

"OVIDIUS" UNIVERSITY OF CONSTANȚA
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
PhD FIELD HISTORY

ROMANIA AND AFGHANISTAN

1958-2013

THESIS ABSTRACT

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CONSTANȚA, 2019

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	6
CHAPTER 1. ROMANIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH EASTERN ASIA	
1. Romanian diplomacy in Asian area. Evolutions, actions and results	16
2. Analysis of bilateral relations with central and south eastern Asia states	27
CHAPTER 2. POLITICS, SOCIETY AND RELIGION IN AFGHANISTAN	
1. The historical evolution of the Afghan state. From monarchy to republic	56
2. Multiculturalism and Islam in Afghan Society	109
CHAPTER 3. BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ROMANIA AND AFGHANISTAN	
1. From the beginning of the Romanian-Afghan relations to the collapse of communism in Romania (1958 - 1989)	140
2. Romania's position towards Taliban regime	175
3. Balance of Anti-terrorism war and Afghanistan's road to democracy	204
CONCLUSIONS	221
BIBLIOGRAPHY	226
ANNEXES	256

KEY WORDS: Romanian diplomacy, Asian continent, bilateral relations, Afghanistan, Taliban, terrorism

Romania and Afghanistan have developed diplomatic, economic and cultural ties for 60 years. The two states have established their diplomatic relations on their common interests in world peace, non-alignment, general disarmament, and relations they have had with the Soviet Union. While the Soviet-Romanian relations followed a downward path, starting from a total subordination and reaching a clear distance in later years, the Soviet-Afghan relations had an ascending evolution, Afghanistan being increasingly economically subdued and attracted to fulfill the Soviet ideal. Unlike Romania, which had a diplomatic continuity with U.R.S.S. and followed the same communist path, the situation of the Afghan state, through its very complexity, evolved in a direction favorable to communism, after which it took a radical turn.

The relations between Romania and Afghanistan are based on special characteristics, found in the states that managed to distinguish of the pattern, in one way or another. The features of the two nations are all the more distinct, as they do not add much to the similarities of thought, action and international recognition.

By its own nature, Afghanistan can not be conquered and no foreign will may be imposed on it that would contradict the people's belief. The Great Britain understood this almost 200 years ago, the Soviets stubbornly refused this quality to the Afghan state and paid the price, and the Americans will also understand the defeat twelve years later with the start of the anti-terrorism war. Three great powers from three different continents tried to conquer Afghanistan and failed.

The necessity of setting up the bases of Romanian-Afghan ties has been part of the extensive process of diplomatic expansion on the Asian continent, from the desire of the Romanian state to create an international market and gain many economic advantages.

After the end of the Second World War, Romania and Afghanistan have established diplomatic relations because the Romanian state has reorientated its foreign policy. Unlike Romania, whose internal policy was already established by the Communist doctrine, Afghanistan focused on maintaining a pacifist climate within the country, avoiding engagement in international conflicts at any cost.

The chosen theme is a real interest in the history of international relations and has as its starting point the diplomatic opening manifested by Romania since the late 1950s towards the Asian continent, with the emphasis on the development of relations with

Afghanistan. Thus, it was necessary a thoroughly research of Romania's main spheres of interest to Asia and the importance of the diplomatic ties developed with the Asian states, in general, and Afghanistan in particular. We have succeeded in building a picture made up of parts that seem distinct at a first sight, but put together, projects the image we wanted to achieve. We went from a theoretical and explanatory basis of Romanian diplomacy and its orientation, we continued with a thorough analysis of the main countries with which Romania developed diplomatic relations, then focusing on the historical importance of Afghanistan and its relations with both the neighbors, and with Romania.

The choice of theme is based on three important reasons, the need to know Afghan history as a result of the visit to Kabul in August 2012, the lack of a scientific paper based on the study of the historical sources in the Romanian archives to argue the opening of Romania to the South- Eastern Asia and Afghanistan, as well as the importance of the Afghan state at the international level, which offers challenges and lessons to the world.

The period on which the thesis concentrates begins in 1958, when the Soviet army left the Romanian territory, and Bucharest begin an opening to the Asian states, with the official signing of the Romanian-Afghan act that opened the way for diplomatic relations and ends with 2013, the year before the US Army's official withdrawal from Afghan territory.

In order to achieve pertinent scientific research to satisfy the current requirements of the reader, it was needed the choice and adequate use of research methods and tools. Being a paper based largely on archive documents, statements, official communications, agreements, etc., the scientific research methods are analysis, synthesis, explanation and deduction.

From a structural point of view, the thesis is divided into three parts that coincide with the three chapters.

The first chapter, **ROMANIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH EASTERN ASIA**, structured in two sub-chapters, focuses on the opening of horizons of understanding the interest shown by Romania for the Asian continent.

First subchapter, *Romanian Diplomacy in Asian Space. Evolutions, actions and results* starts from a theoretical examination of Romanian foreign policy after the end of the Second World War.

Starting from the premise that the internal policy of building socialist society and foreign policy are based on a dialectical, unshakable link, the Bucharest leadership argued for the expansion of diplomatic relations across European borders through its obligation to

support the cause of peace globally, friendly settlement of world-wide conflicts, neutrality and progressive trends of the era.

The indisputable assertion of socialism on a global scale, the increase of its role and its influence in the foreign political life were the true foundation that brought Romania to a higher level of bilateral and multilateral relations. The initiatives and measures adopted by Romanian state at international level were based on objective, well-established premises, with unquestionable links at the internal-external level: the nature of the economic and social order, the geographic location, the level of development, the size of the population and the size of the territory , traditions and aspirations of Romanian people.

If at the beginning of the Cold War, Romania was poorly represented internationally, counting only 19 states in 1947, then the number increased to 32 states in 1950, 48 states in 1960, 67 states in 1965, 97 states in 1969 and reaching 119 states in 1974, their number still rising. The diplomatic ties that Romanian state had begun to have with the states of the world materialized in both political, economic, technical-scientific and cultural relations.

Opening up to capitalist Europe and the world was one of the most daring actions that Romania could do at that time, but which also enjoyed a resounding success. The image of Romanian state began to change unquestionably, fueled by the rebellious measures of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej that made the Romanian-Soviet bilateral relations difficult and consumed its ardent desire to promote an independent foreign policy.

Romania's international policy relies on its existence and fruitful development on the expansion of trade and economic exchanges, on the increase of the technical-scientific collaboration, as a vital condition of world prosperity and pacifism. Active participation in the global economic circuit, especially in the fields of production, science and technology, as well as the sharing of political ideas in a continuous international dialogue, reflected in high-level visits and increased contacts between politicians, opened new prospects for diplomatic growth , both of Romania and of the states with which it had links.

Starting from these economic reasons, Romania has expanded its influence and importance among the states of Asian and African continents. Dominated by good economic development at national and world level, Bucharest has launched a large campaign to promote and assist states with poor infrastructure and insufficient education to capitalize on their own resources and riches.

Romania's interest for Asian and African states was argued by its desire for its economic development, diminishing the economic gap between developed and developing countries, and loyalty to a peaceful international climate.

Romania has declared itself for the continuous development of friendship and cooperation relations, for the intensification of the multilateral relations with the states of Asian continent, and welcomed the policies of Asian states to consolidate unified, free and independent states, promoting the way of progress and civilization.

At the time of expanding diplomatic relations with Asian and African states, Nicolae Ceausescu laid the foundations of a world policy direction, mainly motivated by four arguments: cooperation and solidarity with all socialist countries, cooperation and solidarity with developing and unaligned countries; friendship, promotion of relations with developed capitalist countries, and cooperation and development of relations with all states, indifferently of economic, political and social order.

The fourth motivating argument of the foreign policy was the one that established the global character of the Romanian foreign policy, crossing the European borders and giving it a greater legitimacy and possibility of independent development. This argument corresponded to the needs of contemporary life, being a significant tool to remove the risk of a new confrontation, international detente and closeness among the peoples of the world, while at the same time showing real help in material and spiritual progress.

The second subchapter, *Analysis of bilateral relations with Central and South Eastern Asian states*, highlights in detail Romania's international activity on Asian continent, visits made, the main diplomatic documents signed with the partner states, and the importance of these links at economic level, cultural and technical-scientific.

The most important moments of the bilateral relations between Romania and the countries of Asian continent were strongly marked by high-level visits by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceausescu. According to official documents, Romania has managed to establish long-lasting ties with 23 Asian states, including China, North Korea, Japan, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Vietnam, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Kuwait, Lebanon, Siria, etc. Official journeys have been recorded in numerous documents that have attested the importance and attention of these states. For China, important trips were made in 1978, 1982 and 1988. In 1972, 1974, 1982, Nicolae Ceausescu organized a sightseeing tour on Asian continent in several states of importance to Romania.

The revival of the socialist Romania's foreign policy took place in a changing climate, the Soviet Union being caught up in numerous military and ideological conflicts in various parts of the globe, from the invasion of Czechoslovakia to the Vietnam War and the increase of danger posed by NATO member countries on the identity and territorial boundaries of the Soviet bloc. Refreshed by the Nicolae Ceaușescu's visits during his leadership in Asia, in Turkey (1969, 1976, 1979, 1983, 1987), India (1969, 1978, 1987), Iran (1969, 1971), People's Republic of China (1971, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1988), People's Republic of Korea (1971, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1988), Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1971, 1978, (1974, 1975, 1982, 1984), Pakistan (1973, 1975, 1982, 1984), Syria (1974, 1979, 1982, 1984), Lebanon (1974), Iraq (1974, 1982), Japan and Philippines (1975), Jordan (1975, 1982), Kuwait (1976), Laos (1978), Indonesia (1982, 1988), Singapore, Malaysia (1982), Nepal (1987), Mongolia (1971, 1988) and states of other continents, the foreign policy of Romanian state at that time was capitalized in the best possible way.

Established on three levels, the Romanian-Chinese relations have progressed in the system of relations used by the Soviet Union and enshrined in the treaties of friendship, collaboration and mutual assistance between the Soviet Union and Romania and the Soviet Union and China, consolidated in the Warsaw Treaty.

The success of development of mutual relations between the two states was realized due to the decisive role of high-level meetings and conversations for the expansion and deepening of Romanian-Chinese collaboration in all areas of mutual interest.

If with North Korea, Romania shared common views in the struggle for the achievement of global peace, global disarmament and security, in fostering links between national youth organizations, women and trade unions, to expand and diversify economic and technical-scientific relations in culture areas, education, health, tourism, press and sports, South Korea did not represent an purpose in Bucharest's leadership as being harmful and against the interest of socialism because of its links with United States of America.

Despite the involvement and insistence on the leadership of the Republic of Korea to establish a friendship with Romanian state, the bilateral relations between the two states had three distinct stages: rejection (until 1970), of interest (between 1971-1989), and stability and development (after 1990).

Clarifying its bilateral relations with the South Eastern Asian states, Romania was in the category of states that committed itself to the recognition of the independence of some Asian states, crossing to consolidate bilateral relations and opening diplomatic

missions. Until 1989, Romanian state had succeeded in establishing diplomatic missions in most of the countries in Southeast Asia (Afghanistan, Myanmar, China and North Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Japan and Pakistan).

Friendship with India has gone both toward the development of cultural-scientific and trade exchanges, as well as international support. Thus, India supported the reception of Romania in O.N.U. and jointly developed several resolution projects on political issues such as the creation of a Committee for the peaceful use of the bottom of the sea, the international cooperation on the peaceful use of cosmic space, the proclamation of the 1970-1980 period as the International Decade of the Exploration of the Oceans, and the mandate of the 18-nation Disarmament Committee.

The relations Romania has developed with Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Syria have been part of President Nicolae Ceausescu's plan to expand the Romanian product market. Rich in natural resources, oil, crude oil and phosphates, the four states have signed agreements with Romania, protocols and programs designed to help their successful exploitation. Iran, Iraq and the Arab States occupied a significant place in Romanian exports.

Romania's policy on the continent beyond the Urals was the product of vital and necessary changes within the Romanian society. This, without any regrets, can be said to have influenced society much more than any other continent. The visits made especially by Nicolae Ceausescu in the Middle East and Southeast Asia have had a resounding impact on the people and changed the course of Romanian international history.

Papers such as those of Marcel Știrban and Călin Valentin Florea, *Politica externă a României în secolul XX*, Nicolae Ecobescu and Sergiu Celac, *Politica externă a României socialiste*, Ion Ciubotaru, *Politica externă a României socialiste – direcții fundamentale, principii, acțiuni*, contain important information regarding the theoretical vision of Romanian diplomacy: the objective premises and principles of the foreign policy of socialist Romania, the dynamics of external relations, the friendship and the fraternal alliance with the socialist countries, the solidarity and the cooperation with the countries that have won their independence, amplification and diversification relations with the developed capitalist states, the consolidation of the general peace and security - the central objective of the Romanian international activity, Romania's contribution to the strengthening of the international legality, the contribution of the Romanian state to the elimination of the sources of conflict and the peaceful regulation international

championships, supporting the struggle to liberate peoples and their independent development efforts, etc.

The detailed analysis of the relations established by Romania with the states of Asian continent is based on a series of special papers focused mainly on the visits made by the representatives of Romania in Asia. Thus, the most important are *Sub steagul internaționalismului socialist. Vizita delegației de partid și guvernamentale a Republicii Socialiste România, condusă de tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu, în Republica Populară Chineză, Republica Populară Democrată Coreeană, Republica Democrată Vietnam și Republica Populară Mongolă; Pace, progres și colaborare internațională. Întâlniri ale tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, împreună cu tovarășa Elena Ceaușescu, cu conducători de state 1985-1986; În numele păcii și prieteniei. Vizita tovarășilor Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej și Ion Gheorghe Maurer în Indonezia, India și Birmania, 1-24 octombrie 1962; O solie de prietenie, pace și colaborare. Vizita oficială de prietenie a tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, împreună cu tovarășa Elena Ceaușescu, în Indonezia, Singapore, Malaezia, Kuweit și în Pakistan, 21-28 noiembrie 1982; Sub semnul prieteniei frățești româno-laoțiene. Vizita oficială de prietenie a delegației de partid și stat a Republicii Socialiste România, condusă de tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu, în Republica Democrată Populară Laos, 26-28 mai 1978; Pentru prietenie, înțelegere și colaborare. Vizita oficială a președintelui Nicolae Ceaușescu și a tovarășei Elena Ceaușescu în Japonia, Filipine, Pakistan, Iordania și Tunisia. Vizita de prietenie a președintelui Nicolae Ceaușescu în Republica Arabă Siriană și Republica Arabă Egipt, etc.*

The second chapter of the **POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND RELIGION IN AFGHANISTAN** thesis is divided into two subchapters analyzing the general and particular features of Afghanistan. In this chapter, the overall image of Afghan state and society is outlined, from the ethnic division of the population, political evolution, economic development to the role of women in society, and the significance of the Muslim religion that dictates everyday life.

First subchapter *Historical evolution of the Afghan state. From the monarchy to the republic*, it highlights the importance of Afghanistan worldwide, its internal and external myths and confrontations, its visible attempt to cope with ethnic and religious grind.

Thomas Barfield divided the history of Afghan state into the twentieth century in three tumultuous and eventful stages, to which we need to add a fourth stage.

The first stage, framed in a 28-year period (1901-1929), was Shah Amanullah Khan's attempt to modernize Afghan state, initiating a series of Western-style reforms, removing Afghanistan from its characteristic isolation and diversifying diplomatic relations focusing on partnerships with Italy, France, Germany and Turkey.

The second phase of 1929-1978 of Afghan history is divided into two periods. The first, from 1929 to 1973, is characterized by peace and internal stability, avoiding both international and domestic conflicts at any cost, and in the second period (1973-1978) dominated the coup and the fierce struggle for power.

The third period of contemporary Afghan history ranks between 1978 and 1989 and is the most complex. This coincides with the Soviet invasion of Afghan territory. The significance of the 9-year war between the Soviets and Afghans is a special one, enrolling in the dictionary of Cold War conflicts as one of great scale. Dominating the last years of the Cold War, the Soviet-Afghan conflict not only had a fairly long duration, but also affected international relations, playing a crucial role in the collapse of the USSR, directly contributing to the birth of the Al- Qaida and planting the seed of Sept. 11, 2001.

The fourth Afghanistan's historic phase begins in 1989, with the withdrawal of USSR troops and the appearance of a new political force, the Taliban. Until the beginning of the third millennium, the Taliban regime managed to withstand, following the attacks of September 11, 2001 on twin towers and the Pentagon, the United States have triggered military operations, which has been a major change in the Afghan social and political structure due to the presence of the military forces of NATO member states.

Regarding Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors, the most important diplomatic clashes that the Afghan state manifested during the Cold War are those with USSR and Pakistan, Iran, but also the socialist states on the European continent.

Regarding the relations with the Soviet Union, it is assumed that the Russians' interest in Afghan territory has a continuity of more than 250 years. Researchers believe that in the 1730's, Russia turned its eyes to the Afghan territory, but only a hundred years later it began to exert pressure on it. Animated by the desire to reach its old objective, the Soviet Union has actively engaged in Afghan projects in order to economically subjugate the Afghan state and attract it into its sphere of influence.

Since the 1920s, the two states have paved the way for strengthening bilateral relations, signing a Friendship Treaty accompanied by financial support in 1921, a Non-Aggression Pact in 1926, opening the first Soviet consulates at Herat and Mazar-i Sharif in 1928, in 1931 they signed a treaty of neutrality and non-aggression, as well as numerous

military and economic cooperation agreements materialized in the construction of railways, deliveries of locomotives and oil equipment, assurance of technical assistance, etc.

Soviet intervention on Afghan territory has shattered investments of hundreds of millions of dollars and dozens of years. USSR had to content himself with the fact that he had obtained more from Afghanistan in a relatively short time compared to other powers, simply because he continued to accept and use the Soviet economic aid, but also the presence of the advisers sent by Moscow.

In its relationship with the Pakistani state, Afghanistan has, from the outset, displayed a diplomatic resistance that is accentuated by economic and territorial considerations. The pashtun and baloch problem is one of the oldest situations affecting the foreign policy of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. In the pashtun issue, it is very difficult for a foreign state to take part in one of the two problematic states! Both states, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have well-founded reasons to strengthen their identity with the pashtun in their composition. There are justifiable reasons for the division of Pakistan and the reconciliation of the Pashtun population from the Afghan territory, but also for the union with it! The situation is similar to the baloch, pashtun-related population living in the border area between Iran and Pakistan.

Afghanistan's relationship with Iran has been build on a similar history, dominated by common religious, cultural and linguistic ties, and a regional stability and national security policy that is dependent on each other.

Until Mohammed Daud, three disputes have characterized bilateral diplomatic relations: the regulation of Helmand River waters, the intense illegal trafficking at the border of the two with perishable goods, and the position adopted by the Tehran Government on the question of Balochistan emancipation.

If relations with Iran focused on three major objectives that prevented the prosperity of diplomatic ties, the relations with India, most of the time, they were cataloged exemplary.

Regarding its economic relations, the People's Republic of China, the Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Czechoslovakia and, the US, United Kingdom, as well as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank granted considerable credit to Afghanistan long or short term, with or without interest rate for the development of the state.

The second chapter, *Multiculturalism and Islam in Afghan Society* refers to the story of Afghanistan, which began thousands of years ago, whose complexity became known as a result of the amalgam of cultures, languages and ethnic origins of the succession of the great historical empires of Persia, Maur, the Mongol Empire and Durrani, etc., each contributing to the national cultural heritage.

Situated at the intersection of four cultural and geostrategic areas, Afghanistan is a mountainous, arid and a one of the poorest country in the world, with a non-uniform national culture, the population differing in language, religion or race.

From an ethnic point of view, Afghanistan is characterized by the existence of 12 ethnic groups divided into 3 groups: the Persian group represented by Pashtuni, Hazara, Nuristan, Tajik, Baloch, Farsiwan and Atsacija; the Turkish group of Turkmen, Uzbek and Kyrgyz; other ethnicities represented by gypsies (sindi) and penjab.

The Afghan state has been condemned by its own nature to know social disagreements, from ethnic, economic, political problems, to education and women's rights. The history of Afghan state is closely linked to gender differences in the population. Women's rights have always been a politicized area, amplified in over thirty years of conflict and mediated worldwide. The attempts of reforms to modernize and liberalize women's status have been made in several critical periods throughout modern Afghan history and have always met strong resistance.

Regarding the economy, frozen for centuries by the frontiers of a nomadic economy, based mainly on agriculture and subjected to traditional feudal relations, the economic sector has been an obstacle to the development and withdrawal of Afghanistan from a visible past. What automatically left the Afghan state to overcome the underdevelopment was the plan of viable, realistic and realistic strategies for internal conditions.

From a religious point of view, the foundation of Islam has manifested itself in the transmission of religious concepts and doctrines through the holistic observance of the Islamic law called Shari'a, whose sources continually produce problems through a differentiated way of interpretation. The five sources of Shari'a, the Koran, Sunnah, Qiyas (analogical reasoning), Ijma (consensus) and the principle of public welfare, are the source of spiritual and ethical, authentic and singular knowledge.

Afghan education has always raised great problems for the international community, just because the illiteracy rate has reached alarming numbers, and educational discrimination between women and men has raised even more. From an educational point

of view, Afghanistan was a special case, and three important aspects dominated the educational system from the very beginning: the role of Islam in education; education for girls; governmental control over Islamic education

Historically, there is a consistent international bibliography that analyzes the history of the Afghan state as a whole, or key moments of its evolution over time.

One of the most comprehensive analyzes of Afghan history is written by Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, illustrating the events within the state and the features that define it, internal and external politics, economy, education, religion, etc. Hafizullah Emadi's book, *State, Revolution, and Superpowers in Afghanistan*, is complex because in his five chapters he manages to draw a well-drawn picture with the main elements of both internal events and the influence, help or problems of neighboring powers superpowers. In the volume of researchers Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner, *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, the chapter on the Afghan state outlines in detail the relationship between the state, Islam and ethnicity in the context of changes in political, economic and historical realities.

Regarding the Romanian historiography regarding the Afghan state, one of the few Romanian researchers who have made an overall analysis of Afghanistan is Doru-Claudian Frunzulică. His analysis focuses on aspects of the history of the past century, historically, politically, geopolitically, and the success of Romania, or rather, the success of Romanian troops on Afghan territory.

Another researcher who managed to combine the most important elements of the Afghan state is Cristina Alexandrescu. In his work, *Afghanistan, between myth and reality*, the author briefly follows the stages of today's Afghanistan's formation, with its global implications, from religion, ethnicity, women's rights, inherited, transformed or imposed political regimes.

The third chapter, **BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ROMANIA AND AFGHANISTAN**, chronologically structured in two periods, 1958-1989 and 1989-2013, aims to bring to the knowledge and to analyze the development of the relations between two states with different structures, evolutions and localization and the importance them on the international relations arena. The analysis is a comprehensive one, which implies the interest of each state in the development of the other, the independent and simultaneous evolutions of the two states, as well as the underlying reasons for these long relationships.

The first subchapter, *From the beginning of the Romanian-Afghan relations to the collapse of communism in Romania (1958-1989)* proposes an argumentation

introduced in the plan of bilateral Romanian-Afghan relations. The structure of this chapter is composed from the stages of the establishment of the Romanian-Afghan relations, namely 1958 with the signing of the documents that decided the bilateral relations at the legation level; the year 1969, which involved the lifting of the legacy at embassy level; the year 1973, with the collapse of the monarchy and the opening of new approaches in relations between the two states and 1989, as a reference in the radical change in the treatment of political, economic and social relations.

The post-World War II period laid the foundations for strengthening relations between the socialist states and led to the founding of new ones between states with different political and social regimes. This is also the case for Romania, which has set as a priority the expansion of the diplomatic relations network with the countries of Southeast Asia, implicitly with Afghanistan.

Established on the basis of principles of mutual respect for national sovereignty and independence, non-interference in domestic affairs and equality of rights, Romanian-Afghan diplomatic relations have brought about a number of benefits: the richness of Afghan territory (coal, salt, gold and precious stones, copper, zinc, tin, nickel, natural gas and oil) have been successfully exploited by Romanian specialists; the resolution submitted by Romania in 1965 on the promotion of the ideals of peace and understanding between peoples by young people within the United Nations or the Romanian proposal of 1969 on the codification of treaties were strongly supported by the Afghan state, etc. From a diplomatic point of view, Romania and Afghanistan have a rather long historical thread, the relations between them stretching over a period of 60 years. Romania, as an important player in the international relations arena, saw in Afghanistan a state of great strategic importance, established diplomatic, cultural, social relations with it and tried to capitalize on its maximum amount.

The Romanian-Afghan relations specifically refer to the involvement of the latter in oil and construction projects, the sale of cars, the granting of scholarships to young Afghans, mutual support at international level, the facilitation of the visa process, the conclusion of an agreement on the line cultural and press exchanges, the organization of a joint venture for cotton, sugar beet and sunflower, the establishment of a permanent commercial office in Kabul, the granting of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan as a result of the natural calamities of the early 70s, the capitalization of medicinal plants from Afghanistan, establish links between the High Council of Theologians and the cults in

Romania, the participation of Afghans in various courses, seminars, congresses and conferences organized on the territory of Romania, etc.

The other two subchapters, *Romania's position towards Taliban regime, the Balance of the Antiterrorism War and the Afghanistan Road to Democracy* covering the period 1989-2013, are looking at a topical issue with roots in the distant past that seems endless. They broadly develop the major challenges Afghan society faces in the context of the emergence of a new ideological opponent on the international arena. The subject discussed in this last part implies a detailed understanding of the causes that triggered an antiterrorist war within Afghanistan. What was the logic of the emergence of this new adversary within a state misted by its own inability to develop and homogenize society as a whole? The two subchapters deal with the way in which it was possible for the Afghan state, which at the end of the 1980s enjoyed sympathy from Western states against the backdrop of the Soviet invasion, to become a theater of operations with impact and to represent the major threat to world security.

The civil war broke out after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghan territory has multiple causes, of a political and social nature, and has manifested itself in several stages. The first stage, which began in 1973, refers to the coup d'état that ended the 230-year-old monarchy, set to lay the foundations for a new political system of the republic and to propel the country in a modern way of development.

The establishment of the new regime, which has become unpopular and variable, defined by the continuity of internal struggles and the impossibility of the Kabul government to centralize power at national level, has led to the creation of the second phase of the Afghan civil war. The end of the Soviet invasion, coming to the Afghan power of the Mujahedin groups and the establishment of an Islamic regime was a temporary settlement of the civil war and defined the third stage of this bloody internal conflict. Thus, we can conclude that the end of the Afghan monarchy has made the economic and social development of the state much more difficult, and has visibly weakened the political foundation, constantly and permanently attacked by the dangers of the states concerned.

The return of Osama bin Laden as guest of the Taliban in May 1996 was the event that would change the fate of Afghanistan, transforming this civil war into a terrorist one. Bin Laden's presence in Afghanistan, under the protection of the Taliban, gave him the chance to continue the war against unbelievers by issuing on August 23, 1996 the "Jihad Declaration Against Americans Occupying the Two Sacred Places, Mecca and Medina of Saudi Arabia."

The turning point that radically changed the fate of Afghanistan, propelling it into the global scene as the main terrorist state was the 11 September 2001 bombings against the two twin towers in New York.

The reaction of states and international bodies has been rapid and imminent. While the United States described the attacks on the twin towers as war crimes, and clearly stated that revenge on this attack would not distinguish between those who organized them and those who house the perpetrators, the other world states, implicitly the North Atlantic Alliance partners have offered their support in helping the attacked state and punishing the aggressor. For the first time since NATO's implementation, Article 5 was invoked to provide immediate assistance from all Member States. The United Nations Security Council also adopted Resolution 1368, which recognizes the "inherent right to self-defense and collective self-defense" in Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Romania condemned terrorist attacks and publicly supported anti-terrorist operations on Afghan territory. Although Romania was not one of the NATO member states at the time of 2001, its decision to engage with the United States and the other member states was a major step in supporting the bid to join the structures of the North Atlantic Alliance.

As early as 21 December 2001, by Decision no. 38 of the Romanian Parliament, its personnel and technical participation was approved at ISAF with a mountain hunting company, a NBC company, 15 military doctors, and the means by which it set the objectives of the mission was made available to the Romanian Government. A month later, on January 28, 2002, the military police platoon headed by Lieutenant Colonel Gheorghita Teodorescu and the crew of the aircraft left for mission to Afghanistan.

Romania's contribution to solving the Afghan crisis by participating in the missions of international military structures is real and complex. The courage of the Romanian soldiers, fighting side by side with the Americans and Europeans, has demonstrated that the Romanian state is able to rise to the highest expectations and to meet the standards imposed by the West. Anchored in the execution of thousands of missions and trained in a wide range of activities, from counterinsurgency and intelligence operations, to research missions and removal of explosive mines, as well as development projects consisting of bridges and roads, schools, farms, etc., the Romanian staff was able to cope with the challenges posed by the Afghan territory and its aggressors.

The events of 11 September undoubtedly played an important role in bringing the international community to Afghanistan, as reflected in support for the Bonn process and

the Tokyo meeting. They have brought Afghanistan to the forefront of global attention and have generated a new goal among Western states to firmly re-launch terrorism.

The war in Afghanistan in 2001 ended decisively. The state institutions that existed collapsed during the war years. The state lost its monopoly on power, the national economy collapsed and was replaced by a series of local economies dependent on neighboring states, there was no macroeconomic policy, the currency collapsed, service delivery was almost non-existent, and to survive, the Afghans returned to family systems. Some have even been forced to develop illicit survival strategies such as corruption, smuggling, etc.

Although the expulsion of the Taliban has been smooth, the history of Afghanistan has shown that the country has revolted against any foreign power that has remained there, as happened against the British in the 19th century and the Soviets in the 20th century, if not immediately within one year. Bin Laden himself was sure that after the United States invaded Afghanistan, Afghans would provoke a guerrilla war, a repeat of the one against the Soviets, but that did not happen because they needed protection from the factions that had destroyed their country.

The situation of Afghan society continues to be problematic today. The population does not live with the fear of a NATO insurgency or air strike, but fears hunger and worries that families will no longer resist a winter.

Although there is a variation of Islamic democracy, the antagonism of the Afghan people hampers the positive evolution of the state and society due to its too conservative nature, the lack of education to the extent of the current challenges and the existence of major cultural differences of ethnic groups. However, the Afghan domestic situation has changed a lot in recent years. Much of the school population enjoyed jobs in US companies, which meant an increase in living standards or even an opening to political asylum in the United States.

Between a part of the population receptive to change and Western influence and a more oriented part towards conservatism, there will always be a conflict that is the main reason for Afghan economic, political and social return. The only way Afghanistan could overcome its condition would be the balance and mutual respect of ethnic and religious groups, those living in rural and urban areas.

The third chapter of the thesis is based mainly on the research of archive documents within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the specialized articles.

Official documents in the Diplomatic Archive of MFA contain information that sometimes contradicts each other but have always highlighted the interest of the MFA for Afghan territory and have shown that every time Bucharest initiates projects and insists on expanding relations at multiple levels.

Despite the unfavorable directions of Afghanistan's relations with neighboring countries, the Romanian ambassador appreciated Romania's relations with Afghanistan as indispensable, continuing to take up diplomatic information and send them further to Bucharest. Indispensable were the information obtained officially or unofficially by the Romanian ambassador in the circles he was part of both in Tehran and Kabul.

Until 1979, the existence of the few dossiers strictly refers to the Romanian-Afghan relations, the way of their establishment and the ways of development, since the 1980s, the vast majority of documents focus mainly on Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and on the actions taken by the great powers to resolve the conflict.

In the first 21 years of bilateral relations, the contacts between Romania and Afghanistan aimed at creating a solid framework for helping the Afghan state in the field of oil exploitation and drilling, the education of young Afghans in this field and the most active participation of Romanian specialists in projects construction.

The 70 public access files in the MAE archive manage to bring to the fore three major issues: the Romanian-Afghan relations itself, Afghanistan's relations with neighboring states and other world states, the Soviet invasion of Afghan territory.

The information contained in various notes, reports, telegrams, information, congratulations on various occasions, official invitations are grounded in the discussions held annually by the Romanian ambassadors accredited in Afghanistan with the Afghan heads of state, various ministers and prime ministers state and business people, etc .; in the discussions between Romanian ambassadors and Afghans in various Asian and European states.

Analytical or contradictory, the basic documents in the research of our subject, helped us to produce pertinent images, presented in their objective form, becoming in time an eloquent and truthful study. Thus, at first glance, the conclusions of the doctoral thesis seem simple, easy to draw and all-encompassing, but the subject is unprecedented and requires a lot of attention in the elaboration of a final note. The thesis proposes in its entirety an analysis of the Romanian diplomatic orientation towards the central and south-east Asian region, the causes and results of this direction, focusing on the Afghan state, its

history and evolution, the challenges to which it was subjected, the nature of the Romanian-Afghanistan and development.

By carefully examining the archive documents within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one can conclude that the bilateral relations between Romania and Afghanistan, developed over a period of 60 years, had five stages.

The first timeframe between 1958 and 1969 coincides with the period of transition from legation to embassy. Under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania has focused its attention on knowledge, proximity and setting of important and realistic objectives with Afghanistan.

The second stage recorded between 1969 and 1979 was the moment of Romania's involvement in Afghan projects. Concluding cultural agreements on the press, helping the Afghan people by sending food, medicines, etc. as a result of the drought of the 1970s, Romania's interference in industrial development projects was only some of the objectives of the Romanian diplomatic agenda.

The third period, 1979-1989, was marked by a markedly increased difficulty of the Romanian-Afghan bilateral relations, amid the URSS's intervention on Afghan territory. Due to the lack of financial resources, the internal struggles between the Soviets and the Afghans, the attention of the Kabul leadership was focused on solving these urgent problems and less on the development of relations with Romania. Despite Bucharest's insistence on the Afghan government to honor invitations to various conventions, conferences, and specialization courses, they have suffered a financial denial.

In the last two stages, from 1989 to 2001 and 2001, the relations between the two states were contradictory. If, during the Taliban regime, Romania was among the states that did not recognize the Afghan government, since 2001, with the launching of military operations against terrorism in Afghan territory, the Romanian state has been involved both with NATO members against insurgents and with projects humanitarian assistance of the Afghan population, supporting the process of normalization and post-war reconstruction.

The chronological review of the events and events revealed that the theme provides an analysis of the relations between Romania and Afghanistan. We have shown through facts and analysis that diplomatic relations exist between Romania and Afghanistan. Even the invasion of the Soviet troops on Afghan territory or the anti-terror war waged by Americans against it did not put an end to the continuity of the Romanian-Afghan bilateral relations, because in one way or another, Romania was constantly active in Afghan society.

Even if it took the part of the NATO member states and the anti-terrorist coalition, Romania managed to get involved in humanitarian, training and protection projects for the Afghan population. No one can dispute this merit and can not diminish it!

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