

## **ROMANIA AND THE COMMUNIST BLOC 1964-1968. GEOPOLITICAL ASSESSMENT**

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*The middle of the 1960s has been marked by a pronounced process of integrating the armies of the Warsaw Pact member states, directed, organized and firmly led by Moscow. At the reunion of the chiefs of General Staffs, that took place in Moscow, in February 1966, the Romanian delegation presented its own point of view on the activity improvement of the Warsaw Pact military structures. According to this point of view, the Romanian delegation pointed out the necessity to improve the Status of functioning of the Unified Armed Forces Commandment, in order to correspond with the Treaty's provisions and initial purpose.*

**Keywords:** Warsaw Pact; Unified Armed Forces Commandment; Political Consultative Committee; Military Council; Supreme Commander.

On April 26, 1964, the Bucharest regime issued a declaration that actually represented Romania's clear detachment from the USSR. Prior, in March 1964, an official delegation undertook a visit to China and North Korea, on which occasion Mao Zedong became directly acquainted with Romania's efforts to make the public Sino-Soviet polemic to end<sup>1</sup>.

The so-called "Declaration of April 1964", as it remained known, represented a turning point. It also marked the initiation of the public process of Bucharest's detachment from Moscow, the assuming of a large autonomy in the international arena (notably in the international communist movement), the inauguration of a political trend in foreign relations that would bring to Romania the perception of "mutinous ally" within the Warsaw Pact. It claimed the equality in rights of the Warsaw Pact members, which practically meant the very same thing with not recognizing the Soviet hegemony<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexandru Oșca, Vasile Popa, *România, o fereastră în Cortina de Fier*, Vrantop Publishing House, Focșani, 1997, pp. 136-178.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Deletant, Mihail E. Ionescu, *Romania and the Warsaw Pact 1955-1989. Selected documents*, Politeia – SNSPA, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 64-65.

The Romanian historiography considered the "Declaration of April 1964" as the most important public act of national provenience that fundamentally defined Romania's anti-hegemonic orientation during the following period<sup>3</sup>. The Bucharest regime took measures of limiting the USSR visibility at the level of the Romanian public opinion (closing of the book shop "Cartea Rusă", of the Romanian-Russian Museum, of the Russian language Institute "Maxim Gorki", of the Romanian-Soviet Institute, of the review "Timpuri Noi", the change of the Soviet names of streets, localities and institutions, less classes of Russian language in the school program)<sup>4</sup>.

During the debates occasioned by the "Declaration of April 1964", the Romanian Prime Minister, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, said that things were not too clear within the Warsaw Pact: "There were sent missiles to Cuba. We were not aware of this matter. For the time being we do not make of this any incrimination and do not raise any problem to anybody. The existence of these missiles in Cuba caused some international tension. (...) Within the framework of this tension, after a time, one can foresee a certain policy. The supreme or single commander of the military forces of the Warsaw Treaty launched an order to all the participant armies in this group of military forces that alarmed all of them. In the Warsaw Pact, there is a third article, which binds the signatory states to mutual consultation in international political matters of most importance. I am asking: all these matters would not have justified a consultation like this? Or, at least, the order of alarming the participant state armies would not have to be issued following consultations like these? These are problems! (...) These orders are issued, these actions are implemented, and nobody is asked about. At least, we have not been asked"<sup>5</sup>.

Romania's position within the Warsaw Pact was fairly assessed, among the others, by the defector Czechoslovak General Jan Sejna, who noticed: "In 1963, the USSR began to change the defensive role of the Warsaw Pact to the offensive. The process involved, of course, increased expenditure of arms, which was of great economic benefit to the USSR, the principal supplier of arms to the Pact. The Romanians, however, refused to increase their military budget and declared that they would not carry out additional military manoeuvres, except at Pact expense. Much more dangerous was their assertion that they saw no reason for military expansion since they did not believe there was any threat of aggression from the West.

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<sup>3</sup> Lavinia Betea, *Convorbiri neterminate. Corneliu Mănescu în dialog cu Lavinia Betea*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2001, pp. 82-96.

<sup>4</sup> Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria românilor. De la origini până în zilele noastre*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1992, p. 270.

<sup>5</sup> Apud Alexandru Oșca, Vasile Popa, *op.cit.*, pp. 167-168.

This was heresy, indeed, and the Russian feared, with good reason, that it might spread to the others members of the Pact"<sup>6</sup>.

The analyzed period opened the way to economic cooperation with the Western countries, Bucharest having a series of contacts highly fruitful with the US, France, West Germany, Italy, and UK. After legations have been turned into embassies and the appointment of the first US Ambassador in Bucharest, William Crawford, Romanian-US economic relations acquired new dimensions, unprecedented and simultaneously without correspondent in the communist bloc. Welcoming the US President, Lyndon B. Johnson's policy of "building bridges" towards the communist world, the Bucharest regime proceeded to enhancing the bilateral relations<sup>7</sup>. In the period May, 18-June 1, 1964, the Vice-President of the Romanian Government, Gheorghe Gaston Marin, made an official visit to the US. The outcome of this visit was excellent. On this occasion it has been signed an important bilateral economic agreement<sup>8</sup>.

At the same time, it has been re-established the thread of the traditional friendship between Romania and France, which was to bring about concrete results at several levels. During the visit to France, in July 1964, the President of the Council of Ministers, Ion Gheorghe Maurer approached together with the French officials aspects related to the cultural and economic bilateral relations<sup>9</sup>. During Maurer's meeting with General Charles de Gaulle, the latter promised economic help for Romania if it would be isolated by its "allies"<sup>10</sup>.

Very interesting data regarding the echo of Maurer's visit in France offers General Sejna, who specified: "The Romanians gave the Kremlin no information on de Gaulle's visit, but the Russians had all they needed from their own intelligence sources. We ourselves received a comprehensive report on the visit of the Romanian Prime Minister, Ion Maurer, to Paris for political and economic discussions with de Gaulle. Maurer argued that Romania wanted to pursue its own national course, but could not at present leave Comecon because her economy was too closely tied to it. In the meantime, she was determined to diversify her economy and forge closer links with the West. De Gaulle assured Maurer that France would help Romania to develop her independence and would give economical and political support. He would even sponsor

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<sup>6</sup> Jan Sejna, *We Will Bury You*, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1982, pp. 66-67.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph F. Harrington, Bruce J. Courtney, *Relații româno-americane 1940-1990*, European Institute, Iași, 2002, p. 260.

<sup>8</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1964-1968*, Volume XVII. Eastern Europe, US Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1996, pp. 387-395.

<sup>9</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1964, tome II, (1<sup>er</sup> Juillet – 31 Décembre), PIE-Peter Lang, Bruxelles, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M, Hew York, Oxford, Wien, 2002, pp. 108-111.

<sup>10</sup> Mihai Retegan, *1968-Din primăvară până în toamnă. Schiță de politică externă românească*, Rao Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 54-55.

Romania if she wished to apply for associate membership of the EEC, and France would stand by her, if she was isolated by the communist bloc"<sup>11</sup>.

Referring to a possible military assistance, granted by the French Government to Romania, the Soviet Marshal Rodion Y. Malinovsky declared: "If de Gaulle ever tries to carry out his pledge to the Romanians, we shall know about it before his orders reach the French Commander-in-Chief"<sup>12</sup>. In August 1964, during his last visit to Prague, Nikita S. Khrushchev considered that in case of Romania would attempt to leave the Warsaw Pact, "then our soldiers, not de Gaulle, will have the last word". At Antonin Novotny's declarations, who considered that the Romanians had already generated enough trouble and it would be not bad thing if they were leave the Warsaw Pact, Khrushchev, visibly irritated, replied that Novotny was totally wrong, because "that is exactly what the Romanian leaders want", and "the whole situation would become untenable if Romania followed Yugoslavia and Albania into the anti-Soviet camp"<sup>13</sup>.

The session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact participant states, that took place on January 19-20, 1965, in Warsaw, stands out through the topics approached. This session was the last one in which Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (he died on March 19, 1965, from a rapidly evolving cancer) participated and the first one attended by the new Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev. The Warsaw Pact states assessed the situation generated by the initiative of creating NATO Multilateral Nuclear Forces (MLF)<sup>14</sup>.

The East German delegation submitted two projects to be adopted. The first one referred to the project of a treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The second one proposed that the foreign affair ministers reunion or of their deputies to be turned into a permanent organ with its own legal status.

Regarding the first project, Romania did not raise any objection to the idea of a treaty like this, but to the fact that the issue of this treaty necessitated a lot of time to be implemented, dedication and responsibility and underlined that the parts should have been asked in appropriate time in order to elaborate such a project. The Soviets rejected the Romanian point of view and demanded that the project to be examined.

Concerning the second project, the Romanian representatives argued that the transformation of a consultative reunion into a permanent organism infringed the provisions of the third article of the Treaty. They stressed that

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<sup>11</sup> Jan Sejna, *op.cit*, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>14</sup> Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AMFA), fund 9 Varşovia 3, file 23/1964, Direction 1 Relations, pp. 28-46.

the important decisions that affected the member states common interests are the exclusive responsibility of the party and state leadership in each and every country and not of the ministers of foreign affairs<sup>15</sup>. The objections raised by the Romanian delegation decidedly influenced the decision of rejecting the two proposals. At the same time, the Romanian delegation pronounced in favor of dismantling the two political and military blocs, but the delegations of the USSR and Warsaw Pact other member states opposed that this idea to be included in the session final communiqué<sup>16</sup>.

On the other hand, the Romanian delegation considered that "if we do not do the right things, any of the socialist countries can find itself in the situation of being excluded from the proceedings of the Political Consultative Committee, as it happened with Albania"<sup>17</sup>.

Romania radically rejected the issue of condemning the creation by NATO of the MLF, which actually constituted the purpose of the reunion, to be linked to the Warsaw Pact proposal of concluding a treaty of nuclear non-proliferation. Even if the reasons of the Romanian position, very radical in this matter, except for the rejection of the Soviet monopoly, including in the nuclear domain, have not been sufficiently clarified, it has been common knowledge that Romania perceived the nuclear non-proliferation as being part of a process of general nuclear disarmament<sup>18</sup>. It is quite possible that the Bucharest regime, by the radical adopted attitude, indirectly intended to provide explicit support to China, which had become since October 1964 a nuclear power. As a matter of fact, after 1964, the Bucharest regime undertook actions directed towards defying the Soviet monopoly on the issues concerning the international communist movement, as well as, avoiding the economic integration, as mean to consolidate national autonomy at international level<sup>19</sup>.

After Nicolae Ceaușescu took over the power in March 1965, he continued the policy of detachment from Moscow and displayed an even more daring attitude than his predecessor. Referring to Romania's particular position within the communist bloc, the Soviet General Anatoly I. Gribkov, chief of Staff of the Unified Armed Forces in the period 1976-1989, remarked that "until 1968, namely before the allied troops entered Czechoslovakia, the relations with the Romanian leadership, both at political and military levels,

<sup>15</sup> AMFA, fund 9 Varșovia 3, file 23/1964, Direction 1 Relations, pp. 4-6.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> National Historical Central Archives (NHCA), fund Central Committee (CC) of Romanian Communist Party (RCP) – Section Foreign Relations, file 15/1965, p. 97.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>19</sup> Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trăită*, vol. I, Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 63.

were relatively normal. Once Nicolae Ceaușescu came to power in 1965, Romania's foreign policy begun to change substantially"<sup>20</sup>. General Gribkov considered that "during Joseph V. Stalin's life, the Romanian leadership accepted its situation of subordination to the USSR, also, by copying the functions of Soviet power institutions. In the post-war first years, it did not follow critic reactions towards the Soviet system, the force of inertia was quite strong, as long as there were dispatched Soviet troops in Romania. Their withdrawal from Romania, in 1958, represented a new stage in the country development process, marked by a political doctrine of the Romanian Communist Party towards national self-development, independence, and equality in rights of the Warsaw Pact member states. The Romanian leadership tended to national independence on its own forces. During that period, the economic contacts with the West have been widened"<sup>21</sup>. He noticed that particularly after the "Declaration of April 1964", Romania was referred to in the Western side as a «dissident» within the Warsaw Pact"<sup>22</sup>.

The new Bucharest leader's first visit to Moscow, on September 9-11, actually turned into the first confrontation between Brezhnev and Ceaușescu. On his return to the country, in an informative session, Ceaușescu made a genuine indictment to the hegemonic power, and attacked a variety of extremely sensitive problems concerning the bilateral relations, including the unsolved problem of the Romanian treasure from Moscow<sup>23</sup>.

Presenting the image of the Romanian-Soviet relationships, General Sejna specified: If the Soviets expected an easier time after the departure of Gheorghiu-Dej they were to be disappointed. His death, in March 1965, was the signal for a fresh outburst of anti-Sovietism in Romania from the Politburo down to local Party organizations. One of the first actions of Nicolae Ceaușescu, who became First Secretary, was to reduce dramatically the number of Soviet advisors in the Romanian Army and the Ministry of Interior. He warned the remainder that they would not be allowed to attend any meeting to which they had not been specifically invited, nor would they be permitted to contact any officer directly for information. If they wanted a briefing they must approach the Minister of defense or Ceaușescu himself"<sup>24</sup>.

The middle of the 1960s has been marked by a pronounced process of integrating the armies of the Warsaw Pact member states, directed, organized and firmly led by Moscow. At the reunion of the chiefs of General Staffs, that

<sup>20</sup> Anatoly I. Gribkov, *Sudba Varshavskogo Dogovor. Vospominania, dokumenty, fakty*, Russian Book, Moscow, 1998, pp. 74-75.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> *NHCA*, fund CC of RCP – Chancellery, file 129/1965, pp. 2-15.

<sup>24</sup> Jan Sejna, *op.cit.*, p. 67.

took place in Moscow, in February 1966, the Romanian delegation presented its own point of view on the activity improvement of the Warsaw Pact military structures. According to this point of view, the Romanian delegation pointed out the necessity to improve the Status of functioning of the Unified Armed Forces Commandment, in order to correspond with the Treaty's provisions and initial purpose.

The attributions of the Unified Commandment have been established in the Status of functioning adopted in January 1956 that proved to be obsolete. In order to avoid the transformation of the Pact military ruling structures in supranational organisms initiating interferences that defied the member states sovereignty the Romanian side made several proposals. Those stipulated that the Status of functioning, as well as, the other documents regulating the activity of this commandment should be based on the idea that each country's party and government held the exclusive responsibility for the ruling, endowment and training of all its armed forces, both in war and in peace time, and the founding of the Military Council of the Commandment, as deliberative structure that adopted decisions unanimously. It would be composed of the Supreme Commander that was the President, its deputies, one for each of the member states, and the chief of Staff, as members. The proposals and recommendations made by the Military Council were submitted to the approval of the Warsaw Pact member states governments. Each state contributed with troops that had the capacity to act jointly, and they could be engaged in war only on the basis of a national decision.

During the two already mentioned reunions, at the Soviet proposal, the discussions begun, in order to modify the Status of functioning of the Unified Commandment. The Romanian military delegation agreed initially with the draft of this document, but a series of objections have been made, which were inserted, as an annex, to the Protocol of the defense ministers' reunion that had taken place in Moscow, in May 1966<sup>25</sup>. The Romanian side stressed that accepting to create the Military Council as settled in the draft would have actually signified that the leading of the national armed forces be no longer the responsibility of each and every state's constitutional organs. At the same time, the Romanian delegation stated that the very existence of the institution of the Unified Commandment representatives run counter the principle of member states' equality in rights, expressed its opinion in favor of canceling this institution, arguing that it was not necessary<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Laurențiu-Cristian Dumitru, *România și Tratatul de la Varșovia 1955-1968. Obediență și nesupunere*, "Carol I" National Defense University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 338-345.

<sup>26</sup> Teofil Oroian, *România – un aliat incomod*, în Document. Buletinul Arhivelor Militare Române, no. 2(10)/2000, pp. 53-55.

The Romanian position gained initially an unexpected victory. Most of the Romanian proposals were accepted, in the issued protocol of the reunion being mentioned the contradictory points of view<sup>27</sup>. The Romanian proposals included in the new Status of functioning draft referred to the following: the role of coordination (and not of command) of the Unified Armed Forces Commandment; the subordination of the aimed troops to be used by the Unified Armed Forces, to the national commandments; the officers' proportional representation in the composition of the Staff of the Unified Armed Forces; the nuclear strategic forces of the USSR would not belong to the Unified Armed Forces; the setting up of the Military Council subordinated by the Political Consultative Committee.

At the session of the Political Consultative Committee that took place in Bucharest, in July 1966, the Romanian delegation passed to the Warsaw Pact's member states defense ministries, the Status of functioning draft of the Unified Armed Forces Commandment that nevertheless was not discussed. One can suppose that the Romanian position, as expressed in this draft, run counter Moscow's intentions. Moscow's reaction was quick. First of all, the Soviets adopted the tactic of backwardness. The Romanian requests to include their demands in the discussed documents have been approved and then, in a tacit way rejected. Thereby, at the defense ministers' reunion that took place in Moscow, on May 27-28, 1966, in the Status of functioning draft "there were included most of the principle matters that our delegation elaborated" and, at the same time, "there were excluded certain provisions that did not correspond to our point of view, such as: the Supreme Commander right to control the Unified Armed Forces troops and the right to have his own representatives within the armed forces of the Pact's participant states; the USSR strategic nuclear forces do not belong to the Unified Armed Forces; the creation of the Military Consultative Council subordinated by the Political Consultative Committee, that was to include the defense ministers"<sup>28</sup>.

It was some time until the meeting of the defense ministers' deputies that took place in Prague, on February 29-March 1, 1968. This break was used with success by the Soviet side in order to surpass the Romanian opposition, by avoiding that the Status of functioning to be elaborated and by succeeding in materializing their own intentions through punctual actions, supported by the other minor allies within the Pact. Therefore, in Prague, the Soviet side openly opposed the Romanian delegation's proposal to bring into discussions the Status of functioning draft, advanced in July 1966. "At this proposal – as it was registered in the report submitted by the chief the

<sup>27</sup> *Romanian Military Archives (RMA)*, fund V2, vol. 3, file no. 9/62, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Dennis Deletant, Mihail E. Ionescu, *op.cit.*, pp. 72-73.

Romanian General Staff to Nicolae Ceaușescu – all the other chiefs of delegations and notably, General Sokolov and Marshal Yakubovsky, stated that they were not mandated, they were not ready and there were not the appropriate circumstances in order to reply to the issues raised by the Romanian side”<sup>29</sup>. Actually, on that occasion, the Soviet side imposed the debate on the issues of creating the Military Council and Status of functioning of the Unified Commandment Staff. The above mentioned report testified that “taking into account the way that the reunion proceedings evolved, as well as, the delivered discussions, one can come to the conclusion that the representatives of the other armies of the Warsaw Pact member states wished to solve, by sharing, the issues related to the Unified Commandment, respectively the issues of the Military Council, Staff, Technical Committee and affirmed that all of them agreed to these issues. One can deduce that, for the first time, one tried to solve officially the issue of setting up the different organs of the Unified Commandment, without approaching the essential topic, namely the elaboration of the new Status of functioning of the Unified Commandment”<sup>30</sup>.

Remembering the issues related to the “status battle”, General Sejna noticed: “We were not surprised when in 1966 the Romanians proposed changes in the command structure of the Warsaw Pact. They claimed it was not an organization of equals, but a fiefdom of the USSR; that so-called «United Command» of the Pact did not exist, it was simply the Soviet General Staff. If the Pact was to be really effective, they insisted, it must be reflected in the structure of the Command. They proposed, first, the establishment of a Warsaw Pact Command separate from the Soviet High Command, staffed by contingents from each country; secondly, they suggested that the posts of Commander and chief of Staff of the Pact should be guided by the Pact’s Political Consultative Committee; and fourthly, that while all members should contribute contingents to the Pact, each nation should have the right to retain some of its forces under its own internal command”<sup>31</sup>.

On the context of dissensions within the Warsaw Pact and Comecon, Romania promoted a policy of openness towards the Western countries, incomparably in a much more visible manner than the other satellite-states of the USSR, aspect which was well perceived by the Western democracies. The Romanian demarches in the foreign policy, successful at the beginning of 1967, have been finalized with the establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany, Romania being the only communist country that succeeded in this respect, besides the USSR, that provoked angry of East German Government<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> RMA, fund V2, vol. 3, file no. 14/3, pp. 76-79.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> Jan Sejna, *op.cit*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>32</sup> Alexandru Popescu, *România și cele trei războaie mondiale în arhive diplomatice germane și austriece*, European Institute, Iași, 2002, pp. 233-239.

Nicolae Ceaușescu was to make another defiant gesture during the extraordinary session of the Political Consultative Committee that took place in Moscow, on June 9, 1967, when it was assessed the Arab-Israeli conflict, also known as the "Six Day War". The Romanian delegation, led by Ceaușescu adopted a different position from the other representatives, including Tito, and opposed to the slogan proffered by the other delegations, and particularly by the Soviet one, to condemn Israel, considered the be responsible with the breaking out of the conflict and denounced as an "aggressor". At the end of the reunion, the Romanian delegation was the only one to refuse signing the Moscow Declaration; the adopted declaration condemned the Israeli action and also promised to intensify the political, economic and military support to the Arab countries. Ceaușescu opposed the Soviets, considering that "if we adopt the declaration you proposed, the socialist countries will be isolated from the progressive movement of the West, including from the Western communist parties"<sup>33</sup>. The request to condemn Israel for being an aggressor, as long as, the Arab states waged war with the purpose of annihilating the Israeli state, run counter the Bucharest regime position of recognizing each and every state right to a free existence<sup>34</sup>.

During the Romanian delegation's participation to the proceedings of the General Assembly of the UN, in New York, in July 1967, took place meetings with the US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, and the US President, Lyndon B. Johnson. There were approached issues regarding the Romanian support to opening an unofficial channel of negotiations between the US and North Vietnam, and it was insured that the US and Western states would support the Romanian Minister of foreign affairs candidacy for the presidency of the General Assembly of the UN<sup>35</sup>. In September 1967, Corneliu Mănescu was elected the President of the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly of the UN, being the first dignitary from a communist country and the only Romanian one, to have exercised this high rank function.

On the framework of the Soviet-Chinese split, strong trends of polycentrism, defined as the plurality of decision-making centers within the Soviet bloc which contested the monolithic unity of the communist system. As a process, the polycentrism depended on the affirmation of certain independent national communist parties without very close connections with Moscow. In Western Europe, the polycentrism was perceived as a

<sup>33</sup> Petre Otu, *Războiul de șase zile, o nouă problemă pentru Tratatul de la Varșovia*, în *Revista de Istorie Militară*, nr. 3/2002, pp. 3-7.

<sup>34</sup> Mihail E. Ionescu, „Războiul de șase zile” și relațiile dintre Moscova și București, in *Revista de Istorie Militară*, nr. 1-2/2003, p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Volume XVII, Eastern Europe, pp. 426-435.

synonymous of the independent position adopted towards the USSR<sup>36</sup>. Although it had neither China's potential nor Yugoslavia's positions within the communist bloc, or France within the Western side, one can advance the idea that under certain configurations and circumstances, or after a series of enterprises in the foreign policy, military and economic fields, Romania acquired certain valences that could be perceived as characteristics of what we named the bi-polycentrism<sup>37</sup>.

The historical perspective highlights that, at the beginning of 1968, the economic relations with the West were in full development, the Soviet integration projects within Comecon and the Warsaw Pact were not affecting Romania, and the special relations with China knew an increased acknowledgment.

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<sup>36</sup> Graham Evans, Jeffrey Newnham, *Dicţionar de relaţii internaţionale*, Universal Dalsi Publishing House, 2001, pp. 455-456.

<sup>37</sup> Laurenţiu-Cristian Dumitru, *op.cit*, p. 371.