

The Euphoria of the Return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria and Rousse's Sociality

Lyubomir Zlatev

The euphoria of the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria and Rousse's sociality: The author of the present statement is trying to reveal the reaction of Rousse's sociality from the return of South Dobrogea to the mother country on the background of the general enthusiasm spread in the country as a result of the big success of Bulgarian diplomacy.

Key word: South Dobrogea, North Dobrogea, (Old Dobrogea), the Treaty of Craiova, Internal Dobrogea's Revolutionary Organization (IDRO).

INTRODUCTION

The signing of the Treaty of Craiova between Bulgaria and Romania on 7th September 1940 put an end of unjust peace treaties – the Treaty of Bucharest from 1913 and the Treaty of Neuilly from 1919 which had amputated primordial Bulgarian territory – South Dobrogea. Actually it was the biggest success of Bulgarian diplomacy between the two world wars because it had brought peaceful revision of Versailles system in favour of Bulgarian national cause. A significant number of historical researches on this issue were published. The aim of the present statement is to enlighten the vision of Rousse's society and especially of the activists of Dobrogea resistance movement to this act with more details on the background of nationwide celebrations of the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria.

EXPOSITION

The wave of the robberies and the murders of Dobrogea had intensified since the spring of 1940. The "scientific" propaganda activity of the district's past was accelerated. Dozens of Romanian scientists-historians, politicians, journalists, teachers and priests proved that Dobrogea had been Romanian land since the antiquity and later a lot of Dobrogea's people though descendants of Romanian were under Bulgarian influence and they still had Bulgarian names. The aim of this campaign was to persuade the international society that Great Romania was national unitary state. In this respect very important role for nourishing plenty of unscientific historical theses played the lecture "Dobrogea – the land of rising sun" and especially Professor N. Yorga who as a king advisor with his lecture on 4th April the same year had given signal for a total attack to Bulgarianism in the region. [22, p. 79].

The population of the region was subjected to open repressions after the starting of the negotiations with Romania for the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria. During June and July the tax authorities actively went out all settlements and gathered state revenues for the whole financial year which ended on 31st March 1941. These citizens, who had the opportunity to pay and didn't pay, were beaten and tortured in different ways. The tax officers pilfered what they could find from the houses of the insolvents. The requisitioning committees continued to travel through the villages and they also robbed Bulgarian population. There were a lot of Romanian thunderbolts who declared that they would leave Dobrogea after proper revenge. The position of the mobilized soldiers in Romanian army was very rough. They were captured as hostages against eventual attacks of Bulgarian troops or detachments in some camps around Constanta. [2, a.e. 469, l. 1242-1243]. During July 1940 in Dobrich Romanian officers kidnapped four girls from v. Senokos and other soldiers kidnapped the wife of a peasant from v. Stojer. [2, a.e. 89, l. 346]. At the same time Romanian colonists equipped wholesale. [4, p. 386-387, doc. №62.]

At the end of August the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Popescu appealed to Romanian settlers of South Dobrogea in order to persuade them that the negotiations with

Bulgaria in Craiova were going "favourable and light" and they needn't leave the district immediately. However, he proposed to Romanians in this region without waiting to start to move all their agriculture machines, seeds, the production of the harvest and the livestock, which at the moment they didn't need, across the Danube in confines of the "old kingdom". On 24th August it was written in a statement in Romanian press that according to king's request the heart of his dead mother had been moved from the castle in Balchik to the cathedral in Bucharest. [15, №6438, 24 August 1940]. That was clear landmark for the direction in which Bulgarian Romanian negotiations in Craiova would develop.

At the end of August three Varna's journalists travelled to Dobrich. The first thing which made them an impression was the fact that the old forests had been fully destroyed. Although it was the work season they didn't notice not a single peasant in the field during the whole journey. Passing through some villages they were surprised that there wasn't any movement of people. They saw the stampede of the luggage cars at station in Dobrich which loaded train compositions with food, agriculture technics and machines to Romania. According to Varna's journalists Romanian colonists were scared by the future return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria and "steal everything" and "nothing stopped them". They found that the process of the evacuation had been preplanned and concerning this the most drastic were the excesses in Silistra where had been even made killings of immigrants [12, №47, 2nd September 1940].

In order to save itself from the Tsintsarski bands, Bulgarian population was forced to hide in the forests. The saved refugees in Rousse told startling details for the plight in which Bulgarians of South Dobrogea had been prolapsed. The gendarmes helped Romanians to get Bulgarian agriculture machines and household goods in many villages. Dozens ships and barges which day-and-night shuttled between the two banks of the Danube were loaded in the ports in Silistra and Tutrakan. Up to the utterance of one affected refugee after the withdrawal of Romanian settlers in Dobrogea "there wouldn't be left even a hen". The protests of Bulgarian government to the Romanian authorities for limiting the outrages of the Kucovlach bands didn't have tangible results. [15, №6450, 4th September 1940].

The leadership of the illegal Internal Dobrogea's Revolutionary Organization (IDRO) activated again in the last months before the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria. The terror over Bulgarians by Romanian authorities and local nationalist organizations in the region reached its culmination after the occupation of Bessarabia and North Bukovina by the Soviet Union. Having in mind this fact, IDRO prepared and sent big detachment to Dobrogea which in July and August 1940 was settled down in the forest "Karakuz" in the land of v. Bradvary, Silistra. The detachment had the contacts with the members of the organization in Silistra and had connection with The Central Committee of IDRO in Rousse. Its aim was to collect information for the position of the south part of Dobrogea and to save Bulgarian population from outrages. The location of the detachment was known for Romanian authorities but obviously they couldn't organize the prosecution of the detachment [2, a.u. 89, l. 1243; 24, p. 337]. This initiative of IDRO turned out to be really well-timed because even after the signing of Craiova Treaty on 7th September [5, p. 8-28] Romanian violences over Bulgarians in Dobrogea, connected with the robbery of their property and livestock, didn't stop. [1, ф. 3К, он. 1, a.u. 119, l. 1-4; 6, p. 52].

The recent found letter to Doctor Ivan Penakov from the partly saved archive of Ivan Hadzhiivanov, the chairman of IDRO, in a relation with his speech on radio Sofia on 5th September 1940 provoked great interest. Penakov agreed in his speech with the made concessions from Bulgarian side during the negotiations in Craiova but however he insisted on efficient measures for protection of the interests of North Dobrogea's Bulgarians, he himself was one of them. [23, p. 344; 20, p. 415]. It became clear from the letter that Hadzhiivanov had known Doctor Penakov and they had been very close friends. It made impression the extremely critical attitude of Hadzhiivanov to Bulgarian rulers who in his opinion hadn't defended strong enough the national interest. Analyzing the speech of

Penakov, Hadzhiivanov sarcastically told that its theme should have been "The Great funeral of Dobrogea and the ruin of Bulgarian spirit in the Old Dobrogea" (North Dobrogea – n. a.)". He condemned Penakov that he had pronounced the words: "to wait for the bell ring of joy and the resurrection of Dobrogea" but in fact it was "the funeral of Dobrogea's question". Finally the letter ended: "Now the news that Carol (Carol II, Romanian king – n.a.) has abdicated" spreads and if God still loves Dobrogea's people, hopefully a revolution will start and stop the signing of such a disgraceful contract with which we have nothing else left to give to the king!" [3].

After signing the Treaty of Craiova the authorities of South Dobrogea received strict orders to save themselves from the outrages over Bulgarian population and didn't destroy and rob government and public buildings because according to the Treaty all damages would be paid by Romanian state. The invasions of the leaving South Dobrogea settlers reduced but Bulgarian population also self-organized itself by creating groups of self-defense [15, №6455, 9th September 1940].

The news of the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria arrived with a bell ring and a cry of fabric sirens in Rousse on 14.30 on 7th September 1940. After the speech of the Prime minister Bogdan Filov on the radio impressive impromptu rally was crowded in front of the club of Dobrogea's organization on 19 p.m. Half an hour later thousands march was created under the sounds of military music and it passed through street Alexandrovska and reached the barracks of the Fifth Infantry Regiment. Here Iv. Hadzhiivanov and the commander of the regiment Syrnev pronounced speeches. The march went again to the German embassy across street "Alexandrovska" and across street "Borisova" in order Rousse's sociality thanked German and Italian governments for the return of South Dobrogea to mother Bulgaria. The march ended with a popular celebration in the center of the city in front of the Freedom Monument [1, ЧП №764, p. 107-109; 10, №3025, 8th September 1940].

On the next day- Sunday, 8th September – King Boris III, the queen, Princess Maria Luisa and the crown prince Simeon from the balcony of the castle in Sofia accepted the parade of the army and the spontaneous hundred thousand rallies of Sofianties under the sounds of the hymn "Oh, Dobrogea's land". Formal meetings and marches were organized in almost every big city of the country but especially imposing were these in Southeast Bulgaria – in Rousse, Varna and Shumen [9, №12031, 8th September 1940; 16, p. 278].

Groups from the villages, dressed with national garbs and waved national flags, has begun to arrive since early dawn on Sunday in Rousse. A solemn service was celebrated in front of the Freedom Monument. After that passionate patriotic speeches were pronounced by metropolitan Michael, garrison commander general Stefanov, the Mayor of the city - Kiril Starcev, the president of Ladies Dobrogea's organization An. Bozhkova and the president of organization "Dobrogea" and the president of IDRO Iv. Hadzhiivanov who put a bouquet of corn from Dobrogea at the foot of the monument. [10, №3026, 9th September 1940].

On 8th September in Varna in front of the cathedral in the presence of innumerable citizenship Varna's and Preslav's metropolitan Yosif with the whole priestly clergy celebrated the liturgy. The commander-in-chief captain I rank As. Toshev, the Mayor Eng. Mustakov, the head of Varna's Chamber of Commerce B. Abadzhiiev, the Brigadier Colonel Georgiev attended the meeting. The representatives of the management of the local Dobrogea's organization and of the local German colony were met with admirations [11, №76, 8th September 1940]. Eight teams of cameramen and foreign correspondents, who showed the entry of Bulgarian troops in South Dobrogea, arrived in Varna. [6, №7822, 20th September 1940].

Just on the night of 7th September in Shumen, after the public announcement of the news for the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria, a torchlight procession was conducted by the Mayor Hr. Haralambiev. After the multithousand rallies, speeches were pronounced

by the Mayor and by the Governor St. Penev on the next day, after that a solemn service had been celebrated by the vicar general Stefan Popov [13, №36, 17th September 1940].

On 21st September Bulgarian troops entered South Dobrogea. At 9 o'clock a.m. the same day along Tutrakan's road, connecting Rousse with Tutrakan, the symbolic transmission of the district between the Defense Minister lieutenant-general Theodosiy Daskalov and Romanian general Zamfiresku was conducted [9, №6384, 22nd September 1940]. In Tutrakan the Mayor of the town Hristo Markov met Bulgarian troops with a bread and salt. [8, p. 30 and the next].

Some days later, after the signing of the Treaty of Craiova in Dobrich, Citywide Committee was established and it elected Constant attendance called Central Dobrogea's Committee in order to perform representative functions for the whole population of the district. Five committees were formed to the committee and the major tasks for them were saving of the public order in the period of powerlessness and solemn meeting of Bulgarian government bodies. The care for the maintaining of the order and billeting of the officials were assigned to the alternate host and "The Legion St. Karadzha", i.e. to the youth division of IDRO in Dobrich created earlier during Romanian regime [9, p. 100]. Bulgarian fleet parts were met extremely solemnly in Balchik and Kavarna. [22, p. 104 and the next pages].

It was found initiative committee for the meeting of Bulgarian troops in Silistra too. George Karageorgiev, Hristo Andreev, Stefan Kucilov, Dragan Bobchev, Encho Tokushev participated in it. The committee dealt with a lot of marauders, saving the property of many citizens, and sent protest to the Prime Minister of Romania about the outrages of retreating colonists. The safety of public order in Silistra was due to the members of the committee till the arrival of new Bulgarian administration. [14, №50, 22th September 1940; 6, №7827, 26th September 1940].

From Bulgarian side the recognition of the role of the outstanding Dobrogea's activists was the appointment of the outstanding activists of Dobrogea's organization – Asparuh Aydemirsky and Doctor Iv. Penakov as councilors of the General-Manager of Dobrogea's administrative area lieutenant-general George Popov with a decree of the Council of the Ministers from 10th September 1940 [19, p. 582-583]. On 11th September Asparuh Aydemirsky pronounced a heartfelt speech for the role of the emigration in the liberation struggle of Dobrogea on Bulgarian radio [18, p. 302].

After the initial euphoria of the return of South Dobrogea the activists of IDRO in Rousse evaluated that their main aim – the liberation of whole Dobrogea – hadn't already realized. These moods were best illustrated later in the letter of Iv. Hadzhivanov, written by him as a head of Rousse organization "Dobrogea" and addressed to the Prime minister and the Council of Minister. It was outlined in it that "Dobrogea is single and indivisible and it is the cradle of Bulgarian state and that Tutrakan, Silistra, Dobrich, Balchik, Kavarna, Cherna voda, Kyustendzha, Babadag, Isakcha and Tulcha are the pearls which has decorated the crowns of Bulgarian kings during the ages". And slightly below it was outlined with an accent: "We well understand that we can get part of what we want but we better know that we won't get something which we haven't asked for. Don't let us to the criticisms of the history". [1, ЧП №1107, l. 42-43].

The government gave attention in the letter to the fact that the outrages over Bulgarian population by the retreating Romanian authorities from South Dobrogea didn't stop. It was also noted that although the present circumstances forced the division of Dobrogea, it had to be remembered that Bulgarians still lived in its North part and in the future it would be needed to protect the national and civil rights against denationalized experiments and against the colonization of foreign ethnic elements from Romania. At the end, it was made an invocation to the government to appoint as clerks in the returned Dobrogea's territories only staff from "the elite of Bulgarian patriotic intellectuals" [1, l. 43].

The representatives of the other nationalistic organizations and these from the Union of the Front Soldiers, the Union of the Reserve Officers and All Bulgarian Union

“Father Paisios” also reproached to the government after the days of the signing of the Treaty of Craiova. N. Mushanov and Professor P. Mutafchiev were very critical to the question for the exchange of the population and they also noted that there was a real risk of the exorcism of Bulgarians from North Dobrogea. But the main part of the Deputies of the National Assembly accepted the reasons of the Prime minister that the final refusal of this territory and the mandatory deportation of Bulgarians from there was the necessary sacrifice for realization of the national interests which would compensate with the transformation of South Dobrogea into strong “fortress of Bulgarianness”. Even the left in the face of BRP which position about the national question was always fluctuating and was under Communist productions evaluated the Treaty of Craiova as a “right decision”. Even though the nuances and the differences of the positions of Bulgarian sociality about the various aspects of the contract, some historians and public continued to defend the historical truth about the ethno-cultural background for the return of North Dobrogea to Bulgarian national area. [20, p. 276-278].

CONCLUSION

The process of the administrative placement of Dobrogea newly liberated districts was accelerated by the creation of Rousse and Varna districts during the summer of 1941 [7, №164, 29th July 1941]. The return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria during the autumn of 1940 undoubtedly was primarily due to the skilled diplomacy of Bulgarian state. Rousse’s sociality met this act with joy and satisfaction but the activists of the legal and illegal Dobrogea’s organization didn’t hide their big concern for the remained Bulgarian population under Romanian rule in North Dobrogea.

Notes

- [1] SA- Rousse, F. 3C, r. 1, a.u. 119; PP №764; PP №1107, l. 42-43.
 [2] State Military Archive (SMA) – V. Tarnovo, F. 23, r. 1, a.u. 89; a.u. 469.
 [3] Personal archive of Ivan Hadzhiivanov
 [4] Historical sources of Dobrogea 1919-1941. v. 2. Editor P. Todorov S., 1993.
 [5] St. record. XXV ONA, I extraordinary, session, 2-nd session from 21st September 1940.
 [6] Varna’s post, Varna.
 [7] State newspaper.
 [8] n. Dawn.
 [9] n. Peace.
 [10] n. National Struggle, Rousse.
 [11] n. Last News, Varna.
 [12] Morning post, Varna.
 [13] n. Shumen’s municipal news, Shumen.
 [14] n. Black Sea, Varna.
 [15] n. South, Plovdiv.
 [16] Beshkov, L. Dobrogea during the ages. Dobrich, 1999.
 [17] Boychev, P. The Meeting of the Liberation Troops in Tutrakan on 21st September 1940 - 50 years from the liberation of South Dobrogea. Research Collection. Tutrakan, 1991.
 [18] Milachkov, V. Notes of Dobrogea’s activist Asparuh Aydemirsky about his conviction of National Court 1944-1945. – Dobrogea, 1992, №9.
 [19] Milachkov, V. The public activity of Dobrogea’s activists after 1940. V. 4. V. Tarnovo, 2007.
 [20] Petkov, P. Bulgarian sociality and the return of South Dobrogea to Bulgaria during 1940. – Bulgaria, The Balkans and Europe. Collection in the honour of Professor Doctor Simeon Damyanov (Veliko Tarnovo, 24-26th September 1991). V. Tarnovo, 1992.

[21] Radev, V. The Meeting of Bulgarian Authorities and the Troops in Silistra during the autumn 1940– 50 years form the Liberation of South Dobrogea. Research Collection. Tutrakan, 1991.

[22] Todorov, P. Craiova Treaty and the epilogue of Dobrogea's revolutionary organization. – 50 years form the liberation of South Dobrogea. Research Collection. Tutrakan, 1991.

[23] Todorov, P. The Liberation Struggles of Dobrogea. Dobrogea's revolutionary organization 1925-1940. S., 1992.

Contact Information:

Associate Professor Lyubomir Zlatev, Department "Pedagogy, Psychology and History", University of Rousse "Angel Kanchev", tel. 082 507 637, GSM 0886 418 210, e-mail: lubomir_zlatev@mail.bg

The paper is reviewed.

РУСЕНСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ „АНГЕЛ КЪНЧЕВ“
UNIVERSITY OF RUSE „ANGEL KANCHEV“

ДИПЛОМА

Програмният комитет на
Научната конференция RU&SU'13
награждава с КРИСТАЛЕН ПРИЗ
“THE BEST PAPER”
ЛЮБОМИР ЗЛАТЕВ

автор на доклада
“Еуфорията от възвръщането на Южна Добруджа
към България и русенската общност ”

DIPLOMA

The Programme Committee of
the Scientific Conference RU&SU'13
Awards the Crystal Prize
"THE BEST PAPER"
LYUBOMIR ZLATEV
author of the paper

“The Euphoria of the Return of South Dobrogea
to Bulgaria and Rouse’s Sociality ”

РЕКТОР
RECTOR

проф. д-н Христо Белоев
Prof. DSc Hristo Beloev

26.10.2013