

## FREEMASONRY AND THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE (JANUARY 1919 – JUNE 1920)

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**Abstract.** The Romanian delegation - headed by Prime Minister Ion I.C. Brătianu - accompanied by other well-known Romanian figures who were not part of the delegation, but represented the Romanian elite who had emigrated to the French capital, attended the Paris Peace Conference and recognised that the political decisions concerning the future borders of the nations emerging from the former Austrian-Hungarian Empire were made by the *Roman Catholic Church*, the *Freemasonry* and the *Jewish Youth Organisation*. These were the institutions behind the political decisions made by the political leaders of France (Georges Clémenceau), Great Britain (Sir David Lloyd George), the United States of America (Woodrow Wilson), and Italy (Vittorio Emanuele Orlando).

When, after a conflict with the then French Prime Minister, who was failing to observe the provisions of the August 1916 Treaty concluded between Romania and the Triple Entente, Ion I.C. Brătianu left Paris, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod became his successor as head of the Romanian delegation.

The Transylvanian political leader and some of his close associates would also become members of the *Ernest Renan* Masonic lodge in Paris, on 4 August 1919. The decision was made by Alexandru Vaida-Voevod after extensive consultations with Ion I.C. Brătianu, who had returned to Bucharest by then, and Iuliu Maniu, the Chairman of the Ruling Council in Sibiu.

The masonic involvement of the Romanian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference was proof of the diplomatic abilities of its members as well as of the perfect cooperation with the local political decisionmakers, with the purpose of adjusting to the then current international context to the benefit of the country's national interests.

After Romania and Hungary signed the Treaty of Trianon (4 July 1920) whose clauses were favourable to Romania, the Romanian freemasons would leave their Masonic lodges in the coming years.

**Keywords:** *Ion I.C. Brătianu, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Paris, freemasons, 4 August 1920*

In the autumn of 1918, the Central Powers were defeated and started to withdraw from the war they had started in 1914 against the Triple Entente. Thus, instruments of surrender/truce were signed with Bulgaria (on 29 September, in Thessaloniki), the Ottoman Empire (on 31 October, in Mudros), Austria-Hungary (on 3 November, at Villa Giusti), and Germany (on 11 November, in Compiègne, a commune near Paris).