

BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY FACULTY
ROMANIAN ACADEMY-CLUJ BRANCH
„GEORGE BARIȚIU” HISTORY INSTITUTE

***Politic and Economic Dimensions of the African
Continent.***

***The Romanian-African Relations in the Totalitarian Regime
and their Post-Communist Reshaping***

Scientific coordinators,

Prof.Univ.Dr. Adrian Ivan

C.S.I Dr. Lucian Nastaș Kovacs

PhD. Candidate

Șipețean Cristian-Constantin

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Keywords: Africa, Romania, communist regime, Cold War, foreign policy, trade, economic development, MDG's, European Union.

In most cases, African's states evolution during the colonial period until their entrance in the influence spheres of the two blocks during the Cold War was treated as a controversy and widespread subject. Some specific data are missing and the positioning in an analytic and integrated manner of those that exist requires a long time effort and generous resources. This is why, most of the research papers existing in this field are just focused on a sequential analysis. The central theme of this research is the Romanian-African relation during the period 1960-1990, having in parallel a contextual analysis of a macro-frame in which these relations are developing, especially in the totalitarian period.

The research paper has taken a final form developed in two levels, one concerning the African continent evolution and one evolving a study case on Romania's relations with these countries. It was difficult to analyze African states policy during the Cold War without examining the colonial period (as a result a form of western heritage printed on these territories), the time of independence (in many cases the root of conflicts in Africa from then until today) and their political and economic characteristics (especially concerning natural resources) that influenced the spheres of influence that were built during the Cold War and the interests of the two blocks on them.

The first chapter analyzes the situation of African countries from the colonial period, the progress made by them, and the massive structural and cultural changes that resulted in this territory. Are highlighted civilizing services (infrastructure development, railways, ports, urban planning), but also how these were paid through exports of raw materials headed for European metropolises. The paper further highlighted the emergence of national liberation movements which increase administration costs and that after about 80 years of colonial rule, most of these colonies would be free. Factors which caused a major impact in these areas were analyzed in terms of changes brought in these countries and beyond specific national features, some factors have generally shown such as the colonization of these African territories with European origin population or African migratory waves that were generated by economic centers and urban setting.

Following this analysis were presented national liberation movements and the moment of achieving independence in African states, but not in terms of multitude of events in resistance movements on the African continent at the end of the colonial period, but with a short analysis of models of political organization and the ideology that made possible the manner in which African populations have found forms of collective action to redeem their

territory. It was equally necessary to analyze some aspects that facilitated understanding foreign policy dimensions of the African countries after independence and the manner in which they have built relations with other countries in the world through Hirschman-Herfindahl index model.

Chapter II introduces the Cold War, the emergence of the two blocks and how African countries have continued to remain elements of rivalry and competition. In the case of the African states, the competition was more intense than ever and aspirations of the main actors were easier to understand because the struggle between these two blocks has assumed not only power relations but rather a clash between two worldviews: the communist vision versus capitalist vision. Africa became the scene of political and ideological conflict with models of action more complex: competition between ideas, effective political infiltration and even help by support grants becoming outward expression of this type of conflict. Although the Soviet Union recognized the strategic importance of the African continent, it took some time to decide to act.

The second chapter is continued by focusing attention on Romania, finding it as a totalitarian state ideology embedded in the communist bloc, but with a network of commercial and political relations highly developed by itself. Often not well defined, but in most cases based on political rather than economic interests, these relations with Romania were preferred by the African states due to the fact that it hasn't no unjustified focus on domestic issues in these countries and economic criteria was the only reason. Romania has initiated a number of projects in African mining, agriculture, civil engineering and industrial projects. The hallmark of trade between African countries and Romania (and the rest of centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe) are joint ventures and joint economic commissions. In many cases the economic cooperation was delayed until it was confirmed a clear interest in the African state resources in question. From a political perspective, the communist regime always pleaded for noninterference in the internal affairs of these countries and therefore Romania was the preferred trading and political partner.

The last chapter is based on an analysis of the African continent and its relations with Romania after 1990. It was found that Romania gave little importance to these relations with the African continent and, along with the liberalization of the Romanian economy, the amount of trade decreased significantly in intensity. Today the African continent develop a series of commercial and political relations with the United States, China and the European Union, being clearly affected by globalization and the emergence of non-state actors. Africa remains behind, unable to adapt quickly to these changes. The only regional power are now South Africa and Nigeria, the latter with large internal ethnic problems that weaken its external relations.

Given that this research aims and questions go back a few decades in time, from the 1970s, the need to address historical sources has emerged as an obvious fact. Sources used in formulating integrated research are primarily archival primary sources, many of them analysed for the first time.

There were used more than 200 records in National Archives of Romania, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party Fund, Chancery Division, Department of Administrative-Political, Economic Division, Department of External Relations (sub-collections of foreign and domestic visits) and archives available online at Central European University in the archiving laboratory of Open Society Archives. For the latter were analyzed documents digitized in *Communism, the Cold War, and Their Afterlife* Fund which includes an extensive collection of documents from Research Institute of Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty.

For sections on comparative data, graphs, maps, distributions, cumulative charts based only on economic data, statistical sources origin was mentioned in the text. For a graphic illustration of this work, one of the annexes is a summary based on photographic sources of photo albums from Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party Fund.