

ROMANIA AND GERMANY: FRIENDS AND INTERESTS IN THE BALKAN WARS (1912-1913)

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Abstract. In the second half of the 19th century German-Romanian relations became tighter and tighter, a consequence of both a prince of the Hohenzollern dynasty being accepted to lead Romania (1866) and by Romania joining the Triple Alliance (1883). The relationship between the two countries was also visible during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), when the German Chancellery supported Bucharest's territorial claims. There was a great need of an ally, as Austria-Hungary was backing Bulgaria. If the Vienna seemed to be obsessed with Serbia, Berlin did not want Romania to get separated from the Central Powers.

Keywords: Balkan Wars, territorial claims, the Peace of Bucharest, the Balkan „powder keg”, economic interests, national interests.

In 1913, the Bucharest peace treaty was concluded following the Balkan Wars. It represents an important moment because it is the confirmation of the international status that Romania enjoyed at that moment. The impact on the public opinion was quite strong. Clemenceanu wrote in „L'Homme libre”: “Starting now, Romania distinguishes itself as a moral power as well as a military power in front of Europe.”¹ General Herjeu also commented, “What grand days we are living! Thank God that He helped me see my country elevated so high.”²

In order for Bucharest to become the place where the negotiations were to take place and the peace treaty was to be signed, Romania needed support from the Great Powers. In order to achieve this objective, the German chancellery proved to be an extremely important endorser of King Carol I. It was not accidental, as Bucharest enjoyed the support of Berlin throughout the progression of the conflict.

Romania's participation in the Balkan Wars was dictated by its geostrategic position and by its national interests at that moment, as the war broke out in its immediate vicinity. Romanian diplomacy knew how to play its hand very well indeed.

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¹ Herjeu C. N., *Studii critice și militare, Din învățămintele războaielor din 1013 și 1916-1918*, București, Editura Librăriei „Stănciulescu”, 1921, p. 40.

² *Ibidem*.

The dissensions in the area stemmed from a much earlier period than the year 1912, in the context in which small peoples were trying to create their national states. The least content were the Serbs because they had been constrained to accept Bosnia's and Herzegovina's annexation by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1909.³ Under these circumstances, they directed their attention to the territories inhabited by their co-nationals and which were part of the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria wanted to complete its 1908 success, when, united with Rumelia, it had proclaimed itself a kingdom by the annexation of some Macedonian territories, while Greece, which had a more active foreign policy, after the government was taken over by Venizelos, had its own territorial aspirations.

Each state wanted to rebuild what they believed was their territorial unity which had been affected by the Ottoman conquests. The fact that the Ottoman Empire no longer existed created new opportunities. The intentions of the three governments were facilitated by the outbreak of the Italo-Turkish war in 1911. As a result of this war, not only did the Ottoman Empire have to cede Tripolitania and Cyrenaica,⁴ but it also lost the military capabilities to defend its territories.

Italy started the war because it wanted to expand its territory and colonies, just as Germany did. Even so, at the level of international relations, attacking Turkey was not an inspired move because Turkey was one of the countries that had signed the Treaty of Berlin, which guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and the Hague Conventions. The conflict did nothing more than light the fuse which exploded the Balkan Powder Keg. The war, or rather the two Balkan wars, which reopened fresh wounds, seemed full of ill omens.⁵

The intention to start a conflict between the states in the area did not go unnoticed by the Great Powers. The most interested were, according to tradition, Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which supported different peoples according to their interests. The tsar was dissatisfied because in 1909, he had had to ratify the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria without any receiving any compensation.

The same event had made the Italians discontent. Despite being members of the Axis powers, Italy had secretly made a pact with Russia at Racconigi in 1909 directed against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The two parties agreed to protect

³ With regard to the interests of Austria-Hungary for Serbia and Montenegro, see The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, II Handelspolitische Abteilung; Aktenbetreffend die Mobilmachung der Balkanstaaten, Balkankrieg, Band 1, Handel nr. 557, roll 74, frame 149, *The Report of the German Embassy in Vienna*, 28 October, 1912.

⁴ *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, tom II, *De la independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)*, comp. Gheorghe Platon, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2003, p. 280.

⁵ F.-G. Dreyfus, A. Jourcin, P. Thibault, P. Milza, *Larousse, Istoria universală*, vol. III, *Evoluția lumii contemporane*, București, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2006, p. 229.

the *status quo* in the Balkans and to follow a joint policy in all political matters concerning the Balkans. While Italy promised to support Russian interests in the Bosphorus Strait, Russia promised to support Italy's expansion plans in Tripoli and Cyrenaica.⁶

The tsar tried to retaliate in South-Eastern Europe, taking advantage of the circumstances created by the Italo-Turkish War. In the spring of 1912, he secretly negotiated with the Balkans League (Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro) considering that the moment was favorable to settle his accounts with Turkey, while it was being attacked by Italy.

The League attacked Turkey, situation in which Turkey quickly concluded its hostilities against Italy, as it had to defend its territory against four simultaneous concentric attacks⁷. On 8th October 1912, Montenegro declared war on Turkey followed by Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece on 17-18 October.⁸

The Bulgarians applied the decisive blows and reached the outskirts of Constantinople. But their military advances were stopped by the German mission, which was reorganizing the Turkish military at that time. The German officers mobilized the townspeople and improvised defense lines on the Catalpa hills that had served for centuries as Constantinople's ramparts. And the situation was reversed: on 17th November, the Bulgarian assault waves were dispersed by the barbed wire networks and the machinegun fire. The world became unsettled by the efficiency of the triad (T+ BW +M) – trenches, barbed wire and machineguns, which knocked down an entire victorious army. A new problem had appeared, whose solution could not yet be envisaged by any of the major states.⁹ Diplomatic interventions were needed for Germany to partially withdraw the support given to the Turkish military.

Finally, the large number of the allies led to the Turks' defeat. The Greeks took over Salonika, the Bulgarians almost arrived at Constantinople, the Serbs invaded from the Adriatic Sea. On 3rd November, the Turkish government was forced to demand peace and it asked the Great Powers to intervene as mediators.¹⁰ They were happy to answer the request and they organized a conference in London, but their baneful passions were reawakened. Russia did not want a Bulgarian Constantinople and least of all a Greek one, while Austria saw its *Drang nach Osten* action blocked. During a truce, Great Britain gathered, the

⁶ Klein Fritz, *Deutschland von 1897/98 bis 1917 (Deutschland in der Periode des Imperialismus bis zur Grossen Sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution)*, VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1963, p. 200.

⁷ *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, tom II, *De la independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)*, comp. Gheorghe Platon, p. 280.

⁸ Klein Fritz, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

⁹ F.-G. Dreyfus, et.al., *op. cit.*, p. 229.

¹⁰ Klein Fritz, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-237.

great and small powers in London, since discussing these problems had become urgent. The conference's goal was to settle the differences between the Great Powers interested in the Balkans' fate. The only goal was to replace the Berlin arrangement with the London one.¹¹

As a result of the discussions "Austro-Hungary managed to circumscribe Serbia to its territory by creating an Albanian Principality which then constituted the favorite topic for the songwriters of the time. Russia, which erroneously considered that it had regained its strength, made use of threats once more, when an unusual event broke the peace a month after it had been signed: Bulgaria, exasperated that it had not obtained either Constantinople or Salonika, surprise attacked its Serbian and Greek allies. It was one of those rare examples when Machiavellianism did not win: a concentrated attack by the Serbians, Greeks and Turks (who had left the tranches) as well as the Romanians (who had given up neutrality) quickly ended the melodramatic traitor! Consequently, the Bucharest Treaty (11th August 1913) left in Sofia as well as in Belgrade grudges that would soon become manifest."¹²

The result of the Balkan Wars was mainly a significant change in the power balance because of the Serbian triumph, the Austrian-Italian rivalry and the fact that few noticed, namely that Romania participated in the war on the side of the enemies of the Central Powers. The Second Balkan War weakened the Triple Alliance which did not manage to regain its balance. The Balkan Wars represent the prelude to the First World War, as the problems between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Serbia had not been solved.¹³

An important role was played in these wars by Germany and Romania. Unlike Romania, whose contribution was visible, Germany's role is not stressed enough, although it was behind the Austro-Hungarian policy, and had quite a big influence on the decisions made in Bucharest. Moreover, "the Kaiser's diplomacy became central for European peace" and it is precisely this diplomacy that was meant to be "Europe's hammer and not the anvil"¹⁴, that generated the First World War.

The Germany of the Bucharest Peace in 1913 was the Germany of the *Weltpolitik*, a Germany destined by Kaiser Wilhelm II to become a world power. This type of politics started in 1897 and the consequences were visible until the second half of the 20th century.

At the end of the 19th century, this type of policy was based on at least two realities: politically, Bismark's ability had won and the German state was formed not around Austria, but Prussia, beyond the calculations of the diplomats of the

¹¹ Topor Claudiu-Lucian, *Germania, România și Războaiele Balcanice*, Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2008, p. 116.

¹² F.-G. Dreyfus, et. al., *op. cit.*, p. 282.

¹³ Klein Fritz, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-242.

¹⁴ Kissinger Henry, *Diplomația*, București, Editura ALL, 2007, p. 144.

time, and economically, the German industry experienced unprecedented growth. Both realities created new necessities and obligations.

The answer to the political necessities, in an era when imperialism was simply flourishing, was to try and expand foreign influence and to form a powerful colonial empire, fashioned after Great Britain's example. Economically, the development of the German industry required the acquisition of raw materials from outside Europe, for good prices so that German merchandise, renowned for their quality, could compete with similar products on a free market. Moreover, outlets were to be expanded and thus the economy forced the politicians to adopt the measures necessary for the German state to grow.

The most obvious problem of implementing the *Weltpolitik* was that the world had already been divided into areas of influence, just as the colonial domains had been divided. Historical experience had proven that war was an easy way of reconfiguring the world map, but in order for this reconfiguration to take place to Germany's advantage, it had to prove its power. Under the circumstances in which the political factor had decided, and the economy allowed for it, the power of the new state implied the formation of proficient armed forces. The *Weltpolitik* was linked to the development of the naval fleet, which generated British discontent. The result did not measure up to the expectations, although German influence extended in Latin America, China and the Near East.¹⁵

In Kissinger's opinion, German diplomats made mistakes that led to the "extraordinary upheaval and reorganization of the alliances." So that, if in 1898, France and England were on the verge of declaring war on each other, and the Russians and the British experienced animosities throughout the 19th century, under the impact of "insistent and threatening German diplomacy", Great Britain, France and Russia ended up on the same side of the barricade.¹⁶ On the other hand, Klein Fritz claims that at the end of 1909, one could easily notice the Germany and Austro-Hungary's isolation in foreign policy.¹⁷ This was reason enough to lead to a greater closeness between the two Powers, as their interests were no longer divergent, not even with respect to the Balkans.

Analyzing the situation in the region, the German diplomat Radowitz wrote to king Wilhelm I, "With respect to Germany's attitude to Greece, there are the best intentions to help this Christian kingdom to expand, if this can be accomplished without a war. Except for this, the Christian and civilizing elements, which unlike the Turks, are deeply rooted in the Greeks, makes the latter form, together with the Albanians and the Romanians, the great majority of the non-

¹⁵ Fischer Fritz, *Krieg der Illusionen, Die deutsche Politik von 1911 bis 1914*, Dusseldorf, Droste Verlag, 1969, pp. 417-418.

¹⁶ Kissinger Henry, *op. cit.* p. 145.

¹⁷ Klein Fritz, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

Slavic population in the Balkan peninsula and the counterweight against Pan-Slavism. Last, but not least, there is the danger, for Eastern Europe, and not through Russian but through revolutionary power, that Slavic populations could come as far as Bohemia or Illyria.”¹⁸

With respect to its relations with Romania, Germany's interests are manifest both at a political and at an economic level. At a political level, Romania's influence grew once Carol of Hohenzollern became the king of independent Romania and joined the Triple Alliance. At an economic level, German businessmen and bankers gradually got involved in economic activities, which is why when the Balkan Wars started, Berlin started paying close attention to the changes in commerce, industry and agriculture.¹⁹

For the period 1880-1890, Ficher Fritz noticed an increase in the number of securities bought by the German banks, their investments focusing especially on the railway and oil industry. In 1903, the German Bank together with Vienna Bank founded the Oil Company “Steaua Română.”

In 1897, the General Romanian Bank had been set up, the first bank with German capital in Romania which was involved in the oil industry. The German bank had ambitious goals in the oil industry, meaning that it tried to obtain as many concessions as possible to form a dominant German market, to the detriment of English-American companies.²⁰ The gain was great as by 1908, 40.8% of the total investments in the oil industry in Romania were made up of German capital.²¹

On the financial market, the German banks, competing with the French banks that were approved by the Romanian government, were extremely sensitive to the Romanian securities “business”. However, when there was a drop in the value of the securities in 1913, the Romanian government asked for financial assistance from France, but as the conditions imposed by the French would have led to a confrontation with Germany, the Romanian government gave up French assistance and placed securities in Germany, especially for political reasons.

Wishing to push aside the French competition, the German bankers took quite high risks by giving long-term credits, not only in Romania, but also in the other Balkan states.

¹⁸ *Die Grosse Politik Der Europäischen Kabinette Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914: Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes, im Auftrage des Auswärtigen Amtes*, vol. IV, herausgegeben von Lepsius Johannes, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Thimme Friedrich, Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte M.B.H. in Berlin W 8, p. 19, Letter dated 7th November 1880, addressed by Radowitz to king Wilhelm I.

¹⁹ The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, II Handelspolitische Abteilung; Aktenbetreffend die Mobilmachung der Balkanstaaten, Balkankrieg, Band 1, Handel nr. 557, roll 74, frame 89, Note from the State Secretary of The Ministry Of Internal Affairs, Berlin, 4 October, 1912.

²⁰ Fischer Fritz, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

²¹ Topor Claudiu -Lucian, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

A domain on interest for Germany was the sale of armament. On the Romanian market, Krupp and Schneider-Creusot competed and both were supported by the government.

Berlin's efforts to get involved as much as possible in the Romanian economy were quite high, because for Bucharest the relations with France took priority, as France was the representative of Entente's interests in the area. Fischer Fritz also notices that, although from a financial point of view Romania needed to place some securities in Germany, Bucharest still enjoyed special attention from Paris. Collaboration with firms such as Krupp, Rheinischei, Mauser Rottweil or Deutsche Bank, as well as the effort made by Wilhelm II, King Carol I, prince Ferdinand, the conservative minister Petre Carp were useless as the interests related to the Romanians in Transylvania and the connections with France kept Romania close to Entente.²²

The discrepancy between the sympathies manifested by a king of German descent and a political class oriented towards Paris were reflected at the level of the military alliances. The fact that at that time Romania joined, even if for objective reasons, the Triple Alliance (1883) was a gesture that went against national will. Otherwise, we could not explain why King Carol I kept secret what should have been a great achievement for independent Romania. The draft of the treaty was perfected during Carol I's visit to Berlin to participate in a family event.²³ In peace times, this alliance did not seem to bring any real prejudices to the state's interests, but in war time, the situation changed dramatically and the decision makers in Germany and Romania were aware of this fact.

It is obvious from all the documents sent during the Balkan Wars that Berlin's objective was to keep Bucharest within the Triple Alliance. The interest was so great that Germany interceded with Austria asking it not to favor Bulgaria to the detriment of Romania and with Hungary, asking it to be more conciliatory with the Romanians in Transylvania. King Wilhelm II personally asked the Hungarian minister Tisza for concessions and reforms to the benefit of Romanians in Transylvania. Moreover, a clarification of the relations between Romania and Austro-Hungary was called for so that the latter would not be forced to leave the alliance.

The German ambassador to Vienna in December 1913, V. Tschirschky, advised the banks to give out another loan to Romania so that it would become interested in the Triple Alliance through its "wallet" too.²⁴

The outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1912 led to a focus of the German decision makers' attention on the conflict area. This was evaluated not only from

²² Fischer Fritz, *op. cit.*, pp. 418-419.

²³ Scurtu Ioan, *Contribuții privind viața politică din România*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1988, p. 115.

²⁴ Fischer Fritz, *op. cit.*, pp. 418-419.

the point of view of ensuing geopolitical changes or from a military point of view, but also economically. In a report from 1912, the measures called for by the war were discussed with direct reference to commerce. In this respect, restrictions on imports and exports are taken into consideration as well as the Romanian state's need for supplies. In the financial sector, an increase of taxes and measures in the banking system as well as transportation were expected.²⁵

In another report, dated 7 October 1912, it is made clear that the Balkan War should and did not affect the business community in Moldova. Romania does not seem to experience any financial complications, but there are some reservations concerning the extension of big loans.²⁶

Analyzing the Romanian-German political relations during the Balkan Wars we can see they are only normal given that king Carol I belonged to a German dynasty. It is also true that they bore a special imprint due to the personality of the Romanian monarch.

His priority was to defend the national interests of the Romanian state which proved to be quite complicated in a military alliance with Austro-Hungary, the then-ruler of a traditionally Romanian territory.

Concerning the attitude of the Romanians in the kingdom with respect to Austro-Hungary, the German general Waldthausen reported on 27 December 1912, "Two of the speakers gave a militant speech, the third, the chauvinistic university professor Iorga, the leader of the nationalists, lamented the way Romanians in Bucovina and Hungary are treated and demanded the Austro-Hungarian monarchy respect his Romanian brethren's rights. He also pleaded for educating Romanians and for Romanian peasants' rights."²⁷

In 1913, Germany tried to be the link between Romania and the Triple Alliance. The efforts made to this end were not negligible as on the one hand the Romanians in Transylvania were asking for support from the Mother country, and on the other Austro-Hungary supported Bulgaria in the Balkan Wars.

Bucharest could not have been pleased by the policy of the Vienna Court because, as early as 1878, Romania had claimed back territories that were under Bulgarian rule as a result of some provisions nonconforming with the Berlin Treaty. With respect to this issue, Carol I negotiated with the Central Powers, "[a]s a result of the negotiations [so that Romania could join the Triple Alliance],

²⁵ The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, II Handelspolitische Abteilung; Aktenbetreffend die Mobilmachung der Balkanstaaten, Balkankrieg, Band 1, Handel nr. 557, roll 74, frame 89, *Note from the State Secretary of The Ministry Of Internal Affairs*, Berlin, 4 October 1912.

²⁶ Idem, Frame 105, *Report of the German Consulate in Iași*, 7 October 1912.

²⁷ The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, Sachs. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Aussenministerium, nr. 1884, roll 87, frame 112, *Report of the Saxon Legation in Bucharest signed by General Waldthausen*, Bucharest, 27 December 1912.

the German diplomacy also assured Romania with respect to possible transformations in the Balkans.” In Berlin’s opinion, in the case of a conflict, Romanian should keep “its guns ready”. In case Bulgaria extended its territory into Macedonia, Romania was going to occupy the territory which bordered on the south with the Rusciuk-Varna line.²⁸

The outbreak of the first Balkan War led to an increase in diplomatic interest for Romania. In a report addressed to the king, dated 20 September/1 October 1912, Titu Maiorescu, the President of the Minister Council, informed that he had been visited by the Turkish minister Sefa-bey and by the Bulgarian minister Kalinkov. Both wanted to ascertain Romania’s interests, as Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece were getting ready for war.²⁹ Romania announced that it wanted to maintain its neutrality but if “territorial changes would occur in the Balkans (...) it would have its say.”³⁰

In a meeting that Carol I had with the president of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, Stojan Petrov Danew, the latter “talked to the king about the friendship and even the gratitude that Bulgaria has for Romania [and] the king asked him not to speak along those lines, as in the country nobody believes that, and that first there should be a sign of friendship on Bulgaria’s side. His majesty explained to Mr. Danew how border problems had developed and explained that he wants to have a friendly relation with Bulgaria and does not need compensation, but a restoration of the borders.” The Bulgarian diplomat tried to shirk the accusation replying that the problem of the borders could not be understood by the members of the Assembly. The king’s reply was firm, “this is why statesmen exist, and there are plenty who are capable, such as Mr. Danew, to explain the situation to the House.”³¹

The Romanian government would have liked to preserve the status quo in the area, which is why it spoke against conflicts that could alter it, and maintained a position of neutrality. Even during the Italo-Turkish war, Romania sought, in partnership with the diplomacy of the Central Powers, to try to appease the conflict and to limit its consequences for the Ottoman Empire, and consequently for the situation in the Balkans.³²

²⁸ GP, 18/1, p. 137 *Kiderlen-Wachter către Bulow*, 1 februarie 1901, apud *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, tom II, *De la independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)*, comp. Gheorghe Platon, p. 273.

²⁹ Maiorescu Titu, *România, Războaiele Balcanice și Cadrilaterul*, Editura Machiavelli, Bucharest, 1995, p. 161; *Cartea Verde, Documente diplomatice secrete, Titu Maiorescu's Report, from 20 September/1 October 1912*, addressed to King Carol I.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, Titu Maiorescu's Report, from 16/29 October 1912, addressed to King Carol I.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, part II, *De la independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)*, comp. Gheorghe Platon, p. 281.

Once the conflict had started, the map of Southern Europe started to change. The moment was considered good for Romania to attain its goals, “once the provisions of the Berlin treaty were set aside completely, and implicitly the legitimization of our Dobrudja borders imposed by that treaty. However, amiably and confidentially, I can say that rectifying our border south of Dobrudja must contain a line from Turtucaia to the Black sea, beyond Varna.”³³

To this end, Romanian diplomats looked for support from their allies, Austro-Hungary and Germany. Its hopes, however, were not completely well-founded as Vienna continued to support Sofia. One positive aspect was that there was disagreement between Germany and Austro-Hungary, as Berlin found Romanian claims justified.

The German interest is manifest in the discussions between general Waldthausen and King Carol I in December 1912. On this occasion, the monarch expressed his opinion regarding the events in the Balkans, mentioning that Romania never considered joining the Balkan Alliance, as the conditions for this were unknown as was the opinion of the Alliance leaders. Romania was prepared even to sign a treaty with Bulgaria in these conditions: the borders had to be specified, Danube crossing had to be permitted, as well as Romanian help for Vlachs’ churches and schools.³⁴

The problem of Romanians outside national borders was also raised by Romania during the London Conference. Finally, not all discussions regarding the demarcation of Albania’s southern border reached their conclusion, as Romania, supported by Austro-Hungary, would have liked that the villages inhabited by Vlachs in the Gorica (Goriza) and the Pind Mountains regions to become part of Albania, while Germany wanted them to become part of Greece.³⁵ Carol I informed Waldthausen that Romania would not remain quiet if the Albanian problem were not satisfactorily solved.³⁶

Given that the London stipulations failed to satisfy all parties involved, the Conference of the Ambassadors in St Petersburg took place between the 18th/31st March – 26th April/9th May 1913. The works of the conference provided to be, more than once, the stage for the clashes between the two political and military rival blocs, Entente and Central Powers.

³³ Maiorescu Titu, *op. cit.*, p. 165, *Report from 27 October /9 November 1912*, addressed to King Carol I.

³⁴ The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, Sachs. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Aussenministerium, nr. 1884, roll 87, frame 112, *Report of the Saxon Legation in Bucharest signed by General Waldthausen*, Bucharest, 27 December 1912.

³⁵ Topor Claudiu –Lucian, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

³⁶ The State Archives, RDG Microfilm Fund, Sachs. Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Aussenministerium, nr. 1884, roll 87, frame 112, *Report of the Saxon Legation in Bucharest signed by General Waldthausen*, Bucharest, 27 December 1912.

During the conference, "all powers concurred with Silistra being ceded to Romania; however, whereas Germany agreed to that without any reservations, the other great powers sought not to alienate Bulgaria while satisfying Romania's requirements."³⁷

Romania enjoyed the support of its allies. In this respect, Friederich von Pourtalès, the German Ambassador in Petersburg, declared within the above-mentioned context that the Romanian demands are legitimate due to its strategic needs; Silistra, controlled by Bulgaria, would constitute an attack base directed against Dobrogea, for which the Bulgarian claims are well known. For this reason, and in order to establish peaceful relations between the two countries, it seemed more natural to deprive Bulgaria of an offensive weapon in favor of Romania, where it would play only a defensive part.³⁸

The discussions within the conference were greatly prolonged. Bulgaria was dissatisfied with the decisions agreed upon, thus, failing to issue a declaration of war, it attacks its former allies on the 17/30th June.

The lack of a declaration of war led to some confusion. To clarify things, on 19th June/ 2nd July, 1913, Maiorescu sent a memorandum to the Romanian Legations in Sofia, Athens and Belgrade, asking the diplomats to discover if the governments they are accredited to deem the war between allies as having actually started.³⁹

The answers he received were positive, and the consequences, as expected. On 27th June/ 10th July, 1913, the Romanian Royal Legation in Sofia is tasked with communicating the declaration of war to the Bulgarian Royal government: "The Romanian government has warned the Bulgarian government in due time that, provided the Balkan allies were at war, Romania could not keep the neutrality we have imposed on ourselves for the sake of peace, and we might see ourselves forced to join the action."⁴⁰

Joining the war against Bulgaria leads to a certain cooling of relations with the Vienna Court and implicitly to the separation of Romania from the Central Powers. Bucharest could not accept the adversity of Austria-Hungary towards Serbia and their sympathy for the Bulgarian cause. The emperor, however, seemed to fear so much the menace of a strong Serbian state forming and then affiliating itself to Russia that he no longer took into account the danger the alliance with Romania was put in.

³⁷ *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, tom II, *De la independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)*, comp. Gheorghe Platon, pp. 181-184.

³⁸ Ghețău Florin, *Protocolul de la Sankt Petersburg (1913)*, Editura Virtual, 2011, p. 16.

³⁹ Maiorescu Titu, *op. cit.*, p. 217, *Circular Telegram of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Romanian Legations in Sofia, Athens and Belgrade, Bucharest*, 19 June/2 July 1913.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 218, *Telegram of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Romania's Ministry Plenipotentiary in Sofia, Bucharest*, 27 June/10 July 1913.

Germany also didn't want Russian influence in the Balkans to increase, but they acted in two different directions: they hoped to balance it by means of a strong coalition of Balkan states other than those of Slavic origin (Greece, Romania and Turkey),⁴¹ and, on the other hand, in 1913, they agreed, again, to reorganize the Turkish army. The German military mission was placed under the command of General Liman von Sanders, who took command at Constantinople. Russia was irritated as it feared German control of the Bosphorus.⁴²

Meanwhile, the German Chancellery was trying to save, and, if possible, to increase the number of member states of the Triple Alliance. Aware of the influence they had on King Carol I, they tried to persuade him to help bring Greece to the Central Powers. But they wished that Greece would join the Alliance indirectly, through a treaty signed with Romania. On the other hand, Athens, together with Belgrade, were trying to involve Bucharest in the Second Balkan War. "The Greeks used the German influence in Romania, and Serbia used the tradition of good relations between the two nations, whose traditional enmity could have no different target than Austria-Hungary."⁴³

Beyond all these attempts, the reality is that the decision makers in Bucharest believed that the war would bring the issue of Dobrogea to an end. Maiorescu summarizes very well the reasons Romanian troops entered Bulgaria: "1. to ensure that this time our Dobrogea is granted a military border, that is, Turtucaia-Dobrici-Balcic... 2. to participate in the Treaty that will regulate the division of territories conquered from the Turks..."⁴⁴

The deployment of the operations was prepared with great care, and the favorable external context meant that the troops did not meet with any resistance, as General Herjeu tells: "10th July The Bulgarian Tsar asks King Carol I to hasten the peace and convince the other armies to cease hostilities. Our army now controls the exits south of the Balkans..."

M.S. decided to warn the governments of Serbia and Greece - the latter more recalcitrant - that if they do not receive the favorable conditions offered to them, Romania will sign a separate peace treaty.

11th July The Bulgarian Army is stuck... our political interests demand we don't let Bulgaria be struck the final blow.

By order of the King, the answer given to the Serbian army was that the Romanian army will not take part in the attack of Vidin, nor will it cooperate with the Northern Serbian army ...

⁴¹ Wolfgang J Mommsen, *Grossmachtstellung und Weltpolitik. Die Aussenpolitik des deutschen Reiches 1870 bis 1914*, Verlag Ullstein, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, 1993, pp. 260-261, apud Topor Claudiu-Lucian, *op. cit.*, p.182.

⁴² Kissinger Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁴³ Topor Claudiu-Lucian, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-163.

⁴⁴ Maiorescu Titu, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-220, *Titu Maiorescu's report to His Majesty the King*, Bucharest, 28 June/11 July 1913.

15th July The situation is getting clearer now, Romania is recognized today as the arbiter of the bloody conflict among the Balkan peoples. Her resolute and swift action and the arrival of the Romanian army on the plain of Sofia have compelled Bulgaria to entrust its fate to Romania, which is now recognized throughout Europe as the rightful arbiter."⁴⁵

And indeed, between the 17/29th July – 28th July/ 10th August 1913, the works of the Peace Conference started in Bucharest. The choice of setting was the recognition of Romania's European status and the role it played in bringing the conflict to an end.

The German diplomats highly praised the Romanian state: "What a special twist it was that His Majesty, your King, could take part in ending the Balkan crisis, a role that he could not undertake from the beginning for reasons that are known to us. Romania is greater today than ever. It became an arbiter in the Balkan Peninsula and it will certainly not give up this position. This time it achieved what many had done wrong."⁴⁶

On the other hand, Germany's support did not go unnoticed. In a reply to a diplomatic report it was written: "I thanked the German Government for the appreciation they showed for our policy... Our King (Carol I a/n) is very satisfied with the valuable help that Germany extended to our political action in these difficult circumstances."⁴⁷

The year 1913 ended without the emergence of a new conflict. The situation in the Balkans improved "France and Germany have granted only a weak support to their allies, which averted the breaking out of a general war."⁴⁸

Unfortunately the situation was only partially resolved. Serbia and Austria continued to be discontent. For the time being, King Wilhelm II contributed to lowering the war fever, stating that the Treaty of Bucharest is satisfactory. "And yet, from his mighty empire rose, louder and louder, Nietzschean howls of violence and threat...There were however many theoreticians of the Pan-Germanism and the Machtpolitik, of the policy of force, whose formulas of cold aggression brought no smiles to people's faces.

Actions came after words...: in 1912 and 1913 huge additional loans were granted to the budgets of the navy ... and of the field armies."⁴⁹

In 1914 the first great world war broke out...

⁴⁵ Herjeu C. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 17-35.

⁴⁶ The State Archives, Royal House Fund, File no. 51/1913, *Copy of His Excellency General Field Marshal von der Goltz's letter to Romania's attaché in Berlin*, 7 August 1913.

⁴⁷ The National Archives, Royal House Fund, File no. 59/1913, *Reply to Beldiman's Report*, Bucharest, 23/5 August 1913.

⁴⁸ Milza Pierre, Berstein Serge, *Istoria secolului XX*, vol I, 1900-1945, *Sfârșitul „lumii europene”*, Editura ALL, Bucharest, 1998, p. 64.

⁴⁹ F.-G. Dreyfus, et al., *op. cit.*, p. 282.

