

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE “*DIPLOMACY OF 1918 GREAT UNION*,” AS SEEN IN FOREIGN DOCUMENTS

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Abstract. *Within the present paper, we'll briefly explore the diversity of diplomatic ways that composed what we can define today as “Diplomacy of the Great Union of all Romanians.” We are taking into account not only the official kind of diplomacy (exercised through official diplomatic representatives of Romanian government from Old Kingdom of Romania), but equally, informal and quasi-officialized types of diplomatic actors – subsequently, fully officialized and recognized by foreign governments – (as collective organisms and bodies representing the Romanians from abroad, originary from oppressed Romanian lands included into the multi-national empires; the collective diplomacy exerted by organs and bodies representing the Romanians from historical provinces). We are including into the research, diplomatic documents emanating from foreign officials, showing the recognition of the complex character that diplomacy of the Great Union had.*

Keywords: *1918 Great Union of all Romanians, diplomacy of the Great Union, national interest.*

Diplomatic documents of the time show how the will to fulfil the unification of the Romanians from the Romanian provinces with the Kingdom was clearly expressed by their representatives, through their representative bodies, being also communicated to the Romanian government. Thus, during this period, Romanian diplomats and politicians from the Kingdom acted *de facto* and *de jure* as “diplomats for the national priority objective of the Great Union,” making a crucial contribution to the process of national union. If the Romanian government and the Romanian army had not provided effective support, taking a firm political-diplomatic direction, as well as effective actions on the field, the Romanian population from the provinces oppressed by the foreign empires, the final act of Union on December 1st 1918 or its international acknowledgement at the Peace Conference¹ would not have been possible solely with the enthusiastic participation of the popular masses.

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¹ Dumitru Suci, *Anul 1918 în Europa Centrală și Răsăriteană. Ideea de Europă unită*, Argonaut Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, pp. 112-114.

A series of capable politicians and diplomats from the Kingdom of Romania, as well as from the Romanian provinces under foreign occupation, such as I. I. C. Brătianu, Alex. Marghiloman, Take Ionescu, Al. Lahovari, as well as Vasile Stoica, Octavian Goga (who founded the Transylvanian Legion in Bucharest, in 1915²) and many others, took diplomatic action in order to secure the Great Union. These personalities were devoted to the ideal of fulfilling the Great Union of all the Romanians³, implementing a policy of political balance between the two coalitions (the Central Powers and the Entente), which was in the interest of the Romanian nation. They created or insisted on the creation of the best conditions for Romania to join the war or to negotiate at the Peace Conference in Paris (later on), conditions necessary for the fulfilment of this national ideal of political unity for all Romanians. For example, we can quote Austrian-Hungarian Empire representative O. Czernin's report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Royal-Imperial House I. Burian, regarding I. I. C. Brătianu, report issued on June 6th/June 19th 1916, in Sinaia⁴: "*the President of the Council of Ministers maintains a balance between two poles: on one hand, he does not miss the occasion to participate in due time in the Entente's victory, which he looks forward to; on the other, he delays any action against us, assuming as little risk as possible. Mr. Brătianu has the ability to navigate between these two rocks – waiting, fearing and hoping.*"⁵

A report to Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Beyens, dated 1916, presents the skill of the Romanian politicians, their emotions, efforts and their wait for the most adequate moment for Romania's political, diplomatic and military, an essential factor for the fulfilment of the national unity ideal. For example, this report gives an account of the conversation with Alex. Lahovary, delegate of the Romanian government in Paris, on I. I. C. Brătianu's position regarding the fact that Romania was no longer neutral, as it joined the war on the Entente's side⁶: "*Mr. Minister of Romania – Alex. Lahovari (our note) – told me that his country is now more than ever sure that the Allies will win the current war and that their participation is ensured, but Mr. Brătianu cannot accept that Romania may be exposed to the smallest risk; therefore, it waits for the Allies to assume a clearer position before assuming its own position. The two words of the Prime Minister are 'reality' and 'possibility': we must leave dreams and hopes aside to prove*

² Note of the Royal-Imperial Commandment, General Staff, to the Register Office of the Royal-Imperial General Staff, February 19th/March 3rd 1918. Microf. Austria, r. 222, c.135-136 și 171-172. Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, Politisches Archiv I, K.881, Liasse Krieg 6 a. In the anthology *1918 la români, Desăvârșirea unității național-statale a poporului român. Recunoașterea ei internațională. Documente interne și externe (1879-1916)*, vol. I, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 569-570.

³ Dumitru Suci, *quoted op.*, pp. 107-108.

⁴ Report sent by O. Czernin to Burian, June 6th/June 19th 1916, Sinaia, microf. Austria, r.221, c.314-316, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, Politisches Archiv I, K. 520, Liasse XLVII/7 g. In the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. I, *quoted op.*, pp. 711-712.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 711.

⁶ Report sent by Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Beyens, to Guillaume, January 4th/January 17th 1916, Paris microf. Belgia, r.24, c-16-17, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Correspondance Politique, Légations, France, série non reliée, vol. 15, in the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. I, *quoted op.*, pp. 686-687.

our force; we must make sure that the action of the Bucharest government is possible⁷," mentions the report, with regard to the subtle and pragmatic approach of the Romanian politicians from the kingdom.

The clear will of the diplomats and politicians from the Romanian Kingdom to support, through the Romanian government, the efforts of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat and the other oppressed provinces inhabited by Romanians outside the borders of the Kingdom, efforts which led to the fulfilment of the Great Union of 1918, will be *even mentioned in documents of the Western chancelleries*. Some of these documents are responses to the protest notes of the *representative bodies of the Romanians* (such as the Romanian National Council of Transylvania), with regard to certain mentions of territories inhabited by Romanians. For example, a note issued by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows that France recommends ("*for the moment*") solely "*verbal responses*" to the multiple protest notes attached by Victor Antonescu, as the representative of the Romanian government, against maintaining the Hungarians on the Transylvanian territory, respectively the Bulgarian administration on the territory of Dobrogea, plus the protest notes sent to Mr. Antonescu by the delegates of the National Council of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary⁸. They transmitted the instructions and their power of attorney to the delegate of the Romanian government who "*transmitting these notes according to the instructions of the National Council, acts as representative of the Great Unified Romania, which is interpreted as a slight anticipation of the events*"⁹, mentions the document.

The note issued by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the matter also mentions "*unification of all the Romanian provinces from Transylvania and Hungary, as well as Banat, decided by the Alba-Iulia Assembly is notified by them as a done deal.*"¹⁰ The aforementioned document notes that the representative bodies of the Romanians from the oppressed provinces receive the full political support of the Romanian government: "*the National Council of the Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary has transferred its tasks to the Romanian government, officially sending a note on the matter; therefore, Mr. Antonescu now acts as the Romanian government, which he represents, assuming all the claims of the Council.*"¹¹

On November 30th/December 13th 1917, R. Graham, Foreign Office/Great Britain sends a letter to Epaminonda Lucaciu, President of the Administrative Committee of the National Romanian Committee in America¹². The document

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 687.

⁸ Note by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the protest notifications of the National Romanian Council from Transylvania, December 25th 1918/January 7th 1919, Paris, Arh. St. București, col. Microf. France, r.187, c.399-402, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Archives Diplomatiques, Série Europe, sous-série Roumanie vol. 32, f. 88-91. In the anthology *1918 la români, Desăvârșirea unității național-statale a poporului român. Recunoașterea ei internațională. Documente interne și externe (august 1918 – iunie 1919)*, vol. III, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 119-121.

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 120-121.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 120.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Letter sent by R. Graham, Foreign Office, to E. Lucaciu, November 30th/December 13th 1917, London, Microf. Anglia, r.258, Public Record Office London, Foreign Office, General Correspondence, FO 371,

mentions support for the Romanians' rights, in the speech given by the British State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord James Arthur Balfour. The correct version of this excerpt, as forwarded to the representative of Romanians in America, states the following (among others): "*Why is saying that Romanians should gather under the Romanian flag considered imperialistic?*"¹³ The excerpt is an expression of the political support provided by British officials to the Romanians' fight for national liberation from under the Austrian-Hungarian yoke.

The Romanians in America set up organizations to defend the rights of oppressed Romanians from the provinces occupied by the Austrian-Hungarians, issues regarding the activity of the organizations and their mandate being constantly presented to the USA State Department, for information purposes. Thus, in his letter to the American State Secretary Robert Lansing, dated November 18th 1918, Vasile Stoica, member of the Romanian patriotic mission in the United States, informs the American official about the necessity "*to provide Romania and the Allies with all the resources that the Transylvanian nation needs, as it is desperate under the Hungarian oppression.*" To fulfil this objective, the letter mentions that the Romanians in Transylvania, a population of 4 million oppressed people at the beginning of the war, supported this war as a war of liberation from under the Habsburg imperialistic yoke ("*... we knew this war would bring freedom and that this freedom would come from the weapons of the Allies and the Romanian Kingdom. We were all convinced that the defeat of the Austrian-Hungarian and German armies would mean a new life for our people*"¹⁴, mentions the document), After Romania joins the war against Austria-Hungary, "*Romanians from Transylvania made all the efforts to help Romania's Allies,*" as mentioned in the letter. Thus, Transylvanian Romanians living in America at the moment when the States become Romania's ally, by declaring war to Germany, "*volunteered for the American army, in large numbers... the new declaration of war made by the USA to Austria-Hungary was most satisfactory for the Romanians in the American army... the number of volunteers would be even greater, if they could be gathered in a single unit, without being spread among soldiers of another origin.*"¹⁵

During the preparation for the Great Union, Romanian diplomatic actions were also taken by collective representative diplomatic bodies, besides the delegates of the Romanian government, heads of political parties from the Kingdom, intellectuals and priests from the Kingdom or from the oppressed provinces. The Western representatives of the Romanians acted constantly towards informing Western chancelleries that it is just for oppressed Romanians from the provinces occupied by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to regain their rights, and towards receiving active support from the Allies, in order to fulfil the great national

Balkans, Greece, vol. 2895, f. 218, in the anthology *1918 la români. Desăvârșirea unității național-statale a poporului român, documente externe (1916-1918)*, vol. II, General Department of State Archives, Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 1021-1022.

¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 1021-1022.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 1040.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 1040-1041.

objective of the Romanians – national unity. Thus, we must note (among the numerous documents of the sort, issued by the representative bodies of the Romanians in the West) the firm stand taken by the Committee of the Romanian Colony in Paris, which sent a protest note to the governments and peoples fighting and suffering for a generous ideal, document dated May 10th/May 23rd 1918, issued in Paris¹⁶. The document mentions that the Romanian people oppose the Treaty of Bucharest, a peace imposed to Romania by the Central Powers, which “*represents the very negation of our country’s political and economic independence.*” Romania also took the Entente’s side in the war as a protest against the Treaty of Bucharest, which “*is not a peace treaty, it is in direct contradiction to the notion of peace, as understood by the civilized world. The clauses of this contract evidently exclude Romania’s free consent.*”¹⁷

The document signed by *the representatives of the Committee of the Romanian Colony in Paris, of the Committee of Romanians from Transylvania and Bukovina, and by Romanian delegates of the Committee of Oppressed Nationalities* also mentions that “*the interests of the Romanian nation are solidary with the interests of the great Occidental democracies. Romania is the only barrier at the gates of the Balkan Peninsula against the German invasion southward and Asia. On behalf of the Romanian people, we declare ourselves today, as much as yesterday, allies of the Entente powers and we declare the Treaty of Bucharest to be null and void, with all its clauses and additional covenants*” (a similar document is issued by the Romanian Colony in Switzerland). The document calls for the support in battle from the Allied government, in order to fulfil the national unity aspirations of the Romanian people. At informal level, the diplomacy of the Great Union was also supported by press outlets of the representative Committee of the Romanians in provinces under foreign occupation, such as *La Transylvanie* newspaper, which belonged to the National Committee of Romanians from Transylvania and Bukovina. We must mention the article ‘Declarations from Versailles’, dated June 2nd 1918¹⁸, according to which: “*the Romanians... voluntarily and valorously sacrificed themselves for the common cause. The Romanians requested authorization to build legions and fight against their oppressors, in the first line....*”¹⁹

According to the minutes of the founding meeting of the Committee of Action for Romanians in the Allied countries, originating from Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina, issued in Cittàducale, on June 6th/June 19th 1918, “*the Romanians from the territories of the Habsburg Empire, on account of the peace imposed to Romania who have not only the right, but also the duty to continue the fight*

¹⁶ The Protest note of the Romanian Colony in Paris, 10/ 23 May 1918, Paris, microf. Belgia, r.24, c.354-356, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et du Commerce Extérieur, Correspondance Politique, Légations, France, Série non reliée, vol. 18, within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1115-1120.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 1118.

¹⁸ Article named “The Versailles declarations,” from the journal “La Transylvanie,” 2/15 iunie 1918, pp. 1125-1126. Microf. Italia, r. 13, c. 90-91, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, fond Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministre, fasc. 19.4.3., within the anthology *1918 la români*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 1126.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1126.

started by Romania, for the national unity of all the Romanians”²⁰ assembled in the above-mentioned Committee, which adopted a series of resolutions: the Committee will consist of “16 members, some of whom will be appointed as extraordinary delegates in Paris, London and Washington”; the right of the Committee to include other Romanian personalities from Austria-Hungary, who are in the Allied countries; the Committee demands official acknowledgement from the Allied governments, as the only body with the competence to represent the Romanians from the territory of Italy, from the Allied countries and from the homeland²¹.

Vasile Stoica, as the President of the National League of the Romanians in America, informs Robert Lansing in a letter that, besides the Yugoslavian and Czech organizations representing oppressed nationalities from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, “there is a new organization: the organization of the Transylvanian Romanians” and that “the Romanians from the USA have elected a committee, which has published a manifesto outlining the goals of the organization, in order to assemble a Romanian congress”²². The manifesto presents the program of this Committee: “we, the Romanians, wish that our people, settled by the Lord’s will between the Nistru River, Tisa River and Danube River, in the mountain fortress of the Carpathians, also be one nation, a unified country, under one administration, that it defends the Latin culture at the mouth of the Danube and the gates of Orient. We, the Romanians, wish that all the nations from our borders be entirely free, organized into democratic national states, spread as wide as their mother tongue. We wish to respect these nations, to be respected by them and to maintain good relations of durable friendship.”²³ The manifesto quoted by V. Stoica in his letter to Lansing also states that, to this end, “we – the Committee (our note) – will do our best to support the USA and the other Allied nations, which now fight for the fulfilment of this program ... the true peace will be the peace imposed by the Allies at the end of the war and it will bring justice to the world and to all the nations, which have suffered the way we suffered.”²⁴

In the telegram dated October 2nd 1918, sent to Charles J. Wopicka, USA Minister in Romania, American State Secretary R. Lansing assures the Romanian government and the Romanian people²⁵ that it is a duty of honour for the Allied Powers to

²⁰ The Minute of the Founding Séance of the Committee of Action of the Romanians living in Allied countries, from Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina, 6/19 iunie 1918, Cittàducale, microf. Italia, r.10/3 c.130-35, Fond Ministero dell Interno, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, fascicola 19.3.8, within the anthology *1918 la români*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 1127-1128.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 1128.

²² Letter addressed to V. Stoica, The President of National Romanian League from USA, to the US Secretary of State, R. Lansing, July 12, 1918, Washington, microf. SUA, r. 572, c. 300-304, The National Archives of the United States, Washington DC, Records of the Department of State relating to World War I, and its termination, roll 98, no. 763 72/10798. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1136-1139.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 1139.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ R. Lansing’s Telegram to the US Minister in Romania, Charles J. Wopicka, 2 October /3 November 1918. Microf. Austria, r. 221, c.429, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, Politisches Archiv I, K, 520, Liasse XLVII/7 g. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1188-1189.

defend Romania's integrity and independence. "*The Romanian people must not doubt that, according to the Agreement of August 4th/August 17th 1916, its Allies fully acknowledge Romania's national aspirations... Romania will most certainly win and stand proud and strong during the peace treaties*"²⁶, Lang promises.

Romanian diplomacy went beyond the diplomats from the Old Kingdom of Romania, the special delegates sent to the capital cities of the great powers, to plead the cause of the Romanians' national unity. The research of diplomatic documents shows that the diplomacy of the Great Union was also covered by collective representative bodies of communities of Romanians from various countries. For example, the National Committee of Romanian Volunteers in Russia sent a telegram to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requesting that the Czechoslovak National Council (another collective representative body of another oppressed nationality from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire) be informed that Romanian volunteers declare irrevocable the will of the population from the Romanian territories of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to unite with Romania²⁷. The telegram clearly mentions that, by agency of the Allies' diplomacy (through the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs), "*the National Romanian Committee requests that the Czechoslovak National Council be informed with regard the following: as a response to the manifesto of the Emperor of Austria, the Army Corps of the Romanian volunteers from Russia, represented by its National Committee declares the Romanian parts of Transylvania, Banat, Crişana, Maramureş and Bukovina separate from Austria-Hungary. These territories are now part of Romania, a unique, free and independent state. We declare irrevocable the will of the people inhabiting these regions to become and to remain citizens of the Great Romania and we ask the Czechoslovak government to take note of this declaration*"²⁸. Thus, this diplomatic document shows how Romanians from other states created collected entities and transmitted diplomatic messages to the governments of other states, in a legitimate manner, actively supported by the Allied Powers – which is proven by the use of the French official diplomatic channels, which transmitted the requests and viewpoints of these Romanian representative bodies.

The collective representative bodies of the Romanians, such as the Central National Romanian Council²⁹, are active diplomats, completing the diplomatic efforts of the Romanian government. Thus, the Central National Romanian Council sends a diplomatic ultimatum to the Hungarian government, regarding

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 1188.

²⁷ Telegram from the National Committee of the Voluntary Body of Romanians from Russia, to the Foreign Ministry of France, 24 October/6 November 1918, Vladivostok, microf. Franţa, r. 254, c.971, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Archives Diplomatiques, Direction des Affaires Politiques et Commerciales, Série A, carton 1163, Dos. 7, 1918-1920, Travaux préparatoires de la Conférence, Politique de la Roumanie, f.1, within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1201-1202.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1202.

²⁹ Ultimate Diplomatic Note from National Romanian Central Council, 27 October/9 November 1918, Arad, Microf. The Hungarian Popular Republic, r.39, c. 148-149, Magyar Országos Levéltár Polgári Kori központi Kormányhatoságok Levéltarai (K szekcio) Miniszterelnökségi levéltár. See also, the book *December 1st 1918 Great Union*, Library of Bucharest Section of Astra Association, December 1st 1943, pp. 33-34. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 1210-1212.

the request to cede the territories inhabited by Romanians (October 27th 1918), in which it invokes “*the right of the peoples to self-determination and the interest of our nation and of the minorities with which it cohabits the same territory,*” in order to “*immediately assume the entire governing power on the Hungarian and Transylvanian territories, inhabited by Romanians.*”³⁰ The note demands that the Hungarian government “*transfer all the state, political, administrative, justice, education, church, financial, military and transport institutions, official entities and bodies from these territories to our authority. At the same time, any other form of authority ceases on these territories. In this case, we guarantee the public order, and the security of goods and people. Otherwise, we have issue a proclamation to inform the people, the country and the entire world that it is now impossible for us to exercise our right to self-determination, for which reason we cease any cooperation with the authorities, and we assume no responsibility for future events, as such responsibility is to be handled by the current government of the National Hungarian Council*”³¹, the diplomatic note mentions. The National Romanian Council, represented by President Ștefan C. Pop, also mentions that “*a mixed commission will determine the procedure for governance transfer*” and that the government (representative for the Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary) will be installed at Sibiu³².

Another diplomatic document illustrative for the complex process that was the diplomacy of the Great Union is the letter sent by the National Council for Romanian Unity to the Italian Government, letter issued in Rome and dated November 9th/November 22nd 1918. The document expresses gratitude for the support provided by the Italian government and its constant interest in the efforts made by the Romanians to fulfil their objective of national unity. The letter requests its recognition as a collective body and support for its activity in Italy. The National Council for Romanian Unity was a representative body, founded in Paris, with I. Ursu, C-tin Mille and N. Titulescu as members, and Vasile Lucaciu and Angelescu³³, as vice-presidents. The letter explains that the French and the British recognized the Council in official letters, attached with the letter issued by American State Secretary Lansing. Lansing’s letter expresses the USA government’s support for the “*just claims of the Romanians*”³⁴. The letter to the Italian government also mentions “*full gratitude for the measures recently taken to speed up the creation and recruitment of the Romanian legion.... Legion, which will soon leave to join the Romanian troops in the Kingdom.*”³⁵

On November 25th/December 8th 1918, English Minister in Rome, Sir J. Jennel Rodd, writes a letter to A. J. Balfour, in which he quotes the letter issued by the Italian government, recognizing the creation of the National Council for Romanian

³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 1210-1212.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 1212.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ Letter of the National Council of Romanian Unity, November 9/22, 1918, Roma, microf. Italia, r.13/2, c.151-152, Archivio Centrale Dello Stato, Roma, Ministero dell-Interno, Fasc. 19.29.7, within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1229-1231.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 1230-1231.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 1231.

Unity and creating relations with it³⁶. The letter mentions that the Italian government "will fully support the acquiring and guarantee of all the political and territorial rights of the Romanian people and nation, motivated by the historic connections which have always brought the two peoples close, and by the common interests of all the citizens of each state, who endured the same foreign oppression."³⁷

Another important role in the diplomacy of the Great Union was played by delegates from the Great National Assembly in Alba-Iulia, through diplomatic documents (aide-mémoire) such as the one mentioned in the report issued by British ambassador in Bern, Horace Rumbold, and sent to Lord A. J. Balfour³⁸, to be further transmitted to the Peace Conference, with the aid of certain officials from the allied governments³⁹. The document mentions that "the old Belgrade truce concluded with a foreign government (the Hungarian government) divides the Romanian people into two, which causes considerable difficulties and confusions"⁴⁰, as well as "the necessity to establish a new arrangement between the Romanian government and the Allies, which are now its Allies."⁴¹

Another manifestation of the Great Union diplomacy is seen in the collective documents of Romanians living abroad, such as the petition of Romanians from Canada, sent to George V who is asked to support the cause of Transylvania and Bukovina unified with Romania, at the Peace Congress from Paris⁴². The petition states: "we, the people who has suffered in Austria-Hungary" and asks the King to intervene at the Peace Conference, for "the five million people in Bukovina, Transylvania and the region above the Tisa River to be freed from oppression and united with their homeland, Romania."⁴³ The petition is signed "on behalf of the entire people settled by fate between the banks of the Nistru and Tisa rivers, between the Carpathians and the Black Sea."⁴⁴

Another entity representative for Romanians from the historic Romanian provinces in the multinational empires (General Congress of Bukovina) is also an essential political actor involved in the diplomacy of the Great Union. One of its actions is sending diplomatic notes to other political actors (to the Entente, in this case)⁴⁵. Thus, in a telegram to Romania's allies, the General Congress of

³⁶ Letter of the UK Minister in Rome, Sir J.Rennel Rodd, to A. J. Balfour, November 25/ December 8 1918, Roma. Microf. Anglia, r. 390, c.889-890, Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office Political (FO 371), vol. 3141, f. 551-552. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1257-1258.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 1258.

³⁸ The Report of the Ambassador Horace Rumbold, to A. J. Balfour, November 26 / December 9, 1918, Berna, microf. England, r. 390, c.906-909, Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office, Political (FO 371), vol. 3141, f. 564. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1266-1269.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1266.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 1268.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² The Memoire of the Romanians from Canada, addressed to the King George the 5th, December 2/15, 1918, Windsor, Canada, microf. England, r. 392,c.1055-1059, Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office (F.O. 371), vo. 3568, f. 257-260, within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1272-1274.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 1274.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ Telegram of the General Congress of Bukovina to the Entente, November 15/28, 1918, State Archives, Bucharest, fond Savel Rădulescu, dos. 187, f. 13-14. Within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 1241.

Bukovina invokes the right of the peoples to decide their own fate and announces the Entente “*the re-annexation of Bukovina to the Kingdom of Romania, within its old borders, to Ceremuş and Nistru.*”⁴⁶

The Romanian Legation in France (political entity representing Romanians from the Kingdom) practices a type of official diplomacy (at the level and on behalf of the Romanian government), by sending a notification with regard to the will of the Romanians (including the Romanians from Austria-Hungary) to form a single state⁴⁷. At the same time, the notification includes references to the relations between the National Committee of Romanians from Transylvania and the National Romanian Committee from Paris, in relation to getting the truce conditions modified. The documents states that “*there is an agreement between the Romanian Government and the National Committee of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary, based on which the government of the Kingdom of Romania has exclusive decision rights regarding foreign relations, speaking on behalf of Transylvania and of the Romanians from Hungary.*” The document mentions that this quality of the above-mentioned Committee is temporary, in terms of the internal organization of the country. “*Romanians from the Kingdom and from the Romanian territories in Austria-Hungary wish to form a single state.*”⁴⁸ As president of the National Committee of Romanians in Transylvania, Iuliu Maniu sent a telegram to the delegates of the Paris Committee, explaining that, as a consequence of the unification with the Kingdom of Romania, they are asked to send the delegation which they carry to the Minister of Romania in Paris, who represents the interests of all the Romanians from now on, and to provide with the adequate instructions, in order to have the truce conditions modified.⁴⁹

Conclusions

The Romanian diplomacy of the Great Union was complex, flexible and multidimensional. It followed official channels (diplomats and politicians who represented the political will of the government from the Kingdom of Romania), channels subsequently officialised, covered by the creation of the collective entities representing Romanians from the historic Romanian provinces), as well as informal channels (various scholars, politicians, Romanian clerics from the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, Romanians originating from the oppressed Romanian provinces, who moved abroad, representative entities etc.) We can talk about a civil diplomacy (exercised through the representative entities of the legion corps of Romanians abroad or through the military diplomatic documents issued by high officials of the Romanian army).

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 1241.

⁴⁷ The Note of Romanian Legation in France, November 15/28, 1918, Paris, microf. France, r.184, c.617, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Direction des Affaires politiques et commerciales, Archives diplomatiques, vo. 41, serie Z, carton 577, doss.5, f. 24, within the anthology *1918 la români*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 1241-1242.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1242.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

We note that such a complex diplomacy, fully dedicated to the ideal of political unity of all the Romanians in a single national, unitary and indivisible state, entailed *the creation of diplomatic relations even among the collective entities representing the Romanians from outside the Kingdom of Romania, which sent diplomatic notifications*. In addition, *these collective entities have either sent direct documents, or used the official diplomatic channels of the Allies (who accepted to cooperate), requesting that they are officially recognized by the governments of other countries and that they are allowed to be active on their territory, as they represented the will of Romanians originating from the Romanian provinces under oppression or simply settled abroad*.

Thus, what we have in view is a complex, multi-layered diplomacy, with sets of precise strategic objectives, a diplomacy which coordinated its efforts in times of peace and in times of war, being not only a diplomacy that obtained the Great Union of 1918, but also a diplomacy active *after* this historical moment, in order to ensure *the official diplomatic and political international recognition* of this Union, at the Peace Conference from Paris and at subsequent conferences.

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