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Abstracts

SELKE BEÁTA KELNER, Dagli archivi di Bucarest: la reazione del Partito Comunista Romeno all'istituzione della Repubblica Islamica dell'Iran

Recently available archive documents suggest the establishment of a special relation between Romania and Iran. During the monarchy period, close economic ties and mutual international political goals explain the empathy between Pahlavi and Ceaușescu. What appears surprising is Romanian reaction to the collapse of the Pahlavi dynasty system. Bucharest welcomed the Iranian revolution and sent several tons of medical and food aid to the new régime. This survey adopts a comparative perspective, resorting to a systematic comparison between Romania and Soviet Union attitudes toward the Iranian question. The study highlights mainly four factors affecting Romanian-Iranian relations during the post-revolutionary period: three variables concerning international politics debates and an economic coefficient. With regard to the political issues this enquiry recalls: a) the US embassy siege in Tehran; b) the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; c) the Iran-Iraq war. Eventually this analysis resorts to an economic explanation regarding commercial interests between Bucharest and Tehran. In fact, since the traditional western partners of Iran abided by the US boycott, the new Islamic Republic was eager to develop trade ties with other countries. At the same time the Socialist Republic of Romania (SRR) was willing to restore the Romanian-Persian oil trade tie. Romanian leadership merely followed a pragmatic approach to politics, since the import of Iranian oil was perceived as vital interest for the Romanian economy. Moreover Ceaușescu looked to be also worried about the reestablishment of a political cooperation between the two countries. Bucharest attitude toward the Khomeyni government showed conformity to the Soviet orientation. As far as relations between Bucharest and Teheran are concerned, Romania followed the Soviet route; thus, with regard to the historical debate, they seem to corroborate the heterodox paradigm. This approach assigns to the SRR the role of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Trojan horse in Western affairs. According to this view, Romanian nonconformity foreign policy was designed to corroborate a maverick image of the RCP leadership among the capitalist countries, becoming the most loyal Soviet satellite. However Romanian-Soviet relations still appear enigmatic. A Kremlin willing to tolerate a satellite pursuing a pro-Western policy platform seems a remote hypothesis. Ceaușescu's claims of a likelihood of falling victim to a Soviet seizure give the impression of being merely a propagandistic maneuver. Nevertheless, it is hard to deny that the CPSU greeted some RCP decisions without enthusiasm, as a case in point the well known 1968 condemnation of the Red Army invasion of Czechoslovakia. Then, we could presume that Romanian leadership was deeply concerned about the political balance within the Warsaw Pact and more broadly within the Socialist bloc. Pursuing Romanian national interests appears to be Ceaușescu's main foreign policy priority; however a goal devoid of any concrete independence ambitions. Moscow and Bucharest established an intricate relation resembling an indissoluble Oedipus complex, which do not lend to any oversimplified view of the dialogue between Romania and the USSR.