

Florin Anghel, *Construirea sistemului "Cordon Sanitaire". Relații româno-polone, 1919-1926 / The Construction of the "Cordon Sanitaire" ("Quarantine Line") System. Romanian-Polish Relations, 1919-1926*, ed. a II-a, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2008, 316 p.

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In the year 2008, the "Cetatea de Scaun" Publishing House of Târgoviște published the work of the historian Florin Anghel, *Construirea sistemului "Cordon Sanitaire". Relații româno-polone, 1919-1926* (The Construction of the "Cordon Sanitaire" System. Romanian-Polish Relations, 1919-1926), second edition, summing up 316 p.

The work deals with and analyzes the evolution of the political and diplomatic relations between Romania and Poland during the period 1919-1926, interval which, though limited chronologically, is extremely complex and full of significances.

The years 1918-1919 constitute the period when these two countries were reborn on Europe's map (Poland became an independent state, and Romania acquired its national unity). The year 1926, in point of the Romanian-Polish relations, is the year of the negotiation and signing of the Guarantee Treaty between Romania and Poland.

The main topic of this work, namely the analysis of different aspects of the Romanian-Polish relations (political, economic, military and cultural) has been rigorously dealt with by the author. By the well-thought analysis of different

documents and official acts coming from the diplomatic archives from Romania and Poland, and also by deepening the study of the Polish and Romanian historiography, this work completed by Florin Anghel is original, completes the previous knowledge of the Romanian historiography on the relations between these two states and peoples. A quite interesting image on the evolution of the relations between Romania and Poland was made as well using the press as historical source.

The book is structured in eighth chapters, eventually valorizing a complex bibliography based on unpublished and published sources, and general and special works.

The first chapter of this work, entitled *Historical considerations on the Romanian-Polish relations* (p. 17-44), approaches the historical premises of the Romanian-Polish relations beginning with the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century until the years 1919-1926. In this section, the author deals in several subchapters with the initiation of the relations between Romania and Poland (*The role played by the town of Lwow in the history of the two peoples; The importance of knowing Poland through the efforts of the Romanian savant Nicolae Iorga; Main aspects of the Romanian and Polish historiography – concerning the*

researches completed until then on the topic). The inventory of the historiography on this issue is complex and represents a necessary departure point for all those who will focus on the study of the Romanian-Polish relations during the third decennium of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (p. 37-44).

The second chapter of this work, called *Reason and pragmatism: common regional interests and the conclusion of the alliance* (p. 45-93), includes several subchapters (*Great Romania and Poland Restituta. Geopolitical aspects; The issue of the Romanian-Polish frontier; The beginning of the diplomatic relations – November 1918 – August 1919; With the eyes on the East: projects and interests, 1919-1920; Romania and the plans to share Ukraine, 1918-1920; Romania between the “Red Star” and the “White Eagle”, 1919-1920; Romanian humanitarian operations in support of the Polish refugees from Russia and the Near East, 1919-1920*) dealing with special aspects of the Romanian-Polish affinity after the end of the First World War, following the French line of the so-called “cordon sanitaire” (quarantine line), and also with some aspects not known so far in the Romanian historiography concerning the position of Romania and Poland concerning USSR and Ukraine, the common effort to push back the Bolshevik bands from the frontiers and the conclusion of an alliance between the two states, as well as the humanitarian aid given by Romania to the Polish refugees from Russia and the Near East during the civil war (1918-1921).

The third chapter of the work, entitled *The issue of Pocuția and the Romanian military administration of the province (May-August 1919)*, p. 95-116, approaches in two subchapters (*Premises ; The Romanian administration in Pocuția 1919*) the situation of the province until May 1919, and also the actions taken during the period May-August 1919 by the Romanian state in Pocuția. The author deals with the issue of the Romanian administration in Pocuția (May-August 1919), based on unedited documents, the issue itself being unknown in our historiography.

The fourth chapter of this work, *Political-military alliance: strategies and achievements*, is structured in several subchapters (*The political*

*convention of defensive alliance between Romania and Poland – March 3, 1921: negotiations, content, significances; The military convention of 1921; The military convention of 1922. The Polish strategy for obtaining influence in SE Europe; Common projects and military strategies during the period 1922-1926*).

The fifth chapter, called *Projects for commercial roads towards the Balkans and the Black Sea* (p. 153-174), based on unedited information, through its two subchapters (*Commercial roads and strategic axes for the extension of the Polish influence in the Balkans and the Black Sea Region; Polish transit transport projects between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea*), introduces the reader in certain aspects of the Polish influence extension in the Balkans and the Black Sea area. The commercial convention between Romania and Poland, concluded on May 2, 1921 in Bucharest, regulated the economic relations between the two allies. However, the commerce between Romania and Poland did not enjoy a spectacular evolution during the period between the two World Wars.

The fourth chapter of the book of the historian Florin Anghel, called *From the conclusion of the alliance conventions (1921) to Locarno (1925)*, p. 175-209, approaches the issue of the political-diplomatic relations between the two states during the period 1921-1925. Consequently, the reader discovers some special aspects of the Romanian-Polish relations: the Romanian diplomacy and the Baltic states, Pilsudski's visit in Romania (September 14-17, 1922), that of king Ferdinand and of queen Maria in Poland (June 26-29, 1923), the conclusion of an agreement between Romania, Poland and France, which remained only at the stage of the intentions.

The seventh chapter of this work is made up of several subchapters (*Poland in front of the Little Entente constitution process; “Intermarium” against the Little Entente: the sources of the Polish refusal*) and deals with the regional interests of each alliance partner. Poland and its tendency towards Hungary led to its withdrawal from an alliance with Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania.

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The last chapter of the work under analysis, entitled *Together for the future of the alliance: the new Romanian-Polish treaty (1926)*, is structured in several subchapters (*The negotiations concerning the Guarantee Treaty between Romania and Poland. Divergences, solutions and the common perspective on the future and regional policies; Compared analysis of the texts of the 1921 Convention and the 1926 Treaty; The ratification of the Guarantee Treaty: between the end of the liberal government and the coup-d'état of Marshall Pilsudski*) and approaches the activity that took place in Warsaw

and Bucharest for the negotiation and signing of the 1921 Guarantee Treaty. The use of unedited sources, as well as of edited sources, some of them unknown to the Romanian historiography, makes the work we have analyzed so far extremely valuable. The author's concise and vivid style, his capacity of analysis and synthesis, and the daring approach of some delicate issues of the history of the Romanian-Polish relations of the 1919-1926 period represents an unquestionable success in historiography for the historian Florin Anghel.