

ROMANIAN DIPLOMATS IN THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES (1916-1947)

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Abstract:

The main object of the present paper is to introduce the diplomats sent to represent the Romanian state in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Helsinki and Oslo, as heads of diplomatic missions. Did they have professional or human connections with the Nordic states? Were they moved from one legation in the Scandinavian world to another? In other words, were they specialists in Scandinavian matters? Were the Nordic states a professional attraction /a trampoline in the career of Romanian diplomats or were they `quiet` diplomatic missions, marginal in importance, less attractive to diplomats? In my attempt to provide an answer to these questions I found that most of those who took turns as head of legation in the Scandinavian countries had not previously been trained at the same missions. Only three ministers had two missions as heads of legation in the region and only two of them had, throughout their career, held positions in missions in the Scandinavian states. In addition to this, the fact that for 10 of the 23 ministers plenipotentiary being appointed as head of legation in the Scandinavian world was their first experience of the kind stands to attention. This proves that the diplomatic missions in Northern Europe can be perceived, in general, as a place to test/promote talented or experienced diplomats with a tortuous career path as envoys extraordinary or ministers plenipotentiary, positions which entailed higher responsibility for their occupants. Aside from these remarks, it must be emphasized that two of the legation holders that succeeded each other throughout more than three decades in the Scandinavian capitals, held, for a brief while, the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Rezumat:

Obiectul central al lucrării de față este să prezinte cine au fost diplomații trimiși să reprezinte statul român la Stockholm, Copenhaga, Helsinki (Helsingfors) și Oslo, din postura de șef de misiune diplomatică. Aveau aceștia legături profesionale sau umane cu statele nordice? Au fost mutați de la o legație din lumea scandinavă la alta? Cu alte cuvinte erau specialiști în problemele lumii scandinave? Reprezentau statele nordice o atracție profesională/o trambulină în cariera diplomaților români sau erau niște misiuni diplomatice „liniștite”, periferice ca importanță și mai puțin atractive pentru diplomați? Căutând să ofer un răspuns la aceste întrebări am constatat că majoritatea celor care s-au perindat la conducerea legațiilor din țările scandinave nu mai făcuseră stagii la aceste misiuni. Doar trei miniștri au avut câte două misiuni ca șef de legație în regiune și doi dintre ei activaseră în cariera lor la misiuni din statele scandinave. Apoi, atrage atenția faptul că pentru 10 din cei 23 de miniștri plenipotențieri, numirea la conducerea unei legații din lumea scandinavă a fost prima experiență de acest fel. Acest fapt demonstrează că misiunile diplomatice din nordul Europei pot fi percepute, în general, ca un loc de testare/ de promovare a diplomaților talentați ori a celor cu experiență, dar care au avut o ascensiune sinuoasă în carieră, în poziția de trimis extraordinar și ministru plenipotențiar, ce impunea o responsabilitate mai mare pentru deținătorul acestei funcții. Dincolo de aceste aprecieri, trebuie subliniat faptul că doi dintre titularii de legații ce s-au perindat în cele mai bine de trei decenii în capitalele scandinave au deținut, pentru o perioadă scurtă, funcția de ministru de Externe.

Keywords: diplomat, diplomatic mission, Romania, Scandinavian Countries

Thesis Statement

Diplomatic relations between Romania and the Scandinavian states took shape with more difficulty than in the case of relations between the Romanian state and the great European powers or between Bucharest and the capitals of neighbouring countries. If in Paris, Sankt Petersburg, Constantinople, Rome or Berlin the newly independent Romanian upgraded its diplomatic agencies to the rank of legations throughout 1878-1880, while Greece and Serbia hosted diplomatic representations during the same interval, diplomatic relations took a different turn in the case of the Scandinavian countries. The first legations were established during World War I (1916-1917), which does not mean that Romania maintained permanent diplomatic missions in all Scandinavian states over the following decades. The financial issues the Romanian was facing, the persistent lack of political and economic interest at different times, the geographical distance, as well as the impact of the world wars are factors that might explain the frequent changes in the geography of Romanian legations in the four Scandinavian countries.

In Romanian historiography, reliable studies on the diplomatic, cultural or economic relations between the Romanian state and the Scandinavian countries have emerged in the past years, mainly focusing on the interwar years and the Second World War. The research of Silviu Miloiu, Oana Popescu, Ana-Maria

Despa, Oana Otu etc. contributed to the knowledge of a field deemed 'exotic' in Romania up to a few years ago. Due to the work of the above-mentioned researchers, we now have an overview of the connections between Romania and the Scandinavian world at the first half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, there is still room to nuance or deepen the understanding of certain aspects of the ample themes of Romanian-Scandinavian contacts.

I consequently intend to devote the present paper to an analysis of the chiefs of diplomatic missions of Romania in the Scandinavian countries and attempt to answer a few questions: how and in what context were Romania's legations in the Scandinavian countries opened and closed?; who were the diplomats sent to represent the Romanian state in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Helsinki (Helsingfors) and Oslo (Christiania)?; did they have any professional or human connections with the Scandinavian countries? were they moved from one Scandinavian legation to another?; in other words, were they specialists in Scandinavian matters?; was there an interest in Bucharest to train specialists in this field?; were the Scandinavian countries a professional attraction/a springboard in the career of Romanian diplomats or were these 'quiet' diplomatic missions, marginal in importance and less attractive to diplomats? Can we identify a certain intellectual and professional profile of the chief of Romanian diplomatic mission from the Scandinavian states?

Romanian diplomatic missions in the Scandinavian world

The network of Romanian legations at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth was relatively small, mainly reduced to the neighbouring regions and the great powers. The Balkans and Central Europe were the areas best-covered by the permanent diplomatic missions of Romania, since the political stakes in Bucharest were confined to the region. At the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, Romania opened a legation in Bern and as soon as Albania became independent a Romanian diplomatic representation was established¹. 1913 was also the year when Romania accredited a minister plenipotentiary in Madrid².

The war changed the European and world geopolitical landscape, upsetting the diplomatic relations that had previously been built. Romania's involvement in the war in August 1916 led to the interruption of diplomatic relations with the

¹Dinu C. Giurescu, Rudolf Dinu, Laurențiu Constantiniu, *O istorie ilustrată a diplomației românești 1862-1947*

(București: Monitorul Oficial, 2011), 40; Constantin Velichi, "Tirana", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 1911-1939 (București: Editura Politică, 1971), 59.

²Dan Berindei, "Madrid", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 75.

states of the Central Powers, which translated into the dissolution of the legations in Berlin, Vienna, Constantinople and Sofia.

During the war, the belligerents consolidated their diplomatic missions from the allied states and were also interested in being represented in the neutral countries. In fact, neutral countries could be a 'connecting bridge' between adversaries, a place where information could be obtained and passed on and various products could be bought, as well as a transit area of people and goods. This was the international situation of Sweden, Denmark and Norway at the time³.

In this context, Romanian leaders started to regard Northern Europe differently. It was time to open diplomatic missions in this side of the European continent, too. The first Romanian legation established in the Scandinavian area was in Stockholm. The decision was made in the context of the interruption of Romanian-German diplomatic relations under war conditions. Furthermore, belligerent material headed to Romania was passing through Sweden and Stockholm was perceived as a point to collect information and a launching space for propaganda or campaigns meant to counteract enemy propaganda. Thus, the Romanian government approved the establishment of a legation in the Swedish capital starting with 1 November 1916⁴.

A further half a year would pass until the Romanian government, having sought refuge in Iași, adopted the decision to establish legations in the capitals of the other two Scandinavian states, too. Consequently, the diplomatic representations in Oslo (Christiania) and Copenhagen were established on 1 May 1917. It must also be noted that the legation in Copenhagen was managed by a chargé d'affaires and was placed under the coordination of the minister plenipotentiary in Stockholm, who was also accredited in Denmark⁵.

Alongside the three Scandinavian diplomatic missions, Romania also opened a legation in United States of America⁶ on 1 October 1917 and sent a special mission to Portugal⁷. It is worth noting, however, that the main organizing initiatives of Romanian diplomacy of the sort after joining the war were aimed at the neutral states of Northern Europe. One of the initiators of this endeavour was Take

³Silviu Miloiu, *O istorie a Europei nordice și baltice*, volumul I, *De la epoca naționalismului la războiul rece* (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2004), 108-109, 116.

⁴Paul Oprescu, "Stockholm și Oslo (Christiania)", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 100.

⁵Oana Popescu, *România și Danemarca în prima jumătate a secolului XX* (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2010), 48.

⁶Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 329.

⁷Venera Teodorescu, "Lisabona", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 116-117; Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 327.

Ionescu, *ad-interim* state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1917, a politician and diplomats with vision and initiative⁸.

After the war, the diplomatic landscape is radically altered as a result of the disappearance of empires and the appearance of new states, as well as the emergence of changes in the international agenda. For Romania, the period 1919-1922 bore the imprint of the establishment of a few legations or by the re-opening of some offices that had been closed during the war. Evidently, the tendency was to adapt to the new geopolitical realities from the viewpoint of diplomatic representation. In this context, Romania's legation in Helsinki is created in February 1921, a few years after Finland had become independent⁹. A year later, however, the legation was closed and diplomatic issues were transferred to the portfolio of the plenipotentiary minister in Stockholm¹⁰. The act was part of a larger set of measures that also affected the other diplomatic missions of Romania. In fact, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to cut down on its structures of external representation as a result of budgetary pressure. Thus, if in 1921 Romania had 25 permanent diplomatic missions, over the following year six legations and a diplomatic agency were closed. There were two Scandinavian legations among the suppressed ones: those from Oslo and Helsinki¹¹. Practically, starting from 1922, the Romanian state would only have one diplomatic representation, that in Stockholm, which ensured connections with the four states of the region. Unlike the Scandinavian area, which slid back to an area of marginal interest to Romanian diplomacy, another state that had maintained neutrality during the First World War, Switzerland, maintains interest in the eyes of the Romanian decision-makers since it had hosted the League of Nations and was an important financial center where the Romanian state attempted to obtain loans¹².

The mission in Stockholm was short-staffed in the '20s, the chief of the legation stating in 1924 that although he was 'a minister in four states' he only had 'a secretary and an interpreter' at his disposal¹³. During N. Titulescu's first term of office in Foreign Affairs (1927-1928), he advocated a revival of connections with the Scandinavian states, militating for the expansion of the area containing the

⁸Popescu, 48.

⁹Anca Oana Otu, *Relațiile româno-finlandeze în perioada 1918-1947*, doctoral thesis (Iași, 2011), 39-47.

¹⁰N. Copoiu, "Helsinki", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 206.

¹¹*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe. Acte și documente*, volumul II, 1920-1947, edition supervised by Ion Mamina, George G. Potra, Gheorghe Neacșu, Nicolae Nicolescu (București: Fundația Europeană Nicolae Titulescu, 2006), 58 and 69. The legations in Portugal, Holland, Spain and Japan were closed, as well as the diplomatic agency in Egypt.

¹²Roland Ruffieux, *La Suisse de l'entre deux guerres* (Lausanne: Payot, 1974), 119-143; Hans-Ulrich Jost, "Bedrohung und Enge (1914-1945)", in vol. *Geschichte der Schweiz und der Schweizer*, Band III (Basel&Frankfurt am Main, Helbing&Lichtenhahn, 1983), 103-107, 144-147.

¹³Oprescu, 103.

permanent diplomatic missions of Romania. This explains the establishment of the Oslo legation on 1 February 1928, alongside other diplomatic representations opened at the same time (Brazil, The League of Nations, Portugal, Latvia)¹⁴.

Despite the establishment of the legation in the Norwegian capital, it was still the plenipotentiary minister in Stockholm who ensured diplomatic representation in the neighbouring country, too¹⁵. Moreover, from August 1929 to March 1930, for financial and maybe political reasons, even the legation in Stockholm was headed by a chargé d'affaires, as well as Romania's diplomatic representations in Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Holland, Latvia or Japan¹⁶.

Staff-wise, matters were no better, either. Nothing had practically changed since 1924 up to the end of the 20s. The chargé d'affaires was seconded by an interpreter and a typist, to whom we might add the consul general (Constantin I. Karadja)¹⁷. The legations in Spain, Turkey, Portugal and Egypt had less staff, while the mission in Bern had six employees, and that in Paris, 23¹⁸.

In a few years, the situation would change radically. Romania's legation in Finland was established in 1934 (1 February)¹⁹, the legation in Oslo²⁰ began functioning and a diplomatic representation opened in Copenhagen²¹. It was the beginning of a stage in which Romanian-Scandinavian relations enjoyed mediation in each of the four Northern capitals. A few factors might explain the measures undertaken by Romanians in 1934: the wish of Minister of Foreign Affairs, N. Titulescu, for the Romanian state to be as best diplomatically represented in the world as possible- the same year a Romanian legation in Moscow is opened; overcoming the economic crisis by the Romanian state, which allowed for a re-fashioning of the budget assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the dynamics of commercial relations between Romania and the Scandinavian states. Denmark, for instance, was an important market for Romanian agricultural products²². Furthermore, the promotion of a similar policy within the League of Nations, as well as similar interests pertaining to the relation

¹⁴Mircea Malița, "Diplomația românească în perioada interbelică", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 22.

¹⁵Popescu, 52.

¹⁶Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității (The National Council for the Study of the 'Securitate' Archives), Documentary Fund, file 8845/ vol. 5, Tablou al funcționarilor Ministerului Afacerilor Străine, Bucharest, 11 September 1929, unpaginated.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹See details in Silviu Miloiu, "An Untold Story: The Romanian-Finnish Diplomatic Bounds 1923-1939", *Valachian Journal of Historical Studies*, nr. 7-8 (2007), 103.

²⁰Ana-Maria Despa, "The History of diplomatic relations between Romania and Norway during the interwar period", *Revista Română de Studii Baltice și Nordice*, vol. 3, Issue 2 (2011), 319.

²¹Popescu, 55.

²²Ibid., 53-54.

with the USSR (in the case of Finland) was at the basis of the decision to open permanent diplomatic missions in all the Scandinavian countries.

This context of diplomatic relations was shaken by the outbreak of World War II. Thus, after the occupation of Norway by Germany, Romania's legation closed. Legally, the diplomatic mission ceased its activity on 15 July 1940²³, at the same time as the Romanian diplomatic representations in Belgium and Holland, while diplomatic relations were discontinued on 20 February 1941²⁴.

In mid-October 1940, the Bucharest government decided to close the legations in Helsinki²⁵ and Copenhagen. The budget cuts face by Romania due to territorial losses and war were, most likely, the causes that spurred the dissolution of these diplomatic missions. Furthermore, on 15 October 1940 the diplomatic representations of Romania in Tehran and Ciudad de Mexico²⁶ ceased their activity, while, in September, the legation Rio de Janeiro had been closed²⁷. Thus, this was not a singular measure adopted by the new Bucharest government, but part of a larger plan to close the diplomatic legations from the countries that were not of interest, at the time, on the agenda of Romanian diplomacy. In fact, a reorganization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic representations was attempted at the time. In this setting, Frederic C. Nanu, who drew up a report regarding the possible reorganization of the ministry, made the proposition to transform the legation in Sweden into a consulate²⁸.

Not much later, however, on 1 June 1941, the legation in Helsinki was reopened, at the same time as that from Tehran. Geopolitical factors regarding the relations with Germany and the closeness to Soviet Russia underlay the reopening of these diplomatic offices. Thus, on 22 June 1941, at the moment Romania joined the war, Romanians had legations in Stockholm and Helsinki. The first of the two states was neutral (Sweden), while the second was taking part in the war against the soviets. Each of them was important in their own way in the pursuit of Romania's international interests which were led, at the time, by Ion Antonescu. We must note, though, that the legation in Sweden tends to acquire greater importance, since Romanians negotiated their retreat from the war with Russian diplomats accredited in Stockholm²⁹.

On the other hand, on 11 September 1941, as a result of the decision taken by the Bucharest government, the minister of Romania in Berlin was also accredited

²³Despa 2011, 325-326.

²⁴Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 319, 326.

²⁵Miloiu 2007, 105.

²⁶Popescu, 68.

²⁷Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 319.

²⁸*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 480.

²⁹For exemple, see Mihai Dimitrie Sturdza, *Rușii, masonii, Mareșalul și alte răspântii ale istoriografiei românești* (București:Compania, 2013), 264-337.

in Copenhagen³⁰. This solution was kept until the summer of 1943, when the legation in Copenhagen was reactivated and a minister plenipotentiary was appointed³¹.

The events that occurred in Romania starting with 23 August 1944, as well as international developments impacted the diplomatic representations of the Romanian state. The government changes, the defeat in the war, the increasing soviet influence and the communists' tendency to subordinate the institutions of the Romanian state drew a great scar on Romania's diplomatic relations with the members of the international community. In this context, the legation in Copenhagen was left unheaded on 1 October 1944³², but diplomatic missions in Helsinki³³ and Stockholm were led by *chargés d'affaires* until 1947³⁴.

Starting with 1946, the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was still outside of full communist control, tried to connect Romania to the new international realities, supporting the process to create new legations or to appoint new occupants for the diplomatic offices that were led by *chargés d'affaires*³⁵. Thus, on July 1946, the Romanian state reopened the legation in Oslo.

Towards the end of the war, Romania's interests in Denmark were represented by the legation in Stockholm³⁶. In 1947, a new minister was appointed in Copenhagen, with a mandate that lasted a few months (28 March-15 September 1947)³⁷. Later on, from August 1948, Romania's interests in Denmark being represented by the legation in Holland³⁸. Starting with 26 December 1947 the Romanian ambassador in Moscow was also accredited in Finland³⁹.

Heads of Diplomatic Missions

The first diplomatic mission established by Romania in the Scandinavian countries, the legation in Stockholm, was initially headed by a *chargé d'affaires* in the person of the diplomat Grigore Bilciurescu (1874-1945). He had worked from 1912 at Romania's legation in Berlin and had mediated the settling in of an honorary consul general in Stockholm, while during the following year he

³⁰Popescu, 69.

³¹*Ibid.*, 70.

³²*Ibid.*

³³Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 322; *Arhivele Diplomatice ale Ministerului Afacerilor Externe al României* [The Diplomatic Archives of the Romanian Foreign Ministry, hereafter AMAE], Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 388.

³⁴AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 238.

³⁵For details Adrian Vițalariu, "Impunerea controlului comunist asupra Ministerului Afacerilor Străine, 1944-1948", *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, anul XXI, nr. 78-79 (1-2/2013), 61-82.

³⁶Popescu, 72.

³⁷Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 321.

³⁸Popescu, 72.

³⁹Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 322.

worked as a consul general in Budapest⁴⁰. Thus, Bilciurescu was no stranger to the Scandinavian area. Another element that weighed heavily on his appointment was the fact that he was present, at the time, in the capital of Sweden⁴¹. After the legation in Oslo was established, Bilciurescu was appointed minister plenipotentiary in the Norwegian capital, where he remained until the diplomatic representations' closure, on 1 April 1922⁴². Consequently, at 43 years of age, Bilciurescu, a professional diplomat, was head of legation as minister plenipotentiary⁴³. After the legation in Norway was closed, Bilciurescu returned to Bucharest, where he became, for a while, the head of the Directorate of International Political Issues within Romania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁴⁴. Later on, from 1924, he returned to the leadership of some legations, taking turns as minister plenipotentiary in Sofia⁴⁵, Warsaw and Hague⁴⁶.

Gheorghe Derussi (1870-1931) was appointed in Stockholm in his place. He was in charge of the legation's destiny from 1917 onwards, with an interruption (1 April 1918-1 February 1919)⁴⁷ until 1 September 1919, when he was moved to Bern. Derussi was a diplomat of great experience, who had been minister plenipotentiary in Sofia in 1913-1916 and had spent time in formerly important legations, such as the one in Vienna⁴⁸, throughout his career. For Derussi, the mission in Stockholm was a challenge – especially in times of war – which he took up brilliantly. His activity to promote the national Romanian ideal during the time when he was unemployed mattered greatly, too. For this, he was transferred, at Ion. I. C. Brătianu's suggestion, to Bern, a legation deemed more important during peacetime than the one in Stockholm. In fact, there was an exchange in the diplomatic missions' leadership. The occupant of the Vienna legation, Mihail Pâcleanu, was appointed in the capital of Sweden, where he remained as chief of diplomatic mission until 1928⁴⁹. One must emphasize the fact that Derussi was

⁴⁰Alexandru Periețeanu-Buzău, Mihai Alin Pavel, "Spița familiei Bilciurescu", in vol. *Familii boierești din Moldova și Țara Românească. Enciclopedie istorică, genealogică și biografică*, volumul I, Abaza-Bogdan, coordinated and co-authored by Mihai Dim. Sturza (București: Simetria, 2004), 538.

⁴¹Oprescu, 102.

⁴²*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 69.

⁴³See details in Periețeanu-Buzău, Pavel, 538.

⁴⁴*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 72.

⁴⁵Constantin Iordan, "Les chef de la mission diplomatique de la Roumanie à Sofia pendant l'entre-deux-guerres: esquisses de portrait", *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, Tome XLIX, 2011, Nr. 1-4, Janvier-Décembre, 276-277.

⁴⁶*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 539, 553.

⁴⁷Meanwhile, Mihail A. Arion wasad interim chargé d'affaires (Ana-Maria Despa, *România și Norvegia în prima jumătate a secolului al XX-lea* (doctoral thesis, Târgoviște, 2013), 45).

⁴⁸Ibid., 539. See Mihai Sorin Rădulescu, *În căutarea unor istorii uitate. Familii românești și periplituri europene* (București: Editura Vremea, 2011), 166-167; Andrei Alexandru Căpușan, *Diplomați români de elită. O istorie - incompletă - a diplomației române prin diplomați*, vol. II, *Epoca modernă. Epoca contemporană, 1919-1947*, ediția a II-a (București: Ars Docendi, 2009), 52-54.

⁴⁹Despa 2013, 70; Oprescu, 102-103.

one of the two legation chiefs from the Scandinavian countries who became, albeit for a short while, Minister of Foreign Affairs (17 December 1921 - 19 January 1922).

As noted before, Derussi also coordinated the activity of the Copenhagen legation, where he was transferred as a *chargé d'affaires*, Constantin Langa-Rășcanu (1872-1941), a former legation counsellor in the central administration, aged 45⁵⁰. Langa-Rășcanu stayed in Denmark between 15 June 1917 and 31 July 1919, and after his departure no replacement was appointed⁵¹. Langa-Rășcanu had two decades' experiences as a professional diplomat (he had joined the diplomatic corps in 1896), had worked in the diplomatic representations of Romania from various European capitals, as well as in the central administration of the ministry. The post in Copenhagen served as a sort of springboard for taking over the leadership of the legation in Belgrade. In fact, from July 1919 to December 1936, he represented Romania in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovaks, in Bulgaria and Greece, during what would be the peak of his career⁵². Thus, Langa-Rășcanu took the step towards the top level of diplomatic career in the Scandinavian countries, but stood out as a specialist in Balkan matters, since his whole career as chief of mission took place in the Balkans.

Originating from a boyar family from the Buzău area, Mihail Pâcleanu (1867-1928) had reached the peak of his career when he arrived in Stockholm, after having been the head of the diplomatic agency of Romania in Cairo (1906-1912) and then minister plenipotentiary in Switzerland⁵³. After Pâcleanu left the post in Norway in February 1928⁵⁴, the legation leadership was briefly taken over by Alexandru Gurănescu and then by Pâcleanu's son-in-law, Nicolae Dianu, as *chargé d'affaires*⁵⁵. This is just one of the examples of affinal relations within the diplomatic corps of Romania.

A brief presence as a professional diplomat and as a head of diplomatic representation was Dimitrie Plesnilă, who headed the diplomatic mission in Helsinki for a year (April 1921- 1 April 1922)⁵⁶. Unlike other heads of mission mentioned thus far, Plesnilă had not previously contacts with the diplomatic world. He was one of the Romanian diplomats that who, unlike others, ended up

⁵⁰Căpușan, 95; Iordan, 276.

⁵¹Nicolae-Alexandru Nicolescu, "Copenhaga", in vol. *Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României*, vol. II, 84-86.

⁵²Căpușan, 96.

⁵³Miloiu 2007, 93.

⁵⁴For Pâcleanu the mission in Stockholm was the last of his career. He died in July 1928.

⁵⁵Despa 2013, 63-65

⁵⁶Constantin Argetoianu writes that Plesnilă was Take Ionescu's wife's houseboy and that he had a well-established reputation as a 'cad': Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, vol. VI, part VI (1919-1922), edited and notes by Stelian Neagoe (București: Editura Machiavelli, 1996), 134.

as head of a diplomatic mission without going through all the stages of professional evolution. Plesnilă was, in other words, an 'outsider' or a 'non-specialist', as career diplomats called those who had entered the system without due training and experience. Such appointments were the result of either various foreign affairs necessities or meant to provide a 'cosy' position to a political friend, or to remove an inconvenient political adversary. It was not Plesnilă's inexperience that mattered in his brief presence in Helsinki, but the government's decision to close the legation.

Towards the end of the '20s, the only Romanian diplomatic mission in the Scandinavian region was that in Stockholm, headed, between 1 February 1928 and 1 August 1929, by Dimitrie C. Pennescu (1874-1938), a 54 year-old diplomat⁵⁷. He came to Stockholm after almost eight years spent at the lead of the Vatican legation, which proves he wasn't connected to the Northern world⁵⁸. Pennescu had graduated from the Bucharest Faculty of Law and had begun his career in diplomacy in 1894, so he was a diplomat by profession. Apparently, the post in Stockholm was his last mission abroad, ending his diplomatic career on 31 December 1930.

After Pennescu was called back, Constantin Flondor (1889-1942) took over the representation in Stockholm for a short while as chargé d'affaires. He began work as a member of the diplomatic corps in 1920, but the appointment in Sweden was the most important he had held in his diplomatic career thus far⁵⁹. At about the same time (July-December 1930), Romania was represented in Helsinki, too, by a chargé d'affaires, Theodor Scortzescu, who had come from the legation in Ankara⁶⁰. In a few months, however, he was transferred to the legation in Riga (December 1930)⁶¹.

After Pennescu left Sweden, the Romanian government appointed Carol M. Mitilieu (1864-1942) as head of the legation in Stockholm (13 June 1930-31 December 1930), who had served before for seven years as minister plenipotentiary in Vienna⁶². Mitilieu had completed his university studies in Paris and was of venerable age in 1930 - 64- and had 41 years' experience in diplomacy⁶³. He had overcome the legal limits of retirement and the post in Stockholm was meant to provide a quiet gate to retirement. After Mitilieu's

⁵⁷Miloiu 2007, 96; *Anuar diplomatic și consular 1942* (București: Monitorul Oficial și Imprimeriile Statului, Imprimeria Națională, 1942), 188-189.

⁵⁸*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 562.

⁵⁹Miloiu 2007, 52.

⁶⁰Scortzescu was born in January 1893, in Iași, where he went to Law School. He began his diplomatic career during Take Ionescu's term at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1921 (*Anuar diplomatic și consular 1942*, 150).

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²AMAE, Fund 77/Dosare personale, M 41 - Carol M. Mitilieu, vol. II, Stat de serviciu, nepaginat.

⁶³He began his diplomatic career in 1889 (Ibid.).

departure, the legation's business was first taken over by the chargé d'affaires Constantin Flondor⁶⁴. Then, on 1 June 1932, the chargé d'affaires in Stockholm, Matila Costiescu-Ghika (1881-1965) was promoted as minister plenipotentiary and occupied the position of minister of Romania in Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway, resident in Stockholm. He had entered diplomacy in 1910, was intellectually trained in the francophone mould, and had gained recognition due to the papers he had published in French. He did not excel as a diplomat, the post in Stockholm being one of the notable achievements in his career⁶⁵. Not after long, in 1933, Costiescu-Ghika was put on at his request⁶⁶. Until a new post holder's appointment, the *ad-interim* position was assured by Grigore C. Cugler (1903-1972), third secretary, who was appointed chargé d'affaires⁶⁷. Not after long the position was taken over by Barbu Constantinescu (1886-1948)⁶⁸. He had one of the longest minister terms of office in the Scandinavian countries, ending his mission on 15 October 1940⁶⁹. It is worth noting that Barbu Constantinescu did not find himself in charge of another diplomatic mission after this.

From 1922 to 1934, the ministers plenipotentiary of Romania in Sweden were accredited in Norway, too. As late as 1934, the Romanian government decided to reopen the legation. The diplomat Dimitrie Iurașcu (Jurașcu) (1890-1964)⁷⁰ was appointed minister plenipotentiary. He was a professional diplomat, having graduated from Law in Paris and having begun his career in diplomacy in 1913. Until 1934 he worked in various legations (Belgrade, Athens, Istanbul, Prague, Sofia, Bern, the Vatican), without arriving, however, in the Scandinavian region. For Iurașcu, the mission in Oslo was a first, since he was making the first step towards heading a legation. Consequently, the post in Oslo represented his integration in the first line of the Romanian diplomatic corps. He stayed in the Norwegian capital for almost five years (15 April 1934 – 1 March 1939), becoming an apt connoisseur of the political realities in Northern Europe. Back in Bucharest, he was appointed as head of Consular and Political Affairs in the ministry and in 1941 he headed the legation in Lisbon. After this he went back to the central apparatus of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁷¹. Iurașcu was succeeded at the lead of the Oslo legation as chargé d'affaires by Emil Zarifopol, who took over the legation until it was closed⁷².

⁶⁴Despa 2013, 79.

⁶⁵Rădulescu, 267.

⁶⁶Despa 2013, 80.

⁶⁷Ibid; see also Geo Șerban, "Grigore Cugler. Un diplomat printre literați", *Manuscriptum*, 1998, 29, nr. 1-2, 242-248.

⁶⁸Popescu, 54.

⁶⁹*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 559.

⁷⁰Despa 2011, 319; *Anuar diplomatic și consular* 1942, 133.

⁷¹AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 277.

⁷²Despa 2013, 158.

At the same time that Iurașcu was in Oslo and Constantinescu in Stockholm, George Assan⁷³ held the position of minister plenipotentiary in the freshly opened legation in Copenhagen. He was an important member of the National Liberal Party⁷⁴, former state subsecretary at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, who withdrew for a while from home politics, being assigned a position in diplomacy. This is a classic case of political appointment, similar to that of Dimitrie Plesnilă or Ioan (Jean) Theodor Florescu, another important member of National Liberal Party, who was in charge of the legation in Madrid 1 October 1935 – 1 March 1937⁷⁵. Usually, the ministers plenipotentiary coming from outside diplomacy pursued the guidance of a close collaborator with diplomatic experience. For Assan, this collaborator was Marcel Romanescu, knowledgeable in Scandinavian languages and the geopolitics of the region⁷⁶. Experienced in economics, Assan had the mission to contribute to the growth of economic relations, tourism and mutual knowledge between Denmark and Romania⁷⁷. He was in charge of the legation until 1 May 1938, when he was replaced by Mihail R. Sturdza (1886-1980). Sturdza was born on 27 April 1886 in Roman and he was a descendant of the family who had reigned in the Romanian Principalities. He graduated from the Faculty of Law in Iași in 1910 and he started his diplomatic career in 1913, working at the diplomatic representations in Durazzo, Athens, Bern, Budapest, Vienna, Washington. Between 1932 and 1935 he was appointed minister of Romania in Riga⁷⁸. He was, thus, an experienced diplomat, who was not working on his first mission of the sort. However, Sturdza was controversial, especially due to his political options as a supporter of the Iron Guard and of Romania's closeness to Germany. He took over the position in Denmark with the approval of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen.

On 10 October 1939, Sturdza was called back to the central administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For a short while, the legation in Copenhagen was led by the chargé d'affaires, Emilian Berea⁷⁹. Sturdza felt wronged by Gafencu's decision and let it be understood in the Danish circles that he was a victim of the Romanian regime as a result of his political options. Moreover, he refused to meet with his successor, Al. Duiliu Zamfirescu (1892-1968).

⁷³Nicolescu, 84-86.

⁷⁴Ovidiu Buruiană, *Liberalii. Structuri și sociabilități politice liberale în perioada interbelică* (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași, 2013), 286, 293.

⁷⁵Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români. Enciclopedie* (București: Editura Machiavelli, 2007), 281; for political activity, see Buruiană, 568-581.

⁷⁶Popescu, 56.

⁷⁷Ibid., 55.

⁷⁸Corneliu Ciucanu, "Diplomatul Mihail Sturdza. Mișcarea legionară și «coaliția anti-Titulescu»", in vol. Paul Nistor, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu (coord.), *Diplomație și destine diplomatice în lumea românească* (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2011), 260-261.

⁷⁹Popescu, 62; *Anuar diplomatic și consular 1942*, 112.

Zamfirescu was extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister in Copenhagen from 1 November 1939. The diplomat was born in Rome 1892 and he was the son of the writer and diplomat Duiliu Zamfirescu. He began his diplomatic career as legation attaché in Rome. He was close to N. Titulescu and an admirer of King Charles II, which drew criticism from the legionaries and the Antonescu regime. Eventually, his past would weigh in on his removal from diplomacy a few days before 23 August 1944⁸⁰. Al. Duiliu Zamfirescu was head of the legations in Rio de Janeiro, Lisbon, Warsaw and Rome starting with 1934. The mission in Copenhagen was last in his career abroad⁸¹.

When the Helsinki legation was established (February 1934), Raoul V. Bossy (1894-1975), a diplomat close to N. Titulescu's Foreign Affairs policy, was appointed envoy extraordinaire and minister plenipotentiary of Romania in Finland⁸². For Bossy this was an important moment, since this time he was head of a diplomatic mission. Descendant from a boyar family, having studied Law in Paris, Bossy embraced the diplomatic career in 1918, being a generation colleague of Alexandru Duiliu Zamfirescu and Frederic C. Nanu⁸³. On 28 November 1936, Bossy ended his mission in Helsinki, being put in charge of the legation in Budapest. The move was a kind of promotion of a competent diplomat to a more important, and, at the same time, more difficult, post⁸⁴. Caius Brediceanu (1879-1953) was appointed to replace Bossy. Brediceanu had completed his juridical studies in Vienna, was a member of the Romanian Peace Conference delegacy and was then part of the Take Ionescu government as state secretary and member of the Romanian Parliament, as well. Later, in 1927, he was appointed as head of the Rio de Janeiro legation. Between June 1929 and March 1930, he held the office of envoy extraordinaire and minister plenipotentiary of Romania in Vatican, and between 1930 and 1936 he was minister plenipotentiary in Austria⁸⁵. He was the typical case of the politician who finds a professional niche in diplomacy, eventually ending up building a diplomatic career. Thus, his situation is different from that of Plesnilă or Assan. He was in charge of the legation a little over two years. According to some archive data, after Brediceanu's departure, Frederic C.

⁸⁰Sanda Stolojan, "Depărtări și întoarceri - un diplomat de carieră Al. D. Zamfirescu", *Manuscriptum*, 1998, 29, nr. 1-2, 21-24.

⁸¹He was appointed delegate of Romania in Brazil in 1957.

⁸²See details in Miloiu 2007, 103.

⁸³Stelian Neagoie, "Studiu Introductiv. Raoul Bossy - diplomat de carieră și istoric publicist", in Raoul Bossy, *Amintiri din viața diplomatică 1918-1940*, vol. I (București: Humanitas, 1993), 7.

⁸⁴See details in Miloiu 2007, 104-105.

⁸⁵*România - Vatican. Relații diplomatice*, I, 1920-1950, autori: Marius Ioan Bucur, Cristina Păiușan, Ioan Popescu, Dumitru Preda, cuvânt înainte Mihail Dobre -Ambasador extraordinar și plenipotențiar al României pe lângă Vatican, Mons. Jean-Claude Périsset, Nunțiu Apostolic în România (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), 53.

Nanu was appointed as head of the legation for a brief two months (15 February-14 April 1939)⁸⁶.

On 1 May 1939, the legation in Helsinki had a new chief in the person of Gheorghe Lecca (born 23 April 1893), which was a professional diplomat. He had begun his career in 1918 and had worked at the Stockholm legation for five years (1922-1927)⁸⁷. Lecca was, thus, one of the few Romanian ministers plenipotentiary in the Scandinavian countries who had previously worked in the diplomatic representations in the region. He was experienced as head of diplomatic missions and came to Stockholm after a short stay in Prague (15 February- 1 May 1939). In mid-October 1940, Lecca's mission ended and the legation closed⁸⁸. He returned to Bucharest to work in the central administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁸⁹. On 1 June 1941, the legation reopened. Noti Constantinide (1890-1957) was appointed minister plenipotentiary in Helsinki, remaining in office between 15 June 1941 and 10 November 1942. Constantinide had been awarded his PhD in Law in Rome, where he had also earned his university degree. He had dallied with diplomacy since 1919, working with the legations in Paris, Rome and Berlin throughout his career, as well as in the central administration of the ministry. A few days before his appointment in Helsinki, he was promoted to class II minister plenipotentiary. The mission in Helsinki was an important step in Constantinide's career, since he was for the first time the head of a diplomatic representation⁹⁰. Constantinide was succeeded by George G. Caranfil (born 1897), which had a PhD in Law from the University of Paris and had entered diplomacy in 1928. Caranfil was minister of Romania in Finland between 1 March 1943 and 15 August 1945, after he headed the legation in Sofia⁹¹.

In the year following the dissolution of the Copenhagen legation, the Romanian government decided to appoint ministers from the neighbouring countries in the suppressed positions. Thus, on 11 September 1941, Raoul Bossy, the minister of Romania in Berlin, was also accredited in Copenhagen⁹². Thus, Bossy was, in a way, making a comeback in Scandinavian affairs, this time in Denmark, not Finland, where he had been several years before. Bossy ended his diplomatic mission in Berlin and Copenhagen on 15 June 1943, when he resigned

⁸⁶AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 309.

⁸⁷Lecca's diplomatic career began in 1918. He worked in Athens (1922), Stockholm (1922-1926), Paris (1927-1930) and Rome (1933-1936). From 1936 he was in charge of the Rio de Janeiro legation, and in 1939 he was the occupant of the Prague legation for a brief while (*Anuar diplomatic și consular 1942*, 135; also see AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 282).

⁸⁸Miloiu 2007, 105.

⁸⁹*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 487.

⁹⁰AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 218.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 204.

⁹²Popescu, 69.

because he could no longer approve of the politics of the Bucharest leaders⁹³. After Bossy's departure from the leadership of the two diplomatic representations, the legation in Copenhagen was taken over by Gheorghe Crutzescu (born 1890) (1 August 1943). Crutzescu remained in office until 1 October 1944, when he was called back⁹⁴. He had entered diplomacy in 1918. At the time when he took over the legation leadership, he was a class I minister plenipotentiary.

During World War II, the legation in Stockholm became an important mission. Between 1 March 1941 and 1 September 1943 it was led by Victor Brabetzianu (born 1897). He was legally trained and entered diplomacy 1920, but in Sweden he began his career as a chief of diplomatic mission⁹⁵. After Brabetzianu's term, Frederic C. Nanu (1894-1981) was appointed in Stockholm, who had the mission to negotiate the conditions under which Romania could exit the war. Born in 1894, he was the son of diplomat Constantin G. Nanu and had studied Law in Paris. He was an experienced diplomat, who had previously been in charge of legations in Latin American, Spain and was, as we have seen, a minister in Helsinki for a short while. When the legation in Helsinki was placed in his charge, he was secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in other words a key person in the bureaucratic machine of the ministry. He had a short mission (1 September 1943 – 1 October 1944), after which he was called back to Bucharest⁹⁶.

Following 23 August 1944, political uncertainty affected the ministry on a large scale. Some diplomats were let go and then purged, others tried to save their careers, without much success. The general political climate also affected the situation of Romanian diplomats accredited in Northern Europe. Although the legation in Stockholm ran without interruption, it was headed, for a few years, by a chargé d'affaires, Gh. I. Duca (1905-1985)⁹⁷, the son of I.G. Duca. He had studied Law and entered diplomacy in 1928. Before he became a chargé d'affaires in Stockholm (he occupied the position twice – 1 August 1943; 1 October 1944) he worked in the legation in Helsinki (10 November 1942 – 1 August 1943)⁹⁸. Starting with 28 March 1947, the legation was headed by the minister plenipotentiary Radu D. Ruscescu, who was also at his first experience in such a position⁹⁹. It was a

⁹³Neagoe 1993, 18.

⁹⁴Popescu, 70.

⁹⁵AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 195.

⁹⁶Ibid., 309.

⁹⁷Florin Manolescu, *Enciclopedia exilului literar românesc. 1945-1989* (București: Editura Compania, 2010), 256-358; *Anuar diplomatic și consular* 1942, 125.

⁹⁸AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 238.

⁹⁹*Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe...*, volume II, 487. Apparently he was one of the 'new people' from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, since he appears in the ministry files as late as August 1946 as legation counsellor (AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 350).

transition to a new stage, dominated by the replacement of the diplomatic elite with 'new people' close to the communist regime.

From July 1945 the legation in Helsinki was headed by Ion Constantin Vardala, legation secretary and chargé d'affaires¹⁰⁰. Then, starting with 26 December 1947, the Romania's ambassador in Moscow would also be accredited in the Finnish capital¹⁰¹. 1946 was also the year when Constantin Văllimărescu (born 1891) (15 July 1946 - 1 December 1947) was accredited at the lead of the Oslo legation, a diplomat from the 'old guard' who did not escape the purge of the Foreign Affairs staff after the ministry was taken over by Ana Pauker¹⁰².

At the end of the war, Romania's interests in Denmark were represented by the Romanian minister in Stockholm¹⁰³. But in 1947 a new minister was appointed in Copenhagen, in the person of Victor Brabetzianu. Brabetzianu only held office for a few months (28 March-15 September 1947)¹⁰⁴. Starting with August 1948, the legation in Copenhagen reopened, the task of representing Romania's interests in Denmark was assigned to Mihail Neculcea, the chief Romanian legation in Holland and Petre Eugenia, legation secretary based in Copenhagen¹⁰⁵.

Conclusions

According to the data we have at our disposal, the diplomatic representations of Romania in the Scandinavian countries were led, in 1916-1947, by 33 diplomats, among whom 23 envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary and ten chargés d'affaires. Only two of the ministers were outsiders of diplomacy (Dimitrie Plesniță and George Assan), while the others were diplomats by profession, having entered the ministry at a young or adult age, as was the case of Caius Brediceanu. The oldest head of mission was Carol M. Mitilieu (64 years old), while the youngest Romanian minister plenipotentiary from the Scandinavian countries was Raoul Bossy, aged 40 in 1934, when he took over the legation in Helsinki. Generally speaking, the age of ministers plenipotentiary that succeeded each other in Copenhagen, Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm was 45-55, which was a normal state of affairs for the diplomatic corps of Romania. Still, it is remarkable that for 10 of the 23 ministers plenipotentiary, being appointed head of legation in the Scandinavian world was the first experience of the sort. This

¹⁰⁰*Anuar diplomatic și consular 1942*, 156; AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 388. Vardala was born on 15 May 1907, had a degree in Law and had been a member of the diplomatic corps since June 1936, he was part of the Stockholm staff from 1 August 1943.

¹⁰¹Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 322.

¹⁰²AMAE, Fund 77/Personal, vol. 17, 387. Văllimărescu had a degree in Law and had entered diplomacy in 1920. He was head of several legations (Riga, Santiago de Chile, Buenos Aires), as well as working in the central administration.

¹⁰³Popescu, 72.

¹⁰⁴Giurescu, Dinu, Constantiniu, 321.

¹⁰⁵Popescu, 72.

proves that the diplomatic missions in Northern Europe can be generally perceived as a place to test out/promote talented or experienced diplomats with meandering career paths to envoys *extraordinaire* and ministers plenipotentiary, which entailed greater responsibility for the occupant of the position. This means, from our point of view, that at least during the interwar years and in the first years after World War II, the legations in Scandinavia were less important both politically and economically, so that the Romanian leaders were able to appoint diplomatically inexperienced ministers or diplomats who were just climbing the professional ladder. Such cases are very seldom in Romania's diplomatic missions in Paris, London Berlin or Rome and the number is much smaller in other capitals such as Prague, Belgrade, Budapest or Warsaw.

Aside from these observations, one must emphasize the fact that two of the legation occupants that succeeded each other in more than three decades in the Scandinavian capitals held, for a brief time, the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs (Gheorghe Derussi and Mihail R. Sturdza).

Most of those who passed through the lead of Scandinavian legations had not interned at these missions before. Only three ministers had two missions as legation chiefs in the region (Nanu, Brabetzianu and Bossy) and also two of them had worked throughout their career in Scandinavian missions (Lecca and Vardala).

The longest missions belonged to Mihail Pâcleanu (1919-1928) and Barbu Contantinescu (1933-1940). Both were based with the legation Stockholm, while the shortest mission belonged to Frederic C. Nanu in Helsinki (15 February-14 April 1939). At the same time, we note that during 1929-1933 and 1939-1947 there was high instability within the legation staff leadership. Among the factors that generated the phenomenon were the effects of the economic crisis and war, reflected in ministry budget cuts, the frequent government changes of 1929-1933 and the radical geopolitical transformations of 1939-1948.

As to the intellectual training of the diplomatic missions heads, I have shown that, for the most part, they were Law graduates and PhDs. In fact, this was the norm for the diplomatic world in those times. Most heads of legation studied in Paris as the trend of the time dictated, others in Rome, some in Romanian universities, some in Vienna or Brussels. Among them there were literary talents, Matila Costiescu-Ghica or Al. Duiliu Zamfirescu, while others were interested in researching elements of past Romanian-Scandinavian relations, as in the case of Raoul Bossy.

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