

Sicht stärkste sich die Kommunistische Partei erwies.

Die Arbeit ist weitehin auch eine politische und soziale Geschichte Griechenlands. Sie zeichnet sich durch den Reichtum der Quellen, die tiefgreifende Interpretationsweise und die differenzierten Schlußfolgerungen aus, die gewisse "Vorurteile" in der griechischen Geschichtswissenschaft abbauen. Ein unentbehrliches Hilfsmittel für alle, die sich mit der Geschichte Griechenlands beschäftigen.

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SPYRIDON SFETAS

Sherman David Spector, *Romania at the Paris Peace Conference. A study of the diplomacy of Ioan I. C. Brătianu*, ed. The Center for Romanian Studies, The Romanian Cultural Foundation, Iași 1995, pp. 355.

Romania emerged from World War I with its size and its population more than doubled, the obstacles to a Greater Romania overcome by the tenacity of the Romanian Premier in resisting the efforts of the Allies to renege on their 1916 promises.

Dour, intractable, rigid, possessing a logical mind and clearcut opinions, Ioan Brătianu had the most extraordinary talent for diplomatic acrobatics and intrigue; he was a superb actor, a master of timing, and an ingenious dissimulator. From 1914 to 1916 he executed one of the most notable acts of political tightrope walking. Equally uninfluenced by the promises of Germany, the blandishments of Russia, the pleas of France, and the loans of Britain, he for two years refused to deviate from a policy of more or less impartial neutrality and awaited the opportune moment. This neutrality wavered on two calculations: a wish to arrive in time for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and an effort to earn as much as possible at the expense of the belligerents. Idealistic considerations such as justice, liberty and international rights left him indifferent and somewhat scornful. The war to him was simply a supreme chance for extending boundaries and increasing the security, prestige and importance of Romania. Accordingly, he advised the Crown Council of August 1914 before hostilities commenced that Romania would await the most favourable bid before taking sides; tried to obtain concessions from Austria-Hungary by playing the threat of intervention; took advantage of every Allied disagreement on Balkan policy and turned it to his gain at Russia's expense; flirted with the Central Powers; and finally secured from the Allies promises of territory that made the dismemberment of Austria-

Hungary inevitable.

Brătianu expected a reserved seat on the Supreme Council and was angered when the Allies excluded him and relegated Romania to the ranks of the "small powers" which were unrepresented at the final disposition of their claims. He resisted the dictates of the Allied leaders and by rejecting all compromise entangled them in contradictions that accentuated their bickerings and rivalry and their failure to repudiate or honour the Alliance publicly. Brătianu could see that the Allies had no means of enforcing their decisions in Eastern Europe because war-weariness and mutually antagonistic aims had hindered inter-Allied occupation. Indeed, by the winter of 1918-1919 the liberation and unification of all Romanians had already been proclaimed and Greater Romania was already established. More skilled than any of the Big Four and, unlike other elected statesmen, not accountable to public opinion for his acts nor under any necessity to defer to his opponents at home, Brătianu fought to retain what Romania had been promised and had already acquired. The infusion of Wilsonian ideals of liberal democracy into peacemaking made Romani's position one of particular difficulty and ambiguity, but since Allied statesmen were neither united as to policy nor faithful to their decisions, Brătianu found conditions most favourable for his tactics of resistance, delay and skilful bargaining. When he proceeded alone to implement the Allied promises the shocking lack of unity among the Allied governments was revealed. In August 1919 their mask of hypocrisy and equivocation was removed and the brief flirtation with ideals was over. In view of Romania's military resources, strategic location, raw materials and position in the new balance of power, the French now moved swiftly to accommodate Brătianu's maximum demands before the Italians could intervene in their own interest.

Romania's success was due indirectly to the Americans' inexperience in Realpolitik and to their subsequent defection from the Peace Conference. Equally significant was Russia's absence —as a result of the collapse of the regime— without which Romania would certainly not have acquired so much territory from enemy and ally alike. But Russia was still his neighbour and Brătianu should have realised that only by a far-sighted moderation of his territorial claims would Romania keep what she had won.

This work offers much to historical research, being supported by rich archive material which the writer has used to good effect.