Middle East. The independence of the new

Turkish state was therefore recognized, while its borders in Europe were established according to the situation from 1913, like they were after the end of the Second Balkan War. The public debt of the former Ottoman Empire was divided among the states which took over territories, the regime of capitulations and the financial control over the Turkish state were abolished and a population exchange took place between Greece and Turkey.

The free circulation in the Straits of all ships and aircraft (civilian and military) was proclaimed, in accordance to several cases – in peacetime, in wartime, with Turkey as a belligerent power, with Turkey neutral, etc. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits were demilitarized on a length of 15 to 20 km, with the exception of Constantinople (Istanbul), which could keep a garrison of 15 000 soldiers. The Commission of the Straits was established, which was presided by the representative of Turkey and having one delegate from each of the littoral states. The treaty transformed the Black Sea in a free and open sea to navigation for all countries, regardless whether the ships belonged to the littoral or non-littoral states or whether they were trade ships or war ships.⁶

The Conference of Lausanne, in spite of all the tensions, played an important role in stabilizing the relations among the states from South-Eastern Europe and in diminishing the strong contradictions that plagued this geographic area for a long time. The agreement was the first act which revised the system built on the Paris Peace Conference, abolishing the Treaty of Sèvres. At the same time, it officially confirmed the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire, the great power that had dominated the region for five centuries.

The positive collaboration between the Romanian and Greek delegations during the Conference of Lausanne contributed to the development of bilateral relations, which became closer. For instance, on July 1925, the Romanian government agreed to the proposal of the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Constantin Rentis, concerning the signing of some treaties of arbitration by Greece, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia since 1929), as a first step towards the signing of a security pact or even the constituting of an alliance of the three countries. The talks that followed did not lead to the materialization of the project, but did soothe the tensions in the Balkans.

The initiative of the Turkish and Greek governments concerning the setting up of a Balkan Pact illustrates this new atmosphere. The Romanian government considered that several conditions must be met in order to make this formula successful: things should not be rushed; no mentioning of any state; no outside hegemony in the Balkans; all the Balkan states should take part. The Balkan Pact project was eventually abandoned because of the opposition of France, which favored a formula similar to the Little Entente, the alliance created in 1920-1921 by Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.⁷

An important moment in the evolution of bilateral relations was the signing, in March 12, 1928 in Geneva, of the Pact of nonaggression and arbitration. Through this document, the parties committed themselves not to attack each other, not to invade their territories and not to declare war against each other. The use of force was allowed only in the cases of self-defense stipulated in the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Covenant also provisioned methods of solving the disputes in the spirit of the norms established by the forum in Geneva. The exchange of the instruments of ratification took place on July 5, 1929.

In the same year, during the reunion of the International Labor Organization in Athens, the former Greek prime-minister, Alexandros Papanastasiou, proposed the convocation of an informal conference of the Balkan states. The latter gave their consent, thus laying the grounds of a period of political effervescence in the region, the first such reunion taking place in Athens on October 5-12, 1930. The statute of the conference stipulated that the fundamental goal of the reunion was the rapprochement among the Balkan states from all points of view. Three such reunions followed – Istanbul (October 1931), Bucharest (October 1932) and Thessaloniki (November 1933), while the fifth, initially planned to take place in Belgrade and later moved to Istanbul, never took place. As they were nongovernmental bodies, they could not have possibly solved the numerous problems in the region, some of them decades or centuries old, but the topics of discussions and the proposed solutions did contribute to a significant rapprochement of the countries from this geographic area.

Regarding naval collaboration, we must mention another revealing fact. At the end of August

1933, ample manifestations took place in Greece commemorating the great naval victories in the War of Independence. The ship "Constanța" was invited to take part to these manifestations, alongside a British cruiser. During the three days of the event, there took place boat races, swimming competitions and other sailor games. A dinner was offered in the honor of the foreign fleets. The Greek Minister of Navy, Hadjikyriakos, visited the Romanian ship, being saluted by its commandant, cmdr. Al. Dumitrescu. The Minister of Navy declared, as the Romanian representative in Athens reported, that he is happy to see the representatives of the Romanian fleet attending the Greek navy manifestations, thus illustrating the friendship between the two countries, "which are united by everything and divided by nothing".⁸

Coming back to the general situation, we notice that in the autumn of 1933 the political contacts intensified, including those at the highest level, the main topic of discussions being the setting up of the Balkan Pact. This issue was also discussed during the reunion of the Little Entente in Zagreb (January 22-23, 1934), where the final attempt to draw Bulgaria was decided, on the occasion of the visit in Romania of Czar Boris (January 25-28, 1934). This final attempt, however, had no results.

On February 9, 1934, the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania and Turkey signed in Athens the Balkan Pact. The essence of the pact was contained in the first two articles: "*Romania, Turkey, Yugoslavia and Greece mutually guarantee the security of all their borders in the Balkans*" (art. 1). "*The High Contracting Parties commit themselves to focus on the measures of dealing with certain situations that could affect their interests, as they are defined by the present agreement. They commit themselves not to undertake any political action towards any other non-signatory Balkan country of the present agreement, without prior mutual notice, and not to take any political obligation towards any other Balkan country without the consent of the other contracting parties*" (art. 2). The agreement was accompanied by an "annexed protocol", which referred, among others, to: the non-aggressive and open nature of the alliance; the possibility of enforcing the pact even if the aggressor was from outside Balkans; the signing of the conventions "*with similar goals to the ones pursued by the Balkan Pact*"

(military conventions); the maintaining of the territorial statu-quo, etc. Another important feature was the reservation formulated by Turkey and recorded in the secret annex of the Pact, in which it in no way admitted to be considered as committing itself to take part in actions directed against the Soviet Union.⁹

The alliance had three periods in its development: during the first, until mid 1936, each member defined its positions; the second, until the end of 1938, was the phase of actual military collaboration; the third, during 1938-1940, was marked by the weakening of the solidarity and the reduction in the military cooperation.

A lot of energy was put in the first phase and the negotiations proved difficult as a consequence of the different geopolitical situation of the various signatory states. Thus, the common denominator had to be found for states with a Mediterranean calling (Turkey or Greece) and for others with a central-continental inclination (Romania). It was also necessary to eliminate or at least to dampen the major differences resulted from prior political agreements. We mentioned the case of Turkey. Greece found itself in a similar situation, the authorities in Athens stating that, by fulfilling its commitments from the Pact, they cannot go to war against one of the great powers under any circumstance.

The Black Sea issue was the main point of interest of Turkey and Romania, both littoral states, Greece paying more attention to the situation in the Mediterranean Sea, where it had to face Italy's hegemonic tendencies. That is why the tripartite military convention (Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey) was first finalized.

During the tripartite talks, certain differences in the opinions surfaced out concerning the number of forces allocated to the Balkan theater of war and the area of concentration of the large Romanian units for the action against Bulgaria. Therefore, Turkey, starting from its superior potential of mobilization and from the existence of a single enemy on a frontier of about 100 km, was demanding the concentration of an army of 30 divisions, each ally participating with an equal number of troops. Ankara's option was determined by the fear of an Italian action in the Eastern Mediterranean, an area where most troops would have been deployed. Romania, having in mind its strategic situation – all its borders being quasi-concentri-

cally threatened – rejected the proposal of the Turkish General Staff, declaring that Turkey should have the main share in an action directed against a Balkan enemy.

The Turkish General Staff assessed the situation differently, offering, in one of the solutions still under development, “*the maximum number of available forces*”. There existed, therefore, a major difference between the Romanian point of view (shared also by Belgrade) and the Turkish one. The Romanian view saw the Balkan Pact as the natural extension of the alliance system in Central Europe, offering Little Entente the safety of the back of the disposition. For Ankara, Little Entente was a factor susceptible of taking over the ensuring of the security in the Balkans, while its forces could have been deployed, for example, in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Political aspects also added to these different strategic views. The international events from the spring of 1936, such as the remilitarization of Rhineland, postponed the signing of the tripartite military convention. The firm stance of Nicolae Titulescu in what concerned both alliances (Little Entente and the Balkan Pact), given that not even France had reacted to an act of force threatening its territory, led to the apprehension of the decision makers from the other Balkan capitals of being committed, without their consent, to an extra-Balkans or extra-Mediterranean conflict.

The new reunion of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Pact (Belgrade, May 4-6, 1936) did not succeed to break the deadlock of the tripartite military convention. But it was important because Greece insisted to clarify its position concerning the military convention, a very important fact given its reservation from May 1934. Formally, the Greek prime-minister Ioannis Metaxas gave assurances that “*Greece is strongly determined to follow the politics of the Balkan Pact in the most sincere spirit of trust and in constant collaboration with its Balkan allies*”. Moreover: “*The royal government considers the Balkan Pact to be an essential foundation of the Greek foreign policy*”. From a military point of view, in the eventuality of Italy taking part in a Balkan conflict against the Balkan Pact, Greece would have not considered itself automatically bound to an immediate response. But, if the Balkan Pact would fight on the French and British side in a conflict, Greece was willing to have consultations with both powers and

with its Balkan allies in order to determine the way it can participate. On this basis, it was decided to begin the talks for the elaboration of the quadripartite military convention. From a diplomatic point of view, it can be said that the reunion in Belgrade recorded a change in the Greek-Italian relations, with beneficial effects on the solidity of the Balkan Pact. From a military point of view, however, which was essential for such an alliance, the situation did not differ, the written declaration of Ioannis Metaxas moving Greece only a little from where it stood in May 1934.

Although during the summer of 1936 many important events took place in the Balkans, such as, for instance, the Montreux Conference (June 22-July 22), which adopted a new statute of the Straits of the Black Sea, the establishment of the authoritarian regime in Greece (August 4) and the dismissal of Nicolae Titulescu as the minister of Foreign Affairs (August 29), the Balkan states succeeded to harmonize their different views and to sign the tripartite military convention (between Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia) on November 6 and the quadripartite convention on November 10.

The first document had 21 articles and laid down the conditions of the military cooperation among the three allied states (Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey) against an aggressor in the Balkans, under the conditions of not being engaged in any front, this being the least probable case. On



▪ Nicolae Titulescu

the grounds of the principle of equal rights, proposed by Turkey, the intervention forces were fixed to 120 infantry battalions, 150 artillery batteries, 24 squadrons and 100 planes for each party. The necessity of establishing a high command came to light, but this issue was transferred to the political factors.

Turkey opposed mentioning the provision concerning the transit of military materials in wartime as being contrary to the Montreux Convention, but Ankara made a concession to Romania, the most interested state in this issue, the access being guaranteed through a letter given by the Turkish government.

In the second hypothesis, the one of "*restricted liberties*", concerning the engaging in other front of one of the contracting parties in the context of a regional conflict, the formulation was evasive, the action being supposed to be supported at "available maximum". This expressed Turkey's fear of being engaged outside the Balkan area.

This tripartite military agreement was similar to those signed in the framework of the Little Entente at the beginning of its activity, in 1920s. It was a framework convention, under which the projects of the operations were to be finalized. This was the task of the chiefs of General Staffs who met at annual conferences.

The quadripartite military convention was also a framework convention, which established the principles of military collaboration in case of a regional conflict with the separate participation or in cooperation with Bulgaria, Albania and Hungary. The forces destined in such case for Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey consisted in 120 infantry battalions, 120 artillery batteries, 24 squadrons and 100 planes for each of the three countries and 75 battalions, 90 artillery batteries, 16 squadrons and 65 planes for Greece. The quadripartite convention was discussed again at the session of the Permanent Council of the alliance of Athens (February 15-18, 1937), where, following difficult negotiations, the reservations concerning this document formulated by Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania were eventually abandoned. The major objections on the nature of the document previously expressed by Greece and Turkey remained in their place.

On February 11 and, respectively, on April 10, 1937, the tripartite and quadripartite conventions were ratified by the signatory countries. But, mean-

while, Yugoslavia distanced itself from the two alliances, signing separate agreements with Bulgaria and Italy. The direct consequence was the reduction of the military activity, although the chiefs of general staffs continued to meet annually.

In the dramatic summer of 1938, the Balkan Pact tried to adapt itself to the new realities. The expression of these new orientations was the Thessaloniki agreement (July 31, 1938) with Bulgaria, where the putting into practice of the military, naval and air clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly was given up.

The Balkan Pact survived the Czechoslovak crisis, but the disappearance of the Little Entente created, from a strategic point of view, a difficult situation for Romania and Yugoslavia by leaving uncovered the northern and western borders. The Romanian General Staff, aware of these implications, considered that "*the Balkan Pact can endure the influence that Germany and Italy will exert over some of the component members*".¹⁰

In order to remedy this shortcoming, the Romanian and Yugoslav General Staffs held talks in 1938 and 1939 in order to reach a new bilateral military agreement. The chance of success of this attempt was ruined by the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact (August 23, 1939), which placed the entire area from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea under the condominium of the two totalitarian great powers – Germany and the Soviet Union.

It is worth mentioning that the Balkans remained outside this agreement between Moscow and Berlin, something that allowed the Balkan Pact to survive until the spring of 1940. The last session of the Permanent Council of the alliance took place in Belgrade (February 2-4, 1940). At the request of Greece, the four ministers of foreign affairs decided to take into account the studying of some hypotheses of defense in case of an attack from outside the Balkans, but things did not move forward. Despite the displayed optimism – the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Grigore Gafencu, was a good example – the Balkan Pact was a dying alliance, as it could not cope with the pressures coming from outside its region of competence.

It is also worth mentioning that the Balkans represented one of the subjects which contributed to the deterioration of the friendly German relations with the Soviet Union. During the visit to Berlin in the autumn of 1940 of Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Hitler turned down Stalin's offer to reach a new agreement to divide the Balkans, something that precipitated the decisions taken in Berlin. In the spring of 1941, Yugoslavia and Greece were occupied by Germany, which imposed its control over South-Eastern Europe. Both Romania, which had also been mutilated in the summer of 1940, and Bulgaria had been previously included in the German sphere of dominance.

The Montreux Conference, where the decisions taken in Lausanne were discussed again, represented another moment when the common interest of Romania and Greece concerning the issues in the Black Sea came to light. Having in background the important changes that took place in the international arena during the first half of the fourth decade, Turkey strongly demanded the revision of the treaty of 1923, which, in its opinion, was harming its sovereignty. On April 10, 1936, the Turkish government sent a letter to the signatories of the Treaty of Lausanne and also to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, in which it demanded the revision of the status of the Straits. All the contracting parties accepted Ankara's request and the place for the new conference was chosen again in Switzerland, this time at Montreux. The talks took place between June 20 and July 20, 1936. The Romanian delegation was led by Nicolae Titulescu and the Greek delegation by Nicolas Politis, who was elected vice-president of the Conference, the president being W. Bruce, Australia's representative, the only British dominion that attended at the Montreux Conference.

Just like in Lausanne, there were two points view – one expressed by Turkey, the other by Britain. Basically, Turkey wanted to regain the control over the Straits, something that met the grievances of the Soviet Union. The British project envisioned the maintaining of the regime established in 1923. After hard negotiations, the Turkish point of view prevailed, the right of Turkey to rearm the zones demilitarized by the Treaty of Lausanne being recognized. The free circulation principle was maintained for trade ships, but was severely restricted for war ships, especially if Turkey remained neutral.

Romania supported the Turkish point of view and opposed the British project. This was a significant change of stance compared to what had happened in Lausanne, when Bucharest and London were on the same wavelength. In the opening ses-

sion, Nicolae Titulescu stated that Turkey's request to revision the status of the Straits by legal means complied with the international law and, consequently, did not contravene to the spirit and letter of the peace treaties. The Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated: "*I will say that the Straits are the heart of Turkey, but they are also the lungs of Romania. And when a region is, by its very geographic location, the heart of one nation and the lungs of the other, the most elementary piece of wisdom demands that the two nations unite*".¹¹ In another intervention, Titulescu declared that the main reason why Romania accepted Ankara's standpoint was "*our unlimited trust in Turkey's loyalty*".¹²

Titulescu's stance can be explained by several causes. The acceptance of the Turkish point of view contributed to the maintaining of the unity of action of the Balkan Pact, which was subjected, at that time, to strong pressures from inside and especially from outside. At the same time, Titulescu's position also met the interests of France, who had signed a treaty of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union. As the Soviet help for France could have only come by sea, the Romanian acceptance satisfied both powers – France and the Soviet Union.

At the same time, Nicolae Titulescu had signed with the Soviets, also in Montreux (on July 21, 1936), a protocol which laid the foundations of a future treaty of mutual assistance between Romania and the Soviet Union. The support given to the Turkish position, which met Moscow's interests, could only prepare the way to the signing of the treaty of mutual assistance between the two countries.¹³

Titulescu's position in Montreux generated mixed reactions among the Romanian political class, a number of leaders – Gheorghe I. Brătianu, Octavian Goga, Mihail Manoilescu and others – considering that Romania's security interests were affected by the blocking of the Straits during wartime. Nicolae Titulescu's attitude in Montreux was actually one of the reasons for which he was dismissed from the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs on August 29, 1936.

In what concerns Greece, its position took into account its interests at the Black Sea, which were significantly smaller than Romania's. The Greek diplomacy agreed to Turkey's request because the Greek commercial navigation to the ports from this region, although very active in the Straits,

was not harmed by the new regime. Greece unsuccessfully tried, yet without putting too much effort, to obtain in exchange the fortification of the Greek islands that had been disarmed following the Lausanne convention, such as Lemnos, Chios, Mytilene, as a safety measure at the entrance in the Straits.¹⁴

During the interwar period, closed relations of cooperation in numerous fields developed between Romania and Greece, both of whom were, in a certain sense, a model for the entire region. These relations materialized themselves in several initiatives, the most important being the Balkan Pact, a defensive regional alliance whose goal was to preserve the political and territorial statu-quo. As for the issues in the Black Sea, they represented a point of convergence in the Greco-Romanian relations, both countries situating themselves on the same position at Lausanne and Montreux. It must be added that the significance of the Black Sea was different at Bucharest and Athens, Romania being a Black Sea country and Greece a Mediterranean country. Consequently, the two diplomacies promoted mainly their interests in these maritime areas. But, when these interests overlapped, Romania and Greece succeeded to find ways of communication which amplified the bilateral cooperation.

¹ For the geopolitical aspects in the Black Sea, see the Central National Archives of History, fund Brătianu family, file no. 506. (The course on the Black Sea after the Ottoman conquest taught by Gheorghe I. Brătianu at the University of Bucharest, 1941-1942); Georgios Prevalakis, *Balcanii. Cultură și geopolitică*, foreword by the author in the Romanian edition, translation, notes and afterword by Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, Publishing House Corint, Bucharest, 2001; Charles King, *Marea Neagră. O istorie*, translation by Dorin Branea and Cristina Chevereșan, Publishing House Brumar, 2005.

² For the events in the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor in the period 1919-1922, see, among others, Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Eastern Question in Greece and Turkey*, second edition, Howartig Fertig, New York, 1970; Misha Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999. Nationalism, War and Great Powers*, Granata Books, London, 1999, p. 378-396; Georges Corm, *Europa și*

Orientul. De la balcanizare la libanizare. Istoria unei modernități neîmplinite, Romanian translation by Ileana Rotund, foreword by Claude Karnoouh, Publishing House Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 105-111; Barbara Jelavich, *Istoria Balcanilor. Secolul al XX-lea*, translation by Mihai Eugen Avădanei, afterword by Ion Ciupercă, Institutul European, vol. 2, Iași, 2000, p. 120-126, etc.

³ Among the papers on the Conference of Lausanne, there must be mentioned: Ali Fuad, *La question de Détroits. Ses origines, son évolution, sa solution à la Conférence de Lausanne*, Paris, 1928; Nicolae Dașcovici, *Marea Neagră sau regimul Strămtorilor*, Iași, 1937; Paul Gogeanu, *Strămtorile Mării Negre de-a lungul istoriei*, Bucharest, 1966; Nicolae Titulescu, *Documente diplomatice*, Bucharest, 1967; Ilie Seftiuc, Iulian Cârțână, *România și problema Strămtorilor*, Publishing House Științifică, Bucharest, 1974; Gheorghe N. Căzan, *Problemele Orientului Apropiat de la războiul mondial la Conferința de pace de la Lausanne*, in *Relații internaționale în perioada interbelică*, Bucharest, 1980; Eliza Campus, *Din politica externă a României. 1913-1947*, Bucharest, 1987, etc.

⁴ I.G. Duca, *Memorii*, volume IV, *Războiul, partea a II-a (1917-1918)*, edition and index by Stelian Neagoe, Publishing House Machiavelli, Bucharest, 1994, p. 262.

⁵ Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *Formarea statelor naționale balcanice. 1804-1920*, translation by Ioan Crețiu, foreword and peer review by professor Camil Mureșan, Publishing House Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, p. 365.

⁶ Nicolae Dașcovici, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁷ Jean Baptiste Duroselle, *Istoria relațiilor internaționale*, vol. I, *1919-1939*, translation by Anca Airinei, Publishing House Științelor Sociale și Politice, Bucharest, 2006, p. 80.

⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive, fund 71/ Greece (1920-1944), volume 35, f. 16.

⁹ Among the papers on the establishment and evolution of the Balkan Pact, there must be mentioned: Cristian Popișteanu, *Antanta Balcanică. Momente și semnificații*, second edition, Bucharest, 1971; Eliza Campus, *Înțelegerea Balcanică*, Bucharest, 1972; Alexandru Oșca, Gheorghe Nicolescu, *Tratate, convenții și protocoale secrete (1934-1939)*, Publishing House Vlasie, Pitești, 1994, etc.

¹⁰ Romanian Military Archives, fund 948, file no. 493, f. 113-114.

¹¹ Nicolae Titulescu, *Discursuri*, Publishing House Științifică, Bucharest, 1967, p. 530.

¹² Idem, *Documente diplomatice...*, p. 803.

¹³ For the Soviet-Romanian relations, see *Relațiile româno-sovietice, vol. I, 1917-1934*, Publishing House Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 2004, p. 414-434.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEGAL REGIME OF THE STRAITS AND ACCESS TO THE BLACK SEA (EUXEINOS PONTOS)

Rear Admiral Dr. STYLIANOS POLITIS
Vice President of the Hellenic Commission on Military History

The access to the Black Sea (Euxeinos Pontos¹) has not been safe since Antiquity. According to the Greek myth a pair of cliffs, the Gyanean Rocks (Symplegades) were moving on their bases together randomly, crushing whatever sought to pass through the Straits. In order to cross them with Argo, Jason followed the advice of seer Phineus in order to cross them with his boat Argo. The Argonauts were given a dove and they were supposed to let it pass through the Symplegades. If the dove managed to do so, Argo could try to cross as well. Otherwise, the operation should be cancelled. Finally, the dove passed losing only its tail's feathers and thus Argo followed. After Argo's successful journey, the Rocks stopped moving and became firmly rooted in the sea.²

This strange myth resembles the formation of the legal regime of the Straits. Many tried – like in the Clashing Rocks – to prohibit the free transit of ships. The flight though of the dove, which is the peace symbol, shows that the existing legal regime secures the transit of the Straits without obstacles and establishes stability in the region. Interest on the Straits, meaning the region of Hellespont or Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus,³ possibly started at the era of the Trojan War which is not simply a myth of Homer. Then, many years later, the Persian army and that of Alexander the Great⁴ passed through this area but from opposite directions: the first in 489 BC to take over the world for imperialistic reasons and the latter in 334 BC in order to stop Persian conquests. At the time Greece showed all its grandeur! The victorious army Commander did not spread terror and destruction, but civilisation! That's why he is the only conqueror in History who was adored like a God! There is no doubt that this was the best de-

fence. Wherever he passed, he did not ruin anything but on the contrary he built model cities, majestic theatres, gyms; he opened new roads, spread Greek education, established new currency and developed trade. Plutarch⁵ in his book "*On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander the Great*", correctly stated that "*the countries that did not meet Alexander did not see the light of sun*". Arrian⁶ also notes that Alexander the Great actually set free the cities he had occupied and established liberal regimes. Therefore, the Straits became at the time the bridge over which the Greek civilisation passed to Asia.⁷

The transfer of the capital of the vast Roman Empire to the "New Rome" gave the Straits a great strategic importance. During the medieval times, they played an important role to Constantinople's defence until its submission to the Ottomans in 1453, when they devolved to the full control of the Turks. The problems related to the control of the Straits started in 1774 when the Treaty of Kyuchuk-Kainardjy between Russia and Turkey regulated issues of free navigation through the Straits. Then during the 19th century, the control or the creation of a special regime to the Straits was the main target of the Russian Foreign Policy. In 1809 a peace treaty was signed between England and Turkey, forbidding the navigation of all warships of any power. This was a great success for England, which meanwhile had under its rule Gibraltar and Malta, and managed to achieve the isolation of the Russian warships in Euxeinos blocking their access to the Mediterranean. During the Greek revolution, Turkey tried many times to deny the navigation even by commercial ships that were of Greek interests. The Ottoman defeat during the Russian-Turkish war of 1828-29, obliged the Turks to sign

the Hunkiar Iskelesi Treaty on 8 July 1833 according which Turkey would close the Dardanelles to all warships except those coming from the Black Sea Powers when requested by Russia. This treaty created the conditions for the absolute Russian domination of Euxeinos Pontos. As Western powers were afraid of the consequences of a possible Russian expansion in the Mediterranean, Britain, France, Austria and Prussia forced, with the London Straits Convention of 13th July 1841, Russia to accept that only Turkish warships could pass through the Straits. The Treaty of Paris on 30 March 1856 closed the Straits to all warships, made the Black Sea a neutral territory and prohibited fortifications, naval bases and warships in its region.

World War I broke out on 28 July 1914 when Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia and ended on 11 November 1918 when the Allies accepted Germany's armistice. It lasted approximately four years and three months, while peace negotiations went on for five years. On 28 June 1919 the Treaty of Versailles was signed and on 10 September that of Saint-Germain followed by the Trianon on 4 June 1920, the Peace Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 and finally on 24 July 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne which consists of two parts, the first related to the Straits which is annulled and the latter on peacekeeping which is in force until today.

The regime of the Straits started actually getting shape at the San Remo Conference, in Italy in April 1920. The decisions taken were embodied in the Treaty of Sèvres and got their present form during the Montreux Convention that replaced fully all the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty on the Straits.⁸ According to the Treaty of Sèvres, the Straits open, both in peace and war, to every vessel of commerce or of war and to military and commercial aircrafts, without distinction of flag, were under the control of the Commission of the Straits. This international Commission should have its own military force in order to secure the demilitarisation of the region including the Straits, the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus. The existing fortifications were to be disarmed and demolished following the Treaty within three months.⁹ This treaty was a moral restoration for the Great Powers, as well as a political expediency. If it was implemented, it would stop

Wars in the Balkans, minimize serious complications and guarantee until nowadays security in the region.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the Treaty was not enforced, although the Sultan's government signed it and the Soviet Union recognised with the Treaty of Moscow on 16 March 1921 the principle of free navigation to the Straits. In an extremely diplomatic way, Turkey achieved its first success. The Representative of Kemal, Bekir Sami Bey, managed to sign an agreement with the French government in the framework of the London Summit, which was violating many important provisions of the Sèvres Treaty. On 10 May 1921, the Straits were pronounced neutral by the High Commissioners of Britain, France and Italy. At the time, Britain's foreign policy was against Turkey, strongly supporting the strengthening of the Guard of the Straits. On the contrary, France was pro Turkey. On 20 October 1921, Franklin-Bouillon, a diplomat representing France, signed the Treaty of Ankara, the crown of the Turkish efforts to subvert the Treaty of Sèvres – a Treaty described correctly by the French President Poincaré as “more fragile than the famous porcelains of the town where it was signed”.

International developments including the retreat of the Greek troops from Asia Minor which started in August 1922, gave Turks the opportunity to occupy the Straits. However, their plan did not succeed and they gave up their effort when the British opposed force. At the same time, the Allies sent a Note to Kemal on 22 September informing him that they were considering in a positive way the Turkish request to get Thrace up to Evros river. Correspondence resulted to the Armistice of Mudanya on 11 October 1922 and the Treaty of Lausanne headed by Lord Curson¹¹ and signed on 21 November 1922. Negotiations lasted many months, stopped on 4 February 1923 and reopened on 23 April. The participants were Greece, Turkey, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Romania and Serbia, while USA attended as an observer. Bulgaria and Russia participated only in the negotiations on the Straits status; Belgium and Portugal settled only financial matters with Turkey. Greece was represented by Eleftherios Venizelos,¹² Turkey by its Foreign Minister, General Ismet İnönü, Italy by Prime Minister Benito Mussolini and France by President Raymond Poincaré. The most important issue for the Great Forces was the

status of the Straits. Initial views were completely contradictory. Soviet Union wished to close the Straits for its own security, although the Treaty of Moscow (16 March 1921) had already recognised the Turkish sovereignty under the condition of free navigation of merchant ships. Britain wanted the opposite, i.e. to remain open so as their fleet could sail through Euxinos. Finally, the British proposals prevailed with certain restrictions. The principle of freedom of transit and navigation by sea and air, at Hellespont, Propontis and Bosphorus was recognised under certain conditions.¹³

To secure a satisfactory operation of the status of the Straits, the Treaty demilitarized the regions around Bosphorus and Hellespont including the islands at the entrance of the Straits - Imbros, Tenedos, Mavries, Lemnos and Samothrace.¹⁴ An international Commission was also formed under the supervision of the League of Nations with representatives from England, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Bulgaria, Serb-Croat-Slovene State, Russia and Romania headed by Turkey. Demilitarization regime didn't really affect Greece as it referred only to two Greek islands, Lemnos and Samothrace, as opposed to Turkey. Apart from this, Turkey did not like the Lausanne status of the Straits for various reasons. It tried to undermine with all means, transit ships and created serious problems by abusing its rights and blocking free navigation of the Straits.¹⁵ It was anxious to find the right moment to replace it and managed to supersede it in 1936 with the Montreux Convention. The Turkish Government invoking *rebus sic stantibus* (total change of circumstances) considered that the Treaty of Lausanne was out-of-date and called the High Contracting Parties to review it.¹⁶ International conjunctions assisted this success as Turkey joined the League of Nations in 1932, Germany denounced the military provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, Italy was absent from the Conference of Montreux due to its attack to Ethiopia, Soviet Union supported with its great power Turkey and England tried to win Turkey over so as to have it as an ally in case of war in the Mediterranean.

According to the provisions of the Montreux Convention of 1936 the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus enjoy complete freedom of transit and navigation. The Convention has 29 articles, 4 an-

nexes and one protocol,¹⁷ and represents the triumph of the Turkish and Soviet interests. After the abolishment of demilitarisation, Turkey regained its sovereignty right, as well as the military control of the Straits. The Soviet Union secured its naval domination in the Black Sea. Greece also profited as the demilitarisation regime for the islands of Limnos and Samothrace was abolished.¹⁸ The restrictions of the new status are registered in Articles 10, 14 and from 18 to 21.¹⁹ Only the light surface war vessels and auxiliary ones belonging to Black Sea or non-Black Sea Powers enjoy freedom to transit through the Straits. The classification of ships was based to the existing at the time criteria, mainly in order to block the transit of "pocket" battleships. Present ships are not so big, machine guns have smaller calibres and other weapons are more effective but completely unknown when the Convention was drafted, and consequently the above mentioned restriction has lost its meaning. The rest restrictions though remain of great importance, especially those referring to the tonnage and the duration of stay in the Black Sea. The forces transiting the Straits should not comprise more than nine vessels and exceed 15,000 tons, while the total aggregate tonnage of the vessels of war belonging to non-Black Sea Powers should not exceed 30,000 tons and exceptionally 45,000 tons. No vessels of war can remain in the Black Sea more than 21 days.

The Montreux Convention imposes restrictions to the Black Sea States too, regarding their exit the Aegean through the Straits. Battleships and cruisers of any size can individually pass through the Straits, escorted only by two destroyers.²⁰ Their submarines constructed or purchased outside the Black Sea, can enter the Black Sea to reach their bases on condition that a prompt notice is submitted to Turkey. Submarines that are to be repaired in dockyards outside the Black Sea must follow the same procedure and give detailed information to Turkey. In any case, these submarines have to travel by day on the surface and must pass through the Straits singly.²¹

The Montreux Convention was implemented successfully until the beginning of World War II and during the period that Turkey seemed to be neutral. In March 1945, the Soviet Union annulled the Moscow Treaty signed with Turkey in 1925,

and tried to revise radically the status of the Straits. At the same time it demanded the deployment of Soviet bases in the Straits, had territorial claims along the coasts of the Black Sea and accused Turkey – not in vain – that it was not impartial as a neutral Power but supported the Nazis and acted against Russia.²² These Soviet views were expressed officially by a Note on August 1946 which proposed the free at any time transit and navigation of all merchant ships and war vessels of the Black Sea Powers and embargo for all other war ships belonging to non-Black Sea Powers with the exception of some cases, non-defined in the Note. The Soviet Union intended to create a new status exclusively run by Black-Sea Powers so as to keep away all other states. It also wished to take over the defence of the Straits in cooperation with Turkey. Turkey was not objecting to a reform of the existing status, but denied to discuss any proposal which could offend its sovereign rights and rejected Moscow's request for bases, insisting on the necessary involvement of Great Britain and USA to the formation of the new regime. The Turkish government was aware that the Russian involvement to the defence of the Straits would downgrade their country's strategic position and bring them dangerously close to a Power with a different political theory aiming to expand its international influence. The strong Soviet pressure brought Turkey closer to England and the USA, which both eagerly showed their interest to participate in a revising conference on the Straits. At the same time, the United States expressed their objection to the formation of a new status with local features, as well as to the Soviet demand to participate to the defence of the region.

The first country to submit precise proposals, was the USA on 2 November 1945. The first 3 points of the American Note satisfied the Soviet requests. The Straits would remain open to the passage of all merchant ships even in time of war, as well as to the war vessels of the Black-Sea Powers, while the passage of all other war ships was not permitted unless agreed otherwise by the Black-Sea Forces or unless the ships were part of a UN operation. These views and the lack of reactions from the British side, surprises us even at present. At the time, the interest of these two Great Forces on restricting the Soviet exit to the Mediterranean was possibly low or there was an un-

known to the international community exchange. How else can this attitude be explained? Two Great Powers had no objection to lose their few rights of access of their war ships to the Black Sea and were abandoning this maritime region to the Soviet sovereignty.

This diplomatic activity had no results and nothing happened. The “cold war” also contributed to this as gradually the relations between the East and the West were getting worse. The Truman Doctrine which literally saved so many states including Turkey, brought it closer to the West.²³ On 4 April 1949, the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, formed a strong group of liberal states faithful to the aims and principles of the UN Chart, with strong desire to live peacefully with other people and their governments. On February 1952 the Alliance was enlarged by the simultaneous accession of Turkey and Greece.²⁴ Turkish-Soviet relations were not any more at a satisfactory level. There was small improvement on 30 May 1953 when the Soviet Union gave up its claims on Turkish territories.²⁵

The Montreux Convention had a twenty years' validity.²⁶ In 1956 the twenty years expired, but it was not revised and is still into force. It is a fact that it operated and continues to do so in a satisfactory way. The Soviet Union used its rights and its war ships were crossing very often the Straits in their way into the Mediterranean. Many submarines coming from Arctic and Baltic bases²⁷ also joined the Soviet fleet. The United States of America have not signed the Convention, but they have fully respected it. In their efforts to keep it alive, they have been sending their ships to the Black Sea following carefully its provisions. Turkey though created many problems despite its contractual obligation. It tried to regulate the navigation regime of the Straits with unilateral acts. It issued relevant Turkish regulations in 1994 and 1998 as well as restricting navigating measures in November 2002. Within this framework, Turkey expressed strongly its wish to replace the names “Straits of Dardanelles, Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus” or “Straits”²⁸ that appear on the terms of the Convention by others such as Turkish Straits or Cannakale Straits, Istanbul Straits in order to include them gradually to their Regulations and to overthrow the validity of the Montreux Conven-

tion as well as the international guarantees of free navigation that Montreux enacts.²⁹ Turkey has implemented a Maritime Traffic Regulation of the Turkish Straits since 1 July 1994, in order to control transit of the Straits. This Regulation violates the Convention. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) urged caution on it in May 1994 to avoid further action from Turkey. The fact that the increased traffic in the Straits causes problems and could create dangers, cannot be ignored. On the other hand, if Turkey wanted to contribute positively to these problems, it could bring the matter for discussion in the IMO and ask international Community to take the necessary measures instead of trying to annul unilaterally the Montreux Convention. This was also the spirit of the IMO Legal Committee during the relevant Assembly in October 1994. Turkey though instead of modifying its Regulation, it published instructions on its implementation and not adjustments according to the Convention. Taking it into account during its Assembly, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 65) adopted its President's conclusions regarding the navigation through the Straits following the IMO Rules and Recommendations, and pointed out the need to conform to the international law and the 1936 Montreux Convention. It also advised Governments and International Organisations to refer all technical issues arising during the transit of the Straits, to the sub-Committee of the Maritime Safety (NAV) of the IMO, which is the competent body for their solution. On November 1995, the 19th Plenary Session of the IMO adopted the Regulation and Recommendations for maritime traffic through the Straits that were agreed upon previous MSCs (63 – March 1994). It confirmed that they aim to the protection of the maritime traffic and environment in the area of the Straits, and don't influence the rights of ships passing through the Straits as these are provided by International Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 and the Montreux Convention of 1936. Furthermore, it mentioned that the Turkish Code of Regulation should be in full compliance with them. Following a Russian initiative, the final Resolution included a proposal for the establishment of an International Commission to observe the Turkish Traffic Regulation and the passage through the Straits. Turkey though stated that it was not sharing its right to speak on Straits. However, when unilateral acts by a contracting party of the Convention, consist se-

rious violation of international law, cannot annul or replace international agreements. All parties believe that the status of the Montreux Convention should not be offended, especially regarding the right of free navigation under no excuse.

The end of the "cold war" influenced considerably the dangers arising from the non-implementation of the status secured by Montreux. Initiatives also on its reform by those states that had reasons to ask for it were reduced, with the exception of Turkey which continues to insist but not as strongly. Nowadays, the dispute between East and West does not exist any more and the role of NATO has been redefined after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. At the 5th NATO Enlargement in 2004, seven new members joined the Alliance, including two Black-Sea Powers, Bulgaria and Romania.³⁰ Last year these two countries also joined the EU. Turkey which has been a NATO member since 1952, is hopefully going to access it soon. The ties between the states interested in the Straits, are continuously getting closer and make the future look more optimistic. The basic condition though is the maintenance of the legal regime of the Motreux Convention and its strict implementation, through which peace and prosperity can be secured.

¹ The historical name of the sea between the south-east Europe and Minor Asia. It is connected to the Mediterranean via Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara. The name changed to Black Sea because of the bad weather which usually exists. The original name Euxeinos Pontos in the contrary means "hospitable sea". Countries bordering it are Bulgaria, Georgia, Ukraina, Romania, Russia and Turkey.

² Argonaut expedition is a mythic trip with a ship named Argo on board of which were all the principle heroes of ancient Greece headed by Jason. Their destination was Colchis, the eastern point of Euxeinos Pontos.

³ According to the introduction of the Montreux Convention: "... the Straits of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus comprised under the general term 'Straits'...".

⁴ Alexander in ancient Greek means "he who repulses fighters". His father's name was Philippos, meaning "friend of horses" and his mother's one Olym-

pias. Her name comes from the word “Olympos”, the mountain where ancient Greek Gods lived.

⁵ Plutarch lived approx. from 45 to 120 AD. He was born in Chaeronea, Boeotia and was a priest for Apollo at the Oracle of Delphi. He travelled a lot and was an important historian and biographer.

⁶ Known as Flavius Arrianus, he was born around 105 AD in Nicomedia, Asia Minor and was a military commander as well as a great historian, philosopher and geographer. He also became a priest for Demeter and Persephone. He was holding high military and political command in the Roman Empire. He died after 146 AD.

⁷ Cf. J.F.C. Fuller, *The Generalship of Alexander the Great*, translated by K. Koliopoulos.

⁸ Its preface is clear and cannot be misunderstood: “...Desiring to regulate transit and navigation in the Straits of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus comprised under the general term “Straits” in such manner as to safeguard, within the framework of Turkish security and of the security, in the Black Sea, of the riparian States, the principle enshrined in Article 23 of the Treaty of Peace signed at Lausanne on the 24th July, 1923; **Have resolved to replace by the present Convention the Convention signed at Lausanne on the 24th July, 1923**, and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries”.

⁹ V. Moschopoulos, *The Issue of the Straits – Contribution to the Diplomatic History*, p. 101; Ch. Nikolaou, *International Political and Military Treaties – Conventions and Agreements*, pp. 255-60.

¹⁰ Cf. G. Christodoulou, *Diplomatic History of Modern Europe*, pp. 50-1.

¹¹ Foreign Minister of Great Britain.

¹² Greek politician born in Mournies, Chania in 1864 and died in 1936. He was elected many times Prime Minister and played an important role in the country’s political life.

¹³ Cf. K. I. Skaltsas, *The Treaty of Lausanne. Political and Diplomatic Comments*, pp. 14-7.

¹⁴ This was the only reason for demilitarisations and not Turkey’s security. If the Turkish security against the Greek threat, was one of the reasons, then the restrictions would not extend so much on Turkey’s territories. See S. Politis, *Demilitarization and the legal regime of the Aegean islands according to international law*, p. 247 et seq.

¹⁵ See Moschopoulos, *op.cit.*, supra footnote 8, pp. 100-11.

¹⁶ E. Roukounas, *International Law*, vol. 1. p. 165.

¹⁷ The attached Protocol refers to direct remilitarisation only from the part of Turkey. According to article 3 “*The present Protocol shall enter into force as from this day’s date*”, i.e. from 20 Junly 1936 and not on 9 November 1939 that the Convention was implemented. This special provision gave Turkey

the privilege to exercise its rights earlier, without though depriving all other States of any right coming into effect after the enforcement of the Montreux Convention. See H. Pazarci, *The Demilitarisation Regime of the Eastern Aegean Islands*, Greek translation A. Alexandris –K. Economides, *The Legal Regime of the Greek Islands in the Aegean – Reply to a Turkish Study*, p. 147.

¹⁸ See: Politis, *op. cit.* supra footnote 13. On 31 July 1936, during a debate in the Turkish National Assembly on the ratification of the Montreux Convention, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rustu Aras, declared full of joy: “the provisions concerning the islands of Limnos and Samothrace which belong to our friend and neighbour, Greece, and which had been demilitarized by the Lausanne Convention in 1923, are abolished also by the Convention of Montreux and we are particularly pleased about this... By this opportunity I wish to point out one of the features of new Turkey’s policy: to wish our friends what we wish for ourselves and never wish for them as well as for any other power, what we consider unfair” See: Turkish Gazette of Great National Assemblies, vol. 12, assembly 31 July 1936, p. 309.

¹⁹ **Article 10.** In time of peace, light surface vessels, minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels, whether belonging to Black Sea or non-Black Sea Powers, and whatever their flag, shall enjoy freedom of transit through the Straits without any taxes or charges whatever, provided that such transit is begun during daylight and subject to the conditions laid down in Article 13 and the Articles following thereafter. Vessels of war other than those which fall within the categories specified in the preceding paragraph shall only enjoy a right of transit under the special conditions provided by Articles 11 and 12. **Article 14.** The maximum aggregate tonnage of all foreign naval forces which may be in course of transit through the Straits shall not exceed 15.000 tons, except in the cases provided for in Article 11 and in Annex III to the present Convention. The forces specified in the preceding paragraph shall not, however, comprise more than nine vessels. Vessels, whether belonging to Black Sea or non-Black Sea Powers, paying visits to a port in the Straits, in accordance with the provisions of Article 17, shall not be included in this tonnage. Neither shall vessels of war which have suffered damage during their passage through the Straits be included in this tonnage; such vessels, while undergoing repair, shall be subject to any special provisions relating to security laid down by Turkey. **Article 18.** (1) The aggregate tonnage which non-Black Sea Powers may have in that sea in time of peace shall be limited as follows: (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) below, the aggregate tonnage of the said Powers shall not exceed 30.000 tons; (b) If at any time the ton-

nage of the strongest fleet in the Black Sea shall exceed by at least 10,000 tons the tonnage of the strongest fleet in that sea at the date of the signature of the present Convention, the aggregate tonnage of 30,000 tons mentioned in paragraph (a) shall be increased by the same amount, up to a maximum of 45,000 tons. For this purpose, each Black Sea Power shall, in conformity with Annex IV to the present Convention, inform the Turkish Government, on the 1st January and the 1st July of each year, of the total tonnage of its fleet in the Black Sea; and the Turkish Government shall transmit this information to the other High Contracting Parties and to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations; (c) The tonnage which any one non-Black Sea Power may have in the Black Sea shall be limited to two-thirds of the aggregate tonnage provided for in paragraphs (a) and (b) above; (d) In the event, however, of one or more non-Black Sea Powers desiring to send naval forces into the Black Sea, for a humanitarian purpose, the said forces, which shall in no case exceed 8,000 tons altogether, shall be allowed to enter the Black Sea without having to give the notification provided for in Article 13 of the present Convention, provided an authorisation is obtained from the Turkish Government in the following circumstances: if the figure of the aggregate tonnage specified in paragraphs (a) and (b) above has not been reached and will not be exceeded by the dispatch of the forces which it is desired to send, the Turkish Government shall grant the said authorisation within the shortest possible time after receiving the request which has been addressed to it; if the said figure has already been reached or if the dispatch of the forces which it is desired to send will cause it to be exceeded, the Turkish Government will immediately inform the other Black Sea Powers of the request for authorisation, and if the said Powers make no objection within twenty-four hours of having received this information, the Turkish Government shall, within forty-eight hours at the latest, inform the interested Powers of the reply which it has decided to make to their request. Any further entry into the Black Sea of naval forces of non-Black Sea Powers shall only be effected within the available limits of the aggregate tonnage provided for in paragraphs (a) and (b) above. (2) Vessels of war belonging to non-Black Sea Powers shall not remain in the Black Sea more than twenty-one days, whatever be the object of their presence there. **Article 19.** In time of war, Turkey not being belligerent, warships shall enjoy complete freedom of transit and navigation through the Straits under the same conditions as those laid down in Article 10 to 18. Vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers shall not however, pass through the Straits except in cases arising out of the application of Article 25 of the present Convention, and in

cases of assistance rendered to a State victim of aggression in virtue of a treaty of mutual assistance binding Turkey, concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and registered and published in accordance with the provisions of Article 18 of the Covenant. In the exceptional cases provided for in the preceding paragraph, the limitations laid down in Article 10 to 18 of the present Convention shall not be applicable. Notwithstanding the prohibition of passage laid down in paragraph 2 above, vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers, whether they are Black Sea Powers or not, which have become separated from their bases, may return thereto. Vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers shall not make any capture, exercise the right of visit and search, or carry out any hostile act in the Straits. **Article 20.** In time of war, Turkey being belligerent, the provisions of Articles 10 to 18 shall not be applicable; the passage of warships shall be left entirely to the discretion of the Turkish Government. **Article 21.** Should Turkey consider herself to be threatened with imminent danger of war she shall have the right to apply the provisions of Article 20 of the present Convention. Vessels which have passed through the Straits before Turkey has made use of the powers conferred upon her by the preceding paragraph, and which thus find themselves separated from their bases, may return thereto. It is, however, understood that Turkey may deny this right to vessels of war belonging to the State whose attitude has given rise to the application of the present Article. Should the Turkish Government make use of the powers conferred by the first paragraph of the present Article, a notification to that effect shall be addressed to the High Contracting Parties and to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations. If the Council of the League of Nations decide by a majority of two-thirds that the measures thus taken by Turkey are not justified, and if such should also be the opinion of the majority of the High Contracting Parties signatories to the present Convention, the Turkish Government undertakes to discontinue the measures in question as also any measures which may have been taken under Article 6 of the present Convention.

²⁰ **Article 11.** Black Sea Powers may send through the Straits capital ships of tonnage greater than that laid down in the first paragraph of Article 14, on condition that these vessels pass through the Straits singly, escorted by not more than two destroyers.

²¹ **Article 12.** Black Sea Powers shall have the right to send through the Straits, for the purpose of rejoining their base, submarines constructed or purchased outside the Black Sea, provided that adequate notice of the laying down or purchase of such submarines shall have been given to Turkey. Submarines belonging to the said Powers shall also be entitled to

pass through the Straits to be repaired in dockyards outside the Black Sea on condition that detailed information on the matter is given to Turkey. In either case, the said submarines must travel by day and on the surface, and must pass through the Straits singly.

²² See Barry Buzan, "The Status and Future of the Montreux Convention", p. 161; Frank G. Weber, *The Evasive Neutral: Germany, Britain and the Quest for a Turkish Alliance in the Second World War*.

²³ Cf. Barry Buzan, *op. cit.* supra footnote 21, p. 163.

²⁴ S. Politis, *NATO Establishment and Enlargement*.

²⁵ This issue was finally closed with an agreement on the redemarcation of the Turkish-Soviet borders on December 1973.

²⁶ See article 28.

²⁷ On 18 July 1976, Russia violated the Convention by sending Kiev aircraft carrier to join its fleet in the Mediterranean. Although that ship had a 14,700 square meter flight deck, arrestor wires, a bow ski-jump and the carrier consisted of helicopters and 30 vertical launched aircrafts, the Soviet claimed that it was not an aircraft carrier but a large antisubmarine cruiser because of its aircrafts. This type of ships were not included into the ones restricted by the Convention and for this reason it was entitled to cross the Straits. Barry Buzan, *op. cit.* supra footnote 21, pp. 159-60.

²⁸ These names have a Greek origin. The word Dardanelles comes from Dardania, Dardanos' town, son of Zeus and Electra, 8 km from Kephez Burnu on the coast of Asia Minor; Marmara comes from the Greek word for marble and Bosphorus from the ox passage according to the Ancient Greek myth of Io, Zeus' mistress.

²⁹ See Y. Inan, *A Turkish view on the Current Regime of the Turkish Straits*, pp. 87-99.

³⁰ The other states were Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. See Politis, *op. cit.* supra footnote 23.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BRUMA M., "NATO and EU Membership Impact Over the National Security Strategy of Romania", *Monitor Strategic, Revistă de Studii de Securitate și Apărare*, 1-2/2004, Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară, București.

BUZAN BARRY, "The Regime and the Future of the Convention of Montreux", from the magazine "Survival", Greek translation in the Revue of

National Defense, volume 4 (1977) (BUZAN BARRY, «Οι Εξελίξεις και οι Προβλεπόμενες Οδηγίες», *Υπὲρ τοῦ Ὄπλοῦ Ἄεραίου Ἰσθμοῦ*, Δελφίνι 4, 1977).

CHRISTOPOULOS G., *Diplomatic History of Modern Greece*, Athens 1935 (ΧΡΗΣΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ Γ., *Ἱστορία τῆς Διπλωματίας*, Ἀθήναι 1935).

DIMITROV I., "Regional Environment in Southeast Europe After Enlargement: A View from Bulgaria", International Seminar "US Realignment and NATO Transformation: Implications for Southeast Europe and Greater Black Sea Region, Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, Bucharest 2004.

ECONOMIDES K., "The Legal Regime of the Aegean: The Legality of Armament of the Greek Islands in the Aegean" from the Symposium Notes (Rhodes 4-6 November 1994) with the attention of S. Perrakis, publ. A. Sakkoulas, Athens-Komotini, 1996 (ἸΕΕΠΙΠΕΑ, Ἀθήναι Ἐπισημογραφία, 1996).

ECONOMIDES K., "The Island of Lemnos and the so-called obligation for its demilitarisation" from the Military Annals, vol. July-September 1983. (ἸΕΕΠΙΠΕΑ, «Ἡ Ἰσθμὸς καὶ τὸ Ἄεραίο Ὄπλο», ἀπὸ τῆς *Ἐπισημογραφίας*, Δελφίνι 4, 1983).

FULLER J.F.C., *The Generalship of Alexander the Great*, translation Koliopoulos K. publications Piotita, Athens 2004 (ΦΟΥΛΕΡ Τ. Τ. Τ., *Ὁ Ἄριστος Ἰσχυρὸς*, Ἀθήναι 2004).

HALKIOPOULOS T., "Reflections on the Issue of the Straits used for International Navigation", Conference Proceedings The Passage of Ships through Straits, Defense Analyses, Athens October 23, 1999.

INAN Y., "A Turkish view on the Current Re-

gime of the Turkish Straits”, Conference Proceedings The Passage of Ships through Straits, Defense Analyses, Athens October 23, 1999.

IOANNOU K, ECONOMIDES K. ROZAKIS CHR., FATOUROS A., Public Law (Theory of the Sources), publications A. Sakkoulas, Athens – Komotini, 1988). (ÉÚÁÍÍÏÖ È., ÌÉÈÌÍÏ È Ä Ç Ó È., ÑĹÆÄÊÇÓ ×Ñ., ÖÄÖĪ ÖÑÍÓ Ä., Äçiuóéi ÄÊéáéi (Èáũñßá ðui Ðçãpi), áêä. Ä. ÖÜêêiðéá, ÄèÞiá-Ètiïðçip, 1988).

IONESCU M., *Romania – NATO Chronology 1989-2004*, Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, Military Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004.

IONESCU M., “NATO in Transformation, Tour d’Horizon”, *Monitor Strategic, Revistă de Studii de Securitate și Apărare, 1-2/2004*, Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară, București.

KOLTAIR V., “The Russian view on the Regime of the Black Sea Straits”, Conference Proceedings The Passage of Ships through Straits, Defense Analyses, Athens, October 23, 1999.

KONSTANTINIDIS K., “*International Development of the Status of the Straits*”, General Army Revue, monthly publication of the General Staff of Army, no. 12, December 1956 (ÈÚÍÓÔÁÍÓÉÍÉÄÇ È., «Ç Äêáipò ÄiÝéiéò ðið Èáéáòðpò ðui Óðãipí», ÄãíéèÞ ÖðñáòéuðéèÞ Äðéèpñçóéò, içiéáßá Ýéãioç Äãíééý Äðéðáèßið Öðñáoiý, áñéèiüò 12, ÄêéÝiãñéið 1956).

MOSCHOPOULOS V., *The Issue of the Straits - Contribution to the Diplomatic History*, Athens, 1926 (Ì Í Ö × Ì Ð ÎÇÈÌ Ö Ä., ÖæÞòçiá ðui Óðãipí. ÓðiaïèèÞ áéò ðç ÄéðéuüiáðéèèÞi Èóðiñßái, ái ÄèÞiáéò 1926).

MIHALKA M., “NATO Response Force: Rapid? Responsive? A Force?”, *Monitor Strategic, Revistă de Studii de Securitate și Apărare, 1-2/2004*, Institutul pentru Studii Politice de Apărare și Istorie Militară, București.

MICHOV K., “Building a Greater Black Sea Defense Ministerial and Black Sea Task Force: A

View from Bulgaria”, International Seminar “US Realignment and NATO Transformation: Implications for Southeast Europe and Greater Black Sea Region, Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, Bucharest 2004.

NICOLAOU CH., *International Political and Military Treaties – Conventions and Agreements*, additional publications of the General Staff of Army, Athens 1980 (ÌÉÈÌ È Ä Í Ö ×., Äêéiáßò Ðièáéýò éáé Öðñáòéuðéèýð ÒðieÞéáò – Óðiuüiðáò éáé ÓðiaÜóáéò, óðidè. Äêäüóáçò Ä.Ä.Ö., ÄèÞiá 1980).

OXMAN B., “The Application of the Straits Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in Complex Situations such as the Aegean Sea”, Conference Proceedings The Passage of Ships through Straits, Defense Analyses, Athens October 23, 1999.

PAPARIGOPOULOS K., *Condensed History of the Hellenic Nation*, publications Pergaminai, Athens 1955 (ÐÄÐÄÑÇÄÏÐÏÇÈÌ Ö È., Äðßòiið Èóðiñßá ðið Äèççieééý, éiïðò, áêä. «Ðãñã áiçiáß», ÄèÞiá, 1955).

PAZARCHI H., *The Demilitarisation Regime of the Eastern Aegean Islands*, Greek translation: Alexandris A. – Economides K., *The Legal Regime of the Greek Islands of the Aegean – Reply to a Turkish Study*, publications Gnosi, Athens 1989 (ÐÄÆÄÑÆÈ ×. Ö Èáéáòðpò Ätiððñáòéèi ðiÞçòçò ðui ÍçóèÞi ðið Äiáðieééý Äéááßið, ÄèççieèÞ iáðÜðñáòç: ÄèãiáiañÞ Ä., - ÌÉÈÌ Í Ì ÌÈÄÇ È., Ö Ìtiéèü Èáéáòðpò ðui ÄèççieèÞ í ÍçóèÞi ðið Äéááßið – ÄðÜiðçòç óá ÖðñéèèÞ ÌáèÝðç, áêä. «Äipòç», ÄèÞiá, 1989).

POLITIS S., *The Naval Strategy of the USA and Great Britain from the Washington Conference (November 1921) to September 1939 – Its Effectiveness to War Preparations*, Naval War College, Athens 1991 (Ð ÌÈÈÖÇ Ó., Ìáóidüèãiið: Ç ÌáððéèèÞ ÖðñáðçáéèèÞ ðui Ç.Ð.Ä. éáé ðçò ÌááÜèçò Äñãðáiðáð áðü ðçí ÄéÜðéãøç ðçò Ìðáóéèðpið (ÌiÝiãñéið 1921) Ýüò ðii ÓáððÝiãñéi 1939 éáé Äèðßiçòç ðçò Äðiðáèãóiaðéèüðçðáð ðçò ððçí ÐièáieèèÞ Ðñiãðieiaóßá, Í.Ó.Ð., ÄèÞiá, 1991).

POLITIS S., “NATO Establishment and Enlargement”, Notes from International Conference

THE PARTICIPATION OF ROMANIA AND GREECE AT BSEC COOPERATION THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE BALKANS

ȘERBAN FILIP CIOULESCU

***Researcher of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense
and Military History***

During the Cold War era, the Black Sea has been a Soviet lake with a strategic “clasp” provided by Turkish control on the Straits. After the end of the bipolar rivalry, the existing riparian states and the newly independent ones felt the need to set up an institutional framework, in order to go beyond the classical “neorealist” (using International Relations theory vocabulary) zero-sum game for power and security maximization. They wanted to (re)invent the logic of cooperation and mutual trust, and create a common understanding of the new security environment characterized by globalization and regionalization. More precisely, they wanted a better mutual understanding and confidence, a safe politic and economic climate and good neighborly relations.

Therefore, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) has been created June 1992 as an informal intergovernmental framework for promoting trade and economic cooperation in this area and was lately turned into an international economic organization on 1 May 1999, following the coming into force of its Charter signed in June 1998 in Yalta, when it received legal identity on the international scene. It became a tool for multilateral cooperation, knew the institutional spectacular development and quickly specialized in “soft security” issues: economy, trade, environment, culture, science etc.¹ Worth to remember that the Istanbul Summit Declaration from June 25, 1992, a kind of birth-certificate for the new organization, stipulated that its main goal “is to ensure that the Black Sea becomes a sea of peace, stability and prosperity, striving to promote friendly and good-neighborly relations” among the region’s states.²

BSEC is important especially because it covers a huge territory encompassing the areas of the

Black Sea littoral states, the Balkans and the Caucasus, with an area of nearly 20 million square kilometers. The BSEC-covered region is located on two continents: Europe and Asia.³ Demographically, BSEC represents a region of about 350 million people and a foreign trade capacity of over USD 300 billion annually. Analysts noted that after 2000, the BSEC countries had the fastest economic growth in the world, with 6% GDP increase and a growing rhythm 3,5 times bigger than that of the Euro zone.⁴ In 2006, the foreign direct investments was 72 billion USD. After the Persian Gulf region, it is the second-largest source of oil and natural gas along with its rich proven reserves of minerals and metals. It is becoming Europe’s major transport and energy transfer corridor, as the Greater Black Sea Area is a transit space for the oil and gas coming from Central Asia and the Caspian basin.

Certainly, Greece and Romania are among the main countries benefiting from the economic rise of this region. Even in Romania exports more than 65% of its goods in the EU states, there are at least 20% of its exports going to the Black Sea region. At the same time, the number of commercial transactions between BSEC countries and Greece almost quadrupled between 1992 and 2003, and is continuing to increase rapidly.⁵ They have a common interest in the development of a regional wide market and regional infrastructures.

Romania has been, since the beginning, an enthusiastic supporter of the Turkish initiative for setting up BSEC and the first session of the working group which put the basis for the new organization held its consultations in Bucharest in 1991.

The BSEC has its headquarters in Istanbul and is made up of 13 member states: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, the Russian

Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. FYROM is expected to clarify its status, especially by ratifying in its Parliament the Treaty of accession. So, through Albania, Serbia and Montenegro, BSEC connects the Black Sea and the Balkans areas. The observer countries are: Austria, Belarus, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Tunisia, the US, as well as the International Black Sea Club and the Energy Charter Secretariat Black Sea Commission – also play an active role within BSEC.

Among the most important areas of cooperation within BSEC one should mention the combat against organized crime. Romania has a tradition in this field, because at the second BSEC summit, on June 30, 1995, in Bucharest, it pushed towards the decision to agree with the combat against organized crime, traffic of drugs, weapons and radioactive stuffs as a new realm of activity for the organization. The Hellenic Republic has been also a strong supporter of the combat against crime and terrorism, and on October 1998, in Korfu, the states signed “The Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC participating states on cooperation in combating crime, in particular in its organized forms”. At the Kiev summit, in March 2002, it was signed the Additional Protocol establishing the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers for combating crime, which entered into force in April 2003.

A real success was the organizing in Romania of the “Regional Conference on Strengthening of the Criminal-Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons in the Black Sea Region”, included in the BSEC – UNODC Project on “Strengthening of the Criminal-Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons in the Black Sea Region”, under the supervision of Romanian Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform in July 2008. Romania is the Country-Coordinator for the WG on Combating Crime for the term May 2007-April 2009. Together with Greece, which hosted a meeting of this WG in December 3, 2004, the member states adopted the Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism to the Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in Particular In Its Organized Forms.

Romania was also a coordinating-country for the following working groups: “transportations” and “science and technology”, the last group being

currently chaired by Bulgaria, between May 2008 and April 2010.⁶ The Hellenic Republic is the Country Coordinator for the WG on Banking and Finance for the term November 2006 - October 2008, for the WG on Culture between November 2006 and October 2008, and also for the WG on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance between May 2007 and April 2009.

Romania contributed to the BSEC activities, especially by supporting a strengthening cooperation between BSEC and the EU and framing a partnership, immediately after the EU launched its European Neighborhood Policy. It favored the security and stability dimension in the Black Sea, by cooperating for drafting a concept for more involvement of the organization in this filed. Also it launched a reflection process on the future of BSEC, supported the economic exchanges in the region and the states from SE Europe and Caucasus in their democratic transition. Romania also launched the reform and restructuring process of BSEC for more effectiveness and visibility. The Bucharest Statement “Towards the 15th anniversary of BSEC”, adopted by consensus, expressed the common will for implementing key-decisions, reform and restructuring the BSEC, enhance the observer states’ contributions. One should mention the additional protocol to the convention for fighting organized crime, with a special emphasis on terrorism, but also a memorandum of agreement between BSEC and SECI Centre of Bucharest in order for the centre to share its experience with the organization, and also the fact that Romania, as an EU and NATO member, committed itself to support and promote the BSEC goals within these organizations’ agendas for more visibility.

During Romania’s OSCE presidency, between November 2005 and April 2006, the main goals has been accomplished: developing a partnership relation between EU and BSEC, supporting states from eastern Europe and Caucasus, the reflection process on the future of the organization, mobilizing member states to implement projects for regional development, developing trade exchanges among BS countries, enhancing BSEC cooperation with other international and regional organizations.

So, Romania is very interested in attracting more investments in Greater Black Sea Area (by improving the investment climate), developing energy and communication, transport infrastructures and improving the trade environment, also

in the protection of the environment, which in a compulsory EU requirement.

Regarding the energy corridors, Bucharest strongly supports Nabucco gas pipeline, a big EU project, which is said by many analysts to be the geo-economic “rival” of the Blue Stream II and South Stream (the Russian parallel projects), not because it is seeing the building of energy corridors like a zero-sum game between Russia and the EU states, but because this pipeline coming from Azerbaijan and Turkey to Austria would ensure the beginning of a real energy independence for the EU states towards Russia.⁷ EU imports too much of its natural gas from a single country, Russia, or from sources that are under Russian control – more than 30% from the total imports and it’s foreseen to have about 65-80% in 2020. Thus, EU needs to diversify its suppliers.⁸ Unfortunately, up to now, BSEC does not have a real decision-making power concerning the transit corridors and the inter-states negotiations are usually bilateral not multilateral. It would be very useful to have a wide and deep cooperative framework among EU, BSEC and Russia in the realm of energy sharing and transportation, but a prior condition would be the signing and ratification of the European Energy Charter by Russia and all the other interested states and common rules for the access on energy infrastructures markets.

In order to have good assessment of the security situation in the Black Sea region, one needs a conundrum of academic and practical experience. Consequently, Greece’s efforts to link the academics and policy-makers in the Black Sea area were crowned by the setting up of the *International Center for Black Sea Studies* (ICBSS), headquartered in Athens, a project warmly supported by Romania. In 2008, the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) is celebrating its tenth year of existence and is may be the main academic think tank dedicated to the study of security, politics and economy in the region, thus serving as a very important expertise provider for governments and for the BSEC executive structures.

The Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, which is the organization’s main funding mechanism, is based in Thessaloniki and has an important role in promoting financial stability and investments in this region. Concerning Romania, “the BSTDB will focus in the next four years on

providing financial support to large and medium sized companies engaged in particular in export generating activities, infrastructure and financial sector” (Romania – *Country Strategy 2007-2010*).⁹ Greece has a strategy which insists on the benefits of regional cooperation for promoting investments and trade in neighboring states – “instead, for operations undertaken in Greece, the Bank needs to focus most on fulfillment of the regional cooperation aspect of its mandate. Promoting regional cooperation is important for Greece, which borders on countries with which investment and commercial ties had remained at very low levels for decades. As a result, much remains to be done to interconnect with neighboring countries in order to improve relative efficiencies, realize economies of scale, and achieve better complementarity. (Greece – *Country Strategy 2007-2010*, Thessaloniki, December 2006¹⁰) In June 2008, at the 10th Annual Meeting in St. Petersburg of the Board of Governors, the Black Sea Bank posted some impressive results for 2007 financial year, “with 60% growth of outstanding portfolio and 15% increase in operating income. The amount of approved operations exceeded USD 1,3 billion”.¹¹ Romania was also deeply involved in the drafting and adoption of the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future.

On 1 May 2006, for the first time, a Greek representative, Ambassador, L. Chrysanthopoulos, assumed the post of Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat; he was elected, through consensus, by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC member states.

Greece had the chairmanship previously in May-October 1999 and Athens took the necessary actions to ensure the BSEC observer status at the UN General Assembly. The initiative to strengthen relations between the BSEC and the UN was adopted in 2000 by the UN General Assembly. In November 2006, the BSEC signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme, for the joint implementation of the Black Sea Trade and Investment Promotion Programme. This pioneering programme is funded jointly by Greece and Turkey, with a symbolic financial contribution from the BSEC. The BSEC completed negotiations with the OECD Development Center on implementing a programme entitled “Black Sea and

Central Asia Outlook jointly with the OECD and OSCE". This programme proposed by the OECD concerns a cooperation framework already agreed upon with the OSCE. BSEC-OECD cooperation under this programme was approved at the BSEC Foreign Ministers Meeting in Moscow in January 2006. Greece's financial contribution to this programme comes up to 200,000 euros annually for its three-year duration.

Within the framework of the 1st meeting of BSEC Foreign Ministers (Thessaloniki, 1999) a Decision was adopted, on Greece's initiative, regarding the Organization's contribution toward achieving the objectives of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, and particularly with regard to the activities of the second and third Working Table on economic reconstruction, development, justice and internal affairs. Greece and Romania are now active in the Regional Cooperation Council, the body which replaced in February 2008 the Stability Pact.

Greece organized during its presidency seven ministerial meetings on transport, tourism, energy, combat against organized crime, education, research, technology, good governance. Between November 2004-April 2005 and November 2005 and April 2006, during their presidency terms, Bucharest and Athens made substantial efforts to enhance the cooperative framework and ensure a regular participation of the EU in BSEC activities, through the observer status. Bucharest and Athens reached a common position also in September 2005, when the Ministers of countries that belong to BSEC adopted a 'BSEC Action Plan on cooperation in science and technology', because they acknowledge the extreme importance of these activities in the future development of the Black Sea countries, in a globalized world.

Building relations between EU and BSEC obviously had been the main goal of both Romania and Hellenic Republic's presidencies of the BSEC. Thus, the central focus of Greece's Chairmanship of the BSEC (2004-2005) was bringing the BSEC closer to the EU¹² and this is an extremely important common point with Romania. Worth to mention that the Summit Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the BSEC Member States from Moscow, on 25 October 1996, affirmed their political will to cooperate with the EU in fields of common interest and invited the EU institutions to work out a common platform for developing

closer contacts and cooperation.¹³ In 1997 the European Commission submitted to the EU Council a Communication on *Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area: State of play, perspectives for EU action encouraging its further development*, but only on 30 April 1999 the *Platform for Cooperation between BSEC and the EU* was adopted by the BSEC CMFA in Tbilisi.

It is within the framework of this objective that all the Ministerial Meetings and Working Group meetings were held; that the Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials took place in Brussels in April 2005 and that the 15th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC member states adopted the Komotini Declaration. The International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) supported with a theoretical perspective the Komotini project.¹⁴ Following this meeting and the Komotini ministerial declaration, a special mandate was given to the Greek presidency by the BSEC Foreign Ministers in 2005 to proceed to the necessary consultations with the organs of the EU and to examine the potential for creating a new EU regional Dimension in the wider Black Sea area, along the lines of the EU Nordic Dimension. Logically, Romania and Greece openly supported the Declaration endorsed by the BSEC Ministerial Council from Chişinău, in October 2005, which asked for a wide partnership between EU and BSEC in areas like trade, development, energy and transport infrastructures, combating terrorism and organized crime, protection of the environment and good governance.

In September 2006, the European Commission made a positive recommendation for strengthening EU-BSEC relations and announced the drawing up of a new Communiqué with the regard to EU regional policy for the Black Sea region and the future role of the BSEC in implementing this policy. Based on the abovementioned special mandate, our country has played an important role in changing the climate in relations between the EU and the BSEC.

In 2006-2007, this Black Sea regional dimension was born, especially during the German EU presidency, with substantial Greek and Romanian efforts made within EU and BSEC.¹⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic prepared a Working Paper entitled "*Towards an EU Regional Dimension in the Wider Black Sea Area*", which

was presented at the meeting of the Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia in Brussels, in January 2006. A second meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials with representatives of EU institutions and member states took place in Brussels on 11 April 2006¹⁶. The Committee of Senior Officials endorsed in January 2007, in Istanbul, the *Working Paper on BSEC-EU interaction and it became an official document named BSEC-EU Interaction: The BSEC Approach*.¹⁷ The document has been drafted by ICBSS. This policy paper underlined the common aims of both these organizations, the fields of cooperation and the goals to be fulfilled by the BSEC using the synergy with the EU¹⁸.

Romania, through the voice of former minister of foreign affairs, Mihai R. Ungureanu, took part on 22 January 2007 at the CAGRE meeting in Brussels, and asked for a Black Sea regional dimension of the CFSP. He mentioned the need for a balanced relation between the Eastern and Southern dimension of the ENP and proposed an extension of the Barcelona Process and the setting up of a Bucharest process, to be included in the ENP.¹⁹

Eventually, the European Commission's communiqué entitled *Black Sea Synergy A New Regional Cooperation Initiative* was issued on 11 April 2007 and may form the basis for future BSEC cooperation, because it is building on the ideas from "BSEC-EU Interaction" document. The EU's Black Sea Synergy stated that "the EU, however, should be ready to strengthen contacts with regional organizations. The EU's Black Sea regional initiative aims at a comprehensive approach including all countries in the region; therefore the wide membership of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the fact that Russia and Turkey are its founding members is a decisive advantage and could substantially contribute to the success of Black Sea Synergy. EU-BSEC links would serve primarily for dialogue at the regional level. This might include meetings between senior officials with a view to better coordinate concrete projects".²⁰ BSEC welcomed this document and prepared its reception using its own mechanisms. The BSEC Approach and the Black Sea Synergy are the two main documents which ensures a common institutional ground for dealing with this region.

Romania and Greece, together with Bulgaria, are the only EU members which are also BSEC

members; therefore they had a common interest in linking, as strongly as possible, these organizations. If Turkey will also join, then the EU will have a stronger presence within BSEC. The Czech Republic, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Poland and Slovakia have an observer status within BSEC. Because some of the BSEC states are participating is the European Neighborhood Policy (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), the cooperative framework becomes more and more important and it's absolutely necessary for the EU, in order to build a Black Sea regional dimension, to have deep and positive relations with BSEC. Eventually, the European Commission applied for and was granted the observer status of the BSEC on 25 June 2007 at the organization's 15th Anniversary Summit which was held in Istanbul.

The Greek proposals contained within the Komotini declaration were partially implemented during the Serbian Chairmanship of BSEC. These proposals included the construction of a ring-road around the Black Sea named "The Argonauts Road", to begin at Alexandropolis, crossing Turkey through the new bridge over the river Evros, skirting the Black Sea and returning to Alexandropolis, the construction of some parts of the Pan-European Corridor X (86 km in Serbia, 33 km in FYROM and roads in Albania) and also the Greek proposal for sea corridors, i.e., connections between the ports of the Black Sea and the ports of the Aegean Sea. Therefore, Greece, supported by Romania and other BSEC states, managed to create connections between the markets of the Black Sea and Balkan countries.

It seems that the key-element for deeper partnership between BSEC and EU would be a closer relation between Brussels and Moscow, thus meaning also that Russia should give up its tendency to divide EU and establish preferential relations with some member countries.

Romania played a significant role in other two initiatives within the Black Sea region: the establishment of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) and the setting up in 2007 of the Black Sea Euro-region, under the aegis of the Council of Europe. All BSEC states are members in the Council of Europe, this is an important factor for improving stability through cooperation. In June 2006, Romania launched the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership, a cooperation initiative aimed at strengthening the dialogue and mutual

confidence among the region's countries. Together with the Community of Democratic Choice and other regional initiatives like GUAM, all of them contributed to the enhancement of regional cooperation and exchanges, fostering a better security environment.

Romania and Greece are both generally satisfied regarding the huge achievements fulfilled under BSEC umbrella, but they also acknowledge some problems which need solutions, like the lack of effectiveness in sensitive realms such as energy infrastructures, proliferation of weapons, frozen conflicts, also the slow mechanism of implementing decisions and the lack of sufficient financial funds. Together with the other members, they will try to improve its activity and expand its cooperation areas, for the well-being of the region's peoples.

We are, now, at the beginning of a new century, which we hope will bring much more cooperation and a more stable environment than the previous one. There is a need for more cooperation in the Black Sea Area and even in the Balkans, of identifying common interests and common visions. Following the end of the Cold War, the international community found new perspectives and new mechanisms for ensuring regional cooperation and stability.

As we all know, the Western Balkans had been an area of confrontation, turmoil and instability for a very long time. Now, the situation seems more stable and predictable, as most of the countries in Western Balkans are on their way to EU and NATO integration. What the community of experts and the policy makers had the opportunity to see, during these long years, is that the logic of cooperation is much more profitable and useful than the logic of confrontation. Those states and also ethnic-religious communities that tries to play a zero-sum game against their neighbors and 'rivals' usually failed in their strategies, had a difficult and economy went bad. All of them eventually understood that the security through cooperation is the best answer to an international environment affected by globalization and by the new risks and challenges. A win-win strategy is the only reasonable solution for a peaceful coexistence of the democratic states. Of course, the strong states, those which had a socio-political cohesion and a workable economy, are in a much better position to enter effective forms of cooperation than the weak or

failing states. The strong ones can rely on the consent of their populations when they decide to cooperate. The democratic consent is the best guarantee for the popular support for inter-state cooperation.

So, the Balkan countries were generally speaking, successful in their efforts to modernize, to transform and improve, and they did it by accepting to play the game of the cooperation, either in an institutionalized form, or in a informal one. But we should remember that the most effective organizations of cooperation have been promoted from abroad. The Stability Pact for South East Europe, the SECI and Royaumont initiatives were all brought by the EU, US and other states and organizations.

Today, the Greater Black Sea Region is in a position that suggests some resemblance with the Balkans ten years ago. There are very different countries, with specific visions and interests, each has its own history and foreign policy, and therefore one cannot speak about a common Black Sea identity.

In contrast with the Euro-Atlantic space, security is not conceived, imagined as indivisible and unique. Usually, each country wanted to enhance its own security by itself or by a limited form of cooperation. Like the Western Balkans, the Greater Black Sea region is a regional security complex. There are patterns of interaction ranging from hostility and mistrust to partnership and even friendship. This reflects historic preferences, happy and unhappy events for each nation. But history should not become an insurmountable obstacle if states really want to forge cooperative ties. Nobody is so radical to stand that the nations should rewrite their history only to improve relations with the other ones, by forgetting sensitive issues, remembrances of discord and hostility. History doesn't have to be neglected because it is a bench-mark, a vital element for a people's identity. Only it should be interpreted in a constructive way.

For those states which had a glorious history of regional hegemony in areas like the Black Sea and the Balkans, it must be clear that the 'animus dominandi' spirit (quoting famous IR theorist Hans Morgenthau²¹) is not well suited for the contemporary world. Hegemony, be it a hard military one or a softer one, usually creates mistrust, rivalry and even hatred. In a globalized world when everybody can see closely what the others are

doing, when the risks of conventional war are diminishing while the asymmetric transnational threats are more and more important, the community of democratic states should always strive for a multilateralist solution to all the regional and global issues of security. Even if there is no Black Sea-Caspian identity, even if the Balkans contain EU and NATO members plus non-members, it must be a common will to assert the 'ownership' principle in a multilateral framework that doesn't exclude other states outside the regions themselves.

As all the IR theorists and practitioners perfectly know, the inter-state cooperation in the "hard" security field, that is military one, is much more difficult to realize than the economic, environmental and cultural one. Military security is still a very sensitive topic in the GBSR. But even in the Balkans the situation is not perfect, as long as not all the region's countries belong to NATO and the EU. Anyway, we have Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro which eventually became PFP countries and are on their way for a possible future enlargement. More than that, Albania and Croatia has been included in a new NATO enlargement wave, their Adriatic Charter proving to be an effective and credible cooperative framework, worth to be replicated by the other states who want to integrate the Euro-Atlantic security space. FYROM also has its chances to be a NATO member and Romania warmly encourages Greece and FYROM to find a amiable solution for their cultural and political dispute.

In my opinion, the lessons of stabilizing the Balkans through institutionalized cooperation are useful also for the Black Sea Area. The existence of BLACKSEAFOR and the SEEBRIG could be a first step in the long way of building an inclusive multilateral cooperative security framework, focused on the military area. It is time for institutionalizing a mechanism of multilateral cooperation much more effective and with a potential of confidence-building.

Therefore, the economic cooperation has been the easiest way to set up closer ties between these states who had the rational interest to create domestic welfare and to be recognized as valuable partners of dialogue by the Western states and organizations. Above all, most of them, especially the new ones, realized that it was vital for their regained independence and sovereignty to avoid

the Black Sea region domination by one single power. Multilateralism has been an effective strategy for the Balkans in the second half of the ninth decade, after the Dayton agreement. For the Black Sea region's states there is a choice between effective and wide multilateralism on one side, and bilateral cooperation with preferred neighbors or with a dominant regional power. In my opinion, multilateralism is more adequate as it brings a sense of common vision and common interests and also it avoids the zero-sum game perception from the excluded states.

The liberal logic of international relations stipulates that cooperation is a rational behavior for those states which does not consider each other as enemies. It's about absolute gains, not relative ones. Sometimes it's better to work collectively if the final output is bigger than that one can achieve by itself. But setting up a long-term and effective cooperation is not easy, because states often mistrusted each other. In an anarchic and dangerous international order, based on the fight for power and security, it was thought that cooperating could be a dangerous game because states were ultimate rivals and only occasionally allies. Being a 'realist', a pragmatic foreign policy decision-maker meant to behave as an egoistic actor, avoiding to put too much trust in a relation with others. That is avoiding cooperation or keeping it at a low level.

Obviously, the new security environment after the Cold War proved that such strategies are of limited utility. As more and more states in the world are democratic and with market economies, they understood that only through cooperation they can increase security and promote welfare for their citizens. So, it is important to find areas of common interests and expected common gains.

One of the most powerful incentives to cooperation in the Black Sea Region was offered by the large oil and gas reserves in the Caspian Sea basin and Central-Asia. To transport these huge quantities to the EU states, one needs security and cooperation in the Black Sea area, and avoiding the facto monopolies instituted by a country.

If the Caspian and Central Asia are one of the main regions where natural energy is extracted, the Black Sea and the Balkans are essential areas for the transportation of gas and oil. Therefore, there is a rational need for cooperation between Black Sea, Caucasus and the Balkan states.

Greece and Romania has a privileged position towards the non-EU Balkan and Black Sea states and their tradition of cooperation and supporting the modernization and democratization of neighboring countries will help them improving the regional stability and also support EU and NATO further enlargements, if this will be the case. Both of them see the Balkans and Black Sea as strategically very important areas and refer to their history and cultural heritage. So, together they can shape EU regional dimensions in these areas and enhance the chances for the European Neighborhood Policy's success.

¹ Nicolae Ecobescu, Nicolae Micu, "Black Sea Multilateral Cooperation: New Stage, Wider Opportunities", in *Romanian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. IX, 2-3, 2003, pp. 246-256.

² Ibidem, p. 248.

³ http://www.bsec-organization.org/main.aspx?ID>About_BSEC.

⁴ Vasile Popa, "Noi Initiative ale Organizatiei de Cooperare Economica la Marea Neagra", in *Impact Strategic*, nr. 3 (24)/ 2007, UNAP-CSSAS, p. 79.

⁵ http://www.acci.gr/trade/No33/TRADE_52_53.pdf.

⁶ BSEC, www.mae.ro.

⁷ Nick Butler, "Energy Security. A New Agenda For Europe", Oct-Nov 2004, *CER Bulletin*, Issue 38, www.cer.org.uk.

⁸ Olexander Pavliuk, Ivanna Klimpush-Tsintadze (eds), *The Black Sea Region. Cooperation and Security Building*, East West Institute, 2004, pp. 139-141.

⁹ http://www.bstadb.org/pdf/Country_Strategy_20072010_Romania.pdf, accessed in July 4, 2008.

¹⁰ http://www.bstadb.org/pdf/Country_Strategy_20072010_Greece.pdf, accessed in July 4, 2008. "Moreover, it applies to all neighbors whether they are potential EU candidates (Albania), accession candidates (Turkey) or new EU entrants (Bulgaria as of 1 January 2007). There has been impressive growth in commercial and investment ties between Greece and new EU members Bulgaria and Romania, spurred

by the prospect of the EU accession process of the latter, but even so there exist many further possibilities, particularly if levels of integration among neighboring EU member countries in western Europe are taken as standards of comparison"

¹¹ http://www.bstadb.org/press_releases/2008/20080608_16am.htm.

¹² Panagiota Manoli, "Greece's Engagement With the Black Sea Economic Cooperation", in *Xenophon Paper*, no. 2, July 2007, ICBSS, Athens, p. 79, <http://icbss.org>. This author considers that Greece, Romania and possibly also Bulgaria will try to create a Black Sea Synergy Working Group within the BSEC.

¹³ The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), June 25, 2007, <http://www.greekembassy.org/embassy/content/en/Article.aspx?office=1&folder=904&article=21032>.

¹⁴ We should also mention that at the Komotini Council, in 2005, Greece managed to include a new issue, good governance, on the BSEC agenda and a new *Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance* has been created. See especially Panagiota Manoli, "Greece's Engagement With the Black Sea Economic Cooperation", in *Xenophon Paper*, no. 2, July 2007, ICBSS, Athens, p. 77, <http://icbss.org>.

¹⁵ Nicolae Micu, "The Policy of Romania Towards The BSEC And The Black Sea Region", in *Xenophon Paper*, no. 2, July 2007, ICBSS, Athens, p. 105, <http://icbss.org>.

¹⁶ <http://icbss.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=189>, accessed in July 2008.

¹⁷ International centre for Black Sea Studies, <http://icbss.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=189>.

¹⁸ N. Micu, "The Policy of Romania Towards The BSEC And The Black Sea Region", op. cit, p. 105.

¹⁹ Romania Officially asks for a EU policy for the Black Sea, January 24, 2007, <http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana>.

²⁰ "Black Sea Synergy A New Regional Cooperation Initiative", (COM [2007]160 final, April 11, 2007, <http://europa.eu.int>.

²¹ <http://www.kentuckypress.com/0813123216> excerpt.cfm, accessed on July 6, 2008.

Coordinator Editors: Commander (Ret) GHEORGHE VARTIC

Editors: Dr. MIRCEA SOREANU, MONA ELENA SIMINIUC

Layout: ELENA LEMNARU

Cover: ADRIAN PANDEA

Tiparul executat la Tipografia Filaret

B 77/13.08.2008