

The Romanian-Chinese relations in the XXth century

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The Master's degree paper „Romanian-Chinese relations in the twentieth century” represents an attempt, relatively for the first time in our country, of research, analysis and presentation, with the highest possible accuracy and objectivity, *sine ira et studio*, of the evolution in the last century, of the Romania links with the „Middle World Kingdom” – *Zhong guo*, - as is called China, too – as well as to decipher the prospect of the Romanian-Chinese ties in the future.

Although, in the world history, the intensity and substance of the contacts of one state to another states were influenced decisively by the geographic, ethnic, religious factors, material and strategic interests, as well as by the ambitious of the different epoch leaders, the relations of Romania with China were witnessed – despite the huge distance of *san wan li, bai shan, qian shui* (tens of mountains, hundreds of rivers, and thousands of *li*) and great differences concerning their fundamental data: territorial and demographic dimensions, historical developments, language, mentality and different vision on the flow of time and world – unexpected moments of close nearness, co-operation and reciprocal support, bilaterally and on the international field, for the benefit of both countries and peoples.

In addition, the building up and maintenance of good relations with China, in all domains, have given to Romania an original shield for defending its national independence, as well as a special situation, to be „cultivated” by the great power of the world, to play an particular political – diplomatic role in doing mediation among „the bigs” and *ipso factum* to participate to the evolving process of the new strategic forces in the international arena.

Significantly is, also, the fact that the mutual support between Romania and China in consolidation their national independence was an important factor in the breakdown of the socialist camp monolitism, and in the shaping of the 8th and 9th decennium historical events.

In this framework, the doctorate paper attempts, on the basis of some relevant documents, ones original, from the Romanian and Chinese archives (specially belonging to the Romanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs), on the basis of the analysis of the some adequate books and studies published in

Romania, China, or in the Western countries, as well as on the personal, direct experiences, during years of studies in the „Beida” University (Beijing Daxue) and of the diplomatic activity in China – to reveal the historical course and thread of the Romanian-Chinese relations in the twentieth century and their prospects in the future. For this purpose, the master’s degree paper presents a classical structure, with four big chapters: Historiography aspects; Introduction in the Chinese history, geography and civilisation; Romania and China: acquaintance, nearness and complex evolution of the bilateral ties; Romania and China in the future; as well as the Bibliography and 55 Annexes.

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Relating to the historiography aspects concerning the Romanian-Chinese ties, these were a real challenge, because the number of the works and studies published by the Romanian authors about China and Romanian-Chinese links, mostly for the first part of the twentieth century, is very low.

However, significant for this period, there are many data and proper analysis included in the works: „Far East war” (1905) written by the famous historian Nicolae Iorga; „Aspects of the Chinese civilisation and thought, from the very beginning until now” (1917) by prof. Mihai Negru; „Traveling through China from Shanghai to Beijing” (1930) by prof. Vasilescu Nottara. Our work to identify some original documents in the Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, unpublished until now, regarding the 1880-1949 period of the Romanian-Chinese contacts, has given more accuracy and historical content of the evolution of the Romanian-Chinese ties in that period.

Certainly, for 1949-2000 period, the sources regarding the links between Romania and China are richer, in the consonance with the amplification and diversification of the relations between the two countries; In addition to the numerous documents, being kept in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs archives, there are the collections of the newspapers „Scântea” and „Renmin ribao” as well as the documents of the former Romanian Communist party and another official papers, concluded on the occasion of many political, economic, cultural bilateral events.

Books and studies of some Romanian, Chinese and foreign authors, like: George Calinescu, Ovidiu Drîmba, Jian Bozan, Yang Zhao, Su Kaiming, Arthur Cotterell, Danielle Eliseff, Michael Lynch, Henry Kissinger etc., have completed the documentary sources regarding China and Romanian-Chinese relations.

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The second chapter of the work, in accordance with the title: „Introduction in the Chinese history, geography and civilisation” is aiming to prepare the Romanian reader with the fundamental data regarding the history, geography and civilisation of the „Middle World Kingdom” and to specify more what has represented and what represents the Far East Romanian great dialog partner.

For the better understanding the difficulties of the official relations establishing process between Romania and China and the complex evolution of these ties, a supplementary emphasis was put on the revelation of some modern China history complicated moments, some less known or exposed subjectively.

Thus, the paper of doctorate doesn't avoid to approach some delicate aspects, which some Chinese or foreign historians, maybe from ideological reasons, have been omitted or treated less accurately, like:

- the intervention of the Communist International League in China for setting up the First Communist-Guomindang Front;
- the influence of the struggle for power between Stalin and Trotsky on Chinese left movement;
- the impotence of the League of Nations to stop the Japan aggression in the North-East China;
- the birth of the Nanjing Wang Jingwei puppet government;
- the attempts of United States to avoid the civil war between Chinese Communist forces and Goumindanig forces;
- the Stalin's antipathy towards Mao;
- the Cultural revolution – a tragedy of seven and eight decenniums of modern China;
- the elimination of the „Gang of four”;
- the „ping-pong diplomacy” in facilitating the way for the normalisation of the Chinese-American relations;
- the premises of today China re-launching, as a big political, economic and military power, through the application of the „modern China patriarch” – Deng Xiaoping's vision: *jing-ji gai-ge* (the implementation first of the economic reform and after the political one) *dui wai kai-fang* (China opening to outside world) *jing-ji te-qu* (special economic areas) blaming the theory „honest and poor communism” and carrying in practise the strategy „one Chinese features socialist country with reach people”, using a simple and genial tactics to attract and stimulate the initiative of

the common people (doesn't matter if the cat is black or white, that who catching mice is valuable).

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The third chapter, named „Romania and China: acquaintance, nearness and complex evolution of the bilateral relations” represents the fundamental part of the Doctorate thesis. Divided in four subchapters it exposes extensively and thoroughly, on the basis of the investigated documents, the great moments, which offered substance to the history of the twentieth century Romanian-Chinese relations, as well as others numerous significant situations, facts and details.

In this framework, it is depicted the first moment of the establishment of the official ties between Romania and China, following the official letter of the Romanian king, Charles Ist (1866-1914) sent, in April 1880, to the China's emperor, Guang Xu (1875-1908) and the positive answer to it, received via Paris – where Mihail Kogalniceanu was acting as Romanian diplomatic mission plenipotentiary minister -, through which China recognised the new status of Romania, as independent state.

Then, it is emphasised the idea that, although the Romanian Chinese links were established relatively later, these didn't appear suddenly, on the empty, unknown soil.

The works of the well known Romanian chronicle writers: „Moldova State Chronicle” by Grigore Ureche; „Moldova State Chronicle since the Aron King's reign”, by Miron Costin; „Some important words” by Ion Neculce, as well as the translated books „The story of the Asian continent countries and emperors”; „Geography and history of China” by the school masters Costea from Brasov Schei and respectively, Amfilohie from Hotin, have widespread in Romanian States since the XVI and XVII centuries the first knowledge about China. Subsequently, Nicolae Milescu Spataru, the first Romanian citizen who reached the „Middle World Kingdom” (may 20th, 1676) leading a diplomatic mission of the Russian tsar, Alexei Mihailovici (1645-1676) to the Chinese emperor, Kang Xi (1661-1722) and especially, the three books written by him: „Travel to China Diary”, „China's Description” and „The Secret report”, have had a great echo in that historical epoch, bringing a valuable contribution for the acquaintance of China in Europe, and through the translation in Romanian language of the mentioned books, by the erudite Constantin Cantacuzino, in Romania, too.

The master's degree paper presents, further on, October 18th, 1939 moment, when the Romanian Government, having Armand Calinescu, as

prime minister and Grigore Gafencu, as minister for foreign affairs, has decided, after a long negotiations, to establish official diplomatic relations with China and to receive the accreditation, for the first time in our country, of a Chinese diplomatic envoy, Lone Liang.

Then, the paper presents the Titulescu moment, when the famous Romanian diplomat expressed, on the occasion of March 7th, 1932 Geneva Nations League extraordinary session, the Romanian position to support China, following the Japanese aggression in the North/East China. He especially drew attention on the firm respect of the article 10th of the Nations League Pact, which provide the observance of the territorial integrity of any League member subject to an aggression, as well as the help of the victim state.

The doctorate work adds the remarks made by Nicolae Iorga, than Prime Minister, „Superb speech which no other world personality didn't dare to say“ and by the China's representative: „The justice voice have been heard through the voice of Romania”.

The Master's degree paper doesn't omit to mention(maybe, for the first time publicaly) the 1940 and 1941 years Romanian diplomatic blunders towards China, through which Romania recognised and accredited official diplomatic envoys in the puppet states, created by Japan on the Chinese territory: „Manzhouguo“ (Manciuria) with the capital Changchun, led by the ex emperor Pu Yi, under the new name, Kang De, and the „Republic of China“, with the capital in Nanjing, led by Wang Jingwei.

Because the Romania's Tripartite Pact adhesion (November 23^d, 1940) didn't impose a previous condition concerning the Far East situation, one considers that the two mentioned diplomatic mistakes were within the tendency of some, conducted foreign policy and diplomacy, Romanian leaders, to join conjunctionly and to pleased the big powers of the respective historical periods, aiming their own selfish advantage, without observing the long term national interest. Unfortunately, this kind of attitude can be noticed even in our times.

The paper reflects original diplomatic situation of Romania, unrevealed until now by Romania historiography, when the United States of America represented, after the Chinese legal Chongqing Government broke the relations with Romania (July 10th, 1941) the interests of China in Romania until June 2^d 1942; it was maybe a premonition or historical coincidence of the well-known 7th decennium events.

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Passing to 1949-1989 period, the Master's degree paper put an emphasis on the October 5th, 1949 moment, which marks the establishment of official diplomatic relations and the accreditation of the permanent ambassadors, through the exchange of the official letters between the then minister of foreign affairs: Ana Pauker and Zhou Enlai. Then, the doctorate work presents : „the red period” of Romanian-Chinese solidarity, based on the proletarian internationalism, as well as the premises and the process of becoming closer countries in supporting the strengthening of their national independence, on the basis of the mutual respect and under the 60 years conditions of the communist bloc splitting and the increasing of the Soviet-Chinese conflict.

Further on, the Master's degree thesis reflects the political-diplomatic support asserted by China for the defending Romania's sovereignty, under the august 1968 tension circumstances, created by the possible invasion of Soviet troops, following the sympathy attitude expressed by Romania towards „Prague Spring movement” and the condemnation of the Soviet and other four allies socialist countries „brother intervention“ in Tchechoslovakia.

It is emphasised the historical period peak of the Romanian-Chinese relations, when Romania was considered by China the fourth friendly country among an *sui-generis* hierarchy of China's world hundred friendly countries, and the volume of the commercial exchange reached 4 billions Swiss franc and a plenty of joint co-operations in almost every field, were carried on.

Then, the paper underlines Romania's privileged diplomatic situation, as initial factors of the ties normalisation process between the United States of America and China, as well as in supporting China to recover its legitimate place in the United Nations, Security Council and other UN specialised institutions.

The eighth decennium internal opposite evolution in the two countries, has led to a certain involution of the bilateral ties.

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After 1989, when initial Romanian new authority tackled a relatively „cold“ attitude to China, the relations between Romania and China witnessed, starting from 1991 a process of full normalisation, on a

pragmatic basis, within any ideology, but never reached again the 1968-1982 historical peak.

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The fourth chapter „Romania and China in the future”, reveals the actuality, in a metaphoric way, of the XIX century premonition of the French emperor Napoleon, „Quand la Chine s’éveillera le monde tremblera” and, especially, the real tendency of China’s evolution as a world superpower.

Concurrently, one makes a realistic analysis with both favourable and unfavourable elements and one identifies an area of intersection of the two countries common interests and aspirations, which represents and will represent the premises of a sure prospect of the Romanian-Chinese relations further on development.

The active development of the ties with China doesn’t contravene, in any way, to the new status of Romania, as N.A.T.O. member and of the future EU member, as well as to the close collaboration with U.S.A. and the European developed states.

The amplitude and the substance of the Romanian-Chinese relations will fluctuate, depending on the international situation evolution, but, also, on the ability of the Romanian leading factors to wisely promote, within the new international circumstances, on the pragmatic, sound, serious and mutual advantage base, the overall relations with China.

With and without active ties with Romania, China was, is and will be a great power and civilisation.

Without large relations with China, Romania will lose a supplementary support for its national interest on economic, financial, cultural, political and even strategic field.

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Finally, one can appreciate that the Master’s degree paper „Romanian-Chinese relations in the twentieth century” represents a first attempt for researching, analysis of the historical course and thread of the ties between Romania and China, as well as to explain the 60’, 70’ years surprising situation of the close Romanian-Chinese co-operation with mutual great benefits especially for Romania.

The investigation of the numerous and diverse Romanian, Chinese and foreign documentary sources, mostly the 30 original documents discovered in the Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, included entirely in the framework of the 55 Annexes, has offered, in an extensive measure, substance and historical authenticity to this Master's degree paper, as a modest pioneer in revealing the hundred years history of relations between Romania and China.

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