

OTTOMAN STATE AND ROMANIA'S DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN 1901-1906

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ABSTRACT: *There are strong administrative, political, economic and socio-cultural ties between the Ottoman State and Romania. Romania, which remained under the Ottoman administration for several centuries, gained its independence at the end of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878. Even though gaining Romania's independence did not cause misunderstandings between the two states, during the First World War, as a result of Romania's membership in the Allied Powers bloc, relations between the Ottoman State and Romania were suspended. Relations between the two states, which were frozen on August 20, 1916, could not be restored until June 20, 1922. This study is based on Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister's Office (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi), as well as on literature in domain published by Turkish and Romanian researchers and deals with commercial and diplomatic relations between Romania and the Ottoman State after Romania's independence within the framework of the historical commitment between the two states, between 1901-1906, covering the period when Alexandru Em. Lahovary was named as Romanian's ambassador in Constantinople. For a better understanding of the Ottoman-Romanian relations in the post-Ottoman Romania, it is necessary to look at great achievements, as commercial agreements between the two states between 1901-1906, which included some critical years. This study highlights one of the first commercial agreements between Romania and the Ottoman State, thus proving the importance given by the Ottomans to the newly created Romania. This study is useful for researchers in the field of economic history, history but also for master and doctoral students in the field of international relations. Last but not least, this study can be useful for the general public interested in history.*

Keywords: *post-Ottoman era, Romania's independence, Alexandru Em. Lahovary, Ahmet Tefik Pasha, Abdulhamid II., Carol I.*

JEL Classification: *N13 Europe: Pre-1913, N44 Europe: Pre 1913, N74 Europe: Pre 1913*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Why another study about Post-ottoman Romania

There are studies about trade relations between the Ottoman State and Romania during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, as well as on diplomatic activity carried out in Constantinople by

the Romanian ambassador Alexandru Em. Lahovary, between 1902-1906, but this issue was never addressed in the light of the documents in the custody of the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* (The Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister's Office) BOA¹, Istanbul. This lack of references was the main argument on choosing this topic, along with the possibility of investigating new sources from the Ottoman archives. The choice of the theme was due to the interest for the analysis of the Ottoman documents regarding the history of commercial and diplomatic relations between the Ottoman State and the newly created Romania.

Being aware on these bibliographic issues, the authors decided for a detailed presentation of the issues related to the conclusion of the trade cooperation agreement, but also to reveal the Prime Minister Tevfik Pasha's (*Sadrızam Ahmet Tevfik Paşa*) correspondence on this topic.

1.2. Sources and methodology

This study deals with Ottoman-Romanian diplomatic and commercial relations in the early 20th century (1902-1906). For this paper the authors relied on the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* (The Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister's Office) BOA, Istanbul, Turkey. This paper is a unique approach in the Romanian and Turkish domain literature, the theme not being approached previously, as the authors overwhelmingly used Ottoman archival sources, alongside with the domain literature in Turkish and Romanian languages. BOA houses the most important collection of Ottoman documents. Following the thorough research of the original documentary collection, respectively the documents in the custody of the Yıldız Palace Archive, the *Yıldız Hariciye Nezareti Maruzatı*/Yıldız Foreign Affairs Acknowledgment, Y..PRK.HR collection arose study's structure and its arguments. *Yıldız Sarayı*, in the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, was the official residence of Sultan Abdülhamid II. (1293-1327 /1876-1909). The archive of the Yıldız Palace consists of documents and books accumulated during the reign of Abdülhamid II. To this documentary fund were added documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Hariciye Nezaret) HR., which contain documents that include decisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezaret*) HR.TH .., documents related to the special decisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (İrade Hariciye) - İ..HR .., which include documents regarding the trade agreement between the Ottoman state and Romania, as well as the documentary fund *Taltifat* (Reward) İ..TAL. which hosts documents regarding the rewarding of Alexandru Em. Lahovary and of his two daughters. Documentary fund Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası (Ottoman State's Script Office) BEO is home for documents about revocation of the Romanian ambassador, Alexandru Em. Lahovari (1902-1906).

For this study were used the classical methods of economic history, data interpretation, quantitative and quantitative analysis, which established data on trade and diplomatic relations between the two governments. All these problems were presented through concrete data collected from Ottoman documents. All documents are hosted by the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Archives* (Ottoman Archive of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers). All these issues were conferred through detailed data collected from Ottoman documents.

¹ Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi hereinafter named BOA

2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1. Moldavia (*Boğdan*) and Wallachia (*Eflak*) “*sair memalik-i mahruse*/protected countries

In the mid-sixteenth century after coming in the Ottoman State's borders, the Romanian voivodships, known as *Memleketeyn* (Two Memleket/two homelands) relations between the two voivodships and the Ottoman State entered in a new phase, and thus began a new era. The Romanian voivodships came under Ottoman administration in the 1530s, and over time, their obligations to the Ottoman state consisted of tribute and donations. From a legal point of view, Moldova (*Boğdan*) and Wallachia (*Eflak*) were treated as “*sair memalik-i mahruse*/protected countries” (Maxim, 2008:169). Wallachia (*Eflak*) and Moldova (*Boğdan*), although paid their taxes to the Ottoman State until the beginning of the 18th century had administrative autonomy and were administered by their own voivodes. After the Crimean War the autonomous administration of the two voivodships came under the protection of European Great Powers. According to the document with BOA, documentary fund of Grand Vizier Special Correspondence, A. DVN. NMH/*Sadaret Name-i Hümayun Evrakı*, 8-11, H-09-08-1272/M.15 Nisan/April 1856², Article 22, Paris Treaty, signed after the Crimean War (1853-1856) states: “The principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia will continue to be the beneficiaries of the privileges and exemptions they have acquired, being subject to the Ottoman State and at the same time the guarantee of the *düel-i muahede*. None of the *düvel-i mutekeffilen* states has the right to violate their independence and no political party will have the right to interfere in their internal affairs”. In 1859, Wallachia and Moldavia were united and Alexandru Ioan Cuza (Kuza Bey) was elected ruler of the United Romanian Principalities. In 1866, Cuza was forced to withdraw from the government administration and it was decided to invite an outside prince so as not to create dissension between the local boyars. Prince Carol, member of the Hohenzollern dynasty, was elected and a constitutional method of administering the Romanian Principalities was adopted (Şemseddin, 1891/H.1308: 2376).

2.2. Prince Charles of Hohenzollern

His family, Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, was related to the family of Napoleon III, being on excellent terms with him. At that time, Romania was under the strong influence of French culture. The recommendation made by Napoleon III on the appointment of Prince Carol was very important for Romanian politicians. To all this was added the blood kinship with the ruling Prussian family.

In the Romanian Parliament, members of the Chambers at the initiative of the regency, with the consent and will of the people to crown Prince Carol, in the meeting of May 1, adopted the following acknowledgment:“... the assembly, without disregarding the respect due to the Ottoman State and the guarantor powers, declares for the last time before God and the people that the unwavering will of the United Principalities is to remain what they are: a united Romania, indivisible under the hereditary rule of a prince foreigner from one of the sovereign families of the West, this prince of this united, indivisible Romania, being Prince Carol Ludovic de Hohenzollern,

² BOA, A. DVN. NMH/*Sadaret Name-i Hümayun Evrakı*, 8-11, H-09-08-1272/M.15 Nisan/April 1856

whom in this way the assembly proclaims under the name of Carol I” (Lindenberg, 2016: 50). On May 10, Prince Carol I arrives in Bucharest, goes to the Parliament and takes the oath of allegiance “I swear to be faithful to the laws of the country, to guard the religion of Romania, as well as the integrity of its territory and to reign as Constitutional Lord” (Giurescu, 1939: 6)

2.3. The Independence War and King Carol I of Romania

The Balkans’ political situation reflected the balance of the Great European Powers. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state’s situation in the Balkans continued to deteriorate, the Ottomans losing control of some provinces, and the administration of principalities and autonomous states was exercised only by name (Lindenberg, 2016: 180). At the Constantinople conference, in December 1876, the Great European Powers tried to impose a series of reforms on the Ottoman state, which were considered necessary to bring peace to the revolted provinces of the Balkans. The efforts of the European powers have failed to prove once again that the solution of the Eastern question is possible only by army force (Pascu, Giurescu, 1977: 135). During this critical period, the political parties should have gathered around Prince Carol, but, unfortunately, the enmity in political life ignited in the most detestable way. Romania’s parliament was divided into two political camps: on the one hand, the conservatives, who wanted to maintain neutrality, withdraw the army to the mountains and the liberals, who believed that gaining independence required concluding an agreement with tsarist Russia and effective participation in the war against the Ottoman state (Lindenberg, 2016: 184). On April 4, M. Kogălniceanu, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, together with D. Stuart on the Russian side, signed the Russian-Romanian Convention on the passage of Russian troops through Romania to go to the battlefield in the Balkans. Russia undertook to maintain and enforce the political rights of the Romanian state. The desideratum of the Romanian government and its people was for Romania to wage its own war against the Ottoman State in order to obtain its independence (Pascu, Giurescu, 1977: 135). Russia declares war on Ottoman state. At the end of April, the Romanian Parliament approved by a large majority the Convention on the passage of Russian troops through Romania, and on May 8, the Romanian diplomat in Constantinople’s passports were returned, and five days later Romania declared war on Turkey (Lindenberg, 2016: 198). Following the Ottoman-Russian War, after a successful diplomatic and press campaign, Romania proclaimed its independence.

2.4. Romanian diplomacy’s role in achieving its independence

On May 14, 1877, Mihail Kogălniceanu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, asked for help from the Great European powers, and in the next 20 days he sent to the Romanian diplomatic agents, in addition to the guaranteeing powers, a note proving the circumstances that determined Romania to declare independence. None of the Great European powers hastened to approve Romania’s decision. Although it proclaimed its independence and took part in the Ottoman-Russian War, Romania faced serious difficulties in the international recognition of its full independence (Maciu, 1977: 301). The Congress of Berlin (1878), which ended the Russian-Ottoman War, aimed to reorganize the Balkan regions. Cancellor Bismarck tried to balance the relations among the British Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Tsarist Russia, which had great interest in the area. In order for Romania to participate in the Congress, Ion C. Brătianu, from the Council of Ministers, and Mihail Kogălniceanu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, were empowered to the Congress of Berlin, but the representatives of the great powers did not hurry to

convene them or to satisfy Romania's demands. The Berlin Congress enshrines the international diplomatic recognition of Romania's independence, which it had proclaimed a year earlier. After the Congress, Romania loses Bessarabia, but receives Dobrogea in return (Maciu, 1977: 312).

3. POST-OTTOMAN ROMANIA'S TRADE AND DIPLOMACY (1878-1906)

3.1. Abdülhamid II. and the Balkans (1876-1909)

Sultan Abdülhamid II. is the son of Abdülmecid, reigned as the 34th Sultan of the Ottoman State - the last Sultan to exert effective control over the declining state. He got a special education and unlike the other sultans he visited the capitals and cities of Europe before he took the throne. Agreeing with Midhat Pasha and his friends, who wanted to establish a constitutional government based on the constitution, and therefore they dethroned Abdulaziz and Murad V. Abdulhamid II ascended to the throne on August 31, 1876. During the reign of Murad V, the wars of Serbia and Montenegro added to the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgarian uprisings that had begun during the reign of Abdülaziz. Russia, which provoked and supported these revolts, was looking for an opportunity to solve the "Eastern Question". In the last years of Abdülaziz, Mahmud Nedim Pasha's decision regarding the payment of foreign debts caused great reactions in Europe and therefore it became impossible to receive new aid. European public opinion turned against the Ottoman State, and under these conditions, Abdülhamid II started his reign. In a short time he quickly won the hearts of the army and the people with some movements that were not seen before in the Ottoman history. Abdülhamid II, who was the Ottoman sultan and the caliph of the Muslims from 1876 to 1909, remained on the throne for 33 years. Abdulhamid reigned over this vast empire as an omnipotent ruler. Undoubtedly, there is no other sultan in the history of the Ottoman State who gathered as much power as Sultan Abdülhamid II (Küçük, C., 1988: p. 218).

3.2. Ahmet Tevfik Pasha and Romania's trade agreement (1901)

Ahmet Tevfik Pasha is the Grand Vizier, who played a key role during the reign of Abdulhamid II. He witnessed and took an active part in all the events presented in this study. The Grand Vizier Ahmet Tevfik Pasha was appreciated as an honorable person, extremely honest in his work as a civil servant, patient in his relations and extremely sincere. He was respected and trusted by all. His family originated in the Crimea, being one of the noble and rich families belonging to the Crimean khanate.

He attended military school, but while serving as a cavalry officer, he left the military, and was employed with the Translation Bureau of the Ottoman State. Due to his merit, perseverance and hard work, he soon rose to positions. From 1872 to 1895, he was appointed a civil servant in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he served as the Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister with the embassies of Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Athens and St. Petersburg. Tevfik Pasha served as Foreign Affairs Minister for a long time, fourteen years, during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, whose trust and appreciation he fully gained. In fact, in 1908, he was offered membership in the Ayan Assembly along with the ministry. However, in February 1909, after the resignation of Kibrıslı Kamil Pasha and the dissolution of the government, he left his post. Although he was appointed to the London embassy, shortly after his appointment, as a true and impartial person who gained the trust of everyone who did not belong to any party, upon the government crisis caused by the 31 March events (14 April 1909) he was tasked with establishing

the new government. After Abdülhamid II was dethroned and Mehmed V became sultan, he left the Grand Vizier's office on May 6, and was again appointed to the English embassy in London (Beydilli, 1989: 140).

During his viziership, on August 12, 1901, a trade and navigation agreement was concluded between the Ottoman government and the Romanian government „Osmanlı Hükümeti ile Romanya Hükümeti arasında ticaret ve seyr-i sefaîn hakkında yapılan muahede/Agreement on trade and navigation between the Ottoman Government and the Romanian Government”. The partnership between the two governments is confirmed by documents in the custody of BOA, HR., Y..PRK.HR.. 31-15, H-26-04-1319/12 Ağustos /August 1901³. As concluded in the 7 articles agreement “The Ottoman sultan and the Romanian king wanted to establish trade and shipping relations between their governments, based on a special agreement established on new principles, the understanding is being negotiated between Ottoman Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmet Tevfik Pasha and the Romania's Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister in *Dersaadet/Istanbul*, [Sir t.n.] Alexandru Ghica Brigadier [t.n. in the document is Alekasandri Kiga], named ambassador. The two diplomats signed a 7-article treaty regulating trade and shipping between the two states”.

“Romanya Ticaret Muahedesi Sureti Divana Zat-ı şevketmeab hazret-i padişahi ile haşmetli Romanya kralı hazretleri kendi hükümetleri beyninde münasebat-ı ticariyeyi veseyr-i sefaîn muamelatını yeni esaslara müstenid bir mukavele-i mahsusa ile tesis etmek arzusunda bulunduklarındanbu iş için taraf-ı eşref hazret-i padişahiden murassa imtiyaz ve iftihar ve murassa Osmani ve mecidi nişan Zişanlarıyla “Etoval Doromani” nişanının birinci rütbesini vesair nişanları haiz ve hamil bulunan hariciye nazırı devletli Tevfik Paşa hazretleri ve haşmetli Romanya Kralı hazretleri canibinden “Etoval Doromani” nişanının ikinci ve “kurun Doromani” nişanının üçüncü rütbeleriyle birinci rütbeden Osmani ve mecidi nişan Zişanlarını ve altun ve gümüş imtiyaz madalyasını hamil bulunan Dersaadet fevkalade ve murahhası orta elçisi Siyor [hasarlı belge]“Aleksandri Kiga” murahhas tayin kılınmışlardır. Murahhasan-ı müşarunileyha yolunda ve muntazam görünen ruhsatnamelerini baadetteati mevad-ı atiyeyi kararlaştırmışlardır.”

The first two articles refer to the customs tariffs applied by the two states “The Ottoman State will apply the most convenient import tax, which is mentioned or will be found in trade contracts signed with other states or in trade tariffs, on products imported from Romania. The second article states: The Romanian Government will apply the import tax entered in the table on Ottoman crops or products specified in the treaty and will also make these crops and products benefit from a more moderate tax to be applied to similar crops and products of another state. Ottoman crops or products not included in the attached table will be subject to the most moderate tax valid in Romania today or in the future.

“Birinci madde Hükümet-i seniye düvel-i saire ile münakid mukavelenamelerde veya mukaveleli tarifelerde muharrer bulunan veya muharrer bulunacak olan en mutedil idhalat rüsumunu Romanyanın mahsulat veya mamulatı hakkında tatbik edeceğini beyan eder. İkinci madde Romanya hükümeti merbut cedvelde zikr ve mikdar olunan mahsulat veya mamulat-ı Osmaniye hakkında cedvel-i mezburda muharrir idhalat rüsumunu tatbik eyleyeceğini ve bir de mahsulat ve mamulat-ı mezkureyi diğer bir devletin mahsulat ve mamulat mümasilesi hakkında tatbik olunacak daha mutedil rüsumdan istifade ettireceğini beyan eder. Merbut cedvelde muharrir olmayan mahsulat veya mamulat-ı Osmaniye Romanyada eleyevm cari olan veya istikbalen cari olacak olan en mutedil rüsumu tabi olacaktır”.

Articles three, four and five describe imported products by the parties, as well as details about the certificate of origin for the imported products “Treaty's third article states: Ottoman crops and products to be imported into Romania, as well as Romanian crops or products to be imported by the Ottoman State will be subject to change in the products and goods of the nation

³ BOA, HR., Y..PRK.HR.. 31-15, H-26-04-1319/12 Ağustos /August 1901

with the most authorizations in the States Parties, in respect of export and transit tax and refund, as well as through warehousing and customs procedures, and there shall be no customs duty, no local official, no other day tax or other charges for any other than the tax levied on the products and goods of nations that exist today or in the future, in accordance with the national crops and products that have the highest endorsement. Excluded from these provisions are products that come from the cultures of the Ottoman State, and when they are exported to Romania, an export tax of four kurus per kilogram will be imposed, ie 312.5 kuruş per hundred kilograms. The fourth article states: the parties will be required to present a certificate of consent issued by the consul or on duty officer located in the area or port of origin. An official declaration made in the presence of an officer at the customs of the importing state or a certificate of declaration given by the customs administrator on departure or dispatch of the products of the importing country to confirm the will and determination that the goods and merchandise are crops of Ottoman or Romanian origin. However, in the fifth article, it is promised not to allow the sending of goods to the Ottoman State or Romania, which are prohibited or monopolized in these states, to be loaded on ships in their own ports, unless there is a state authorization to be imported. These elements are determined as follows: in the Ottoman State gunpowder and all kinds of flammable materials, firearms and other military equipment, tobacco and salt, in the Romanian state gunpowder and all kinds of flammable materials, firearms and other military equipment, tobacco, salt, matches, playing cards and cigarette paper”.

“Üçüncü Madde Romanyaya idhal olunacak Osmanlı mahsulat ve mamulâtı ve memalik-i şahaneye idhal kılınacak Romanya mahsulat veya mamulâtı tarafeyn memalikinginde ihracat ve transit rüsumunca ve iadeten ihraç hususunca ve antrepoca ve gümrük muamelatınca en ziyade mazhar-ı müsaade olan milletin mahsulat ve mamulatına edilen muameleye tabi olacak ve bunlardan elyevm mevcut bulunan veya ileride mahsulat ve mamulat-ı milliye ile en ziyade mazhar-ı müsaade olan milletler mahsulat ve mamulatına tarh edilecek olan rüsundan gayri bir güne gümrük resm [hasarlı belge] veya mahali oktrova resmi veya diğer her güne resm veya rüsum-u müteferria-i cedide istifa kılınmayacaktır. Memalik-i şahanenin mahsulatından olan [hasarlı belge] bu ahkamdanda müstesna olub Romanyaya ihraç olunduktaki kıyye başına dört guruş yani beher yüz kilogramda 312.5 guruş ihracat resmini tabi kılacaktır. Dördüncü Madde Emtia ve eşyanın memalik-i şahane veya romanya mahsulat veya mamulatının olduğunu irade ve tayin için emtia ve eşyayı idhal eden tacir idhalatın icra olunduğu memleket gümrüğüne ya mahal-i sevkinde mukim bir hakem huzurunda yapılmışresmi bir beyanname veya mahreç gümrüğü müdürü canibinden verilmiş bir şehadetname yahud idhalatın icra olunacağı memleketin mahal-i sevkte veya mahreç iskelelerinde mukim şehbender veya şehbender memurları tarafından verilmiş bir şehadetname ibraz etmek mecburiyetine tabi tutulabilecektir. Beşinci madde Tarafeyn-i akideyn-i memalik-i şahaneye veya romanyaya sevk olunacak olan ve bu memleketlerde memnu veya inhisara tabi bulunan bir eşyanın –idhalatının icra olunacağı memleketin müsaade-i mahsusası munzam olmadıkça- kendi limanlarında sefaine tahmil olunmasına müsaade etmemegi taahhüd ederler işbu eşya şunlardır. Memalik-i şahanede Barut ile her nevi mevad-ı müşteile esliha-i harbiye ile teferruat-ı mühimmat-ı askeriye kafe-i eşkalinde tütün tenbaki [hasarlı belge] ve tuz. Romanyada Barut ile her nevi mevad-ı müşteile esliha-yı harbiye ile teferruat-ı mühimmat-ı askeriye kafe-i eşkalinde tütün tenbaki tuz kibrit oyun kağıtları ve sigara kağıdı balada muhar.

Article six refers to shipment and freight terms “The sixth article of the treaty states: the nation with the most permission in all matters will be treated as Ottoman ships and their freight in Romania, and Romanian ships and their consignment in the Ottoman State. However, they mutually protect their free movement and approve this free movement in all matters related to the provisions to be included in the consular agreement to be signed between the states parties”.

“Altıncı madde Sefin-i Osmaniye ile hamuleleri romanyada ve romanya sefineleriyle hamuleleri memalik-i şahane de her hususda en ziyade mazhar-ı müsaade olan millet muamelesinden müstefid olacaklardır. Mamañh tarafeyn-i akideyn-i beyneddevleteyn akid olunacak konsolos mukavelenamesine mevad-ı bahriye vesaireye dair derç olunacak ahkama müteallik bilcümle hususatta serbestçe hareketlerini müteakabilen muhafaza ve yekdiğerine bu serbestçe hareketini tasdik ederler”.

The last article, the seventh states: It has been decided that this agreement will remain in effect for five years from the date of adjustmnet of contract and that the change of agreement will be made in Istanbul as soon as possible. İstanbul 30 Temmuz/July-12 Ağustos/August 1901.

“Yedinci madde İşbu mukavelename tasdiknamelerin mübadelesi gününden itibaren düsturulamel tutulacak ve beş sene müddetle meri-ülicra kalacaktır. Mamefih tasdiknamelerin mübadelesi tarihinden sonra on sekiz madde müdurunda tarafeyn-i akideynden her biri daima bunun masnuhiyetini ilan etmek hakkını haiz olacaktır. Bu takdirde mukavelename ilan masnuhiyet diğer tarafa tebliği olunduğu günden itibaren bir sene müdurunda hükümden sakıt olacaktır. Tasdiknameler sürat-ı mümkünine ile dersaadette mübadele kılınacaktır. Dersaadet 30 Temmuz/12 Ağustos 1901 Aleksandri Kiga, Tefvik Paşa”.

The commercial agreement between the two sides was signed by the Foreign Minister, Ahmet Tefvik Pasha, on behalf of the Ottoman State and by the Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister in Constantinople, Sir Aleksandri Kiga⁴.

3.3. Alexandru Emil Lahovary a Romanian envoy at Constantinopol (1902-1906)

In the following, the authors of this study referred to the work published in 2009 by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also rendering the original documents found at BOA regarding Alexandru Em. Lahovary, during his activity in Constantinople. (1902-1906). By this article, the authors differentiate themselves through the contribution made accessing BOA documents. The study does not insist on the already known historical data, nor on the biographical profile of the diplomat, it only provides data found at BOA, about the activity of the Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister Alexandru Em. Lahovary, at Constantinople.

This part of the study presents the documents found in the BOA about the correspondence of the Prime Minister, Tefvik Pasha on the signing of trade contract between the Ottoman State and Romania, as well as the appointment of the new Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister, Alexandru Em. Lahovary to Constantinople. The document hosted by the documentary fund of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HR.TH. /*Hariciye Tahrirat*/Prime Minister’s Correspondence, 266 – 26, M-25-03-1902⁵ comments about the presence in Istanbul of the Monsieur Lahovary, the Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister, who was named by the King of Romania “The appointment of Monsieur Lahvary⁶ to the Romanian embassy was submitted to the embassy in Istanbul by submitting a memorandum stating that the trade agreement signed between the Ottoman State and Romania was received by the Romanian charge d’affaires. Monsieur Lahvary was personally selected by the King of Romania due to the fact that Monsieur Lahvary had the necessary qualifications to be appointed to the Romanian Embassy in Istanbul”. In the same document reference is also made to the acceptance of the commercial agreement, which was mentioned above “As it was deemed appropriate and the order to be sent in accordance with the commercial contract was also considered, acceptance from the Başkatib Office was given in response to the application, dated 15 Zilkaade 319/12 Mart 318/M. 25 Mart/March 1902”.

“HR.TH. (Hariciye Tahrirat) 266 – 26, M-25-03-1902Osmanlı Devleti ile Romanya arasında imzalanan ticaret mukavelenamesi ile Romanya sefiri olarak atanan Mösyö Lahvari'nin memuriyetinin padişah tarafından onaylanacağı. Daire-i sadaret-i uzma. Mektubi kalemi. Aded 82. Hariciye Nezareti Celilesine. Devletlü efendim hazretleri. Devleti aliye ile Romanya beyninde imza edilen ticaret mukavelenamesinin biran

⁴ In rendering the Romanian Ambassador’s name, the authors preserved the spelling found in documents with, BOA.

⁵ BOA, HR.TH. /*Hariciye Tahrirat*/Prime Minister’s Correspondence, 266 – 26, M-25-03-1902

⁶ In rendering the Romanian Ambassador’s name, the authors preserved the spelling found in documents with, BOA.

evvel tasdik-i aliye iktirami esbabının istihsali dersaadet Romanya sefaretine Mösyo Lahovary'nin evsaf-ı lazimeyi haiz olması hasebiyle Romanya kralı hazretleri tarafından bizzat intihab edilmiş olduğu Romanya maslahatgüzarlığından ifade edildiğine dair tezkire-i devletleri ledülarz mumaileyh mösyo lahovarynin sefaret-i mezkureye tayini taraf-ı eşref hazret-i padişahiden tensib buyrulmuş olduğu ve mezkur ticaret mukavelesinin icab-ı alisi emir buyrulduktan sonra irsal kılınacağı emr ü ferman-i hümayun-u şahane Mübin-i hümayun başkitabet-i celilesinden tezkire-i hususa cevab ile tebliğ edilmiş olmağla ifa-yı muktezasına himmet buyrulması siyakında tezkire-i senaveri terkim kıldı efendim. 15 Zilkaade 319/12 Mart 318/25 Mart 1902. Sadrazam”.

The document Y..PRK.HR. (*Yıldız Hariciye Nezareti Maruzatı*) 31 – 95, H-28-12-1319/M-7-4-1902⁷, which is in the custody of the Yıldız Palace Archive, informs us about the arrival of the Romanian ambassador, Alexandru Em. Lahovary in Constantinople. The document is a translation of the ambassador’s letter sent to Tevfik Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman State, requesting an audience with Sultan Abdülhamid II. ”It is the translation of Memorandum 298 sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Mr. Lahvory, the new Romanian ambassador to Istanbul and the speech of the newly appointed Romanian Ambassador to Istanbul, Lahvari, to be delivered in the presence of the Sultan, and a translated report, April 7, 1902 “Since “His Majesty the King, my Sovereign Augustus [unclear text], who has decided to entrust me with the task of representing Him as Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, I have the honor to bring to your attention, [unclear text] that I have just arrived in Istanbul”, and [he] declares that “I will consider myself happy because [he] will be in contact with the state, as well as a guarantee between the Ottoman state and the Romanian government. I assure you that I will make every effort to preserve the existing sincere relations and, if possible, to strengthen and raise them even more”. As is customary, the reasons for my honor [deteriorated text] in the presence of the sultan by presenting my credentials, a copy of which was sent as an attachment”.

“Y..PRK.HR. 31 – 95, H-28-12-1319/M- 7-4-1902. Yeni tayin edilen Romanya'nın İstanbul Sefiri Lahovari'nin padişahın huzurunda söyleyeceği nutkun çevirisi ve takrir tercümesi. Babialı. Nezaret-i Umuru Hariciye – dış işlerin faliyetleri. Tercüme Odası. Aded. Hariciye Nezaretine 7 Nisan 902 tarihli Dersaadet Romanya sefiri cedidi Mösyo Lahvory tarafından irsal olunan 298 numaralı takririn tercümesidir. Metbu-u müfehhim haşmetli kral hazretleri senaverlerini nezd-i [belirsiz belge] hazret-i padişahiye fevkalade ve murahhas orta elçi sıfatıyla tayin ettiğinden bu kere dersaadete muvasalat ettiği zat-ı ali-yi asafanelerine işar eder ve zat-ı devletleriyle münasebatta bulunacağından dolayı kendimi bahtiyar ad eylediğimi beyan ile beraber devlet-i aliye ile Romanya hükümeti beyninde teminen mevcut olan münasebat-ı samimiyenin muhafazasına ve mümkün ise bir kat daha tahkim ve teşyidine mesai-yi mümkününe sarf edeceğimi temin eylerim. Alelusul bir sureti leffen irsal kılınan itimadnamemi lacilütakdim huzur-u şevketmekur [hasarlı belge] Hazret-i padişahide nail-i şeref mesul olmaklığım esbabının istihsal ve [belirsiz belge] delalet-i aliye-i asafanelerdir. Beyan-ı hal ibraz müessir-i ihtiramkariye [hasarlı belge] itihaz kıldı”.

We do not insist on the solemn audience during which Alexandru Em. Lahovary presented his credentials to Sultan Abdülhamid II. as it was already done by the excellent work prepared by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this text we affirm some of the events of the diplomat and other landmarks of his mission in Constantinople, among which the ambassador’s appointment, together with other representatives of different Legations, for receiving *Osman Nişan-ı Alisi* medal from the Sulatan Abdulhamid II. *Osman Nişan-ı Alisi* is a high prestigious medal given during Abdulhamid II. reign in general to the members of the dynasty, but sometime it was also awarded to foreign dignitaries, as Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister Alexandru Em. Lahovary. From document found at BOA, documentary fund

⁷ BOA, Y..PRK.HR. (*Yıldız Hariciye Nezareti Maruzatı*) 31 – 95, H-28-12-1319/M- 7-4-1902

Taltifat/Rewards, İ.TAL. 293 – 39, H-24 Şevval 320/ 11 Kanunusani 318/ 24 Ocak 1903 (1320L-059)⁸, the Romanian Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister, Monsieur Lahvari, and others were rewarded with *Osman Nişan-ı Alisi* “Romanya Sefiri Mösyö Lahvari Cenabları'yla diğerlerinin ödüllendirilmeleri”.

From the same documentary fund *Taltifat/Reward* İ.TAL. 327-5, H-11-01-1322/M-28-Mart/March-1904⁹ we found out that ambasador's daughters were awarded with the Order of Mercy, the 2nd rank “About the awarding the daughters of the Romanian Ambassador Lahvari. (1322M-005) Yıldız Palace Office of the Epistle 211 This modest servant presents that Since Mademoiselle Tatyana lahovary has been awarded the 2nd rank of the Order of Mercy, Mademoiselle Karlet [unclear document], the daughters of the noble monsieur lahovary, the ambassador of Romania to Istanbul should be awarded; the execution of the necessary action is required by the Sultan's order, and the edict in this matter is the Sultan's. 11 Muharram 322, 15 March 320, Mehmed, Chief Clerk of the Sultanate”

“İ.TAL. 327-5, H-11-01-1322/M-28-3-1904, “Yıldız Sarayı Hümayun Başkitabet Dairesi 211 Maruz Çakerkeminelidir ki Dersaadet Romanya sefiri asaletli mösyö lahvary cenablarının kerimeleri madmazel Karlet [belirsiz belge] Lahovary madmazel tatyana lahovary 2. Rütbeden şefkat nişan-ı hümayunu ihsan buyrulduğundan muamele-yi lazımanın şerefsadr olan irade-i seniye-yi cenab-ı padişahi icab-ı alisinden olmağla olabda emr ü ferman hazreti menleülemirindir. 11 Muharrem 322 ve 15 Mart 320 Serkatip hazreti şehriyari Mehmed”.

The envoy's mission, which began in spring 1902, when he was appointed head of the Romanian Legation in Constantinople, ended in 1906 when he moved to the office in Vienna. Here is the document attesting Alexandru Em. Lahovary's dismissal, HR.TH.. (Hariciye Tahrirat) 334 – 97, M-05-Haziran/June-1906¹⁰ “His Excellency This letter was written in response to the letter sent by the King of Romania, stating that Monsieur Lahvary was dismissed from his position as a civil servant, as ambasador, who was honored to His Majesty the Sultan, H. 12 Rabiulahir 324/R. 23 May 1322 /M-5-Haziran/June-1906 The Grand Vizier”

“HR.TH.. (Hariciye Tahrirat/Prime Minister's Correspondence) 334 – 97, M-05-06-1906, Daire-i Sadaret-i Uzma Mektubi Kalemi Aded 488 Hariciye Nezareti Devletlü Efendim Hazretleri Taraf-ı eşref hazret-i hilafetpenahiye Mösyö Lahvary'nin memuriyetine hitam verildiğine dair haşmetlü Romanya Kralı hazretleri tarafından yazılıb nail-i şeref mesul olan sefir mumaileyh canibinden arz ve takdim kılınan nameye cevaben tastir olunan ve ledülarz icab-ı alisi icra buyrulan name-yi hümayun suretiyle beraber leffen savb-ı alilerine irsal kılınmış olmağla icra-yı icabına himmet buyrulması siyakında tezkire-yi senaveri terkim kılındı efendim. 12 Rebiülahir 324/23 Mayıs 322 Sadrazam”.

CONCLUSIONS

After gaining its full independence at the end the Ottoman-Russian War, 1877-1878, Romania did not had hostility towards the Ottoman State, on the contrary, it endeavored to develop friendly relations. Likewise, the Ottoman State did not hold grudges against Romania, its former dependent state, and took care to develop its relations in every field. In this rapprochement, both the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II, and King Carol I of Romania brought great contributions. The efforts of the envoys of the two states in keeping the warm diplomatic relations established between the Ottoman State and Romania are noteworthy.

⁸ BOA, İ.TAL. 293 – 39, H-24 Şevval 320/ 11 Kanunusani 318/ 24 Ocak 1903 (1320L-059)

⁹ BOA, İ.TAL. 327-5, H-11-01-1322/M-28-Mart/March-1904 (1322M-005)

¹⁰ BOA, HR.TH.. (Hariciye Tahrirat) 334 – 97, M-05-Haziran/June-1906

Alexandru Em. Lahovary, who served as Romania's envoy to Istanbul, in between 1902 and 1906, was one of the architects of the intensification of these relations. During his four-years duty, Lahovary, even his family, was awarded medal for his services in the Ottoman State. During Lahovary's period, the mutual and sincere friendship feelings of the two states were also reflected in the economic-commercial field. Before Lahovary took office, Trade and Navigation Agreement was signed between the Ottoman State and Romania, sealed and put into effect during Sultan Abdülhamid II reign.

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