

FOR A NEW METHOD OF ANALYSIS: ROMANIA'S ROLE IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR*

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Abstract

This study represents a short synthesis of my recent book on the topic of the history and theory of international relations. My analysis represents an argument for a theoretical perspective in the research of the Romanian historiography dedicated to the First World War. Taking into consideration the lack of such historical papers and books, I decided to elaborate this article starting from the main items, concepts and syntagms belonging to the theory of international relations. Nowadays in the field of humanities and social sciences, the interdisciplinary approaches are not only welcomed but required. The international relations need to be analyzed from a descriptive perspective and from a theoretical one, as well. Methodologically I used different theoretical concepts and tried to apply them to the history of Romania's participation in World War I. I built my analysis mainly from the point of view of the realism, without neglecting the constructivist theory. I attempted to demonstrate that the Romanian state performed as a rational actor during the First World War, aiming to maximize its benefits and advantages. Romania also carried out a policy of prestige. The Romanian Kingdom entered First World War in order to extend its national territory.

Keywords: theory of international relations, World War I, Romania, realism, game theory, national interest, policy of prestige, balance of power, coalition, alliance.

Paraphrasing the title of an exceptional volume of history theory by Marc Bloch,¹ the present study is intended to plead in favor of a methodology that should transfer the approach from event factor to theory.

In modern research in the fields of humanities and social sciences, it is advisable to apply an interdisciplinary methodology. International relations, as a

* The study consists of a very succinct synthesis of the recently published volume, also presenting some of its essential ideas. We also proceeded to deepen the analysis on several aspects. See Hadrian Gorun, *România și Marele Război. Introducere la o istorie și teorie a relațiilor internaționale* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut/Mega, 2021). A Romanian version of the study was already published in *Anuarul Institutului "A.D. Xenopol"* 58 (2021). See Hadrian Gorun, "Pledoarie pentru o abordare teoretică: România în ecuația Marelui Război", *Anuarul Institutului "A.D. Xenopol"* 58 (2021): 345–353. This text was also delivered on the occasion of the 3rd Congress of the Romanian Historians, Alba-Iulia, 8–10 September 2022.

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¹ Marc Bloch, *Pledoarie pentru istorie*, trans. George Cipăianu (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Tribuna, 2007).

branch of political sciences, require both a descriptive, expository approach and, particularly, an analytical, theoretical one. In other words, the history of international relations must be blended harmoniously with the practice and theory of international relations, generating a symbiosis as far as possible. Adequate understanding of the complicated working mechanisms of relations between international actors cannot be achieved, in all their complexity and diversity, in the absence of the knowledge of events, but especially in the absence of a familiarity with the essential theories, concepts and paradigms. The analysis of events from the perspective of the international relations theory gives the historical text a higher degree of problematization, conceptualization and contextualization.

Romanian historiography, in general, and particularly the historical writings that address topics on the First World War, experience quite severely the lack of approaches from a theoretical perspective. Conceptual and theoretical works are relatively rare in the historiographical picture. The volumes, studies and articles that have been published, generally expository present military and diplomatic realities or narrate battles, eventually using methodological tools specific to strategic studies. The scarcity of studies dealing with the history of the Great War from the perspective of the main theories of international relations has led me to undertake a bold scientific approach. Concepts and phrases such as national interest, rationality, game theory, diplomacy, alignment (bandwagoning), power, balance of power, alliance, coalition, realism, liberal idealism, were capitalized and applied in the present study. Moreover, the article analyzes Romania's foreign policy, especially from the perspective of realism, without neglecting the constructivist theory though.

All Romania's actions during the First World War were carried out under the sign of realism. The Romanian political class pursued the fulfillment of the national interest, a fundamental concept of the realist theory. In terms of foreign policy priorities, the political elite shared similar values, ideas and opinions, and there was a quasi-unanimous consensus, even if domestic policy was marked by divergences. In addition to preserving territorial integrity, the concept of national interest implies ensuring and perpetuating the independence of the state so that it should enjoy prestige in the international arena.² The national interest of the Romanian state implied the union of the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy (Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Bucovina), inhabited by a mostly Romanian population, with the Old Kingdom. Therefore, through the territorial expansion of the country, Romania's external efforts aimed at increasing and enhancing its international prestige. The politics of prestige was pursued constantly and consistently. Thus, we can explain the insistence of Bucharest, in

² Frederic Pearson and Martin Rochester, *International relations. The global condition in the twenty-first century* (New York: Mc. Graw Hill, 1998), 177; Jill Steans, Lloyd Pettiford, and Thomas Diez, *Introduction to International Relations. Perspectives and themes*, trans. Mihnea Columbeanu (București: Editura Antet, 2008), 63–65.

the first half of 1915, in order to recognize the rights over Banat in its entirety, as well as of the Prut River as the eastern border. Romanian diplomacy also requested that the Kingdom of Romania should be treated on an even footing, both during the peace negotiations and at the general peace conference.³

Starting with August 15, 1916, Romania will resort to war, in order to achieve the main objective of foreign policy and, implicitly, its national interest. Realism, on the other hand, sees war as a mere continuation of diplomacy and politics, but by other means. In other words, war was nothing more than a necessary evil, for which the states had to always be prepared. The clash of different, contrary interests of the state actors inevitably led to war. Also, behaviorism starts from the assumption that states are inclined to wage wars. To the same extent, in order to prove this assertion, behaviorist theory seeks to identify fundamental principles and laws regarding the behavior of states.⁴

Even public opinion, predominantly Francophile, acted in a typically realistic manner. It imperiously requested the government of Ion I. C. Brătianu to urgently adopt the decision to intervene alongside the Entente. The desire to achieve the national interest of the Romanian state motivates its behavior.⁵ This behavior may seem paradoxical, since interwar idealistic liberalism assigned an important role to the domestic public opinion, not the realist theory, which practically overlooked it.

During The First World War, the Romanian state performed as a rational actor, tending to the maximization of territorial and material advantages and to the minimization of risks, costs and losses. The Kingdom of Romania sought to increase its power, military capabilities (by achieving a satisfactory level of military training and by improving its supplies), as well as demographic ones (by acquiring provinces populated by Romanians).⁶ According to the fundamental principles of political realism, stated by Hans J. Morgenthau, a state's foreign policy is classified as good if it minimizes risks and maximizes its advantages, profits.⁷

Romania strove to adopt a rational foreign policy and promote effective diplomacy. According to Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, the rational model is the general starting point in decision-making.⁸ decision-makers set their essential goals to be achieved, calculate the costs and benefits of each course of action individually, preferring, of course, the one that involves (or seems to involve)

³ Hadrian Gorun, *România și Alianții*, (Târgu-Jiu: Editura Academica Brâncuși, 2010), 56.

⁴ Edward A. Kolodziej, *Securitatea și relațiile internaționale*, trans. Ramona-Elena Lupu (Iași: Polirom, 2007), 290; Șerban Filip Cioculescu, *Introducere la teoria relațiilor internaționale* (București: Editura Militară, 2007), 89–90.

⁵ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 29.

⁶ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 91.

⁷ Jean-Jacques Roche, *Théories des relations internationales*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Editions Montchrestien, 1999), 32.

⁸ Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Esența deciziei. O explicație a crizei rachetelor din Cuba*, trans. Mihaela Răileanu (Iași: Polirom, 2010), 29–76.

maximum benefits and minimum costs.⁹ Obviously, the primary objective of Romania was to obtain the territories inhabited by Romanians, belonging to the dualist empire. In July 21/August 3, 1914, the decision-makers, gathered in the Crown Council at Sinaia, chose the option of neutrality. Given that there were impediments, inclusively following the military engagement, two years later, an intervention supposedly occurring as early as 1914 would have been a true military adventure. Therefore, Romanian statesmen thought and acted rationally. In August 14/27, 1916, within the context of the assumption of diplomatic and military commitments by the Entente states, through the political and military Conventions, of August 4/17, the government decided that the right moment for action had come. A perpetual neutrality for an average power at most, such as Romania, was impossible. Moreover, the Romanian state would not have been able to materialize its vital interests.

In close connection with the thesis of the rationality of state actors, postulated in classical realism and structural realism, is the theory of games. In zero-sum games (null sum), one player's winning a state is equivalent to the other player's loss. In zero-sum games, both players can win or lose. In a zero-sum game, negotiations and communication between the parties are absolutely useless because they have diametrically opposed interests.¹⁰ We identify such a situation, during the world conflict, in the relationship of the Kingdom of Romania with the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy and even in Romanian–Bulgarian relations. The primary objective of Romania to take over territories incorporated into the dualist monarchy, as well as the territorial dispute with the South-Danube state for Quadrilater (Durostor and Caliacra counties) accounts for this value judgment. The different interests of the states concerned were irreconcilable. Nonzero sum games apply to Romanian–Russian and Romanian French relations in the First World War.¹¹ In non-zero-sum games, coordinating the actions of state actors can lead to the maximization of the total reward for the players. However, each state undertakes actions to obtain as consistent a part of this reward as possible.¹²

States designate entities endowed with strategic thinking, which tend to achieve absolute gains, even if in practice absolute gains cannot be achieved. Joining in the war alongside the Entente, the Romanian state aimed at enjoying the advantages due to the victors, at the end of the conflagration. A report belonging to the Belgian captain Lambert¹³ implicitly highlighted this non-zero-sum game. The cabinet led by Ionel Brătianu claimed that the Entente powers should commit to

⁹ Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*, trans. Andreea-Ioana Cozianu, Elena Farca, and Adriana Ștraub (Iași: Polirom, 2008), 114.

¹⁰ Goldstein and Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*, 199.

¹¹ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 92.

¹² Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 92.

¹³ Ion Ardeleanu et al., *1918 la români. Desăvârșirea unității național-statale a poporului român*, vol. 1 (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983), 759–760; Gorun, *România și Alianții*, 57.

dealing with peace only when Romanian aspirations will have been fulfilled. Great Britain and France were on the verge of accepting that clause, which implied a relative obligation. There were practically two alternatives: the Entente will be victorious and then Romania will be compensated in accordance with the assumed obligations (being part of the victorious alliance), or on the contrary, it will be defeated and, as a consequence, the Romanian Kingdom will endure, like the entire alliance, the case of force majeure.¹⁴ The fate of Romania, at the end of the war, was inevitably connected to the fate of the Allies. Analyzing the role of Romanian diplomacy during the Great War, I assigned the term diplomacy the same meaning as the realist theorist Hans Morgenthau: the formulation and implementation of foreign policy at all levels.¹⁵

The quality of diplomacy is among the components of a nation's power. For Morgenthau, it represents even the most important constitutive part of national power. Quality and effective diplomacy is an absolutely necessary condition for achieving foreign policy objectives. Optimum promotion of a state's national interest is conditioned by an effective and flexible diplomacy. Diplomacy "is the art of combining the various elements of national power to obtain the maximum effect on those matters of international relations which affect the national interest most". Consequently, diplomacy is the "brain of national power".¹⁶

The diplomatic negotiations revealed their relevance in the issue of Romania's relations with the Entente states. In the current analysis, I will only focus on the pre-eminent role played by the President of the Council of Ministers, Ion I. C. Brătianu. He led the foreign policy and coordinated the Romanian diplomacy during the war of reunification. His diplomatic qualities and tact emerged during neutrality. The representatives of the Entente and those of the Central Powers were striving to obtain the military concurrence of the Kingdom of Romania to facilitate their own war effort. Ion I. C. Brătianu initially tried, through the policy of neutrality, to avoid armed involvement in the conflict. Then, the Romanian statesman would adopt an alignment-type behavior (bandwagoning), deciding to intervene in the war alongside the stronger alliance (Quadruple Understanding), at the moment he considered optimal.¹⁷

The President of the Council of Ministers followed a rule postulated by realist theorists. In principle, in the relations with the great powers, the weaker states tend to align rather than balance. Conversely, in relation with the actors of a

¹⁴ Gorun, *România și Aliații*, 57.

¹⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni. Lupta pentru putere și lupta pentru pace*, trans. Oana Andreea Bosoi, Alina Andreea Dragolea, and Mihai Vladimir Zodian (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2007), 179, note no. 18.

¹⁶ Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni*, 179.

¹⁷ Rudolf Dinu, "Romania's way from neutrality to War. An analysis regarding the Romanian Foreign Policy 1912–1916", in *La Grande Guerre. Histoire de la mémoire collective en France et en Roumanie*, ed. Christophe Prochasson and Florin Țurcanu (Bucharest: New Europe College, 2010), 14–15.

similar power to theirs, they will rather opt for balancing.¹⁸ Thus, as far as Bulgaria is concerned (a state with somewhat similar military capabilities), the officials from Bucharest preferred to opt for balancing. In relations with the Entente states, the Kingdom of Romania naturally chose to adopt a bandwagoning type of conduct. When a state actor or alliance has the best chance of winning the conflict, states prefer to rally to the more powerful side rather than form coalitions. Under these conditions, the states will opt for alignment.¹⁹

Romania will decide to enter the war on the side of the Entente in a favorable situation for the latter when the final triumph had begun to shape to some extent. From this perspective, pursuing a policy of alignment, a state allies itself with the stronger camp, in order to share the advantages and benefits, after achieving the final victory.²⁰ Romania's alliance option in The First World War highlights this type of alignment.²¹ As a price for participating in the conflict, the Entente promised that it would be rewarded territorially at the expense of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The American political scientist Stephen M. Walt, an exponent of defensive neorealism, developed the balance of the threat theory. By virtue of this, the smaller states, unlike the great powers, show an increased interest towards the neighboring powers. They are particularly concerned with the evolution of the events near their own borders. Weak state actors can swing when threatened by states with approximately equal capabilities. However, they intend to align and tend to align when they realize that their security and territorial integrity is endangered by a great power.²² The policy of balancing the power of Bulgaria, adopted by the government in Bucharest, is therefore explicable.

On the other hand, if we consider the theory of the balance of threat and the main assumptions regarding the alignment, addressed by Stephen Walt, the alliance (coalition) of Romania with the Russian Empire is not really surprising. Thus, for the Romanian state, Russia represented the biggest and most serious external threat, being located in its immediate geographical proximity. Or, in Walt's view, states are inclined to ally with the most threatening power. Moreover, the closer a great power is geographically, the greater the tendency and temptation of neighboring states to ally with it.²³ Finding the Kingdom of Romania and the Russian Empire in the same camp, starting from August 4/17, 1916, as a result of the former's bandwagoning policy, does not appear unnatural in this context.²⁴

¹⁸ Șerban Filip Cioculescu, "Studiu introductiv", in *Originile alianțelor*, ed. Stephen M. Walt, trans. Mihaela Boca (Iași: Institutul European, 2008), 28.

¹⁹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Teoria politicii internaționale*, trans. Nicoleta Mihăilescu (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 176.

²⁰ Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 61.

²¹ Alan John Percivale Taylor, *The First World War: An Illustrated History* (New York, 1989), 88–90, 153; Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 61.

²² Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 71.

²³ Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 75.

²⁴ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 54–57.

In opposition to realism and neorealism, constructivism is concerned with the manner in which actors define their national interests, as well as threats to these interests and relations with the others.²⁵ In the constructivist theory, the actor's interests are not compulsorily and necessarily determined by the distribution of power in the international system.²⁶ They derive from the preferences of the respective actors. The way in which international actors perceive other actors, the image of the other are the elements that pose the greatest importance to constructivists. Depending on the respective perceptions, a state can represent another state as an enemy, a rival, or a friend, regardless of the power held by the two actors.²⁷ Capitalizing on this reasoning, France was perceived as a friend by Romania, while Russia as a potential adversary, although the two great powers were part of the same military block. However, the accession of the Romanian Kingdom to the Entente implied the formal alliance with both, both the French Republic and the Empire of the Tsars.²⁸

In general, states are inclined to be more afraid of state actors they perceive as potentially threatening than of other states that are great economic or even military powers. In this vein, even if Germany was far superior to Russia from an economic and military point of view at the beginning of the First World War, Romania deeply perceived the possible threat from its eastern neighbor. In explaining this way of perception, elements such as historical precedents, the indisputable hegemonic tendencies of Russia, camouflaged by the Pan-Slavist and Pan-Orthodox policy, as well as, of course, the geographical position very close to Romania's borders, must be considered. The Romanov Empire was seen in Bucharest as a possible threat to Romania's territorial integrity.

International relations theorists, especially those belonging to the realist school, but also the neorealists, stated the key role played by alliances in the operation of the balance of power. For Hans Morgenthau, alliances were "a necessary function of the balance of power". The purpose of alliances lies in "adding to the power of another nation", or in "preventing the adversary" from proceeding in a similar way.²⁹

Unlike John Mearsheimer, who proposed an offensive neorealism, Kenneth Waltz believed that the main concern of states was not the maximization of power, but the maintenance of positions within the system.³⁰ Therefore, in the view of the best-known exponent of defensive structural realism, the primary objective of states is to ensure survival, their own security. In this context, Waltz was referring

²⁵ Goldstein and Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*, 172.

²⁶ Kolodziej, *Securitatea și relațiile internaționale*, 321; Cioculescu, *Introducere în teoria relațiilor internaționale*, 262.

²⁷ Olivia Todorean, "Constructivismul în relațiile internaționale", in *Manual de relații internaționale*, ed. Andrei Miroiu and Radu-Sebastian Ungureanu (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 157–158.

²⁸ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 63–64.

²⁹ Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni*, 216.

³⁰ Waltz, *Teoria politicii internaționale*, 177.

to the principle of self-help”, which is connected to John Mearsheimer’s postulate, according to which alliances are only “marriages of convenience”.³¹ In order to maintain their national security and ensure their survival, states will tend to form a balance of power, which contributes to the preservation of the system.³² In order to maintain or (re)establish a balance of power in accordance with its own interests, a state actor can resort to strengthening and increasing its own internal capabilities, especially if it prepares for war: “In order to emerge well from such a conflict, the state must rely on its own means, the efficiency of which he must constantly attend to”.³³ One of the main reasons why the Kingdom of Romania postponed its entry into the First World War for two years was precisely the urgent need to complete the training of the army and to improve the supply of war materials, munitions and efficient and modern weapons. In fact, military training inclusively is one of the fundamental constitutive elements of national power, which Hans Morgenthau analyzed.

The formation of alliances is also among the most well-known levers used by state actors to balance the power of a rival and, implicitly, to achieve their goals externally. Even if there is a risk of shifting responsibilities, forming an alliance, or joining an alliance against a state perceived as dangerous or threatening is often a faster, less expensive and more effective method.³⁴ The purpose of the alliances is to increase the military capabilities of their members in relation to those of other states.

From the first months of the war, the Entente multiplied its efforts to obtain the military cooperation of the neutral states. The examples of Romania, Italy and Bulgaria are eloquent. At the time of the outbreak of the world conflagration (July 28, 1914), Romania and Italy were, at least formally, officially, the allies of the Central Powers. The mode of action of the Triple Alliance aimed to apply the *divide et impera* principle. Since initially the camp of the Central Powers was superior from a military point of view, The Entente aimed precisely at weakening the rival alliance and strengthening its own military, demographic, and economic capabilities by resorting to the policy of *divide et impera*. Analyzing this established method of power balancing, Hans Morgenthau concluded: “The process of balancing is realized by decreasing the weight of the heavier plate or increasing that of the lighter plate”.³⁵ Finally, in the case of Italy and Romania, the *divide et impera* policy will bear fruit, getting a successful outcome.

Also, in order to attract their neutral states from the Balkan area, the Entente powers tried to mediate a policy of territorial compensations, in 1914–1915. The

³¹ John Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions”, *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/1995): 11.

³² Waltz, *Teoria politicii internaționale*, 165–172.

³³ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Omul, statul și războiul*, trans. Mihaela Sadovschi (Iași: Institutul European, 2001), 163.

³⁴ Goldstein, Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*, 120–121.

³⁵ Morgenthau, *Politica între națiuni*, 213.

principle of compensations is also among the mechanisms used to maintain or restore the balance of power. Territorial disputes persisted between the Balkan countries, and they could not be ignored. These were serious obstacles to the formation of an alliance, made up of Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece.

The diverging foreign policy objectives of the concerned actors are the main reason for the failure of the Entente plan, which sought to recreate the Balkan League, since 1912. The national interest of each individual state actor prevailed both over the interest of the Entente alliance, of the subsystem represented by the Balkans, and on the interest of the international system. Each Balkan state placed its own national interest above the interests of the projected Balkan alliance and those of the Triple Entente.³⁶

The bloc of the Balkan states, which was to be joined to the Entente, remained a dead letter also due to the reluctance expressed towards that project by the states in the region. The Romanian government was reserved about the idea of ceding parts of the Quadrilateral in favor of Bulgaria. The officials from Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, and Athens were circumspect towards the suggestions of France and Russia to proceed with territorial concessions as compensations. There is a risk that one state takes the initiative of concessions, but the others do not immediately adopt a similar conduct. In this unfortunate eventuality, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the states that consented to the concessions would have been damaged. In fact, the national interest had to be channeled in such a way as to ensure the sovereignty of the state. Complying with the territorial integrity of all states, within acknowledged borders, constitutes a very important principle of international relations, inextricably linked to the concept of sovereignty.³⁷ Sovereignty also implies the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a state. In the view of the French political scientist Jean-Jacques Roche, the territory and the principle of non-interference are, in fact, the quintessence of sovereignty.³⁸

In the end, the national interests of the state actors, their fundamental goals are at the basis of the formation of alliances, determining their composition and nature. It is not alliances that determine the interests of member actors. National interests are not fixed, they do not always remain the same, and therefore, neither are alliances permanent, immutable. The latter tend, in turn, to change their composition.³⁹ After declaring itself neutral in 1914, Romania will join the Entente in August 1916. In the past, between 1883 and 1914, it was an ally of the Central Powers. For Romania, the Dual Monarchy represented an obstacle to achieving territorial and national unity. Furthermore, in the context of the re-intensification of relations with France at the beginning of the 20th century, and especially during neutrality, the alliance with Germany gradually proved unviable.

³⁶ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 69–73.

³⁷ Joshua Goldstein, *International Relations*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2001), 78–79.

³⁸ Jean-Jacques Roche, *Relations internationales* (Paris: Librairie Générale de droit et jurisprudence, 1999), 81–87.

³⁹ Goldstein and Pevehouse, *Relații internaționale*, 131.

Between a proper alliance and a coalition there are differences, both semantically and conceptually. Coalitions work, in principle, for a short period.⁴⁰ The main purpose of a coalition is usually to defeat a common enemy, which is often a hegemonic power or a power likely to become a hegemonic one. The anti-Napoleonic coalitions and the United Nations Coalition during the Second World War are relevant examples. Basically, after achieving its main objective, a coalition falls apart, ending its ephemeral existence. The coalition can often be “informal, tacit, and the obligation of supporting the partner is a moral and/or strategic one”.⁴¹ The formation of alliances is favored, among other things, by the existence of a common ideology, similar political regimes, similarities or cultural identities, as well as other common features between the actors that are allying.⁴² Considering the latter, the intensification of Romanian–French relations even before the outbreak of the Great War, and later, the finding of France and Romania in the same alliance, that of the Entente, are not accidental at all.

The Romanian–Russian alliance during the World War could rather be considered a coalition of compromise. Both during neutrality and during the entire period of the world conflict, Romanian–Russian relations evolved under the sign of compromise. The alliance of the Empire of the Tsars and Romania was a conjectural one, a compromise solution itself. Bringing the two states into the same camp was due to France. The French Republic was the western power that placed the highest value on the alliance with Romania.

At the same time, we could value the following syllogism, to better understand Romania’s conjecture alliance with Russia. If a state A is allied with a state B, and another state C develops cordial relations with state A, states B and C will not be irrevocably irreconcilable, despite the frictions and tensions between them. Power A will assume the mission of removing the asperities arising in power B’s relations with state C. Given that France was allied with Russia, and Romanian–French relations experienced a permanent improvement (leading to an alliance), Romania’s final alliance with Russia appears as normal. But it was more about a temporary coalition. In fact, between the two states there were no affinities and other cohesion factors necessary, in principle, for the creation, operation and consolidation of a lasting alliance.

In general, the points of view of France and Great Britain coincided regarding the necessity of involving Romania in the war in order to consolidate the Entente alliance. On the other hand, Russia tended to put its own expansionist objectives above the interests of the Entente and, eventually, to subordinate Romania’s entry into action to them. Hans Morgenthau believed that the so-called “ideological solidarity” is a decisive factor in making alliances. Ideological solidarity concerns alliances formed between states with the same politics, with a

⁴⁰ Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 120–121.

⁴¹ Cioculescu, “*Studiu introductiv*”, 22.

⁴² Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 29, 75.

similar culture, or that share other common features. According to this principle, the more similar two or more states are, the more likely their alliance will be.⁴³ However, with the exception of Orthodoxy, there were practically no political, cultural, or other similarities between Romania and Russia. Politically, the former was a constitutional monarchy, while Russia was an autocratic one.⁴⁴ However, the similarities are significant in the case of Romania and France. Raymond Poincaré, the president of the French Republic during the Great War, invoked, among other things, “racial affinity” in favor of the Franco–Romanian alliance.⁴⁵ It was, of course, a remark about the Latin origins of the French and Romanians, which was a catalyst for the rapprochement of the two nations.

However, according to the realist and neorealist logic, the main reason for which states ally lies in the need to withstand external threats.⁴⁶ From this perspective, we could also interpret the signing of the Russo–Romanian agreement in September 18/October 1 as a response to the Austro-Hungarian threat. Subsequently, the alliance with Russia (or, more precisely, the Romanian–Russian coalition), with Romania's accession to the Entente and the intervention in the war, was also materialized from the need to (counter) balance the power of the Dual Monarchy.

In the conception of the English school, international relations are a subfield of interpersonal relations. In fact, people, individuals are actors of international relations, contributing to their achievement. International relations analysts are responsible for explaining and interpreting the way of thinking and action of the respective actors⁴⁷. Therefore, starting from the postulate of the English school, we can establish a comparison between a coalition and an interpersonal relationship (of friendship or love) whose catalyst is either the exclusive interest of one of the parties, or of both parties. On the contrary, an alliance resembles an inter-human relationship (of love or friendship) based on the affinities between the respective persons, on the common values and conceptions they share.

⁴³ Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 75.

⁴⁴ Gorun, *România și Marele Război*, 60–65, 73–75.

⁴⁵ Fond *Constantin I. Diamandi section*, fol. no. 27, fil. 25, Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale.

⁴⁶ Walt, *Originile alianțelor*, 75.

⁴⁷ Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations. Theories & Approaches*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 127.