

**THE ROMANIA-BULGARIA TERRITORIAL INCONGRUITY AND
ROMANIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE CENTRAL POWERS
DURING THE LONDON PEACE CONFERENCE (DECEMBER
1912-JANUARY 1913)**

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Abstract: *The Romania-Bulgaria territorial incongruity and Romania's relations with the Central Powers during the London Peace Conference (December 1912 - January 1913).*

The paper includes a thorough analysis of the Romanian-Bulgarian relations during the Peace Conference in London, where representatives of belligerent states, but also of the Great Powers, wanted to establish a new political-territorial configuration in South East Europe at the end of the First Balkan War. The author believes that during that period, depending on how the Great Powers approached, in terms of their interests, the territorial dispute between Romania and Bulgaria, Romania's relations with the two political and military opposing groups, the Triple Alliance and the Entente, were established.

Channeling his/her scientific approach to the analysis of Romania's relations with the Central Powers, the author concludes that, despite a tactical diplomatic opening towards the Entente Powers, Bucharest based its entire strategy to resolve the territorial dispute with Bulgaria, during the Peace Conference in London, on the support it was counting to get from Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Keywords: *territorial dispute, bilateral diplomatic negotiations, Central Powers policy, diplomatic support, diplomatic strategy.*

Romania's diplomatic activity during the London Peace Conference aimed at promoting the general interests of the Romanian state in South-East Europe, as negotiations were taking place, in the British capital, both between representatives of the Balkan states engaged in conflict, and between the ambassadors of the Great Powers, in order to establish a new political territorial configuration south of the Danube. Of particular importance for the fate of the nations in this geographical area, the decisions that were to be adopted also represented a major concern both for the Great Powers, grouped into opposing political-military alliances and concerned with maintaining or expanding their influence in the region, and for the Romanian state, located in close proximity to the conflict area, in which many compatriots were living, which gave them a particular significance. As geographical reasons did not allow raising the issue of

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their integration within the Romanian borders, because they were living in scattered territorial enclaves south of the Danube, the priority of Romania's diplomatic activity was to ensure a suitable balance of forces between the states in the region, given that the territorial *status quo*, for whose preservation the Romanian government had pleaded so many times in the past, was about to be profoundly changed, as result of the military operations. From this point of view, the settlement of the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute related to determining the border in Dobrudja, acquired a special importance for decision makers in Bucharest, as bilateral negotiations, without being interrupted, proved ineffective, and the result of war created the prospect of a territorial expansion of Bulgaria.

It can be stated with certainty that ***reaching an acceptable solution for Romania in its territorial dispute with Bulgaria represented the most significant activity of the Romanian diplomacy during the Peace Conference in London.*** The Romanian-Bulgarian dispute settlement was important not only for the two involved parties, but also for the Great Powers, especially Russia and Austria-Hungary, situated in opposed political-military groups, which led to the formulation of the other Great Powers positions. Therefore, ***during that period, depending on how the Great Powers approached, in terms of their interests, the territorial dispute between Romania and Bulgaria, Romania's relations with the two political and military opposing groups, the Triple Alliance and the Entente, were established.*** On the other hand, the diplomatic efforts made for this purpose by the Romanian state are themselves significant in order to appreciate, from this perspective, the evolution of Romania's relations with the Great Powers that were part of the two opposing political and military systems. Revolving around the Triple Alliance, Romania had to take into account, to a large extent, the policy promoted by the Great Powers of the Entente. The important changes that occurred in Romania's relations with the Entente are the natural consequence of this state of affairs and clearly express the general orientation of Romania's foreign policy.

Romanian diplomatic activity during the Peace Conference in London took place on several levels and through several diplomatic channels. It was not confined to addressing the dispute between Romania and Bulgaria, although this was the main concern, as it was not limited to activities in the British Capital, where the Peace Conference took place. The general interests of the Romanian state's foreign policy were analyzed in the context of the "Balkan crisis", and several diplomatic channels were used, especially in the capitals of the Great Powers, but also of the Balkan states.

At the same time, the Romanian diplomatic activity was also influenced by several domestic factors. The European diplomatic chancelleries carefully watched the increasingly noisy struggles of some of the country's political circles and of the public opinion, which, through various means, were trying to determine the government to act more firmly and even resort to the military solution for the annexation of the territory claimed in Southern Dobrogea. It is worth mentioning that Romania's diplomatic action was also complicated by the rather abnormal situation due to the existence, to some degree, of a double leadership of the

Government team on foreign policy issues, by both Prime Minister Măiorescu and Take Ionescu, because of how differently the two politicians were set to determine the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute resolution and, generally, the future foreign policy of the Romanian state.

In parallel, the whole content of the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute became subject of many articles in international newspapers, predominantly favorable to Bulgaria and hostile, not once denigrating, towards Romania.

Since the preliminary discussions in Bucharest between Titu Măiorescu and S. Danev, on 25 - 26 November / 9 - 10 December 1912, differences had occurred, in addition to matters of substance, which actually led to their failure, also on the diplomatic manner of conducting negotiations and settling the dispute between the two countries. For S. Danev, problems with Romania were to be solved after having set the new status of the territories in the Balkans, which the Ottoman Empire would give to the Christian states. In Măiorescu's view, the two issues, making peace with the Ottoman Empire and the Romanian-Bulgarian negotiations were distinct, separate and should have been settled as such. At the same time, Măiorescu wanted to give a swift resolution to the dispute between Romania and Bulgaria, because any delay could cause the intervention of the Great Powers¹.

In a first stage, the main site of the diplomatic debate on the dispute between Romania and Bulgaria was the British capital. In this respect, N. Misu, Romania's diplomatic representative in London, possessed written instructions to deal with S. Danev, head of the Bulgarian delegation to the Peace Conference. He had a double task, to present and defend the interests of Romania and of the Romanians in the Balkan Peninsula, on the one hand, and to continue and conclude negotiations with Bulgaria on the border in Dobruđa and on bilateral relations, on the other². The whole responsibility belonged to Măiorescu, who was in permanent contact with King Carol I, the ultimate decision maker on any issue.

During talks in London, the Romanian delegation had to take into account several different factors, arising from Romania's situation, the relations between the Balkan states and the position of the Great Powers. In fact, had negotiations with Bulgaria have failed, it was obvious that fulfilling Romania's aspirations mostly depended on the Great Powers' position. Romania had not mobilized in 1912, maintaining an attitude of strict neutrality, and had not issued any official

¹ Gh. Zbucnea, ***Romania and the Balkan Wars. 1912-1913. Pages of South-Eastern European History***, Albatros, Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 158.

² View content of instructions in *Green Paper. Diplomatic Documents. Balkan Peninsula Events. Romania's Action (September 1912 - August 1913)*, in Titu Măiorescu, *Romania, Balkan Wars and Cadrilater*, edited by Stelian Neagoe, Machiavelli Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995 (further cited as *Green Paper*), p. 169-171. As regards border issues, it was stated that "Romania must get a border line from the Danube to the Black Sea, to be drawn as much to the South of the present border as possible", presenting also four paths together with relevant maps, to be considered by the Romanian side during the negotiations. Even more specifically, "We could not accept the line from west of Silistra to Balchik, which would leave Dobrich to Bulgaria." Later, in a telegram dated December 18/31, 1912, Titu Măiorescu wrote to the Minister Plenipotentiary of Romania in London that the Romanian side required "a border line from west of Turtucaia to south of Ekrene with or without Dobrich". *Green Paper*, p. 171.

claims with regard to the South-Eastern European area, so grounds for participating in the conference along with the belligerent states did not exist. It was also obvious, on the other hand, that Romania did not belong to the Great Powers which had assumed the role, considered by them to be appropriate, of mediating and setting new political and statal realities in this area³.

Thus, although eventually admitted to the peace conference to express their point of view, the Romanian delegation had to act in particularly difficult context, because they could not attend the debates. But the main difficulty consisted in the refusal of the Bulgarian delegation to accept Romania's requests. Bulgaria's negative attitude can be explained, quite obviously, by the regard it enjoyed from the European chancelleries and public opinion, as the main factor in the victory against the Ottoman, which could justify the refusal to accept any Romanian request⁴.

Given that, during negotiations in London, there was the possibility of linking "Adrianople question" of "Silistra", meaning that if Turks surrendered Adrianople to Bulgarians, the latter could, in turn, give up Silistra, king Carol I proposed to Prime Minister Maiorescu, on 11/24 December 1912, to conclude a military alliance with Bulgaria against the Ottoman Empire. Maiorescu considered that it was a complex idea, suggested, as it seems, by Take Ionescu⁵. Although there is no evidence in this regard, we have reason to suppose that King Charles I was receptive to this idea also as a result of conversations he had with Conrad von Hoetzendorf on the subject, during the latter's visit in Romania not long before. Although it might sound paradoxical, this idea, that in Take Ionescu's view had a different justification, did not contravene the Vienna's diplomatic plans, as it was willing to support Bulgaria.

Whatever the reason for such a proposal, since it came from the King, Titu Maiorescu accepted it and sent instructions to N. Misu in London to negotiate with Danev that, in exchange for military help against the Ottoman Empire on the occupation of Adrianople, Romania should be granted Turtucaia-Balchik border line⁶. To this end, Take Ionescu also went to London to discuss with Danev, after the Prime Minister showed him the instructions written for N. Misu⁷.

At the end of December 1912, Take Ionescu traveled to the West, having a series of meetings in Vienna, Berlin and Paris, before joining N. Misu in his negotiations with S. Danev. On this occasion, he clearly showed serious differences he had with the Prime Minister, thus indirectly with King Carol I.

On his way to the British capital, stopping in Paris, had talks with R. Poincaré, asking for the French government's support, something which, in his passage to London, Danev⁸ had also done. Raymond Poincaré kindly received the

³ Gh. Zbucea, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 159.

⁵ Titu Maiorescu, *Daily Political Notes*, in Titu Maiorescu, *Romania, Balkan Wars and Cadrilater*, edited by Stelian Neagoe, Machiavelli Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995 p. 56-57.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 57.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ On that occasion, Danev told R. Poincaré that "*Romania is entitled to nothing*". R. Poincaré, *Au service de France, Neuf années de souvenirs*, tome II, "*Les Balkans en feu*", 1912, Plon, Paris, 1926, p. 389.

Romanian diplomat, listened to him with interest, but at the same time, being aware of Romania's alliance with the Central Powers, he asked him, before promising any support, what would be his country's attitude in case of war between the Entente powers and the "allies" of Romania. Unwilling, for reasons of diplomatic opportunity, to recognize the secret treaty invoked by Poincaré, Take Ionescu denied its existence, but added that if France supported Romania's claims, his concern would be totally unjustified. Poincaré understood the difficult situation of his interlocutor, and before his departure, won by his arguments and by the prospects of Romania's change in attitude, promised him the requested support. Conversation of Take Ionescu and R. Poincaré was previewing a new phase of French-Romanian relations.⁹

In London, to obtain the support of the other Great Powers, Take Ionescu met with Sir Edward Grey, British foreign minister, with the ambassadors of Germany, France, Austria-Hungary and Russia, involved in peace negotiations in the British capital, as well as with delegates from Serbia and Greece - Nicola Pasic and E. Venizelos – and, later, negotiated with Danev, head of the Bulgarian delegation. In Take Ionescu's discussions with E. Grey and the ambassadors of the Great Powers, the Romanian Minister was communicated the view that Romania should have had settled the whole matter even before the mobilization of the Bulgarian army and the outbreak of the Balkan war.¹⁰

In London, talks with Danev were difficult and did not achieve any success. Stoyan Danev, aware of the clear prospects of victory against the Ottoman Empire, resorted to delays, even refusing to continue negotiations with the Romanian diplomats, although he had full powers from Prime Minister Ghesov. On the other hand, presumably, Danev noticed differences between N. Misu, who was closely following instructions given by Prime Minister Maiorescu, and Take Ionescu, who had a different view on settling the dispute between Romania and Bulgaria and, generally, on Romania's foreign policy orientation. This could only encourage the head of the Bulgarian delegation to continue the talks delaying tactics. Especially since, apparently, at some point, Take Ionescu ceased to claim Silistra and Balchik, in pursuit of the Romanian-Bulgarian rapprochement.

Take Ionescu's diplomatic activity in London was not pleasing the king, nor Maiorescu. Take Ionescu wanted an immediate agreement with Bulgaria to avoid facilitating Austria-Hungary's goals in the Balkans. He was willing to give to the Bulgarian government military support against the Ottoman Empire, solely to avoid military cooperation with Austria-Hungary. In 1915, summarizing his intentions to resolve the dispute between Romania and Bulgaria, Take Ionescu wrote: *"I was going to give Bulgarians - which, at that time meant the Balkan League - Romania's support and, if necessary, military assistance, to compel Turkey to give up on Adrianople issue. [...] The Powers could not find an agreement. On the other hand, it was certain that the Turkish armed resistance was finished and that, even for them, it would have been a blessing to be a little pressed. [...] There is no need to repeat what I said so many times, that I found repulsive the idea of a war with*

⁹ Vasile Netea, *Take Ionescu, 1858-1922*, in *Illustrious Diplomats*, vol. IV, Ed. Politica, Bucharest, 1983, p. 318.

¹⁰ R. Seișanu, *Take Ionescu*, Bucharest, 1930, p. 153.

*Bulgaria, thus with all the Balkan states, our friends for ages. Such a war could result in a European conflagration, in which we would have been found along with Austria-Hungary – a totally horrible prospect to me. In my view, it would have buried our whole future, our whole ideal.*¹¹ "

It had become increasingly obvious the old suspicion of the king and of Maiorescu towards Take Ionescu, long before known as a supporter of the Entente. Taking into account his failures in negotiations with Danev and some statements made to the foreign press, in disagreement with the official policy, the king asked Maiorescu to recall him from London¹². Afraid that their cooperation might be terminated, the Prime Minister proceeded carefully, by sending a telegram to announce him briefly that his presence was more needed back in the country, which deeply dissatisfied Take Ionescu¹³. Negotiations were to be continued by N. Misu, who was closely following the political line drawn by the Prime Minister, but because of Bulgarian delegation's attitude, they had practically failed.

The Bulgarian government resorted to another strategy, asking Russia to mediate the dispute with Romania. Russia has not initially accepted mediation under the conditions proposed by the Bulgarian government, and insisted to reach an agreement through direct negotiations.¹⁴ On the other hand, failure of negotiations induced King Carol I, under some political circles and public opinion pressure to become firmer, asking for more determined action aimed at occupying the claimed territory, but without a declaration of war and without mobilization.¹⁵

In this situation, in telegrams sent on December 25 and 26, 1912, to D.I. Ghica in Sofia and N. Misu in London, Maiorescu informed them that: "*By order of His Majesty the King, Romania is determined to occupy the territory claimed in Dobrudja without mobilizing and without declaring war, if Bulgaria continues to be reluctant to our friendly proposals.*"¹⁶ Ministers of the Great Powers in Bucharest and Romanian Ministers in their capitals were prevented in this regard. Situation in South-Eastern Europe was thus appearing to complicate through the possible development of the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute into an armed conflict.

Faced with this position of Romania, on 26 December 1912, Russia, assuming the role of a mediator, at the request of the Bulgarian government, proposed Romania an agreement based on the four points previously submitted by the Bulgarian side.¹⁷ Prime Minister Maiorescu considered that such intervention

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 156-157.

¹² Take Ionescu was accused, among others, for telling Prince Lichnowsky, German Ambassador in London, of his acceptance to give up Silistra. N. Iorga. ***Under three kings. History of a struggle for a moral and national ideal***, Pro Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 117.

¹³ A. Iordache, ***The political crisis in Romania and the Balkan Wars, 1911-1913***, Paideia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, p. 199.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 198.

¹⁵ Titu Maiorescu, ***Daily Political Notes***, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁶ ***Green Paper***, *op. cit.*, p. 173-174.

¹⁷ These points, also submitted by Danev to Tache Ionescu as basis for negotiations in London, were:

1. Ecclesiastical and educational autonomy for Coutzo-Vlachs in Macedonia;
2. Tearing down strongholds and forts of Silistra and ceding Medgidia-Tabia strategic positions;

seemed inappropriate, the most appropriate solution to the problem being to directly discuss with the Bulgarian delegation. According to Maiorescu, all that Russia could do was to determine the Bulgarian government to reach an agreement with the Romanian one, in order to avoid a crisis. Therefore, the Romanian Prime Minister told the Minister of Russia in Bucharest, N. Schebeko, that "*as long as conflict between Romania and Bulgaria is not declared, there can not be mediation or arbitration*" and, "*if Mr. Danev does not resume talks, the Romanian government will proceed to military occupation of the territory claimed from Bulgaria*".¹⁸ This statement was also made before the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Bucharest, Fürstenberg, arrived in the meantime, in the presence of the Russian Minister.¹⁹

Great Powers' reaction was not favorable to the intransigent position adopted by the Romanian government with regard to Bulgaria. The general opinion prevailing at the time in various European capitals was to disapprove a Romanian action in force aimed at annexing the territory claimed in Southern Dobruja. Conflict aggravation through a possible involvement of the Great Powers was feared. Russia could not accept a military action of Romania against Bulgaria and the Russian government wanted to clarify its position in this regard. Sazonov stated to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in St. Petersburg that "*if Romania continues to claim Silistra, serious complications may follow*". Informing the Romanian Minister in the Russian capital, C. Nanu, on this statement, his Austro-Hungarian counterpart warned him that "*if Romania occupies the disputed territory while the Bulgarians are busy in Ceatalgea, Russians will have to act, as well as the Austrians. That would be a general war and Silistra is not worth it*".²⁰ "That was, in fact, an indirect but obvious threat of Russia towards Romania.

Take Ionescu had well perceived that, at that time, the Great Powers, each for its own reasons, wanted to avoid, as far as possible, any other military action in South-Eastern Europe, as such actions could easily spread across the continent. In a memorandum addressed to Maiorescu after his return, Take Ionescu stated: "*Our action is regarded as likely to prevent or delay peace, by giving hope to the Turks, therefore it is treated reluctantly. In turn, their desire for peace also makes all the Powers inclined to give advice to Sofia in our favour, because no one disputes our right to a certain satisfaction. Nobody wants to conceive a war between us and Bulgaria*".²¹ In fact, Take Ionescu opposed a decision that would have led to war with Bulgaria, even threatening to resign, which could have led to a government crisis, thus blocking the projected action²².

Although Romania's firm stance in relations with Bulgaria could cause serious internal and external complications, it also had a positive effect in that it

3. Border rectification resulting in annexation by Romania of about 20 villages;

4. Bulgaria guarantees Romania's possession of Dobrudja.

See **Green Paper**, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹⁸ **Ibidem**, p. 174.

¹⁹ Titu Maiorescu, **Însemnări politice zilnice inedite**, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

²⁰ Apud Gh. Zbucnea, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

²¹ R. Seișanu, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

²² Al. Marghiloman, **Political Notes**, vol. I, Scripta Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993, p. 149, 152.

led to unblock negotiations with the Bulgarian side. Stoyan Danev, at the request of Bulgarian Prime Minister, I Ghesov, resumed talks with N. Misu in London. The representative of the Romanian state in the British capital received new instructions which included Romania's claims on Dobrudja frontier: maximum Turtucaia - Dobrich (Bazargic) - Balchik, minimum Silistra - Balchik, without Dobrich. The same instructions were also sent to the Romanian Minister in Sofia, who was to maintain contacts with the Bulgarian government, in both cases being recommended to communicate only the maximal line, but pointing out that an agreement to bring the line Silistra - Kavarna to Romania could always be signed. The results of negotiations in London were to be recorded in a protocol or report clearly showing the positions of both parties²³.

Meanwhile, in the Balkans, important events occurred, that would impair the conduct of the Peace Conference in London. In the context of internal turmoil in the Ottoman Empire, Turkish government's decision to surrender Adrianople led to a coup outbreaking, on 10 January 1913, a new government headed by Enver Pasha being formed. The new Turkish government decided to continue the war, which resulted in suspending belligerents' conference in London on 28 January, denouncing Ceatalgea armistice on 30 January and resuming military operations on 3 February 1913. In the new situation, of course, it was normal and expected a more flexible and conciliatory position of Bulgaria in its negotiations with Romania. This did not happen, although the Great Powers were insisting in Sofia to reach an agreement with Romania.²⁴

On 16/29 January 1913 was signed the report, also called the "*London Protocol*", recording the divergent positions of the two countries. Bulgaria agreed to give autonomy to Aromanians' schools and churches in Macedonia that were to be included in Bulgaria. As regards the border, Romania required the new border line between Romania and Bulgaria to be Turtucaia - Balchik. Bulgaria accepted only the demolition of forts around Silistra and a small border correction, giving Romania two triangles in the middle of the border line, that would included in Romanian Dobrudja, thus redrawing it in a straight line, and another triangle on the Black Sea coast, shift the border 5-6 km farther, which would have allowed Romania to make better use of the Mangalia harbour. So very small territorial concessions from Bulgaria, and also conditioned by the definitive establishment of the new Southern border of Bulgaria. Furthermore, at the request of the Bulgarian side, had to be recorded in the report its surprise on the increase of Romanian claims since the discussions on the subject between Danev and Take Ionescu. It was recorded that, after discussions with Take Ionescu, it was revealed that Silistra and Balchik would not be included in the border correction, that on 12/25 January 1913 the Romanian delegate demanded a territorial cession encompassing those two towns, and that on 14 / January 27, 1913 Romania claimed a new border line starting from West of Turtucaia and encompassing a territory twice as large. Therefore, the Bulgarian delegate considered that the last request - "*a real cession of territory meant to give a fatal blow to the friendly*

²³ *Green Paper*, *op. cit.*, p. 182-183.

²⁴ G.A. Dabija, *Memories of a Romanian Military Attache in Bulgaria, 1910-1913*, Bucharest, 1936, p. 276.

relations between the two Kingdoms" - could not be taken into account and that it was "invalidated in its foundation by the view that Romania itself assumed during the previous discussions."²⁵ The report was completed, the differences being mentioned to serve as a basis for further negotiations between governments of both countries.

Romania's relations with the Central Powers during the Peace Conference in London were driven by the interests of Austria-Hungary and Germany in South-Eastern Europe in the context of the "Balkan crisis", but also by the general goals the Romanian state had South of the Danube.

Obviously, among the Central Powers, Austria-Hungary was the one having a direct interest in the conflict area in the Balkans. Ballplatz diplomacy was mostly concerned with how to prevent the territorial expansion of Serbia towards the Adriatic Sea and the formation of a strong Serbian state that could represent a center of gravity for the Southern Slavs subjects to the Dual Monarchy, but also, at a more general level, it was interested in undermining the Serbian-Greek-Bulgarian alliance to diminish Russian influence, thus the position of the Entente, in the Balkan Peninsula. To achieve these objectives, Austro-Hungary was ready, during the First Balkan War, to be militarily involved, even though it could have led to conflict generalization through Russia's entry into the war. Lack of support, in this case, from Germany, tempered in turn by England, led the Court of Vienna to give up the military means of solving the "Serbian question", aiming to achieve its goals only by political and diplomatic means.

The issue of the Romanian-Bulgarian conflict was analyzed by the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy in terms of Vienna's general interests in South-Eastern Europe. While Romania's desire to include some of the Romanians living in central-western Balkans within the Albanian state borders had full support from Austria-Hungary, in fact serving its Balkan policy objectives, not the same can be said about Vienna's attitude regarding the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute.

The Romanian government was expecting, since the beginning of the "Balkan crisis", to receive an open support from Austria-Hungary on redrawing the Romanian-Bulgarian border, had Bulgaria expanded its boundaries in the region of Macedonia. The Romanian government was expecting Austria-Hungary, as an ally of Romania, to intervene more strongly in Sofia, to determine the Bulgarian government to act in this direction. But, contrary to the expectations of the Romanian government, Austria-Hungary conducted a policy of sparing Bulgaria, initially remaining in expectancy, then preferring Romanian-Bulgarian dispute resolution through bilateral direct negotiations. The lack of a categorical position of Vienna favored the attempts of Russia and France to remove Romania from the Triple Alliance, on which the Austro-Hungarian Minister in Bucharest, Fürstenberg, repeatedly warned. But his reports were not convincing enough for the head of Ballplatz diplomacy, Count Berchtold, who, probably, after his visit in Romania in the summer of 1912, had remained convinced of the loyalty of King Carol I to the political line of the Central Powers.

²⁵ *Green Paper*, *op. cit.*, p. 183-184.

Only the danger of Russia's entry into the war to help Serbia, which was threatened by Austria-Hungary, had determined Viennese diplomacy to give proper support to Romania. In fact, it was serving the interests of Austria-Hungary, which needed the alliance of Romania. The Military Convention concluded on 30 November 1912 in Bucharest between General Franz Conrad von Hoetzendorf and General Alexandru Averescu established the conditions of military cooperation in case of war against Russia and Serbia. Maintaining Romania in alliance with Austria-Hungary was regarded as absolutely necessary at that time, when the Balkan war threatening to turn into a European one. Consequently, Austria-Hungary advised Sofia to begin direct negotiations with the Romanian government for a border rectification and then, after their failure, supported, along with Germany and Italy, Romania's participation in the Peace Conference in London.

It has been shown that, at the same time, Vienna diplomacy also considered another possibility for the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute settlement. In case of failure of negotiations on border rectification in Dobrudja, Vienna was considering the idea of a Romanian-Bulgarian alliance and, therefore, military cooperation, in order to incorporate Adrianople to the Bulgarian state. According to the strategy of the Austro-Hungarian head of diplomacy, with the main objective to prevent the territorial expansion of Serbia, the Romanian-Bulgarian alliance was meant to oppose Belgrade and the Russian influence in the Balkans, thus undermining the Balkan Entente. But it overlooked the possible refusal of Bulgaria, as it was not achievable without Bulgaria meeting some demands of the Romanian government. In these circumstances, the project was abandoned.

Russia's position towards Bulgaria manifested after the occupation of Adrianople by the Bulgarian troops, was encouraging the Austrian diplomacy's projects to attract Sofia on Central Powers' side. In the context of military operations resumption by the Balkan belligerents, the St. Petersburg government took a hostile position towards Bulgaria after the conquest of Adrianople²⁶, Russia not wanting a Bulgarian presence on the shores of the Straits and in Constantinople.

It is worth mentioning that, as differences were emerging between Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria concerning the division of Macedonia, Austria-Hungary acted to break the Serbian-Greek-Bulgarian alliance, by supporting the Bulgarian government. Given that Serbia and Greece demanded compensations in Macedonia for some territories assigned to Albania, Count Berchtold promised to the Bulgarian government the diplomatic support of the Dual Monarchy against Serbia and Greece²⁷, which produced much satisfaction in Sofia, because, after hostilities resumption between the Balkan Allies and the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria felt abandoned by Russia.

²⁶ M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923*, London-Melbourne-New York, 1966, p. 296.

²⁷ *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der Bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914. Diplomatische Aktenstücke des Österreichisch-Ungarischen Ministeriums des Aussern*, Vienna and Leipzig, 1930, vol. 5, doc. no. 5618, 5727, 5733. Berchtold to Tarnowski (30 January and 9 February 1913) and Fürstenberg (9 February 1913).

Thus, after Romanian-Bulgarian negotiations had failed, Austria-Hungary continued to treat Bulgaria as an important pillar of its Balkan policy. That was to have consequences on Romania's relations with Austria-Hungary. On this issue, however, Austria-Hungary had to take into account the position of Germany.

German ruling circles were not fully sharing the Austro-Hungarian policy in the Balkans. German diplomats feared that King Carol I would not be able to impose his policy of alliance with the Central Powers, unless the Romanian government's requests to Bulgaria were met. Therefore, in December 30, 1912 / January 12, 1913, the German chancellor told the Romanian Minister in Berlin, Al. Beldiman, that he would do his best to give satisfaction to the Romanian government and, in early January 1913, the Undersecretary of State instructed the German ambassador in the British capital, where the Peace Conference was taking place, "*to insist on the need that all Powers, in the general interest [...] should make Sofia understand the urgency to reach an agreement with Romania*".²⁸

In fact, King Carol I and Prime Minister Titu Maiorescu were aware of the importance of German support, on which they could count in settling the Romanian-Bulgarian dispute. This was probably why the Romanian government adopted intransigent positions in relations with Bulgaria, threatening the military occupation of the territory claimed. Since Romania's attitude could complicate the situation in South-Eastern Europe, by generalizing the conflict, the Great Powers, including Germany, intervened in Bucharest, to remove such an eventuality. In addition, the tone adopted by the Cabinet of Petersburg towards the Romanian government was becoming threatening. In this situation, fearing Russia, King Carol I and Prime Minister Titu Maiorescu became concerned with renewing the secret treaty between Romania and Austria-Hungary, after the Triple Alliance had itself been renewed on 5 December 1912.

In conclusion, we appreciate that, during the Peace Conference in London, despite a tactical diplomatic opening towards the Entente Powers, Bucharest based its entire strategy to resolve the territorial dispute with Bulgaria on the support it was counting to get from Germany and Austria-Hungary.

²⁸ Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Fund 22, Berlin 1905-1913, unnumbered. (Telegram from Al. Beldiman of 4/17 January 1913); Idem, Fund 21, 1878-1913, vol. 68. ***Political Reports from London, 1905-1913***, f. 202. Titu Maiorescu to N. Misu, 11 January 1913.