

**STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI**

**Historia**

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**Volume 66, Number 2, December 2021**

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Semestrial Review edited by  
The Babeş-Bolyai University  
Cluj-Napoca, Romania

# Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai

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## *Historia*

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*Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia* is published biannually in June and December by Babeş-Bolyai University.

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The Executive Board, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia*,  
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1 Mihail Kogălniceanu Street, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

This Number is coordinated by Lucian Dorel Turcu and Vlad Popovici.

ISSN 1220-0492

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ARGONAUT PUBLISHING

Desktop Publishing, Print and Distribution

# Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia

Volume 66, Number 2, December 2021

doi:10.24193/subbhist.2021.2

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# Correction de quelques erreurs dans les éditions scientifiques de L'Histoire hiéroglyphique (1705) par Dimitrie Cantemir. L'édition Panaitescu-Verdeş (1965)

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Article history: Received 3.11.2021; Revised 10.12.2021;

Accepted 28.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.

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**Abstract:** Correction of some errors in the scientific editions of *The Hieroglyphic History (1705)* by Dimitrie Cantemir. The Panaitescu-Verdeş edition (1965). *The Hieroglyphic History*, written by Dimitrie Cantemir in 1705, is considered the first Romanian (historical) novel. Beyond the veil of allegory, the exotic topos and animal-related fantasy, the historical events between 1685-1705 are revealed through characteristic deciphering, which can represent valuable data for a historian. The work, first published in 1883, then in 1927 and 1957 in a few *non-scientific* editions, was finally republished in 1965 in a *scientific edition* elaborated by P.P. Panaitescu and Ion Verdeş. This particular 1965 edition is of very high historical value, but it also has a number of lacunae, especially in the field of theology. The editors don't reference certain biblical quotes, they hint at certain psychological ideas when mentioning quotes that are clearly extracted from the Bible, they ignore the biblical source, which was the very foundation of Cantemir's maxims, they overlook the study of certain toponyms with biblical origins (Euphrates, Tarshish, Babylon etc.) and don't realize that some of his ideas are of biblical origin (for example: the cyclical evolution of things, free will). Furthermore, they don't distinguish certain elements of Christian iconography from their biblical counterparts, leading to confusion (according to the editors, Saint Veronica's Veil is attributed to Magdalene!). For all this, attention, thoroughness, knowledge of biblical sources and familiarity with Romanian and European biblical tradition are required. An edition of *The Hieroglyphic History* which envelopes historical, philological, but also theological and, last but not least, philosophical notes and commentaries is expected in the future.

**Keywords:** Dimitrie Cantemir, *The Hieroglyphic History*, Panaitescu, Verdeş, theology, cyclical evolution, Menander, The Apostle Paul, Saint Veronica's Veil

SUBB – Historia, Volume 66, 2, December 2021

doi:10.24193/subbhist.2021.2.01

**Rezumat: Corectarea unor erori în edițiile științifice ale Istoriei ieroglifice (1705) de Dimitrie Cantemir. Ediția Panaitescu-Verdeș (1965).** *Istoria ieroglifică*, lucrare scrisă de Dimitrie Cantemir în anul 1705, este considerată primul roman (istoric) românesc. Dincolo de haina alegoriei, a toposului exotic și a fantasticului animalier, prin deciptări specifice, se revelează evenimente istorice din perioada 1685-1705, care pot constitui pentru un istoric date valoroase. Lucrarea, publicată în 1883 apoi în 1927 și 1957 în câteva ediții neștiințifice, în sfârșit a fost republicată în 1965 într-o ediție științifică elaborată de P.P. Panaitescu și Ion Verdeș. Această ediție din 1965 are o mare valoare istorică, dar și câteva lacune, în special în domeniul teologic. Editorii nu indică anumite citate biblice, fac aluzii la idei psihologice pentru citate care sunt clar extrase din Biblie, ignoră filonul biblic care a stat la baza maximelor lui Cantemir, omit să studieze unele toponime la originea lor biblică (Eufrat, Tharsis, Babilon etc.) și nu realizează că unele idei cantemiriene sunt de origine biblică (de exemplu: evoluția ciclică a lucrurilor, liberul arbitru). Totodată nu disting unele elemente de iconografie creștină de corespondentele lor biblice, ajungând la confuzii (năframa sfintei Veronica este atribuită de editori Magdalenei!). Pentru toate acestea se cere atenție, minuțiozitate, cunoașterea surselor biblice și familiarizarea cu tradiția biblică românească și europeană. O ediție a *Istoriei ieroglifice* care să înglobeze notele și comentariile istorice, filologice, dar și teologice și nu în ultimul rând filozofice, este de așteptat pe viitor.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Dimitrie Cantemir, *Istoria ieroglifică*, Panaitescu, Verdeș, teologie, evoluție ciclică, Menandru, Apostolul Pavel, năframa sfintei Veronica

### Introduction

Le manuscrit signé par Dimitrie Cantemir contient 337 pages recto-verso (environ 674 pages) écrites en roumain en caractères cyrilliques et comporte douze parties et deux « échelles » (un glossaire et un index de décryptage). L'œuvre est restée dans la bibliothèque de Cantemir et de ses successeurs pendant 78 ans, jusqu'en 1783 lorsqu'elle a été donnée aux Archives d'État des actes anciens de la Russie de Moscou (Mss n° 1419, Fonds 181). Un autre siècle est passé et seulement 178 ans après sa parution, en 1883, la première édition de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* a été publiée, sous le patronage de l'Académie roumaine.

L'édition « Panaitescu-Verdeș » de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* de 1965 en deux volumes (avec les rééditions correspondantes: 1973, 1978, 1983, 1997) et l'édition « Stoicescu-Toma » de 1973 (avec ses rééditions: 2003,

2016) ont le mérite d'être reconnues par les cantémirologues comme des éditions scientifiques, apportant des ajouts substantiels aux précédentes (la première, en 1883 imprimée par l'Académie roumaine ; la seconde, publiée en 1927 avec un texte édité par Em. C. Grigoraș ; la troisième, celle de 1957, rééditée en 1973 avec le texte élaboré en cyrillique par I. Vartician). Mais aussi scientifiquement composées soient ces éditions, elles ne peuvent jamais être considérées comme définitives (des personnes limitées ne peuvent pas réaliser des éditions définitives). P.P. Panaitescu et Ion Verdeș, reconnus dans le domaine historique et littéraire comme des autorités, ont complété le texte de Cantemir avec des informations multiples et précieuses par rapport à leurs prédécesseurs. Ensuite, l'édition St. Toma & N. Stoicescu de 1973 (l'année des commémorations de l'UNESCO, l'année « Cantemir 300 »), apporte des ajouts majeurs à l'édition de 1965. Ainsi, la linguiste Stela Toma, et l'historien méticuleux, Nicolae Stoicescu, ont corrigé quelques erreurs dans l'édition de Panaitescu et Verdeș (surtout linguistiques) et ont complété l'horizon historique avec des informations précieuses et pertinentes.

P.P. Panaitescu et Ion Verdeș n'étaient pas très bien formés théologiquement (comme Virgil Cândea le prouvera plus tard en écrivant et en analysant *Le Divan*). Ainsi, ils commettent quelques erreurs, omettent certains éléments importants, ou sont ambigus lors qu'ils analysent critiquement des mots ou des expressions cantémiriennes de la sphère biblique / théologique. Sans doute ont-ils fait un excellent travail, scientifique du point de vue historique, mais quelques erreurs de la sphère biblique qu'ils n'ont pas remarquées se sont glissées dans leurs textes, *volens nolens*. Il existe cependant des passages bibliques rapportés par des éditeurs, comme celui de la page 261 (« Car je ne fais pas le bien que je veux, et je fais le mal que je ne veux pas ») où la référence biblique manque – *Romains* 7:19.

## 1. Repères

(1) P.P. Panaitescu et Ion Verdeș, les deux auteurs de l'Introduction du livre *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* soutiennent qu'il existe quatre sources de « phrases » de Cantemir: les idées personnelles de l'auteur, le folklore, les anthologies d'adages philosophiques et morales et la littérature orientale (arabe ou perse). Dans une analyse du volume de *Maximes* recueillies par Em.C. Grigoraș de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique*, on peut observer que Dimitrie Cantemir a également utilisé la Bible (environ 5%).

(2) Les adages / maximes de Cantemir (« phrases ») méritent d'être analysés afin d'observer quel message moral elles transmettaient à l'époque.

Nous avons parcouru une citation ci-dessous, tirée *via* Cantemir de l'Apôtre Paul. Ce segment mérite également d'être exploré à l'avenir.

(3) Dans le sous-chapitre « Les idées socio-politiques dans *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* » (vol. 1, 1965, p. LVII et suiv.), les auteurs du texte commentent une citation cantémirienne<sup>1</sup> à partir de laquelle ils soutiennent que « sous un règne tyrannique et oppressif, les sujets simulent l'amour par peur<sup>2</sup> ». En fait, le texte paraphrasé par Cantemir se trouve dans la première épître de Jean (4:18)<sup>3</sup>, mais son sens est plus proche du sens biblique que des idées des éditeurs. Les sujets ne « simulent pas l'amour par peur » (Panaitescu – Verdeș), mais ils ont peur, ils montrent de la peur envers le souverain, car ils n'ont pas d'amour pour lui ; ainsi ils l'honorent, mais ils ne l'aiment pas. C'est exactement la thèse développée par Jean dans son épître.

(4) Dans l'Étude introductive, les deux éditeurs soulignent la cupidité de « l'Empire turc », un royaume qui est assis « sur un siège de feu » et – notent les éditeurs – de cette manière « la punition et l'effondrement à venir sont prévus » (volume I, p. XXXIV). Nous sommes tout à fait d'accord avec eux ; un trône terrestre placé au-dessus du feu n'a aucune chance de survivre, fait confirmé par la chute de l'Empire ottoman. Cependant, si les auteurs de l'introduction avaient signalé certains aspects bibliques et historiques (sur le trône de Satan dans l'Apocalypse, sur les peintures du XVIIIe siècle de Sucevita, Arbore, Moldovița, Humor et Voroneț), ce sujet aurait eu une conclusion beaucoup plus proche de la vérité.

(5) Ensuite, des expressions telles que: « le repos et l'abri de tous les volants » (À « L'Échelle... »: le dattier), « la corne du pouvoir » (À « L'Échelle... »: « le sceau des souverains de Moldavie »), « saisir la branche du dattier » (À « L'Échelle... »: « gagner un nom honoré »), etc. – nécessitent des explications détaillées pour prouver qu'ils trouvent leur origine dans les Saintes Écritures.

(6) Enfin, certains toponymes tels que le Babylone (« Vavilon »), l'Euphrate (« Evrath »), Tharsis (« Tharsis ») (avec la variante « Le vieux Tharsis qui s'appelle l'Amérique »), la Palestine, Jérusalem, la Mésopotamie, etc. nécessitent d'autres précisions que les éditeurs ont laissées de côté. Par

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<sup>1</sup> La citation cantémirienne est la suivante: « Là où il n'y a pas de véritable amour, le respect est donné par peur. Et là où le respect est donné par peur, on attend le moment où il n'y aura plus ni peur ni respect, mais leur transformation en mépris. » (*traduction interprétative*). Voir: Dimitrie Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglifică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique], vol. 1 (Bucarest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1965), LXIX.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. Panaitescu et Ion Verdeș in Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> « La crainte n'est pas dans l'amour, mais l'amour parfait bannit la crainte ; car la crainte suppose un châtement, et celui qui craint n'est pas parfait dans l'amour. » (1 Jean 4:18).



exemple, la première expression (Babylone) interprétée à « L'Échelle... » par l'auteur comme « le commencement du mal » a bien sûr un sens local, crypté, mais elle a aussi un sens universel, tiré de la Bible, renvoyant à la rébellion de l'homme qui a commencé à se propager dès la construction de la célèbre tour de Babel, lorsque Dieu a confondu les langues des hommes. Pourquoi Cantemir appelle-t-il le Danube « l'Euphrate de l'Europe » ? Et pourquoi l'Amérique est-elle le « vieux Tharsis » ? Ne serait-ce pas parce qu'il fait référence au Pays de l'Or, car Salomon apportait son or d'Ophir / Tharsis (voir 1 Rois 10:22) ?

## 2. Aspects analytiques

### 2.1. *L'idée de la cyclicité: un thème de la Genèse et de l'Ecclésiaste*

(1) Les éditeurs mentionnent dans l'étude introductive de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* (1965, I) (en référence à un autre ouvrage cantémirien – *L'Histoire de l'expansion et de la chute de l'Empire ottoman*) – « la conception philosophique de l'auteur sur l'évolution cyclique des grands empires, un concept explicitement déclaré dans *La recherche sur les monarchies* »<sup>4</sup>. Cependant, l'idée cantémirienne de la cyclicité des pouvoirs politiques énoncée dans des ouvrages ultérieurs, tels que ceux susmentionnés, trouve son précédent dans *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique*. Pourtant, le concept de cyclicité est beaucoup plus ancien, inspiré du premier chapitre écrit par Salomon dans l'Ecclésiaste, où l'auteur décrit la routine des activités humaines (v. 3-4) ou de la nature (v. 5-7). Ce « flux d'activités répétitives » est marqué chez Salomon par un « langage qui véhicule à la fois vigueur et monotonie »<sup>5</sup>. Dans le même sens conceptuel, l'auteur humain du livre *La Sagesse de Salomon* déclare qu'il connaît les « retours des solstices », les « cycles des années » et les « lois des étoiles » (7:17-19)<sup>6</sup>, et dans le Nouveau Testament, Jacques utilise l'expression « le cours de la vie » (3:6). Le même modèle biblique de cyclicité, selon lequel toutes choses fonctionnent, est basé sur le schéma de Genèse: (1) *Génération* (Genèse, chap. 1-2), *Dégénérescence* (Genèse, chap. 3-11) et *Régénération* (Genèse, chap. 12-50).

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<sup>4</sup> P.P. Panaitescu et Ion Verdeș, I, p. XX; voir aussi p. XLVII.

<sup>5</sup> Choon-Leong Seow, *The Anchor Yale Bible: Ecclesiastes. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [La Bible Anchor Yale: Ecclésiaste. Une nouvelle traduction avec introduction et commentaire] (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2008), 115. Salomon spécifie: « Une génération s'en va, une autre vient, et la terre subsiste toujours. Le soleil se lève, le soleil se couche; il soupire après le lieu d'où il se lève de nouveau. Le vent se dirige vers le midi, tourne vers le nord; tous les fleuves vont à la mer... » (Ecclésiaste 1: 4-7).

<sup>6</sup> *Septuaginta 4/II: Iov, Înțelepciunea lui Solomon, Înțelepciunea lui Isus Sirah, Psalmii lui Solomon* [Septante 4/II: Job, Sagesse de Salomon, La Sagesse de Jésus, fils de Sirach, Psaumes de Salomon], C. Bădiliță et al. (coord.) (Bucarest, Iassy: Polirom, 2007), 193-4.

Il est évident qu'ayant un tel substrat biblique, Dimitrie Cantemir écrit dans *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* sur la cyclicité des phénomènes naturels. Ainsi, il met dans la bouche de Brehnace (le Faucon) de sages paroles sur les choses des mortels qui se livrent au jeu de la vanité des vanités<sup>7</sup>, luttant dans une sphère d'instabilité (« les choses naturels retournent tous dans la sphère... »), dans un cercle des mouvements de la nature, le but inaccessible de chaque élément inscrit dans ces rotations étant de découvrir la source des mouvements circulaires et la raison pour laquelle ils sont dans la cyclicité existante<sup>8</sup> ; l'auteur en donne un exemple dans « L'histoire de Brehnace »<sup>9</sup>. Mais il ne faut pas oublier encore une chose: l'auteur écrit à propos d'un homme – son père – comme suit: « L'histoire de la naissance, de la croissance, de l'ascension », en représentant une croissance exponentielle, l'apparition, puis le déplacement de la terre jusqu'aux astres de l'homme qui était Constantin Cantemir. Mais l'idée de cyclicité serait différente: « naissance, montée, déclin », dans le cas des Turcs celle-ci étant dictée par la corruption (la cupidité). Cela signifie qu'en résumé, Cantemir préfigurait dès 1705 l'idée féconde de l'ascension et de la chute de l'Empire ottoman.

## 2.2. Citation de Ménandre (342-291 av. J.-C.): psychologique, éducative ou morale ?

Les deux éditeurs analysent dans l'*Introduction* au premier volume quelques « Aspects philosophiques de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* » (Cantemir 1965, vol. 1, p. LVI) et suggèrent que l'expression cantemirienne – « la nature humaine est plus ancienne que les mœurs et **les mauvais ragots gâchent toujours les bonnes mœurs**<sup>10</sup>. » [s.n.] – fait partie des éléments de la psychologie, plus précisément du domaine des « conceptions ultérieures sur l'éducation (de *Loca obscura*) », et ici Cantemir véhiculerait l'idée « que le tempérament (la nature humaine) et les mœurs des gens peuvent changer, bien que très difficilement » (Ibid: LVI). L'intuition des deux chercheurs a vu quelque chose dans cet apophtegme, mais pas assez pour clarifier les choses.

<sup>7</sup> Cantemir reprend ici un autre concept biblique sapientiel: celui de *vanitas vanitatum*, que l'on retrouve également chez des auteurs antérieurs.

<sup>8</sup> La citation de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* est la suivante: « La vérité est que les hommes et leurs choses se déplacent comme les grains dans un crible et les rayons dans une roue ; et personne n'a et n'aura dans le monde de place permanente ou de vie tranquille; mais toutes choses tournent dans la sphère de l'instabilité et dans le circuit de la nature. » (*traduction interprétative*). Voir: Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglifică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique], vol. 1, p. 252, f. 162.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglifică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique], vol. 2 (Bucarest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1965), 117.

(2.2.1.) Tout d'abord, la phrase cantémirienne susmentionnée, lue dans son contexte, véhicule-t-elle l'idée que le tempérament/les mœurs de l'homme sont difficiles à changer ? En parcourant la huitième partie de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique*, nous remarquons que le Caméléon, c'est-à-dire Scarlet Ruset, s'exprime ici dans la plénitude de son mal. Il rencontre les chiens et les lancent sur la Licorne (Dimitrie Cantemir) ; il rencontre le Crocodile et lui promet une riche proie: « ... je t'ai tendu la proie (...), je t'ai dressé une grande table et je t'ai cuisiné des repas copieux et, pour faire bref, j'ai comblé tous tes appétits et tes désirs<sup>11</sup> » ; il rencontre le Faucon (Toma Cantacuzino, un ami de D. Cantemir) et gagne sa confiance.

Enfin, lorsqu'il arrive à la Licorne, il apprend qu'il a des soupçons sur sa possible capture par le Crocodile. Faisant semblant d'être inquiet, il demande à la Licorne de faire attention, parce que certaines rumeurs peuvent être vraies ; puis il jure qu'il n'a pas surpris le Faucon révélant aucun secret sur la Licorne à personne. Ici Cantemir se défoule et entre ses parenthèses, s'écrie: « Oh, la peau du diable sous les cheveux du diable ! Avec quels futurs complots il s'empresse de calomnier le nom d'autrui ! »<sup>12</sup>. C'est maintenant le moment où le Sage de l'ombre, à travers ces exclamations, introduit, entre autres parenthèses, la phrase que nous avons étudiée: « la nature humaine est plus ancienne que les mœurs et toujours **les mauvais ragots gâchent les bonnes mœurs.** » Que veut-il dire par cela ? Il souhaite transmettre que la nature caméléon de Scarlet Ruset est plus forte que tout ce qu'il a acquis par l'éducation (notez qu'il était un rhéteur du Patriarcat de Constantinople<sup>13</sup>) ; et que les commérages, les calomnies détruisent les bonnes habitudes (mœurs).

(2.2.2.) D'où Dimitrie Cantemir s'est-il inspiré dans la deuxième partie de sa « phrase » ? Si les deux éditeurs - Panaitescu et Verdeș - avaient connu l'histoire de l'idée transmise par l'Apôtre Paul dans sa première épître aux Corinthiens (15:33) ou quelques textes allusifs des livres sapientiaux de l'Ancien Testament<sup>14</sup>, ils auraient été beaucoup plus précis. La lettre de Saint Paul contient un trimètre iambique probablement repris de l'ouvrage *Thais* (218) du poète comique Ménandre (342-291 av. J.-C.), ou d'une anthologie de citations classiques de son temps<sup>15</sup>. Mais, ce qui nous intéresse c'est de quelle édition de la Bible Cantemir reprend cette maxime.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>13</sup> Voir: N. Stoicescu dans Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglifică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique] (Bucarest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1973), 322.

<sup>14</sup> Voir: *Prov* 13:20 ; 22:24-25 ; *Eccles* (*Ben Siráh*) 13:1 etc.

<sup>15</sup> Il s'agissait en fait d'un « proverbe populaire attribué à l'origine à Ménandre, auteur de comédies [dans l'ouvrage *Thais*, éd.], mais largement diffusé à l'époque de Paul ». Voir: Craig S. Keener, *Commentaire historico-culturel sur le Nouveau Testament* (Oradea: Casa Cărții, 2018), 586 ; voir aussi: Hans Conzelmann, *Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 341.

Si nous consultons l'une des éditions critiques du Nouveau Testament – par exemple Nestle-Aland 27 (NA<sup>27</sup>), ou en même temps l'appareil critique électronique de CNTTS (*Centre d'études textuelles du Nouveau Testament*), nous constaterons que le verset 33 de 1 Corinthiens 15 apparaît presque invariablement dans la plupart des manuscrits comme ça :

μη πλανᾶσθε· Φθειρουσιν ἥθη χρηστὰ ὁμιλῖαι κακαί.

[transliteration: *mē planasthe phtheirousin ēthē chrēsta homilīai kakai*]

Traduction littérale: « Ne vous y trompez pas: les mauvaises compagnies corrompent les bonnes mœurs. »<sup>16</sup>

Mais même si le Nouveau Testament de Bălgrad / Alba Iulia (1648) traduit le verset de la même manière: « Ne vous égarez pas ! Les mauvaises compagnies corrompent les bonnes mœurs »<sup>17</sup>, Cantemir ne cite pas comme ça. Il écrit différemment: « **les mauvais ragots** gâchent les bonnes mœurs » [s.n.]. D'où Cantemir a-t-il repris cette version textuelle ? On pourrait conclure, en vérifiant des versions de la Bible roumaine telles que *le Nouveau Testament Cornilescu* (1920), *la Bible synodale* (1936), *la Bible Radu-Galaction* (1939) et plus récemment *la Bible catholique* (2013), qu'ici Cantemir a paraphrasé le texte qui, dans ces traductions, sonne presque invariablement: « Ne vous y trompez pas: les mauvaises compagnies corrompent les bonnes mœurs ». Mais non, ce n'est pas comme ça. En grec, l'expression ὁμιλῖαι κακαί [*homilīai kakai*] peut être traduite soit par « mauvaises amitiés » ou « mauvaises conversations » (le terme ὁμιλέω [*homileō*] signifie soit « s'associer avec » ou « converser avec »<sup>18</sup>. De plus, le nom neutre *ēthē* (au pluriel) du terme *ethos* – « habitude, usance, coutume, mœurs », est traduit correctement, littéralement, dans la citation de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique*, ce qui signifie que Dimitrie Cantemir a traduit le

<sup>16</sup> Voir: Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland et al. (éd.), *Novum Testamentum Graece* [NA<sup>27</sup>], Nestle-Aland 27e édition (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993). Voir aussi l'appareil critique pour le texte de 1 Cor 15:33, dans la base de données CNTTS NT Critical Apparatus, © 2004: le texte étudié n'est pas problématique ; il est lacunaire / omis dans plusieurs manuscrits majeurs (grade I et II (ἰ<sub>15</sub> = *Papyrus 15*, sec. III ; c = *Codex Ephraemi*, palimpseste du NT avec des lacunes, sec. V ; ἰ<sub>14</sub> = *Papyrus 14*, sec. VI ; ἰ<sub>11</sub> = *Papyrus 11*, sec. VII ; ἰ<sub>15</sub> = *Papyrus 34*, sec. VII ; ἰ<sub>61</sub> = *Papyrus 61*, sec. VIII), mais il est présent dans une multitude de manuscrits, en commençant par a01 (*Codex Sinaiticus*, 4e siècle), en poursuivant avec A02 (*Codex Alexandrinus*, 5e siècle) et en terminant par des *minuscules* comme 2400 (13e siècle) et 2495 (15e siècle).

<sup>17</sup> De nombreuses versions de la Bible en anglais ont ensuite traduit de la même manière (NIV, NLT, ESV, BSB, NASB etc.).

<sup>18</sup> Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* [Un lexicon grec-anglais] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

texte biblique directement du grec. La *Bible de Bucarest* (1688) traduit différemment: « Ne vous y trompez pas ! Les mauvais mots gâchent les bonnes mœurs. »<sup>19</sup> D'où Cantemir s'est-il donc inspiré ? A-t-il cité de *la Bible de Bucarest* (1688), comme le prétend Ludovic Demény<sup>20</sup> ? Deux autres versions de la Bible attribuent le même sens au texte biblique, versions célèbres au temps de Cantemir: *King James* (1611) et *Douay-Rheims Bible* (1610-1611). Ainsi, Cantemir a-t-il cité des Bibles catholiques ou anglicanes ? Nous arrivons, donc, à la conclusion de Virgil Cîndea, selon laquelle les citations de Cantemir provenaient soit de la *Vulgate*, soit d'une autre version latine de la Bible, soit d'un *Thesaurus biblicus* de citations organisées par ordre alphabétique et thématique (Cîndea in: Cantemir 1974: 33<sup>21</sup>). À l'appui de cette hypothèse, on peut également citer le texte de la *Vulgate*: *nolite seduci corrumpunt mores bonos conloquia mala* (*Epistula Ad Corinthios I*, 15:33), où *conloquia mala* (et non pas *consilium*) renvoie à de mauvaises conversations.

### 2.3. « Le Saint Voile »: *Objet de la Bible ou de la Tradition ?*

Dans la *Huitième Partie* du livre, Dimitrie Cantemir utilise l'expression « visage indéscribable », qui dans « l'Echelle » de la fin du volume fait référence au « saint voile »<sup>22</sup>, et les deux éditeurs suggèrent qu'il s'agit du voile de Marie-Madeleine. Je cite la note de bas de page no. 1: « Le visage indéscribable (invisible) » est « le saint voile », le voile de Marie-Madeleine. »<sup>23</sup> En revanche, Nicolae Stoicescu est beaucoup plus prudent à cet égard et évite la phrase de Cantemir. Au fait, de quoi parle-t-on

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<sup>19</sup> BB 1688: “Nu vă rătați! Strică năravurile bune voroavele reale”. Des éditions plus tardives, telles que *La Bible de Blaj* (1795), *Le Nouveau Testament de Neamt* (1818), *Le NT de Smyrne* (1838), *Le NT de Bucarest V* (1857), *La Bible de Pesta* (1873), *La Bible de Iassy* (1874), *Le NT de Nitzulescu* (1897), *La Bible synodale* (1914) etc.

<sup>20</sup> Il semble qu'une copie des Écritures créée par Șerban Cantacuzino, son beau-père, ait appartenu à Dimitrie Cantemir. Le chercheur Lajos Demény a découvert à Moscou un exemplaire de *la Bible de 1688* portant son autographe. Il reprend « un certain nombre de notes marginales », dont il propose quelques citations. L'hypothèse de L.D. est cependant réfutée par certains spécialistes. Andrei Eșanu examine cette question en profondeur lorsqu'il parle de la bibliothèque de Cantemir en Russie. Cf. Lajos Demény, « Adnotări făcute de Dimitrie Cantemir pe Biblia din 1688 » [Annotations faites par Dimitrie Cantemir sur la Bible de 1688]: *Dacoromania*, 7 (1988), 265–273 ; Lajos Demény, « Tradiție și continuitate în *Hronicul* lui Dimitrie Cantemir » [Tradition et continuité dans *La Chronique* de Dimitrie Cantemir], *Studii. Revistă de istorie* [Etudes. Revue d'histoire], 26/5 (1973): 955–956 ; Andrei Eșanu, « Urme ale bibliotecii lui Dimitrie Cantemir în Rusia » [Traces de la bibliothèque de Dimitrie Cantemir en Russie], *Academica*, XXIV/11–12 (2014): 40.

<sup>21</sup> Cantemir, *Opere Complete* [Œuvres complets], vol. I: *Divanul* [Le Divan] (Bucarest: Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1974).

<sup>22</sup> Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique], vol. 2, 265.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

là-bas ? Le Caméléon (Scarlat Ruset), pour être crédible devant la Licorne (l'auteur, Dimitrie Cantemir), jure sur ce qu'il considérait comme sacré – le « saint voile », sans tenir compte du fait que le Nouveau Testament interdit catégoriquement le serment<sup>24</sup>. En lisant la phrase de Cantemir entre parenthèses, on remarque que le Caméléon a utilisé le nom du vertueux Faucon (Toma Cantacuzino) pour tromper la Licorne: « Et quant à moi, je jure par le visage indescrivable, que je n'ai trouvé le Faucon coupable ni en paroles ni en actes (ainsi le rusé jura comme s'il était sincère) ». De quel « **visage indescrivable** » et de quel « saint voile » Cantemir parle-t-il? À propos du « voile » de la Sainte Marie-Madeleine ?

Les deux éditeurs se trompent. Le texte biblique de *Jean* 20:7 fait référence à la « serviette » ou le « linge » trouvé dans le tombeau de Jésus. Le matin de la Résurrection, deux disciples de Jésus, Pierre et Jean, ont couru au Saint-Sépulcre et n'y ont pas trouvé Jésus. Mais ils trouvèrent quelque chose: « les bandes qui étaient à terre » et « **le linge** [σοῦδάριον, s.n.], qu'on avait mis sur la tête de Jésus, non pas avec les bandes, mais plié dans un lieu à part. » (v. 6-7). Dans le même texte, il est dit que Marie-Madeleine courut au Saint-Sépulcre et rencontra les anges dans le tombeau: on en déduit qu'elle a également vu la serviette, mais rien n'indique qu'elle l'a prise<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> À l'origine, dans la loi mosaïque, les gens étaient encouragés à jurer (*Nombres* 30:2 – « Lorsqu'un homme fera un vœu à l'Éternel, ou un serment pour se lier par un engagement, il ne violera point sa parole, il agira selon tout ce qui est sorti de sa bouche. ». Cependant, après de mauvaises expériences comme celle de Jephthé, qui a dû brûler sa fille à la suite d'une promesse faite (*Jud* 11, 30, 35-36, 39), Salomon recommande d'y renoncer (*Ecl* 5, 4-5 – « Lorsque tu as fait un vœu à Dieu, ne tarde pas à l'accomplir, car il n'aime pas les insensés: accomplis le vœu que tu as fait. Mieux vaut pour toi ne point faire de vœu, que d'en faire un et de ne pas l'accomplir. »). Jésus, le Sauveur, dans son célèbre Sermon sur la montagne, ordonne de renoncer totalement au serment (voir *Mat* 5,33-37), une idée reprise par Paul (*Col* 4,6) et Jacques (5,12). À la fin du Sermon, Jésus conseille à ses auditeurs: « Que votre parole soit oui, oui, non, non ; ce qu'on y ajoute vient du malin. » (v. 37). Cette signification biblique du serment interdit semble également être approuvée par l'esprit moral de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique*. Ainsi, dans une parenthèse, Cantemir commente: « Les serments ont été inventés pour les mortels afin que le démon, sous le nom du grand Dieu, puisse plus facilement accomplir ses ruses. » (*traduction interprétative*). Cantemir, *Opere: Istoria ieroglifică* [Œuvres: L'Histoire hiéroglyphique], vol. 1, 58.

<sup>25</sup> Je cite les textes bibliques: « Simon Pierre, qui le suivait, arriva et entra dans le sépulcre ; il vit les bandes qui étaient à terre, et le linge [σοῦδάριον – *soudarion*, n.n.], qu'on avait mis sur la tête de Jésus, non pas avec les bandes, mais plié dans un lieu à part. » (*Jean* 20:6-7). L'évangéliste poursuit: « Cependant Marie se tenait dehors près du sépulcre, et pleurait. Comme elle pleurait, elle se baissa pour regarder dans le sépulcre ; et elle vit deux anges vêtus de blanc, assis à la place où avait été couché le corps de Jésus, l'un à la tête, l'autre aux pieds. » (v. 11-12). Si Madeleine a regardé dans le tombeau, elle a bien sûr vu aussi la serviette ou le linge placé auparavant sur le visage du Sauveur. Mais cela était toute sa contribution à l'histoire de la serviette.

En grec du Nouveau Testament, σουδάριον [*soudarion*], vient du latin *sudarium* [dérivé de *sudor*] et signifie une serviette ou un suaire, un mouchoir ou un voile. Plus précisément, dans une tombe, c'était « un tissu pour essuyer la sueur du visage et pour nettoyer le nez [du défunt] »<sup>26</sup>. On sait que dans l'Empire romain, un *sudarium* était utilisé pour s'essuyer le visage et les mains. Les Juifs ont repris cette coutume, mais lui ont donné une signification plus profonde et spirituelle: de même que le visage de Moïse était recouvert d'un voile, afin que les pèlerins du désert ne vénèrent aucun autre visage que le Dieu invisible, ils enveloppaient la tête des morts dans un tissu. Ces aspects complètent avec une pointe d'ironie *La Parabole des Mines*, prononcée par le Sauveur en Luc 19:20: l'homme qui avait reçu une mine, au lieu de la mettre dans une banque, l'enveloppa dans un *suddarion*, une serviette pour couvrir le visage des morts et l'enterra pour toujours. Plus tard, le terme fait référence à l'utilisation de la serviette qui, lorsqu'elle touchait le corps des saints, avait des pouvoirs de guérison (*Actes* 19:12). Il est possible que cette « capacité » acquise par la serviette (le linge) dans les Actes ait conduit à des interprétations ultérieures du pouvoir miraculeux du saint voile.

Selon une légende, il y aurait eu un autre linge, pas celui du Saint-Sépulcre: il s'agit du voile de la sainte Véronique (ou Bérénice), sur lequel l'image du Sauveur se serait imprimée lorsqu'il a gravi le chemin de croix. Le texte *Vindicta Salvatoris*, tiré de l'*Évangile Apocryphe de Nicodème*, raconte que Véronique a essuyé le visage du Sauveur avec un linge, et que l'image du visage de la sainte y est restée imprimée. Cette relique aurait ensuite reçu des pouvoirs miraculeux<sup>27</sup>. Dans le même texte apocryphe cité plus haut, l'empereur Tibère aurait envoyé quelqu'un pour lui apporter le linge afin qu'il soit guéri. Une étymologie populaire explique que le nom « Véronique » signifie « vraie image » (*Vera-icon*) du Christ<sup>28</sup>.

Cantemir ne mentionne dans son « Echelle » aucun nom lié au « saint voile » (ni le nom de Marie de Magdala, ni le nom de Véronique). Dans l'ancienne culture roumaine, il semble que la légende du voile de

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament* [Un lexicon grec-anglais du Nouveau Testament] (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, 1889), 581.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Joe Nickell, *Relics of the Christ* [Reliques du Christ] (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky, 2007), 71-6 et Basil Watchins (ed.), *The book of saints: a comprehensive biographical dictionary* [Le livre des saints: un dictionnaire biographique complet] (Ramsgate: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 746.

<sup>28</sup> J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal Jesus. Legends of the Early Church* [Le Jésus Apocryphe. Légendes de l'Église primitive] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 109.

Véronique était bien connue. Je fais référence au *Tableau de Lugoș*, daté par certains de 1450<sup>29</sup> et par d'autres du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>30</sup>. L'*Encyclopédie roumaine* écrit à propos du voile de la sainte que « le Sauveur s'est essuyé le visage et son visage a été imprimé sur ce voile »<sup>31</sup>.

Le caméléon a juré sur le « visage indescriptible », c'est-à-dire sur le « sait voile » qui avait le visage du Sauveur imprimé, il a juré sur ce visage que personne n'a jamais pu peindre et qui n'a jamais vraiment été peint. De l'image du Christ, l'apôtre Paul écrit: « Il est l'image du Dieu invisible, le premier-né de toute la création. » (*Col* 1:15 ; en *Hébreux* 11:27, Dieu le Fils reçoit le même nom: « Celui qui est invisible »). L'essence du passage est claire: le serment du caméléon a été prêté sur une relique de la Tradition chrétienne (le voile), ou sur le « contenu » métaphysique, spirituellement significatif, d'une relique (le visage imprimé du Sauveur). Les deux rédacteurs ont confondu deux personnalités de l'histoire biblique et de la tradition chrétienne: une personnalité historique (Marie) et un personnage légendaire (Véronique). Cantemir a fait référence à ce dernier, mais les rédacteurs ne l'ont pas remarqué.

En effet, si l'on suit le visage de Sainte Madeleine dans l'iconographie du Moyen Âge, on ne découvrira pas la présence du voile de la sainte. De la *Crucifixion* de Giotto (1310, Basilica di San Francesco), aux cinq hypostases de la *Vie de Marie-Madeleine* de Giovanni da Milano et Matteo da Pacino (1363-71, Santa Croce, Florence), aux dix images du cycle de San Giovanni de la Villa (1370-90, Santa Maddalena, Rencio), aux images de l'*Autel de Marie Madeleine* de Lukas Moser (1432, Pfarrkirche St. Maria Magdalena, Tiefenbronn), aux représentations de *La Madeleine pénitente* de plus tard (1454 de Donatello, 1578 de El Greco, 1597 de Caravage, 1598 de Tintoretto, 1635 de Reni et autres), ou de la scène *Noli me tangere* (*Codex Egberti*, approx. 977-993, Reichenau ; de Fra Angelico, approx. 1445, San Marco, Florence ; de Martin Schongauer approx. 1481, Colmar ; de Bronzino approx. 1532, Florence, etc.), on ne trouvera nulle part la représentation du sait voile<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> Valeriu Branisce, *Tabla de la Lugoș: un monument prețios literar-istoric* [Le Tableau de Lugoș: un précieux monument littéraire et historique] (Lugoș: Imprimeria Carol Traunfellner, 1903), 36 et suiv.

<sup>30</sup> Alexandru Ofrim, *Cheia și psaltirea: imaginarul cărții în cultura tradițională românească* [La clé et le psautier: l'imaginaire du livre dans la culture traditionnelle roumaine] (Pitești: Maison d'édition Paralela 45, 2001), 193.

<sup>31</sup> C. Diaconovich, *Enciclopedia Română* [L'Encyclopédie roumaine], tome III: *Kemet-Zymotic* (Sibiu: Maison d'édition de W. Kraft, 1904), 1209.

<sup>32</sup> Michelle A. Erhardt, Amy M. Morris, *Mary Magdalene, Iconographic Studies from the Middle Ages to the Baroque* [Marie-Madeleine, Études iconographiques du Moyen Âge au Baroque] (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2012), *passim*.



L'iconographie médiévale souligne l'importance du voile de la Sainte Véronique comme objet de culte chrétien. En analysant le *Velo della Veronica* de Bernardino Zaganelli (vers 1500, *Philadelphia Museum of Art*), la gravure d'Albrecht Dürer, *Véronique* (1513), les tableaux de Domenico Fetti (1620), Emmanuel Tzanes (1659), Francisco de Zurbarán (XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle), etc., on sera marqué par cette réalité. Partout, dans chaque représentation, la Sainte Véronique est accompagnée de son propre objet-symbole sacré et déterminant: le voile. Sans lui, Véronique est comme tous ses homonymes dans le monde. Le voile, l'objet-symbole archiconnu de tous les chrétiens traditionnels, la caractérise et donne à Véronique la personnalité spirituelle pour devenir telle que nous la connaissons: une sainte. D'un point de vue historique, la référence au voile est réelle, compte tenu du fait qu'en 1705 la légende du voile de la Sainte Véronique était connue dans la région roumaine.

### Conclusion

À une simple lecture littérale, il est facile de voir que dans le corpus historique-hiéroglyphique, les *perles bibliques* (pour reprendre un terme d'un titre d'une anthologie de théologie patristique de Jean Chrysostome connue par Cantemir<sup>33</sup>) sont plus difficiles à trouver. Les noms divins (Dumnădzău / « Dieu », Ziditoriul / « Bâtitseur », Stăpânul / « Maître », Izvoditoriul / « Rédempteur », etc.), les toponymes (Asia / « Asie », Athina / « Athènes », Eghipt / « Egypte », Ierusalim / « Jérusalem », Tharsis / « Tharsis », Vavilon / « Babylone », Zmir / « Smyrne », etc.) et les hydronymes bibliques (Nil / « Nil », Evrath / « l'Euphrate », Marea Roșie / « la Mer Rouge », Mediterana / « la Méditerranée », etc.), les symboles sacrés (numérologiques, zoomorphes), les récits moralisateurs et les proverbes (généralement tirés de sources extrabibliques, et partiellement de livres sapientaux bibliques) et surtout les concepts théologiques (comme la libre volonté), tous ceux-ci constituent 150 phrases / mots et plus de 280 termes du corpus historico-hiéroglyphique.

Sur un total d'environ 127.153 mots du roman, nous obtenons un pourcentage de 0,22%. C'est extrêmement peu, étant donné que la Licorne compte environ 377 occurrences, ce qui ne représente ni plus ni moins que 0,29% de l'économie terminologique du roman.

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<sup>33</sup> *Mărgăritarele* [Les Perles] de Jean Chrysostome ont été traduites du grec par Radu et Serban Greceanu en 1686, sur la base du volume imprimé à Venise par Nicolae Gliki en 1683, et étaient connues de Dimitrie Cantemir, qui les a citées plus tard. Rodica Popescu, « Note sur l'édition », in: Jean Chrysostome, *Mărgăritare* [Perles] (Bucarest: Libra, 2001), 5 et D. Cantemir, *Vita Constantini Cantemyrii* (București: N. Iorga tr., s.ed., 1923), 68.

Pour tous cela, l'attention, la rigueur, la connaissance des sources bibliques et la familiarité avec la tradition biblique roumaine sont requises. Une édition de *L'Histoire hiéroglyphique* intégrant des notes et des commentaires historiques, philologiques, mais aussi théologiques et, surtout, philosophiques, est attendue dans le futur.

(Traduction par Alexandra-Ligia Hojda)

# Identity Choices Among Romanian Officers in the Habsburg Army

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*Article history: Received 13.10.2021; Revised 19.11.2021;*

*Accepted 16.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract:** In recent times, the identity of the Habsburg military has been the subject of numerous studies aiming to explain the behavior of this social-professional category. However, in Romanian historiography, research on this subject is almost completely lacking. The present work aims, first of all, to open the historiographical discussion on the identity choices of Romanian soldiers and officers in the Habsburg army. Alongside national identity and dynastic loyalty, frequently addressed in historiography, special attention should be paid to other types of loyalties or identities, developed within the military environment and related to the appropriation of a well-defined code of honor. It was in this context that the officer's honor, transformed into a military identity, took shape, as well as other types of attachments, such as that to the state, which is different from dynastic loyalty, or that to the territory. Last but not least, this paper also focuses on how all these different identities are harmonized into multiple identities, defining the behavior and actions of the soldiers of the multinational Habsburg army.

**Keywords:** Habsburg Army, Romanian militaries, military identity, supranational identity, multiple identities

**Rezumat: Opțiuni identitare în rândul ofițerilor români din armata habsburgică.** În perioada recentă, identitățile militarilor din armata habsburgică i-au fost dedicate numeroase studii, în căutarea unor explicații cu privire la comportamentul apartenențelor acestei categorii sociale și profesionale aparte. Cu toate acestea, la nivelul istoriografiei române, cercetările dedicate acestui subiect lipsesc aproape cu desăvârșire. Lucrarea de față își propune, înainte de toate, deschiderea discuției istoriografice referitoare la opțiunile identitare ale militarilor și ofițerilor români din armata habsburgică. Alături de identitatea națională și de loialitatea dinastică, abordate frecvent în istoriografie, o atenție aparte trebuie să le fie acordată și altor tipuri de loialități sau identități, dezvoltate în contextul integrării în mediul

militar cazon și al însușirii unui cod comportamental bine definit. În acest context, s-au conturat onoarea ofițerească, transformată în identitate militară, dar și alte atașamente, precum cel pentru stat, diferit de loialitatea dinastică, sau cel pentru teritoriu. Nu în ultimul rând, această lucrare se concentrează și asupra modului în care toate aceste identități diferite sunt armonizate în cadrul unor identități multiple, definitorii pentru comportamentul și acțiunile militarilor armatei habsburgice multinaționale.

**Cuvinte cheie:** armata habsburgică, militari români, identitate militară, identitate supranațională, identități multiple

Over the past decades, historians have continuously approached the subject of identities in search of further explanations regarding certain historical events to which some political, economic, or social causes have already been assigned. In time, the issue of national identity in the Habsburg Monarchy has constantly raised the historians' interest, and the monopoly it brought, especially in the national historiographies of the successor states, diminished the attention given to other types of attachments or loyalties. The Romanian historiography includes many studies on the evolution of the Romanians in the Habsburg Monarchy and the creation of their national identity,<sup>1</sup> but, in the recent years, other types of identities have also been increasingly researched.<sup>2</sup>

As for the identity construction and assertion, a certain socio-professional group received special attention, given its special status within society – i.e., that of the Romanian officers in the Habsburg army.<sup>3</sup> Usually,

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<sup>1</sup> Nicolae Bocșan, *Ideea de națiune la românii din Transilvania și Banat (secolul al XIX-lea)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1997); Sorin Mitu, *National Identity of Romanians in Transylvania* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001); Liviu Maior, *Habsburgi și români. De la loialitatea dinastică la identitate națională* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2006); Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Identitatea românească. Felul de a fi român de-a lungul timpului* (Bucharest: Contemporanul, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Selectively: Sorin Mitu, "Transylvanian Romanians and Transylvania's Provincial Identity in the 19th Century," *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Series Historica, Special Issue* (2012); Idem, "Local Identities from Transylvania in the Modern Epoch," *Transylvanian Review*, supp. No. 3 (2013); Idem, "Românii ardeleni la începutul secolului al XX-lea. Loialități și identități în schimbare," in *Multiculturalism, identitate și diversitate. Perspective istorice* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2016); Sabina Fati, "Naționalism civic versus naționalism etnic în perioada memorandistă," *Altera*, X/24 (2004); Luminița Ignat-Coman, *Imagine de sine la românii ardeleni în perioada dualistă* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2009); Cecilia Cârja, Ion Cârja, "On the Eastern Identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in the Second Half of the 19th Century," *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Series Historica*, 57 (2012).

<sup>3</sup> Selectively: Liviu Maior, *Românii în armata habsburgică. Soldați și Ofițeri uitați* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004); Gabriel Kohn, "Galben-negru până în măduva oaselor și dinastic până la exces". Ultimul secol al ofițerului habsburgic," in Ciprian Vălcău (ed.),

historiography has analyzed the phyllo-dynasticism and the national sentiments exhibited by this category; but beyond these two, however, Romanian officers in the Habsburg army developed other identities dependent on the various contexts of their professional and personal life. The way these identities intertwined raises a research question regarding the behavior of these Romanians who had a special attitude within the national movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. The soldiers can best be associated with the concept of “multiple identities,” which underlies their actions that were often different from those of other Romanians in the monarchy.

The topic, of course, cannot be exhaustively covered in an article, but it is necessary, especially for the Romanian historical writings, to stir up the historiographical discussion on the different identity options of the soldiers; therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze it in its general framework. Thus, it focuses mainly on covering the space between the two extremities more intensely researched by the historiography (i.e., the national identity and the dynastic loyalty), and aims to explore and illustrate various other identity versions of the Romanian officers in the Habsburg army, as well as how they intertwined, generating multiple, overlapping or concurrent identities.

### **Theoretical framework**

The problem of identities has aroused the interest of several categories of researchers, mostly in the fields of sociology, psychology, imagology, philosophy, but also of history. A large number of studies are dedicated to identity construction and other related aspects.<sup>4</sup> As for the

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*Splendoarea decadenței. Viena 1848-1938* (Timișoara: Bastion, 2008); Irina Marin, “The Formation and Allegiance of the Romanian Military Elite Originating from the Banat Military Border” (PhD diss., University College London – School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 2009); Ionela Zaharia, “Clerul militar din Austro-Ungaria în Marele Război” (PhD diss., Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, 2016); Mircea Măran, “Identitate națională, confesională și loialitate dinastică în Regimentul de graniță germano-bănățean nr. 12 (1764–1872),” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie George Barițiu – Series Historica*, 58 (2019); Vlad Popovici, “Officiers et société civile roumaine en Transylvanie (1790–1867),” *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire*, 58/1–4 (2019).

<sup>4</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991); Stuart Hall, “The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity,” in Anthony King (ed.), *Culture, Globalization, and the World-System* (London: Macmillan, 1991); Craig Calhoun, “Social Theory and the Politics of Identity,” in Craig Calhoun (coord.), *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Wiley–Blackwell, 1994); Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, voice, and loyalty: responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states* (Cambridge–London: Harvard University Press, 1970); Gilles Ferréol (coord.), *Cetățenie și integrare socială* (Bucharest: I. N. I., 1999); Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Columbia

Romanian researchers who approached this topic, they also cover several fields of Humanities<sup>5</sup>. The process of creating identities is the one that drew the attention of researchers; in time, two main theories were shaped: the substantialist one and the interactionist one.<sup>6</sup> The supporters of the former stated that the natural characteristics are those that lead to the creation of identities, giving birth to a set of unalterable features. In terms of national identity, these theories speak of the historical predestination, that which decides the belonging of an individual to a nation in advance.<sup>7</sup> The interactionist theories, however, discuss the social contacts and the psychological, cultural, and historical contexts, which are the determining factors in creating and asserting an identity. Thus, the interactionist theories emphasize the importance of the individual's insertion in certain groups, which triggers the mobilization of cognitive mechanisms according to the socio-political context.<sup>8</sup>

According to the interactionist theories, on which the argument of this study is built, "the identity is not an imminent condition of the individual, a fact that defines him constantly and invariably. It would rather be a posture adopted during an interaction, a possibility, among other things, to organize one's relationships with another [...]"<sup>9</sup> It

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University Press, 2000); Anthony P. Cohen (ed.), *Signifying Identities: Anthropological perspectives on boundaries and contested values* (London-New-York: Routledge, 2000); Gilles Ferréol, Guy Jucquois (coords.), *Dicționarul alterității și al relațiilor interculturale* (Iași: Polirom, 2005); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London-New York: Verso, 2006); Paul du Gay, *Organizing Identity: Persons and Organizations "After Theory"* (Sage Publications, 2007); Charles Westin, José Bastos, Janine Dahinden and Pedro Góis (eds.), *Identity Processes and Dynamics in Multi-Ethnic Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Nicoleta Turliuc, "Construcția identității minoritare în condiții de eterogenitate culturală," in Adrian Neculau, Gilles Ferréol (coords.), *Minoritari, marginali, excluși* (Iași: Polirom, 1996); Luminița-Mihaela Iacob, "Imagologia și ipostazele alterității: străini, minoritari, excluși," in *Ibid.*; Alin Gavreliuc, *Mentalitate și societate. Cartografii ale imaginarului identitar din Banatul contemporan* (Timișoara: Editura Universității de Vest, 2003); Melinda Mitu, Sorin Mitu, *Ungurii despre români. Nașterea unei imagini etnice* (Iași: Polirom, 2014); Victor Neumann, *Neam, popor sau națiune? Despre identitățile politice europene* (Bucharest: Editura Rao, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Gavreliuc, *Mentalitate și societate*, 19.

<sup>7</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> Fredrik Barth, "Les groupes ethniques et leurs frontières," in Philippe Poutignat, Jocelyne Streiff-Fenart, Fredrik Barth, Jacqueline Bardolph, *Théories de l'éthnicité* (Paris: PUF, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Albert Ogien, "Les usages de l'identité," in *AFA (Association française des Anthropologues), Vers des sociétés pluriculturelles: études comparatives et situation en France* (Ed. De l'ORSTOM), 135.

manifests itself and is identifiable as a result of the multitude and diversity of social contexts. The types of personal identities can be diverse (e.g., being a soldier, being a brother, being a Muslim, being a Transylvanian), each of which designate identities emerged from the professional, family, religious, or regional levels. Collective identities are similar to individual ones and can equate to the feeling of belonging.<sup>10</sup> Each individual has as many identities as feelings of belonging, so there is a plurality of affiliations, either simultaneous or successive. These are located on different levels, each of which must have its elements of categorization and differentiation; depending on the context, one category or another is emphasized.<sup>11</sup>

Sometimes, as in the case of individuals belonging to one community, and who come into contact with elements belonging to a cultural code of another community, there arises an intra-subjective conflict related to the assumption of two different cultural codes and their harmonization. The management of the intra-subjective conflict is made in different ways; one of them is the creation of a syncretic composite identity.<sup>12</sup> This is the context in which the concept of “multiple identities” was born, the concept that differs from multiculturalism or transculturality “by underlining the denial of the theory of absolute values, and by emphasizing that nothing entitles us to operate hierarchically and exclusively through the terms such as *ethnic, racial, religious, regional, national-racial*.”<sup>13</sup> Within the same category that includes multiple identities, other identity researchers have also discussed the “concrete universalism”, considered the third way, located in the middle, between abstract universalism and the absolute differentialism.<sup>14</sup>

The means of creating concrete universalism are found not in the attempt to eliminate the particular cultures, but in the search for the so-called “cultural universals”, i.e. the constituent elements of each particular culture that would have the potential to develop into principles of universal value.<sup>15</sup> In the case of the ethnic groups in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy that went through the process of nation-building, such “cultural universals” were represented by dynastic loyalty and imperial patriotism,

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<sup>10</sup> Gilles Ferréol, Guy Jucquois (coords.), *Dicționarul alterității și al relațiilor interculturale* (Iași: Polirom, 2005), 43–44.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

<sup>12</sup> Turliuc, “Construcția identității minoritare,” 58.

<sup>13</sup> Victor Neumann, *Neam, popor sau națiune? Despre identitățile politice europene* (Bucharest: Rao, 2015), 207.

<sup>14</sup> Michel Giraud, “Etnicitatea ca necesitate și ca obstacol,” in Gilles Ferréol (coord.), *Cetățenie și integrare socială* (Bucharest: I. N. I., 1999), 64–67.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

citizenship, or regionalism. However, there were also references to the so-called “identity opportunism”, regarding the change of identity according to situation, and the transition from an identity group to another, so as to fulfil a pragmatic function.<sup>16</sup>

As for the application of this theoretical structure to the particular situation of the Romanian soldiers in the Habsburg army, it is necessary to make a summary of the historical evolution of this professional category. The first substantial enlistments of the Romanians into the Habsburg army took place in the second half of the eighteenth century, on the occasion of the establishment of the border regiments in Transylvania and the Banat. The prospect of liberation from serfdom determined the Romanians in these areas to accept, not without reluctance, the status of border guards (*grăniceri*), which, in time, would become a constituent part of their identity spectrum. The Romanian border guards distinguished themselves as loyal soldiers of the Monarchy. In the decades before the revolution of 1848, Romanians also managed to enter the officers’ corps, even though they were underrepresented compared to other ethnic groups; in the first decades of the nineteenth century, the number of Romanian officers in the Habsburg army was less than 50, most of whom belonged to the border regiments in Transylvania and Banat.<sup>17</sup>

Changes in the military system took place in mid-nineteenth century, which directly affected the Romanians. The most important of these was the disbandment of the border regiments (in 1851 in Transylvania and 1872 in Banat), followed by a new legal framework that regulated the organization of the Monarchy’s army, after the Compromise of 1867. The Dualist Monarchy had a common army and navy, subordinated to the common Ministry of War, as well as three national militias (*Landwehr*): Austrian, Hungarian, and Croatian-Slavonic. The Common Army and the *Landwehr* of Cisleithania swore allegiance to the emperor, while the Hungarian and Croatian armies swore allegiance to the king and the constitution. According to the laws of 1868, 80% of the recruits were directed towards the common army, while the remaining 20% were directed towards the territorial armies.<sup>18</sup> Until the end of the First World War, the Romanians were present in the military structures of the

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<sup>16</sup> Turliuc, “Construcția identității minoritare,” 58.

<sup>17</sup> Ladislau Gyémánt, *Mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania între anii 1790 și 1848* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1986), 122, cited in Vlad Popovici, “Officers et société civile,” 42.

<sup>18</sup> István Deak, *Beyond Nationalism. A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New-York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 56–58.



monarchy, although in a rather small number compared to other nationalities, sometimes standing out in some of the highest positions of the military system.<sup>19</sup>

The various situations and contexts in which the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army found themselves could point towards a somewhat contradictory shaping of their identities; however, by the end of the nineteenth century, they had developed well-defined and, at the same time, harmonized multiple identities, loyalties, and attachments. The constant contact with representatives of other nations, social categories, or regions within the monarchy led them to shape a syncretic identity background, even though in some cases the management of the intra-subjective conflict meant displaying the elements of a single identity – usually the ethnic/national one. This study will focus on how the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army dealt with the process of harmonizing their multiple identities, in different historical periods and contexts.

### **The officers' honor and the military identity**

The reasons for choosing the military career were diverse, and underwent constant changes from the eighteenth century until World War I. Regarding the establishment of the border regiments and the Romanians' enlistment, a sense of duty or loyalty towards the Empress were undoubtedly less important at the time than the social perspective opened by this decision. From the very beginning of the establishment of the border guards' regiments, the imperial authorities appealed to social and economic measures so as to motivate the future militaries to renounce their servile status.<sup>20</sup> The newly militarized were to become free people, bearing financial obligations only to the state. Let aside coercion, this was the first and most powerful motivation for entering the military service; the Romanians who enlisted were driven by social reasons, partly enhanced, in some areas, by their ethnic conflicts with the Saxons. The establishment of border regiments also involved opposition, partly due to the attempts of having the Greek Catholic denomination imposed on them, partly out of a desire to avoid military service constraints;<sup>21</sup> however, as time went on, the condition of "border guards" was so much assumed by the Romanians, that embracing the military career became a primary professional option for those born in a border guard family. Even after the disbandment of the

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<sup>19</sup> Leonida Pop became the general adjutant of Emperor Francis Joseph. Virgil Șotropa, "Soarta maiorului Leon Pop," *Arhiva Someșană*, series I, 14 (1931).

<sup>20</sup> Liviu Maior, *Românii în armata habsburgică. Soldați și Ofițeri uitați* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 59.

<sup>21</sup> Carol Göllner, *Die siebenbürgische Militärgrenze* (Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1974).

border regiments, many Romanian career officers in the Habsburg army came from areas with a regimental tradition, such as Banat or Năsăud.<sup>22</sup>

Starting with the Romanians' first contacts with the military environment, the shaping of a particular identity took place both from within the border regiments and from outside, including imperial policies. The new soldiers were integrated in what used to be called at that time the *military estate*.<sup>23</sup> The term, coined by the imperial authorities, was meant, among other things, to emphasize their condition of free people, similar to that of other free social or privileged categories. Militarization also generated a much more active involvement in civic enterprises at territorial, cultural, ethnic, institutional or social levels. The emergence of this entangled regional, professional and social identity was encouraged, on the one hand by the privileged status bestowed on them by the military regulations, and on the other hand by the self-perception of their social and legal otherness in comparison with the civilians.<sup>24</sup> The inhabitants of the border regiments were referred to by a specific term (*grăniceri*), which they still used to define themselves a century after the border regiments' disbandment.<sup>25</sup>

An example in this regard is provided by Leontin Luchi, in a discourse about the role of the Romanians in Năsăud (the former border guards regiment no. 17), in which he highlights the idea of their superiority among other members of the Romanian nation: "[...] we will be able to raise useful men for the homeland, the nation, and the human society, all the more so as the mountain people of this place are endowed with the best qualities: with a rare aptitude, effort, and energy and many other beautiful natural qualities, so that in this respect they rank first amongst the Transylvanian Romanians."<sup>26</sup> The border guards' mentality was

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<sup>22</sup> Liviu Maior, *România în armata habsburgică*, 47–59. See also Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Bolovan, "Granița militară austriacă și românii din Transilvania în sec. XVIII-XIX (studiu de caz: zona Năsăud)," in Susana Andea (coord.), *Pe urmele trecutului: profesorului Nicolae Edroiu la 70 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy – Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2009); Mathias Bernath, "Die Errichtung der Siebenbürgischen Militärgrenze und die Wiener Rumänenpolitik in der frühjosephinischen Zeit," *Sudost-Forschungen*, XIX (1960); Vlad Popovici, "Establishment of the Austrian Military Border in Transylvania and Its Short- and Medium-term Effects," *Povijesni prilozi*, 54 (2018).

<sup>23</sup> Which was not an actual provincial estate with the associated political rights, but it was rather a professional and social denominator.

<sup>24</sup> Josef Wolf, "Granița militară din Transilvania și din Banat. O perspectivă comparată," in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan (coords.), *Călător prin istorie. Omagiu profesorului Liviu Maior la împlinirea vârstei de 70 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy – Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2010), 101.

<sup>25</sup> Ioan Lumperdean, "La longue durée" în mentalitatea și limbajul grănicerilor năsăudeni. Repere economico-sociale și politico-naționale," *Revista Bistriței*, 8 (1994): 144.

<sup>26</sup> Iuliu Moisil, "Figuri grănicerești năsăudene," *Arhiva Someșană*, series I, 23 (1938): 496.

characterized by the awareness of their special condition, conferred by the affiliation to a strictly delimited administrative-territorial unit, and supported by rights and freedoms that came along with the military status.<sup>27</sup> Such self-defining elements have been perpetuated in the respective area until nowadays, the inhabitants still talking about the “Năsăud pride” (*fala năsăudeană*), defined as “a feeling of superiority over other provincials. It derives from the tradition of the Military Border, and was invoked especially in the critical moments of the community.”<sup>28</sup>

In order to achieve solidarity between and amongst the young people who joined the army, the *esprit de corps* (i.e., regimental solidarity) was encouraged by a strong attempt to instill love for the regiment, as well as concern for its reputation; the idea of the moral service towards their military unit was induced in the conscience of the young militaries so as to make them consider it to their own benefit. In the case of the regiments too, “imagined communities” of selfless love and solidarity took shape.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the border guards’ identity manifested transnationally and even dictated the behavior of Romanians in these military structures on relation with members of other ethnic groups. In 1848, the Romanian battalion of the Năsăud border regiment sent to fight against the Serbs in southern Hungary openly refused to fight against other border guards, “with whom they had fought together under the same royal flags [...]. And the one who works against it will be banished from his homeland and cursed.”<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, a certain Romanian-Serbian solidarity was born within the border regiments in the Banat, which prevailed even over the dynastic loyalty, as underlined in a letter of a Romanian border guard to a Serbian comrade-in-arms. The sender was writing about the political-administrative status of the border regiment’s area, whose inhabitants were being advised at the time not to demand union with Vojvodina, but to follow the emperor’s decisions: “Behold, brother! Now you see that these people, who simply and miserably lead our Romanian people by the nose with various lies, can no longer live. And, like Judas, who betrayed Christ,

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<sup>27</sup> Claudia Septimia Sabău, “*Și ne-au făcut din grănițeri, țărani...*”. *Mentalități colective în satele năsăudene foste grănicerești în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2015), 37.

<sup>28</sup> Oana-Ramona Ilovan, Ioana Scridon, Kinga Xénia Havadi-Nagy, Dănuț Huciu, “Tracing the Military Frontier District of Năsăud. Territorial Identity and Regional Development,” *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Geographischen Gesellschaft*, 158 (2016): 231.

<sup>29</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 141–146, cited in David French, *Military Identities. The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People, c. 1870–2000* (New-York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 79.

<sup>30</sup> Iulian Martian, “Însemnările medicului dr. Ignaț Iancsa,” *Arhiva Someșană*, series I, 14 (1931): 440.

so do these soulless people sell our people first to the Hungarians, and now to the Germans, an even worse enemy, who has sucked the blood of our poor people, and whom we have been serving for centuries. And now think of what can become of us, I see nothing good in spite of all the faith we show to the Austrian Empire, and I think we will remain mere slaves and nothing else.”<sup>31</sup>

The professionalization of the army in the second half of the nineteenth century, the transformation of border regiments into line regiment, and also the clearer shaping of ethnic identities produced changes in the way the military career was perceived by Romanians, including those from the former military border. There were no more “privileged” areas, such as the border regiments, and choosing a military career even became, in some cases, a decision dictated by principles. On the verge of choosing his future career, as in most of the turning points in his life, Octavian Furlugeanu hesitated between two identities. His Romanian parents and grandfather urged him towards a liberal profession which would have allowed him to get involved into the national movement. His grandmother, born into a noble family and representative of a supranational identity, wanted a future for him in the service of the state. In the end, under the influence of the years spent in the company of colleagues of other nationalities in a Hungarian school, Furlugeanu opted for a military career, to the great joy of his grandmother.<sup>32</sup>

Even though the military career was not financially attractive, this shortcoming was compensated by the privileged status enjoyed by the officers. The Habsburg monarchy was a militarized state and authorities paid special attention to the army. The imperial propaganda presented officers as role models for the entire population. Military service and the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the defense of the state were considered supreme virtues, and the officers’ code of honor, rooted in the medieval concept of chivalry, was appealing to all educated men.<sup>33</sup> Since the Enlightenment, a pattern of a soldierly morality had been created, and it included national and religious tolerance, loyalty to the throne and homeland, sociability, civility, and a paternal attitude toward subordinates.<sup>34</sup> The emperor himself encouraged the perpetuation of the

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<sup>31</sup> Mircea Măran, “Identitate națională, confesională și loialitate dinastică în Regimentul de graniță germano-bănățean nr. 12 (1764-1872),” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie »George Barițiu«* - Series HISTORICA, 58 (2019): 68.

<sup>32</sup> Nicolae Bocșan, Valeriu Leu, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 747-748.

<sup>33</sup> Deák, *Beyond Nationalism*, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Kardos Atilla-Alexandru, “K. u. K. Infanterieregiment “Kaiser Leopold II” - Regimentul de Casă al Aradului” (PhD diss., West University of Timișoara, 2021), 249.

discrepancy between commissioned officers and NCOs and soldiers, bestowing on the formers a privileged status and establishing a social distance between them and all other societal strata. This fueled the officers' self-awareness, encouraging them to perceive themselves as "special" citizens of the empire.<sup>35</sup>

Military honor thus defined the officers' consciousness, and it was one of the elements that helped maintain their loyalty to the Crown during watershed events such as the Revolution of 1848-1849, or World War I, and even after the death of Francis Joseph, or when the prospects of a victory of the Central Powers became null. As for the Romanians with higher military ranks, the military honor, and wearing the emperor's uniform were of major importance, even after retirement. Nicolae Cena retired in 1904 with the rank of field marshal, the highest ever achieved by a Romanian officer of the Austro-Hungarian army. On 26 July 1914, Cena was arrested by the Hungarian authorities on political suspicion. During this experience, Cena often expressed his deep dissatisfaction with the treatment he received, which was no different from that of other detainees, but also regarding his arrest, which was operated by gendarmes and not by army officers, his transportation being carried out with a car that did he deemed to be beneath him as a retired field marshal. After having been released on 24 August 1914, Cena insisted on being rehabilitated by *Ehrenrat*, a council of honor in front of which he had the opportunity to deny the charges brought against him, thus having his honor fully restored.<sup>36</sup>

Military honor and the privileged status of the military in the Habsburg Monarchy were both components of the military identity. The elements that contributed to its shaping were promoted by both the authorities and the officers themselves, as a result of the awareness of the special status that such position held within the society. The military identity was embraced in the context of assumed characteristics and principles that gradually came to define the image of the Austro-Hungarian officer. Thus, a pattern was created, which characterized the officer as tolerant and adaptable, loyal, and possessing a strong dynastic patriotism. Some historians have even spoken of the social isolation of the officers' corps; career officers perceived themselves as devoted exclusively to the monarchy, so that, from the perspective of direct loyalty to the dynasty, they showed very little interest in other fields of activity, or

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<sup>35</sup> Laurence Cole, *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 47.

<sup>36</sup> Marin, "The Formation and Allegiance," 237-246.

towards social or political topics.<sup>37</sup> However, this political indifference could itself be considered a form of politics, especially because it was accompanied by the veneration of the imperial figure. Therefore, the attitude of the officers is categorized as being associated with imperial patriotism. Especially the officers perceived the imperial idea as pragmatic, tangible, more than abstract – as it was the case of other citizens of the state. The imperial sentiment was part of their *forma mentis*.<sup>38</sup>

The military identity of the career officers was even stronger in the case of the so-called *Tornisterkinder*, a term that designates officers following their fathers' military careers. Alexander Rosenfeld, known as Roda Roda, described this type of officer as "having no national feelings. He could have been born in the Galician Tarnopolis, or the Riva del Garda: he was Austrian. And he spoke military German [...]." <sup>39</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the number of the career officers increased enormously. In 1913, the number of graduates of the military academy within the boundaries of the monarchy whose fathers were not part of the military was merely 25.3%.<sup>40</sup> The strong dynastic loyalty and military identity of the officers from the so-called regimental families had a major influence on the behavior of these career soldiers during World War I, most of whom fought on behalf of the emperor until the very last day of the monarchy's reign. This was the case of an officer identified in the memoirs of Octavian Furlugeanu under the fictitious name Virgil Coșodeanu; imprisoned in Russia, when asked by other Romanians about his readiness to enlist and join the Romanian army, Coșodeanu flatly refused: "Lieutenant Zăleanu told them that he also had spoken with Captain Coșodeanu, but he cut it short that he 'was, first and foremost, a soldier of the monarchy and he had been born Romanian only by accident'. What else could you expect from the son of a Viennese woman married to a Romanian officer and who then, as a child, was raised in the environment of military high schools, where he had heard nothing but the idolization of the Kaiser and knew no other colors than black-yellow."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Eugene Lohr Miller Jr., "Politics, the Nationality Problem, and the Habsburg Army, 1848-1914" (LSU Historical Dissertations and Thesis, 1992), 309.

<sup>38</sup> Johann Christoph Allmayer-Beck, "Forța armată în stat și societate," in Adam Wandruszka, Peter Urbanitsch și Alois Brusatti (eds.), Rudolf Gräf (coord. of Romanian edition), *Monarhia Habsburgică (1848-1918)* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2019), 323-324.

<sup>39</sup> Roda Roda, *Roda Rodas Roman*, 269, cited in Tamara Scheer, "Language Diversity and Loyalty in the Habsburg Army," 177-178.

<sup>40</sup> Nicoleta Hegedús, Csaba Horváth, Vlad Popovici (eds.), *Portrete de ofițeri de origine română din Armata de Honvezi (1868-1918)* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2020), 30.

<sup>41</sup> Nicolae Bocșan, Valeriu Leu, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană (1914-1919)*, vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 777.

### **Supranational identity**

For the Romanians in the Habsburg Monarchy, supranational identity referred to the mixture of dynastic loyalty and state patriotism. Taken separately, each of them is defined by different characteristics; however, in practice, they often functioned like a binomial, their separate identification in primary sources often representing a challenge. The elements that created the premises for the existence of a supranational identity among the soldiers of the Austrian-Hungarian Army are diverse, but the most important was undoubtedly the loyalty to the monarch. Having fallen in love after graduating from the military school, O. Furlugeanu decided to buy a medallion, which was engraved with the text: "My life belongs to the Kaiser and to you, Aranka!"<sup>42</sup> Thus, for the students of the military schools within the monarchy, the emperor was seen as a demigod, a perception maintained, moreover, through a whole series of measures taken by the authorities in order to shape the career of future officers around the image of the emperor. Francis Joseph inspired loyalty in his subjects in the Austro-Hungarian army through his own behavior. He projected himself as the first member of the joint armed forces, and, towards the end of his life, he appeared in public exclusively in a military uniform.<sup>43</sup>

Before the generalization of military recruitment and the professionalization of the officer corps, dynastic loyalty was also one of the engines that fueled the militaries' attachment to the imperial idea, despite not having taken the form of an imperial identity in itself. The way in which Vienna tried to gain the loyalty of the Romanians in the border regiments was precisely by appealing to their dynastic loyalty, which already had a consistent basis at the end of the eighteenth century, especially after the reign of Joseph II, who was known amongst Romanians as the "good emperor" (*bunul împărat*).<sup>44</sup>

Maintaining loyalty to the emperor was all the more enhanced by the oath of allegiance, which was a sacred moment in every soldier's life. The oath was of particular importance for the transition of the individual from the status of a mere inhabitant of the monarchy, to that of a citizen and to that of a military man, while it also provided a tool for cultivating discipline and morals. The oath created a personal, direct relationship, as well as an obligation between the subject and the monarch; the state would use this covenant to place the dynastic loyalty above all other ties – even

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<sup>42</sup> Bocșan, Leu, *Marele Război*, 784.

<sup>43</sup> Allmayer-Beck, *Forța armată în stat și societate*, 214.

<sup>44</sup> Alexandru-Bogdan Bud, *Limitele loialității dinastice: Iosif al II-lea și românii din Transilvania în epoca modernă* (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română-Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015).

above one's own family ties.<sup>45</sup> Beyond the fact that it enhanced the loyalty to the emperor, the oath was also intended to create an attachment to the homeland (*Vaterland*). One of the moments that show its importance for the Romanians in the Habsburg army was their refusal to pledge allegiance to the Hungarian constitution during the 1848 revolution.<sup>46</sup> This moment remained one of major importance in terms of dynastic loyalty for the Romanians, even if they probably also had other, more ethnically entrenched reasons to reject Hungarian law. Loyalty to imperial insignia, such as the emblems on the flag, manifested on the same occasion both by militaries and civilians, confirms the same attitude.<sup>47</sup>

At the same time, instilling imperial patriotism was one of the main goals of the military schools, although achieving it was hampered by several major obstacles, as one of the army's periodicals read in 1911: "While the Germans, the French, and the Italians, who join the army as recruits, usually already consider themselves citizens, and identify with their state, and only need to be trained to become soldiers, recruits join our army every year after they had often already undergone an anti-Austrian, nationalist pre-school, [...] out of this material [...] We need to train citizens who are willing to sacrifice themselves [...], and that is not always possible to accomplish in three years."<sup>48</sup> In this context, historiography considered that supranational identity could have arisen especially in the case of career officers, who spent their entire lives in the military. For most of them, commitment and oath to the emperor took precedence over any other identity, and, in time, the officers came to be regarded as the guardians of the multinational monarchy.<sup>49</sup>

### The national identity

As mentioned in the introduction to this study, Romanian historiography has long preferred to consider the two identity coordinates of the Romanian military in the Habsburg army, i.e. the national one and the supranational one, rather as opposable, or at least as generating

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<sup>45</sup> Laurence Cole, *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 22.

<sup>46</sup> György Spira, "Kossuth și grănicerii români reînțorși de pe râul Vág în toamna anului 1848," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie din Cluj-Napoca*, 41 (2002): 132.

<sup>47</sup> Dumitru Suci (coord.), *Războiul național din Transilvania de la 1848-1849. Date, realități și fapte reflectate în documente bisericești greco-catolice, 1848-1852* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2014), 132.

<sup>48</sup> *Danzer's Armee-Zeitung* (12 January 1911): 1, cited in Tamara Scheer, "Language Diversity and Loyalty in the Habsburg Army, 1868-1918" (Habilitation Thesis, University of Vienna, 2020), 104.

<sup>49</sup> Deák, *Beyond Nationalism*, 4.



constant tension, sometimes even a tragic one on an individual level (as was the case of Apostol Bologa/Emil Rebreanu).<sup>50</sup> The exception was given by the border guards' regiments, for which historiography not only accepted, but actually emphasized the mixture between ethnic character, dynastic loyalty and state patriotism. Trying to identify the reasons why national consciousness was always alive among the Năsăud border guards, Iuliu Moisil noted, first of all, the recognition of the Romanians as descendants of Rome by Emperor Joseph II; the fact that all the emperors in Vienna called themselves "Roman emperors" proved that the Habsburg sovereigns were proud of their Romanian subjects. A consequence of this was the development of the national feeling and the national pride of the Romanian border guards.<sup>51</sup> For the period after 1867 however, when most of the Romanians in the monarchy became citizens of Hungary, their national identity was described as conflicting with the idea of Hungarian state; during the First World War, this conflict intensified in the context of the armed confrontations with the Romanians from the Old Kingdom, or even Bessarabia. More recent works have implicitly accepted the complementarity of the two concepts, without analyzing them thoroughly.<sup>52</sup>

For a large part of the politicians of the Danube monarchy, the national feeling did not exclude the possibility of also manifesting a strong dynastic loyalty. This relationship between the two types of identities was similar in the case of the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army, whose professional status greatly contributed to the amplification of dynastic loyalty, but against the background of the manifestation of an incipient national consciousness starting with the eighteenth century. Some of the

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<sup>50</sup> Vasile Popeangă, "Voluntari bănățeni în lupta pentru înfăptuirea Marii Uniri," *Ziridava*, XVIII (1993); Vasile Dudaș, *Voluntarii Marii Uniri* (Timișoara: Augusta, 1996); Ioan I. Șerban, *Voluntarii transilvăneni și bucovineni din Rusia în războiul pentru întregirea neamului 1916-1919* (Alba Iulia: Aeternitas, 2003).

<sup>51</sup> Iuliu Moisil, "Conștiința națională și eroismul grănițerilor năsăudeni," *Arhiva Someșană*, series I, 24 (1938): 144.

<sup>52</sup> Ion Cârja, Lorand L. Madly, Dan-Lucian Vaida, "Din armata austro-ungară în România Mare. Destinul unui ofițer uitat: Albert Porkolab (1880-1920)," in Lönhárt Tamás, Nagy Róbert Miklós, Hunyadi Attila-Gabór (coords.), *Modernizare economică, socială și spirituală în Europa Est-Centrală. In honorem Prof. Univ. Dr. Csucsujá István* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2017); Popovici, "Officiers et société civile;" Ion Cârja, "Și de ne veți uita!" O mărturie inedită de pe frontul italian al Marelui Război: Memoriile lui Ion Leuco," in Eva Mârza, Karol Hollý, Radu Mârza (ed.), *Anul 1918 - anul speranței: lucrările celei de-a XIII-a reuniuni a Comisiei de Istorie Româno-Slovace: Alba Iulia, 15-18 octombrie 1918* (Alba-Iulia - Cluj-Napoca: Editura Muzeului Național al Unirii - Mega, 2020); Kardos Atilla-Alexandru, "K. U. K. Infanterieregiment "Kaiser Leopold II" - Regimentul de Casă al Aradului" (PhD diss., Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, 2021).

Romanian career officers in the Habsburg army were involved in nationalist activities both before and after retiring from the army, although most of them preferred the cultural or the religious sphere.

Thus, the Romanian militaries and officers in the border regiments were actively involved in the Romanian petitionist movement starting with the end of the eighteenth century, in close connection with the confessional structures of the time. A memorandum of December 1790, addressed to Emperor Leopold II, was written by Ioan Para, chaplain of the border regiment No. 17 (2 Romanian) in Năsăud. The content of the act remains closely linked to the framework of dynastic loyalty, argued through the multiple military and human efforts made by the Romanian officers, on the basis of which the politico-national demands were expressed: "the Romanians were faithful to the House of Austria from the very beginning, as they are today ready to die and shed their blood for its glory."<sup>53</sup> A year later, Ioan Para was among those signing *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, a petition claiming the recognition of a Romanian "political nation" (i.e., political estate) in Transylvania. These petitions are closely linked to the concept of dynastic loyalty, since the recipient was, in most cases, the emperor himself. Furthermore, according to sociologists, petitionism, associated with protest, is one of the manifesting forms of loyalism, its alternative being either indifference or abandonment.<sup>54</sup>

The mobilization of border guards during the events of 1848 is another example of the interweaving and mutual instrumentation of national identity and dynastic loyalty. The involvement of the Romanian peasants of the border regiments in the Revolution of 1848 was enhanced by the nationalist elites who addressed social demands with national resonance. Along with the social demands of the revolutionary programs, the appeal to loyalty towards the emperor was a decisive and influential component of the elites' discourse, complemented and reinforced by the appeal to national sentiments coming from the Imperial Court in search of provincial allies.<sup>55</sup> In the period between 1848 and 1849, the political involvement of the Romanian officers of the border regiments is also relevant, as they themselves were elected or promoted as representatives of their compatriots in relation to the authorities.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> David Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum. Din istoria formării națiunii române* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984), 47–49, cited in Popovici, "Officiers et société civile," 41.

<sup>54</sup> Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, voice, and loyalty: responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states* (Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 1970).

<sup>55</sup> Sorin Mitu, "Mobilizare politică și naționalism la Năsăud, în vara lui 1848," *Arhiva Someșană*, Series III (2004): 36–40.

<sup>56</sup> Popovici, "Officiers et société civile," 43–44.

The revolution of 1848 marked the end of the political involvement of the Austrian army officers. However, the national activity continued in the educational and social spheres; after the dissolution of the military frontier, the officers got involved in the Romanian civil society in Transylvania and Hungary. During the administrative reorganization of the former military border, retired militaries played an active part, as proved by the correspondence between George Pop and Ioachim Mureșan, in which Pop describes Năsăud as an “Eldorado of the Romanians”, stating that: “the organization of the district fulfilled all my desires.”<sup>57</sup> Also, in Regiment no. 16 (1<sup>st</sup> Romanian) in Orlat, the Mounting Fund was transformed in 1863 into a School Fund managed by former border guards’ officers (e.g., Constantin Stezar, Paul Străulea, Dionisie Drăgoi, Vasile Stanciu or Colonel David Urs de Margina).<sup>58</sup> In the 1860s, some of the Romanian border guards’ officers became members of different Romanian cultural associations, such as ASTRA or the Arad National Association, others contributing to their development through donations (Traian Doda or George Popa). These actions were accompanied by letters with a strong nationalist character: “our greetings welcome and accompany all your enterprises that strive for brilliance and for a great future, worthy of our brilliant ancestors.”<sup>59</sup> In fact, throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the former Romanian border guards who had retired from military activity, as well as the still-active career officers became involved in a plethora of charitable activities for the Romanian society as reported by the press of the time.<sup>60</sup>

However, the extent to which the national and the imperial identities could truly coexist became visible in moments of crisis, which overlapped with the growing nationalist radicalization of the dualist period. Even if, to a large extent, the Romanian career officers maintained their loyalty to the emperor and the monarchy until its collapse, either as a result of a genuine imperial patriotism or as a result of the code of honor,

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<sup>57</sup> Adrian Onofreiu, “Corespondența dintre Vasile Neacșu, Ioachim Mureșan și George Pop (1861-1866),” *Arhiva Someșană*, Series III (2004): 450.

<sup>58</sup> Popovici, “Officiers et société civile,” 44-47.

<sup>59</sup> Ioan Bolovan, “Asociația națională Arădeană pentru cultura poporului român (1863-1918): între local și regional,” in Liviu Maior (coord.), *Asociaționism și naționalism cultural în secolele XIX-XX. Lucrările Conferinței internaționale Asociaționism și naționalism cultural - 150 de ani de la întemeierea ASTREI, Cluj-Napoca, 22-24 septembrie 2011* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy - Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2011), 84-85, cited in Popovici, “Officiers et société civile,” 49-50.

<sup>60</sup> *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, No. 27 (April 18/6, 1868): 110; *Ibid.*, No. 40 (June 1/May 20, 1879): 4; *Ibid.*, No. 46 (April 21/May 3, 1881): 3; *Ibid.*, No. 47 (April 23/May 5, 1881): 4; *Ibid.*, No. 25 (February 2/14, 1895): 3; *Ibid.*, No. 257 (November 19/December 1, 1895): 3; *Ibid.*, No. 40 (February 21/March 6, 1907): 3; *Ibid.*, No. 51 (March 5/18, 1913): 3.

which forbade the violation of an oath, there were also exceptions in which they chose to act according to their Romanian national identity. Such cases were present from the very beginning of the dualist political system. The evolution of Captain Nichita Ignat is relevant in terms of the negative effects of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 on the dynastic loyalty of the Romanians. Born in Salva, in 1829, in a regimental family, Nichita Ignat followed in his father's footsteps – he became an officer and was wounded in the battle of Custoza in 1866. A year later, in the context of the Compromise, his loyalty and allegiance to the House of Habsburgs were severely affected, so he would increasingly consider the option of desertion in order to join the Romanian Army. In 1868, Ignat joined the Romanian army with the rank of captain; in 1877 he received Romanian citizenship, and also played an active role in the Russian-Romanian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 (the War for Independence in Romanian historiography).<sup>61</sup> He was not the only former Habsburg officer who fought in the Romanian army in 1877-1878: Captain Moise Groza also chose the same path, and later became a general in the Romanian Army.<sup>62</sup>

During World War I, the desertion of Lieutenant Octavian Furlugeanu is just one of the many cases that prove the strong impact of the war on the loyalty of Romanians. Furlugeanu distinguished himself as a full-fledged officer dedicated to the Austro-Hungarian cause before the outbreak of the war; however, when he was taken prisoner in Russia, he chose to desert and joined the struggle for the unification of all Romanians in a nation-state. Although he did not seem to be visibly affected, Furlugeanu always found himself in the position of having to make life choices according to his supranational or to his national identity – the previously mentioned episode of choosing his professional career is conclusive in this respect. By following the “call” of his supranational identity, he later confessed that he had often reconsidered the extent to which his decision had been the right one. On his first return home from military school, he felt guilty about leaving his hometown, remembering his grandfather's desire for him to become a cattle breeder, not a military man, saying to himself: “Maybe Father Irimia was right!”<sup>63</sup>

Furlugeanu's episodes of turmoil, following his fall into Russian captivity, are illustrative for the struggle between his two identities, as he was unable to harmonize his imperial and national identities. After he

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<sup>61</sup> Ioan Cernucan, “Contemporani ai Războiului pentru Independență: maiorul Nichita Ignat din Salva și învățătorul bărgăuan Ilarion Bozga,” *Arhiva Someșană*, 31 (1977): 47.

<sup>62</sup> Liviu Maior, *Habsburgii și români. De la loialitatea dinastică la identitate națională* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2006), 112.

<sup>63</sup> Bocșan, Leu, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, vol. I, 748.

arrived in Russia, he had his first contact with those who had voluntarily left the Austro-Hungarian army in order to join the national armies: "they were volunteers of the so-called nations, former Austro-Hungarian soldiers, and now recruiting new elements for their legions [...]. Towards them, those who had nothing in common with them and who could not understand the voice of the blood could only show contempt [...] Zeno (i.e., the *persona* of the narrator, Furlugeanu) was among those who blamed these volunteers."<sup>64</sup> Later, the news about Romania's entry into war triggered a strong internal conflict: "His Romanian nature fought with the emperor's soldier inside him [...]".<sup>65</sup> As a result, on 8 June 1917, Octavian Furlugeanu took the oath of allegiance to Romania. Furlugeanu's relationship to the Habsburg dynasty changed completely, as the attachment to the Romanian royal family increased.<sup>66</sup> Furlugeanu's identity journey and the transition from a supranational to a national identity, as well as other cases, such as that of Moise Groza, Ioan Dragalina, or Traian Moșoiu, remained nevertheless exceptions, or rarely made choices at best, within the Habsburg officers' corps. For the most part, the national identity of the Romanian military in the Habsburg army developed in a complementary relationship with the dynastic loyalism, especially due to the fact that before the outbreak of World War I the prospect of creating a Romanian nation-state had seemed far-fetched, at best.

In the case of reserve officers, however, things were completely different, especially during the war, because, for them, nationality was often the main side of the identity spectrum, rooted in their everyday experience before the war. Most of the reserve officers belonged to the category of intellectuals, many of whom acted, both before and after the mobilization, as radical nationalists, who saw the collapse of the monarchy as the only way to achieve their national-political ideal.<sup>67</sup> Habsburg military authorities constantly tried to find ways of attracting representatives of the nationalities among the reserve officers' corps, but with limited success. The arguments that were most often used for enlistment as reserve officers were not loyalty to the state or dynasty, but the opportunity to avoid the many years of training as a simple soldier. Most often, the future reservist officers joined the army having already clearly aligned themselves with a political creed, being intensely "politicized", since some of them were even active in the national movements.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 772-773.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 782.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Kohn, "Galben-negru până în măduva oaselor și dinastic până la exces," 41.

<sup>68</sup> Scheer, "Language Diversity and Loyalty in the Habsburg Army," 147.

Beyond the nationalist feelings of reserve officers, other causes that prevented their real integration into the military system were of social origin. The cases of Ion Curița and George Iuga are relevant for this situation, as they exhibited, at the end of the nineteenth century, a deep lack of interest for the military career; the official military reports recorded the involutions of the two, and in the case of Iuga, in 1888, it is even mentioned that “he did not have a stable income corresponding to the status of officer, and does not have any adequate social position.”<sup>69</sup> Ioan Curița’s disinterest in the military career features an interesting mixture of social and national-political factors: the social gap between him and his fellow officers might have generated a nationalist radicalization. In 1893 he was to cross the mountains to Romania, at a time of great significance for the Romanian national movement in Transylvania: the failure of the Memorandum action.<sup>70</sup> Both Curița and Iuga shared a social status that was beneath the one required by the officers’ standing, as well as a lack of prospects for promotion, which prevented them from assuming a military identity. This fact led to the channeling of attachments, at least in the case of Curița, in the direction of the national identity.<sup>71</sup>

### The regional identity

Despite the assertion of identities that dictated different modes of action both before and during the war, the career officers, the reserve officers, and the Romanian soldiers in the Habsburg army shared a certain type of identity: the territorial one. In their discourses, Transylvania or Banat held an extremely important place, and the desire to defend these territories, regardless of the enemy they were fighting, was strongly expressed. Beyond their attachment to the province from which they came, a certain micro-regional identity also existed. The best-known example refers to the aforementioned “pride of Năsăud” (*fala năsăudeană*), which was an important element of the micro-regional identity.<sup>72</sup> The legal character of the territories on which this type of identity was built also had a say in these identity games. For the most part, the territorial attachment was born in relation to regions with an explicit autonomous administrative organization, such as, for example, the territory of Transylvania until 1867, or that of the border regiments until their dissolution in the second half of

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<sup>69</sup> Hegedűs, Horváth, Popovici, *Portrete de ofițeri*, 48.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 77–78.

<sup>72</sup> Claudia Septimia Sabău, “Și ne-au făcut din grănițeri, țărani...”. *Mentalități colective în satele năsăudene foste grănicerești în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2015), 37.

the nineteenth century. However, with the loss of the legal political standing of these territories, the identities created in relation to them continued to exist, and some of them are still exhibited today by the inhabitants of the respective areas.

The regional identity of the militaries at war appears to be different from that during peacetime. The attachment to the native region was not political, but rather involved a series of feelings associated with alienation, longing for family, remembrance of happy moments spent in one's homeland, all of which had been felt prior to the outbreak of the war. In such a context, Octavian Furlugeanu expressed his nostalgia and attachment to the territory of Banat; wounded in the war, during one of his nights in the hospital, he heard a clarinet singing a folk song from the Banat: "that night, Zeno was no longer in the cursed land of Pripet, but in his beloved Banat."<sup>73</sup>

### **Multiple identities**

For the most part, in terms of the intensity of national or territorial attachments, there was no noticeable difference between the militaries who remained loyal to the monarchy until its disintegration and those who chose to desert. The identities were the same, but the way they were expressed was different. An analysis of the reasons for this difference reveals a series of explanations that can be brought to discussion and which open a research direction approached by recent historiography: the topic of multiple identities. The vast majority of Romanian career officers in the Habsburg army were characterized by multiple identities, assuming different affiliations, sometimes seemingly opposable, but harmonized so that none of them prevailed over the others in an overwhelming ratio. The process of outlining the multiple identities of the Romanian militaries began with the foundation of the border regiments. According to an obituary published in the "The Romanian Telegraph" (*Telegraful Român*), following the death of retired captain Constantin Stezar: "a certain type of men disappears from among us, men who fought with swords in their hands for half of their lives for the glorification of their beloved homeland, while for the other half they sacrificed themselves in cultural work in the field of national culture."<sup>74</sup>

The military careers, the political activity, and the civic involvement of the militaries and officers of the border regiments are an example of the harmonization of identities, which were intertwined and mutually supportive: the ethnic identity, the military identity, the regional identity (a

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<sup>73</sup> Bocșan, Leu, *Marele Război în memoria bănățeană*, vol. I, 766.

<sup>74</sup> *Telegraful Român*, No. 113 (20 October 1909).

result of the military one), and the dynastic loyalty. It is highly debatable whether in the case of these soldiers we can talk about the intrasubjective conflict that led to the harmonization of several different cultural codes. Prior to the professionalization of the army, of the political class, and before more clearly defined identities and roles took shape, multiple identities formed a rather singular identity, in which there was a homogenization of all elements that would later become components of different identity attachments.

The harmonization of all the identities within a one single multiple identity became both necessary and more difficult in the 1860s. On the one hand, during this period, the modern Romanian state was born, and it exerted a strong influence upon the imaginary of the Romanians in the monarchy; on the other hand, the shock of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was even stronger for the Transylvanian Romanians, who, in 1867, were to lose their “homeland”; starting with that moment, they needed to channel such loyalties into another direction. These events led to awareness of identities, but at the same time to the triggering of the aforementioned internal conflict, which was managed in two ways: either by giving priority and sometimes even exclusivity to the national identity, or by identity harmonization within the multiple identities, the military and the imperial identity being ranked equal with the national or religious identities.

Dimitrie Burdea was one of the officers of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Arad Regiment who assumed such an identity, accepted as such by the whole society, as it appeared in the press of different nationalities: he was considered a “friend of the Hungarians” by the Hungarian press, but also a “good Romanian” by the Romanian one.<sup>75</sup> Burdea’s multiple identities included his national identity; he publicly asserted his identity as a Romanian, both in terms of private and professional life, being considered one of the “leading local Romanian soldiers and civilians.”<sup>76</sup> The national identity of these officers remained a constituent element of their affiliation to the monarchy, and not an engine of irredentist policies. Especially for the military elites of the empire, the center of gravity was represented by Vienna and the emperor, and not by Bucharest or the Romanian Kingdom.<sup>77</sup>

Regarding the attitudes of the Romanians in the Dualist Monarchy in the context of the War of 1877-1878, Traian Doda’s case is relevant. Back in 1868-1869, Doda tried, through diplomatic correspondence, to contribute

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<sup>75</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap*, No. 291 (1899): 7; *Tribuna poporului*, No. 199 (1899): 2, cited in Kardos Atilla-Alexandru, “K. U. K. Infanterieregiment “Kaiser Leopold II”,” 264.

<sup>76</sup> Kardos Atilla-Alexandru, “K. U. K. Infanterieregiment “Kaiser Leopold II”,” 252-265.

<sup>77</sup> Marin, “The Formation and Allegiance of the Romanian Military Elite,” 29.



to the organization of the Romanian army, intending to travel to Romania, along with colonel David Urs de Mărgineni. His request was rejected at the time by Ion C. Brătianu, and a second request was rejected in the autumn of 1876. However, in 1877, in the context of the Russian-Romanian-Turkish War, Brătianu decided to officially request the help of several Romanian generals in the Austro-Hungarian army to organize the war efforts.<sup>78</sup> It was now Doda's turn to refuse, arguing that "it is impossible for me to commit myself to such serious matter, full of such responsibility, on the eve of the event, ignorant of the means available and without having the time to examine and possibly amend or replace them."<sup>79</sup> Although, in the end, he agreed to join the Romanian army, Doda never departed for Romania, because of the emperor's rejection of Brătianu's request.<sup>80</sup>

For the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army, World War I was the final test of their identities and loyalties. Most of them kept their oath, showing loyalty to the monarch and the state. At the same time, they were aware of their national identity, being involved in various nationalist, cultural, social, or religious actions before and during the war. They fought on the side of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as its citizens, and after the dissolution of the state, they contributed to the formation of national guards and the process of unification between Transylvania, Bukovina and the Kingdom of Romania. Many of them continued their military career in the Romanian Army.

As for the officers who eventually chose to desert after Romania entered the war in 1916, their national and imperial loyalties came into conflict. The soldiers did not consider the option of harmonizing them, so one had to prevail, as in the case of Octavian Furlugeanu: throughout his life, he was always forced to choose between his imperial and his national identity. Until the moment of desertion, his actions were directed by his supranational identity, confessing that he had become estranged from his birthplace and family.<sup>81</sup> Later, he completely abandoned his imperial identity and his dynastic loyalty, embracing the national ones: "I opened my eyes and all the formulas in which I had been immersed in military school disappeared from me [...] it is the divine commandment of the blood."<sup>82</sup> Furlugeanu's case is not an isolated one, as proven by the tens of thousands

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 283–286.

<sup>79</sup> Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale ale României, Fond Familial Brătianu, No. 1286, File 21/1877, p. 87–92, cited in Marin, "The Formation and Allegiance," 282.

<sup>80</sup> Liviu Maior, *Transilvania și Războiul pentru Independență (1877-1878)* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1977), 28–29.

<sup>81</sup> Bocșan, Leu, *Marele Război în memoria bănațeană*, vol. I, 748.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 776.

of Romanians in the Austro-Hungarian army enlisted in volunteer corps formed amongst the prisoners in Russia<sup>83</sup>, Italy<sup>84</sup> or France.<sup>85</sup>

The assumption of multiple identities was the opposite of Furlugeanu's behavior. For the officers who remained in the Austrian-Hungarian Army until its disintegration, the national identity outlined within the monarchy was complementary with the dynastic loyalty.<sup>86</sup> The direction that best characterizes the nationalist views of these officers is a moderate one. In the case of the career officers in the Habsburg army, the Romanian national identity was manifested almost exclusively at the cultural level, not implying a commitment within an irredentist policy.<sup>87</sup> After the disintegration of the empire, this situation changed in some cases. Ioan Boeriu was responsible for organizing the Romanian troops from the former Habsburg army, and later, in February 1919, through the Sibiu Military Command, he began the formation of a Transylvanian army.<sup>88</sup>

After the war, some former Romanian Habsburg officers entered politics, partly following the model of the Old Kingdom's high officers. Gheorghe Domășneanu became the mayor of Timișoara as a member of the National Peasant Party. Colonel Romulus Boldea founded the Christian National Party, which was to merge with Goga's agrarians and with A. C. Cuza's League.<sup>89</sup> Other Habsburg officers, who became Romanian army officers after 1918, maintained the pre-eminence of the military identity and the spirit of officer's honor. Medical Colonel Victor Corbu resigned from the Romanian Army in 1921, after being jumped on the promotion list by another officer, related to the Brătianu family, despite passing the exam for the rank of General.<sup>90</sup>

It was not only the career officers who upheld their oaths when leaving the front, thus proving the assumption of multiple identities. Some

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<sup>83</sup> Ioana Rustoiu, Marius Cristea, Smaranda Cutean, Tudor Roșu (eds.), *Legiunea Română din Siberia*, vol. I and II (Alba Iulia: Muzeul Național al Unirii Alba-Iulia, Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2021).

<sup>84</sup> Vasile Dudaș, "Legiunea română din Italia," in Antonio Faur, Radu Românașu (coords.), *Perseverență și devoțiune în căutarea adevărului istoric. Omagiu profesorului și istoricului Viorel Faur la împlinirea vârstei de 75 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy - Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2016).

<sup>85</sup> Vasile Dudaș, *Legiunea română din Franța (1918-1919)* (Timișoara: Mirton, 1996).

<sup>86</sup> John Paul Newman, "Shades of Empire. Austro-Hungarian Officers, Frankists, and the Afterlives of Austria-Hungary in Croatia, 1918-1929," in Paul Miller, Claire Morelon (eds.), *Embers of Empire: Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States after 1918* (New-York - Oxford: Berghahn Books), 160.

<sup>87</sup> Irina Marin, "The Formation and Allegiance of the Romanian Military Elite," 28.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-149.

<sup>90</sup> Florea Marin, *Medicii și Marea Unirea* (Târgu Mureș: Tipomur, 1993), 38-39.

reserve officers remained attached to the imperial cause, despite their active involvement in the national movement. It was the case of Lieutenant Iuliu Maniu, one of the main Romanian political leaders of the time, who, in the autumn of 1918, used his troops to protect the Viennese government, as a last fulfillment of his imperial duty before returning to Transylvania where he organized the Union with Romania.<sup>91</sup> Last but not least, behaviors specific to multiple identities can also be identified among ordinary soldiers. Immediately after enlisting in the war, Horațiu C. Deacu exclaimed: “we are leaving with a strong faith in God and firmly determined to fight for the honor of our homeland, regiment, and people.”<sup>92</sup>

However, the issue of multiple identities cannot be brought to discussion without mentioning another explanation that could justify the actions of the officers and soldiers who remained loyal to the monarchy until its disintegration, later being present in either the Romanian Army or the Romanian politics. To some extent, multiple identities could be associated with the idea of conjunctural or pragmatic loyalty. The extent to which these two notions are mutually exclusive or complementary to one another remains an open topic; it can be discussed the case of Albert Porkolab, an officer in the k.u.k. Regiment no. 63 in Bistrița, who, after the war, continued his military career in Greater Romania. Among the arguments he mentioned in order to prove his attachment to the Romanian nation, he identifies himself as being of “Romanian origin”, and also describes his previous life, inside the empire as follows: “only Romanian was spoken at my home and that is how I grew up”; “I graduated from Romanian schools”. Porkolab also signed a statement assuring the Romanian military authorities that he was renouncing any foreign “subjection”. At the same time, after the disintegration of the empire, he changed the spelling of his name from Porkolab to Porcolab.<sup>93</sup>

In reality, Porkolab cannot be categorically associated with any of the three main nationalities of Transylvania, and it features in the historiography as an example of multiple identities.<sup>94</sup> In his case, but also in that of many other former career officers, the pragmatic reasons for joining the Habsburg army, respectively the Romanian Royal Army, should not be overlooked. Thus, along with a real attachment to the imperial idea, to the

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<sup>91</sup> Friedrich Funder, *Vom Gestern ins Heute: aus dem Kaiserreich in die Republik* (Vienna: Herold, 1972), 535, 586, cited in Marin, “K.u.K. Officers of Romanian Nationality Before and After the Great War,” in Miller, Morelon (eds.), *Embers of Empire*, 147.

<sup>92</sup> Horațiu C. Deacu, *Ziarul unui erou. Însemnări făcute pe câmpul de luptă din Galiția, între 12 august-21 octombrie 1914, ziua în care autorul a fost ucis de un glonte dușman* (Gherla: Tipografia Augustin S. Deacu, 1930), 14.

<sup>93</sup> Cârja, Madly, Vaida, “Din armata austro-ungară în România Mare,” 139–144.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

dynasty, or nationality, the awareness of and the will to perpetuate their privileged professional status may also lie behind the actions of these officers there. As I mentioned before, to the extent that multiple identities and conjunctural loyalty can be viewed as opposable, they can also be perceived as complementary, especially in the case of officers who chose to fight in the Monarchy until its collapse, even at the moment when the victory of the Entente had become certain.

### Conclusions

Although the imperial and the national identity have often been perceived in the historiography of the successor states as being fully opposable, especially in terms of the political views of radical nationalists, for a large part of the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army a harmonization of sentiments generated by these identities became possible, and as a result, nationality became a complementary part of the state identity. The concept that best characterizes this type of attitude is that of "multiple identities", according to which the identity spectrum of a person could include some seemingly opposite coordinates, which, dosed according to experience and education, have become complementary fragments of a whole, characterized by tolerance and diversity. The existence of multiple identities (the dynastic loyalty, the Austro-Hungarian or the Hungarian state identity, the provincial identity, the national identity, the professional identity) is one of the answers to the questions regarding the reasons why some of the Romanian militaries in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy maintained their loyalty even after the death of Francis Joseph or after Romania entered the World War I. This explains why only after its disintegration did they join their efforts to organize the actions that eventually led to the union of December 1, 1918, but also to its subsequent consolidation.

At the same time, another type of behavior that could be explained by the existence of multiple identities was that of the career officers of Romanian origin (especially those integrated into the *Honvéd*), who, after the disintegration of the monarchy, chose to continue their lives and even their military careers in Hungary.<sup>95</sup> Not to be neglected, in terms of the attitudes of these soldiers, are the practical reasons behind them, which can be seen both as elements that exclude the possibility of multiple identities, and as ones that make this type of identities complete. Common in terms of the identity of the militaries, whether career officers, reservists or ordinary soldiers, was the attachment to the territory of Transylvania and other micro-regions within it, which became even more important in the context

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<sup>95</sup> Hegedűs, Horváth, Popovici, *Portrete de ofițeri*, 71–72.

of the war. Both the continuation of the fight with the Austro-Hungarian army and the option of desertion came with the idea of returning to Transylvania.

The identities of the Romanian militaries in the Habsburg army were shaped under the strong influence of the special social and professional status of the officers. Along with the forms of identity mainly discussed by historiography (i.e., the national identity and the dynastic loyalty), a military professional identity also existed, which strongly influenced their actions and personal choices. The harmonization of these multiple identities took place gradually. Paradoxically, however, it occurred at the same time and pace as the process of the increasingly clear delineation of each individual identity, under the influence of the increasing radicalization of political life in the monarchy at the beginning of the twentieth century. As a result, at the moment of choice during or at the end of the First World War, a diverse and harmonized multi-identity complex often manifested, traces of which continued to surface in the decades that followed among the citizens of the monarchy's successor states.



# “Engel Pharmacy “La Coróna”, near the gate of the royal court, Jassy”\*

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Article history: Received 14.10.2021; Revised 26.11.2021;

Accepted 18.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.

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**Abstract:** The paper reconstructs the history of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>-century Engel pharmacy in Iași starting from a lot of items preserved in the History of Pharmacy Collection in Cluj-Napoca. The lot includes numerous drug jars, measuring cups, apothecary working tools, financial documents, prescriptions, correspondence, and various other documents, some of which were recently identified during the renovation of the pharmacy museum in Cluj. The analysis allows one to see the transformation of pharmaceutical practice in Moldavia and Romania between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Second World War and to reconstruct the history of a successful family business.

**Keywords:** history of pharmacy, Iași, museum studies, Engel family

**Rezumat:** “Farmacia Engel “La Coróna”, lângă poarta curții domnești, Jassy” Articolul reconstituie istoria farmaciei Engel din Iași din secolele XIX-XX pornind de la un lot de obiecte păstrate în Colecția de Istorie a Farmaciei din Cluj-Napoca. Lotul constă din numeroase recipiente farmaceutice, mensuri, unelte specifice meseriei, documente financiare și contabile, rețete, corespondență și diverse alte documente și tipărituri. Unele bunuri au fost reidentificate recent, cu ocazia lucrărilor de renovare ale muzeului de istorie a farmaciei din Cluj. Analiza permite observarea transformărilor practicii farmaceutice din Moldova și România între sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și Cel de Al Doilea Război Mondial, dar și refacerea istoriei unei reușite afaceri de familie.

**Cuvinte cheie:** istoria farmaciei, Iași, studii muzeale, familia Engel

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\* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2020-1562, within PNCDI III. I thank Mr. Marius-Andi Dașchievici for the photographs of Engel family members and for the details of their history that he has kindly shared.

In Moldavia, the first pharmacies started functioning near hospitals around the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but public and private apothecary shops soon opened on the basis of princely privileges granted to various, mostly foreign, pharmacists.<sup>1</sup> In 1823 prince Ioan Sturza allowed Joseph Leiter to open a pharmacy in Iași, the eighth such establishment in the city,<sup>2</sup> and granted him several privileges.<sup>3</sup> Its owner, Joseph Leiter, was a well-educated man. Together with apothecaries Abrahamfi, Torenberg, and Lochmann he elaborated a table of the degrees of alcohol using advanced tools.<sup>4</sup> The subsequent provisors of the pharmacy were Anton Abrahamfi, Dimitrie Orosz, Gustav Schiller, and, since 1868, Andreas Iassinsky. The location(s) and name(s) of this pharmacy remain unclear until around 1870, when it was marketed as “La Coroana” (“At the Crown”) and placed in a very central location, “by the princely gate”.<sup>5</sup> Johann Engel, who held a degree in pharmacy obtained in Munich, leased and then bought the “La Coroana” pharmacy. The dates are not clear, but it seems that at least in 1872-1874 he was working for Iassinski’s widow. The Engel family was of German origin and settled in Moldavia in 1845, the year Johann was born. Upon his death, in 1915, he left the pharmacy to his son, Alexandru Engel. The pharmacy moved after the location “by the princely gate” (Ștefan cel

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<sup>1</sup> In Iași, Ioan Grecu and Gheorghe Mermeze mention the following pharmacies (some of the dates are contradicted by other authors): 1757 the pharmacy of the **Saint Spiridon Hospital**; 1778 **Farmacia obștii**; 1765 the pharmacy of **Gheorghe Jilnicerul**; 1786 the pharmacy of **Herleț Gerah**; 1795 the pharmacy of **Alexandru Venier**; 1802 the pharmacy of **Ion Lochmann**; 1815 [sic!] the pharmacy of **Josef Leiter** (?), in 1857 sold to Dionisie [Dimitrie] Oros; 1819 the pharmacy of **J. Krauss**, in 1835 sold to Ignat Degré; 1820 the pharmacy of **Ferdinand Klos**, in 1844 sold to Constantin Hampel and in 1856 to Albert Neumann; unknown year - the pharmacy of **Jani Vasiliu**, in 1852 owned by Gh. Balomir; 1826 the pharmacy of **Jacob Virojinski**, in 1855 owned by Alexandru Racoviță; 1827 the pharmacy of **Gh. Vasilcovschi**; 1827 the Minerva pharmacy (owned by Ion Pădure, in 1848 by Benjamin Schleider, and since 1900 by Ioan Werner who changed its name into The Central Pharmacy); 1833 the pharmacy of **Carol Thornberg**, in 1854 sold to Gustav Schiller; 1882 **The Independence Pharmacy**, owned by the Berceanu family. Ioan Grecu, Gheorghe Mermeze, *Farmacia și Societatea Română de Istoria Farmaciei de-a lungul vremii* (Oradea: Ed. Universității din Oradea, 2005), 59–60.

<sup>2</sup> If the foundation dates mentioned in the previous footnote are accurate.

<sup>3</sup> Marius-Andi Dașchievici, “Engel – o veche familie de farmaciști ieșeni,” *Ion Neculce. Buletinul Complexului Muzeal Moldova (seria nouă)*, XX (2014), transcribes the document on p. 259–260. The document is preserved in a 1911 copy, among the items in the personal archive of Angela Engel Știrbu.

<sup>4</sup> Reomur’s thermometer and Vagner’s alcoholmeter. See Iuliana Crișan Soporean, Ana Carata, “Pompei Gh. Samarian și istoria farmaciei din Moldova,” available online at <https://www.revistagalenus.ro/istoria-farmaciei/pompei-gh-samarian-si-istoria-farmaciei-din-moldova/> (accessed January 2022).

<sup>5</sup> The building was demolished around 1933: Dașchievici, “Engel – o veche familie,” 259.



Mare St. 68) was consumed by fire in 1925 (and eventually demolished in 1933) to Anastasie Panu St.<sup>6</sup> The pharmacy “by the princely gate” has been described as vaulted, with storage room, basement, a laboratory, sheds for tools and containers, a crushing room, and an attic. After the 1925 fire, the pharmacy moved to another central location in Iași. The documents and labels of the “La Coroana (Al. Engel) Pharmacy” mention the address Anastasie Panu St. 52, 54, 56, and 64, though the location of the shop is most often indicated at no. 54 and 64 (featuring mostly on correspondence, the other numbers might point to the entrance to the family quarters or might have been erroneous renderings of the address). It remains unclear how the pharmacy fared during the First World War (if it continued functioning for the needs of the civilian population). Alexandru Engel had three children, Emil, Alexandrina, and Lucia, of which only the first daughter continued the family’s profession and possibly took over the pharmacy for a short period. The end of the pharmacy is also unclear, as it is not mentioned in the list of private sanitary units nationalized in 1949.<sup>7</sup> Some of the items were kept by the family and friends and subsequently donated or sold to museums, while others, more personal goods such as photographs, are still with their heirs.<sup>8</sup>

Angela Engel-Știrbu (1943-2011), grand-daughter of Alexandru Engel and museographer in Iași, inherited a valuable lot of artifacts from the “La Coroana” pharmacy: furniture, drug jars, seals, the busts of Mercury and Hippocrates, various written records.<sup>9</sup> Part of the lot was sold in 1982 to the History Museum in Cluj, currently the National Museum of Transylvanian History, to be included in the History of Pharmacy Collection. It seems the museums in Iași were unable or unwilling to acquire the items and the specialized museum in Cluj was well-known at the time and expressed an interest in the lot. As I shall subsequently show, some of the items mentioned above were not part of this sale and their present whereabouts are unknown (the furniture and the two busts). Other goods from the Engel pharmacy ended up, through another donor, in the pharmacy collection of the Grigore T. Popa Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in Iași, while yet others are reportedly kept in private collections (such as that of Dr. Mungiu).<sup>10</sup> The documents of the old “La Coroana” pharmacy are kept in a dedicated archive font at the Town Hall of Iași.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 259–260.

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 34.

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication with Mr. Dașchievici.

<sup>9</sup> Dașchievici, “Engel – o veche familie,” 264.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 264.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 259.

The contract with the museum in Cluj, no. 985/6.11.1982, was signed by Enghel Elena, Angela Știrbu's mother, the wife of Alexandru's son, Emil, who disappeared in action during the Second World War. The contract mentions a lot of "objects of pharmaceutical and historical interest" sold for the total sum of 10,000 lei. There is no list of the artifacts in this lot, but a notation in pencil indicates the inventory numbers that some of them have subsequently received.<sup>12</sup> I shall clarify the structure of this lot (detailed in appendix 1) and analyze it in connection to the history of this pharmacy and of the Engel family against the backdrop of the history of pharmacy in Moldavia, Romania and Europe between ca. 1850 and 1945.

The Engel lot is unusual for the History of Pharmacy Collection in Cluj because of its size (there are usually fewer artifacts from a single pharmacy), its structure (it contains numerous financial documents),<sup>13</sup> and its origin (the collection focuses on artifacts from Transylvania and Banat).<sup>14</sup> The significant Engel lot allows insight into various research topics, such as economic history, early advertising and marketing, the drug trade, Jews in pharmacy and medicine, female medical practitioners, pharmaceutical education, the early regulation of narcotics consumption, even recruitment around the turn of the century and contraception. Eventually, it provides a very specialized perspective on the modernization of Romania.

The lot under discussion includes various types of items from the "La Coroana" pharmacy in Iași: drug jars, measuring cups, scales, tools, framed engravings, financial documents, correspondence, product catalogues and price lists, inventories and ledgers etc. It consists of a total of 1195 items, of which 686 are bills and 288 are prescriptions and recipes. The earliest is a pharmaceutical certificate dated 1857 and the latest dated item is a 1946 writ typed on a typewriter. The table in appendix I lists all items and lots identified in the Engel sub-collection, starting from those previously inventoried (in ascending order of their inventory numbers) and ending with those recently processed and included in the inventory ledger (in the order in which they were rediscovered). I shall nevertheless

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<sup>12</sup> The pencil notations are partly erroneous: IF 2081-2237 (in fact IF 2081-2236), IF 2242-2255, IF 2266-2309 (the entire interval is erroneously attributed to the Engel pharmacy). IF 2237 and 2266-2309 refer to artifacts originally used in other pharmacies. The un-inventoried items have been transcribed in the museum ledger in 2022: IF 2426-2444.

<sup>13</sup> A lot with a similar structure, from the old Hintz pharmacy in Cluj, was also recently identified during the relocation of the history of pharmacy exhibition, but they are in a poorer state of preservation and currently under treatment at the conservation laboratory of the National Museum of Transylvanian History.

<sup>14</sup> Another exception consists of a few artifacts from the Red Crayfish pharmacy in Bratislava.

discuss them below typologically and in approximate chronological order for the sake of historical development.

As previously mentioned in the brief history of the "La Coroana" pharmacy, Andreas Iassinsky became its fifth provisor in 1868. In 1857, aged 17, Iassinsky had obtained in Huși a certificate attesting his instruction (of the apprenticeship type) and successful examination in front of a doctor and a pharmacist, before continuing his pharmaceutical education abroad. The diploma (cat. no. 67), in form of a manuscript on paper with a small red wax seal, is among the last of its kind, resembling the stages of medieval guild instruction, soon to be replaced by official primary and secondary pharmaceutical education abroad and then in Romania.<sup>15</sup>

The most interesting documents are several manuscripts written by Ioan (Johann) Engel, the provisor after Iassinski and subsequently owner of the pharmacy between 1857 and 1915.<sup>16</sup> Member of a German family from Saxony whose members were granted Romanian citizenship around 1906, Ioan Engel was born in Iași in 1845, studied at the School of Pharmacy of the St. Spiridon hospital and completed his apprenticeship at the hospital's pharmacy, followed by university studies in Munich where he obtained his magister diploma in 1868. Ioan then returned to Moldavia to start working in several pharmacies: "La Îngeru", Otto Selten's, and "La Coroana".<sup>17</sup> He was thus the first pharmacist of the latter to benefit from a solid, formalized upper education (as compared to Iassinski's certificate discussed above) and one of its longest-lasting provisors. His preserved documents indicate that he took various measures to ensure the success of the pharmacy and of his son: he kept updated with the latest legislation and development of professional bodies, he arranged for his son to enroll in the military, to complete his studies and apprenticeship in the field of pharmacy and to become the next owner of the "La Coroana", sought to obtain ministerial contracts, and endowed the pharmacy with good-quality tools and equipment, sometimes obtained from abroad.

Most of his preserved documents relate to the education and military career of his son, Alexandru Engel. Unsurprisingly, the latter completed his apprenticeship in his father's pharmacy and was examined in various disciplines, obtaining the required grades and certificates in 1897, 1898, and 1899 (cat. nos. 63-65). A commission (that included the "chief of the pharmacy", Engel senior, evaluated the student's knowledge in the fields of physics, chemistry, pharmaceutical practice, zoology,

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<sup>15</sup> Angela Știrbu, "O mărturie documentară despre învățământul farmaceutic din Moldova," *Ioan Neculce, Buletinul Muzeului de Istorie a Moldovei (serie nouă)*, I (1995): 143-144, with the full transcription of the Latin original and translation into Romanian.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 144; Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 258.

<sup>17</sup> Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 258-259.

botany, herbarium and zoological collections, pharmacognosy and terminology, pharmaceutical taxes and legislation, as well as his conduit (with grades between 6 and 8). In 1897 Ioan Engel wrote a letter to the dean of the Faculty of Medicine and director of the Higher School of Pharmacy, asking him to include the attached first year certificate of his son to his school file, thus making sure the paperwork was in order (cat. no. 62). In 1899 Alexandru Engel completed his education at the Faculty of Medicine, the Higher School of Pharmacy, of the University of Bucharest, obtaining a degree as pharmacy assistant (stage II). His father made and kept a handwritten copy of this important document that allowed the young man to practice and enroll in the advanced specialized courses (cat. no. 60). During the year 1900 Ioan Engel was preoccupied with his son's enrollment in the army. In the first months of that year he stood with his son before the Revision Committee (Council) of the City of Iași, requesting that the latter be enlisted as a student, but they were turned down on the basis of a legal unclarity. Thus, in February 1900, the father wrote the minister of war himself to ask that clarifications be sent to the above-mentioned committee, "in support of his parental rights", instructing them on how his son should be enrolled in the army (he also preserved the sketch of this letter, cat. no. 81). It seems that the solution was to enlist through the drawing of lots. As this was a period of peace, the system required for young men to enlist and if accepted (based on a set of physical requirements) to take part in a drawing of lots meant to cover regional quotas.<sup>18</sup> Another preserved document (cat. no. 77), dated November 1900, is a handwritten certificate of admission of Alexandru Engel to the drawing of lots, following his father's previous request (not preserved). The certificate in question, issued by the Iași Police Commissariat, records the young man's date of birth, parent names (Ion and Natalia), their address (Ștefan cel Mare St. 68, thus showing that the family resided above their pharmacy), and his particulars (blue eyes, light brown hair, shaved beard etc.). The exact details of Alexandru Engel's military career remain unclear, but one knows that in 1916 he was pharmacist sub-lieutenant. The information is preserved in his answer (cat. no. 83) to an official request for a list of the military situation of all pharmacy employees in case of mobilization (addressed in fact to his father, who had died the previous year) (cat. no. 82). A photograph preserved by the family shows Alexandru Engel in uniform, as sergeant-major, in 1906/1907, so he did advance to the officer corps during that decade.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Personal communication with Dr. Horațiu Bodale, whom I thank for the clarifications kindly provided.

<sup>19</sup> I thank Mr. Dașchievici for providing an electronic copy and allowing me to publish the photograph. He also published it in his article on the family's history, though in the

Several other manuscripts in the collection that are dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century stress Ioan Engel's diligence and perseverance. He kept the 1857 diploma of Andreas Iassinski, the former provisor of the pharmacy (cat. no. 66),<sup>20</sup> in 1892 he wrote and signed a document granting lawyer George Buzescu power of attorney, if need be, and in 1896 he petitioned the minister of Cults and Public Instruction for inclusion among the pharmacists supplying boarding schools, as despite existing regulations that established the rotation of such suppliers, he had not yet been appointed to the position (cat. no. 61). These recorded initiatives show Ioan Engel as a determined petitioner, cautious father, and able businessman.

Many of the apothecary containers in the analyzed lot can be dated to the time when Ioan Engel was head of the pharmacy (1857 - 1915), some on the basis of decorated printed labels mentioning his name (cat. nos. 20, 31, 36, 39, 48, 50, and 56). Based on the style or history of the products/objects, one can also discuss a set of 19 white porcelain jars with shield-shaped cartouches (similar items reported in the collection of the University of Medicine Museum in Iași) (cat. no. 1), 3 graduated jars and porcelain measuring cups (cat nos. 2 and 3), 20 clear glass bottles with faceted stopper and shield-shaped cartouches (also an incomplete series, as similar items are reported in the same collection from Iași) (cat. no. 4), 5 clear glass bottles for oils with similar shield-shaped cartouches (cat. no. 23), and 35 small blue glass bottles (cat. no. 8). All containers with shield-shaped cartouches, though made of different materials, were likely made by the same producer or at least decorated in the same workshop (cat. nos. 1, 4, 23). It was common for pharmacists to buy such containers in bulk, and the sets under discussion were even larger, as some analogous containers are preserved in the collection of the University of Medicine Museum in Iași.<sup>21</sup> The practice was also continued by Alexandru Engel. A bill issued in 1939, for example, lists 80 jars and 365 bottles bought from Porcelanul S.A. (cat. no. 76) and the 1938-1940 inventories also record hundreds of jars and bottles. Other items, such as mortars, spatulae, and various containers, have also been dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cat. nos. 6, 7, 9, 25, 29). Though the origin of many of the artifacts that can be attributed to the period of Ioan Engel remains unknown, a few can be identified as

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caption the date is erroneously listed as 1916, despite the notation in pencil on the actual photograph and the correct reference in the text. Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 270, fig. 16.

<sup>20</sup> Possibly also a 1911 copy of the original 1823 princely foundation document. A. Știrbu mentions that the copy was exhibited in 1993, together with other items from the Engel pharmacy, during a temporary exhibition held at the Moldova Museum Complex. Știrbu, "Iașii la sfârșit și început de secol," *Ioan Neculce. Buletinul Muzeului de Istorie a Moldovei (serie nouă)*, I (1995): 197.

<sup>21</sup> Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 268.

imported. A wooden spatula, for example, is inscribed with the name of a court supplier from Berlin (cat. no. 25) and a glass bottle for “Migraeinin” was produced by Bayer, in Germany (cat. no. 31). Many of the imported pharmaceutical products in the Engel lot can only be dated to the “early 20<sup>th</sup> century”, so one cannot decide if they were acquired before or after 1915, the year of Ioan Engel’s death. Still, one should note that during this period, the pharmacy acquired goods produced by the large pharmaceutical and technical companies of the era, especially from German-speaking areas, such as Merck, Bayer, Riedel, Brückner, but also from France and Great Britain. The table in appendix 1 indicates the places of origin of the items in question, as identified by their labels or inscriptions: Darmstadt, Berlin, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Vienna, München, Zürich, Hamburg, Paris (Fig. 5). As the accounting documents of the pharmacy show, such goods were acquired through intermediaries mainly from Iași and Bucharest (to be discussed below).

Among the printed materials dated to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that both father and son might have used, one should mention the statutes of the General Association of the Pharmaceutical Body from Romania (cat. nos. 69 and 70) that was founded in 1899 by Ștefan Minovici and subsequently merged with the Society of Pharmacists from Romania, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ioan Engel might have been involved or at least interested in the creation of this professional body, but further research is needed to clarify the issue. The Engels also owned practical materials, essential in their line of trade: printed legislation, i.e. the sanitary law of 1885 with all its changes<sup>22</sup> (cat. no. 72), a booklet on the regulation of “foreign composite medicines and pharmaceutical specialties” (cat. no. 68), and a book of analytical chemistry (cat. no. 71).

Alexandru Engel (1878-1947) followed his father’s example, studied pharmacy, and eventually stepped into his father’s shoes. He attended courses at the Advanced School of Pharmacy, part of Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest (cat. no. 60). Specialized education of this sort was as yet unavailable in Iași, where a pharmaceutical department was only founded inside the Faculty of Medicine in 1913. In Bucharest, the National School of Medicine and Pharmacy was established in 1857, though an independent Faculty of Pharmacy only started functioning in 1923.<sup>23</sup> Aided by his father, Alexandru completed his apprenticeship and examinations in the family’s

<sup>22</sup> It was one of the numerous laws that brought changes to the well-known 1974 sanitary law, the first modern such law in Romania. Alina Ioana Șuta, Oana Michaela Tămaș, Alin Ciupală, Constantin Bărbulescu, Vlad Popovici, *Legislația sanitară în România modernă (1874-1910)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2009), 32. It included detailed rules for pharmacists, pharmacies, and the drug trade.

<sup>23</sup> Emilia Stancu, “Din istoria farmaciei românești interbelice,” *NOEMA*, VII (2008): 61–62.

pharmacy in 1896-1899 (certificates cat. nos. 63-65). In 1900 he sought to join the army as a student at his father's insistence and was enrolled at least in 1906 (Fig. 1). He married in 1911 and four years later took over the family's apothecary shop. When Romania entered the First World War he was a sub-lieutenant-pharmacist (artillery)<sup>24</sup> and family photographs show him wearing a uniform until 1918, but it remains unclear if he was involved in the war or was left to operate the pharmacy for the needs of the civilian population (this possibility is mentioned in the official letter that required him to declare the military status of all pharmacists working at "La Coroana" - cat. no. 82).

The logo of the pharmacy marks both the continuity and the change of ownership in 1915. One knows that the name "La Coroana" was chosen by the previous provisors, but kept by the Engels, probably for marketing reasons and in order to boast continuing a piece of local history. Before 1915 the preserved labels have a decorative heading spelling "Farmacia la "Coroană" Ioan Engel Jași, lângă Poarta Curții", with the depiction of a crown and nice floating text bands (cat. nos. 15, 20, 31, 36, 39, 48, 50, 56, possibly also 42) (Fig. 2). Afterwards, the labels are simpler, marked "Farmacia la "Coroană" Alexandru Ioan Engel - Iași" (cat. no. 14, 43) (Fig. 3). The labels and other printed and manuscript items in the collection also reflect the orthographic changes around the year 1900 (Corónă becoming Coroană, Jón becoming Ioan, and Jassy becoming Iași), though the family name was consistently miss-spelled until 1946, as it features both as Engel and Enghel in all types of preserved sources issued outside the family itself. Chronologically, the lot of artifacts under discussion shows clusters in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in 1936-1946. The activity might have been suspended during the Great War, or there might have been damage and losses when the pharmacy moved - from the location in front of the "Court Gate", a.k.a Ștefan cel Mare St. 68 (that burned down in 1925) to (at least) Anastasie Panu St. no. 54 and 64 (the latter address featuring on items dated 1936-1946). The existing correspondence also mention the address as Anastasie Panu 52 and even 56, but these might be errors, separate entrances to the family quarters, or the result of changes in house numbering.

An interesting feature of the items preserved from Alexandru Engel's period is the presence of consistent financial documents. There are close to 1000 invoices, bills, certificates, goods received notes, transportation notes, narcotic and alcohol bills, checks, trade cards, product

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<sup>24</sup> Dașchivici mentions the status of lieutenant-pharmacist (in reserve) from the artillery (Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 261-262), but in his official letter dated 1916 Alexander Engel declares he was pharmacist sub-lieutenant (cat. no. 83).

lists and catalogues, as well as an accounting book (for 1938-1939). The sources allow for detailed case-studies in the history of accounting, pharmaceutical industry, marketing, and commerce. There are, for example, numerous billheads, with the seller's name, address, logo, sometime including product commercials as well (cat. no. 76) (Fig. 6). According to the lot of financial documents dated 1937-1943, that record 36 suppliers (see footnote 45), the most numerous invoices were issued for the Engel pharmacy by Droguemed from Iași (173 invoices), the Pharmadrog "depozit de medicamente fam. M. Gurău", Iași (140 invoices), and Drogueria Standard "societate anonimă română, aprovizionări complete pentru farmacii și droguerii, București, droguri, specialități, produse chimice și farmaceutice, plante medicinale, uleiuri etc." (66 invoices). Droguemed seems to have changed both owners and headquarters during this period. In 1933-1938 it was called "Droguemed depozit de medicamente, reprezentanțe&consignațiuni" and changed address from str. Anast. Panu 4 to Adamache 14. It seems that the main supplier was also the closest geographically, located on the same street as the pharmacy. In 1938 it was called "Droguemed David Rabinovici depozit de medicamente", still in Adamache street, while in 1942-1943 it had become "Droguemed S.I.N.C., C. Cioriciu & Farmacist Col. Al. Vieru, Depozit de medicamente." As confirmed by these documents, drug trade was flourishing and very mobile. Most of the suppliers defined themselves as "medicine warehouses" and agents, but also laboratories, workshops, even factories. Still, during the Interwar Period in Romania most of the laboratories were also limited to processing, conditioning and especially selling foreign patent medicines, locally known as "specialties".<sup>25</sup> The substances were likely bottled and sold in containers with the Engel label. Still, a few actual autochthonous products were also acquired, from Ufarom, "uzinele chimico-farmaceutice române, fost Egger & co S.A." (Terapia), a laboratory founded in Cluj in 1920<sup>26</sup> (8 invoices in 1937-1938), the "Dr. Al. Iteanu" laboratory, one of the very first local chemical-pharmaceutical laboratories, founded in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, winner of a gold medal at the first national pharmaceutical exhibition held in Bucharest in 1903<sup>27</sup> and supplier of the royal court (cat. no. 47) (Fig. 4), the W. Ghelberg chemical-biological laboratory from Iași (cat. no. 14), and "Laboratorul Dr. Gh. Dumitrescu" from Bucharest. As for the items bought, the documents mention drugs, medicinal plants, containers and medicinal bottles, pharmaceutical bags and capsules, but also bandaid, ring

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<sup>25</sup> Stancu, "Din istoria farmaciei," 69.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 68.



callus pads, hydrophilic cotton wool, medicinal vaseline, paraffin oil, perfume, Nivea cosmetics (soap, toothpaste, face cream, shaving cream), even condoms (Primeros gum, 1938). Some of the bills also list presents. For example, Alexandru Engel received a "Cairo vase" from Porcelanul S.A. in 1939 and a pen with gold nibs from Primeros gum in 1938, and this can be discussed in the context of early marketing gifts and the habit of gift making to and by pharmacists. In the 18<sup>th</sup>-century, the privileged pharmacist of Cluj, Tobias Mauksch, instructed his son that for the New Year he should gift sugar, coffee, or lemons to the doctors in town (more to those who write numerous prescriptions).<sup>28</sup>

An interesting item is a notebook with three general inventories of the pharmacy, for 1939, 1940 and 1941, officially secured with thread, stamped and legalized by the Court in Iași in 1940, 1941 and 1942 (cat. 90) (Fig. 10). The 10 pages also display judicial stamps and the mark of Administrația de Constatere Mixtă a Jud. Iași." For each year, the inventory lists all general merchandise (medicinal products, containers and wrappings, books ("various manuals"), labels, etc. in alphabetical order, with number of units/weight and price as of December 31<sup>st</sup>. The last page for each year is a brief accounting summary and balance sheet. The declared profit ranges between 3700 lei (in 1940) and 7442 (in 1939, but with 4713 lei reported from 1938), while Alexandru Engel received 54000 lei/year for personal expenses (as detailed in the accounting book discussed below). A working inventory in pencil, with (cat. no. 91) (Fig. 10) is probably from the same period and was used in the preparation of the official variants. It is interesting to note that these pages have a stamp of the syndicate of pharmacists from Iași, so one can presume that Alexandru was part of this syndicate and thus continued his father's interest in contemporary professional bodies.

One should note several specialized financial documents, such as an accounting book (for 1938-1939) (cat. no. 75) (Fig. 10), structured according to heading such as cash, suppliers, general merchandize, and "various things"; a few pages with the balance sheets as of December 1938, probably working variants for the accounting book, as they share the same

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<sup>28</sup> "Because, unfortunately, New Year's gifts are given to gentlemen physicians everywhere, here at Târgu Mureș we must send them too. Such a gift can be a jar of fine sugar, 4, 5, 6, 7 pounds of coffee, a can of Pulv. Fumalis, or Troch. Benedicti and if the lemons are beautiful, 6 pieces. For the physicians who have little experience and write less, half of these amounts." "Before physicians you must bow. On New Year's you must wish them 'Happy New Year!' give them a little gift, but you have to mention that we cannot give more and using the opportunity, we may ask them to honor us with their support in the future too." Tuka László, "Tobias Mauksch: Instructio," *Acta Musei Napocensis*, 49/II (2012): 175.

paper size and writing (cat. no. 92), and a bill mentioning a bank payment via the Romanian Credit Bank (among the invoices from Drogueria Standard, cat. no. 76).

Other documents in the lot under discussion relate to the control of drug trade, toxic medicines, alcohol, saccharine, and dispensing in general. The Engels have kept, among the financial documents, alcohol bills, several special authorizations for saccharine, bills for narcotic medicines, as well as a special ledger for such controlled substances (cat. no. 78). These items reflect the modernization of legislation in the field and adoption of specific international regulations in Interwar Romania. Both the financial documents discussed above and the preserved prescriptions contain special bills for narcotic drugs, dated 1938-1942. The special ledger of the Engel pharmacy, dated 1942, focusing on special pharmaceutical products such as narcotics, toxic substances, and saccharine, has a section for legislation and one for analyses. During the Interwar Period there were international attempts at regulating the production and consumption of narcotics in Europe. In 1930 Romania instituted the state monopoly of narcotics and created the Commission against the abuse of narcotics.<sup>29</sup> The League of Nations attempted to follow up on the decisions of the 1912 International Opium Convention by concentrating on the manufacture of opium (establishing quotas), assessing the legitimate medical needs of the each state (based on their own reports), tracking imports and exports of narcotics and identifying discrepancies that indicated points where narcotics were diverted into the underground economy. In the late 1920s it became apparent that “nations were uncertain how to list pharmacies and secondary manufacturers of medical compounds”, so that the League and several national police forces “had criminalized recreational consumption and had severely restricted retail distribution by physicians and pharmacists”.<sup>30</sup> In Romania, especially in Moldavia, Jews held strategic positions in medicine and pharmacy (which were key entry points for narcotics)<sup>31</sup> and this is also reflected by the names of both suppliers and doctors writing prescriptions fulfilled at the Engel pharmacy, at least during the periods with preserved detailed financial records. The lot of preserved prescriptions dated 1942 (cat. no. 74) also sheds light on the continued persecution of the Jews (Jewish doctors) in the aftermath of the 1941 pogrom of Iași, when at least some of the doctors were released.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Stancu, “Din istoria farmaciei,” 66.

<sup>30</sup> Alan A. Block, “European Drug Traffic and Traffickers between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences,” in *Journal of Social History*, 23/2 (1989): 318, 323.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.

<sup>32</sup> Radu Ioanid, “The Holocaust in Romania: The Iași Pogrom of June 1941,” *Contemporary European History*, 2/2 (1993), 133.

Numerous prescriptions include both the mention "Jewish doctor" in the printed header of the documents and the dry stamp of the Professional Association of the Jewish Doctors, with a depiction of the Star of David. Though expelled from the National Association of Doctors in 1940, segregated to their own professional associations, and only allowed to treat Jewish patients,<sup>33</sup> Jewish doctors in Iași continued to profess in 1942 and had their prescriptions fulfilled by the son of a naturalized German pharmacist. The prescriptions (cat. no. 73 and 74) also reveal the existence of a few female doctors active in Iași and Cornești-Bălți during that period: Dr. Violette Strat (internal and female diseases, gynecologist and obstetrician - "mamoș", with a private practice), Dr. Elena Derevici (nervous diseases, assistant doctor at the Socola Hospital), Dr. Valeria Costinescu (internal and children's diseases, with a private practice), and Dr. Buciușcan Maria (doctor in the Cornești-Bălți circumscription).

Chronologically, the lot of items from the Engel pharmacy ends during the 1940s with a consistent typed product catalogue with current prices from Gedeon Richter, producer of chemical goods in Bucharest (cat. 88), a request for Alexandru Engel to attend the annual verification of the weights and measuring tools (cat. no. 85), probably also a typed page with suggested shifts for night service and Sunday rest among 23 pharmacies in Iași (cat. no. 87), and a few printed posters, one of which mentions the Engel pharmacy among those opened for emergencies on Tuesday nights (cat. no. 93) (though the latter couple of documents are not dated). The latest in the series is a summons for the pharmacist to repair the doorbell of the shop and to set up an emergency room in five days, under the threat of penalties leading up to the termination of concession rights (cat. no. 84).

It remains unclear when the "La Coroana"/Engel pharmacy closed. The Communist Regime nationalized urban pharmacies in 1949 (through decree 134) and rural ones in 1950 (through decree 418), besides all other private pharmaceutical establishments (pharmaceutical production units, druggist's, cosmetic and medical analyses laboratories, drug warehouses). The decree of 1949 was completed by a comprehensive list of units to be nationalized "even if partially or incorrectly named, and even if they have changed name or address,"<sup>34</sup> but it does not include the pharmacy in Iași. The most recent document preserved in the collection is dated May 1946 (cat. no. 84), so "La Coroana" might have closed between 1946 and 1949. Alexandru Engel died in January 1947,<sup>35</sup> so he might have been the one to

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<sup>33</sup> Ioanid, *Securitatea și vânzarea evreilor. Istoria acordurilor secrete dintre România și Israel* (Iași: Polirom, 2015), 16.

<sup>34</sup> The decree is available online at <http://legislatie.just.ro/public/detaliidocument/21851> (accessed January 2022).

<sup>35</sup> Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 261.

decide the end of the family pharmacy just before his demise, or his oldest daughter Alexandrina (Adina) might have continued operating it for a short period<sup>36</sup> (as the building on Atanasie Panu - no. 64? - was demolished in 1947 and it is unlikely the pharmacy moved again).<sup>37</sup>

Despite some uncertain elements, "La Coroana" pharmacy in Iași functioned for about 120 years (from 1823 to ca. 1946) and was owned by the Engel family for around 70 years (ca. 1874-ca. 1946). Due to its long period of activity and the numerous artifacts preserved (documents, containers, tools, books and various printed materials, inventories, and financial documents) it can be analyzed as a case study for the development of pharmacy during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The history of this family and of its owners reflects, at large, the modernization of Romania in the field of pharmaceutical education, legislation, medicine production and trade, but also provides data for narrow topics such as the history of accounting, marketing, contraception, recruitment etc.

Several of the manuscripts preserved in the collection from Cluj reflect the modernization of pharmaceutical education. In Walachia and Moldavia, pharmacists were only required to have a study diploma in 1832, as regulated by Regulamentele Organice (that also introduced the mandatory use of the Austrian Pharmacopoeia and of the Viense Taxa Pharmaceutica, as no local equivalents existed yet).<sup>38</sup> Andreas Iassinski, provisor of the "La Coroana" pharmacy in Iași since 1868, benefited from a traditional education in Moldova, based on apprenticeship (certificate issued in 1857 by "Fizicatul ținutului Fălchii"), went on to continue his studies abroad, and obtained a doctorate in Munich in 1862.<sup>39</sup> Ioan Engel, the sixth provisor, studied at the local School of Pharmacy of the St. Spiridon Hospital, in 1865 completed his apprenticeship at the hospital's pharmacy that had been founded four years prior, became assistant of this school in the same year, then completed university studies in Munich where he obtained his magister diploma in 1868.<sup>40</sup> Higher pharmaceutical education only became available in Walachia in 1857, when the National School of Medicine and Pharmacy was established in Bucharest, with a 5-year program. A branch of this national school became, in 1869, the Higher School of Pharmacy in Bucharest, as an appendix of the Faculty of Medicine.<sup>41</sup> Alexandru Engel took advantage of this development and

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<sup>36</sup> Oral communication with Mr. Dașchievici.

<sup>37</sup> Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 260.

<sup>38</sup> Grecu, Mermeze, *Farmacia*, 61.

<sup>39</sup> Știrbu, "O mărturie documentară," 143.

<sup>40</sup> Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 259.

<sup>41</sup> Știrbu, "O mărturie documentară," 144.

studied at the Higher School of Pharmacy, obtaining a degree as pharmacy assistant (stage II) in 1899 (with three years of academic practice in his father's pharmacy in Iași), enrolled for the subsequent courses (for stage I pharmacist), and then joined the army as a student and eventually officer-pharmacist.

The middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century marks the modernization of the sanitary system (through the unification of the Wallachian and Moldavian ones), the founding of centralized education in the field, the publication of the first sanitary law of modern Romania (1874) and of the first general sanitary regulations,<sup>42</sup> the publication of the first edition of the Romanian pharmacopoeia (1863). Locally educated in pharmacy, Alexandru Engel lived and adapted to the modernizing and increasingly demanding regulations envisaging pharmacies, dispensing, and the drug trade in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The lot of documents preserved at the museum in Cluj indicate that he compiled and submitted for verification an annual inventory, kept ledgers for certain controlled substances (narcotics, toxic drugs, saccharine, alcohol), followed the new laws concerning the import and selling of foreign specialties, provided night services for pharmaceutical emergencies, and had the pharmacy's weights and tools verified annually.

Further studies might also focus on the history of the artifacts of the Engel family, as they also reveal the modernization of pharmaceutical practice and marketing. Containers were mostly made of porcelain during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but molded glass bottles became more fashionable during the first part of the subsequent century. Most apothecary labels were hand-written in the first period and typed or printed during the second. The preserved containers also reveal the prevalence of imported foreign drugs, the so-called "specialties", followed by the gradual development of Romanian production of medicines, hygiene products, cosmetics, and sanitary goods. One could also analyze the characteristics and origin of the paper employed for the documents in the lot (Ioan Engel's official manuscripts are on paper with watermarks), the molded glass containers (with raised embossing and specific technological marks), and the actual substances preserved in some of the containers (indicated in appendix 1). Though not very developed in Romania, the advanced research of pharmaceutical material culture is a valuable tool of study, providing access to more general historical questions starting from narrow case-studies.

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<sup>42</sup> Șuta et alii (ed.), *Legislația sanitară*, 11, 25.

## Appendix 1

Table of artifacts from the Engel pharmacy in Iași preserved at the History of Pharmacy Collection in Cluj-Napoca

No. crt.	Inv. no.	Item(s)	No. of items	Dating	Origin	Pharmacy name and address	Observations
1	IF 2081-2092, 2094-2099, 2194	White porcelain containers with lids, with signature in black capital letters inside shield-shaped cartouche with blue or pink contour.	19	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	Some lids missing. Similar items at the University of Medicine Museum in Iași. <sup>43</sup>
2	IF 2093	Graduated porcelain jar, marked on the outside "500 G".	1	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	Lid missing.
3	IF 2100-2101	Porcelain measuring cups, with spout and handle, marked on the outside "500 Gr" and "100 ccm".	2	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
4	IF 2102-2108, 2110-2122	Clear glass bottles with faceted glass stoppers, signature in black letters inside shield-shaped cartouche.	20	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	Similar items at the University of Medicine Museum in Iași. <sup>44</sup>
5	IF 2109, 2109a, 2109b, 2109c	Reproductions: Der Wundarzt (The Surgeon), Der Materialist (The Peddler), Der Scheider (The Separator), Der Apotheker (The Pharmacist) from Christoph Weigel's <i>Abbildung der gemein-nützlichen Haupt-Stände</i> , Regensburg, 1698.	4	?	?	-	Actual book pages from an unknown edition? Behind glass, with black tape as frame.
6	IF 2123	Clear glass container with mismatched (?) glass cover with cupping cup-shaped knob.	1	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	Embossed base.
7	IF 2124	Clear glass container with glass stopper with disk-shaped knob, signature "ZINC ACETIC" (preserved content).	1	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
8	IF 2125-2135, 2151-2174	Blue glass small bottles, some with red signatures.	35	19 <sup>th</sup> c.		-	Red signatures indicate toxic substances.
9	IF 2136	Brown glass container, no label.	1	19 <sup>th</sup> c.		-	
10	IF 2137	Bluish glass bottle, printed paper label "Extraktum Cocae	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.?	"Industriile chimico-	-	

<sup>43</sup> Illustrated on fig. 9, Dașchievici, "Engel - o veche familie," 268.

<sup>44</sup> Illustrated on fig. 10, Ibid., 268.

		fluid".			farmaceutice, Soc. Anonimă, Bukarest"		
11	IF 2138	Brown glass bottle with cork stopper, printed paper label "Ferrum sesquichloratum cryst." 1 kg (preserved content).	1	1920s?	E. Merck Darmstadt	-	Label in several languages, including Chinese.
12	IF 2139	Brown glass bottle with cork, printed paper label "Collodium 6%" 1 kilo (preserved content).	1	after 1917	Byk- Guldenwerke Berlin	-	Dating based on company history.
13	IF 2140	Brown glass bottle with cork stopper wrapped in cloth, hand-written label "Naphtolum ...?"	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
14	IF 2141	Brown glass bottle with cork stopper, hand-written signature "Tinct Stramon" on printed paper label.	1	1915- 1925	Iași	"Farmacia Al. I. Engel, Ssor W. Ghelberg, Laborator chimico-biologic, str. Ștefan cel Mare nr. 68"	Dated after the death of Ioan Engel and before the pharmacy moved from Ștefan cel Mare St.
15	IF 2142	Blue glass bottle with the stopper covered in cloth, hand-written signature "Ferr. Oxalycum Oxydul" on printed paper label. Further notations by hand: "8/10, 900" (preserved content).	1	1900	Iași	"Farmacia La Coroana Ioan Engel Jași, lângă poarta Curții"	Pharmacy logo with the depiction of a crown and rosette.
16	IF 2143	Clear glass container with glass stopper.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
17	IF 2144	Black glass container with lid. Marked in white on the glass "Tara fără dop 297 gr."	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
18	IF 2145	Clear glass bottle with glass stopper, fixed with cloth, hanging cardboard label (preserved content, oily yellow substance).	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
19	IF 2146, IF 2148	Clear glass containers with glass stoppers, one with faint traces of a black cartouche, the other with painted signature "ACIDUM BENZOIC".	2	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
20	IF 2147	Clear glass bottle with glass stopper, hand-written signature "Extractum Kolae fluid" on printed paper label (faint traces of content).	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia La Corona Joan Engel, lângă poarta Curții Jassy"	
21	IF 2149	Clear glass container with flared walls and spout.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
22	IF 2150	Clear glass bottle with glass stopper, signature	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	Liqueur obtained from

		"MARASQUIN. DI ZARA".					the distillation of Marasca cherries; industrial-scale production initiated in 1759 in Zadar.
23	IF 2175, 2190- 2193	Clear glass bottles for oils, with glass stoppers, shield-shaped cartouches with signatures.	5	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
24	IF 2176, 2177, 2200- 2204	Pestles made of porcelain and glass (IF 2200).	7	19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> c	?	-	
25	IF 2178- 2186	Spatulas made of wood and metal. One wooden spatula (IF 2178) inscribed "Heinrich Sachs Hoflieferant Pharmaceut. Fabrik Berlin..."	9	end 19 <sup>th</sup> - early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Berlin	-	Heinrich Sachs was a court supplier active around 1900.
26	IF 2187- 2189	Apothecary scale balances with bakelite cups, one with metal beam marked "GESETZL. GLSCH ...?"	2	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		-	Bakelite, the first type of plastic, was patented in 1909.
27	IF 2195	Clear glass cup with inner compartmenting wall, for Seidlitz salts (preserved in paper packages). One paper package printed with coat of arms with lion and unicorn "Honi soit qui mal y pense. Dieu et mon droit" "THE TRUE SEIDLITZ-POWDERS". The other package is likely misspaced (from a pharmacy in Cluj) (preserved content).	1	after mid- 19 <sup>th</sup> -c.	Great Britain?	-	Tartaric acid + 75% potassium sodium tartrate / 25% sodium bicarbonate, dissolved separately then mixed, giving off carbon dioxide.
28	IF 2196- 2197	Clear glass pouring cups (?)	2	20 <sup>th</sup> c.	-	-	
29	IF 2198, 2199, 2205- 2207	Various mortars made of metal, porcelain, and porcelain with outer wire net cover.	5	19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	-	-	
30	IF 2208-	Brown glass container with cork stopper, no signature (preserved content).	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	-	-	
31	IF 2209	Clear glass bottle with green glass stopper, molded text "FARBENFABRIKEM VORM FR. BAYER & CO ELBERFELD PHENACETIN (...)", hand-written signature "Migraenin" and notations "42 g capsulă 50 ... / praf 1/2=30	1	ca. 1900	Germany	"Farmacia La Coroana Ioan Engel Jași lângă poarta curții"	



		bani ?" on printed paper label. Subsequent pencil notations "12 sto... 6 g.."					
32	IF 2210	Yellow glass bottle with cork stopper and printed label "J. D. Riedel - E. de Haën AG Chemische Fabriken. Werk: J. D. Riedel Berlin Gegründet 1814 HEXATHYLENTERAMINUM D.A.B. 6 Bayer", pencil notations, some crossed over (preserved content)	1	1928-1936/7	Berlin	-	Dating based on company history.
33	IF 2211	Clear glass bottle with clear glass stopper, printed paper label "CODEIN PURUM Louis Duvernoy Stuttgart".	1	first half 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Stuttgart	-	
34	IF 2212	Clear glass container with printed label "Podophyllin R.H. Paul... Leipzig" and hand-written notations "100,0 Ph G?"	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Leipzig		
35	IF 2213	Clear glass bottle with cork stopper, printed paper label "G.&R. Fritz, Wien, Oleum Eucalypti globuli., I. Bräunerstrasse 5" hand-written notation "250 gr", bottom with raised embossing "300" (preserved content).	1	?	Vienna	-	
36	IF 2214	Small clear glass bottle with clear glass stopper, hand-written signature "Haemoglobin pur pulver" on printed paper label (preserved content).	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia La Coroana Ioan Engel Iași lângă poarta curții"	
37	IF 2215	Small yellow glass with typewriter typed signature "100g Phenolphthalein" on printed paper label "Dr. Bender & Dr. Hobein. München-Zürich" with handwritten notation "Phenoltal 280".	1	end 19 <sup>th</sup> c. - early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	München-Zürich	-	
38	IF 2216	Small clear glass container with metal stopper, raised embossing "POUDRE LAXATIVE DE VICHY".	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Vichy	-	
39	IF 2217	Small orange glass bottle with cork stopper, handwritten signature "Hidrgir bijodat rubru" on paper printed label (preserved content).	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia La Coroana Ioan Engel Iași lângă poarta curții"	
40	IF 2218	Porcelain container with metal lid.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	-	-	
41	IF	Rectangular clear glass	1	early	-	-	

	2219	container with cork stopper, printed paper label "ZYNCUM CYANAT", signature in red.		20 <sup>th</sup> c.			
42	IF 2220	Clear glass bottle with clear glass stopper, printed paper label "Methylum salycilicum Ph. HELV ..... Z", handwritten notations "156...."	1	before 1915	Zürich	"Farmacia La Coroana J..."	The substance is Oleum Gaultheriae syntheticum.
43	IF 2221	Small clear glass bottle with clear glass stopper, handwritten signature "Extr. Secali cornuti 15%" on printed paper label.	1	after 1915	Iași	"Farmacia "La Coroana" Alexandru Ioan Engel - Iași str. Anastasie Panu nr. 64"	
44	IF 2222	Clear glass container with handwritten paper lid with string, printed paper label "Hydrargyrum oxydatum rubrum (alcohol erased by hand) Louis Duvernoy Stuttgart" and secondary label "Spo: Ko. Netto:" and handwritten notation "500," (preserved content).	1	first half 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Louis Duvernoy, Stuttgart	-	
45	IF 2223	Small porcelain container.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
46	IF 2224	Orange glass container with cork stopper, printed paper label "Coffeinum purum Ph. R. IV, PHARMAROM S.A.R." with manuscript notation "50 g".	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
47	IF 2225	Clear glass container with printed paper label "PECTOFEDRIN. Sirop contra: tusei, bronșitei cronice, afecțiunilor căilor respiratoria, tusei convulsive etc. etc." and secondary label around the neck with the producer's name, relief embossing A inside a circle.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	"Laboratorul "Dr. Al. Iteanu" Furnisor al curții regale, București"	-	
48	IF 2226	Clear glass bottle with cork stopper, faded handwritten signature on printed label "Externe" (preserved content).	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia LA CORÓNĂ Joan Engel Jasi lângă Poarta Curții"	Label on top of another.
49	IF 2227	Brown glass with glass stopper, raised embossing "JODOL D-R No. 35130 Kalle & Co. A.G. Biebrich am Rhein", faded paper label.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Biebrich am Rhein	-	
50	IF 2228	Clear glass bottle with cork stopper, handwritten signature	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia LA CORÓNĂ	

		"DEPILATOR" on printed paper label (preserved content), "LIT LEON&BERMANN BUC" on the base embossed "200".				Joan Engel Jasi lângă Poarta Curții"	
51	IF 2229	Clear glass bottle with printed paper label "J-D Riedel A-G Chemische Fabrik Drogen-Großhandlung gegründet ... (?) Berlin-Britz 100g Extractum valerianae fluidum" (preserved content).	1	1912-1928	Germany	-	Dating based on company history.
52	IF 2230	Brown glass bottle with globe-ended stopper, "Acidum lacticum puriss albiss DAB5 90-91% Gewicht spez Gewicht 1.210 Milchsäure reinst C.H. Boehringer Sohn Hamburg", embossed on the base "75", embossing on the body.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Hamburg	-	Embossing on the body; the company produced lactic acid on an industrial scale since 1895.
53	IF 2231	Clear glass container with glass stopper, printed label "250 g, JODUM RESUBLIMAT, PH. G. VI, Schering-Kahlbauma G. Berlin" (preserved content).	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Berlin	-	
54	IF 2232	Brown glass bottle with heart-ended stopper, printed label "Piperazină iodată, 1 cc = 0,5 piperazină 0,05 iod, doza: 10-20 picături de 2 ori pe zi,", embossing on the body (preserved content).	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Bucharest	"Laboratorul Dr. Gh. Dumitrescu str. Câmpineanu 42 București"	Container similar to 52; embossing on the body; laboratory active at least in 1925-1927.
55	IF 2233	Brown glass bottle with disk-ended stopper, no label, no embossing.	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		-	Container similar to nos. 52 and 54.
56	IF 2234	Clear glass bottle with cork stopper, printed label handwritten note "colorant pentru" before printed signature "OJET AROMATIC", embossed base "80", (preserved content).	1	before 1915	Iași	"Farmacia La Coroana Ioan Engel, Iași, lângă poarta Curții"	
57	IF 2235	Pill-moulding apparatus made of metal, embossed "ŠEVČICK'S OBLATEN-VERSCHLUSS APPARAT".	1	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	Berlin	-	Produced by the company BRÜCKNER, LAMP & C <sup>o</sup> BERLIN. C.
58	IF 2236	Porcelain box with lid, inscribed "dépôt a Paris, Odontine nouveau Dentifrice, composé par Mr. J. Pelletier membre de l'Académie de Médecine, Rue de Seine 61" (preserved content).	1	after 1860	Paris	-	Product launched in 1860 by chemist J. Pelletier, member of the French Academy of

							Medicine.
59	IF 2242	Lot of apothecary labels with printed decorative border.	ca. 10	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	?	-	
60	IF 2243	Handwritten copy of a certificate for Alexandru Engel.	1	1899	The University of Bucharest	-	In Ioan Engel's hand writing.
61	IF 2243a	Handwritten letter to the minister by Ioan Engel, requesting to be included among the pharmacists supplying boarding schools.	1	1896		-	Working sketch of a letter addressed to the Minister of Cults and Public Instruction, with corrections and additions.
62	IF 2243b	Handwritten letter to the dean by Ioan Engel.	1	1897		-	Apparently, the copy of a letter addressed to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine.
63	IF 2244	Certificate of practice, 1 <sup>st</sup> year, for Alexandru Engel	1	1897		-	Original manuscript.
64	IF 2245	Certificate of practice, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year, for Alexandru Engel.	1	1898		-	Original manuscript.
65	IF 2246	Certificate of practice, 3 <sup>rd</sup> year, for Alexandru Engel.	1	1899		-	Original manuscript.
66	IF 2247	Diploma for Andreas Iassinski, with red wax seal.	1	1857	Huși		
67	IF 2248	Set of pharmaceutical printed forms, "Secțiunea Cartonage Preț-curent Farmaceutic, S.A. SONNENFELD R.T..."	1	1923	Oradea		One of the largest printing houses in Romania.
68	IF 2249	Printed booklet, "Farmacopia medicamentelor compuse și specialităților farmaceutice streine, autorizate de direcțiunea serviciului sanitar, a fi importate în România", by Nicolae Antonescu.	1	1913	Târgoviște, printed by "Viitorul" Elie Angelescu.		Alphabetical list of foreign drugs that could be imported into Romania.
69	IF 2250	Printed booklet "Statutele votate în adunarea Generală de la 12 Maiu 1901", Asociațiunea Generală a Corpului Farmaceutic din România.	1	1901	Bucharest		
70	IF 2251	Printed booklet "Statutele Asociațiunei Generale a Corpului Farmaceutic din România votate în congresul de la 3 octombrie 1899".	1	1899	Bucharest, printed by "Minerva".		The General Association of the Pharmaceutical Body from Romania was founded in 1899 by Ștefan Minovici, merging with the Society of

							Pharmacists from Romania in the early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.
71	IF 2252	Book, Alfons L. Brociner, "Introducere la Chimia analitică cualitativă".	1	1888	Bucharest, Carol Gobl Printing House.		
72	IF 2253	Printed booklet, "Lege sanitară promulgate la 3 aprilie 1885, cu modificările..."	1	1893	Bucharest, the State Printing House.		
73	IF 2254	Handwritten prescriptions, recipes, goods received notes.	145	1936-1937	Doctors and medical institutions in Iași.	"Farmacia La Coroana Alexandru Ioan Enghel, Iași, str. Anastasie Panu 62(?)"	125 stamped prescriptions and 20 recipes, one of the latter on a paper with the heading of the "Farmacia la angelû a lui A. Racoviță".
74	IF 2255	Handwritten prescriptions, narcotic bills, goods received notes.	143	1942	Doctors and medical institutions in Iași	"Farmacia La Coroana Alexandru Ioan Enghel, Iași, str. Anastasie Panu 62(?)"	Tied with rope according to the three trimesters of that year. Numerous mentions of the Jewish origin of some of the doctors.
75	IF 2426	Handwritten accounting book "Cartea mare - Farmacia Alexandru I. Engel "La Coroana".	1	1938-1939		"Farmacia Alexandru I. Engel "La Coroana", str. Atanasie Panu nr. 64 Iași"	Headings "cassa, furnizori, mărfuri generale, diverse".
76	IF 2427	Invoices, bills, certificates, transportation notes, and others.	686	1937-1943	Iași, Brașov, Cluj, Bucharest,		541 invoices from 36 providers, <sup>45</sup> 145

<sup>45</sup> Depozit de medicamente fam. M. Rottman, Iași; Droguemed S.I.N.C., C. Cioriciu&Farmacist Col. Al. Vieru / Droguemed depozit de medicamente, reprezentanțe&consignațiuni / Droguemed David Rabinovici depozit de medicamente Iași; Flomerom S.A.R./R.A.G. pentru cultura, colectarea și exportul plantelor medicinale/ Medzinalpflanzen Export-Grosshandel, Brașov-Kronstadt; L. Littner, Atelier de împachetat vată, Iași; Fulger. Pungi și capsule farmaceutice B. Goldștein, Fondată în anul 1899, Iași; Iancu Froim. Coloniale și papetărie, Iași; Coroana H.Weronner, depozit-consignațiuni, București; ...? și Laboratorul Drl. Dr. Beceanu Iași; Chemix S.A.R. pentru fabricațiunea și comerțul de produse chimico-farmaceutice, București; Porcelanul S.A., depozit en-gros de sticlărie, faianță, porcelanuri, vase emailate și de aluminiu, tot felul de articole de menaj, lămpi și becuri electrice, București; Trans-Chimica Alexandru Dima, Import-export-comision-reprezentanțe-transporturi terestre, București; Primeros Gum I. Fuchs, Import și comerț de articole medicinale de cauciuc; Drogueria NESTOR, București; Beiersdorf &Co, S.A.R. Brașov, Fabrică chimică, Dr. Wander S.A. fabrică de produse farmaceutice și dietetice, București; Depozit de medicamente M. Irofte-Mardare, Iași;

					Chişinău, Buftea		other documents.
77	IF 2428	Handwritten enrollment document for Alexandru Engel.	1	1900	Iaşi		With official stamps and dry stamp.
78	IF 2429	Printed ledger, filled-in by hand "Registrul farmaciei".	1	1942		"Farmacia Alex. Engel Iaşi"	Bound and officially stamped ledger for narcotics, toxic substances, saccharin, analyses, including printed legislation.
79	IF 2430	Handwritten power of attorney, Ioan Engel for George Buzescu.	1	1892	Iaşi		Paper watermark, official stamps, dry stamp.
80	IF 2431	Various pharmaceutical printed materials.	15	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		"Farmacia la "Coroană" Ioan Engel Iaşi, lângă Poarta Curjii" / "Farm. Coroană, str. Anast. Panu 54, farm. Alex Ion Engel"	Envelopes, trade cards, brochures.
81	IF 2432	Handwritten sketch of a letter from Ion Engel to the minister of war, asking for his son to be recruited as a pharmacy student.	1	1900			

Depozit de medicamente FARMA S.I.N.C., Iaşi; UFAROM S.A.R., uzinele chimico-farmaceutice române, fost Egger&co S.A., Cluj; Farmako, Laborator de produse chimico-farmaceutice, Chişinău; Laboratoire L'atome Dr. N.A.Racovitza, Société anonyme, produits chimiques et pharmaceutiques spécialisés, Jassy; Drogueria Standard, societate anonimă română, aprovizionări complete pentru farmacii și droguerii, Bucureşti; Amphora Z.G. Segall, agentură Iaşi; Generex, Martin Friedrich agentură&comision, Comerţ în cosignație, Iaşi; Diana, societate anonimă română, furnizorul curții regale, Bucureşti; Hygea, asoc. anon. Rom. Pentru comerțul și industria de produse farmaceutice și sanitare, Bucureşti; A. Grozea&co, depozit de medicamente en-gros, vânzarea exclusivă și depozitul general al laboratoarelor Tion, Limas; Sarcov, societate anonimă pentru comerțul de vopsele și chimicale S.A.R., Bucureşti-Galați-Iaşi; Agentură și comision G.H.Leibovici, Iaşi; Sticlăria Aron Hamer, Iaşi; Parfumeria Excelsior, B. Michelson&P. Marian, Bucureşti; Liavimi depozit de vată R.I.Cohn, Iaşi; Oficiul de distribuție a alcoolului Dumitru Gavrilescu Iaşi; Pharmadrog depozit de medicamente fam. M. Gurău, Iaşi; Dr. Alexandru Radu, Bucureşti; Olex, societate în nume colectiv Ing. L. Edelstein, S. Feltz&Ing. M. Santoma, fabrica specială de ulei de vaselină și vaselină medicinală, Bucureşti; fabrica de vată și pansamente B. Stirbey Buftea, furnisoarea spitalelor și autorităților.

82	IF 2433	Typewriter typed request for loan Enghel to present the military situation of all employed in his pharmacy, in case of army mobilization (with envelope).	1	1916			
83	IF 2434	Handwritten reply of Alexandru Engel regarding the military situation of all those employed in his pharmacy (and slip of postal recommendation).	1	1916			
84	IF 2435	Typewriter typed summons for the pharmacist to repair the doorbell and set up an emergency room in 5 days.	1	1946	Iași, the Sanitary Service of the City	“Farmacia Al. Enghel Iași”	Original signature.
85	IF 2436	Printed form requesting the pharmacist to present his measuring tools and weights for the annual verification.	1	1944	Iași, the Department of Measures, Weights, and Precious Metals.	“A. I. Enghel farmacie, A. Panu 64 Iași”	Official stamps, original signature.
86	IF 2437	Typewriter typed request for a list of personnel (licensed pharmacists) and slip of postal recommendation.	1	1928	Iași, the Sanitary Service.	“Alex Enghel, Atanasie Panu 54”	Official stamps, original signature.
87	IF 2438	Typewriter typed project of modifying Sunday rest and night service of pharmacies.	1	not dated			
88	IF 2439	Typewriter typed product catalogue “Fabrica de produse chimice Gedeon Richter”, 7 pages	1	1940			Original signature “Richter”.
89	IF 2440	Printed page “Farmacie practică, incompatibilitatea unor medicamente noi”.	1	not dated			With handwritten corrections.
90	IF 2441	Pharmacy inventory, handwritten notebook.	1	1939-1941		“Farmacia Engel Alex, St. Anastasie Panu 64, Iași”	Legalized by the Court in Iași.
91	IF 2442	Working pharmacy inventory, handwritten in pencil.	1	not dated			With corrections. Stamp “Sindicatul farmaciștilor din orașul și județul Iași”.
92	IF 2443	Manuscript pages regarding the financial situation of the pharmacy on December 31 <sup>st</sup> 1938.	3	1938-1939			Balance sheet, expenses, merchandise, capital, profit.
93	IF 2444	Printed posters listing pharmacies working Saturdays and night shifts in Iași (the “Enghel” pharmacy opened Thursday night)	7	not dated		“Enghel, Anastasie Panu 64, tel 1445”	

**List of illustrations**



Fig. 1. Pharmacist Alexandru Engel in 1906 (from the family archive).





Fig. 2. Blue glass bottle with the label of the “La Coróna” Ioan Engel pharmacy (cat. no. 15).



Fig. 3. Clear glass bottle with the label of the "La Coroana" Alexandru Ioan Engel pharmacy (cat. no. 43).



Fig. 4. Clear glass bottle labeled Pectophedrin, produced in Romania (cat. no. 47).





Fig. 5. Porcelain box for dentifrice, with preserved content, made in Paris (cat. no. 58).

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Fig. 6. Commercial for Urodonal on a bill issued by Standardrog (cat. no. 76).



# From the Russian Occupation to the Reign of Alexandru D. Ghica. The Features of a Political Transition

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*Article history: Received 2.11.2021; Revised 7.12.2021;*

*Accepted 28.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract:** The appointment of the Princes of Moldavia and Wallachia presented Russian officials with serious dilemmas, whether they were the leaders of the Empire's foreign policy or of the occupation administration. In the end, a solution was adopted – the selection of the Princes by the Porte from a short list of candidates proposed by Russia – in line with Russia's strategic interests regarding the Ottoman Empire as a whole and despite Pavel Kiselev's proposals that the occupation should be prolonged or, in a transitional phase, that the civilian administration of the Princes should operate in parallel with a Russian military administration. The selection of Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica as the main candidate for Wallachia and his rapid investiture by the Sultan have several explanations, including his political profile convenient for both Powers, his activity as minister and head of the militia, his personal relation with Pavel Kiselev and his access to the sums of money required for his investiture in Constantinople. However, his insufficient political prestige in relation to the country's great boyar families, his image as a Prince submissive to the Russian will, skillfully used by his opponents, and the large debts he had accumulated, which he could not pay without generating several resounding financial scandals linked to the leasing of state revenues, were likely to herald the political crisis of the following years, the success of the opposition in undermining his regime and, finally, his dismissal after only eight years of rule.

**Keywords:** Statutory regime, Pavel Kiselev, investiture, Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica, financial obligations.

*SUBB – Historia, Volume 66, 2, December 2021*

*doi:10.24193/subbhist.2021.2.04*

**Rezumat: De la ocupația rusă la domnia lui Alexandru D. Ghica. Caracteristicile unei tranziții politice.** Desemnarea domnilor Moldovei și Țării Românești i-a pus pe oficialii ruși în fața unor serioase dileme, fie că este vorba de diriguitorii politicii externe a Imperiului, fie de conducătorii administrației de ocupație. În cele din urmă, a fost adoptată o soluție – selectarea domnilor de către Poartă dintr-o listă scurtă de candidați propusă de Rusia – în acord cu interesele strategice ale Rusiei relative la Imperiul otoman în anbamblu și în pofida propunerilor lui Pavel Kiselev ca ocupația să fie prelungită sau ca, într-o fază de tranziție, administrația civilă a domnilor să funcționeze în paralel cu o administrație militară rusească. Selectarea lui Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica drept candidat principal pentru Țara Românească și rapida sa investire de către sultan au mai multe explicații, între care profilul său politic convenabil pentru ambele Puteri, activitatea sa ca ministru și șef al miliției pământene, relația personală cu Pavel Kiselev și accesul la sumele de bani necesare cheltuielilor impuse de investirea sa la Constantinopol. Cu toate acestea, prestigiul politic insuficient de pronunțat în raport cu marile familii boierești din țară, imaginea sa de principe supus voinței rusești, abil utilizată de adversari, și marile datorii acumulate, pe care nu le-a putut plăti fără să genereze câteva răsunătoare scandaluri financiare legate de arendarea veniturilor statului au fost de natură a anunța criza politică din anii următori, succesul opoziției în a-i submina regimul și, în cele din urmă, destituirea sa după doar opt ani de domnie.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Regimul regulamentar, Pavel Kiselev, investitură domnească, Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica, datorii financiare

The establishment of the Regulation regime in the Romanian Principalities was accomplished in multiple stages, whose features derive from the correlation between the international context, in touch with the Eastern question, and the clash of internal forces, separating the Russian officials led by Pavel Kiselev and supported by a part of the boyars from the “opponents” and the “dissatisfied”, who, for various reasons, hoped that the new reform, concerning all the internal institutions, would be a temporary experiment, either in the sense of a return to the old order of things or, on the contrary, to allow, through revisions, the accentuation of the modern and national character of the transformations initiated by the organic law.

The first stage of the implementation of the regime, troubled and full of uncertainties for the local elite, ended with the adoption of the Organic Regulation and its application, under Pavel Kiselev’s watchful



eye. Once it was validated in Petersburg, the plenipotentiary president, combining moderation and patience with insistence and firmness, managed to weaken the resistance of the Wallachian elite, as proven by the political conformism shown by most of the boyars in the second stage, that of revision and systematical implementation of the Regulation's stipulations (1832-1834). Of course, the moderation of the president, the uncertainty regarding the political future of the Principalities – whether they were going to be annexed or not – and, last but not least, the energies consumed in intrigues for obtaining the throne would, together, explain this state of things.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the president knew how to find a few supporters of the new regime among the great boyars, whom he promoted in offices of authority, and how to capably maneuver through the contrary interests of various boyar categories; he had an inspired political strategy, aiming to attract the “intermediary category”, namely the boyars of note from the counties and from the less influent branches of the “great families” in “important positions in administration and justice”, offering these boyars “new ways of enrichment, new careers” in the central and municipal administration.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the international context, favorable to Russia, wasn't presenting too many hopes for a rebalancing of forces, from Austria, France or Britain.<sup>3</sup> The Russo-Ottoman war of 1828-1829, ending disastrously for the Turks, alarmed the cabinets of the Great European Powers. In London, especially, there was a fear of new Russian annexations and even of an eventual dismemberment of the Ottoman empire,<sup>4</sup> the British diplomats finding themselves forced to observe a situation that placed Turkey, “a weak and powerless state”, in a state of political dependency on Russia, resembling that of Poland, before the partition.<sup>5</sup>

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\* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2020-1868, within PNCDI III.

<sup>1</sup> Jean C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines sous l'occupation Russe (1828-1834). Le Règlement Organique, etude de droit public et d'histoire diplomatique* (Bucharest: Imprimerie de l'Indépendance Roumaine, 1904), 65–82.

<sup>2</sup> Arhivele Naționale ale României National Archives of Romania, henceforth ANR), *Achiziții noi, pachet CCLV/6, f. 1–2 (Notice sur les Boyards Moldaves)*.

<sup>3</sup> J. A. R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question. An Historical Study in European Diplomacy*, fourth edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), 232–243; Gh. Cliveti, *Concertul European. Un experiment în relațiile internaționale din secolul XIX* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2006), 760–763; Frederick Stanley Rodkey, *The Turco-Egyptian Question in the Relations of England, France, and Russia 1832-1841* (Urbana: The University of Illinois, 1924), 15–16.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Macknight, *Thirty Years of Foreign Policy. A History of the Secretaryship of the Earl of Aberdeen and Viscount Palmerston* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1855), 115–120.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question: Army, Government, and Society 1815-1833*

In Kiselev's view, which he attributed to other Russian dignitaries in an official report to the Foreign Minister, the Egyptian issue that broke out in 1832, followed by a series of crises that troubled the Ottoman empire in the following decade, proved the incapacity of this state to reform itself, to strengthen its finances and internal structures, being destined to disintegrate. He also thought that this conclusion had to be formulated in British, French and Austrian cabinets as well. He assumed that in London, Paris and Vienna there was an "intimate conviction of the futility of their own efforts to stop the decadence of this state" and of the fact that the Ottoman empire could no longer play a significant role in maintaining the European balance of power, as a true counterweight to Russia's growing influence in the Orient.<sup>6</sup> The battle which Kiselev envisioned, following in the footsteps of Adam Czartoryski, when he was Foreign Minister (1804-1806),<sup>7</sup> and of Ioannis Capodistria,<sup>8</sup> was to be for the influence and patronage over the work of substituting the Ottoman empire with "young states" in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, a change in the Russian policy towards the Ottomans seemed absolutely necessary to him - from a policy that mostly focused on compliance with the existent treaties to a strategy meant to ensure Russia's patronage over the Orthodox subjects of the Porte. The first step had to be Moldavia and Wallachia, which the Turks considered "as good as lost", in a political, rather than a territorial sense, offering in exchange to waiver the war compensations and an alliance against the external and internal enemies of the Porte.<sup>9</sup> Why the Romanian Principalities? Because the Russian influence here was consolidating, and the regime instituted through the Organic Regulations offered sufficient warranties for their control and, at the same time, a positive example on what Russian protection meant - a "constitutional" regime, order and stability, internal development etc..<sup>10</sup>

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(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 366. The comparison belongs to lord Charles Heytesbury, British Ambassador to Petersburg (M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923. A Study in International Relations* (New York: MacMillan, 1966), 72.

<sup>6</sup> A. P. Zablotski-Desiatovski, *Graf P. D. Kiselev i ego vremja*, IV, p. 75 (Bucharest, 21 April 1832, *Kiselev's note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*).

<sup>7</sup> *Vnešnjaja politika Rossii XIX i načala XX veka: dokumenty rossijskogo ministerstva inostrannykh del*, serija pervaja, 1801-1815, tom pervoj, 1801-1804, Moskva, 1960, p. 631-632 (26 februarie 1804, A. A. Czartoryski către S. R. Vorontzov); *Diplomaticheskiya snosheniya Rossii s" Frantsiey v" epokhu Napoleona I*, în *Sbornik russkovo istoriceskovo obcestva*, LXXXII, Petersburg, 1892, p. 268-275; 11/23 January 1806, Czartoriski's Memoir to Alexander I).

<sup>8</sup> Ioannis Capodistrias, "Aperçu de ma carrière publique depuis 1798 jusqu'à 1822," *Sbornik russkovo istoriceskovo obcestva*, III (1868): 210-211.

<sup>9</sup> A. P. Zablotski-Desiatovski, *Graf P. D. Kiselev i ego vremja*, IV, 77.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, IV, 82 (Kiselev to Nesselrode, 26 September 1832).

## **The designation of the Princes and the issue of the new regime**

Before the fate of the Principalities was decided and the conditions for the withdrawal of Russian troops established, another two essential political aspects on which the future of the regime depended – the issue of electing the Princes and the procedures of *revision of the organic legislation*, an essential component of the internal autonomy, guaranteed by the Adrianople Treaty<sup>11</sup> – were somehow left in suspension.<sup>12</sup> Initially, the revision was attributed to an Extraordinary General Assembly, a solution preferred by the “reform committee”, as *it clearly results* from a report of Minciaky, which emphasized the disadvantages of this decision for Russia: the election of the Princes would generate intrigues and internal tensions, fueled by the consuls of other Great Powers, with unpredictable results, and the prerogative to revision the Organic Regulations would allow the boyars to alter, in time, the foundations of the regime.<sup>13</sup> These observations, adding to the comments of Nesselrode and Kiselev regarding the risks of a premature withdrawal of Russian troops from the Principalities, before the Porte’s ratification of the Regulations and their implementation in the truly important points – the reorganization of the administration, the local militia, the courts and the regime of privileges – show that the transition to the rule of the Princes was to be extended for as long as possible. Regardless of the trajectory the Russian-Ottoman relations were to take, the issue of “electing” the Princes was important and had to be permanently in Russia’s attention, since in November 1830, Nesselrode informed Kiselev that the Tsar wanted “the election of the Princes [...] to be carried out in the time and *under the power* of the Russian occupation”, and, if necessary, the great boyars had to be informed, as a concealed threat, that the Russian officials “will protect the countries against the intriguers and the ambitious.” Thinking this Russian interest not in terms of political force,

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<sup>11</sup> *Acte și documente relative la istoria renascerei României*, I, published by Ghenadie Petrescu, Dimitrie A. Sturdza și Dimitrie C. Sturdza (Bucharest: Tipografia Carol Göbl, 1888), 321 (*The Adrianople Treaty*, 14 September 1829).

<sup>12</sup> ANR, *Colecția microfilme Rusia*, roll 56, c. 379 (Minciaky to Kiselev; 2 April 1830).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 380-381. Minciaky proposed that the revision should remain the prerogative of a “special committee” made up of eight boyars, four for each Principality, appointed by the future Princes through the Administrative Council, and that the proposal for revision should be validated only by Russia and the Ottoman Empire, since even in the past the acts concerning the status of the Principalities, their privileges, hatt-i sherifs and firmans, “did not need the approval of the boyar assemblies, but these acts were nevertheless presented and read before the Princes and the divans.” (*Ibid.*, c. 382). In regard to the election of the Princes, he considered it necessary that all candidates be approved in advance by the two Courts, the Protector and the Suzerain, in order to verify their conformity with the provisions of the organic law (*Ibid.*, c. 383-384).

but of convenient procedures and able strategies, Pavel Kiselev, in order to prevent the Extraordinary General Assemblies of Revision to become a “nest of intrigues and traps” pending the election of Princes, opted to dissolve them after the revision, “and for electing the Princes to convene a new Assembly, composed according to a law that I will introduce in the Regulation.”<sup>14</sup>

As one can observe, the issue of designating the Princes seemed to be of the utmost importance. The election of Princes through legitimising electoral procedures implied, in his opinion, great risks, because *the old aristocracy obviously interested in returning to the previous state of things*, with the purpose of maintaining its power, the corrupt mores and exclusive privileges, all while being unaware that the dangerous events from 1821 could repeat themselves. That is why the “honorable exceptions” had to be promoted, namely the boyars that favored the “new system” of government and understood its advantages, for the state, for the society in general and for the future of the aristocracy itself. For all of these reasons, the durability of the organic legislation, after the designation of the Princes, was vital – thought Kiselev – for the stability of the Principalities’ future, as well as for the Russian interests in the region. The most secure guarantees were required, especially because the Porte staked everything on delaying the ratification of the Regulations and the swift designation of Princes, hoping to use the “evil produced by the confrontation of caste interests,” in the competition for the throne, to weaken and even undermine the new organization. This interesting, lucid, in some places a masterly synthesis, is completely edifying on the intentions and the plans of the plenipotentiary president.<sup>15</sup> These observations came in addition to the requests he formulated in a letter to Buteniev, eloquent for his political agenda, and expressed concerns regarding an imminent and imprudent nomination of Princes: the appointment hatt-i sherifs had to contain clear guaranties concerning the full compliance to the Organic legislation, of the “administrative and legislative measures adopted by the provisional government” and not included in the Regulation, *the high officials, meaning those from the Administrative Council, were not to be changed by the Princes for a*

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<sup>14</sup> Alexandru Papadopol Calimah, “Generalul Pavel Kisselev în Moldova și Țara Românească 1829-1834, după documente rusești,” *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, series II, IX (1886-1887): 92-93. The President was aware that the “general lack of sympathy for reform,” which would “touch [the] interests of all classes,” demanded its immediate application, otherwise “it will remain only a written theory, and will have power only in the parts of it in which the *disturbing aristocracy would find its profits*” (emphasis added) (Ibid., 92). See also Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines sous l'occupation Russe (1828-1834)*, 79-82.

<sup>15</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* (Colecția Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki supliment I<sub>4</sub>), 394-395.

period of time. The Russian embassy had to publicly and firmly express the idea that the persons who were to be designated by the Porte also needed Russia's consent,<sup>16</sup> and had to comply with a set of publicly announced requirements of the Protective Power in order to block the Phanariot intrigues from Constantinople as much as possible.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, we think his entire demonstration provides a fairly good explanation for why Kiselev's preferences inclined towards potential candidates who contributed to the implementation of the reforms before the elections for the first General Assemblies, namely Constantinică Palade in Moldavia<sup>18</sup> and Alexandru D. Ghica in Wallachia, both commanders of the newly established local militias. If in Moldavia the premature death of Constantinică Palade<sup>19</sup> forced Pavel Kiselev to support other candidates, in Wallachia, Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica was to become Prince – his service as “minister”, his personal relation with the plenipotentiary president and his connections in influential political and financial milieus from Constantinople ensured his victory.

### **A successful candidacy. The reasons for the designation of Alexandru D. Ghica**

In the years of the Russian occupation, Alexandru D. Ghica was perceived as an unselfish person, having a proper education, with the reputation of a righteous man, which made a part of the “general opinion” to favor his candidacy for the throne. Towards Kiselev he acted properly, within the limits of maintaining his own dignity.<sup>20</sup> He fitted the dignitary profile well, namely that of a “new man”, a profile which the plenipotentiary president appreciated, and with which he sought to surround himself during the occupation: with a slightly better education

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<sup>16</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* (Colecția Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, supliment I<sub>4</sub>), 396 (Kiselev to Buteniev, 2 April 1832).

<sup>17</sup> A. P. Zablotski-Desiatovski, *Graf P. D. Kiselev i ego vremja*, IV, 73 (Kiselev to Buteniev, 2 April 1832).

<sup>18</sup> Constantin Gane, *Trecute vieți de doamne și domnițe*, II, ed. by Victor Leahu (Iași: Junimea, 1972), 119, 122; A. F. Mirkovich, M.F. Mirkovich. *Fedor Iakovlevich Mirkovich: Ego zhizneopisanie sostavlennoe po ostavlenным ego zapiskam, vospominaniiam blizkikh liudei, i podlinnym dokumentam*, II (St. Petersburg: Voennaia tipografiia, 1889), 210 (Mircovici to Kiselev, 18/30 August 1830).

<sup>19</sup> Constantinică Palade was one of the few boyars described by I. P. Liprandi in a positive manner, as an “honest” boyar with “some vision” and “a well-founded way of thinking” (ANR, *Colecția microfilme Rusia*, roll 34, c. 467–468).

<sup>20</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, *Corespondență diplomatică și rapoarte consulare austriace (1828-1836)*, published after the copies from the Romanian Academy by Ion I. Nistor (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1942), 525 (Timoni to Metternich; 23 August 1833).

than most of the boyars, proving energy, detached, at least apparently, from the old boyar political practices, favoring reform and, especially, devoted to the Power engaged in the process of bringing order in the country's administration. Alexandru Ghica was efficient in completing his tasks and proved probity, which, to the second man in the Russian administration, Minciaky, seemed something not at all common in the Principality. He had a good education, but not too much "spirit"; however, he came to know and understand the affairs of the country through his numerous activities.<sup>21</sup>

By earning Kiselev's trust, he managed to prevail over several other strong candidates. He was preferred to George (Iordache) Filipescu, the member of a family with a long tradition of attachment to Russia, the son of the Great Treasurer Constantin who was more than once close to obtaining the throne of Wallachia.<sup>22</sup> In his turn, he "seemed to breathe only for Russia"<sup>23</sup>; during the occupation he enjoyed Kiselev's benevolence, and showed complete obedience by proving much zeal in carrying out his orders, from the office of Great Vornic. He received the honor of a Great Cross and hoped to ascend to the throne at the right moment, helped or "guided", as contemporaries observed with malice, by his wife Ecaterina, "a smart and ambitious Moldavian"<sup>24</sup> (daughter of Emanoil Balș, Russian colonel and knight, and of Zamfira Razu),<sup>25</sup> in whose salons, frequented by Russian officers, all sorts of intrigues were being planned or unraveled. Although he was an "esprit borné et sans culture," a sort of honesty and an "amour propre" led him towards good actions, proving openness in regard with the reforms proposed by the Protective Court.<sup>26</sup> However, these qualities were unfortunately diminished by the frivolity of his character and by the powerful influence exerted by his wife, who used to "prendre une part active dans les affaires publiques."<sup>27</sup> His intentions were encouraged even by Kiselev, who suggested, in August 1833, during a confidential conversation, that the time had come "to assert himself

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<sup>21</sup> ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Rusia*, roll 5, f. 640 (*Liste de fonctionnaires en activité*).

<sup>22</sup> Octav-George Lecca, *Familiile boierești române. Istoric și genealogie* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1899), MDCCCXCIX, 221.

<sup>23</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 523 (Timoni to Metternich; 23 August 1833).

<sup>24</sup> I. C. Filitti, *Domniile Române sub Regulamentul Organic 1834-1848* (Bucharest: Librăriile Socec, 1915), 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Familiile boierești din Moldova și Țara Românească. Enciclopedie istorică, genealogică și biografică*, I, Abaza-Bogdan, coord. Mihai Dimitrie Sturdza (Bucharest: Simetria, 2004), 255.

<sup>26</sup> ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Rusia*, roll 56, c. 116 (*Notice caractérogaphique de Boyars Valaques*).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 117.

properly in Petersburg and Constantinople.”<sup>28</sup> The important administrative position of its leader ensured power and influence for the Russophile party of Filipescu, which, among its members, included Alexandru Filipescu, who was ingenious and able, with good relations among the Russian officers, always involved in plots and political combinations, depending on his interests.<sup>29</sup> In his turn, he had hopes for the throne. He was in his early 60s and had a rich experience in maneuvering the most delicate political issues, always ready to join whoever promised him the most advantages.<sup>30</sup> He had rendered important services to the Protective Power, was always in the proximity of Kiselev and maintained close connections among the Russian officers from Bucharest, whom he hoped to use for creating favorable circumstances when the time came.

Another candidate was the elder brother of Alexandru D. Ghica, the former Prince Grigore. “With no education”, but gifted with a natural intelligence, he was able enough to live quietly, enjoying his significant wealth. Strongly challenged by the self-exiled great boyars, Grigore Ghica was perceived with reluctance by the Russian officials and considered a “Turk”, in the sense that he always sought to satisfy the Porte’s interests without openly violating those of Russia.<sup>31</sup> The distinctive features of his character were, in the eyes of the Russian officials, a certain firmness which often “dégénere en opiniâtreté” and “une dissimulation” that prevented a clear understanding of his sincerity in regard to his position towards the projected improvements and the abolition of abuses.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, his divorce from Maria Hangerli, obtained with great efforts from the Patriarch Antim of Constantinople and his marriage, in February 1832, to Eufrosina Săvescu, a young woman from a “family without ancestors and estates” was frowned upon by the boyars and added to the arguments of the Russophiles Iordache Filipescu, Alecu Filipescu Vulpe, Grigore Băleanu and Alecu Villara (general controller in the department led by Iordache Filipescu<sup>33</sup>) who were working hard against his candidacy.

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<sup>28</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 523 (Timoni to Metternich; 23 August 1833).

<sup>29</sup> Minciaky describes him succinctly but rather accurately: he “has some talents, very active and with many skills,” which do not spare him from “the reproach of always using intrigue to achieve his goals” (ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Rusia*, roll 5, c. 639).

<sup>30</sup> ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Rusia*, roll 56, c. 117 (*Notice caractérogaphique de Boyars Valaques*).

<sup>31</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 524.

<sup>32</sup> ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Rusia*, roll 56, c. 114-115 (*Notice caractérogaphique de Boyars Valaques*).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, roll 5, c. 646.

Two other candidates, with strong arguments in their favor, were the brothers Gheorghe Bibescu and Barbu Știrbei. Among the most educated boyars from Wallachia, they studied in France, they were young, energetic, ambitious, they held substantial material resources and, most importantly, they were devoted to Russia, being involved in the reforms conducted by Kiselev from important administrative positions.

In February 1834, only three of these candidates were still in the race: Grigore Ghica, Alexandru Ghica and Gheorghe Bibescu.<sup>34</sup> Of all three, the former Prince had the least chances because he was not well liked by the Russians and did not fit the profile of the Prince which Kiselev considered suitable to continue his work in Wallachia. Compared to Alexandru D. Ghica, Gheorghe Bibescu was much richer, more educated, but, at the same time, he had an unbridled ambition combined with a proud and unwise behavior because of which he had very few friends and many enemies.<sup>35</sup>

The testimonies of his contemporaries construct two largely opposed images of Alexandru D. Ghica - that of the candidate to the throne, another of the Prince in charge of his administration, a beautiful star "à son lever, et comme il a pâlé en si peu de tems."<sup>36</sup> This is unsurprising, as the initial enthusiasm gradually fades and the unfulfilled expectations transform into criticisms. However, Alexandru D. Ghica managed in a short period of time to produce serious complaints, from the natural ones of the former opponents in the race for the throne to those of the Russian officials who preferred him for this position. Even the "unbiased" ones, once satisfied with his appointment, began to see him differently. In the first years of his reign, a series of tense moments revealed the fragility of his position, constantly under the pressure of the Russian Consulate and "attacked" on several occasions in the Assembly. The challenges risen from the implementation of the Regulation's stipulations, the permanent, acquisitive pressure of the Russian officials and the lack of a solid political base among the boyars determined him to take several measures that produced a strong dissatisfaction towards his administration.

Although he was animated by the desire to do good, the weakness of his character, the lack of initiative driven to immobility in some matters - as in that of the country's finances, for example -, the influence of his

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<sup>34</sup> *Correspondence respecting the organization of the Danubian Principalities 1828-1836* (Printed for the use of the Foreign Office, 1878), 150 (Blutte to Lamb; 17 February 1834).

<sup>35</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 543 (Timoni to the Internuncio; 2 May 1834).

<sup>36</sup> *Correspondence respecting the organization of the Danubian Principalities 1828-1836*, 169 (Colquhoun to Palmerston; 26 October 1836).



elder brother Mihail, the appointment of his relatives in important offices, since he had a large but poor family, represented true arguments which his adversaries used to compromise his image.

Shortly after taking the reins of power, on 28 July 1834, the Prince was presented, along with the usual congratulations for ascending the throne, with a set of instructions transmitted from Petersburg for the prevention of any “*mésentendu*” in governing the Principality. On this occasion, Minciaky made him aware that the mission of the Russian Consulate was to oversee “*la stricte exécution*” of the Organic Regulation.<sup>37</sup> A strong recommendation was made to unite all the legislation adopted during the Russian occupation, which the Sultan had just sanctioned through a *hatt-i sherif*,<sup>38</sup> not just the basic texts, but also the stipulations in detail, established during the presence of the Russian troops in the Principality.<sup>39</sup> Kiselev’s efforts had to be continued by a committee formed of intelligent people, without the slightest delay. The paths to follow in the first years of reign were drawn clearly. The changes “*de redaction*” introduced by Buteniev did not alter “*le dispositif du texte*” in any way, but were merely formal and had to be introduced in the definitive form of the Regulation, together with the dispositions added by the Assembly, with Kiselev’s consent, during 1832, 1833 and 1834.<sup>40</sup> The faith of the final version of the text was made clear to him now, one copy was to be sent to the Metropolitan and one to the Russian Consulate. The Regulation was not to be published entirely – for the moment, only excerpts that could interest the public, the articles regarding the rights and obligations “*de la classe industrielle et agricole*”, the ones regarding the justice system were to be made available, but only after Petersburg’s approval.<sup>41</sup> Regarding the paragraph added by Buteniev to the Organic Regulation before submitting it to the Porte, “*en forme de conclusion*” (which will be later known as the “*additional article*”), the tone of Minciaky was very reassuring. This addition was compliant to the true interests of the Principality and only referred to the fundamental dispositions of the Regulation (the rights and prerogatives of the Prince, the attributions of the Assembly, the collection of taxes, the rights and the obligations of the “*agricultural class*”, the organization of municipalities, of the militia, the quarantines). In secondary issues, which could have necessitated completions or changes, the Prince was entitled to intervene, with the help of the Assembly.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> ANR, *Fond Ghica Alexandru Dimitrie*, File 12, f. 2v.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 3v.

Alexandru Ghica had to carefully observe any sign that could indicate an eventual tendency among young spirits “de se livrer à l’entraînement des idées liberales, de les inviter à suivre les progrès de l’opinion publique dans les Principautés.”<sup>43</sup> He was to keep a watchful eye and to prevent any encouragement of subversive ideas, the rules for censure established by Kiselev were, in this regard, models to follow without exception, within the limits of which the journals from Iași and Bucharest were to appear further. They had to offer to the youth education a moderate impulse and “d’arreter de tout leur pouvoir l’esprit d’innovation et de trouble, qui pourrait se manifester dans des têtes inexperimentées avides de donner à leur Pays une existence politique differente de celle que lui assurant ses institutions actuelles fondées sur les traités.”<sup>44</sup> It was as clear as could be that the “national independent administration”, guaranteed by the Treaty of Adrianople, could only function in the Russian sphere of influence. The Prince’s freedom of action, now surrounded by “determined adepts of Russia”, who, for all kinds of favors, obtained written recommendations from Kiselev,<sup>45</sup> was dramatically limited. His situation was indeed delicate, as for all the political issues he had to seek the advice, “constantly every night”, of Minciaky, entitled by the British consul, Blutte, the “Dictator of Hospodars”.<sup>46</sup>

Initially, the boyars’ discontent, besides envies and rivalries, was generated by a certain aversion towards a leader with military background, who, in the political context of the moment, represented an instrument of the Protective Power. The Russian occupation continued without troops through Alexandru D. Ghica’s administration, and the financial difficulties that marked the beginning of his reign accentuated his dependent position, for which his enemies constructed, by discursive means, a strategy to weaken his legitimacy, depicting him as a “Russian Pasha”.<sup>47</sup>

### **The financial and political complications of the investiture. The premises of a failed reign**

Alexandru Ghica’s ascension to the throne, but also the difficulties he faced since the beginning of his reign cannot be explained only through his involvement in the implementation of the new regime and the good

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., f. 4.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., f. 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 543.

<sup>46</sup> *Correspondence respecting the organization of the Danubian Principalities 1828-1836*, 184 (Blutte to Lamb; 1 September 1834).

<sup>47</sup> Felix Colson, *De l’état présent et l’avenir des Principautés de Moldavie et de Valachie* (Paris Cosse Et G.-Laguionie Paris Pougin 1839), 63.

collaboration with Kiselev, or by his compliance with the Russian interests and interventions in domestic politics. Certain connections among great merchants and their Constantinopolitan clientele, the relations with several Phanariots with ties to high Ottoman dignitaries have to be taken into consideration. Especially the financial and political consequences of the support in obtaining the throne were most significant, preventing Alexandru Ghica from stabilizing his reign, from having access to the necessary resources. One of the persons who facilitated his connections in these milieus, important for obtaining the investiture of the Sultan, was Eufrosina Suțu, the wife of the last Phanariot Prince of Wallachia. She moved to Bucharest in the spring of 1830 and married her daughter to the baron Ștefan Meitani, the future business partner of Spathar Alexandru Ghica and in whose houses Pavel Kiselev resided.<sup>48</sup> In fact, Eufrosina Suțu, born Callimachi, was related to Alexandru Ghica. Her mother, Elena, born Ghica, was the aunt of the future ruler of Wallachia, after her grandfather, Dimitrie Ghica.<sup>49</sup> Eufrosina Suțu was the one who obtained, for Alexandru Ghica, the support of the influent Nicolae Aristarhi in Constantinople, repaid later with the office of capuchehaia, which brought him a quasi-diplomatic statute and new possibilities of enrichment. She must have also mediated, with the help of Nicolae Mavros, several loans that ensured the necessary sums in Constantinople. The revenues of the salt mines of Wallachia, a means by which the future Prince chose to guarantee the payment of a considerable part of the contracted loans was to lead to a resounding bankruptcy and great complications for the Prince.

Over time, the revenue of the salt mines represented a significant source of money for the Prince and, after the adoption of the Organic Regulation, for the Treasury. The extraction of this important resource, present in large quantities in the subsoil of the Principalities had, despite the rudimentary means of exploitation, a high lucrativeness. Protected by monopoly, the lease of salt extraction apparently represented an easy way of enrichment, arousing the interest of a wider range of entrepreneurs. Some, as Gheorghe Opresanu and Alecu Villara, got richer, while others were ruined. One such case is that of baron Ștefan Meitani, whose bankruptcy had profound implications for the incomes of Wallachia's Treasury and for the political consequences which marked the early years of Alexandru Ghica's reign. Originating from Adrianople, Meitani had a fulminant business ascension. Between 1819-1820 he was a shop boy, in 1823 he opened a small shop in Bucharest, and only two years later he

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<sup>48</sup> *Memoriile Principelui Nicolae Suțu*, 105, 127.

<sup>49</sup> *Istoria Românilor*, VII<sub>1</sub>, 974, figure 4 (*Ghica*).

became baron of the Austrian empire.<sup>50</sup> In many regards, his course resembled that of other Greeks or Macedo-Romanians who had become rich from trade and usury, having had important working points in the Principalities, under the protection of the acquired quality of Austrian subjects. The year of his ennoblement found him as secretary of Gheorghe Sakelarie,<sup>51</sup> Austrian baron as well and consul of Prussia for six months between 1816-1817. Sakelarie was from Zagora (Macedonia) and together with his younger brother, Constantin, made their fortune in late-18<sup>th</sup> century Vienna. Later, they founded a “bank” and a house of import-export trade in association with George Meitani, the brother of Ștefan. Together they became the correspondents for Europe and the “businessmen” of the last Phanariot Princes of Wallachia, as well as of the Obrenović family from Serbia. They obtained their baron titles from the Austrian imperial chancellery, which delivered them a diploma dated 1819 and common coats of arms.<sup>52</sup>

The association of Gheorghe Meitani with the Sakelarie brothers integrated Ștefan in a veritable network spanning from Constantinople to London (built through connections with merchants from Rusciuc, Silistra, Brașov, Vienna, Trieste, Livorno, Marseille) which operated the trade of coins and bills, loans and the export of numerous types of goods from the Principalities (suet, wool, animal hides, salt, grain, linen seeds, pressed cheese, butter, honey, wood).<sup>53</sup> After having been the personal banker of Prince Grigore Ghica for several years, Ștefan Meitani decided in 1827 to enter into a large enterprise, obtaining from the Princely chamber the leases for salt extraction and customs for a three-year period.<sup>54</sup> In normal conditions, they should have brought him substantial incomes, but the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war led to the temporary interruption of the salt export across the Danube and to a shortage of transportation means, used now for the needs of war.<sup>55</sup> The solution he found in order to deal with his losses was to ask plenipotentiary president Pahlen to reduce his financial

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<sup>50</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. X, *Rapoarte consulare prusiene din Iași și București (1763-1844)*, collected, annotated and published by Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest: Acad. Rom. și Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice, 1897), 320, note 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 320 (Krechely to von Miltitz; 13 March 1825).

<sup>52</sup> Mihail-Dimitri Sturdza, *Dictionnaire historique et genealogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople*, 2<sup>e</sup> edition revue et augmentée (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1999), 189.

<sup>53</sup> For more details in this regard, see “Casa Comercială “Ioan Hagi Moscu și Ștefan I. Moscu” din București,” in Dumitru Limona, *Negustorii “greci” și arhivele lor comerciale*, ed. Loredana Dascăl (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2016), 303–390.

<sup>54</sup> Dumitru Vitcu, “Falimentul Casei Meitani,” *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis. Anuarul Muzeului Județean Vaslui*, V–VI (1983–1984): 242.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

obligations to the state or to be granted the income of the salt extraction for a another five years.<sup>56</sup> He obtained, with the consent of the new president, Pavel Kiselev, who resided in his houses from Bucharest, a concession for another three years with an annual rent of 3 802 000 lei, followed by the adjudication of a contract for “the pavement of Bucharest” for the price of 1400 000 lei, in 1830.<sup>57</sup> Determined to recoup his losses, Ștefan Meitani also succeeded in obtaining a three-year lease on the Moldavian salt (1 February 1830 - 1 January 1833) for 605 000 lei a year, for which he must have given serious guarantees to the Russian officials. This way, he avoided the competition of Moldavian salt on the foreign market, creating all the prerequisites for consistent earnings, a prospect that was also advantageous for the treasuries of the two Principalities that had been affected by the reduced profitability of this lease since the beginning of the war. Leaving the technical and administrative aspects of the salt mines to the two men he had appointed in Moldavia and Wallachia, Meitani concentrated on selling the salt on foreign markets, especially in the Balkans, where he had long-standing connections with Southern Danube merchants.<sup>58</sup> But he was about to make a serious mistake that eventually resulted in bankruptcy. In order to recover the previous losses and to pay the debts to the two treasuries, he exported heavily on credit, thus flooding the market South of the Danube with salt. The natural consequence of this imprudence was a fall of its price, which led to a shortfall in the collection of the sums owed by his collaborators, and inevitably placed Ștefan Meitani in the impossibility of paying the quarterly instalments to the two treasuries.

His financial difficulties led to the seizure of his estates for the rent of 1831, the value of which only covered his debts to the treasury of Wallachia. Until his death in April 1834, the baron tried by various means to meet these pecuniary obligations – he went from being a great creditor to a debtor, receiving, in 1832, the complaints of his Wallachian partners (Gheorghe Opreanu, Lazăr Calenderoglu, Scarlat Petrovici).<sup>59</sup> The failure of this undertaking had repercussions on the treasury of Wallachia, which had to recover five million lei in 1833 and which, in relation to the same institution in Moldavia, presented guarantees and was thus liable.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to the financial complications caused by the bankruptcy of the Meitani house came the debts of Alexandru D. Ghica to Ștefan

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 243.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> See Constantin Broșteanu, *Salinele noastre. Studiu istoric, juridic și economic asupra exploatăreii salinelor și monopolului săre la romani și români după documente literare, epigrafice legislative și economice* (Bucharest: Tipografia G. A. Lăzreanu, 1901), 531-534.

Moscu, made on the occasion of his trip to Constantinople in 1834, to obtain the Sultan's investiture.<sup>61</sup> During the May-July period spent in the Ottoman capital, Alexandru D. Ghica also tried to obtain a postponement of the tribute payment; however, because the Porte refused his request, he was forced to contact the Constantinopolitan partners of Moscu. Thus, P. N. Mavrocordat bought for the Prince silverware worth 100 000 groshen, used for the gifts he was to make to the Ottoman officials, and Zaharia Zaharov advanced him 150 000 groshen, of which 100 000 for Nicolae Aristarchi.<sup>62</sup> The reimbursement of these sums was assumed, through receipts, by Moscu. Meanwhile, in Bucharest, the latter was negotiating with baron Simon Gh. Sina of Vienna for a loan that would allow the prince to pay the annual tribute of 2 000 000 lei to the Porte. The guarantee with the revenues of the salt extraction and customs leases, as well as with the incomes of Brăila, Giurgiu and Turnu, convinced baron Sina to offer the necessary sums, made available in two instalments – 63 500 guildens through Moscu and 26 700 guildens through George Oprescu.<sup>63</sup> It was Moscu who had obtained the agreement of the treasury so the loan could be made through Sina.<sup>64</sup> The repayment of these sums would create a series of complications for the treasury, for the Prince, but also for Ștefan Moscu who would have to unravel them, widening the range of creditors. In order to cover the deficits of the treasury left by the bankruptcy of the Meitani house and by the inability to recover the sums owed to it by the salt merchants from South of the Danube, the solution found was an additional tax in the amount of three groshen per family for the previous year, which was adopted a year later, after the installation in Bucharest of the Russian consul Piotr Rückman, who approved this measure contrary to the Regulation.<sup>65</sup> The documents in Ștefan Moscu's archive reveal how part of the money collected from this tax was used from October 1835 onwards. From the counties of Săcuieni, Prahova, Slam-Râmnic, Buzău and Brăila, 225,448 groshen were collected, which covered a debt to D. Zamfiropol made in Constantinople on behalf of the Prince.<sup>66</sup> This allowed Nicolae Aristarchi to obtain, at the beginning of 1836, 300 000 groshen used as an advance for the tribute owed to the Porte, from the same Zamfiropol, who was invited not to wait for the expiry of Moscu's receipts and to request the money in his account from Pop and Sina in Vienna.<sup>67</sup> Because the Porte

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<sup>61</sup> ANR, *Fond Ghica Alexandru Dimitrie*, File 197, f. 1.

<sup>62</sup> Limona, *Negustorii "greci"*, 374.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Filitti, *Domniile Române sub Regulamentul Organic 1834-1848*, 175.

<sup>66</sup> Limona, *Negustorii "greci"*, 375.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

pressed for full payment of the tribute, Moscu had to take another loan of 367 500 groshen from Zaharov and 320 500 groshen from Spandoni.<sup>68</sup> This way, it was possible to pay the obligations to the Porte, at the cost of Moscu's indebtedness to a number of Constantinopolitan bankers, his solvency becoming dependent on the extent to which he could obtain the sums for which he received guaranties from the treasury.

Moreover, there were Alexandru D. Ghica's personal debts to Moscu, which were always in arrears.<sup>69</sup> Despite the agreement to return the money immediately after his installation on the throne, the Prince failed to keep his promise and had to renew his obligations with additional interest.<sup>70</sup> A balance sheet drawn up by Moscu for the period from 10 April 1834 to 18 December 1835 shows that out of the sum of 2 289 300 groshen obtained for Alexandru Ghica, he still had to return 1 382 406 groshen.<sup>71</sup> To this amount 21 056 groshen of the 214 287 groshen credited between 2 June 1833 and 5 April 1834 were added.<sup>72</sup> For these sums, Alexandru Ghica had guaranteed with all his estates in Wallachia, as well as the three in Moldavia, Grozești, Praguri and Cordeni, which he was trying to sell to Spiridon A. Pavlu from Iasi, through Moscu.<sup>73</sup>

The first years of Alexandru D. Ghica's reign were marked by complications caused by the Meitani bankruptcy, which would find a temporary improvement in 1836, following a visit the Prince made to Milos Obrenović at his Poiana estate. The two agreed that the Serbian Prince would take over the salt export monopoly in the Balkans for two years, and a year later would also take over Meitani's six million lei debt to the treasury.<sup>74</sup> But a new crisis was to erupt on 3 May 1837, with the bankruptcy of the Moscu trading house, which had, beyond its immediate financial consequences and the blow to commercial transactions, a significant political impact on the reign of Alexandru D. Ghica. This resounding bankruptcy was linked to the financial problems of Christofor Sakelarie, who, having failed to recover from the Russian authorities the debts for 20,000 oxen given in 1828 (at a price of 3 guildens per head),<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> ANR, *Fond Ghica Alexandru Dimitrie*, File 197, f. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid..

<sup>71</sup> Limona, *Negustorii "greci"*, 376.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 377.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 376.

<sup>74</sup> *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, tom VII, part I, *Obicinuita Obștească Adunare a Țerei Românești*, legislature II, session I (IV) - 1837 (București: Imprimeria Statului, 1896), 86 (*Discursul Domnesc la deschiderea sesiunii Obșteștii Adunări, 18 martie 1837*).

<sup>75</sup> J. A. Vaillant, *La Roumanie ou histoire, langue, littérature, orographie statistique des peuples de la langue d'or, Ardialiens, Vallaques et Moldaves, résumés sous le nom de Roumans*, tome II (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1844), 367.

found himself in 1834 unable to pay his own debts and turned to Moscu, who obtained from his Viennese partners 200 000 florins in exchange for Sakelaris's claims against the Russian government, amounting to 140 392 rubles.<sup>76</sup> Through this agreement, the financial stability of the house of Moscu came to also depend on the recovery of the Russian administration's debts to Sakelarie for supplies during the occupation. Having put his credit to the benefit of the Wallachian Treasury, of Alexandru D. Ghica and for his friend Christofor Sakelarie, Moscu, in his turn, went bankrupt,<sup>77</sup> after having issued the most receipts on his account between 1834 and 1836.<sup>78</sup>

A report by the General Assembly to the Prince highlights the incalculable impact of a bankruptcy that could compromise the entire country:

"It could not be a more unfortunate and pitiful situation for all the people in this Principality, for, as Your Highness knows, people had faith in the significant estates and wealth of Moshu, and [...] rich and poor, they have their money deposited in his house, and suddenly find themselves threatened with losing their entire savings, especially the poor and widows who have no other hope left."<sup>79</sup>

Against the backdrop of these financial complications, an important political issue, which had been brought to Alexandru D. Ghica's attention since the early days of his reign, still lingered. The drafting and validation of the final version of the Regulation was delayed during Ghica's first years on the throne of Wallachia also due to the "conciliatory spirit" of Minciaky, who tried to harmonize the Prince's behavior with the requirements of the Court of Petersburg, having to constantly intervene to ensure compliance with the Regulation's provisions and even to protect him from certain complaints that could have been made against him.<sup>80</sup> As a result of this attitude, some of even the most useful decisions were taken against his

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<sup>76</sup> Limona, *Negustorii "greci"*, 374.

<sup>77</sup> In 1837, two Viennese firms left under protest two policies of Moscu's house worth 46 000 florins, for which Baron Sina offered to help him with money in exchange for a distraint on many of his properties, but the other creditors did not accept it, so Moscu had to declare bankruptcy on 3 May 1837 (ANR, *Colecția Microfilme Anglia*, roll 9, f. 24-27; Colquhoun to Palmerston; 5 March 1838).

<sup>78</sup> Limona, *Negustorii "greci"*, 372.

<sup>79</sup> *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, tome VII, part I, 688 (*Raportul Adunării către Domn relativ la falimentul căminarului Ștefan Moshu*; 4 May 1837).

<sup>80</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, collected by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, vol. XXI, 606 (Timoni to Metternich; 26 June 1835).



advice.<sup>81</sup> A tense moment between the two was generated by Alexandru D. Ghica's insistence not to allow Moldavian salt to be transported upstream on the Danube – for obvious reasons – invoking a firman prohibiting Ottoman subjects on the upper right bank of the river from buying salt from Moldavia, a decision of the Porte which, from Minciaky's perspective, did not prohibit "foreign nations" from transporting salt on the Danube.<sup>82</sup> In the summer of 1835, the relations between the two became almost hostile, because of the Prince's persistence in certain "preconceived notions", his suspicious nature, but above all because of the delay in resolving urgent matters. These inconveniences put him in the unpleasant situation of having to take action against the hospodar, which proved uncomfortable for Minciaky, who had begun – as he confided to the Austrian consul Timoni – to press for his release from the post in Bucharest.<sup>83</sup>

As the difficult financial legacy of the Russian occupation, the hesitations of the Prince and Minciaky's conciliatory attitude made it difficult to effectively implement essential provisions of the Organic Regulation, the Protective Power realized the need for a more vigorous conduct and appointed baron Piotr Rückman to the Bucharest post. His mission was not to appease the differences between the Prince and the Assembly, in which an "opposition spirit"<sup>84</sup> on financial issues was taking shape, but to adopt the final text of the Regulation and maintain political order and peace in the country. By the time he took up his post in October 1835, Alexandru D. Ghica had not shown encouraging signs in this regard. Since his arrival, Rückman worked to bring things this way, steadily, determinedly, with a strong hand, but always tactlessly.

The works of the first session of the second legislature of the Assembly, which opened on 18 March 1837, were marked by two major issues – the revision of the Regulation and the investigation of the financial state of the country. On 30 June, Constantin Gr. Ghica, Emanoil Băleanu and Ion Câmpineanu, submitted to the Assembly, on behalf of the Financial Commission, a detailed report which showed that the accounts submitted by the financial controller did not correspond to those of the Treasury.<sup>85</sup> According to Article 51 of the Regulation, the Assembly had the task of examining, through commissions, the accounts of the revenues and

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 642 (Timoni to Metternich; 14 March 1836).

<sup>85</sup> *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, tome VII, part I, 354–361 (*Raportul comisiei financiare asupra acestor socoteli*, 30 June 1837).

expenses of the treasury and of all the other houses of the country, as well as the accounts of other officials for the various branches of the administration entrusted to them.<sup>86</sup> Thus, at the beginning of each session, the Prince had to provide the Assembly with the financial records of the previous year. The financial controller (who was assisted by two heads of table<sup>87</sup>) was called upon under Article 136 of the Organic Regulation<sup>88</sup> to make a detailed investigation of the income and expenditure “incurred during the previous year” by the treasury and other departments, in order to draw up a “public table” submitted to the Prince, who in turn made it available to the Assembly for investigation. The Financial Commission’s analysis showed that “the Government proved little concern” about the accuracy and veracity of the financial report and made several recommendations. The sums of certain revenues discovered by the Assembly as early as 1832, 1833 and 1834 and neglected by the Treasury were to be entered in the budget as revenue; the “arrears” at the end of the year were not to be entered in the income and expenditure paragraphs for the following year, and loans, which had hitherto been made at interest rates of up to 18%, were not to be made unless “some delay should occur [...] in the collection of the revenue”, contained in the budget decided by the Assembly and the Prince. Any loan, even for unforeseen expenses, could not be “valid by any means, unless it was first given to the consideration” of the Assembly, and after “its consent, it would take the Prince’s approval.”<sup>89</sup>

These attacks on Alexandru D. Ghica’s administration highlighted the incapacity of his ministers and predicted difficulties in validating the final form of the Regulation. Since it was clear that such an important issue could not be left solely to the reluctant occupant of the throne, in the summer of 1837, the Russian official found the right opportunity to impose changes in the Administrative Council by making way for more capable, loyal figures with experience accumulated during the occupation. Barbu

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<sup>86</sup> *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, Vol. I, *Textele puse în aplicare la 1 Iulie 1831 în Valahia și la 1 Ianuarie 1832 în Moldova*, Paul Negulescu, George Alexianu (Bucharest: Intreprinderile “Eminescu”, 1944), 10-11.

<sup>87</sup> The public control had to check every expenditure of the state in the course of the year as follows: the first table prepared the registries and distributed them to the departments of the ministries, to the county councils and to the other officials, they were sealed and all receipts of money and expenditures were recorded; then, all the registries passed to the second table, which was to examine them and “certify that the expenditure was in fact made and in accordance with the contracts or instructions which may have been given concerning it” and with an approximate account of the sums which should have been spent (*Ibid.*, 36-37).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Analele Parlamentare ale României*, tome VII, part I, 358.

Știrbei was appointed chief of Justice, Alecu Ghica Barbă Roșie<sup>90</sup> to Finances, Constantin Cantacuzino Secretary of State, Costache Bălăceanu chancellor (*logofăt*) of the Faith, Costache Suțu Head of Control, Iordache Filipescu was elevated to the rank of Great Ban and appointed President of the High Divan, and Grigore Băleanu was appointed to a post created especially for him, President of the Extraordinary Administrative Council.<sup>91</sup> The new ministers were now tasked with supporting the fight in the Assembly for the adoption of the “additional article”. However, what the Russian consulate had tried to present to the Prince, since the summer of 1834, as a natural conclusion, which Buteniev had considered appropriate to introduce before submitting the Organic Regulations to the Porte, was to arouse unexpected reactions in the Assembly from several deputies who understood the meaning of the “additional article” for the true interests of the country in a manner that was different than that of the Russian officials.

### **Conclusions**

The appointment of the Princes of Moldavia and Wallachia presented Russian officials with serious dilemmas, whether they were the leaders of the Empire’s foreign policy or of the occupation administration. In the end, a solution was adopted – the selection of the Princes by the Porte from a short list of candidates proposed by Russia – in line with Russia’s strategic interests regarding the Ottoman Empire as a whole and despite Pavel Kiselev’s proposals that the occupation should be prolonged or, in a transitional phase, that the civilian administration of the Princes should operate in parallel with a Russian military administration. The selection of Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica as the main candidate for Wallachia and his rapid investiture by the Sultan have several explanations, including his political profile convenient for both Powers, his activity as minister and head of the militia, his personal relation with Pavel Kiselev and his access to the sums of money required for his investiture in Constantinople. However, his

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<sup>90</sup> Alecu Ghica Barbă Roșie had an interesting perspective on “the good he wanted for the country”. According to his opinion, formed by observing the “governments” of Alexandru D. Ghica, “the nation was too vicious to govern itself”, for this it would have been necessary to establish “a great monarchy”. However, noting that Austria was indifferent to Wallachia and that the influence of Russia, “as important as the once powerful Rome”, was constantly growing, he saw “nothing more salutary for Wallachia than to become definitively Russian, because, in fact, in secret, it already was”. (ANR, Colecția Microfilme Austria, roll 99, pachet CVI (Haus-Hof und Staatsarchiv-Wien, Staatskanzlei, Netenwechsel) c. 668 (Alcibiade Tavernier to Wernhardt, General Commander of Transylvania; January 1836).

<sup>91</sup> Filitti, *Domniile Române sub Regulamentul Organic 1834-1848*, 48.

insufficient political prestige in relation to the country's great boyar families, his image as a Prince submissive to the Russian will, skillfully used by his opponents, and the large debts he had accumulated, which he could not pay without generating several resounding financial scandals linked to the leasing of state revenues, were likely to herald the political crisis of the following years, the success of the opposition in undermining his regime and, finally, his dismissal after only eight years of rule.

# Politische Karriere und sozialer Aufstieg. Konservative und christlichsoziale Politiker aus Vorarlberg als Beispiel (1860-1918/19)

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*Article history: Received 1.12.2021; Revised 27.12.2021;*

*Accepted 30.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract: Political Career and Social Advancement. Conservative and Christian Social Politicians from Vorarlberg as an Example (1860-1918/19).**

As far as the political developments in Vorarlberg were concerned, Martin Thurnher and Johann Kohler have lived in a time of rapid changes. Many of the newly elected deputies to the provincial parliament in 1870, and later also to the Imperial Council, now came from a petty or lower middle-class milieu. For them, political involvement, supported by structural factors such as the successive extension of voting rights to lower social strata, and the increasingly professional self-organization of the Catholic-conservative camp, provided an opportunity for social mobility. Martin Thurnher and Johann Kohler are just two examples of how political engagement enabled social advancement. Further quantitative and qualitative research would provide important insights into the social processes set in motion by the emergence of modern mass parties and the expansion of political participation.

**Keywords:** social mobility, parliamentarism, Habsburg Monarchy, Imperial Council

**Rezumat: Cariera politică și promovarea socială. Exemplul unor politicieni conservatori și creștin-sociali din Vorarlberg (1860-1918/19).** În ceea ce privește evoluțiile politice din Vorarlberg, Martin Thurnher și Johann Kohler au trăit într-o perioadă de schimbări. Mulți dintre deputații nou aleși în parlamentul provinciei în 1870, iar mai târziu și în Consiliul Imperial, proveneau acum din clase sociale inferioare sau cel mult din straturile de jos ale clasei de mijloc. Pentru aceștia, implicarea politică, susținută de factori structurali precum extinderea succesivă a dreptului de vot și auto-organizarea tot mai profesionistă a taberei catolice-conservatoare, a reprezentat o oportunitate de mobilitate socială. Martin Thurnher și Johann Kohler sunt doar două exemple ale modului în care implicarea politică a permis avansarea socială. Alte cercetări cantitative și calitative vor informații importante despre procesele sociale puse în mișcare de apariția partidelor moderne de masă și de extinderea participării politice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** mobilitate socială, parlamentarism, Monarhia Habsburgică, Consiliul Imperial

Am 4. Jänner 1922 erfuhren die Leserinnen und Leser des Vorarlberger Volksblatts, dass der "Alt-Landeshauptmann-Stellvertreter" und ehemalige Reichsratsabgeordnete Martin Thurnher zwei Tage zuvor in Dornbirn verstorben war. Der Autor des Nachrufs würdigte den Politiker als "Führer des katholischen Volkes von Vorarlberg" und als einen jener "verdienten Männer, die in den letzten Friedens-Jahrzehnten die Fahne der Partei hochgehalten hatten". Anschließend rekapitulierte der Autor das Leben des Politikers und zeichnete den Bogen vom Volksschullehrer aus einfachen Verhältnissen hin zum angesehenen und erfolgreichen Politiker.<sup>1</sup> Dieser Lebenslauf steht exemplarisch für die Möglichkeit, durch eine politische Karriere einem bescheidenen sozioökonomischen Hintergrund zu entfliehen und sozial aufzusteigen. Im folgenden Beitrag möchte ich am Beispiel zweier Vorarlberger Politiker, dem schon genannten Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler, zeigen, dass politisches Engagement in Kombination mit weiteren strukturellen und persönlichen Faktoren ein Mittel des sozialen Aufstiegs in der Habsburgermonarchie darstellen konnte. Beide Politiker entstammten einfachen Verhältnissen, beide zeichneten sich durch Disziplin und Ehrgeiz aus und nutzten die günstigen Umstände, die in Vorarlberg gegen Ende der 1860er-Jahre herrschten. Die Karriere der beiden Männer steht beispielhaft für mehrere konservative beziehungsweise christlichsoziale Politiker aus Vorarlberg, die mehrheitlich den klein- und unterbürgerlichen Schichten entstammten.

### **Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler: politische Karriere und sozialer Aufstieg**

Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler stammen beide aus Vorarlberg, waren in der katholisch-konservativen beziehungsweise christlichsozialen Bewegung aktiv und hatten politische Mandate auf Gemeinde-, Landes- und Reichsebene inne. Sie entstammten derselben Generation ambitionierter junger Männer, die vom politischen Wechsel 1870 in Vorarlberg profitierten und am Ende ihres Lebens eine bemerkenswerte politische Karriere und einen ungewöhnlichen sozialen Aufstieg in die lokalen Eliten vorweisen konnten. Im Gegensatz zu anderen Politikern ihrer Zeit haben sie mehr oder weniger ausführliche Ego-Dokumente hinterlassen, die Einblicke in ihre persönliche Weltsicht und Denkweise erlauben.

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<sup>1</sup> "Alt-Landeshauptmann-Stellvertreter Martin Thurnher †," *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, Nr. 3, 4. Jänner 1922, S. 1.

## Zur Biographie von Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler

Martin Thurnher wurde am 7. September 1844 in Dornbirn in eine wenig begüterte Familie geboren.<sup>2</sup> Sein Vater arbeitete als Spinner bei der Firma Herrburger & Rhomberg. Außerdem hielt die Familie nebenher ein wenig Nutzvieh und betrieb Landwirtschaft. Insbesondere während des Krimkrieges (1853–1856) verschlechterte sich die finanzielle Lage der Familie so sehr, dass sie Hunger leiden musste.

Die Eltern erzogen Thurnher und seine Geschwister streng katholisch. Nach dem Besuch der Volksschule und der zweiklassigen Unterrealschule in seinem Heimatort arbeitete er zwei Jahre lang in verschiedenen Fabriken, entschloss sich aber dann doch zu einer Ausbildung als Unterlehrer in Bregenz. 1864 absolvierte er in Innsbruck die Prüfung zum Hauptschullehrer und unterrichtete bis zum Jahr 1891 (dem Jahr seiner Wahl in den Reichsrat) erst als Unterlehrer im Dornbirner Ortsteil Watenegg und ab 1866 an der Hauptschule im Ortsteil Markt. Im Jahr 1874 heiratete er Anna Maria Fußenegger und gründete mit ihr eine Familie. Von den insgesamt sechs Kindern des Ehepaars erreichten fünf das Erwachsenenalter.

Die politische Laufbahn Thurnhers begann im Gemeindeausschuss Dornbirn, führte ihn 1882 in den Vorarlberger Landtag und 1891 schließlich in das Abgeordnetenhaus des Reichsrats. Sowohl im Landtag als auch im Reichsrat hatte Thurnher bis 1918 ein Mandat inne. Neben seiner Tätigkeit als Lehrer und Versicherungsagent sowie als Gemeinde- und Landespolitiker war Thurnher in zahlreichen Vereinen aktiv, die dem katholisch-konservativen beziehungsweise christlichsozialen Milieu zuzuordnen sind. So war er eines der Gründungsmitglieder des Dornbirner Gemeindegasinos, des Katholisch-pädagogischen Vereins, des Katholisch-politischen Volksvereins<sup>3</sup> sowie des Christlichsozialen Volksvereins. Außerdem war Thurnher Mitglied der Wildbachverbauungskommission und der Internationalen

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<sup>2</sup> Zur Biographie Thurnhers vgl. Leo Haffner, ““Der Liberalismus bringt keinen Segen“. Martin Thurnher - ein Leben für den Konservatismus,” in Werner Bundschuh, Harald Walser (Hg.), *Dornbirner Stadt-Geschichten. Kritische Anmerkungen zu 100 Jahren politischer und gesellschaftlicher Entwicklung* (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1987), 83–121, online <https://www.malingesellschaft.at/texte/geschichte-19.-20.-jh/leo-haffner-1987-der-liberalismus-bringt-keinen-segen.-martin-thurnher-ein-leben-fur-den-konservatismus/#34-ebenda-s-86>, 10.1.2022; Karin Schneider, “*Einige Notizen aus meinem Leben*“. *Die Memoiren des Vorarlberger Landtags- und Reichstagsabgeordneten Martin Thurnher (1844–1922)* (Regensburg: Roderer Verlag, 2005); Leo Haffner, *Die Kasiner. Vorarlbergs Weg in den Konservatismus* (Bregenz: Eugen-Russ-Verlag, 1977), bes. S. 141–150.

<sup>3</sup> Der Katholisch-politische Volksverein war die Sammelorganisation der katholisch-konservativen Bewegung in Vorarlberg, beim Christlichsozialen Volksverein handelt es sich um die Nachfolgeorganisation.

Rheinbauleitung, fungierte als Obmann des Landeswahlkomitees und wirkte als Landesschulrat. Darüber hinaus war er Korrespondent des Vorarlberger Volksblatts und schrieb für die vom Katholisch-politischen Volksverein herausgegeben Vereinsblüten. Er starb, wie bereits ausgeführt, am 2. Jänner 1922 in Dornbirn.

Johann Kohler entstammte einem ähnlichen sozialen Hintergrund wie sein Parteikollege.<sup>4</sup> Er wurde am 7. September 1839 in Egg, einem damals 2.000 Einwohner zählenden Dorf im Bregenzerwald, geboren. Seine Eltern betrieben eine kleinbäuerliche Landwirtschaft und waren nebenbei als Stickfergger<sup>5</sup> beziehungsweise Näherin tätig. Kohler half von Kindheit an im elterlichen Betrieb mit, besuchte aber acht Jahre lang die Volksschule und anschließend die Sonntagsschule. Wie Thurnher absolvierte er einen Kurs für Landesschullehrer. Zwischen 1858 und 1866 reiste er in den Sommermonaten durch Vorarlberg und Tirol, um Kapellen, Kirchen und Arkaden auszumalen. Während des Winters unterrichtete er an der Schule in seinem Heimatort.

Das Wanderleben in den Sommermonaten fand 1866 ein Ende. In diesem Jahr heiratete Kohler Maria Theresia Ritter und gründete mit ihr eine Familie. Das Glück währte allerdings nicht lange: Seine Frau verstarb 1867 kurz nach der Geburt ihres ersten Kindes. Zugleich startete Kohler seine politische Laufbahn und wurde ebenfalls 1867 Gemeinderat in seiner Heimatgemeinde. Dies war nur die erste einer Reihe verschiedenster Funktionen, die er im Laufe seines Lebens bekleidete.

Kurz darauf änderte sich Kohlers Leben grundlegend. Zum einen heiratete er 1869 ein zweites Mal. Seine Braut war die Fabrikantentochter Anna Schwärzler aus Schwarzach. Zum anderen übersiedelte er in die Rheintalgemeinde, gab den Lehrerberuf auf und betätigte sich fortan als Kaufmann.

In den folgenden Jahren nahm Kohlers politische Karriere Fahrt auf: 1870 zog er in den Vorarlberger Landtag ein und brachte sich

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<sup>4</sup> Nach Kohlers Tod erschien ein mehrteiliger Nachruf aus der Feder seines Freundes Josef Walser, Pfarrer in Schwarzach, im *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*: "Johann Kohler †. Ein Charakterbild gezeichnet von J. W.," *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 52, Nr. 17/7, 23.1.1917, 1-3; Nr. 20/8, 26.1.1917, 1-4; Nr. 23/9, 30.1.1917, 1-3; Nr. 26/10, 2.2.1917, 1-2; Nr. 28/11, 6.2.1917, 1-3 Ders., *Johann Kohler, ein Führer des katholischen Volkes von Vorarlberg* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1918). 2022 erscheint Ingrid Böhler (Hg.), "*Kohlenschwarz ist seine Gesinnung*". *Johann Kohler (1839-1916) und seine Zeit*, mit zahlreichen Beiträgen. An dieser Stelle vielen Dank für die Möglichkeit, diese bereits vorab zu zitieren.

<sup>5</sup> Die Stickerei war in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts eine weit verbreitete Möglichkeit des Nebenerwerbs für Landwirte und war im Verlagsystem organisiert. Die Fergger stellten das Bindeglied zwischen Heimarbeitern und Händlern dar. Sie sorgten für die Anlieferung der Rohstoffe und lieferten die fertige Ware an den Händler.



insbesondere im Bereich des Volksschulwesens vehement in die Debatte ein. 1889 zog er sich aus dem Landtag zurück und kandidierte 1891 erfolgreich für ein Mandat im Abgeordnetenhaus des Reichsrats. Bis 1896 vertrat er in Wien die Interessen des Wahlkreises Landgemeinden Bregenz, Bregenzerwald, Dornbirn. 1896 zog er wieder in den Vorarlberger Landtag ein und war hier bis 1908 aktiv. Zwischen 1888 und 1910 fungierte er außerdem als Gemeindevorsteher von Schwarzach.

Kohler war in zahlreichen katholisch-konservativen Vorfeldorganisationen tätig. Er war beispielsweise an der Gründung des Katholisch-pädagogischen Vereins sowie des Katholischen Pressvereins beteiligt. Im Fall des Pressvereins beteiligte er sich 1872 an der Abfassung der Statuten und reichte dieselben bei der Statthalterei ein.<sup>6</sup> Darüber hinaus fungierte er als stellvertretender Vorsitzender des Katholisch-politischen Volksvereins. Als dieser im Zuge von parteiinternen Auseinandersetzungen Ende der 1880er Jahre auseinanderbrach, trat interimistisch der Vorarlberger Preßverein, in dem Kohler zu diesem Zeitpunkt den Vorsitz innehatte, an seine Stelle.<sup>7</sup> 1893 beteiligte er sich an der Gründung des Christlich-sozialen Volksvereins für Vorarlberg und fungierte als erster Vorstand.

In der Gemeinde Schwarzach bleibt Kohler als Initiator und Bauherr einer neuen, repräsentativen Kirche in Erinnerung. Er starb am 23. November 1916 in Schwarzach.

### **Faktoren des sozialen Aufstiegs**

Das folgende Kapitel setzt sich mit jenen Faktoren auseinander, die den sozialen Aufstieg von Politikern aus klein- oder unterbürgerlichen Schichten begünstigen konnten. Im ersten Abschnitt stehen strukturelle Aspekte im Vordergrund. Obwohl sie die Laufbahn von Kohler und Thurnher nur teilweise oder indirekt begünstigten – das Wahlrecht auf Gemeinde- und Landesebene wurde beispielsweise in Vorarlberg erst zu einem Zeitpunkt ausgeweitet, als sich beide Politiker bereits am Ende ihrer Karriere befanden – so kam es doch ihren jüngeren Kollegen zugute, die einem ähnlichen Milieu entstammten. Bei der Etablierung politischer Organisationsstrukturen auf lokaler Ebene waren Kohler und Thurnher direkt involviert.

Der zweite Abschnitt wendet sich Kohler und Thurnher auf einer persönlichen Ebene zu. Die von ihnen hinterlassenen Ego-Dokumente

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<sup>6</sup> Nikolaus Hagen, "Umkämpfte Öffentlichkeit. Johann Kohler und die Gründung des Vorarlberger Pressvereins 1888/9," in Ingrid Böhler (Hg.), *Kohltschwarz*.

<sup>7</sup> Markus Wurzer, "Kulturkampf und Selbst. Der junge Johann Kohler und sein Weltbild im Spiegel seiner Tagebücher 1863/64 bzw. 1864/65," in *Ibid*.

werden in Hinblick auf Charaktereigenschaften, Interessen und Netzwerke analysiert, die die Karrieren der beiden Politiker begünstigten.

### **Strukturelle Faktoren**

#### *Ausweitung des Wahlrechts*

Gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts kam zur Ausweitung des Wahlrechts auf Gemeinde-, Landes- und Reichsebene. Dadurch hatten immer breitere Bevölkerungsschichten die Möglichkeit zur politischen Partizipation – und das sowohl aktiv als auch passiv. Denn es erhöhte sich nicht nur die Zahl der Wähler/innen, sondern auch die Zahl der Mandatare in den verschiedenen Vertretungskörperschaften.

Sowohl Martin Thurnher als auch Johann Kohler begannen ihre politische Karriere in der Gemeindevertretung: Thurnher in Dornbirn, Kohler in Egg. Die für ihre Wahl ausschlaggebende Gemeinde-Wahlordnung für Vorarlberg wurde, gemeinsam mit einer Gemeindeordnung, mit dem Gesetz vom 22. April 1864 verabschiedet. Die Wahlordnung sah ein Kurienwahlrecht für jene Einwohner vor, die entweder eine Mindeststeuerleistung von zwei Gulden aufbrachten oder über ein gewisses Bildungsniveau verfügten. Diese Personengruppe wurde in drei (in kleineren Gemeinden in zwei) Wählerklassen eingeteilt und wählte eine identische Anzahl von Vertretern.<sup>8</sup>

Bis zum Ende der Habsburgermonarchie wurde die Gemeinde-Wahlordnung in mehreren Punkten novelliert.<sup>9</sup> Diese Reformen betrafen unter anderem das aktive und passive Wahlrecht, das auf Initiative der katholisch-konservativen Partei sukzessive erweitert wurde. Der Grund dafür lag zum einen in den Härten der Wahlkörpereinteilung, durch welche den Stimmen der einkommensstarken Bevölkerungsgruppen wesentlich mehr Gewicht eingeräumt wurde als den Voten kleinbürgerlicher und bäuerlicher Wähler. Zum anderen rekrutierte sich das Gros der katholisch-konservativen Wähler genau aus diesen Bevölkerungsschichten. Durch die Ausweitung des Wahlrechts

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<sup>8</sup> Gesetz, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit eine Gemeindeordnung und eine Gemeinde-Wahlordnung erlassen werden, in LGBl. für Tirol und Vorarlberg 22/1864.

<sup>9</sup> Eine konzise Zusammenfassung bietet Elmar Häusler, „Bemerkungen zur Entwicklung des Gemeindewahlrechts von 1864 bis 2008,“ *Verba volant. Onlinebeiträge des Vorarlberger Landesarchivs*, <http://apps.vorarlberg.at/pdf/vv62ehgemeindewahlrecht.pdf>, 4.1.2022. Vgl. auch Schneider, „So suchte er zu nützen eben, auch viel im öffentlichen Leben“. *Die Memoiren des Vorarlberger Landeshauptmanns Adolf Rhomberg ; Edition und Kommentar* (Regensburg: Roderer Verlag, 2002), 25–26.

beziehungsweise durch die Erhöhung des Gewichts der Stimmen von Wählern aus diesen sozialen Gruppen erwartete sich die katholisch-konservative Partei Wahlsiege in den größeren Gemeinden und Städten des Landes.

Zu einer ersten Änderung die Stimmengewichtung betreffend kam es 1885. In einer Novelle zur Gemeindevahlordnung<sup>10</sup> wurde festgelegt, dass die Anzahl der Wähler im ersten und zweiten Wahlkörper die Anzahl der zu wählenden Mandatare um das drei- bzw. sechsfache zu übersteigen hatte. War dies nicht der Fall, rückten Wähler aus dem jeweils niedrigeren Wahlkörper nach.

Im Jahr 1909 kam es zu einer generellen Ausweitung des Wahlrechts:<sup>11</sup> In größeren Gemeinden wurde ein vierter Wahlkörper für Personen geschaffen, welche die für die ersten drei Wahlkörper erforderliche Mindeststeuerleistung nicht erbringen konnten, seit mindestens drei Jahren in der Gemeinde lebten und nicht auf öffentliche Unterstützung angewiesen waren. Zudem wurde für Gemeinden mit über 2000 Einwohnern und mindestens 60 wahlberechtigten Personen das Verhältniswahlrecht eingeführt. Das bisher dominierende Mehrheitswahlrecht blieb nur für Gemeinden mit weniger als 2000 Einwohnern in Geltung. Schließlich wurde festgelegt, dass das Wahlrecht persönlich auszuüben war. Die Abgabe von Stimmen durch bevollmächtigte Personen war in der Regel nun nicht mehr möglich. Die wichtigste Konsequenz daraus war, dass nun auch ledige Frauen beziehungsweise Frauen, deren Ehemann nicht wahlberechtigt war,<sup>12</sup> ihre Stimme persönlich im Wahllokal abgeben durften beziehungsweise mussten – denn zugleich mit der Reform von 1909 wurde auf Gemeindeebene eine Wahlpflicht eingeführt.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Gesetz vom 23. April 1885, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, wodurch die §§ 13 und 15 der Gemeinde-Wahlordnung für Vorarlberg abgeändert werden, in LGBl. für Tirol und Vorarlberg 13/1885.

<sup>11</sup> Gesetz vom 13. Jänner 1909, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit eine Gemeindevahlordnung erlassen wird, in *Ibid.* 16/1909.

<sup>12</sup> § 6 des Gesetzes vom 13. Jänner 1909 legte fest, dass Eheleute gemeinsam nur eine Stimme abgeben durften. In der Regel war der Ehemann dazu befugt. Nur wenn der Ehemann aus verschiedenen Gründen vom Wahlrecht ausgenommen oder ausgeschlossen war, durfte die Ehefrau das Wahlrecht persönlich ausüben.

<sup>13</sup> Gesetz vom 13. Jänner 1909, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit für die in Gemäßheit der Gemeindevahlordnung vorzunehmenden Wahlen in den Gemeindeausschuß der Gemeinden des Landes Vorarlberg die Wahlpflicht eingeführt wird, in LGBl. für Tirol und Vorarlberg 18/1909.

Doch nicht nur auf Gemeinde-, sondern auch auf Landesebene kam es in Vorarlberg im ersten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts zu einer umfassenden Wahlrechtsreform, welche die Wählerbasis verbreiterte. Im Jahr 1902 wurde neben der Kurie der Städte und der Landgemeinden sowie den Virilstimmen eine allgemeine Wählerklasse, von Thurnher despektierlich "Badenikurie" genannt, eingeführt. In dieser Wählerklasse waren alle eigenberechtigten Männer wahlberechtigt - unabhängig von ihrer Steuerleistung.<sup>14</sup> Im Jahr 1909 erfuhr die gemischte Wählerklasse eine Erweiterung: Hier wurden nun alle jene männlichen und weiblichen Personen zusammengefasst, die weniger als 6 K. an Grund-, Gebäude-, Erwerbs-, Renten- oder Besoldungssteuer bezahlten beziehungsweise denen weniger als 20 K. an Personaleinkommensteuer vorgeschrieben wurde. Außerdem wählten in dieser Wählerklasse noch alle Männer, die gar keine direkten Steuern entrichteten. Auch hier war das Stimmrecht persönlich auszuüben.<sup>15</sup> Zudem wurde auch auf Landesebene eine Wahlpflicht eingeführt.<sup>16</sup>

Die Zahl der Mitglieder des Vorarlberger Landtags erhöhte sich ebenfalls mehrfach - wenn auch nur bedingt im Gleichschritt mit den Wahlrechtsreformen. 1861 zählte der Landtag 20 Mandatare.<sup>17</sup> 1884 erhöhte sich diese Zahl auf 21,<sup>18</sup> 1902 auf 24<sup>19</sup> und 1909 26 Abgeordnete.<sup>20</sup>

Thurnher wurde 1882, also noch vor der ersten Erhöhung der Zahl der Mandatare, in den Landtag gewählt. Allerdings war er an der Reform des Jahres 1884 und der Erhöhung der Mandatszahl direkt beteiligt: Als Schriftführer des Casinos Dornbirn hatte er eine Petition an den Landtag veranlasst. Darin wurde ein zweiter Abgeordneter für den Markt Dornbirn gefordert, da dieser angesichts der hohen Einwohnerzahl und der ebenfalls hohen Steuerleistung in der Landesvertretung

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<sup>14</sup> Gesetz vom 7. September 1902, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit die Landtags-Wahlordnung abgeändert wird, in *Ibid.* 29/1902. Schneider, *Thurnher*, S. 116.

<sup>15</sup> Gesetz vom 13. Jänner 1909, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit eine Landtagswahlordnung erlassen wird, in *LGBL. für Tirol und Vorarlberg* 14/1909.

<sup>16</sup> Gesetz vom 13. Jänner 1909, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit für die in Gemäßheit der Landtagswahlordnung vorzunehmenden Wahlen in den Landtag des Landes Vorarlberg die Wahlpflicht eingeführt wird, in *Ibid.* 17/1909.

<sup>17</sup> Landes-Ordnung und Landtags-Wahlordnung für das Land Vorarlberg, in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für das Kaiserthum Oesterreich* 20 (Beilage II, e)/1861.

<sup>18</sup> Gesetz vom 26. Mai 1884, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit der § 3 der Landesordnung abgeändert wird, in *LGBL. für Tirol und Vorarlberg* Nr. 16/1884.

<sup>19</sup> Gesetz vom 7. September 1902, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit der § 3 der Landesordnung von Vorarlberg abgeändert wird, in *Ibid.* 27/1902.

<sup>20</sup> Gesetz vom 13. Jänner 1909, wirksam für das Land Vorarlberg, womit die §§ 3 und 12 der Landesordnung von Vorarlberg abgeändert werden, in *Ibid.* 13/1909.

unterrepräsentiert sei.<sup>21</sup> Diese Petition erfüllte ihren Zweck, und bei der Wahl 1884 waren in Dornbirn zwei Kandidaten zu wählen. Thurner vertrat allerdings nicht bis zum Ende seiner politischen Laufbahn im Landtag die Interessen Dornbirns: 1902 kandidierte er für den Landgemeindebezirk Feldkirch-Dornbirn und 1909 für den politischen Bezirk Bludenz.<sup>22</sup>

Kohler wurde erstmals 1870, also ebenfalls noch vor den verschiedenen Wahlrechtsreformen, in den Vorarlberger Landtag gewählt. Er profitierte von der politischen Wende dieses Jahres. Erstmals gelang es den Katholisch-Konservativen, die liberale Mehrheit in der Landesvertretung zu brechen: Sie stellten nun 15 der insgesamt 20 Abgeordneten.<sup>23</sup>

Im letzten Jahrzehnt des 19. Jahrhunderts vertraten sowohl Thurner als auch Kohler das Kronland Vorarlberg im Abgeordnetenhaus des Reichsrats in Wien. Auch dessen Mitgliederzahl wuchs im Laufe der Jahrzehnte beständig an und spiegelte so die verschiedenen Wahlrechtsreformen wider. Im Jahr 1867 wurde die Zahl der Abgeordneten mit 203 festgelegt. Diese wurden allerdings nicht direkt gewählt, sondern von ihren jeweiligen Landtagen in den Reichsrat entsandt. Mit der Wahlrechtsreform von 1873 änderte sich dies: Die Wahl der Mandatare erfolgte nun direkt durch vier verschiedene Wählerklassen<sup>24</sup> für die Dauer von sechs Jahren. Pro Wahlkreis wurden ein oder mehrere Abgeordnete nach dem Mehrheitswahlrecht bestimmt. Zugleich erhöhte sich die Zahl der Mandatare auf 353. 1882 kam es erstmals zu einer Änderung der Reichsrats-Wahlordnung. Die Reformen betrafen einerseits die Wahlkreiseinteilung der Kurie des Großgrundbesitzes in Böhmen, andererseits wurde in der Kurie der Städte und Landgemeinden (mit einigen Ausnahmen) der Steuerzensus auf 5 fl. gesenkt. 1896 wurde eine fünfte Kurie eingerichtet, in welcher alle erwachsenen Männer wählten, deren Steuerleistung geringer war. Die Zahl der Mandatare erhöhte sich im Zuge dieser Novellierung auf 425. 1907 schließlich wurde nach zähem Ringen das Kurienwahlrecht ab- und dafür das allgemeine Männerwahlrecht eingeführt. Nach dieser Wahlrechtsreform zählte das Abgeordnetenhaus des Reichsrats schließlich 516 Mandatare. Die Einteilung der Wahlkreise, die in Hinblick

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<sup>21</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 61.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 116, 122.

<sup>23</sup> Meinrad Pichler, *Das Land Vorarlberg 1861 bis 2015* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2015), 22.

<sup>24</sup> 1. Kurie: Großgrundbesitzer; 2. Kurie: Handels- und Gewerbekammern; 3. Kurie: Landgemeinden; 4. Kurie: Männliche Einwohner von Städten, mindestens 24 Jahre alt, jährliche Mindeststeuerleistung 10 fl. (ab 1882 5 fl.)

auf die Anzahl der dort Wahlberechtigten uneinheitlich war, blieb weitgehend unangetastet.<sup>25</sup>

Durch die steigende Zahl an Abgeordneten sowie die Ausweitung des aktiven Wahlrechts bekamen immer breitere Bevölkerungskreise die Möglichkeit, direkt an den Reichsratswahlen zu partizipieren. In der Folge änderte sich auch sozioökonomische Hintergrund der Reichsratsabgeordneten, wie die zwei folgenden Beispiele zeigen.<sup>26</sup>

Im Jahr 1873 stellte die Gruppe der Großgrundbesitzer mit 26,9 Prozent den größten Teil der Mandatare. Dieser Prozentsatz erhöhte sich in den folgenden Jahren bis auf einen Höchststand von 32,9 Prozent bei den Wahlen 1879 und 1885. 1907, nach der Einführung der allgemeinen Wählerkurie, stellte diese Gruppe immer noch 24 Prozent der Abgeordneten. Erst das allgemeine Männerwahlrecht brachte hier eine einschneidende Änderung: 1907 sank der Anteil der Großgrundbesitzer rapide auf 5,2 Prozent ab.

Eine ähnliche Entwicklung, wenn auch in die umgekehrte Richtung, lässt sich in der Gruppe der Landwirte/Bauern erkennen. Diese stellte nach der Wahl von 1873 nur 3,7 Prozent der Abgeordneten. Dieser Anteil stieg bis zum Jahr 1891 langsam auf 7,6 Prozent an. Bei der Wahl 1897 konnten die Landwirte 11,3 Prozent der Mandate für sich gewinnen. Durch die Einführung des allgemeinen Männerwahlrechts verdoppelte sich dieser Anteil beinahe auf 20,9 Prozent.

Ähnliche Dynamiken zeigen sich bei einer Analyse des sozioökonomischen Hintergrunds der Vorarlberger Mitglieder des Abgeordnetenhauses des Reichsrats. Zwischen 1861 und 1918 entsandte das Kronland 19 Mandatare nach Wien. Sechs von ihnen waren Anhänger der Liberalen, zehn verstanden sich als konservativ bzw. christlichsozial und drei – in der Endzeit der Monarchie – als deutschnational. Um den sozialen Hintergrund dieser 19 Personen näher zu beleuchten und festzustellen, ob bei diesen Personen eine politische Laufbahn den sozialen Aufstieg ebnete, wurden die Berufe ihrer Väter erhoben.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Vgl. die Zusammenfassung in Franz Adlgasser, „Neue Gesichter oder alte Bekannte? Das Abgeordnetenhaus im Spiegel der Wahlrechtsreformen,“ in Thomas Simon (Hg.), *Hundert Jahre allgemeines und gleiches Wahlrecht in Österreich. Modernes Wahlrecht unter den Bedingungen eines Vielvölkerstaates* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 53–87 (53–59). Vasilij Melik, *Wahlen im alten Österreich. Am Beispiel der Kronländer mit slowenischsprachiger Bevölkerung* (Wien – Köln – Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1997).

<sup>26</sup> Die vollständigen Zahlen in Adlgasser, *Neue Gesichter*, 62 (Tabelle), die Interpretation, die hier zusammengefasst wiedergegeben wird, auf S. 62–72.

<sup>27</sup> Diese Angaben nach Walter Zirker, *Vorarlberger in Parlament und Regierung. Ein Lexikon der Politiker/innen von Frankfurt am Main, Kremsier, Wien, Straßburg, Luxemburg und Brüssel*

	Liberal	Konservativ/ Christlich-sozial	Deutschnational
Bauer	1	3	-
Arbeiter	-	2	-
Handwerker/ Kaufmann	-	3	2
Wirt	2	-	-
Fabrikbesitzer	1	2	-
Beamter	1	-	1
Militär	1	-	-

Auch wenn das Untersuchungssample klein ist, so lässt sich doch eine Tendenz ablesen: Die liberalen Abgeordneten wuchsen teilweise in einem adeligen Haushalt auf, andere Väter waren Beamte oder Fabrikbesitzer. Nur einer, Andreas Fetz, war der Sohn eines Landwirts. Die Familie dürfte allerdings recht wohlhabend und überregional vernetzt gewesen sein, denn Fetz besuchte ab 1843 ein Gymnasium in Linz.<sup>28</sup>

Die deutschnationalen Abgeordneten entstammten einem kleinbürgerlichen Milieu. Zwei von ihnen waren Bäckersöhne, einer war der Sohn eines Landesgerichtsbeamten.<sup>29</sup>

Die konservativen/christlichsozialen Abgeordneten schließlich entstammten primär einem bäuerlichen oder kleinbürgerlichen Milieu. Auch wenn die Väter von zwei Abgeordneten als Fabrikarbeiter tätig waren, so entstammten die Söhne doch keinem proletarischen Milieu. Dieses entwickelte sich in Vorarlberg trotz des hohen Industrieanteils aufgrund spezifischer lokaler Gegebenheiten nur in einem begrenzten Ausmaß.<sup>30</sup>

Während die liberalen Reichsratspolitiker daher in der Regel entweder selbst aus den Eliten stammten oder auf günstige Voraussetzungen für einen sozialen Aufstieg durch Bildung und Habitus zurückgreifen konnten, war die Ausgangslage für die späteren konservativen Abgeordneten weitaus schwieriger. Nur wenige von ihnen entstammten einem begüterten Elternhaus, konnten eine weiterführende Schulbildung genießen oder auf familiäre Netzwerke für die Karriereplanung zurückgreifen.

Die verschiedenen Wahlrechtsreformen auf Reichs-, Landes- und Gemeindeebene führten zu einer Ausweitung der Wählerbasis auch auf

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(1848–2000) (Regensburg: Roderer Verlag, 2001) und Ingrid Schuster, *Die Vertretung Vorarlbergs im Reichsrat 1861–1918* (Ungedruckte Dissertation: Wien, 1970).

<sup>28</sup> Zirker, *Vorarlberg in Parlament und Regierung*, 132.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>30</sup> Reinhard Jöhler, "Behinderte Klassenbildung – am Beispiel Vorarlbergs," *Beiträge zur historischen Sozialkunde* 16 (1986), 51–57.

weniger vermögende Schichten. Dieser Umstand spiegelt sich in der sozialen Zusammensetzung des Abgeordnetenhauses des Reichsrats. Für die Vorarlberger Abgeordneten stellt sich diese Analyse zwischen 1873 (erste direkte Reichsratswahl) und 1918 folgendermaßen dar.

Zeitraum	Bauer	Handwerker	Lehrer	Priester	Kaufmann	Beamter	Freie Berufe	Fabrikant
1873-1897			1		2	1	3	1
1897-1907	1	1	2			1		
1907-1918	1	1	1	1			1	

Der Wandel des sozioökonomischen Hintergrunds der Vorarlberger Reichsratsabgeordneten im Laufe der Jahrzehnte zeigt sich deutlich: Während in den ersten 25 Jahren Personen mit einem bürgerlichen Hintergrund dominierten, wählte Vorarlberg im 20. Jahrhundert vermehrt Politiker aus einem kleinbürgerlichen oder bäuerlichen Milieu in den Reichsrat. Damit spiegeln sich auf der Ebene des Kronlands Vorarlbergs jene Trends wider, die für das Abgeordnetenhaus des Reichsrats insgesamt zu beobachten sind.

#### *Die Etablierung politischer Organisationsstrukturen auf lokaler Ebene*

Der bereits erwähnte politische Umschwung des Jahres 1870 in Vorarlberg kam nicht aus dem Nichts. Vielmehr war er das Ergebnis der in den 1860er Jahren einsetzenden Selbstorganisation der katholisch-konservativen Bewegung auf lokaler und regionaler Ebene. Durch die Gründung von schlagkräftigen und mitgliederstarken Vereinen war es den vorwiegend aus klein- und mittelbürgerlichen Schichten stammenden Katholisch-Konservativen möglich, bei der Wahl 1870 einen Erdrutschsieg einzufahren und fortan die Mehrheit der Landtagsabgeordneten zu stellen.

Vorbild für die Organisation der katholisch-konservativen Bewegung Vorarlbergs war das Großherzogtum Baden. Im Jahr 1867 kam es zur ersten Gründung eines sogenannten Kasinos in Bregenz, und innerhalb kurzer Zeit entstanden überall im Land weitere dieser Vereine. Zum Teil kamen sie auf beachtliche Mitgliederzahlen. Das Kasino in Dornbirn konnte zeitweise auf 600 Unterstützer zählen.<sup>31</sup> Diese Vereine

<sup>31</sup> Zur Entwicklung des Kasinos in Dornbirn vgl. Uwe Leissing, "Die Kasinobewegung in Dornbirn," *Dornbirner Schriften*, 10 (1990), 7–26.



sammelten politisch interessierte junge Männer in ihren Reihen und ermöglichten es ihnen, sich rhetorisch, politisch und organisatorisch zu schulen, um auf eine politische Laufbahn vorbereitet zu sein. Wie noch genauer dargestellt werden wird, begannen sowohl Martin Thurnher als auch Johann Kohler ihre politische Karriere in den Kasinos ihrer Heimatorte, nämlich in Dornbirn und in Egg.

Die Kasinos organisierten den Wahlkampf, hielten regelmäßig Versammlungen ab und propagierten sowohl katholisch-konservative Ideale als auch Feindbilder – eben den Liberalismus.<sup>32</sup> Eine besonders wichtige Aufgabe bestand jedoch darin, die Wähler zum Urnengang überhaupt zu motivieren. 1867 erschienen in Egg von den 377 wahlberechtigten Personen des dritten Wahlkörpers nur 55 zur Gemeindewahl.<sup>33</sup> Noch in den 1890er Jahren war die Wahlbeteiligung zumindest bei einzelnen Gemeindewahlen außerordentlich niedrig.<sup>34</sup>

Eine schlagkräftige politische Organisation bedurfte jedoch nicht nur Einrichtungen, um Mitglieder zu sammeln, zu halten, weiter zu politisieren und zu schulen, sondern – um die Botschaften aus den Vereinshäusern hinaus zu tragen – eines Publikationsorgans. Das wichtigste der entsprechenden Vorarlberger Blätter war das 1866 von Teilen des Vorarlberger Klerus gegründete Vorarlberger Volksblatt.<sup>35</sup> In den ersten Jahren erschien es zweimal wöchentlich, seit 1887 täglich. Die Auflagenhöhe schwankte über die Jahrzehnte und betrug im Jahr 1870 nach eigenen Angaben 1300, 1883 1100 und 1908 3700 Stück. Geleitet wurde das streng konservative Blatt in der Regel von Geistlichen. Hier ist der Name Bernhard von Florencourt<sup>36</sup> zu nennen, der dem Volksblatt in den ersten Jahrzehnten seinen Stempel aufdrückte. Er schreckte vor keinem Konflikt mit dem liberalen Lager zurück und setzte dabei alle Mittel bis hin zur persönlichen Diffamierung ein. Finanziell war das Vorarlberger Volksblatt zumindest in den ersten Jahrzehnten seines Bestehens kein Erfolg. Vielmehr war es fortwährend auf die Unterstützung des Katholisch-Konservativen Volksvereins und sonstiger Mäzene angewiesen. Um einen Ausgleich zwischen den geistlichen

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<sup>32</sup> Haffner, *Kasiner*, 42–52.

<sup>33</sup> *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, Nr. 93, 15. November 1867, 1.

<sup>34</sup> 1891: Egg 16,1 Prozent, Lingenau 12,4 Prozent, Altach 4,6 Prozent. Die Angaben nach Benedikt Bilgeri, *Geschichte Vorarlbergs*, Bd. 4: *Zwischen Absolutismus und halber Autonomie* (Wien–Köln–Graz: Böhlau, 1982), 411. In dieser geringen Wahlbeteiligung wird wohl ein wichtiger Grund für die Einführung der Wahlpflicht zu suchen sein.

<sup>35</sup> Zum Vorarlberger Volksblatt vgl. Hubert Weitensfelder, *„Römlinge“ und „Preußenseuchler“*. *Konservativ-Christlichsoziale, Liberal-Deutschnationale und der Kulturkampf in Vorarlberg, 1860 bis 1914* (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik – München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2008), 57–66.

<sup>36</sup> Zu Florencourts Wirken vgl. Haffner, *Kasiner*, 91–100.

Herausgeber und den meist dem Laienstand angehörenden Geldgebern zu schaffen, wurden in den 1870er Jahren das Katholische Presskomitee und der Katholische Pressverein für Vorarlberg gegründet, in dem Johann Kohler sich engagierte. Der Pressverein war schließlich de facto der Eigentümer des Volksblatts.<sup>37</sup>

Florencourt publizierte nicht nur eigene Leitartikel, sondern baute auch ein Netz an Korrespondenten in den Städten und Gemeinden des Landes auf, die über aktuelle lokale Ereignisse berichteten. Um die Jahrhundertwende erschienen häufig antisemitische und fremdenfeindliche Artikel.

Zu den Korrespondenten und Feuilletonisten des Vorarlberger Volksblattes zählte auch Martin Thurnher. Seit 1867 schrieb er Artikel über Dornbirner Lokalereignisse (z. B. über die Vorträge eines Bienenzuchtlehrers), aber auch über politisch relevante Entwicklungen (z. B. die Gründung eines Lehrervereins, an der er persönlich beteiligt war) und die Aktivitäten des Dornbirner Kasinos. In einem Jahr verfasste er nach eigenen Angaben 143 Beiträge. Bald wurde er, wie er in seinen Memoiren berichtet, „ein gefürchteter Korrespondent, da ich auch persönliche Angriffe nicht scheute.“<sup>38</sup> Nebenbei schrieb Thurnher für weitere der Partei nahestehenden Blättern wie etwa die Vereinsblüten (später: Der Landbote) oder die Neuen Tiroler Stimmen.<sup>39</sup>

### ***Persönliche Faktoren***

#### *Motivation, Fleiß und Disziplin*

Sowohl Martin Thurnher als auch Johann Kohler zeichneten sich durch eine außergewöhnliche intrinsische Motivation aus. Beiden war ein hohes Maß an Selbstmotivation zu eigen, beide investierten insbesondere in jungen Jahren viel Zeit ins Selbststudium und beide legten ein großes Ausmaß an Pflicht- und Arbeitseifer an den Tag. Welche Grundmotive<sup>40</sup> sie dabei leiteten und ob sie von Anfang an eine politische Laufbahn anstrebten, kann allerdings aufgrund der Quellenlage nur teilweise rekonstruiert werden. Was Martin Thurnher betrifft, kann auf seine Memoiren zurückgegriffen werden, die er in seinen letzten Lebensjahren verfasste.<sup>41</sup> Von Johann Kohler wiederum sind Tagebücher überliefert, die den Zeitraum Mai 1863 bis Mai 1865 abdecken.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hagen, *Umkämpfte Öffentlichkeit*.

<sup>38</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 169.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 168–171.

<sup>40</sup> Zu den Grundmotiven D. C. McClelland, *Human motivation* (New York: University of Cambridge, 1987).

<sup>41</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*.

<sup>42</sup> Hans Kohler (Hg.), *Johann Kohler, Tagebücher 1863–1865* (Rankweil: s.n., 2011).

So berichtet Thurner über seine Schulzeit, dass er ab seinem zehnten Lebensjahr von Ende April bis Anfang November nicht die Schule besuchte, sondern seinen Vater in der Fabrik unterstützte. Andere Kinder hingegen hätten die sogenannte Sommerschule besucht und zudem noch Nachhilfeunterricht erhalten. Trotzdem "behauptete ich [...] die letzten 2 Jahre in der Volksschule doch den ersten Platz". Auch in der Realschule zeichnete er sich (außer im Fach Zeichnen und Schreiben) aus und erhielt als Gesamtnote ein "vorzüglich".<sup>43</sup> Ähnlich erfolgreich verlief – das Fach Musik ausgenommen – das Studium an der Lehrerbildungsanstalt. Thurner wurde mit "Vorzug" als Schulgehilfe empfohlen.<sup>44</sup>

Thurner war jedoch nicht nur ein ausgezeichnete Schüler, sondern verfügte über eine robuste Konstitution. Ab den 1870er Jahren übernahm er neben seinem eigentlichen Beruf als Lehrer eine Reihe weiterer Aufgaben und war zudem auf Gemeinde- und Landesebene politisch aktiv. Es kam daher "häufig vor, daß ich erst um Mitternacht das Schreiben, Rechnen und Concipiren unterbrechen konnte". Unterstützung erfuhr Thurner hier durch seine Frau und später auch durch seine Kinder.<sup>45</sup>

Fortbildung war auch außerhalb des schulischen Bereichs möglich. Der Erwerb neuer Kenntnisse war in vielerlei Funktionen möglich. Thurner betont in seinen Memoiren die Bedeutung, die seine Tätigkeiten als Vormund, Massenverwalter und Bevollmächtigter für seine spätere politische Laufbahn hatten. Im Rahmen dieser Funktionen hatte er immer wieder bei Gericht zu tun und musste sich daher bereits als junger Mann mit juristischen Fragestellungen befassen.<sup>46</sup>

Wie Thurner absolvierte auch Kohler die Volksschule und legte ebenfalls sehr gute Leistungen an den Tag. Anschließend bildete er sich im Selbststudium weiter. Bereits in seiner Kindheit war er ein begeisterter Leser, der über Antiquariate gebrauchte Bücher günstig erstand. Auch Leihbibliotheken dürfte er häufig frequentiert haben. Die häufige Lektüre spiegelt sich in Kohlers Tagebüchern: 15 bis 20 Prozent der Einträge befassen sich mit dem Themenkomplex Lektüre, etwa 50 Autoren werden namentlich genannt. Der Großteil ist der katholisch-konservativen Erbauungsliteratur zuzurechnen, doch Kohler las auch historische Werke und die deutschen Klassiker Goethe und Schiller. Dazu kamen Tages- und Wochenzeitungen.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Schneider, *Thurner*, 24.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>47</sup> Wurzer, *Kulturkampf und Selbst.*

Die extensive Lektüre färbte auf Kohlers Sprache ab: Bei der Abfassung seiner Tagbücher drückte Kohler sich "eloquent und standardsprachlich" aus - "angesichts seines soziokulturellen Hintergrund sowie der geringen formalen Bildung" ein bemerkenswerter Umstand, wie Markus Wurzer anmerkt.<sup>48</sup> Dieser Umstand fiel auch den Zeitgenossen auf. Kurz nach seiner Wahl in den Vorarlberger Landtag stellte das (ihm wohlgesonnene) Vorarlberger Volksblatt fest: "Kohler gehört zu jenen Wenigen, die durch eigenes Privatstudium die Bildung einer Mittel- und Hochschule ersetzen, er besitzt im Ausdruck mehr Gewandtheit, als manche sog. Studierende."<sup>49</sup>

### *Politische Überzeugung*

Politische Überzeugung steht in diesem Beitrag für ein persönliches Interesse an politischen Themen und die Bereitschaft, diesem Bereich neben der beruflichen Tätigkeit Zeit zu widmen - sei es in Vereinen oder in politischen Vertretungskörperschaften wie Gemeinderat, Landtag oder Reichsrat.

Vor dem Eintritt in die Politik steht die Entscheidung, sich einer politischen Richtung zuzuwenden. Dieser Prozess ist häufig mit Selbstreflexion, grundlegenden politischen Überlegungen und Zweifel verbunden. Die Frage ist also nicht, "ob eine Person liberal oder konservativ *war*, sondern, *wann* sie sich mit den Positionen von einem der beiden Lager identifizierte".<sup>50</sup>

Nicht immer erlaubt die Quellenlage, diesen Prozess der Selbstfindung nachzuvollziehen. Die Memoiren Martin Thurnhers erlauben keine Erkenntnisse hinsichtlich der Herausbildung der politischen Überzeugungen des Autors. Retrospektiv aus der Sicht des arrivierten Politikers mit dem Blick auf eine Veröffentlichung<sup>51</sup> geschrieben, zeigt der Text eine folgerichtige, einheitliche Entwicklung vom strebsamen, religiösen Jüngling zum erfolgreichen konservativen Politiker. Bereits in jungen Jahren, so suggeriert der Text, positionierte sich Thurnher eindeutig im konservativen Lager: Als er mit 23 Jahren am in Wien stattfindenden österreichischen Lehrertag teilnahm, war er ob der liberalen Ausrichtung der Veranstaltung abgestoßen und fühlte sich in seinen politischen Überzeugungen bekräftigt. Direkte Folge dieses Ausflugs war die Gründung des Katholisch-pädagogischen Lehrervereins, an der sich auch Kohler beteiligte.<sup>52</sup> Wenige Jahre später, so berichtet Thurnher in seinen Erinnerungen, wurde er von den

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> "Unser gegenwärtiger Landtag," *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 3. Oktober 1871, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Wurzer, *Kulturkampf und Selbst*.

<sup>51</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 32-34.

Liberalen in Versuchung geführt, die politischen Seiten zu wechseln. Die liberal dominierte Dornbirner Gemeindevertreter habe nämlich den Beschluss gefasst, ihn (damals noch Lehrer und im Turnen nach eigenen Angaben wenig talentiert) nach Leipzig zu schicken, um dort eine Ausbildung zum Turnlehrer zu absolvieren. Dahinter stand, so vermutet Thurnher, ihn im "kleinen Paris" für die liberale Partei zu gewinnen.<sup>53</sup>

Anders ist die Quellenlage im Fall Johann Kohlers: Dessen Tagebücher erlauben einen Blick in das Seelenleben jener Jahren, in denen er sich nach langen Selbstreflexionen schließlich für die katholisch-konservative Seite und gegen das liberale Lager entschied – ohne sich allerdings vorerst politisch zu engagieren. Dieser Selbstfindungsprozess fand allerdings nicht explizit statt sondern erfolgte implizit, indem Kohler zahlreiche Alltagserlebnisse und insbesondere die von ihm eifrig gepflegte Lektüre nutzte, um sich gegenüber dem Konservativismus beziehungsweise dem Liberalismus zu positionieren. Er focht, wie Wurzer pointiert formuliert, "'innere' Kulturkämpfe" aus. Dabei war das Ergebnis dieses Reifungsprozesses keinesfalls von vornherein feststehend, denn der junge Kohler vermochte zumindest vorübergehend dem Liberalismus positive Seiten abzugewinnen. Im Laufe der Monate, in denen sein Suchen und Schwanken deutlich zutage tritt, entwickelten sich seine persönlichen politischen und religiösen Überzeugungen schließlich doch immer stärker in eine Richtung.<sup>54</sup>

Kohler entschied sich letztlich für das katholisch-konservative Lager – und diese Entscheidung war absolut. Er galt als Radikaler, als "Scharfer", innerhalb der Bewegung, der nur selten bereit war, von seinen Prinzipien abzurücken. Für Kompromisse war er nicht zu haben, und heftigen Diskussionen ging er nicht aus dem Weg. Kurz zusammengefasst: "Kohlschwarz ist seine Gesinnung."<sup>55</sup> Martin Thurnher bezeichnete ihn daher auch als "reinste[n] Idealist[en]", der zwar stets guten Willen gezeigt, aber mit der praktischen Umsetzung Probleme gehabt habe.<sup>56</sup>

Kohlers Prinzipientreue, auf welche in den Quellen immer wieder hingewiesen wird, beförderte ihn Ende der 1880er Jahre beinahe ins politische Abseits: Parteiinterne Auseinandersetzungen zwischen ideologischen Hardlinern – zu denen Kohler zählte – und kompromissbereiten "Mittelparteilern" erreichten im Jahr 1887 im sogenannten Bistumsstreit ihren Höhepunkt. Konkret ging es bei dieser

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 35–37.

<sup>54</sup> Wurzer, *Kulturkampf und Selbst*.

<sup>55</sup> "Unser gegenwärtiger Landtag," *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 3. Oktober 1871, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 109.

Frage um die Gründung eines eigenen Bistums Vorarlberg, das die "scharfe" Richtung ohne Rücksprache mit den kirchlichen Autoritäten forderte. Dies führte zu einem politischen Eklat: Der gemäßigte Teil der Partei wie auch der für Vorarlberg zuständige Brixner Fürstbischof Simon Aichner waren empört. Im Zuge dieser Debatte legte Kohler 1889 nicht nur sein Landtagsmandat, sondern auch diverse Vereinsfunktionen – zumindest vorübergehend – zurück. Seine Kandidatur für den Reichsrat 1891 ist aus dieser Perspektive nicht als Karrieresprung zu verstehen, sondern als ein politisches Exil, aus dem er erst 1896 mit einem Landtagsmandat wieder zurückkehrte.<sup>57</sup>

Wie bereits angedeutet, stellte das Engagement im weit verzweigten katholisch-konservativen beziehungsweise christlichsozialen Vereinswesen einen zentralen Faktor für eine politische Karriere dar. Sowohl Thurnher als auch Kohler zeigten sich in diesem Bereich überaus aktiv, waren Funktionäre in verschiedensten Vereinen und wirkten teilweise auch an deren Gründung mit. Vereine fungierten (und fungieren) nicht nur als politische Vorfeldorganisation, sondern sind auch ein idealer Rahmen für die Ausbildung von persönlichen Netzwerken. Regelmäßige Zusammenkünfte, der Austausch mit anderen, aber über eine ähnliche Ausrichtung verfügenden Vereinen, förderten soziale Kontakte nicht nur im eigenen Umfeld, sondern überregional. Die Vereinsmitglieder trafen auf gleichgesinnte Personen, tauschten sich mit ihnen aus und konnten so unter Umständen einflussreiche Förderer und Unterstützer finden. Das Vereinswesen konnte somit als Sprungbrett für eine politische Laufbahn genutzt werden. Wichtig in diesem Zusammenhang sind die bereits genannten Casinos, die ab 1867/68 in Vorarlberg in mehreren Orten gegründet wurden – so beispielsweise in Wolfurt. Thurnher, damals 23 Jahre alt, nahm an der Gründungsfeier teil und hatte hier Gelegenheit, seine erste Rede in einem Casino zu halten – der in den folgenden Jahrzehnten angeblich noch hunderte weitere in ganz Vorarlberg folgten.<sup>58</sup> Im Casino Dornbirn war Thurnher seit dessen Gründung Mitglied und bekleidete verschiedene Funktionen. Ab 1870 hatte er de facto die Leitung inne.<sup>59</sup>

Auch in Egg wurde 1868 ein Casino ins Leben gerufen. Der damals gerade 30 Jahre alte Kohler, der an der Gründung beteiligt gewesen sein dürfte und seit 1867 einen Sitz im Gemeinderat von Egg

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<sup>57</sup> Severin Holzknicht, "Johann Kohler. Der "Windthorst von Vorarlberg"?", in Böhler (Hg.), *Kohlschwarz*.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

inne hatte, wurde zum Präsidenten gewählt.<sup>60</sup> In den folgenden Jahren war Kohler an der Gründung mehrerer Vereinen beteiligt und nahm wichtige Funktionen in denselben wahr. 1870 wurde er von den Katholisch-Konservativen für die Landtagswahl aufgestellt und errang ein Mandat. Auch nach seiner Wahl in den Landtag ließ sein Vereinsengagement nicht nach.

Doch auch Vereine, die keine politische Agenda verfolgten, konnten sich für eine politische Laufbahn als nützlich erweisen. 1867 wurde der Vorarlberger Viehversicherungsverein ins Leben gerufen. Thurnher war für diese Einrichtung seit ihrer Gründung bis 1891, als er in den Reichsrat gewählt wurde, als Agent tätig. Im Rahmen dieser Tätigkeit besuchte er regelmäßig die bäuerlichen Familien, um den Viehstand zu eruieren und die Prämien einzukassieren. So hatte er ausreichend Gelegenheit, zum einen die Probleme dieses Berufsstandes zu erkennen, zum anderen aber auch, sich als dessen politischer Interessenvertreter zu positionieren.<sup>61</sup> Zwei weitere Tätigkeiten sind in diesem Zusammenhang erwähnenswert, da sie den Kontakt zwischen dem Politiker und der Bevölkerung förderten, auch wenn es sich nicht um Vereinstätigkeiten handelte: Zwischen 1875 und 1891 arbeitete Thurnher als Buchhalter der Sennerei Schwarz in Dornbirn und seit 1878 bis in die Mitte der 1890er Jahre vertrat er die Feuerversicherungsgesellschaft Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà aus Triest.<sup>62</sup>

### *Eheschließungen*

Individuen existieren nicht isoliert, sondern sind eingebunden in soziale Netzwerke. Durch diese Verbindungen können zusätzliche Ressourcen in sozialer, finanzieller oder politischer Hinsicht lukriert werden, die außerhalb dieser Netzwerke nicht zur Verfügung gestanden hätten. Auf das Vereinswesen, ein wichtiger Generator von sozialen Netzwerken, wurde bereits verwiesen. Doch auch private Netzwerke wie etwa das Konnubium liefern Hinweise auf den sozialen Status der Brautleute und können wichtige Voraussetzungen für soziales Fortkommen sein.<sup>63</sup>

Insbesondere die zweite Eheschließung Kohlers wirft in diesem Zusammenhang Fragen auf. Es ist nämlich immer noch unklar, wie der finanziell wenig begüterte und aus einer einfachen Familie stammende

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<sup>60</sup> "Casino-Leben," *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 14. Juli 1868, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 30.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>63</sup> Vgl. z. B. Elisabeth Mantl, *Heirat als Privileg: obrigkeitliche Heiratsbeschränkungen in Tirol und Vorarlberg 1820 bis 1920* (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik - München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997).

Kohler die reiche Fabrikantentochter Anna Schwärzler zur Frau gewinnen konnte. Sein Schwiegervater war der Textilfabrikant Gebhard Schwärzler, der nicht nur geschäftlich erfolgreich war (er war der größte Steuerzahler seiner Heimatgemeinde Schwarzach), sondern sich auch auf Gemeinde- und Landesebene politisch engagierte.<sup>64</sup> Eine plausible Erklärung für diese Verbindung könnte darin bestehen, dass der ehrgeizige und talentierte Kohler auf einer der zahlreichen Vereinsversammlungen mit Gebhard Schwärzler Bekanntschaft geschlossen hatte. Das politische Engagement Kohlers hätte ihm dann den Aufstieg in das Vorarlberger Besitzbürgertum durch Heirat ermöglicht.

Diese Eheschließung brachte Kohler jedenfalls finanzielle Sicherheit und die Formalisierung der Verwandtschaft mit Gebhard Schwärzler. Zudem firmierte Kohler nun als Handelsmann und nicht mehr als Lehrer. Inwieweit er neben seinen politischen Aktivitäten jedoch Zeit fand, sich tatsächlich um das Geschäft zu kümmern, ist unklar. In der von Kohler während seiner zweiten Ehe geführten Hauschronik findet dieser Bereich nur während der ersten Jahre Erwähnung. In den späteren Jahren scheint sich insbesondere seine Frau um die finanziellen Belange gekümmert zu haben.<sup>65</sup>

Ähnlich ist der Fall bei Martin Thurnher gelagert: Dieser lernte seine Frau wohl über seinen zukünftigen Schwiegervater kennen. Im Oktober 1874 heiratete Thurnher Anna Maria Fußenegger, die jüngste Tochter des "sehr geachteten Sägers und Holzhändlers Josef Fußenegger", der im Steuerrat, im Dornbirner Gemeindeausschuss und im lokalen Kasino politisch aktiv war und die Errichtung eines eigenen Vereinshauses finanziell unterstützte.<sup>66</sup>

Zu diesem Zeitpunkt konnte Thurnher bereits auf ein gewisses Ausmaß an sozialem Prestige zurückgreifen: Seit 1870 war er Mitglied des Gemeindeausschusses Dornbirn und ein rühriges Mitglied des Dornbirner Kasinos. Er dürfte Josef Fußenegger wohl als geeigneter Heiratskandidat für seine jüngste Tochter erschienen sein. Auch in diesem Fall ermöglichte also das politische Engagement Thurnhers ein Konnubium in ein "bessers" soziokulturelles Umfeld.

Fußenegger und Thurnher waren aber nicht nur politisch und familiär, sondern auch geschäftlich miteinander verbunden. Im Frühjahr 1874 verfügte Thurnher über ausreichende finanzielle Mittel, um ein

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<sup>64</sup> Vgl. dazu Hans Kohler, *Zeitenwende. Gebhard Schwärzler. Ein Unternehmer des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Regensburg: Roderer Verlag, 2017).

<sup>65</sup> Vgl. Margret Friedrich, "Anna Kohler, geb. Schwärzler - eine historisch absente Größe?," in Böhler (Hg.), *Kohlschwarz*.

<sup>66</sup> Schneider, *Thurnher*, 51.



Grundstück für den Bau eines Hauses zu erwerben. Ob ihn sein zukünftiger Schiegervater bei dieser Transaktion unterstützte, ist nicht klar. Allerdings kaufte ihm dieser zwei Jahre später einen Teil der Liegenschaft zu einem guten Preis ab, um selbst ein neues Haus zu errichten, in dem er dann mit seiner dritten Frau wohnte. So kam Thurnher der Kauf des Grundstücks "eigentlich billig zu stehen", weil "durch den Erlös dieser Abtretungen der ursprüngliche Kaufpreis nahezu gedeckt wurde".<sup>67</sup>

### *Zusammenfassung*

Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler lebten, was die politischen Entwicklungen Vorarlbergs betrifft, in einer Umbruchszeit. Viele der 1870 neu in den Landtag beziehungsweise später in den Reichsrat gewählten Abgeordneten entstammten einem klein- oder unterbürgerlichen Milieu. Für sie war ihr politisches Engagement, das durch strukturelle Faktoren wie die sukzessive Ausweitung des Wahlrechts auf weniger vermögende Schichten und die zunehmend professioneller werdende Selbstorganisation des katholisch-konservativen Lagers unterstützt wurde, eine Möglichkeit des sozialen Aufstiegs.

Martin Thurnher und Johann Kohler sind nur zwei Beispiele, wie politisches Engagement einen sozialen Aufstieg ermöglichte. Weitere quantitative Untersuchungen, aber auch qualitative Analysen würden wichtige Aufschlüsse über die sozialen Prozesse, die durch die Entstehung moderner Massenparteien und die Ausweitung politischer Partizipation in Gang gesetzt wurden, ermöglichen.

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<sup>67</sup> 1875 verkaufte Thurnher einen Teil des Grundstücks ebenfalls zu einem guten Preis an die Gemeinde Dornbirn, da diese eine Straße erweitern wollte, Ibid.



**Bucharest, 19 February/3 March 1886:**

**“...anyone understands how shaky and little durable this peace will be”\***

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*Article history: Received 8.10.2021; Revised 22.11.2021;*

*Accepted 15.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract:** Only several years after the war of 1877-1878 between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, in which Romania had also been involved and had had an important role, succeeding in gaining its state independence, the situation in the Balkan Peninsula experienced new tense moments. Against the background of the so-called *Bulgarian crisis* in the late '80s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in which Russian interests played again an important part, along with the involvement of other Great Powers, an armed conflict between Serbia and Bulgaria took place in November 1885, causing a general concern at the continental level. Situated in the immediate vicinity of the conflict, Romania tried to contribute to its resolution, wanting to avoid a new Russian invasion and a tension of the relations with its powerful eastern neighbour.

The choice of Bucharest as a venue for peace negotiations and the signing of the treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria was also a sign of the appreciation and prestige enjoyed by the Romanian state and King Carol I, primarily due to the balanced and prudent approach shown in the foreign policy and international relations. However, at the level of the Romanian historiography, the erroneous perception of an important role that Romania would have played in the completion of the conflict and the signing of the peace in Bucharest was established for some time, a perception contradicted by the historical realities and the testimonies from that period.

**Keywords:** Bulgarian crisis, Serbian-Bulgarian war, Romanian Kingdom, Carol I, the Bucharest peace.

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\* București, 19 februarie / 3 martie 1886: “...pricepe oricine cât de șubredă și puțin durabilă va fi pacea aceasta”.

**Rezumat: București, 19 februarie / 3 martie 1886: "...pricepe oricine cât de șubredă și puțin durabilă va fi pacea aceasta".** La doar câțiva ani după războiul din 1877-1878 dintre Imperiu rus și Imperiul otoman, în care fusese implicată și România și care avusese un rol important, izbutind să-și câștige independența de stat, situația din Peninsula Balcanică a cunoscut noi momente tensionate. Pe fondul așa-zisei *crize bulgare* de la sfârșitul anilor '80 ai secolului al XIX-lea, în care interesele rusești au jucat, din nou, un rol important, alături de implicarea altor Mari Puteri, a avut loc, în noiembrie 1885, un conflict armat între Serbia și Bulgaria, provocând o îngrijorare generală la nivel continental. Aflată în imediata vecinătate a conflictului, România a încercat să contribuie la soluționarea acestuia, dorind să evite o nouă invazie rusească și o tensionare a relațiilor cu puternicul vecin de la răsărit.

Alegerea Bucureștiului drept loc de desfășurare a negocierilor păcii și de semnare a tratatului dintre Serbia și Bulgaria a reprezentat inclusiv un semn al aprecierii și al prestigiului de care se bucurau statul român și regele Carol I, în primul rând datorită abordării echilibrate și prudente manifestate în privința politicii externe și a relațiilor internaționale. Cu toate acestea, la nivelul istoriografiei românești s-a încetățenit, de mai multă vreme, percepția eronată a unui rol important pe care România l-ar fi avut în finalizarea conflictului și în semnarea păcii de la București, percepție contrazisă de realitățile istorice și de mărturiile din epocă.

**Cuvinte cheie:** criza bulgară, războiul sârbo-bulgar, Regatul României, Carol I, pacea de la București.

In 1885-1886, only a few years after the Russo-Turkish war which had caused important changes on the political map of South-Eastern Europe, a new episode of the so complicated Eastern Question unfolded. This time, the coordinates were noticeably changed compared to the years 1877-1878, the main difference being the absence of the Ottoman Empire from the forefront of the events. Until then, almost every time when the Eastern Question was discussed, the Porte was automatically taken into account, as the Turkish state was usually regarded as the main responsible for the general instability and disorder within the area. Nevertheless, for a better understanding and underlining of this aspect, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> one must permanently consider both the specific interests of the Great European Powers and the gradual development and affirmation of the national movements in the territories under Ottoman rule in this part of the continent.

The situation to which we refer through our text falls into the second phase of the so-called *Bulgarian crisis* of 1885-1887.<sup>1</sup> At the level of nowadays historiography it is considered that this crisis comprises three phases. The first concerns the union of Eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria, proclaimed by the unifying act of Philippopolis (Plovdiv) of 6/18 September 1885. The second phase consists of the Serbian-Bulgarian war and the peace of Bucharest. Finally, the third phase is represented by the removal of Alexander of Battenberg and the installation of Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha as prince of new Bulgaria. For reasons as objective and understandable as possible we will not consider the actual development of the Bulgarian crisis nor the military operations during the conflict with Serbia. As it can be easily deduced from the title of our text, we are primarily interested in the role of Romania within this crisis and the meanings that can be attributed to the peace in Bucharest at the beginning of 1886.<sup>2</sup>

The Bulgarian crisis also occurred on the background of the increasing tensions between the Bulgarian Principality under Ottoman suzerainty, led by Prince Alexander of Battenberg, and the Russian Empire which had not given up its great Balkan confederate project in which Bulgaria had been reserved a leading role. The acceptance of the act of unification of Eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria by Alexander of Battenberg was the last straw of those which contributed to the complete degradation of the relations between Tsar Alexander III and his former friend and ally in the Balkans. As an immediate consequence, all Russian officers who were in Bulgaria were called back to Russia,<sup>3</sup> and Alexander III ordered the Prince to be removed from the ranks of the Russian army (he had the rank of Lieutenant General).<sup>4</sup> As Gheorghe Vârnav-Liteanu, the Romanian

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<sup>1</sup> Gheorghe Cliveti, *România modernă și "Apogeul Europei" 1815-1914* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2018), 984.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> R.J. Crampton, *Bulgaria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 123; Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan national states 1804-1920* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2000), 165; Frederick B. Chary, *The History of Bulgaria* (Santa Barbara - Denver - Oxford: ABC-CLIO Greenwood Press), 2011, 39.

<sup>4</sup> *Documents diplomatiques français (1871-1914)*, 1<sup>re</sup> série (1871-1900), tome VI (8 avril 1885 - 30 décembre 1887) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1934), 137 (Le général Appert, Ambassadeur de France à Saint-Petersbourg, à M. de Freycinet, Ministre des Affaires étrangères. Saint-Petersbourg, 5 novembre 1885); Rudolf Dinu (coord.), Alin Ciupală, Antal Lukács (eds.), Anca-Graziella, Nicolae Nicolescu (associated ed.), *Documente Diplomatice Române* (hereinafter: *DDR 12*). Series I, Vol. 12 - 1884-1885, (Râmnicu Vâlcea: Editura Conphys, 2010), p. 754 (the diplomatic agent of Romania in Sofia, Alexandru Beldiman, to the President of the Council of Ministers, Minister *ad interim* of Foreign Affairs, Ion C. Brătianu. Sofia, 9 November (new style) 1885, w.h. [without hour - our note]); Daniel Crețu, "România și reînnoirea Triplei Alianțe," *Transilvania*. 11 (2015): 83.

Minister in Berlin, pointed out in a telegram addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ion Cămpineanu, the measures in question proved that the Russians regarded Bulgaria as a Russian province and its sovereign as a mere official or employee of the Tsar.<sup>5</sup>

However, the situation provoked by the unifying act of Philippopolis led to a new aggravation of the Eastern Question, worrying both the Great Powers and the small states in the area. Among the Great Powers there was also the fear, expressed especially by the French diplomacy, that the three kingdoms in the south-east of the continent – Romania, Greece, and Serbia – might raise, together or separately, the issue of certain compensations following the territorial changes in the Balkans. Indeed, two of them, namely Serbia and Greece, were dissatisfied with the changes and demanded territorial compensations. Unavoidably, there were various discussions between the diplomats of the Great Powers in the attempt to solve the crisis caused by the outcome of the uprising in Eastern Rumelia. Eventually, also through the manoeuvres of British diplomacy which had considered it appropriate to propose the Porte the acceptance of a “personal union” of Bulgaria and Rumelia under the rule of Alexander of Battenberg, it was decided to convene in Constantinople the representatives of the signatory powers of the Treaty of Berlin on 13 July 1878 for a conference to regulate this new disorder. Nonetheless, the most important role in summoning that conference belonged to the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck; although he preferred “direct arrangements between the most interested parties”,<sup>6</sup> understanding the danger that Russia would again take advantage of the possibility of an armed intervention South of the Danube as it had done back in 1877, he insisted with the Ottoman officials for the organization of such a meeting.

The conference in Constantinople opened its proceedings on 25 October / 6 November 1878. Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary wanted a return to the *status quo ante*, while Great Britain sustained the plan of a personal union of the two Bulgarias under the leadership of Alexander of Battenberg and categorically opposed the idea of an intervention of the Ottoman army against the Bulgarians. All these were taking place against the background of a growing agitation and discontent in Serbia and Greece, which were demanding territorial compensations if the new extent of Bulgaria was to be maintained. However, being also

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<sup>5</sup> DDR 12, p. 744 (Minister of Romania in Berlin, Gheorghe Vârnav-Liteanu, to the Minister of the Foreign Affairs, Ion Cămpineanu. Berlin, 6 November (new style) 1878): “Mesure prise par la Russie contre le Prince de Battenberg [a produit l’] impression d’un acte de tension à montrer que la Bulgarie [doit être] considérée province russe et son souverain comme un employé du Czar”.

<sup>6</sup> Cliveti, *România modernă*, 993.

instigated by Austria-Hungary,<sup>7</sup> the Serbs did not wait for the conclusions of the Constantinople talks and took action attacking the Bulgarians. Having their army mobilized even since September,<sup>8</sup> they declared war and crossed the border with Bulgaria on 2/14 November 1885. A few days later they were defeated in Slivnitsa, a locality 22 kilometres away from Sofia, forced to retreat, and after 24 November the Bulgarian army entered Serbia. The determined warnings of the Great Powers, expressed including under the form of an ultimatum issued by Austria-Hungary joined by Germany and Russia,<sup>9</sup> led to the cessation of hostilities and the signing of an armistice. The unfolding of the military events, as well as the complication of the diplomatic situation, demonstrated that a return to the so desired *status ante quo* became increasingly distant. Even Tsar Alexander III had to reluctantly accept this aspect. The situation was regulated and resolved at the official level through the peace treaty signed in Bucharest, on 19 February / 3 March 1886.<sup>10</sup>

Briefly presented, this was the situation which found its temporary resolution following the peace treaty signed in Bucharest. As already mentioned, we are interested to see what was the role played by the Romanian state and what were the meanings attributed to this act carried out in the capital of the Romanian Kingdom. Thus, as pointed out in the field literature, the attitude of the decision makers in Bucharest was, "at least in the first phase, one of timorous expectation",<sup>11</sup> Romania being situated between "the two Russias" and potentially exposed to an invasion both on the two land fronts and at sea.<sup>12</sup> It was also intended to avoid a possible new crossing over the national territory of the Russian armies in the event of another intervention in the Balkans or, even more seriously, the turning of the country into a war theatre. This is why Romania's primary interest was to settle the Serbian-Bulgarian dispute as quickly as possible, the leaders in Bucharest adopting an absolute reserve attitude towards the ongoing events in order not to fuel the conflict in any way.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Chary, *The History of Bulgaria*, 39.

<sup>8</sup> Cliveti, *România modernă*, 993.

<sup>9</sup> Frank Maloy Anderson, Amos Shartle Hershley [with the Assistance of 50 Contributors], *Handbook for the Diplomatic History of Europe, Asia, and Africa 1870-1914* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 125.

<sup>10</sup> "Treaty of Peace between Bulgaria and Servia. Signed at Bucharest, 3rd March, 1886," in Edward Hertslet (ed.), *The Map of Europe by Treaty; showing the various political and territorial changes which have taken place since the general peace of 1814. With numerous maps and notes*. Vol. IV. 1875 to 1891 (London: Butterworths, 1891), 3151; Anderson, Hershley, *Handbook*, 125.

<sup>11</sup> Dinu, "Introduction," in *DDR* 12, X.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, X-XI.

At the same time, the direct relations with the south-Danubian neighbours – Serbia and Bulgaria – presented certain nuances. Both Sofia and Belgrade would have liked Romania to speak out in favour of their interests in this crisis. It is true, in the case of Bulgaria the hopes were somewhat lower if we consider the problem related to the border in the South of Dobruja which dated back to 1878. Therefore, the news that Romania had declared its neutrality towards the situation caused by the act Philippopoli was received with some satisfaction in Sofia, although certain moments of concern appeared even in October 1885, when the Romanian royal government had shown its discontent regarding the arms trafficking and the brigandage acts practised by the Bulgarians within the border area, a fact which was possible, according to Bucharest's opinion, including because of the imprecision in the delimitation of the Dobruja southern border.<sup>14</sup>

For their part, the Serbs hoped that following the visit of King Carol I to Belgrade in August 1884, Romania might even have shown itself open to a military action against Bulgaria. Moreover, on 13/25 September 1885, a special envoy of King Milan I came up with a concrete offer of cooperation regarding the idea of a joint operation against the Bulgarians as the Romanians were invited to occupy the entire territory up to the Rusciuk – Varna alignment.<sup>15</sup> That is why the announcement of neutrality by the Romanian side caused some discontent in Belgrade.

It should also be reminded here that, in the context of the Bulgarian crisis, Prime Minister Ion C. Brătianu considered possible territorial compensations for Romania, even more so as there was the old problem related to the delimitation of the Dobruja border and the city of Silistra. His vision differed from that of King Carol I, but also from that of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ion Cămpineanu, who regarded the Bulgarian or Rumelian crisis only as a new source of problems. In addition to that, Brătianu thought of it as possible opportunity which Romania had to try to capitalize on for the national interest. That is why after testing Bulgaria's attitude he went to Vienna and to Berlin in order to see if he could rely on the support of the new allies<sup>16</sup> in the event that Romania had formally raised claims regarding territorial compensations. However, as King Carol

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 737-738 (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ion Cămpineanu, to the person in charge of the diplomatic Agency of Romania in Sofia, Spiro-Paul. [Bucharest], 19/31 October 1885).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 622-623 (*Propunerile făcute Ministrului Afacerilor Externe al României, Ion Cămpineanu, de către Generalul Gheorghe Catargi, trimisul regelui Serbiei, Milan Obrenović / The proposals made to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Ion Cămpineanu, by General Gheorghe Catargi, envoy of the King of Serbia, Milan Obrenović.* [Bucharest], 13/25 September 1885).

<sup>16</sup> Romania had secretly joined the triple Alliance, on 18/30 October, through a secret treaty signed with Austria-Hungary, to which Germany subscribed the same day, and Italy after almost five years, on 3/15 May 1888.



I recorded in his memoirs, the answer received by the Romanian Prime Minister was that the Triple Alliance was an association of peace and not a purchasing company, being obvious that Otto von Bismarck wanted “absolute peace” as the Bulgarian union was to be recognized without any compensation for Romania.<sup>17</sup> After all, any decision in this regard had to necessarily take into account the interests and the attitudes of Romania’s secret allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary. By the treaty of alliance signed in 1883 the Romanian state had also assumed the obligation to align its foreign policy with the strategy unfolded in Berlin and Vienna.

Following the conclusion of the Serbian-Bulgarian armistice, the question of where the peace talks would take place arose. Victorious on the battlefield, the Bulgarians wanted these to be held in Sofia. The suzerain power – the Ottoman Empire – proposed Constantinople, considering also a possible resumption of the conference of ambassadors’ works. The Serbs, supported by Austria-Hungary, preferred Belgrade, of course. Finally, Otto von Bismarck intervened and proposed for the peace negotiations to be held in Bucharest,<sup>18</sup> a proposal finally accepted by all the Great Powers, as well as the belligerents. It is true, there was also the idea of designating the city of Craiova as the place of these negotiations, but everything remained at the level of pure discussions.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Carol I al României, *Jurnal*, Vol. I, 1881-1887. Text established, translation from German, introductory study and notes by Vasile Docea (Iași: Polirom, 2007), 397: “3 o’clock in Buzău, welcoming, Brătianu there, he returned without result from his trip. Bismarck wants peace absolutely, the Bulgarian union will be recognized, without compensations for us”. The aspect in question is also pointed out by Guasco di Bissio, chargé d’affaires of the Kingdom of Italy in Bucharest, in a report sent to Carlo Felice Nicolis di Robilant, the Italian Foreign Minister, written after a conversation with Ion Câmpineanu – see R. Dinu, Ion Bulei (eds.), *35 de ani de relații italo-române, 1879-1914. Documente diplomatice italiene / 35 anni di relazioni italo-romene, 1879-1914. Documenti diplomatici italiani* (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 2001), 176 (Chargé d’affaires in Bucharest, Guasco di Bissio, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, di Robilant. Bucharest, 11 October 1885): “Non mi fu dato di vedere lo stesso signor Bratiano ma ebbi stamane la sorte di conversare a lungo con questo Ministro degli Affari Esteri [Ion Câmpineanu – our note] ed ho l’onore di riassumere all’Eccellenza Vostra quello che mi pare più importante a conoscersi. Il signor Bratiano si è formato la convinzione che Bismarck vuole la pace a qualunque costo. La questione prettamente bulgara non lo preoccupa in modo eccessivo, e non crede potrà essere causa di conflagrazione”.

<sup>18</sup> A. Ciupală, A. Lukács, L. Trăușan-Matu (eds.), *Documente Diplomatice Române. Series I, Vol. 13 – 1886*, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2014), 21 (hereinafter *DDR 13*) (Minister of Romania in Berlin, Liteanu, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pherekyde. Berlin, 9 January 1886): “Le Comte de Bismarck m’a communiqué que la Serbie et la Bulgarie ne peuvent s’entendre au sujet du lieu à choisir pour les négociations de la paix. Bismarck a ordonné à ses représentants de Belgrade et de Sofia de proposer aux deux parties de se réunir à cet effet à Bucarest”.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7 (Minister of Romania in Sankt Petersburg, Kretzulescu, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pherekyde. Sankt Petersburg, 31 December 1885 / 12 January 1886).

The diplomatic relations between the Great Powers and the lack of willingness to discuss issues that would go beyond the local or regional plan clearly indicated that the peace negotiations in Bucharest were to be assigned a very limited role, namely of officially closing the Serbian-Bulgarian conflict, without involving issues related to the “exclusive competence of the European diplomacy”.<sup>20</sup> That is why the negotiating parties were practically put in the position of fulfilling a mandate previously established by the European areopagus.<sup>21</sup>

The meetings of the Bucharest reunion began on 23 January / 4 February 1886; it was also the moment when the news of an arrangement between the Ottomans and the Bulgarians which ensured Alexander of Battenberg the rule of Eastern Rumelia for an unlimited period reached the Romanian capital; in return he agreed to the maintenance of the Ottoman suzerainty for that province. The Ottoman Empire had to accept *de facto* the situation which occurred. Under these circumstances, when the Great Powers also gradually expressed their adherence to this arrangement, it became even more obvious that the works in Bucharest had to target an epilogue that was supposed to simply aim to the conclusion of peace. The treaty signed on 19 February / 3 March 1886 contains a single article which states: “Peace is re-established between the Kingdom of Servia [*sic* - our note] and the Principality of Bulgaria, dating from the date of the signature of the present Treaty”.<sup>22</sup>

The moment 1886 is very important from the point of view of the regional geopolitics of that time. In current terms one might even say that the Kingdom of Romania was considered by the Great Powers, and first of all by Germany, as the only regional provider of stability and security and a reliable partner for the restoration and guarantee of peace in the case of the Serbian-Bulgarian conflict. This attitude was also the result of the caution shown by the decision makers in Bucharest. In addition to the fact of being, since 1883, a part of an alliance which demanded compliance with the guidelines of the Berlin Treaty of 1878, the heads of the Romanian foreign policy had the wisdom not to follow in any way the proposal that came from Serbia in September 1885. The aspects are interrelated as the alliance with the Central Powers proved to be, for Romania, a real source of security and stability. As noted by Rudolf Dinu, one of the editors of the collection *Documente Diplomatice Române* [*Romanian Diplomatic Documents*], “in most regional crisis situations after 1883, from the Rumelian issue to the Balkan Wars, the Triple Alliance shaped, constrained, and moderated the

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<sup>20</sup> Cliveti, *România modernă*, 1007.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 1008.

<sup>22</sup> “Treaty of Peace between Bulgaria and Servia,” 3151.

Romanian foreign policy, transforming the small North-Danubian kingdom into a factor of stability in the South-East of Europe".<sup>23</sup>

Choosing Bucharest as a venue for peace negotiations also demonstrated that the prudence and balance shown by the Romanian head of state engaged the appreciation and respect of the leaders of the European continent. As an additional proof of the prestige enjoyed by King Carol I one can mention the fact that, in 1886, following the abdication of Prince Alexander of Battenberg, the Bulgarian Prime Minister Stefan Stambulov proposed to Carol to secure the Bulgarian crown in order to accomplish a personal Romania-Bulgarian union, a proposal which the Romanian monarch declined.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to all these issues which deal, first of all, with the overall existing situation, other aspects proved a certain relevance and contributed, to some extent, to the shaping of the positive image which Romania gained during and after the Serbian-Bulgarian war – we refer here not only to the neutrality that was strictly observed by the leading factors in Bucharest, but also to the involvement in helping the wounded of the two sides and the war refugees. The ambulances of the Romanian Red Cross were sent to both states, with Romanian physicians and nurses caring for several hundreds wounded in the hospitals of Sofia and Belgrade; hundreds of refugees who had crossed the Danube because of the war were received and housed in the Calafat area.<sup>25</sup> Both the public opinion in Serbia and Bulgaria as well as various representatives of the Great Powers appreciated the attitude shown by the Romanian state;<sup>26</sup> also

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<sup>23</sup> Dinu, "Introduction," XIII.

<sup>24</sup> Alexandru Em. Lahovary, *Amintiri diplomatice. Constantinopol (1902-1906). Viena (1906-1908)*, Adrian Stătescu and Laurențiu Vlad (eds.) (Iași: Institutul European, 2009), 95. As shown by the Romanian historiography, Carol's refusal was formulated in agreement with the opinions expressed by the Romanian politicians, but also taking into account the fact that neither Russia, nor Austria-Hungary would have accepted a Hohenzollern to rule both Romania and Bulgaria – Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria românilor în timpul celor patru regi (1866-1947)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Vol. I – *Carol I* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică), 2004, 138.

<sup>25</sup> Bogdan Catana, "România și războiul sârbo-bulgar din 1885," *Analele Universității din Craiova. Seria Istorie XI* (2006): 133–135.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. A sign of appreciation from the highest level was sent from the Italian capital – thus, Alexandru Plagino, extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in Rome, informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihail Pherekyde, that the designation of the Kingdom of Romania's capital as a place of negotiations between the Serbs and the Bulgarians was very well received by King Umberto I – *DDR 13*, 79–80 (Ministrul României la Roma, Plagino, către Ministrul Afacerilor Externe, Pherekyde. Roma, 4 February 1886):

"Minister,

I had the honour of receiving yesterday evening the telegram of Your Excellency of the same day relating to the meeting of the negotiators for Thursday 5 current; two

thanks to this fact Bucharest's nomination was finally accepted without much opposition by the belligerent parties.

In spite of these aspects which essentially contain favourable nuances for the Romanian Kingdom and the attitude adopted during the Bulgarian crisis, we consider that it is exaggerated to talk about a special role which our country would have had within this crisis in South-Eastern Europe or about the presentation of the peace of Bucharest as "a prestigious success of the Romanian diplomacy", as it could be understood from all kind of works and studies in our historiography.<sup>27</sup> The fact as such can be easily noticed and understood if we consider the manner in which the entire Bulgarian crisis is presented and analyzed within the foreign historiography – the peace treaty signed in Bucharest at the beginning of 1886 is barely mentioned and sometimes even omitted from the overall picture of the respective crisis.<sup>28</sup> For reasons we have already mentioned,

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hours later I was at the ball of the German Ambassador which was also attended by TM [Their Majesties – our note] The King and Queen, they stayed until 2 o'clock after midnight as they had come at 11 o'clock.

Asked by HM [His Majesty – our note] if I knew anything about the negotiations in Bucharest, I was able to report him the telegram of YE [Your Excellency – our note].

He added that he finds the meeting place to be right from all points of view, that he would like only Romanians to exert some influence on them, as it will be disinterested since the representatives and diplomats of the great powers are more concerned with their own interests".

<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, Nicolae Ciachir, "Oraşul Bucureşti – locul tratativelor şi al păcii care a pus capăt conflictului balcanic din anii 1885-1886," *Bucureşti. Materiale de istorie şi muzeografie*, VII (1969): 279–284 (here 284) it is even shown that: "Proving lucidity, calm, much tact, the Romanian diplomacy managed to establish peace relations in the balkans [lowercase in the text – our note]". After 2000, see Gheorghe Platon (coord.), *Istoria Românilor*, Vol. VII, Tome II – *De la Independenţă la Marea Unire (1878-1918)* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), 251: "During these events, the Romanian government maintained an attitude whose correctness was appreciated by the other powers. It maintained a strict neutrality and was concerned with the localization of the conflict. The correct attitude and the prestige enjoyed by Romania south of the Danube caused the place of the peace talks to be designated the city of Bucharest. The proposal in this way was made by Bismarck. The participants in the talks which would restore the status quo praised Romania's correct attitude. The peace of Bucharest can be considered as a prestigious success of the Romanian diplomacy". See also Liviu Brătescu, "Chestiunea "Dunării" – o problemă pe agenda clasei politice româneşti (1878-1888)," *Acta Moldaviae Septentrionalis*, V-VI (2006-2007): 209: "Without falling on the slope of exaggerations, the years 1884-1888 show us a Romanian state regarded either as an arbiter and mediator in the Serbian-Bulgarian conflict, or the central pillar of certain political constructions of the type of the much invoked in this period Balkan confederations".

<sup>28</sup> See, for instance, the presentation from a book published in 1915, authored, among others, by the great British historian Arnold Toynbee – Nevill Forbes, Arnold J. Toynbee, D. Mitrany, D.G. Hogarth, *The Balkans. A History of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey* (Oxford: s.n., 1915), 58-59 –, in which the entire Serbian-Bulgarian conflict of 1885 is

one must acknowledge that Romania's role was a relatively limited one, very well circumscribed to the European order of the time. This aspect was clearly reiterated in a relatively recent analysis by Gheorghe Cliveti: "Romania was not directly acting in any of the three «phases» nor involved deliberately on the «monitoring and diplomatic solutions of the crisis». It only «hosted» in its capital, at the headquarters of the Ministry of Finance, for almost a month (23 January / 4 February – 19 February / 3 March 1886) the Peace Conference (...).<sup>29</sup>

Although one can speak about the existence of intentions or ideas to see the Kingdom of Romania directly involved in the management and resolution of crisis from South of the Danube it is obvious that such a matter could not materialize without the consent of the majority of the Great Powers.<sup>30</sup> Despite the fact that it was bordering the conflict zone, having certain interests that might have concerned possible border changes in Dobruja,<sup>31</sup> but also the ethnic realities of Timoc area,<sup>32</sup> the Romanian

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summarized in a single paragraph, and the issue of the Bucharest peace is presented in a few words: "On November 13 King Milan declared war, and began to march on Sofia, which is not far from the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier. Prince Alexander, the bulk of whose army was on the Turkish frontier, boldly took up the challenge. On November 18 took place the battle of Slivnitsa, a small town about twenty miles north-west of Sofia, in which the Bulgarians were completely victorious. Prince Alexander, after hard fighting, took Pirot in Serbia on November 27, having refused King Milan's request for an armistice, and was marching on Nish, when Austria intervened, and threatened to send troops into Serbia unless fighting ceased. Bulgaria had to obey, and on March 3, 1886, a barren treaty of peace [our emphasis] was imposed on the belligerents at Bucarest".

<sup>29</sup> Cliveti, *România modernă*, 984.

<sup>30</sup> The fact as such was also publicly stated by King Carol I in the autumn of 1885, on the occasion of the opening of the work of the Parliament, through the message of the throne, reproduced by several periodicals of the time – see for instance "Mesagiul de deschidere a Corpurilor legiuitoare," *Românul*, XXIX (1885), 16 November, 1021: "Having a strong and well-defined position, being in the most friendly relations with all the states, we watched with silence, but with great attention, the events taking place beyond the Danube. Our non-interference in a conflict in which the signatory powers of the Berlin treaty had to pronounce themselves first of all was self-indicated. However, we could not help feeling a vivid regret, when concerns that the general peace could be disturbed aroused, that peace so necessary for the development of all peoples and especially for us who still have so much work to do to reach the degree development and progress to which we all aspire." See also "Mesagiul Tronului pentru deschiderea sesiunii ordinare a Corpurilor legiuitoare," *Epoca*, I/1 (1885), 16 November: 3; "Bucuresci, vineri 15 Noembrie 1885," *Telegraful*, XVI /4034 (1885), 16 November, morning edition: 1; "Mesagiul Tronului pentru deschiderea sesiunii ordinare a Corpurilor legiuitoare," *Voința națională*, II/394 (1885), 16 November, edition B: 1; "Mesagiul Tronului," *România liberă*, IX/2494 (1885), 17/29 November: 1–2.

<sup>31</sup> Cliveti, *România modernă*, 989–990. Besides, shortly after the onset of the crisis south of the Danube, various ideas began to circulate within the Romanian press regarding the expediency of Romania's intervention in order to rectify the Dobrogea's border, with

state could not overcome its condition and could not replace the Great Powers in the context of the time.

Integrated in a broader framework, the conflict of 1885 can also be regarded as a preamble of a premise for later tensions and grievances like the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. The fact as such was correctly appreciated and understood during the discussions in Bucharest, an aspect which is easy to recognize, for instance, at the level of some of the analysis elaborated and published within the Romanian press of the time<sup>33</sup> which also inspired us in establishing the title of our text. If until then the main efforts of the nations in the Balkans were aimed at building an adequate anti-Ottoman resistance which would allow their political and national affirmation, starting with this Serbian-Bulgarian conflict the local animosities specific to the Balkan Peninsula came to light with intensity being overlapped with the interests of the Great Powers.

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direct reference to the situation in the Silistra area – see “Bucuresci 19/1 Brumărel 1885,” *Românul*, XXIX (1885), 20 September, edition B: 837; “Din Bulgaria. Corespondință particulară a Românului,” 1885, 13 November, edition B: 1009; “Bucuresci, 21 Septembrie,” *România liberă*, IX/2449 (1885), 22 September: 1.

<sup>32</sup> Catana, “România și războiul sârbo-bulgar,” 134. It is about the large number of the Romanians from Timok who were enlisted in both armies, Serbian and Bulgarian, a fact mentioned inclusively by the two medical missions sent by Romania south of the Danube.

<sup>33</sup> Eloquent in this regard is the presentation of the current situation that can be found in the newspaper *Epoca* in 19 February 1886. Taking also information from German sources, the editorial board of that newspaper, in view of the disputes which had led to the outbreak of the war, showed: “Therefore, even if today or tomorrow the plenipotentiaries were to reach a peaceable solution and put their signatures on the peace treaty, anyone understands how shaky and little durable this peace will be” – “Conferența,” *Epoca*, I/75 (1886), 19 February, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.: 1. See also the analysis published in the same newspaper on 22 February 1886 at the end of which it was stated: “The peace of Bucharest is nothing more than a suspension of war which resolves none of the issues pending before it, and which is as short as the no fixed duration” – S.H., “Pacea în Orient,” *Epoca*, I/78 (1886), 22 February, 1<sup>st</sup> ed.: 1.

# From university professorship to diplomacy. Gheorghe Tașcă – Plenipotentiary Minister of Romania in Germany (1930-1932)\*

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*Article history: Received 11.11.2021; Revised 3.12.2021;*

*Accepted 18.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract:** In this study we analyse some aspects of Gheorghe Tașcă's activity as Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of Romania to Germany. The focus is on Tașcă's analysis of the economic and political situation in the Weimar Republic, as well as on his contribution to Romanian-German economic relations. We also want to observe how a head of legation from outside the diplomatic corps, as was Tașcă, but with expertise in the economic field, managed to face the challenges of a diplomatic mission that was difficult to manage.

**Keywords:** diplomacy, Gheorghe Tașcă, Romania, Weimar Republic, legation

**Rezumat:** De la catedra universitară la diplomație. Gheorghe Tașcă - ministru plenipotențiar al României în Germania (1930-1932). În studiul de față analizăm câteva aspecte ale activității lui Gheorghe Tașcă în postul de trimis extraordinar și ministru plenipotențiar al României în Germania. Accentele cad asupra modului în care Tașcă a analizat situația economică și politică din Republica de la Weimar, precum și asupra contribuției sale în planul relațiilor economice româno-germane. De asemenea, dorim să observăm modul în care un șef de legație provenit din afara corpului diplomatic, așa cum era Tașcă, dar cu expertiză în domeniul economic, a reușit să facă față provocărilor unei misiuni diplomatice dificil de manageriat.

**Cuvinte cheie:** diplomație, Gheorghe Tașcă, România, Republica de la Weimar, legație

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\* This work was supported by a Grant from the Ministry of Research and Innovation CNCS-UEFISCDI, Project Number PN-III-P4-ID-PCCF-2016-0131, within PNCDI III.

## Introduction

Relations between Romania and Germany in the interwar period have been analysed over the years by several Romanian and foreign historians. These preoccupations have resulted in the publication of monographs and studies focusing on various aspects of relations between the two countries (political, economic, cultural, etc.). However, we still know quite few aspects of the activity of some of Romania's extraordinary envoys and plenipotentiary ministers in Germany. One of them was Gheorghe Tașcă - the only head of the legation in Berlin during the interwar period who came from outside the diplomatic corps.

Tașcă's mission to Berlin was "regarded" ambivalently in Romanian historiography. Some historians insisted on his expertise in economics, which explained his appointment at the head of the legation in the German capital<sup>1</sup> but presented his actions disparately,<sup>2</sup> while others argued that Tașcă had visible limits in the analysis of political life in the Weimar Republic and in "deciphering" the objectives of German foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, other contributions call for a reassessment of his diplomatic work, which is placed on the same level of excellence as his teaching and scholarly work,<sup>4</sup> judging that it was Tașcă who concluded "an important preferential customs agreement" with Germany.<sup>5</sup> In a completely different tone are the observations of some contemporaries about Tașcă's presence in Romanian diplomacy. For example, Constantin Argetoianu, known for his "edgy" statements, which sometimes contain a certain dose of exaggeration, notes: "In Comnen's place I found at our legation Gh. Tașcă, who had been appointed there for no reason and who had penetrated the diplomatic world and Berlin circles like a nail in a stone."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dorin-Demostene Iancu, *Relații culturale româno-germane în perioada interbelică* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2015), 66.

<sup>2</sup> Constantin Buchet, *România și Republica de la Weimar 1919-1933. Economie, diplomație și geopolitică* (Bucharest: Editura ALL Educațional, 2001), 81-94.

<sup>3</sup> Ioan Chiper, *România și Germania nazistă. Relațiile româno-germane între comandamente politice și interese economice (ianuarie 1933 - martie 1938)* (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2000), 37-45.

<sup>4</sup> Sorin Popescu, Tudor Prelipceanu, "Gheorghe Tașcă - economist și jurist de seamă, victimă a represiunii comuniste," *Memoria. Revista gândirii arestate*, nr. 94/1 (2016): 78-86; Robert Păușan, "Gheorghe Tașcă - om politic și diplomat," in N. N. Constantinescu (coord.) *Studii de istorie economică și istoria gândirii economice*, vol. 1, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1996), 51-54.

<sup>5</sup> George-Felix Tașcă, "Un fiu uitat al Bârladului, prof. Dr. G.G. Tașcă (1875-1951) - membru corespondent al Academiei Române", *Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis*, XV-XX/II, (1993-1998): 241.

<sup>6</sup> Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, vol. IX, partea a VIII-a (1930-1931), ed. Stelian Neagoe, (Bucharest: Editura Machiavelli, 1997), 100.



Based on these points of view, we propose to analyze Tașcă's activity as head of the Romanian legation in Berlin, focusing on two aspects: his role in the Romanian-German economic negotiations and the way he analyzed political life in Germany, in a context marked by the impact of the economic crisis and the rise of Nazism. We will also seek to explain the factors behind his appointment in Berlin and the elements that led to the end of his mission in Germany.

### Biographical sketches

Gheorghe Tașcă was born on 30 January 1875 in Bălăbănești, Tutova county (today Galați county),<sup>7</sup> the son of the tax collector Gheorghe I. Tașcă (1847-1935) and Maria (Marghiolița) Dabija (1849-1945).<sup>8</sup> Tașcă attended primary school in his native village and then the "Gheorghe Roșca Codreanu" high school in Bârlad. In 1896 he became a student at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest, which he graduated in 1898.<sup>9</sup> After graduating he practiced law, collaborating for a time with Nicolae Basilescu (1860-1938), a professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest, politician and businessman.<sup>10</sup> His wife Cordelia (née Demetriescu),<sup>11</sup> who was in the entourage of Queen Elizabeth of Romania,<sup>12</sup> also played a role in his bookish ambitions. This is why Gheorghe Tașcă, like some of his peers, headed for Paris, a university centre that attracted Romanians aspiring to a doctorate in law. On 28 May 1907, Gheorghe Tașcă defended, under the supervision of Professor André Weiss (1858-1928), his doctoral thesis *Considérations sur les lois relatives à la propriété rurale en Roumanie, Angleterre et Irlande (étude de droit comparé)*.<sup>13</sup> Back in Romania, Tașcă had an attempt to be co-opted as associate professor at the Department of Political Economy of the Faculty of Law at the University of Bucharest.<sup>14</sup> However, he was accused of not being able to teach political economy because he had a PhD in law and not in

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<sup>7</sup> In his birth certificate his name was Iorgu Tașcă, but during his high school years he changed his first name to Gheorghe (Tașcă, "Un fiu uitat," 234; Andrei Filotti, *De peste mări și țări. Amintiri din viața diplomatică de odinioară*, (Bucharest: Editura Corint, 2020), 73).

<sup>8</sup> Tașcă, "Un fiu uitat," 234.

<sup>9</sup> Tașcă took the bachelor's exam in October 1898 (*Anuarul Universității din București pe anul școlar 1898-1899*, (Bucharest: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Carol Göbl", 1899), 52.

<sup>10</sup> Dan Falcan, "Ctitori de București. Familia Basilescu", *București – Materiale de istorie și Muzeografie*, XVI, (2002): 316-322.

<sup>11</sup> Tașcă married in 1905 (Tașcă, "Un fiu uitat," 237).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>13</sup> The thesis was published by V. Giard et E. Brière and was 352 pages long.

<sup>14</sup> Tașcă gave "free lectures" at the University of Bucharest and published his lectures in a volume (*Lecțiuni de introducere la Economia politică predate la Facultatea de Drept a Universității din București*, (Bucharest: Tipografia Profesională Dimitrie C. Ionescu, 1908), 110 p.

economics.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the following year he enrolled in Paris to obtain a PhD in economics. The result of this was his doctoral thesis *Les nouvelles réformes agraires en Roumanie*<sup>16</sup> on 26 May 1910. With two doctorates in law and economics in his scientific portfolio, plus several other published works, Gheorghe Tașcă was appointed associate professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest in 1911. Almost a decade later, in 1921, he was promoted to university professor and chair of political economy with special reference to agrarian, industrial and mining legislation.<sup>17</sup>

In 1913, Gheorghe Tașcă was involved in another important academic project, namely the creation of the Academy of Higher Commercial and Industrial Studies, where he was appointed professor of political economy and history of economic doctrines.<sup>18</sup> One of his future colleagues, a well-known economist and politician, Ion Răducanu, noted in his memoirs: "The chairs, in the first year of operation, were distributed to political friends. Thus, among those appointed because they were members of the Conservative-Democratic Party were: Gheorghe Tașcă, Benone Marinescu, Stanislas Cihoski and D.R. Ioanișescu, the latter a associate professor. Of all of them, only Tașcă deserved to occupy a seat."<sup>19</sup>

Gradually, through his publications and the prestige he gained as a professor, but also through his involvement in politics, Gheorghe Tașcă became one of the nationally recognized specialists in economics. His scientific prestige, coupled with the support of personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, led Gheorghe Tașcă to be elected, on 4 June 1926, a correspondent member of the Romanian Academy.<sup>20</sup>

Gheorghe Tașcă combined his activity as a university professor with that of lawyer and politician. He entered political life at the beginning of the 20th century, being elected in 1905 as a deputy on the Conservative Party lists. He then migrated to the Conservative-Democratic Party, led by Take Ionescu, and after the death of the leader of the party, Tașcă became a member of the Nationalist-Democratic Party, led by Nicolae Iorga.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, between 1927 and 1930, Tașcă was director of the newspaper "Neamul Românesc", the mouthpiece of the party led by Nicolae Iorga.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Filotti, *De peste mări și țări*, 76.

<sup>16</sup> The thesis was also published by V. Giard et E. Brière and was 212 pages long.

<sup>17</sup> *Universitatea din București 1915/1916 - 1923/1924* (Bucharest: Tipografiile Române Unite, 1924), 63.

<sup>18</sup> Ion Vorovenci, *Istoria Academiei de Înalte Studii Comerciale și Industriale (1913-1947)* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei de Studii Economice, 2010), 146.

<sup>19</sup> Ion Răducanu, *Din amintirile unui septuagenar* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2001), 113.

<sup>20</sup> Dorina N. Rusu, *Membrii Academiei Române (1866-2016). Dicționar, II (M-Z)*, ediția a 5-a, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2016), 698-699.

<sup>21</sup> Tașcă, "Un fiu uitat," 237.

<sup>22</sup> He was director alongside N. Georgescu, while N. Iorga was "political director".

Gheorghe Tașcă was elected rector of the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies in 1929,<sup>23</sup> with political support. However, his economic thinking was closer to liberalism than to the views of the conservatives, of Iorga's followers or the nationalists.<sup>24</sup>

So, in 1930, Gheorghe Tașcă was on the heights of professional affirmation: he was a university professor, rector of the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies, correspondent member of the Romanian Academy. He had been a member of the Romanian Parliament on several occasions, but had not yet occupied a ministerial post.

### **Appointment at the head of the Romanian Legation in Germany**

By a decree issued on 30 April 1930, Gheorghe Tașcă was appointed, starting from 1 May, at the head of the Romanian legation in Berlin. Tașcă's appointment as Romania's envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Germany was part of a wider 'movement' in the diplomatic corps. For example, Ion P. Carp was appointed to head the diplomatic mission in Ankara, while Gheorghe Grigorcea was appointed to the same position in Brussels.<sup>25</sup> Of the three new heads of diplomatic missions, only Tașcă was from outside Romania's diplomatic corps.

The appointment of an outsider (non-career head of mission) to head a diplomatic mission was not new, as it was a measure allowed by the Law on the Functioning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the years after the First World War several specialists from different fields, some of them working in politics, dabbled in diplomacy (Victor Antonescu, Simion Mândrescu, Traian Stârcea), while others made real careers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Nicolae Titulescu, Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen, Theodor Emandi).

Tașcă replaced Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen in Berlin, a diplomat "integrated" into Romania's diplomatic corps at the age of 42 (in 1923), who had headed the legation in the German capital since February 1928.<sup>26</sup> Gheorghe Tașcă's appointment in Germany attracted public attention and was commented on by contemporaries. For example, Constantin Argetoianu, in his memoirs, claimed that the appointment of Tașcă to the

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<sup>23</sup> See Ion Gh. Roșca, Liviu Bogdan Vlad, *Rectorii Academiei de Studii Economice din București*, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei de Studii Economice, 2013), 48–56.

<sup>24</sup> Ovidiu Buruiiană, *Construind opoziția. Istoria politică a Partidului Național Liberal între anii 1927 și 1933*, (Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2013), 56.

<sup>25</sup> Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Arhiva Ministerului Afacerilor Externe al României), Problem 77 Fund, file T 57 – Gheorghe Tașcă, unpagged (hereinafter: ARMFA).

<sup>26</sup> On Petrescu-Comnen's career in diplomacy, see Adrian Vițalariu, *Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen – diplomat*, (Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2014), *passim*.

German capital was part of the National Peasants' Party's strategy to place reliable people in the best possible positions. Argetoianu pointed out that Iuliu Maniu had wanted to appoint Ion Răducanu, Minister of Labour, Health and Social Welfare, to Berlin, but he declined the proposal of the head of government, which led him to move on to Gheorghe Tașcă, after Dimitrie Gusti had refused the appointment in the city on the banks of the Spree.<sup>27</sup> Argetoianu's remarks, although they paint a fairly accurate picture of the reality surrounding appointments to diplomatic posts, reveal his aversion to the leader of the National Peasant Party, Iuliu Maniu, and to Professor Gheorghe Tașcă. Argetoianu considered Tașcă's appointment to Berlin to be "a gesture of kindness" towards Iorga, as the professor at the Academy of Higher Commercial and Industrial Studies was close to the great historian.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the National Peasant Party government included several of Tașcă's acquaintances.<sup>29</sup> Gheorghe Mironescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was a professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest and a former member of the Conservative Democratic Party. In addition, Ion Răducanu, Minister of Labour, Health and Social Welfare, was a professor at the Academy of Higher Commercial and Industrial Studies and took over as rector of the higher education institution after Tașcă left for the diplomatic mission in Berlin.<sup>30</sup>

A possible appointment of Tașcă to Berlin was discussed since the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930.<sup>31</sup> On 10 January 1930, Iorga noted in his diary that Maniu had proposed to Tașcă either the leadership of the Berlin legation or that of the Hague legation.<sup>32</sup> In the immediate aftermath this plan took shape. This is why, at the end of March, Tașcă confided to his friend Theodor Emandi, Romania's plenipotentiary minister in Prague: "My appointment in Berlin, which was a mere hypothesis, began to take shape. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has asked for my consent because there are now major economic issues being debated in Germany and the government there needs a man with an economic background. I am very honoured by the choice that is being made, in my person, but I am leaving here a work in progress and an entire household. My hope is that the trip

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<sup>27</sup> Argetoianu, *Memorii*, 100–101. Rumours about a possible appointment of Gusti to Berlin had been circulating since June 1929. See Political Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts), Rumänien Fund, file R 73657, Bucharest, telegram of 26 June 1929, unpaginated (hereinafter: PAMFAB, Rum.).

<sup>28</sup> Argetoianu, *Memorii*, 101.

<sup>29</sup> Păiușan, "Gheorghe Tașcă," 53.

<sup>30</sup> Roșca, Vlad, *Rectorii*, 57–70.

<sup>31</sup> *Neamul Românesc*, (May 4, 1930): 1.

<sup>32</sup> N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. IV, *Agonia regală și Regența*, (Bucharest: Editura "Națională" S. Ciornei, 1939), 378.

will be short. Once the economic agreements are concluded, I will, I believe, be able to regain my freedom and resume my occupations".<sup>33</sup> On this subject, "Neamul Românesc" of 17 April noted that "there is insistent talk" of appointing Tașcă as minister plenipotentiary in Berlin.<sup>34</sup>

The German legation in Bucharest has carefully analysed the rumours concerning the appointment of Petrescu-Comnen's successor at the head of Romania's diplomatic representation in Berlin. As early as the end of March, German diplomats in Bucharest had been saying that Tașcă was to be appointed to head the legation in Berlin. As usual, they also produced a portrait of the future head of the legation. His political and academic activity was highlighted, as well as the fact that he had no experience in diplomacy. A positive element was that his wife was a good German speaker.<sup>35</sup> The characterisations of Tașcă were therefore balanced, with an emphasis on his economic expertise, which could be a good omen.

In early May, when the appointment became official, Tașcă settled some of his "political business" in the country. He withdrew from the leadership of "Neamul Românesc"<sup>36</sup> and from the party led by Nicolae Iorga,<sup>37</sup> thus preparing for a new stage in his life and career.

### **Start of the diplomatic mission in the German capital**

Professor Tașcă took over the leadership of the legation on 15 May 1930.<sup>38</sup> On 26 May the ceremony of handing over the letters of accreditation to the German President, Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, took place. However, German protocol stipulated that the speech given on the occasion of the presentation of the letters of accreditation should preferably be delivered either in German or in the native language of the head of the diplomatic mission. To avoid being put in a delicate protocol situation, Tașcă chose to prepare his speech in German. Therefore, in the first days of his mandate, the new head of the legation in Berlin, who had minimal knowledge of German, began to systematically repeat the grammar of the German language and, at the same time, learnt by heart the speech he delivered to the President of the Weimar Republic.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> National Library of Romania (Biblioteca Națională a României), Special Collections, St. Georges Fund, Theodor Emandi Archive, CI 5, Letter from Gheorghe Tașcă to Theodor Emandi, 28 March 1930 (hereafter: NLR, TEA).

<sup>34</sup> *Neamul Românesc*, (April 17, 1930): 1.

<sup>35</sup> PAMFAB, Rum., R 73657 (Bucharest, telegram of 29 March 1930; Bucharest, telegram of 7 May 1930).

<sup>36</sup> *Neamul Românesc*, (May 3, 1930): 2.

<sup>37</sup> *Neamul Românesc*, (May 4, 1930): 1.

<sup>38</sup> ARMFA, Problem 77 Fund, file T 57, unpagued.

<sup>39</sup> NLR, TEA, CI 5, Letter from Gheorghe Tașcă to Theodor Emandi, 25 May 1930.

Perhaps Tașcă's most important objective at the beginning of the mission was to get up to speed with "legation business", to get to know the staff and to assign work tasks. As the Berlin legation was one of the important diplomatic missions in the geography of Romania's international representation, and the mediation of Romanian-German relations required a large workload, the staff was more numerous than that of other legations. Tașcă's first impression was hopeful. He confessed to Emandi: "[...] I had the good fortune to find in the legation a staff trained and animated by the greatest goodwill". Gheorghe Aurelian, minister plenipotentiary 2<sup>nd</sup> class, was an experienced diplomat who, in his seven years in Berlin, had built up contacts in German society and the diplomatic corps. Aurelian was, in fact, Tașcă's "right-hand man", as he had been for his predecessor. Next came Noti Constantinide and Radu Florescu, considered by Tașcă to be "peerless [...] always benevolent", as well as another young diplomat, Caius Văleanu. They were joined by Iosif Șchiopul, the press adviser, and Petru Ilcuș, the press attaché, who had also been working at the legation in Germany for many years. The economic component of the mission was provided by Victor Geormăneanu, the commercial attaché, who also had a wealth of experience in his field of expertise. Being an important legation, Berlin also had a military attaché, Colonel Ioan Negulescu.<sup>40</sup> So Tașcă found a well-trained team at the Berlin legation, made up of several experienced diplomats with various contacts, both in the diplomatic corps and in German society. Therefore, Tașcă's settling-in period in Berlin went smoothly. However, as a result of developments in domestic and international politics, Gheorghe Tașcă had to make analyses of the situation in Germany quite quickly and become involved in brokering Romanian-German relations.

### **Aspects of political life in Germany**

When Professor Gheorghe Tașcă took over the leadership of the legation in Berlin, the German government had not long been led by Heinrich Brüning (1885-1970), one of the leaders of the (Catholic) Centre Party. He was trying to form a parliamentary majority, so the issue of dissolving parliament and holding new elections was on the agenda. The scenario was put into practice. So, Tașcă witnessed the election campaign and the parliamentary elections held on 14 September 1930. The outcome of the elections was also important for Romania, because Bucharest wanted to negotiate a trade treaty with Germany.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

The September 1930 elections did not bring the governing coalition the hoped-for parliamentary majority. Moreover, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (the Nazi Party) led by A. Hitler won 18.3% of the vote, becoming the second most popular political party in Germany.<sup>41</sup> Taşcă notes that the election result "shook the German financial market".<sup>42</sup>

After the surprising election result there was a legitimate concern to explain the electoral success of the Nazi Party. Therefore, in October 1930, the Legation sent to Bucharest a summary report, compiled by Radu Florescu, in which a number of explanations for the election result of The Nazi Party were presented. The document was not well received by ministry officials. The report was annotated, pointing out that such information should have been sent and assumed by the head of the legation and not by a lower-ranking official like Florescu.<sup>43</sup> We do not know to what extent this suggestion was passed on to Berlin. What is certain is that only a few days later, Taşcă sent his most extensive report on the situation in Germany to Bucharest. He commented on several dominant themes: the anti-Semitic violence of the Nazi Party, the political disputes in the Reichstag, Germany's armament process, aspects of the Brüning government's foreign policy, and the impact of the economic crisis on the German state.<sup>44</sup> Taşcă believed that a rapprochement between France and Germany was important to maintain peace in Europe, but warned that a future alliance between Germany and the USSR could pave the way for a new war.<sup>45</sup> Even though these scenarios were being discussed in European political circles, we note how the Romanian Minister Plenipotentiary in Berlin dealt with such sensitive issues.

Nevertheless, Taşcă made an effort to capture developments on the German political scene as nuanced as possible. The trend he noticed was that the Brüning government was relying on increasingly weak parliamentary support, and the parties of the far right and left were becoming more vocal. This led him to note in December 1930 that 'the National Socialist Party, intoxicated by repeated electoral successes, has become very bold'.<sup>46</sup> This growing influence of extremist parties, but especially of the party led by Adolf Hitler, led the German government, according to Taşcă's assessment, to recalibrate its foreign policy strategy. This is why, both at the end of 1930 and during the following year, Taşcă

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<sup>41</sup> Ruth Henig, *The Weimar Republic 1919–1933*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 63–65.

<sup>42</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 34, s. 37.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 41.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 46–67 (the report is dated 15 October 1930).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 54–55.

<sup>46</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 1, s. 105.

felt that Germany lacked a coherent foreign policy strategy. This shows that the head of the Romanian legation in Berlin failed to provide a 'top-down' picture of the dominant elements of the Weimar Republic's foreign policy.<sup>47</sup> What was certain, however, was that the Brüning government and Foreign Minister J. Curtius had departed from the 'Stresemann line' of closer cooperation with France.<sup>48</sup> The German strategy seemed to be to isolate France and to achieve results in the extremely important matter of war reparations. It was not by chance that Tașcă insisted in many of his reports on the German government's policy towards reparations, sending to Bucharest information on the negotiations on the subject, accompanied by personal interpretations. The head of the Berlin legation claimed that reparations were perceived in Germany as a "tribute". But he stressed that in German society the "tribute imposed by the victors" was seen as the cause of the economic and social problems facing the Weimar Republic. "Everyone in Germany, economists, politicians, industrialists, bankers, businessmen, see no other cause of evil than <tribute>".<sup>49</sup>

Some of the statements made by Tașcă were questionable. It was no coincidence that diplomats at the headquarters of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who handled correspondence with the legation in Berlin, sought to corroborate information they found problematic. For example, in the autumn of 1930, they noticed a difference between the way Hindenburg was presented by Florescu and Tașcă. While Florescu noted that the German President's working capacity had diminished, as he was unable to intervene to mediate political disputes, Tașcă was of the opinion that Germany's political life was concentrated in the hands of Hindenburg "who, although past 80, has an extraordinary vigour and serenity of spirit".<sup>50</sup> Even if Tașcă's observations were closer to the reality of German<sup>51</sup> political life, the "delivery" to Bucharest of contradictory information by members of the same diplomatic mission caused confusion and diminished the credibility of the head of the legation.

Nevertheless, Tașcă tried to carry out his mission diligently. He wrote thick reports, which showed that the Romanian diplomats in Berlin were gathering and trying to analyse a great deal of information. And yet, sending dozens of pages of reports with lots of "raw information" about the situation in Germany was not always to the liking of officials in

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<sup>47</sup> Chiper, *România și Germania*, 44.

<sup>48</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 1, s. 128.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 134.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, file 34, s. 109.

<sup>51</sup> See Larry Eugene Jones, *Hitler versus Hindenburg. The 1932 Presidential Elections and the End of the Weimar Republic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 55–86.



Bucharest. For example, a 33-page report sent on 29 January 1931 to G.G. Mironescu (Prime Minister and acting Minister of Foreign Affairs) read: "Interesting but much too long".<sup>52</sup>

As the economic and political crisis deepened in Germany, Tașcă devoted more and more space to these themes in his reports. From the reports and telegrams he sent to Bucharest, it can be seen that he felt at ease when analysing the economic problems facing Germany. Tașcă offered a wealth of data and pertinent analysis.<sup>53</sup> But things were different when he presented political developments. He was prone to using many clichés and did not organise the information very rigorously.

In the first months of 1932, Tașcă noted that the political situation of the Brüning government was increasingly delicate. He believed, like other diplomats accredited in Berlin,<sup>54</sup> that the Nazi Party's entry into government could lead to a "loss of prestige among the masses" and would be a remedy for the "Hitler psychosis" facing the German people.<sup>55</sup> These are among the last analyses of political life in Germany, influenced by Hindenburg's re-election as president in April 1932.

### **The avatars of an Economic Treaty between Romania and Germany**

At the time when Tașcă took over the leadership of the legation, economic negotiations between Romanians and Germans were underway. This led to the signing of a provisional<sup>56</sup> trade agreement in Bucharest on 18 June 1930. However, this document, which came into force a few months later, did not provide a stable framework for Romanian-German economic relations affected by the world economic crisis. But the signing of an economic treaty, introducing clear rules and a dose of predictability, would have benefited both countries, given that Germany was Romania's main trading partner and Romania was the Weimar Republic's most important economic partner among the countries of South-Eastern Europe.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, the Germans were well aware of the situation

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<sup>52</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 34, s. 150.

<sup>53</sup> See the report of 17 July 1931 (Ibid., s. 270-281).

<sup>54</sup> This was also the impression of the American ambassador in Berlin, especially after his discussions with Hitler in 1932 (Bernard V. Burke, *Ambassador Frederic Sackett and the collapse of the Weimar Republic, 1930-1933. The United States and the Hitler's rise to power*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 185-187.

<sup>55</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 35, s. 18.

<sup>56</sup> Hans Tonch, *Wirtschaft und Politik auf dem Balkan: Untersuchungen zu den Deutsch-rumänischen Beziehungen in der Weimarer Republik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Weltwirtschaftskrise*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984), 88-96.

<sup>57</sup> Stephen G. Gross, *Export Empire. German Soft Power in Southeastern Europe, 1890-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 171-172.

in which the agrarian states of South-Eastern Europe found themselves and sought to take advantage in order to increase their economic influence in the region.<sup>58</sup> A central objective for the Berlin legation was therefore to find solutions to unblock Romanian grain exports to Germany. Tașcă, who owned an estate producing and selling grain, knew from his own experience the impact of the crisis on the grain market. That's why signing an economic agreement was one way to stabilise trade relations.

Without Tașcă having had any contribution, a first round of negotiations took place in Vienna in March 1931, with the aim of initialling a trade treaty between Romania and Germany.<sup>59</sup> However, the signing of the agreement for the creation of the Customs Union between Germany and Austria on 21 March and the replacement of the government led by G. G. Mironescu led to the provisional suspension of the negotiations.<sup>60</sup> The German side was unhappy that the Romanian delegation decided to suspend the negotiations.<sup>61</sup> Instead, through Tașcă, the Romanian government conveyed to the Germans that the suspension of negotiations was to be short-lived.<sup>62</sup>

After the political situation in Romania stabilized, with the coming to power of the government led by N. Iorga, it was decided (27 April) that the Germans would be invited to Bucharest to resume negotiations.<sup>63</sup> Obviously the Germans also wanted to resume negotiations. This act was closely linked, in Tașcă's opinion, to the fact that the German-Austrian Customs Union Affair was to be debated in the Council of the League of Nations, which was to meet in mid-May. If Germany had signed the treaty with Romania, then the German delegation would have had more economic arguments to defend its point of view in Geneva. Therefore, Tașcă was of the opinion that Romania had to use the momentum to get the most favourable form of the trade treaty with Germany. But a diplomatic incident triggered by the German chargé d'affaires in Bucharest meant that negotiations broke down in early May.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 162–169; Hans-Paul Höpfner, *Deutsche Südosteuropapolitik in der Weimarer Republik* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983), 256–258.

<sup>59</sup> The Romanian delegation was also negotiating an economic treaty with Austria.

<sup>60</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 73, s. 145; ARMFA, 2 Conventions Fund, G 14, file 2, unpagéd (Vienna, report of 31 April 1931). It seems that the suspension of the negotiations was also at the suggestion of the French (Tonch, *Wirtschaft und Politik*, 103–104, 106).

<sup>61</sup> ARMFA, 2 Conventions Fund, G 14, file 2, unpagéd (Berlin, telegram of 13 April 1931).

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., unpagéd (Bucharest, telegram of 14 April 1931).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., unpagéd (Bucharest, protocol of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, 28 April 1931).

<sup>64</sup> Höpfner, *Deutsche Südosteuropapolitik*, 267–268; Tonch, *Wirtschaft und Politik*, 104–105.

However, Tașcă believed that the Germans were still interested in signing a treaty, and the solution they proposed was for the Romanians to give the signal to restart negotiations. Moreover, German officials suggested that negotiations should be held in Berlin. Romania's plenipotentiary minister in Germany seemed pleased with how to overcome the diplomatic incident in early May.<sup>65</sup> It was important for Tașcă to prove useful in developing economic relations between Romania and Germany, as this was a major objective of his mandate in Berlin. That's why he contacted *Auswärtiges Amt* officials at the end of May to lay the groundwork for the resumption of negotiations. During the meetings, Tașcă set the coordinates for the resumption of negotiations in Berlin on 8 June 1931.

This time, he was not part of the delegation representing Romania in the negotiations with Germany. Tașcă was informed about the progress of the talks, but did not have access to official documents. Towards the end of the talks, however, the diplomat came to the fore. He suggested to the Romanian authorities that certain provisions in the documents to be initialled could be detrimental to Romania. His intervention led to the redrafting of some paragraphs of the trade treaty. Moreover, along with the treaty, the Germans wanted to impose a secret protocol whereby the Romanian government committed itself to buying industrial products from Germany, with Romanians receiving payment facilities and a ten-year credit. Warned by Tașcă, members of the Romanian government did not accept the secret protocol and, on 23 June 1931, asked him to intervene with the German Foreign Ministry to demand the annulment of the document. The Romanians argued that the signing of the trade treaty should not be linked to the assumption of contracts with German industry. Tașcă held several rounds of negotiations with *Auswärtiges Amt* officials, finally succeeding in getting the German side to renounce the secret protocol. These impediments having been overcome, the Treaty was signed in Geneva on 27 June 1931.<sup>66</sup>

The Romanian-German economic treaty provided, among other things, for the imposition by the Germans of "preferential tariffs" for corn and barley from Romania, while the Romanian state was obliged to reduce duties on various German goods. But for the treaty to function, the 'preferential tariffs' provision had to be approved by the states benefiting from Germany's most-favoured-nation clause.<sup>67</sup> Romania and Germany

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<sup>65</sup> ARMFA, Problem 71/Germany Fund, file 34, s. 235-237.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, file 73, s. 163-176.

<sup>67</sup> ARMFA, 2 Conventions Fund, G 14, file 2, unpagged (verbal note from the German Legation in Bucharest, 8 August 1931).

had agreed that the treaty would become operational on 15 November 1931, by which date Germany had to receive consent from its trading partners who enjoyed the same 'economic treatment'.<sup>68</sup> Most states responded favourably, but by 10 November the USSR, USA, South Africa, Turkey and Argentina had not yet expressed their views. The most difficult case seemed to be Argentina, where elections were due and the government wanted the decision to be taken by the new parliament.<sup>69</sup>

In this context, the Germans proposed to the Romanians a postponement of the coming into force of the treaty. This proposal was not favourably received in Bucharest. The Romanians suspected the Germans of not having acted vigorously enough to obtain the agreement of the reluctant states, while the Romanians managed to convince the Czechoslovaks. Delaying entry into force put the Romanian government in a delicate situation, with the potential to generate public backlash. It could also set a precedent that would have damaged the credibility of concluding similar treaties.<sup>70</sup> Instead, the Germans responded that they would seek solutions to resolve the situation.<sup>71</sup>

In this context, Gh. Tașcă considered that Germany was no longer interested in the economic treaties with Romania and Hungary (signed on July 18, 1931) coming into force. If in the spring of 1931, the Germans were also involved in the project of creating a customs union with Austria, by the autumn the project had failed and the German leaders were no longer convinced that favouring cereals from south-eastern Europe would increase consumption capacity and generate orders for German industry.<sup>72</sup> Yet Tașcă came up with a solution. He proposed applying the model used following the French-Yugoslav trade agreement. Under this document, the Yugoslavs would pay duties on grain sold in France, and at the end of the year the French would refund part of the duties. This would have eliminated the procedure of requesting the agreement of states that had economic cooperation with Germany on the basis of the most-favoured-nation clause. The option suggested by Tașcă was not considered by the Romanian authorities, who, in collaboration with the Germans, were looking for solutions to unblock the situation.

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<sup>68</sup> Tonch, *Wirtschaft und Politik*, 114–115.

<sup>69</sup> ARMFA, 2 Conventions Fund, G 14, file 2, unpagged (Berlin, telegram 9805 of 10 November 1931).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., unpagged (Ghika to Berlin legation - telegram is recorded in the archives as dated 18 November).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., unpagged (Prague, telegram 9175 of 20 November 1931).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., unpagged (Berlin, Tașcă's report of 17 November 1931, no. 9129).

A round of negotiations between representatives of the two countries took place in Bucharest on 7 December. It was agreed to continue the efforts to bring the Treaty of 27 June into force and to hold negotiations to unblock bilateral trade in the short term.<sup>73</sup> This explains the signing on 19 December 1931 in Berlin by the representative of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Cezar Popescu, of a Supplementary Agreement to the Provisional Trade Arrangement of 18 June 1930.<sup>74</sup>

Taşcă did not take part in the negotiations this time either, but he was the one who liaised with the two foreign ministries. Although various options were tried to unblock the situation and “save” the economic treaty signed on 27 June 1931, the international context marked by the deepening effects of the economic crisis, as well as the change of strategy on the part of the German government,<sup>75</sup> meant that the Romanian-German economic treaty did not enter into force.

### **From the Berlin legation to the Romanian government**

Professor Taşcă’s departure from the leadership of the legation in Germany was announced by the Romanian press at the beginning of 1932. The press reported that the head of the legation in Berlin might take over the Ministry of Justice, a portfolio left vacant after the death of Constantin Hamangiu.<sup>76</sup> However, Valeriu Pop was appointed head of the Ministry of Justice, and Taşcă remained only an aspirant for a ministerial portfolio.<sup>77</sup> In parallel, rumours were circulating about the appointment of a new minister plenipotentiary in Berlin. King Carol II himself was of the opinion that Taşcă should be replaced and Petrescu-Comnen reinstated at the head of the legation in Germany.<sup>78</sup> On 24 March 1932, Iorga noted in his memoirs that he had discussed with the Foreign Minister the appointments at the head of the diplomatic missions. “Comnen would take over Berlin. We discussed how Taşcă would return without offense, being appointed, after his resignation, to a post of trust.”<sup>79</sup> So Iorga wanted to help his political partner by preparing an honourable exit from diplomacy and a

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., unpagged (note of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Filality, 11 December 1931).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., unpagged (Berlin, telegram 9722 of 19 December 1931). See also Toch, *Wirtschaft und Politik*, 116–117.

<sup>75</sup> Gross, *Export Empire*, 173–175.

<sup>76</sup> *Dimineața*, XXVIII/8938, (January 10, 1932): 7.

<sup>77</sup> Iorga proposed him to King Carol II, in the government formed under his leadership in April 1931, but the sovereign refused (N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. VI, *Încercarea guvernării peste partide (1931-1932)* (Bucharest: Editura “Națională” S. Ciornei, 1939), 86.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 311.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 355.

return to domestic politics that would not hurt his pride. First came the possibility of appointing Tașcă as head the Higher Economic Council,<sup>80</sup> and then the possibility of him being appointed to head a ministry. Under these circumstances, Tașcă submitted his resignation from his post in Berlin, which was accepted on 16 April. Under these circumstances, the post of Head of Legation in Berlin was to become vacant from 1 May 1932.<sup>81</sup> Although he would have liked to return to Romania sooner, the visit to Berlin of Princess Ileana of Habsburg, sister of King Carol II,<sup>82</sup> led Tașcă to end his mission in the German capital on 1 May 1932. On the same day, he left Berlin, provisionally leaving the leadership of the legation to Gheorghe Aurelian.

Back in Romania, the former Minister Plenipotentiary in Berlin was appointed to head the Ministry of Industry and Trade. It seemed to be a successful formula for reintegration into domestic politics, given his economic expertise. But the Iorga government resigned at the end of April 1932, so Tașcă's ministry of Industry and Trade was short-lived.

Even though he remained involved in political life, Gheorghe Tașcă did not hold any important positions after 1932. He dedicated himself to his academic career, continued to give lectures and publish scientific papers. Professor Gheorghe Tașcă was arrested in May 1950, like many members of the former political and cultural elite, and imprisoned in Sighet Prison, where he died on 12 March 1951.<sup>83</sup>

## Conclusions

Taking over the leadership of the Romanian Legation in Germany was a real challenge for Gheorghe Tașcă. He stepped out of the "comfort zone" of the academic world and domestic political life and sought to integrate into a profession with strict rules - diplomacy. At the same time, he worked in a country affected by internal political tensions and the devastating effects of the global economic crisis, whose language he knew only approximately and whose culture was much more distant than his French one. Although he worked hard to overcome these barriers, Tașcă found it difficult to build the contacts in German society that are so important to a successful diplomatic mission. A serious and studious nature, Tașcă preferred working in the legation's chancellery to social gatherings, unlike his predecessor. This explains his lengthy diplomatic

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<sup>80</sup> ARMFA, Problem 77 Fund, T 57, unpagged (telegram 18852 of 6 April 1932).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., unpagged (telegram 1401 of 7 April 1932).

<sup>83</sup> Filotti, *De peste mări și țări*, 528–529; Popescu, Prelipceanu, "Gheorghe Tașcă - economist," 86.

reports, based mainly on analysis of the German press, but also the fact that we can hardly find in them references to information received from conversations with various politicians, members of the German government or the diplomatic corps accredited in Berlin. However, Professor Gh. Tașcă tried to explain, sometimes in a nuanced manner and clearly, sometimes wordy, the political and economic situation in Germany. He drew attention to the danger posed by A. Hitler and the Nazi Party, but also analysed the increasingly visible political presence of the German Communist Party.

Sent by the Romanian government to Berlin to contribute to the development of trade relations with Germany, Tașcă tried to showcase his economic expertise. He provided Bucharest's leaders with useful analyses of the German economy and sought to help delegations negotiating with the Germans with suggestions. But he was not integrated into the negotiating team with Germany. Nevertheless, Tașcă's observations before the signing of the Economic Treaty of 27 June 1931 demonstrated his flair for international trade issues. Despite his efforts, the economic treaty did not enter into force and Tașcă's diplomatic mission to Germany ended without any notable results.





# Behind the Scenes of a National Show: The Coronation of King Ferdinand I and Queen Maria at Alba Iulia (15 October 1922)

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*Article history: Received 9.10.2021; Revised 17.11.2021;*

*Accepted 6.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.*

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**Abstract:** The present study examines the complications that the confessional situation of King Ferdinand I (namely the fact that, as a Catholic, he was excommunicated for almost two decades by the Holy See due to the flagrant violation of certain rules of conduct, and the reconciliation granted to him by the pontifical court at the end of the World War I presupposed the observance of strict conditions) generated in relation to the design and conduct of the royal coronation in Alba Iulia, on 15 October 1922. The plans of the various political decision-makers regarding the coronation ceremony, or the intentions of the Orthodox Church (an institution that had aspired to mark the event from a religious point of view) were meticulously negotiated at the top of the Catholic Church, a scenario of the coronation ceremony having thus been staged (*mise en scène*) in accordance with the requirements formulated by the pontifical diplomacy. This is therefore the aim of the present study, namely to untangle, for the first time in historiography, the complicated threads of an important public spectacle – the coronation of Romanian sovereigns in Alba Iulia – in whose preparation political intrigue, religious passions and diplomatic pressure were consumed.

**Keywords:** Reconciliation, nuncio Marmaggi, ceremony, diplomatic pressure, secular celebration

**Abstract: În culisele unui spectacol național: Încoronarea Regelui Ferdinand I și a Reginei Maria la Alba Iulia (15 octombrie 1922).** Prezentul studiu analizează complicațiile pe care situația confesională a regelui Ferdinand I (anume faptul că, catolic fiind, a fost excomunicat vreme de aproape două decenii de către Sfântul Scaun din cauza încălcării flagrante a unor norme de conduită, iar reconcilierea care i s-a acordat din partea instanței pontificale la finalul Primului Război Mondial a presupus respectarea unor condiționalități stricte) le-a generat în raport cu proiectarea și

desfășurarea încononării regale de la Alba Iulia, din 15 octombrie 1922. Planurile diverșilor decidenți politici vizavi de ceremonia încoronării sau intențiile Bisericii ortodoxe (instituție care se ambiționase să tuteleze din punct de vedere religios respectivul eveniment) au fost minuțios negociate la vârful Bisericii catolice, fiind pusă în scenă (*mise en scène*) o regie a festivității de încoronare în acord cu exigențele formulate de diplomația pontificală. Aceasta reprezintă așadar miza prezentului studiu, anume de a desluși, în premieră istoriografică, complicatele ițe ale unui important spectacol public – încoronarea suveranilor României la Alba Iulia – în a cărui pregătire s-au consumat intrigi politice, pasiuni religioase și presiuni diplomatice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** reconciliere, nuntul Marmaggi, ceremonie, presiuni diplomatice, sărbătoare laică

A fundamentally changed Europe. This is how the old continent can be characterized at the end of the more than four years during which it had been the main scene of the armed confrontations during the Great War and after the judges of the Peace of Paris formulated, after long deliberations, their sentences.<sup>1</sup> The redrawing of national borders and the relocation of power poles to the international arena were the result not only of the outcome of the war, but also of the new political ideas (self-determination, democracy, collective security, etc.) that guided state reconstruction after that date.<sup>2</sup> Although the peace forum had sought to identify optimal solutions to the national problems that repeatedly disturbed European peace throughout the nineteenth century, this was difficult to achieve, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, where peoples, different languages and cultures were so intertwined.<sup>3</sup> Forced to admit that it was virtually impossible to create ethnically pure state entities, the artisans of peace sought to include explicit guarantees in the content of the treaties, so that the new states would not discriminate against or persecute minorities who found themselves within their borders.<sup>4</sup> After all, it was not the nation-states, but the multinational

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<sup>1</sup> Emile J. Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference* (New York, London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920), 45–50; Arthur Walworth, *Wilson and his Peacemakers. American Diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986), XI–XIII.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle, London: University of Washington, 1974), XII.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Longworth, *Crearea Europei de Est. De la preistorie la postcomunism*, trans. Eugen Stancu, 2nd edition (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2002), 93–98.

<sup>4</sup> Carlile A. Macartney, *Hungary and her Successors. The Treaty of Trianon and its Consequences, 1919–1937* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1937), 4–5; Georges Castellani, *Storia dei Balcani (XIV–XX secolo)* (Lecce: Argo, 1999), 457–466.

formations that replaced the old empires that had dominated the region's geopolitics for centuries.<sup>5</sup> Hence the impression that the decisions of the Peace Conference created an even greater tension in the Middle Danube Basin than the one that preceded the world conflagration.<sup>6</sup>

Undoubtedly, the Romanians took full advantage of the territorial chance that was offered to them at the end of the World War I.<sup>7</sup> To take into account the motivations of the unifying acts of the provinces with Romanian majority population to the Romanian Kingdom would mean to engage in a discussion with multifactorial explanations. Attributed by some to a vocation,<sup>8</sup> and by others to the context of the era in which it was achieved, the union of the Romanians' destinies was able to awaken constructive energies in them and to urge them to look towards the future with a high dose of optimism. Few were those who, at the beginning of 1918, still truly believed that the motive that had urged Romania to make the choice in the summer of 1916 could be achieved in the near future.<sup>9</sup> The gloomy prospect of a peace imposed by the enemy, the occupation of the territory and the exploitation of its resources, the social and economic disorder and deprivation, the constant search for political solutions to alleviate the many negative effects – all made up the complex image of the unfortunate situation in which Romania was in the final year of the war. However, the course of the events was far from predictable. Their evolution on a regional scale also affected the Romanian space, which made possible, for example, the appearance of the decision to unite the Moldovan Democratic Republic with Romania, on 27 March / 9 April, 1918.<sup>10</sup> The territories inhabited by Romanians from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, in turn, reacted to the changes in the balance of power between the two fighting camps. For many contemporaries, the defeats suffered by the imperial army in the aftermath of the three battles on the Piave River were able to herald the collapse of the dualist state.<sup>11</sup> By the fall of 1918, under the influence of the World Peace Program enunciated by US

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<sup>5</sup> Iván T. Berend, György Ránki, *East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 82–83.

<sup>6</sup> Béla Köpeczi (ed.), *Histoire de la Transylvanie* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1992), 621.

<sup>7</sup> Marcel Ştirban, "Problemele noii epoci," in Marcel Ştirban (ed.), *Istoria contemporană a României* (Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2001), 19–27.

<sup>8</sup> Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *Originile și formarea unității românești*, ed. Ion Toderaşcu, transl. by Maria Pavel (Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 1998), 297–302.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 264; James P. Niessen, "Naționalismul românesc: o ideologie a integrării și a mobilizării," in Peter F. Sugar (ed.), *Naționalismul est-european în secolul al XX-lea*, transl. by Radu Paraschivescu (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2002), 235.

<sup>10</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român* (Bucharest: Univers, 1998), 46–48.

<sup>11</sup> Valeriu Leu, Nicolae Bocşan (ed.), *Marele Război în memoria bănăţeană (1914–1919)* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 64–65.

President Woodrow Wilson and the ideas propagated by the Russian Revolution, the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire organized in the form of councils and national guards.<sup>12</sup> The Romanians were no exception to this institutional trend, laying the foundations of a National Council in Budapest, with the declared intention of collaborating with the similar Hungarian body. As the prospective options of the Romanian political leaders became clear, the Central Romanian National Council (C.N.R.C.) became the coordinating pole of the actions resulting from the organization of the Assembly in Alba Iulia.<sup>13</sup> If this meeting gained a special status through the significance of the decisions adopted, it is no less true that the formal separation of the Romanians from the fate of Hungary was perceived as occurring at the time of the solemn declaration made in this regard by Alexandru Vaida Voevod, in the Hungarian Parliament on 18 October 1918.<sup>14</sup> However, like the other territories that had announced their accession to the Kingdom of Romania, Transylvania also had to accept the clarification of its international status in the proceedings of the Peace Conference.<sup>15</sup> Uncertainties were not lacking among the Romanian political elite in Transylvania either.<sup>16</sup> The way of perfecting the union, conditioned or not, sparked heated discussions that lasted until the very moment preceding the important meeting. The reservations that some Ciscarpathian political leaders had towards the political world in Bucharest<sup>17</sup> can be attributed to the trends of political thought noticeable in the public debate of the last two decades in Austria-Hungary on the identification of new formulas for the institutional articulation of the dualist state, in response to the pressure exerted by the increasingly fierce

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<sup>12</sup> Rothschild, *East Central Europe*, 139–143; Zaharia Boilă, *Memorii* (Cluj-Napoca: Biblioteca Apostrof, 2003), 23–24, 112.

<sup>13</sup> Valer Moga, "Națiunea în discursul politic românesc din Transilvania anului 1918," in Valer Moga, Sorin Arhire (eds.), *Problema Transilvaniei în discursul politic de la sfârșitul Primului Război Mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2009), 35.

<sup>14</sup> Boilă, *Memorii*, 71, 80, 84.

<sup>15</sup> For a more in-depth approach, see Vasile Vesa, "Transilvania la Conferința de Pace din anii 1919–1920," in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Năgler, Magyari András (eds.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, *De la 1711 până la 1918* (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2008), 629–647; Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, "Transilvania la cele două Conferințe de Pace de la Paris (1919–1920 și 1946–1947)," in Cornel Grad, Viorel Ciubotă (eds.), *1918. Sfârșit și început de epocă. Korszakvég-korszakkezdet. The End and the Beginning of an Era* (Zalău, Satu Mare: Editura "LEKTON" – Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, n.d.), 487–489.

<sup>16</sup> Zoltán Szász, "Revolutions and National Movements after the Collapse of the Monarchy (1918–1919)," in Zoltán Szász (ed.), *History of Transylvania*, vol. III, *From 1830 to 1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 774.

<sup>17</sup> Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, 273–274; Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, *Memorii*, vol. I, Alexandru Șerban (ed.) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1994), 119; vol. III (1997), 124, 154–155.

national movements. The federalist solution was one of the options conceived at the time, to the formulation of which the Romanian ideology fully contributed.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the transfer of Transylvanian Romanians to the political and cultural horizon of the Romanian state was deeply marked by the experience of the last decades of interaction with the increasingly annoying centralism of the Hungarian state. If, in Alba Iulia, an agreement was finally reached regarding the unconditionality of the decision to attach the province to the Romanian Kingdom, this did not prevent the phasing of the union.<sup>19</sup> The establishment of a Grand National Council, although it proved to be a difficult functioning body, corresponded to the desire to endow the province with a legislative forum until the organization of general elections for the Parliament of Greater Romania, and the creation of the Governing Council laid the foundations of the institution with an executive role, in charge of managing a geographical perimeter that was constantly expanding, as the Romanian troops advanced towards Budapest.<sup>20</sup> In addition to these concrete decisions, an equally important role was played by the decisions desired by the Transylvanians to represent the basis for the functioning of the new Romanian state. The “nine-point declaration” adopted at the Alba Iulia Assembly was intended to be a true charter of the rights and rules of the government of the new country.<sup>21</sup> It was built on the principles of national freedom, respect for individual and collective rights, the application of non-discriminatory treatment of the Romanian state vis-à-vis its new citizens, governance based on democratic rules, the application of fundamental reforms such as the extension of the right to vote or the redistribution of land ownership.<sup>22</sup>

The establishment of a provisional administration in the territories detached from the political center of Budapest was meant to pave the way

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<sup>18</sup> Here, it would suffice to mention Aurel C. Popovici, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich. Politische Studien zur Lösung der nationalen Fragen und staatsrechtlichen Krisen in Österreich-Ungarn* (Leipzig: Verlag von B. Elischer Nachfolger, 1906).

<sup>19</sup> Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note politice*, vol. IV. 1918-1919 (Bucharest: Editura Institutului de arte grafice “Eminescu”, 1927), 173-174.

<sup>20</sup> Romul Boilă, “Consiliul Dirigent,” in *Transilvania, Banatul, Crișana, Maramureșul 1918-1928*, vol. I (Bucharest: Cultura Națională, 1929), 89; Gheorghe Iancu, *Contribuția Consiliului Dirigent la consolidarea statului național unitar român (1918-1920)* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1985), 8-15.

<sup>21</sup> Sándor Biró, *The Nationalities Problem in Transylvania 1867-1940. A Social History of the Romanian Minority under Hungarian Rule, 1867-1918, and of the Hungarian Minority under Romanian Rule, 1918-1940*, trans. Mario D. Fenyo (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 472.

<sup>22</sup> The complete text of the resolution can be found in Ioan Scurtu, Liviu Boar, Marga Chiva, Gernot Nussbächer, Monica Vlaicu (eds.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1918-1925. Documente* (Bucharest: Arhivele Statului din Romania, 1995), doc. 6, 119-120.

for these provinces to integrate into the institutional and power structures of the new Romanian state.<sup>23</sup> Rightly, the declarations of union in Chişinău, Chernivtsi and Alba Iulia, despite having been confirmed, with some territorial adjustments, at the table of peace negotiations, they were only the starting point of a difficult and long process, but one that was absolutely necessary: the unification.<sup>24</sup> This involved the implementation of strategies to make political institutions compatible and to improve governance techniques, given the plurality of traditions existing at the level of each province that now made up the bundle of the young Romanian state.<sup>25</sup> In other words, the transposition of the union into institutions and laws capable of providing the coherence and consolidation necessary within the fragile state construct. It is understood that the success of this large-scale political project, that of the “unitary nation-state,” directly depended on the successful completion of this endeavor. As expected, different or even opposing views were formulated by the Romanian leadership. Simply speaking, there were two directions of action: the first consists in consolidating around a centralizing pole and extending the legislation, the customs of the exercise of government from the “mother state” to the “newcomers”. This political paradigm was also encouraged by the fact that the proclaimed unions with the Kingdom of Romania from the spring to the winter of 1918 were made, as we have seen, without imposing special conditionalities (except for the Bessarabians, who renounced them as soon as the Transylvanians decreed union without such special clauses), and the Romanians in those regions had limited experience in governing.<sup>26</sup> In this case, the unification was synonymous with integration by absorption, with assimilation.<sup>27</sup> The second perspective projected an additional focus on the regional nuances, on the individualizing local

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<sup>23</sup> Iancu, *Contribuția Consiliului Dirigent*, 41–43; Aurel Galea, *Formarea și activitatea Consiliului Dirigent al Transilvaniei, Banatului și Ținuturilor românești din Ungaria (2 decembrie 1918 – 10 aprilie 1920)* (Târgu Mureș: Tipomur, 1996), 133–135.

<sup>24</sup> Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, 59; Josef Macha, *Ecclesiastical Unification. A Theoretical Framework together with Case Studies from the History of Latin-Byzantine Relations* (Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1974), 11–16. The author borrows and adapts the conceptualizations made by Amitai Etzioni, *Political Unification. A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), and applies them to the analysis of the inter-church relations, with a particular emphasis on the union from Brest (1595–1596).

<sup>25</sup> Niessen, “Naționalismul românesc,” 231.

<sup>26</sup> Vaida-Voevod, *Memorii*, vol. II (1995), 15, 24.

<sup>27</sup> Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, 67; Aurelia Știrban, Marcel Știrban, *Din istoria Bisericii române unite de la 1918 la 1941* (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 2005), 128–129.

traditions, proposing a staged approach of the parts that had come to compose the whole.<sup>28</sup>

In the new post-war context, the Romanian state was forced to submit to the efforts of internal reconstruction, which were crucial after a war that had made the population, resources and institutions face unprecedented challenges. The Romanian leaders were forced to admit that Greater Romania was far from depicting the image of a perfect unity, given the ethnic, linguistic and cultural mosaic within it.<sup>29</sup> After all, in the dowry of each province, there was a notable percentage of non-Romanian population. The biggest complications in managing the situation of the minority ethnic groups were encountered by the Romanian administration in Transylvania due to the fact that their leaders related differently to the decision of union made by the Romanians. After a period of uncertainty, the Saxon community clarified its political behavior, recognizing and adhering to the union of Transylvania with Romania,<sup>30</sup> its gesture thus expressing the hope that the principles enunciated in Alba Iulia would be applied indiscriminately.<sup>31</sup> However, the Hungarian community did not show the same attitude, to which it seemed impossible to admit that the millennial Kingdom of St. Stephen had collapsed in such a short time. The prospect of becoming a *minor gens* within a Romanian-led state, to which they were related in terms of a varied inventory of cultural and ethnic stereotypes, compelled many ethnic Hungarians to either leave the territories now administered by “Romanian imperialism” or to show passive opposition within the new state, whose geographical legitimacy they flatly refused to recognize.<sup>32</sup> The difficulties of accommodating ethnic Hungarians to the new political and societal environment were maintained in the following years by the hope that the segmentation of Hungary was only a temporary reality.

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<sup>28</sup> Iancu, *Contribuția Consiliului Dirigent*, 41–53; Sorin Radu, “Unificarea administrativă a României Mari în gândirea politică a lui Iuliu Maniu,” *Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica*, 2-3 (1998-1999): 15–27.

<sup>29</sup> Paul E. Michelson, “Romanian Unity 1859, 1918, 1989: Beginnings, Opportunities..., and Illusions,” in Kurt W. Treptow (ed.), *Tradition and Modernity in Romanian Culture and Civilization 1600–2000* (Iași, Oxford, Portland: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2001), 53; Elemér Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania. Change in Transylvania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 33–39; Ioan Scurtu (ed.), *Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, *România întregită (1918–1940)* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), 31–35.

<sup>30</sup> Köpeczi (ed.), *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, 638; Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, 73. For the text of the declaration from the general assembly in Mediaș, see Scurtu, Boar (ed.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1918–1925*, doc. 9, 126–128.

<sup>31</sup> Szász, “Revolutions and National Movements,” 779.

<sup>32</sup> Macartney, *Hungary and her Successors*, 279–280.

The task of the politicians who took over the government in the first years after the war was far from easy. The battle for borders in the halls of the Parisian palaces represented the priority zero for the Bucharest political class, closely supported by the representatives of the provinces that had declared their union with the Romanian Kingdom. As it is known, Romania started with high hopes on the road to gaining peace.<sup>33</sup> It was one of the European states that, before the outbreak of hostilities, had made territorial claims from all the neighboring countries.<sup>34</sup> But the Romanian diplomatic mission was received rather with reservations in the French capital, given the fact that Romania had not shown impeccable military loyalty during the war, having signed a peace treaty with the enemy.<sup>35</sup> However, the chancelleries of the victorious powers did not remain inert in the lobby made by the states with which Romania disputed its territorial possessions. A real mechanism of political pressure and public propaganda was operating behind the scenes of the Peace Conference, seeking to tip the scales to the advantage or disadvantage of some of the competitors.<sup>36</sup> But the decisions taken at the green table of the peace negotiations finally confirmed the Romanian claims, even if not in the form of the maximum desideratum. In retrospect, the most important decisions enshrined in the five treaties signed during the two years of peace talks laid the foundations for a rather fragile geopolitical system, which soon had to face the nation's defeated vindictive ambitions.<sup>37</sup> For Romania, this fact became a serious reason to promote, in the period that followed, a system of regional alliances, put in the service of cooperation and guarantee of border security.<sup>38</sup>

The situation was not easier to manage from within either. The end of the war brought not only economic problems, but also social instability, a phenomenon that the authorities tried to control by resorting to extreme measures to repress the demonstrations.<sup>39</sup> The implementation

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<sup>33</sup> Sherman D. Spector, *România și Conferința de Pace de la Paris. Diplomația lui Ion I. C. Brătianu*, trans. Sorin Pârvu (Iași: Institutul European, 1995), 91-114.

<sup>34</sup> Peter F. Sugar, "Naționalismul, ideologia victorioasă," trans. Radu Paraschivescu, in Peter F. Sugar (ed.), *Naționalismul est-european în secolul al XX-lea* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2002), 19.

<sup>35</sup> Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, 100; Keith Hitchins, *România 1866-1947*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, trans. George G. Potra, Delia Răzdolescu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 303-304.

<sup>36</sup> Dillon, *The Inside Story of The Peace Conference*, 136-183.

<sup>37</sup> Sugar, "Naționalismul, ideologia victorioasă," 348-349.

<sup>38</sup> For a more in-depth approach, see Eliza Campus, *Politica externă a României în perioada interbelică (1919-1939)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1975).

<sup>39</sup> Ioan Scurtu, Gheorghe Buzatu, *Istoria Românilor în secolul XX (1918-1948)* (Bucharest: Paideia, 1999), 93-94.



of the agrarian reform meant not only fulfilling the application of certain measures adopted even during the war in order to satisfy the sons of peasants who constituted the bulk of those mobilized, but also an urgency meant to spare social frustrations and to alternatively provide the chance for an unhindered development of national sentiment.<sup>40</sup> The first post-war years can also be seen as a period of searching for optimal political formulas to ensure the stability and governance of the country, to design and apply the laws necessary for the political consolidation of the new state. It was the stage of probing the Bucharest political scene, as actors, by some of the leaders of the parties of the united provinces, to identify the relations between the main political forces in the Kingdom or to redefine their ideological profile. However, despite all the impasse inherent in the successive period of a hard and long war, or the difficulties of adapting millions of new Romanian citizens to the traditions and standards of the adoptive state, marking the public space through demonstrations had the role of highlighting all these essential transformations, but also to relax, after a period of calamities and prolonged deprivations, the society as a whole.<sup>41</sup> To the festive days of old Romania, the more recent celebration days marking the moments when the various provinces had declared their union with the Old Kingdom were added, as well as those present in the official calendars of each province, days whose relevance had not been lost in the new context after 1918. There was a need for a solemnity that would shed light on Romania's new place on the map of post-war Europe and that would depict the image of a country on its way to internal consolidation. Such a festivity could only center on the institution around which the Romanian society was united in the hard years of the war and which had become a symbol of the rebirth that followed: the Romanian Crown.

If the idea of crowning the Romanian sovereigns began to circulate in the 1920s, the first concrete measures regarding the organization of such an event were taken by the cabinet led by General Alexandru Averescu.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Berend, Ránki, *East Central Europe*, 86-89; Irina Livezeanu, *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare 1918-1930*, trans. Vlad Russo (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1998), 19-21; Emil Petrini, "Reforma agrară," in *Transilvania, Banatul, Crișana, Maramureșul 1918-1928*, vol. I, 297-298.

<sup>41</sup> For an analysis on the role played by festive days in the modern society, see Simona Nicoară, "Metamorfozele sărbătorii sub impactul sensibilităților moderne (secolele XVI-XIX)," *Caiete de antropologie istorică*, IV/1 (2005): 124-132.

<sup>42</sup> Ioan Scurtu, "Consecințele Marii Uniri din 1918. Viața politică din România în anii 1918-1923," in Ioan Scurtu (ed.), *Marea Unire din 1918 în context european* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, Editura Academiei Române, 2003), 327; C. Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, vol. VI, part VI (1919-1922), Stelian Neagoe (ed.) (Bucharest: Machiavelli, 1996), 263-264, 310-313; For a comprehensive

The establishment of a “coronation commission” under the auspices of the Prime Minister's colleague-in-arms, General Constantin Coanda, and the metropolitan-primate, Miron Cristea, had the difficult role of establishing, in detail and in collaboration with the Royal House, the script of the entire event, and to strongly highlight its unique symbolic and ideological valences.<sup>43</sup> The respective commission outlined the general coordinates of the action planned to take place in the autumn of 1921, and established that the two venues would be the two centers whose older and newer historical symbolism was obvious to all: Alba Iulia and Bucharest. However, it would appear that the sovereign's sympathy for General Averescu was not enough to allow the latter to “patronize” an event of such importance in the biography of the new Romania.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the leader of the National Liberal Party, who had propelled the general to the helm of the country in the spring of 1920, said that it was time for a forceful return to the forefront of political decision-making.<sup>45</sup> The Liberal Cabinet embarked on an ambitious government program, focusing on the need to adopt laws vital to the new state (the most important of which was the new Constitution) and the country's economic reconstruction, given the potential amplified by expanding the territory and, implicitly, the resources. However, the list of priorities included the continuation of the preparations related to the coronation of the sovereigns, an act whose development did not have to be delayed much. That is why the construction works for the two symbol buildings, the new church in Alba Iulia and the Arc de Triomphe in Bucharest, were expedited, providing the builders with the necessary sums to complete their construction as soon as possible. However, the politicians who made up the parliamentary opposition did not express the most favorable opinions regarding the announced coronation event, accusing the ruling party leader – Ion I.C. Brătianu – of pursuing the confiscation of a holiday whose role was supposed to be that of providing the image of a strong national solidarity between Romanians, by brutally politicizing it. The stance taken by the protesters was amplified by the great disappointment of the electoral score obtained in the elections of March 1922, which made them blame the unfavorable result on the undemocratic

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analysis of the “Averescu myth”, see Daniel-Valeriu Boboc, “Alexandru Averescu și mitul salvaționist în România interbelică,” in Alexandru-Florin Platon, Bogdan-Petru Maleon, Liviu Pilat (eds.), *Ideologii politice și reprezentări ale puterii în Europa* (Iași: Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2009), 305–325.

<sup>43</sup> Antonie Plămădeală, *Contribuții istorice privind perioada 1918–1939. Elie Miron Cristea. Documente, însemnări și corespondențe* (Sibiu, Tiparul tipografiei eparhiale, 1987), 359.

<sup>44</sup> Scurtu, “Consecințele Marii Uniri din 1918,” 328; Argetoianu, *Memorii*, vol. VI, part VI (1919–1922), 264.

<sup>45</sup> *Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, 253; Scurtu, Buzatu, *Istoria românilor*, 145.

methods used by the party called to power. Taking note of the signs of reluctance issued by many political leaders, the king did not shy away from summoning them to the council, on which occasion he asked them to overcome interparty dissensions and to show fidelity to the Romanian Crown, sharing with the entire nation the great joy brought by the recovery of the brothers of the same blood under a single scepter, after centuries in which they had lived separate destinies.<sup>46</sup> The king's call for conciliation and unity had different echoes in the political class. If some party leaders finally agreed to confirm their presence at the festivity (among them: Alexandru Averescu, Alexandru Marghiloman, Nicolae Iorga), others (Iuliu Maniu, Ion Mihalache) remained consistent with the positions initially formulated, choosing to boycott the scheduled celebrations.

But the details related to the celebration of the coronation of the sovereign disturbed, at that time, not only the waters of the Romanian politics. The ecclesiastical elite in the Kingdom, especially the Orthodox and the Catholic, also showed an increased interest in the way the event should take place. The claims that the Orthodox hierarchy be assigned a substantial role in the event were considered legitimate, in view of the fact that, after the establishment of Greater Romania, the number of the adherents to that denomination increased considerably, namely to over 70% of the total population of the new state.<sup>47</sup> Beside the quantitative advantage, the privileged position ensured by the Constitution of old Romania paved its intimate relationship with the state, to which it offered its council not always with the most beneficial consequences.<sup>48</sup> The same fundamental law imperatively established a series of duties for the members of the Royal House, to be carried out for the "dominant religion of the Romanian state." The most neuralgic article that had the worst consequences for the incumbent sovereign was the one that provided for the obligation that "the descendants of His Majesty must be raised in the Orthodox religion of the East." Imposed as a *raison d'état* since the ascension of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty to the Romanian throne, the abovementioned constitutional paragraph produced tensions and even fractures in the relationship between the royal family and the Holy See. The lack of direct heirs of King Carol I caused the

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<sup>46</sup> Scurtu, "Consecințele Marii Uniri din 1918," 328; Argetoianu, *Memorii*, vol. VI, part VI (1919-1922), 311-313.

<sup>47</sup> Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, 37, 219; Sabin Manuilă, *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, *Neam, limbă maternă, religie* (București: Imprimeria Națională, 1938), XXIV.

<sup>48</sup> Olivier Gillet, "Orthodoxie, nation et ethnicité en Roumanie au XXe siècle: un problème ecclésiologique et politique," in Maria Crăciun, Ovidiu Ghitta (eds.), *Ethnicity and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe* (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press, 1995), 348-349.

aforementioned constitutional article to take effect only with the descendants of Ferdinand I. This was the main reason why the future sovereign of Romania was denied, starting with 1900, the administration of the sacrament of the Eucharist.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the situation was not unique in the area. The ruling Saxon-Coburg Gotha House of the Bulgarian neighbors was in a similar position. There, Ferdinand's entrustment of Crown Prince Boris to the religious education of the Orthodox Church caused the rebellious monarch to be denied the remission of sins and communion until the serious error was rectified. In the Romanian case, the separation between the sovereign and the Catholic Church lasted more than two decades, the reconciliation being the result of fierce negotiations between the two parties.<sup>50</sup> The confessional affiliation, but especially the exceptional situation of the Romanian sovereign, recently returned, like a prodigal son, into the arms of the Catholic Church, made the Holy See's interest in his attitudes and behavior to be increased and legitimate. At the time of the coronation preliminaries, there was already a representative of the sovereign pontiff in Romania, in the person of the nuncio Francesco Marmaggi, the titular archbishop of Adrianople,<sup>51</sup> whose difficult mission was to reorganize the various branches of the Romanian Catholic Church, according to the new postwar context, was intertwined with the illusory hope that the Orthodox Romanians would adhere *en masse* to the Catholic faith.<sup>52</sup> The premises of that ambitious plan were not exactly unfounded if we were to consider the prestigious capital held (at the organizational level, of the tools of dissemination of the teachings of faith or of social involvement) by the Catholic Church within the Orthodox world in

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<sup>49</sup> Raymund Netzhammer, *Episcop în România. Într-o epocă a conflictelor naționale și religioase*, vol. I, Nikolaus Netzhammer, Krista Zach (eds.) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2005), 19, 83; Francesco Dante, "Sui rapporti tra Santa Sede e Romania tra Ottocento e Novecento," in Ion Cârja (ed.), *I Romeni e la Santa Sede. Miscellanea di studi di storia ecclesiastica* (Bucharest, Rome: Scriptorium, 2004), 129.

<sup>50</sup> Netzhammer, *Episcop în România*, vol. I, 826; *Ibid.*, vol. II (2005), 909, 919-920; Marghiloman, *Note politice*, vol. IV, 1918-1919, 210; Adela Herban, *România-Vatican 1920-1940. Relații diplomatice* (Deva: Călăuza, 2002), 64; Marius Theodorian-Carada, *Acțiunea Sfântului Scaun în România. De acum și de întotdeauna* (Bucharest: Editura Autorului, 1936), 13. For more details in this respect, see Lucian Turcu, "Com'è avvenuta la riconciliazione del re Ferdinando I di Romania con la Chiesa cattolica? (la fase postbellica)," in vol. *Dal cuore dell'Europa. Omaggio al professor Cesare Alzati per il compimento dei 70 anni*, a cura di: Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ovidiu Ghitta, Ioan Bolovan, Ana Victoria Sima (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015), 363-376

<sup>51</sup> Giuseppe De Marchi, *Le Nunziature Apostoliche dal 1800 al 1956* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1957), 225.

<sup>52</sup> Mózes Nóda, "The Historical, Political and Ecclesiastical Background of the 1927 Concordat between the Vatican and Romania," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 9/27 (2010): 284-285.

general<sup>53</sup> and the argument that the neo-Latin roots of the Romanian language and of the Romanian people predisposed Romanians to an approach to the Western Catholic civilization.

As it is known, the plans of the hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church regarding the coronation ceremony of King Ferdinand I and Queen Maria were ambitious. The metropolitan-primate had imagined a ceremony that would surpass in pomp and significance that which had been attended in a similar situation by the former King Carol I.<sup>54</sup> After careful consideration and analysis, the Orthodox hierarchy managed to embody the religious service of a coronation that compiled specific elements of the similar ceremony at the Court of Russian Countries and the Byzantine imperial tradition. Given the significance of the event, even the typical religious ritual projected was subjected to a thorough discussion with high dignitaries and officials of the Royal House, requiring their consent so that it could be put into practice. Ionel Brătianu and Nicolae Mișu represented the institutions just mentioned, with which Miron Cristea was forced to “negotiate” the content of the religious act scheduled for the coronation down to the smallest details. The discussions on this subject began in the first decade of September 1922, when October 15 had become a certain date for the long-awaited event. Step by step, the outline of a religious service was drawn, which strictly established the boundary between admissible and inadmissible, abandoning ideas such as: the administration of the royal anointing, the unfolding of the coronation inside the place of worship, the blessing of the crowns at the ceremony scheduled to take place outside the church, the modification in any way of the standard of *Te Deum* service. The natural question that deserves to be asked is: what made the politicians of the time consider a series of ideas projected by the high Orthodox clergy regarding the coronation ceremony completely unacceptable? Or, in other words, who directed the coronation scenario from the shadows, establishing exactly what “role” the characters involved in that “play” would play?

The diplomatic representative of the pontifical sovereign in Bucharest was interested in knowing the plans related to the coronation in detail, thus seeking the fair relationship of the Romanian Catholic Church to that event. Taking advantage of his position, his personal contacts with representatives from the top of the Romanian state or with people close to them, the nuncio Marmaggi not only managed to keep up with the ideas that were expected to be put into practice at the coronation ceremony, but

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<sup>53</sup> George Enache, *Ortodoxie și putere în România contemporană. Studii și eseuri* (Bucharest: Nemira, 2005), 459.

<sup>54</sup> Plămădeală, *Contribuții istorice privind perioada 1918–1939*, 336.

also to intervene decisively in the conduct of the ceremony. The nuncio had set two main objectives: first, to prevent by any means the metropolitan-primate from crowning or administering the sacrament of anointing to a Catholic monarch, as was King Ferdinand I; second, to obtain a written order from the pontifical sovereign forbidding Greek Catholic hierarchs from attending the religious ceremony officiated by the Orthodox clergy on the occasion of their coronation.<sup>55</sup> The plan of the nuncio seemed to advance rapidly in the desired direction, since only a day after he had confessed to the Catholic Archbishop of Bucharest the two aforementioned goals just, he succeeded in obtaining from the Prime Minister, with whom he had arranged a meeting on that subject, the promise that the king would not be anointed by Metropolitan Cristea, and his crown would not be blessed, since the adornment that had belonged to his uncle, who had been blessed at a similar ceremony in 1881, was to be used. Also, it was expected that a *Te Deum* would be celebrated in the Orthodox church in Alba Iulia, and at a certain moment of that religious service, the two sovereigns would leave the place of worship, in order to climb a tribune previously arranged in the churchyard, receiving, from the hands of the presidents of the two Chambers of the Romanian Parliament, the crowns that the king was to place on his head and on that of his wife, too. After completing this act, the crowned sovereign was to deliver a speech, to which he was expected to receive an answer, and then the monarchs would return to the church to witness the continuation of the religious service. In this way, the nuncio considered that the central act of the festivity would receive an exclusively civil character, which left room for the Catholic episcopate to be present.<sup>56</sup>

On 11 September 1922, the nuncio Marmaggi wrote to Pope Pius XI's Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri, informing him of the coronation negotiations and of what he had succeeded in obtaining as certainty from the organizers.<sup>57</sup> First of all, the prelate-ambassador acknowledged that the importance he attached to the issue of the coronation of the Romanian monarchs led him to countermand the leave he had scheduled for that period. Entering the main subject of the epistle, the nuncio announced to the high pontifical dignitary that, since August of that year, the central newspapers published the news that, in a Council of Ministers, the decision

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<sup>55</sup> Netzhammer, *Episcop în România*, vol. II, 1151. For an extensive discussion, see Petru Magdău, Ion Cârja, Lucian Turcu, "L'atteggiamento della Chiesa greco-cattolica romana nei confronti dell'incoronazione dei Re Ferdinand e Maria ad Alba Iulia nel 1922," *Anuarul Institutului de studii italo-român. Annuario dell'Istituto di Studi Italo-Romeno*, XII, (2015): 65–92.

<sup>56</sup> Netzhammer, *Episcop în România*, vol. II, 1151–1152.

<sup>57</sup> The complete document is in Archivio Segreto Vaticano (hereinafter referred to as ASV), *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 100r–106r.

had been made to organize the coronation ceremony of the Romanian sovereigns, in October, in Alba Iulia, "from the hand of the orthodox metropolitan-primate." The idea of organizing such a festivity by no means new, only the years of the war and the desperate situation of Romania at that time prevented its implementation. After the creation of Greater Romania, that plan was revitalized, and the city of Alba Iulia was chosen as the venue, especially for political reasons, the nuncio emphasized. The inspiring and supportive employee of the planned event was considered to be Queen Mary, who had expressed concern that the work on the coronation church had not progressed as desired or was hampered by the fact that some parts of the building had not proved strong enough. The responsibility for organizing the event fell to the Liberal government, but as for the program of that event, which was not finalized at the time of its writing, the final say belonged to the sovereign. In order to be fully aware of the case, the nuncio delivered to the Secretary of State a series of data regarding the antecedents of similar solemnities for Romanians. He noted that the Principles of Wallachia and Moldavia were always enshrined in a Byzantine-inspired ceremony. The last Romanian leaders consecrated in that way were Barbu Știrbey in Bucharest and Grigorie Ghika in Iași, in 1849. The successor of the two, Alexandru-Ioan Cuza, escaped such a custom, and a new festivity of that kind was organized only in 1881, when Romania proclaimed itself a Kingdom. Then, King Carol I, a Catholic like the incumbent monarch, and the prime minister wanted to avoid a ceremony that would have given royalty the character of a monarchy of divine right, which is why they agreed to remove all elements that could have been reminders of the Old Regime. That solution met with the assent of the Royal House and many political and religious complications were thus avoided. The ceremony took place as follows: on 9 May, at the appointed time, the President of the Council of Ministers and the Minister of Finance took to the Metropolitanate the two crowns, one of steel, intended for the king, and one of gold, which was to be given to the queen. The next day, the two sovereigns took part in a *Te Deum*, a service during which the two ornaments were placed on a table with the Holy Scriptures. After completing that office, the sovereigns returned to the Royal Palace, where the president of the Senate offered the crown to the King, and the president of the Assembly of Deputies, to the queen. From then on, the two crowns remained in the Throne Room, until 1916, when they were evacuated along with Romania's treasury, in light of the German occupation. Unlike the balanced formula of the festivity that had been chosen four decades prior, in the case of King Ferdinand, the idea of inserting the ritual of anointing into the ceremony, or the possibility of the

Orthodox metropolitan crowning the two monarchs had been strongly circulated. In connection with these plans, which had aroused concern among the Catholic clergy since their acquaintance, the nuncio had had the opportunity to speak directly with the King Ferdinand I, in July 1921. The sovereign did not hesitate to categorize as mere rumors the ideas circulating at that time in connection with the coronation, an event whose development he did not consider to be imminent, as was then believed at the level of public opinion. The nuncio did not miss the opportunity to draw the sovereign's attention to the harm he would cause by agreeing to the implementation of the circulated scenario, even at the level of unconfirmed information, and to the potential negative consequences for both his personal relationships, as well for the country he led, with the Catholic Church. The reasons that led his uncle to adopt a cautious attitude in a similar situation should have guided him as well, considered the nuncio, especially since he had recently obtained the reconciliation with the Catholic Church, being the sovereign a country with nearly four million Catholics and with whom the Holy See had agreed to establish diplomatic relations. Although he had not obtained the assurance from the sovereign that he would not allow gestures to discredit or offend his own Church, the nuncio concluded the account of this episode by emphasizing the king's overt concern about what was being told. The issue of the coronation was put back on the table with the Liberals' coming to power, and the nuncio sought to personally meet with the head of the ruling party, but did not succeed in the first phase. He contacted the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I.G. Duca, before to whom he repeated the arguments he had presented to the king a year before, emphasizing the embarrassing situation in which the Romanian sovereign and the country's government would place themselves in relation to the Holy See, which generously proved their goodwill towards Romania. At such a wake-up call, the senior Romanian official found it appropriate to say that the goodwill the nuncio was talking about should put the Catholic Church in a less uncompromising position, a statement that abruptly ended the discussion between the two. The rather harsh attitude of the government led Marmaggi to intensify contacts with the representatives of the Royal House, without completely giving up the relationship with some members of the executive. Because he intensely desired to avoid being to the curious looks or comments that might easily arise in such situations, the nuncio considered it appropriate that the connection with the royal family be mediated by a third person. Prince Barbu A. Stirbey, with whom the nuncio had also collaborated on the reconciliation between the sovereign and the Catholic Church, once again became the messenger of the royal will, Marmaggi requesting a first



meeting with him in order to discuss the coronation problem on 6 September 1922. The prince had stated that the Catholic Church would have no reason to be offended by a possible coronation of Ferdinand by the metropolitan-primate, since the king was a Catholic only as a private person; as sovereign, he was the head of the nation and of the country, in which Orthodoxy had the attribute of "dominant religion of the state." To this argument, the nuncio hastened to answer that the king could not give up the profession of the Catholic faith at will, and if he wished to be crowned or consecrated by a hierarch, then it seemed natural to appeal to the representatives of the Church to whom he belonged. In addition, the nuncio felt obliged to amend his interlocutor's statement on the status of Orthodoxy in the Romanian Kingdom, stating that such a privilege could not be spoken of in the case of territories attached to the Old Kingdom or even the latter, given that the old Constitution was suspended at that time, and the new one would much more fairly regulate the status of the denominations in the new Romania. The king's envoy was of the opinion that renouncing royal anointing would mean the disappearance of the impediment *communicatio in divinis* for Catholic hierarchs, an idea which was in turn nuanced by the nuncio, who stated that an act such as the coronation of a king by an Orthodox hierarch assumed a religious character, since it was accompanied by ritual and prayers. Wanting to end the game of negotiations and retorts, the nuncio informed prince Stirbey that the only acceptable solution for the Holy See was to minimize the role of Orthodox prelates. The king could not afford a further deterioration in his relationship with the Catholic Church, and it was up to him whether he wanted the representative of the pontifical sovereign in his country and whether the Catholic episcopate were to take part in the coronation ceremony. The two interlocutors broke away from this blunt position, with Prince Stirbey pledging to present the contents of the discussion to the king, whom he intended to visit in Sinaia, where the monarch had retired on holiday. On 10 September, the nuncio responded affirmatively to the invitation of the king's trusted man to visit him, on which occasion he was informed of the royal decisions. Thus, after having been informed of the position of the Holy See, the sovereign invited the Prime Minister to an audience, informing him that he wished to have a coronation ceremony as close as possible to that of his predecessor on the throne, in which the emphasis was to be on the civil moments of such a ceremony. More precisely, the king wanted the two crowns to be taken to the church in Alba Iulia on the eve of the solemnity, a mission that would belong to the president of the Council of Ministers and to one of the members of his cabinet. The king's crown was to be exempted from the ritual of blessing;

only the crown attributed to the queen was to receive the blessing of the Orthodox prelates, which was not to be done with the two cloaks with which the sovereigns would clothe themselves on the occasion of the feast. On 15 October, the sovereigns would arrive in Alba Iulia by royal train, heading straight for the place of worship. An ordinary *Te Deum* was scheduled there, and, at one point, all participants would go out into the churchyard, where the sovereigns would climb a podium arranged beforehand. After the speech prepared for the event, the king would receive from the president of the Senate the crown that he intended to put on his head, and from the president of the Assembly of Deputies, the queen's crown, which he was to place on the queen's crest. After marking these gestures accompanied by the sound of trumpets, the sovereigns were to return to the church to attend the end of the *Te Deum* service. In addition, the king expressed his wish that the nuncio be present at the coronation ceremony, together with the entire Catholic episcopate in the country, appreciating that, following the above scenario, there were no reasons to prevent their participation in the great feast of the ruling family and the whole country. In addition, the sovereign believed that the choir of Catholic bishops could mark the event by celebrating *Te Deum* in the city's Latin rite Cathedral, adjacent to the new Orthodox Church. In fact, the office of that religious service would be, out of the same sovereign desire, the obligation of all priests, regardless of denomination, throughout the country. All these changes in the initial program, the king considered, were likely to satisfy the claims of the Holy See, since they were all that could be offered in the conditions of Romania at that time. In addition, the motives that generated them had to remain undiscovered, so as not to give rise to dissatisfaction or resentment in Orthodox circles.

These were the details that ended Francesco Marmaggi's letter to Cardinal-Secretary Gasparri. The nuncio considered the result obtained on the basis of the concession tactics satisfactory. A coronation of King Ferdinand I by a Catholic prelate could have been requested, but was unlikely to have been obtained, the letter's signer said. However, the greatest achievement, from the nuncio's viewpoint, should be considered that the recent assurances of the sovereign avoided the danger of the Orthodox metropolitan placing his crown on his scalp, since the planned ceremony would be tailored to the principles of the one held 40 years prior.

Only two days passed before this extensive report was drawn up, until a new letter sent from 5 Esculap Street in Bucharest took the path of the Holy See.<sup>58</sup> Through it, the nuncio hurried to announce to the secretary

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<sup>58</sup> The complete document in *Ibid.*, f. 123r-124v.

of state of the sovereign pontiff that he had managed to get the meeting he had wanted with Ionel Brătianu, who, as expected, was aware of the latest changes in the coronation program, made at the express request of the king. The head of the Romanian cabinet seemed to be reconciled with those changes; he only wanted to obtain the opinion of the Pope's representative on one detail: the assistance of the Catholic episcopate to the religious service officiated by the Orthodox clergy, in the conditions in which the participation of the representatives of the other religious communities in the country had already been confirmed. The Romanian political leader had been informed that at the wedding ceremony of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia with Princess Maria of Romania, in the summer of that year, in Belgrade, the religious service officiated by the Orthodox clergy was attended, without restraint, by the Catholic bishops of the country. Under these conditions, the Holy See could not apply the double measure, forbidding the Romanian Catholic hierarchs to take part in the service that the Orthodox bishops were to perform in the new cathedral built in Alba Iulia. At the end of his interlocutor's reasoning, the nuncio felt compelled to state that he was not in a position to judge the reasons that led the high pontifical authorities to allow the presence of Croatian and Slovenian bishops at the Orthodox ritual of the royal wedding in the neighboring kingdom, hoping that the Romanian royal government would not compel the Catholic bishops of any rite to participate in the religious functions of another denomination, without the approval of their supreme ecclesiastical authority. Upon receiving this categorical answer, the high Romanian official did not insist. Instead, he was interested in identifying ways to compensate for the absence of Catholic bishops from the Orthodox Church, suggesting to the nuncio the opportunity to officiate a religious service in the city's old Roman Catholic cathedral of Alba Iulia. In order to establish the conduct of the representatives of the Romanian Catholic Church towards the event scheduled to take place in the Transylvanian city, the author of the letter announced that he had summoned to his residence the Greek Catholic Metropolitan, Vasile Suciu, Raymund Netzhhammer, Archbishop of Bucharest, and the Bishop of the diocese of Transylvania with residence in Alba Iulia, Gusztáv Károly Majláth, for the 19<sup>th</sup> of that month. In the end, the nuncio expressed his hope that the hierarchs would not hinder his plan, and if that were to happen, he would ask for the assistance of the Holy See.

When all seemed agreed upon through dialogue and sufficient efforts had been made efforts to reconcile the intentions of the organizers with the demands of the Catholic Church, the publication on 14 September,

in the form of a press release, of the program of the festivities, stated that the coronation would take place inside the Orthodox place of worship, so that only then the two sovereigns could show themselves to the crowds gathered in the public square;<sup>59</sup> this determined the nuncio Marmaggi, who was in Rome at that time, to ask, through a dispatch sent to Barbu Stirbey, to explain whether the journalistic information was true or it had to be blamed on the lack of information of the person who released it.<sup>60</sup> The answer to this perplexity was not long in coming. By telegraph, from Azuga, the close relative of the royal family informed the nuncio that the program that had been published two days before in several publications in the capital contained numerous errors, including the one related to the coronation of their majesties.<sup>61</sup>

The first recorded reaction of the Secretary of State to the amount of information provided by the nuncio on the issue of the coronation appeared on 19 September.<sup>62</sup> Then, in the form of an encrypted telegram, Pietro Gasparri informed the Pope's delegate in Bucharest that, in order to avoid any obstacle to the attendance of the Catholic clergy in Romania at the ceremony, it was absolutely necessary for it to take place outside any non-Catholic sacred space; also, the sovereigns had to go to the coronation place directly from the residence where they were to be housed in Alba Iulia. After the coronation, their majesties needed to return to their homes, and the Catholic and Orthodox hierarchs could retire to their churches to officiate. The Cardinal-Secretary of State was also interested in knowing whether in Romania the service of *Te Deum* had been assimilated by folk songs or was considered a strictly liturgical service.

After the scheduled discussion with the representatives of the Latin and Greek rites of the Romanian Catholic Church, which tried to standardize their behavior towards the celebration of the coronation of the Romanian sovereigns, the apostolic nuncio sent a new letter to Cardinal Gasparri, informing him of the decisions of that meeting.<sup>63</sup> The prelate-ambassador was quick to ask whether the coronation ceremony in the courtyard surrounded by porticoes of the Orthodox Church was able to change the instructions sent by encrypted telegram, for which he was willing to make every effort with the Bucharest executive. In addition, the nuncio felt compelled to give a number of clarifying details: the first of

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<sup>59</sup> Netzhammer, *Episcop în România*, vol. II, 1152.

<sup>60</sup> ASV, *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 125r.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 126r-127r.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 129r.

<sup>63</sup> The complete document is in ASV, *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 130r-v.

these was related to the fact that the sovereigns did not have a royal palace in Alba Iulia and that their residence during their stay was going to be an apartment adjacent to the Orthodox church, to which they had access only through the cloister of the monastery. Then, the request that the sovereigns not take part in the religious function of the Orthodox Church, at least the one reserved for officiating after the coronation ceremony, was considered impossible by the nuncio, given that their majesties had already appropriated their custom to attend such religious services several times a year on national days. Regarding the nature of the *Te Deum* service, the services are associated with a double character: a liturgical function (with the specification that the liturgical language was not different from the vernacular), but especially the offices celebrated on the occasion of the holidays, which were customarily attended by state dignitaries and representatives of the countries with which Romania had stable diplomatic relations. At the end of his letter, the nuncio did not forget to stress that both the Court and the Romanian government attached great importance to the presence of the Catholic bishops at the coronation ceremony.

An important clarification of the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the coronation ceremony of the Romanian sovereigns was brought by the telegram received from Rome on 23 September.<sup>64</sup> In it, Pietro Gasparri clearly stated that if the coronation ceremony began with the officiating of the *Te Deum* in the Orthodox Cathedral, continued with the act of coronation in the churchyard and ended with the *Te Deum* service, that festivity had an undoubted religious character, in which the presence of the nuncio and the Catholic hierarchs was strictly forbidden. In similar cases, such as the coronation of Edward VII or George V, the Holy Office ruled that the papal legate and the Catholic episcopate should not take part in the acts that took place in the Protestant Cathedral, establishing instead the celebration of distinct sacred functions for the king. The nuncio was mandated to convey to the government in Bucharest that the Holy See did not intend to impose any particular, discriminatory provision in the case of the coronation of Romanian sovereigns, but could not allow the presence of its ecclesiastical representatives at a non-civil ceremony. Taken in these terms, the situation did not seem to become simpler in any way. Quite the contrary. Carried out even without any intervention from the Orthodox hierarchs, the civil character of the coronation was annulled if the act were to be framed by two religious services. The presence of the Catholic episcopate was conditioned by the establishment of a clear delimitation between the two moments of the feast, without the resumption or continuation in any way of the Orthodox divine service or the insertion of

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 134r-v

religious gestures in the civil ceremony. The new data on the issue seem to have raised concerns and serious questions about the real chances of the presence of the Catholic episcopate, in those conditions, even at the civil ceremony. The nuncio expressed all these thoughts to Cardinal Gasparri in a new letter written on 25 September.<sup>65</sup> Declaring from the outset that he would abide by any decision of the Holy See, Marmaggi raised a number of doubts about the similarity invoked in the Secretary of State's telegram between the coronation ceremonies of Edward VII or George V and the one envisaged in the case of the Romanian sovereigns. Specifically, the nuncio emphasized that the coronation ceremony in Alba Iulia was not scheduled to take place inside the church, like those of the English kings, but in the cloister, which looked like a public square, where, 40 meters away from the atrium of the church, more precisely at the entrance to the cloister, a stage was to be installed, on which the act of coronation was to take place. Then, unlike the English precedents, the Romanian case was not to include the ritual of consecration. After all, the Catholic bishops, if the Holy See were to approve of their presence, would not have to partake in any non-Catholic religious prayers or services. And the reasoning stated by the Secretary of State, according to which the framing of the coronation ceremony between two religious functions would give it a religious character, seemed to be amendable to the nuncio. The negative consequences that could result from the absence of Catholic prelates at the coronation ceremony should not be overlooked, Marmaggi said. Especially due to the fact that, at the level of the Romanian government and public opinion in general, there was the expectation that the Catholic nuncio and episcopate would be present at the celebration of the coronation of Romanian sovereigns, and a possible absence risked to be perceived as an act of vexation to Romania. The evidence in this respect was the general offensive, at that time, against the political parties that had announced that they would not take part in the coronation, and a similar decision by the Holy See would only have the Catholic Church joined with the dissidents and subjected to public reproach. The nuncio finally announced his intention to pay a visit to the head of the Romanian executive the next day to inform him of the contents of the latest instructions received from the Holy See.

He had scarcely finished writing this letter that a new epistle signed by the nuncio was on its way to Rome, carrying with it the message of a deep concern.<sup>66</sup> Francesco Marmaggi announced to Pope Pius XI's Secretary of State that he had unsuccessfully tried to obtain hearings from

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<sup>65</sup> ASV, *Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Romania*, no. 37-38, 1922-1924, fasc. 30, f. 19r-23v.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 25r-27r.

the head of the Romanian cabinet, then from Prince Barbu Știrbey, in order to present the contents of the telegram sent on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that month. The intention of the nuncio was to ask the Romanian prime minister and the king's adviser for approval on the suppression of one of the two parts of the religious ceremony scheduled for the day in question, so that there would be a clear delimitation between the church service and the actual act of coronation. Suspecting the difficulty of obtaining such a decision, the nuncio did not hesitate to suggest to the Secretary of State that the principle stated in the respective letter, according to which the framing of the act of coronation between two sequences of the religious service would imprint on the actual coronation a religious character, could hardly find support in canon law. For the papal representative in Romania, things were as clear as could be, even in the way they had been presented at that time: the act of coronation was unequivocally distinct from the two parts of the scheduled religious service (the first before it took place and the second after its conclusion) both by its nature (no ritual or prayer being foreseen), and by the prism of the circumstances in which it was to take place. In the Orthodox Church, the main role was to belong to the metropolitan-primate, but outside, it was to belong to the king; in the same way, the venue was different, as was the special audience (in the cathedral, the access was limited to about 300 people, while thousands of Romanians were to be present outside), stressed the nuncio, in an effort to show that the central point of the entire event scheduled for 15 October was represented by the act of self-coronation of the king. Given the importance of the issue thus raised, the Secretary of State's response was not long in coming.<sup>67</sup> Pietro Gasparri urged the nuncio to urgently request an audience with the king, which he would use as an opportunity to bring to his attention the Holy See's view of the disciplinary impossibility of Catholic prelates attending the religious ceremonies of other Christian denominations. But this was not the only mission entrusted to the nuncio in Rome. The novelty was that the nuncio was asked to persuade the Romanian sovereign to accept that the civil coronation ceremony be held in a public square and not inside the church cloister, a condition which, if accepted, would facilitate the presence of an extraordinary representative of the Holy See and of the Catholic bishops of Romania.

The lack of flexibility of the Romanian authorities, vigorously pressured in those days by the Orthodox clergy and the influential groups around them, regarding the latest requests made by the Roman Curia, undoubtedly contributed to the decision to make the Romanian nuncio tasked with coordinating from Constantinople the rescue of Catholics from

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 29r.

the Archdiocese of Smyrna, caught in the whirlwind of the Greco-Turkish war.<sup>68</sup> Undoubtedly, the nuncio's departure from Bucharest at the end of September put additional pressure on the Romanian authorities, which were threatened not only by the prospect of the absence of a prominent diplomatic representative from the coronation ceremony of the Romanian sovereigns, but also by the danger posed by the potential degradation of the - recently restored - relations between King Ferdinand I and the Catholic Church. During the visit made to the head of the Romanian cabinet with the intention of announcing his departure in the new mission and to present the latest requests of the Holy See in the matter of coronation, the nuncio had the opportunity to observe the indignation with which the high dignitary received the news that the diplomatic representative of the Pope would not be able to take part in the coronation ceremony, which was only two weeks away.<sup>69</sup> Ionel Brătianu used the occasion to convey to the nuncio that a new change in the program of the holiday was impossible, especially since the pressure exerted by Orthodox prelates was overwhelming.<sup>70</sup> During the absence of the nuncio from his post, the secretary of the Nunciature, Vittorio Cavagnis, had received the delegation of charge of affairs from the Holy See, being the person in charge of the attempt to harmonize the program of festivities in Alba Iulia with the requirements of the Roman Curia. The first signals, in the new context, came from Rome, shortly after the announcement that to the nuncio had been assigned a task that forced him to leave Romania. Vittorio Cavagnis was mandated to inform the Romanian government that the Holy See would appoint a pontifical delegate for the coronation ceremony of the country's sovereigns if all requests made by the Catholic Church were to be accepted by the Romanian side.<sup>71</sup> It was only a matter of time before the Romanian officials, faced with a situation that threatened to weaken the country's international image and the recently established diplomatic relations with the Holy See, complied with the non-negotiable demands of the pontifical courts. On 2 October, Secretary Cavagnis informed Cardinal Gasparri that the government had approved the modification of the coronation program so that it would take place in the public square in front of the Orthodox church,<sup>72</sup> and two days later he was able to deliver the news that the final part of the religious service, which involved the re-entry of the newly crowned sovereigns into the Orthodox

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<sup>68</sup> Netzhammer, *Episcop în România*, vol. II, 1157.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> ASV, *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 146r.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., f. 143r-145r.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., f. 147r.



Cathedral, had been suppressed by the organizers.<sup>73</sup> Under these conditions, nothing stood, at least at the declarative level, in the way of the presence of the Catholic episcopate at the coronation ceremony of the Romanian sovereigns, a festivity which by the manner and place of its development met the conditions of an act relieved of any religious symbolism. Once the impediments invoked by the Holy See were removed, the Romanian authorities did not fail to take the necessary steps to obtain, from the Roman Curia, the mandate of a special delegation for the coronation ceremony. After several options were considered, including the official representation of the Holy See through a delegation led by one of the nuncios in Vienna, Belgrade or Warsaw, the Secretary of State informed the Romanian diplomatic mission that the Holy See would ask the nuncio Marmaggi to interrupt the mission with which he had been charged at that time in Constantinople in order to attend, as the extraordinary representative of the sovereign pontiff, the coronation ceremony of the kings of Romania.<sup>74</sup> The presence of Francesco Marmaggi at the coronation ceremony, insisted on by the head of the Romanian diplomacy, Minister I. G. Duca, was made possible by the return of the nuncio to Bucharest on the night of 12 October, when the letter of accreditation as extraordinary nuncio and the credentials were issued.<sup>75</sup> Returning to Romania and guaranteeing that the coronation ceremony would take place as agreed by the organizers of the event with the Holy See, the nuncio Marmaggi hastened to send King Ferdinand I, in confidence, a letter expressing his gratitude for the malleability shown by the sovereign to the wishes of the Catholic Church regarding the organization of the coronation ceremony.<sup>76</sup>

The short time left before the festivities was marked by a no less intense telegraphic correspondence between the nuncio and the Secretary of State, generated by the desire of the pontifical officials to ensure that the organizers of the event in Alba Iulia had no intentions of making any further changes in the program they had agreed to with the Holy See. In the event that such changes were to occur, however, without prior notice from the pontifical forums, the nuncio was empowered to intervene, even by interrupting or leaving the ceremony.<sup>77</sup> Relying on the seriousness and good intentions of the Romanian side, the Holy See wanted to honor the celebration of the coronation of Romanian sovereigns by issuing a congratulatory letter addressed by Pope Pius XI, to the “son” of the

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 149r.

<sup>74</sup> ASV, *Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Romania*, poz. 37–38, 1922–1924, fasc. 30, f. 40r–41v.

<sup>75</sup> ASV, *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 160r, 217r, 218r.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 169r–170r.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 164r.

Catholic Church, King Ferdinand I of Romania.<sup>78</sup> In addition, in honor of the event, Cardinal-Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri himself attended the *Te Deum* service held in the church assigned to Romanians in Rome, along with all the heads of diplomatic missions at the Holy See.<sup>79</sup>

In these circumstances, the coronation ceremony took place in accordance with the scenario agreed between the Romanian government and the Holy See, as the reports sent immediately after the consummation of that act by the nuncio Marmaggi to the Secretary of State and other Roman departments pointed out.<sup>80</sup> Those exposures are also important because they have the power to clarify other backstage details of the Alba Iulia celebration of that day. For example, immediately after his return from Constantinople, the nuncio hurried to Alba Iulia (compelled by the fact that he had not yet received the credentials of Extraordinary Delegate of the Holy See, thus being unable to comply with diplomatic protocol, like the others external missions, which included the presentation of letters of accreditation to the royal residence in Sinaia), where, on the evening of 14 October, he organized a conference at the residence of Bishop Majláth, to which only the united episcopate was invited, knowing that government officials (especially Minister Banu) had put pressure on the Greek-Catholic hierarchs – during his absence from the post – to take part in the religious service in the Orthodox Cathedral.<sup>81</sup> Another pressing issue that the nuncio had to deal with was the unofficial information that the absence of any Catholic bishop from the civil coronation ceremony would lead the Romanian government to ask the Holy See for its immediate revocation. After all, not all Catholic bishops in Romania had been invited by the organizers to attend the celebration in Alba Iulia, such as the bishop of Iasi, Alexandru Cisar, or the bishop of Cenad, Julius Glattfelder, and their absence, corroborated by the fact that some of them had not taken the oath of allegiance to the Romanian sovereigns, could easily be considered an offense brought by the Romanian Catholic Church to the representatives of the Romanian state.<sup>82</sup> The solution devised by the nuncio was as simple as it was efficient: he sent each bishop a telegram requesting, in an imperative

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 161r-v.

<sup>79</sup> *Unirea*, XXXII/42 (21 Oct. 1922): 3.

<sup>80</sup> A.S.V., *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 171r-172v; 213r-214v, 222r-226r; *Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Romania*, poz. 37-38, 1922-1924, fasc. 30, f. 47r-51r, 64r-69r. See also Ion Gorun, *Încoronarea primului rege al României întregite la Alba Iulia și la București* (Bucharest: IG Hertz, n.d.).

<sup>81</sup> A.S.V., *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 213r.

<sup>82</sup> Z. Străjanu, "Culte minoritare în Transilvania," in *Transilvania, Banatul, Crișana, Maramureșul 1918-1928*, vol. II (1929), 840; Mózes Nóda, *Biserica romano-catolică din Transilvania în perioada interbelică* (Cluj-Napoca: Studium, 2008), 30-31.

manner, to be present at the coronation ceremony of the Romanian sovereigns. In addition to the Greek-Catholic hierarchs, Archbishop Netzhammer, Bishop Majláth, Bishop Glattfelder and Canon Emmerich Bjelik, the titular bishop of Thasus, attended the public ceremony of the coronation. The Bishop of Satu Mare, Tibor Boromisza, whose advanced age and health problems did not allow him to reach Alba Iulia, and the Bishop of Iasi, Alexandru Cisar, who had not been invited in time by the organizers, remained absent.<sup>83</sup>

This overview shows that the coronation ceremony of King Ferdinand I and Queen Maria of Alba Iulia from 100 years ago was strongly shaped by the papal diplomacy, which imposed strict conditions on the religious ceremony (supervised by the Orthodox Church), which made the coronation look like an exclusively secular show, far from the plans originally conceived by the politicians in Bucharest or by the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy.

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<sup>83</sup> A.S.V., *Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Romania*, no. 5, fasc. 12, f. 171r-172v.



# Il Partito comunista italiano e i regimi comunisti dell'Europa orientale attraverso la rivista "Rinascita"

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Article history: Received 15.11.2021; Revised 7.12.2021;

Accepted 20.12.2021; Available online 13.04.2022.

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**Abstract: The Italian Communist Party and the communist regimes of Eastern Europe through the magazine "Rinascita".** The cultural magazine of the Italian Communist Party "Rinascita" was published from 1944 to 1991, thus following the evolution of that party from the post-WWII to its self-dissolution. Through an analysis of the articles published in the magazine, this contribution studies the evolution of the image of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe among the Italian communists, retracing the strategic and ideological changes that characterized the Pci, along a difficult path that from the cult of Stalin eventually came to social democracy.

**Keywords:** Magazine "Rinascita"; Italian Communist Party; Eastern Europe; "Real socialism".

**Rezumat: Partidul Comunist Italian și regimurile comuniste din Europa de Est prin intermediul revistei "Rinascita".** Revista culturală a Partidului comunist italian "Rinascita" a apărut între 1944 și 1991, urmărind astfel evoluția aceluși partid de la cel de-al Doilea Război Mondial până la autodizolvarea sa. Printr-o analiză a articolelor publicate în revistă, această lucrare studiază evoluția imaginii regimurilor comuniste din Europa de Est în rândul comuniștilor italieni, reluând schimbările strategice și ideologice care au caracterizat Pci, de-a lungul unui drum anevoios care de la cultul lui Stalin a ajuns în cele din urmă la social-democrația.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Revista "Rinascita"; Partidul comunist italian; Europa de Est; "Socialismul real".

Questo contributo si propone di esaminare l'immagine dei regimi comunisti dell'Europa orientale dal secondo dopoguerra alla fine del "socialismo reale", attraverso lo spoglio degli articoli pubblicati sulla rivista culturale del Partito comunista italiano (Pci), "Rinascita", fondata dal segretario del partito, Palmiro Togliatti, nel 1944 e che continuò le sue

pubblicazioni fino al 1991. Naturalmente, poiché i regimi comunisti dell'Europa orientale e dell'Unione Sovietica costituirono per il Pci un punto di riferimento di carattere ideale e ideologico, su "Rinascita" furono numerosissimi gli interventi dedicati, specialmente dopo il XX Congresso del Pcus, al dibattito interno al partito, che si faceva progressivamente più articolato. L'obiettivo di questo saggio non è quindi di seguire questo dibattito - su cui la produzione storiografica soprattutto in Italia<sup>1</sup>, ma anche all'estero è ormai vasta - ma piuttosto di soffermarsi su alcuni momenti e alcuni episodi considerati rivelatori del modo in cui i comunisti italiani guardavano alle esperienze comuniste dell'Europa orientale.

Palmiro Togliatti era rientrato in Italia dall'Unione Sovietica, dopo un'assenza di quasi vent'anni, il 27 marzo 1944. L'Italia era allora spaccata in due, con la parte centro-settentrionale del paese ancora nelle mani dei nazifascisti, e il meridione controllato dagli Alleati e dal governo monarchico, guidato allora dal generale Pietro Badoglio. In un contesto estremamente difficile, con la guerra in corso, Togliatti, su precisa ispirazione sovietica, aprì alla costituzione di un largo fronte antifascista insieme alle forze "borghesi", accantonando la pregiudiziale antimonarchica. Questa nuova strategia dei comunisti italiani portò poi alla formazione del secondo governo Badoglio nell'aprile del 1944 - cui presero parte tutte le forze antifasciste, comunisti compresi - e successivamente, dopo la liberazione di Roma nel giugno, alla formazione di un governo Bonomi, ormai anziano esponente del socialismo riformista. Fu allora, quindi, che Togliatti decise di dare vita alla rivista di cultura "Rinascita", che avrebbe poi diretto per vent'anni, fino alla sua morte, nel 1964, attribuendole una funzione cruciale per realizzare un radicamento più profondo e ampio del Pci in Italia. Uscito dalla clandestinità, insomma, il Pci doveva trasformarsi, anche grazie a questa rivista, da un partito di quadri in un partito di massa, aperto non solo alla classe operaia ma anche ai ceti medi, cioè in quello che sarebbe stato conosciuto come il "partito nuovo"<sup>2</sup>.

La rivista nasceva a Salerno, allora capitale provvisoria del "Regno del Sud", per poi spostarsi a Roma dopo la sua liberazione, con un programma ampio e ambizioso, ovvero di "fornire una guida ideologica a quel movimento comunista il quale [...] è parte integrante ed elemento dirigente del moto di rinnovamento profondo che sempre più tende oggi a

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<sup>1</sup> In Italia, la storia del Pci è stata studiata specialmente dalla Fondazione Gramsci di Roma, che conserva anche l'Archivio storico del Partito comunista italiano.

<sup>2</sup> Si veda Aldo Agosti, *Storia del Partito comunista italiano 1921-1991* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1999), 51-54; Albertina Vittoria, *Storia del PCI 1921-1991* (Roma: Carocci, 2006), 72-73; Bruno Gravagnuolo, "Oltre le colonne d'Ercoli," *Rinascita*, 3 marzo 1991: 29. Nel contesto dell'Italia repubblicana, il Pci fu sempre il secondo partito più votato, dopo la Democrazia cristiana, alle elezioni politiche nazionali.

manifestarsi e affermarsi in tutti i campi della vita del nostro paese". La visione che ispirava Togliatti e gli animatori della rivista era improntata ad un superamento delle divisioni fra economia, politica e cultura nel nome di una concezione unitaria delle sfere dell'attività umana, evidentemente in una cornice interpretativa marxista: "non separiamo e non possiamo separare le idee dai fatti, il corso del pensiero dallo sviluppo dei rapporti di forza reali, la politica dalla economia, la cultura dalla politica, i singoli dalla società, l'arte dalla vita reale". Per quest'opera di "rinascita" della società italiana, dopo la fine del fascismo, era necessaria una "ripresa di un movimento di pensiero marxista", che implicava l'avvio di un "rinnovamento in tutti i campi dell'attività nostra intellettuale e culturale". Chiaro era l'appello alla collaborazione a forze intellettuali esterne al partito, "forze diverse, non regolarmente inquadrato nel nostro movimento, ma decise come noi a rompere con un passato, prima di decadenza, poi di sfacelo, e a battere le vie di un rinnovamento radicale sia della nostra vita politica che della nostra cultura"<sup>3</sup>.

La rivista dedicò, dalla sua fondazione alla sua chiusura, un ampio spazio alle vicende dei paesi socialisti dell'Europa orientale e dell'Unione Sovietica, specialmente in coincidenza con eventi cruciali quali il XX Congresso del Pcus, la rivoluzione ungherese dell'ottobre 1956 o la repressione della "primavera di Praga" nell'agosto del 1968. In sostanza, quasi ogni numero di "Rinascita" dedicava almeno un articolo ai paesi del "campo socialista", a cui si comincerà però a guardare con un crescente spirito critico, soprattutto fra gli anni Settanta e gli anni Ottanta, in sintonia con l'evoluzione dello stesso Partito comunista italiano, nel contesto della crisi progressiva del modello sovietico presso sempre più larghi strati della sinistra comunista dell'Europa occidentale.

Nel primo numero del giugno 1944 grande spazio era naturalmente dedicato alla figura di Stalin, esaltato come campione della lotta per la libertà dei popoli: "Un nome riempie in questo momento il mondo, un nome che sarà riportato nell'avvenire, nei decenni e nei secoli, con ammirazione, con affetto, con entusiasmo, da un estremo all'altro della terra, da tutti i popoli, - il nome di Giuseppe Stalin". Tutti, proletari e borghesi - si aggiungeva - riconoscevano a Stalin delle "qualità eccezionali" e la caratteristica del "genio"<sup>4</sup>. Un altro uomo, insieme a Stalin, si ergeva però nel panorama della guerra di liberazione dal nazifascismo in Europa orientale, ovvero il *leader* comunista jugoslavo, maresciallo Tito. Nei suoi confronti, "Rinascita" evidenziava la stessa esaltazione di tipo encomiastico, pubblicando un articolo di Milovan Đilas, dello stato

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<sup>3</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, "Programma," *La Rinascita*, 1, 1944, nr. 1: 1-2. Intitolata inizialmente *La Rinascita*, la rivista dal 1945 mutò il proprio nome in *Rinascita*.

<sup>4</sup> Mario Montagnana, "Il Maresciallo Giuseppe Stalin," *La Rinascita*, 1, 1944, nr. 1: 1.

maggiore dell'esercito di liberazione jugoslavo, futuro ideologo dell'autogestione operaia jugoslava e critico della degenerazione burocratica dei regimi comunisti. Secondo Đilas, "soltanto un uomo animato da un grande e generoso ideale d'amor patrio e di devozione al popolo, soltanto un uomo di enorme energia e di volontà ferrea, pieno di decisione e di coraggio, poteva formare e dirigere l'Armata jugoslava e conquistarsi il rispetto e l'amore dei popoli della Jugoslavia. E tale è il Maresciallo Tito"<sup>5</sup>. Nel gennaio del 1945 "Rinascita" tornava a parlare di Jugoslavia, con un articolo non firmato ma attribuibile a Togliatti, in cui, di fronte alla campagna di stampa italiana anti-jugoslava per quanto riguardava la questione di Trieste e dei territori contesi fra Roma e Belgrado, venivano ricordate le responsabilità del fascismo italiano aggressore e la prova "di patriottismo, di eroismo e di spirito democratico" data dal popolo jugoslavo<sup>6</sup>.

Il secondo paese dell'Europa orientale ad essere preso in considerazione dalla rivista fu la Romania, nel marzo del 1945. Un lungo e approfondito articolo seguiva infatti le vicende romene degli ultimi anni, dall'inizio della guerra fino alla presa del potere da parte del Fronte democratico popolare guidato da Petru Groza. Dopo aver messo in evidenza l'assenso dato da Stalin al ritorno della Transilvania alla Romania, l'articolo guardava con ottimismo al governo Groza: "Se il nuovo governo saprà liquidare con decisione tutti i focolai della reazione fascista, menare a termine l'epurazione dell'apparato dello stato ed applicare sul serio la riforma agraria che è nel suo programma, la Romania potrà conoscere un lungo periodo di pace e di prosperità e conquistarsi quel prestigio internazionale che è indispensabile alla sua rinascita"<sup>7</sup>.

Allo stesso tempo, la rivista continuava a mettere in risalto il ruolo dell'Urss nella liberazione nazionale dei popoli attraverso la guerra antifascista e antihitleriana, sotto la guida di Stalin, autentico continuatore di Marx, Engels e Lenin<sup>8</sup>. Oppure pubblicava articoli che evidenziavano la differenza fra la democrazia "formale" occidentale e la democrazia "sostanziale" sovietica, sottolineando il contributo indispensabile dato alla democratizzazione dell'Europa orientale dai liberatori dell'Armata Rossa, con la creazione di governi popolari, che permettevano di realizzare riforme importanti come la riforma agraria<sup>9</sup>. La condotta sovietica rispetto allo scoppio della guerra veniva ricostruita allo scopo di dimostrare che

<sup>5</sup> Milovan Ginas [Đilas], "Il Maresciallo Tito," *La Rinascita*, 1, 1944, nr. 3: 9.

<sup>6</sup> "Italia e Jugoslavia," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 1: 4.

<sup>7</sup> "Lo sviluppo della democrazia in Romania," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 3: 89.

<sup>8</sup> Vincenzo La Rocca, "Lenin e le guerre di liberazione nazionale," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 5-6: 132-134.

<sup>9</sup> Sokolov, "La democrazia europea nel giudizio sovietico," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 5-6: 141-144.



L'Urss non aveva avuto alcuna responsabilità firmando il patto di non aggressione con la Germania nazista nell'agosto 1939<sup>10</sup>. E ancora venivano ricordati i provvedimenti di riforma agraria, ad esempio in Ungheria: "mentre l'Esercito Rosso finisce di ripulire dai tedeschi il territorio dell'Ungheria, il governo provvisorio ungherese, con uno dei suoi primi decreti, dava inizio alla riforma agraria [...]. La liquidazione del regime semif feudale nell'agricoltura ungherese, apre la strada alla democrazia, taglia le più solide e profonde radici della reazione"<sup>11</sup>. Toni analoghi aveva un articolo di Fausto Gullo, allora ministro comunista dell'Agricoltura nel governo guidato dal democristiano De Gasperi, dedicato alla riforma agraria polacca, di cui si sottolineavano anche gli incentivi previsti a forme di conduzione collettiva fra contadini: "la legge dispone la creazione di grandi aziende-modello di proprietà dello Stato, le quali varranno senza dubbio, con l'operante suggestione dell'esempio, ad indurre gruppi di piccoli proprietari limitrofi a convogliare le loro attività verso forme di conduzione collettiva"<sup>12</sup>. In alcuni casi, si ricercavano le radici di un'amicizia italo-russa nel Risorgimento: contrariamente alle usuali letture del processo risorgimentale italiano, dove si ricordano le politiche filopiemontesi della Francia di Napoleone III, "Rinascita" sottolineava l'appoggio russo alle mire unitarie di Cavour: "*Quello che nell'azione di Cavour in quegli anni fu fondamentale fu il deciso orientamento verso la Russia come chiave di volta della soluzione della questione italiana. Cavour s'orientò molto più verso la Russia che verso la Francia*"<sup>13</sup>.

"Rinascita" dedicò una particolare attenzione alle vicende dei partiti comunisti e operai dell'Europa orientale e ai loro congressi. Nel marzo 1946 si segnalava il primo congresso del Partito operaio polacco, svoltosi nel dicembre 1945, sotto la guida del segretario Gomulka<sup>14</sup> e nell'aprile si riportava un discorso tenuto da Georgi Dimitrov a Sofia nel febbraio 1946 sui compiti dei comunisti bulgari<sup>15</sup>. Nel settembre 1946 era nuovamente la volta della Jugoslavia di Tito, definita "lo stato più libero, più democratico e più progredito del mondo non-sovietico"<sup>16</sup>. Eugenio Reale, sottosegretario agli Esteri e delegato del Pci ai rapporti con i partiti comunisti dell'Europa orientale, pubblicò un articolo che analizzava le democrazie popolari nel loro complesso. Tra "regime capitalista" e "regime socialista", scriveva Reale, era nata una nuova forma di stato. Si trattava

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<sup>10</sup> Antonio Ferri, "La politica estera russa tra il 1939 e il 1941," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 7-8: 172-175.

<sup>11</sup> "La riforma agraria in Ungheria," *Rinascita*, 2, 1945, nr. 7-8: 188.

<sup>12</sup> Fausto Gullo, "La legge agraria polacca," *Rinascita*, 3, 1946, nr. 1-2: 26.

<sup>13</sup> Giuseppe Berti, "La Russia e l'indipendenza nazionale italiana," *Rinascita*, 3, 1946, nr. 1-2: 6.

<sup>14</sup> "Il I Congresso nazionale del Partito operaio polacco," *Rinascita*, 3, 1946, nr. 3: 59-60.

<sup>15</sup> "Un discorso di Dimitrov sui compiti dei comunisti bulgari," *Rinascita*, 3, 1946, nr. 5-6: 124-126.

<sup>16</sup> "Il Partito comunista jugoslavo," *Rinascita*, 3, 1946, nr. 9: 241-243.

infatti di una nuova e più progressiva forma di democrazia, nata sulle ceneri di quella “falsa democrazia parlamentare” interbellica caduta ingloriosamente sotto i colpi del fascismo. Le democrazie popolari avevano potuto preservare delle forme di proprietà privata piccola e media, come quella della terra, mantenendo quindi alcuni elementi, limitati, dell’economia capitalista: “Non si può dunque parlare di economia socialista o sovietizzata, bensì di un’economia a fondamento sociale, di una economia profondamente democratica, di un programma di risanamento e rinnovamento nazionale, come è inteso in molti paesi capitalisti anche da partiti non socialisti”<sup>17</sup>.

Nel frattempo, a seguito della discesa della “cortina di ferro” fra est ed ovest e dell’inizio della “guerra fredda”, nel maggio del 1947 in Italia si era rotta l’unità antifascista e i comunisti, insieme con i socialisti, erano stati esclusi dal governo. Per alcuni anni, il Pci avrebbe quindi identificato, in modo totalmente acritico, il proprio destino con quello dell’Urss e dei regimi socialisti dell’Europa orientale: gli articoli presenti su “Rinascita” testimoniano questa fase, che vedrà un aggiustamento di rotta dopo la morte di Stalin. Nel febbraio del 1948 un articolo di Mario Berlinguer, esponente del Partito socialista italiano e padre del futuro segretario del Pci, Enrico Berlinguer, dedicava un articolo ai processi in Bulgaria e in Romania contro Petkov e Maniu. Nikola Petkov, leader dell’Unione agraria bulgara, era stato incriminato per volontà del partito comunista di Dimitrov per essere collegato ad ambienti “monarco-fascisti” e condannato a morte per impiccagione il 23 settembre del 1947<sup>18</sup>. Iuliu Maniu era stato incriminato, in modo analogo, nel novembre 1947, insieme all’altro storico leader del Partito nazional-contadino romeno, Ion Mihalache, con l’accusa di aver congiurato con gli Stati Uniti contro il governo democratico romeno, per morire poi nel 1953 nel carcere di Sighet<sup>19</sup>. Secondo Mario Berlinguer, che era avvocato, le accuse contro Petkov erano suffragate “da prove obiettive inconfutabili”. Per quanto riguarda il processo a Maniu, il suo entusiasmo era ancora maggiore: “la giustizia militare romena rivela, a traverso gli atti della indagine istruttoria, del dibattimento, le requisitorie e la sentenza che leggiamo nei testi originali, una sensibilità giuridica che fa onore alla sua tradizione latina”. Le garanzie di difesa erano ritenute “complete”, le requisitorie “acute e precise” e la sentenza “impeccabile”<sup>20</sup>.

Un certo spazio era riservato nel numero dell’aprile-maggio 1948 alla costituzione dei partiti unificati operai in Cecoslovacchia e Ungheria, segno della presa del potere dei partiti comunisti e della sottomissione e

<sup>17</sup> Eugenio Reale, “Le democrazie popolari dell’Europa Orientale,” *Rinascita*, 4, 1947, nr. 5: 119.

<sup>18</sup> Armando Pitassio, *Storia della Bulgaria contemporanea* (Passignano: Aguaplano, 2012), 93-94.

<sup>19</sup> Francesco Guida, *Romania* (Milano: Unicopli, 2009), 196-197, 201.

<sup>20</sup> Mario Berlinguer, “I processi di Petkov e di Maniu,” *Rinascita*, 5, 1948, nr. 2: 63.

sparizione dei partiti socialisti. Tali eventi erano salutati con entusiasmo dalla rivista: "Gli operai comunisti e socialdemocratici lotteranno ora insieme contro il nemico comune in un solo ed unico partito che permetterà loro di realizzare le grandi idee del socialismo attraverso la democrazia popolare"<sup>21</sup>.

Nel 1948 "Rinascita" si esprimeva sull'espulsione della Jugoslavia dal Cominform, in seguito alla rottura fra Tito e Stalin, con un articolo del vicedirettore Felice Platone, che si allineava completamente alla posizione dell'Urss: "Il fatto che i dirigenti jugoslavi abbiano disertato il fronte del socialismo, si siano allontanati dal marxismo-leninismo e ne abbiano misconosciuto gli insegnamenti (abbiano cioè misconosciuto la direzione bolscevica della loro lotta) è appunto la prova [...] del loro distacco dal proletariato, del loro nazionalismo piccolo-borghese, del loro orientamento verso il capitalismo e l'imperialismo o, per dirla in una parola, del loro tradimento"<sup>22</sup>.

"Rinascita" continuava a seguire i processi imbastiti in Europa orientale, nel clima dello scontro ideologico con la Jugoslavia e della fase più acuta della "guerra fredda", contro coloro che erano accusati di complottare contro quei regimi. Nel maggio del 1952 si soffermava sul "deviazionismo di destra" in Romania, che aveva portato alla condanna del ministro delle Finanze Vasile Luca, il quale, come si spiegava nell'articolo, aveva deliberatamente rallentato il processo di socializzazione delle campagne, facendo l'interesse dei contadini ricchi, i kulaki. Vasile Luca, ricordava la rivista, era stato accusato dal Comitato centrale del Partito operaio romeno insieme al ministro degli Interni Teohari Georgescu e alla ministra degli Esteri Ana Pauker. L'autore dell'articolo, Carmine De Lipsis, non aveva alcun dubbio sulla colpevolezza dei tre accusati e sulla giustezza dell'accusa: "La liquidazione della deviazione di destra del Partito operaio romeno va quindi salutata come un successo del regime di democrazia popolare, come un sintomo del suo accelerato sviluppo in senso socialista"<sup>23</sup>.

Nel febbraio del 1953, un intero numero di "Rinascita" era dedicato alla morte di Stalin, con articoli naturalmente celebrativi, a partire dall'editoriale di Luigi Longo - futuro segretario del Pci dopo Togliatti - intitolato *Gloria a Stalin!*, dove si decantavano l'"opera titanica" e il "genio" del dittatore: "Stalin possedette in sommo grado la teoria marxista e

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<sup>21</sup> "Gli ultimi avvenimenti in Cecoslovacchia" e "Verso il Partito Operaio Unificato in Ungheria," *Rinascita*, 5, 1948, nr. 4-5: 169-170.

<sup>22</sup> Felice Platone, "Il fronte del socialismo e i casi di Jugoslavia," *Rinascita*, 5, 1948, nr. 7: 251.

<sup>23</sup> Carmine De Lipsis, "La deviazione di destra nel Partito operaio romeno," *Rinascita*, 9, 1952, nr. 5: 309.

leninista, la portò avanti e l'arricchì di preziosi contributi, la trasfuse a milioni e milioni di combattenti, ne fece un'arme [sic] imbattibile per la redenzione dei popoli e il progresso del socialismo"<sup>24</sup>.

Per quanto riguardava i processi politici imbastiti nei paesi socialisti contro oppositori veri o presunti, la rivista continuava a mantenersi fedele alla disciplina di partito, ad esempio a proposito del processo che coinvolse l'ex segretario del Partito comunista cecoslovacco, Rudolf Slánský. Di origine ebraica, accusato di deviazionismo nazionalista, Slánský fu condannato a morte per impiccagione. Nell'articolo, presumibilmente scritto da Togliatti, tale fatto veniva giustificato, e venivano scherniti coloro che in Italia, come il giurista Piero Calamandrei, si scandalizzavano: si ribadiva infatti che, analogamente al periodo giacobino durante la rivoluzione francese, la giustizia popolare doveva poter usare anche la violenza, se necessaria. Non si trattava, sosteneva "Rinascita", di un processo contro la libertà d'opinione, infatti "Slanski [sic] ed i suoi sono stati sorpresi mentre operavano sul terreno della congiura politico-militare, per tentare il colpo di Stato controrivoluzionario. Così come avevano tentato Trotzky e i suoi"<sup>25</sup>.

Dopo la morte di Stalin, cominciò a sgretolarsi il sistema di potere edificato durante il lungo dominio del dittatore e iniziò a profilarsi l'ascesa di Chruščëv. Uno degli elementi di questo passaggio fu l'eliminazione di Berija, il temuto capo della polizia politica sovietica. Anche in tal caso, "Rinascita" seguiva pedissequamente le direttive del Pci a sua volta allineato al Pcus, attraverso un articolo di Pietro Secchia, senatore comunista e responsabile della sezione propaganda del partito. "Il Partito comunista dell'Unione Sovietica - scriveva Secchia - con la fermezza e il coraggio che gli sono abituali, non si è limitato a spiegare il caso Berija con l'opera che i nemici del socialismo vanno svolgendo dall'esterno del Paese, ma ha criticato apertamente gli errori e i difetti che hanno reso possibile l'opera criminale di Berija, che l'hanno in un certo senso favorita". Era già evidente, in questo articolo, una velata critica alla gestione di Stalin, alla politica condotta da un uomo solo e all'importanza del principio della "legalità socialista" e della dirigenza collettiva. Secchia, allineandosi alle posizioni del Pcus e della "Pravda", denunciava poi, senza manifestare alcun dubbio su quella che era in realtà una manovra orchestrata dalla nuova dirigenza sovietica<sup>26</sup>, il "tentativo criminale" di Berija di restaurazione del capitalismo in accordo con le forze dell'atlantismo e dell'imperialismo<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Luigi Longo, "Gloria a Stalin!", *Rinascita*, 10, 1953, nr. 2: 65, 67.

<sup>25</sup> "Gli storici gesuiti e il caso Slanski," *Rinascita*, 9, 1952, nr. 11: 612.

<sup>26</sup> A questo proposito, si veda ad esempio Anne Applebaum, *Iron curtain: the crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956* (New York: Anchor Books, 2013), 444.

<sup>27</sup> Pietro Secchia, "Insegnamenti del caso Beria," *Rinascita*, 10, 1953, nr. 7: 395.

L'intero numero del febbraio 1956 era dedicato al XX Congresso del Pcus. La rivista riportava molti interventi tenuti dai delegati al Congresso, fra cui quello di Togliatti sulla "via italiana al socialismo", e si premurava di ribattere a quelle che considerava speculazioni della stampa "borghese", sempre pronta a mettere in evidenza – strumentalmente, si affermava – le critiche espresse da Chruščëv alla gestione politica di Stalin attraverso la condanna del culto della personalità, aggiungendo poi che in ogni caso nulla sarebbe cambiato per quanto riguardava la sostanza positiva del comunismo sovietico<sup>28</sup>.

In realtà, il XX Congresso e l'attacco alla figura di Stalin, di cui Chruščëv denunciò i crimini nel celebre "rapporto segreto", avrebbero costituito per il Partito comunista italiano un trauma profondo, che comportò un lento ripensamento della propria natura e della propria strategia politica in Italia<sup>29</sup>. Nel marzo del 1956, "Rinascita" iniziava quindi il faticoso tentativo di difendere il comunismo dopo il duro colpo inferto da Chruščëv. Provvedeva in tal senso Luigi Longo, con un suo intervento che da un lato ammetteva gli errori del comunismo sovietico, ma dall'altro ricordava che quella sovietica era pur sempre l'unica "vera" democrazia, rispetto alla "finta" democrazia borghese occidentale. Scriveva Longo: "La canea sollevata dai propagandisti dell'anticomunismo a proposito della coraggiosa condanna del culto della personalità, pronunciata dal XX Congresso del Partito dell'Unione sovietica, ha avuto questo scopo preciso: mettere nell'ombra l'enorme importanza mondiale delle decisioni prese da quel congresso sulle questioni ideologiche, politiche e organizzative e per la realizzazione delle quali la condanna del culto della personalità rappresenta una premessa necessaria e un elemento di propulsione"<sup>30</sup>.

Nel numero di maggio-giugno del 1956, "Rinascita" pubblicava le risposte date da Togliatti in una sua celebre intervista alla rivista marxista "Nuovi argomenti" sullo stalinismo<sup>31</sup>. Togliatti ribadiva che la condanna del culto della personalità di Stalin non comportava la condanna di tutto ciò che avevano realizzato i comunisti dalla rivoluzione d'ottobre in poi. Il segretario comunista negava anche che la condanna di Stalin fosse solo la conseguenza di una lotta per il potere della nuova classe dirigente chrusceviana rispetto

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<sup>28</sup> "Ammissioni e falsi della stampa borghese italiana," *Rinascita*, 13, 1956, nr. 2: 79-81.

<sup>29</sup> Si veda ad esempio Jonathan Haslam, *I dilemmi della destalinizzazione: Togliatti, il XX Congresso del PCUS e le sue conseguenze (1956)*, in Roberto Gualtieri, Carlo Spagnolo, Ermanno Taviani (a cura), *Togliatti nel suo tempo* (Roma: Carocci, 2007), 215-238.

<sup>30</sup> Luigi Longo, "Costruendo il socialismo si son fatti degli errori, ma la vostra non è democrazia!," *Rinascita*, 13, 1956, nr. 3: 135-137.

<sup>31</sup> L'intervista fu pubblicata su "Nuovi argomenti," 1956, nr. 20. Si veda Adriano Guerra, *Comunismi e comunisti. Dalle «svolte» di Togliatti e Stalin del 1944 al crollo del comunismo democratico* (Bari: Dedalo, 2005), 214-218.

alla vecchia guardia. Sulla prospettiva di un ritorno dell'Urss a un sistema di democrazia multipartitica di tipo occidentale, Togliatti ribadiva il fatto, più volte ricordato dal Pci, che le democrazie capitalistiche occidentali erano democrazie "formali" e "falsate", dove non governava realmente il popolo ma chi deteneva il controllo dei mezzi di produzione e di scambio. Togliatti riconosceva però che "la vita democratica sovietica è stata limitata, in parte soffocata, dal sopravvento di metodi di direzione burocratica, autoritaria e dalle violazioni della legalità del regime"<sup>32</sup>.

Un momento estremamente difficile per la rivista fu rappresentato dall'interpretazione dei fatti ungheresi dell'ottobre-novembre 1956, conclusisi, com'è noto, con l'invasione sovietica del paese e l'arresto del simbolo della rivoluzione ungherese, Imre Nagy. In tale occasione, il Pci si era schierato con Mosca, ma diversi suoi esponenti - fra cui Giuseppe di Vittorio, segretario della Cgil, il più importante sindacato italiano - e molti intellettuali comunisti condannarono l'intervento sovietico<sup>33</sup>. In un suo editoriale, Togliatti, riferendosi alla repressione dell'insurrezione polacca del giugno e ai fatti di Ungheria, riconosceva che i partiti comunisti polacco e ungherese non erano stati capaci di capire ciò che stava accadendo nelle loro società e di porvi rimedio. Scriveva Togliatti: "Quello che a noi sembra certo, per il momento, è che tanto in Polonia quanto in Ungheria ci si trova di fronte a un incomprensibile ritardo dei dirigenti del partito e del Paese nel comprendere la necessità di attuare quei mutamenti e prendere quelle misure che la situazione esige, di correggere errori di sostanza che investivano la linea seguita nella marcia verso il socialismo". Secondo il segretario del Pci, l'errore di quei partiti era di non aver applicato pienamente lo spirito del XX Congresso, ma solo mezze misure, che non erano riuscite a riavvicinare i partiti comunisti alla società. Tuttavia, precisava Togliatti, una cosa erano le critiche rivolte al governo ungherese, un'altra era una sommossa armata, alimentata dall'"imperialismo occidentale" per mettere fine al potere socialista in Ungheria. In particolare, avvertiva Togliatti, non era possibile approfittare di quei drammatici avvenimenti per condannare il potere socialista in sé: "Nei paesi socialisti si sono commessi errori anche gravi; vi sono difetti da correggere occupando posizioni nuove, seguendo nuove linee politiche e nuovi metodi di amministrazione. [...] Ma tra questo [...] e la sostituzione alla critica non solo dell'insulto incompreso, ma di giudizi precipitosi o grotteschi, per cui i regimi popolari e socialisti diventano qualcosa di simile al fascismo, e

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<sup>32</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, "Le risposte di Palmiro Togliatti a nove domande sullo stalinismo," *Rinascita*, 13, 1956, nr. 5-6: 301-312.

<sup>33</sup> Albertina Vittoria, *Togliatti e gli intellettuali. Storia dell'Istituto Gramsci negli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1992), 109-125.

qualcosa di simile a un paese imperialista l'Unione Sovietica, ci passa la differenza che passa tra la notte e il giorno"<sup>34</sup>.

Parallelamente alla critica mossa, pur entro determinati limiti, nei confronti di alcuni paesi del blocco sovietico, era evidente l'apprezzamento per un paese comunista che però a quel blocco non apparteneva e cioè la Jugoslavia, ormai riappacificatasi con l'Urss di Chruščëv, dopo la sua storica visita a Belgrado del 1955. In un articolo del novembre del 1956, infatti, Luigi Longo, che aveva condotto una delegazione del Pci in visita in Jugoslavia, descriveva positivamente l'attuazione originale del socialismo in quel paese. L'esperienza socialista jugoslava era definita "degnata del più grande interesse e di attento studio, ricca di motivi originali e validi, tesa in un continuo sforzo di adeguamento alle particolarità e alle condizioni del paese". Si faceva poi esplicito riferimento alla condanna subita dalla Jugoslavia all'epoca di Stalin, da cui si prendevano in modo netto le distanze, qualificandola come "l'infelice rottura provocata dalle decisioni dell'Ufficio d'informazione del 1948-49, e l'aspra e ingiusta lotta che oppose i partiti comunisti, il nostro compreso, ai compagni jugoslavi"<sup>35</sup>.

All'inizio del 1957, era ancora Luigi Longo a riportare su "Rinascita" il risultato di un'altra visita di una delegazione del Pci ad un paese socialista, in questo caso l'Ungheria, guidata, dopo la fallita rivoluzione del 1956, da János Kádár. Longo, capo della delegazione, aveva avuto una conversazione con Kádár sui fatti ungheresi di qualche mese prima. L'opinione di Kádár su Nagy, sostanzialmente positiva fino al 1953, diventava però negativa per quanto riguardava i fatti del 1956, quando erano entrati in campo - aveva riferito a Longo - "elementi reazionari" e "agenti hortysti", per cui si era reso indispensabile togliere di mezzo il presidente del Consiglio ungherese e chiedere un secondo intervento sovietico<sup>36</sup>. Un lungo articolo che analizzava i fatti di Ungheria di ottobre-novembre 1956 e la prima fase del governo Kádár, metteva in evidenza sia gli errori dei segretari comunisti ungheresi di epoca stalinista, Rákosi e Gerő, sia gli errori di Nagy, definito un "Kerenski alla rovescia", apprezzando il difficile tentativo di rinnovamento allora intrapreso dai comunisti ungheresi<sup>37</sup>.

Togliatti poi tentava di fronteggiare l'attacco concentrico a cui era sottoposto il Pci da parte di tutte le altre forze politiche italiane, dalla destra

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<sup>34</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, "Sui fatti di Ungheria," *Rinascita*, 13, 1956, nr. 10: 493.

<sup>35</sup> Luigi Longo, "Vivo interesse e attento studio per le esperienze dei comunisti jugoslavi," *Rinascita*, 13, 1956, nr. 11: 569-573.

<sup>36</sup> Luigi Longo, "Come sono potuti accadere i fatti di Ungheria?," *Rinascita*, 14, 1957, nr. 1-2: 21-25.

<sup>37</sup> Orfeo Vangelista, "Tre mesi di faticosa attività per ristabilire il potere socialista," *Rinascita*, 14, 1957, nr. 1-2: 25-29.

ai socialisti – che avevano rotto il patto di unità d'azione stretto con i comunisti dal dopoguerra – e anche da parte di ex comunisti, che avevano abbandonato il partito. Tutte queste forze – ricordava polemicamente Togliatti – collegavano il Pci al “campo socialista” in crisi a partire dal XX Congresso del Pcus e poi in seguito ai fatti di Polonia e Ungheria, ma il segretario comunista replicava che il Pci operava in Italia, marcando così indirettamente una distanza dalla compagnia scomoda delle esperienze dei regimi comunisti dell'Europa orientale. Togliatti riconosceva inoltre che i comunisti italiani si trovavano in una situazione complessa: “Forse si tratta di una ondata di smarrimento che trae origini da fatti lontani, tema a cui bisognerà ritornare. Ma qui non si tratta né di Stalin, né di Khrustciov [sic], né di Gomulka, né di Janos Kadar. Si tratta dell'Italia e della politica italiana, prima di tutto”<sup>38</sup>.

Fino alla morte di Togliatti, “Rinascita” costituì quindi una tribuna importante da cui il segretario comunista tentò di controbattere agli attacchi che verso il suo partito erano lanciati dalle altre forze politiche e in particolare dal Partito socialista di Nenni, ormai ideologicamente in aperta rottura con i comunisti e con quanto rappresentava il “socialismo reale”. Da un lato, Togliatti, pur ammettendo alcune storture presenti nel campo comunista, sottolineava come, a partire dal XX Congresso, si fosse tentato di apportare delle riforme a quel sistema. Dall'altro, continuava però a ricordare che il Pci operava in Italia, aveva una sua storia strettamente legata al contesto nazionale e quindi non poteva essere coinvolto in polemiche che riguardavano la realtà dell'Europa orientale. Ma in ogni caso, anche volendo considerare il campo del “socialismo reale”, quelle società continuavano a sembrare a Togliatti sicuramente migliori e più giuste delle società occidentali: “Per quanto ci riguarda, la solidarietà con i paesi socialisti e il far conoscere al popolo la realtà dei loro progressi sono elementi di prestigio e di forza del nostro partito”<sup>39</sup>.

Allo stesso tempo, la rivista dava crescente spazio anche a voci dissonanti, che, all'interno dello stesso Pci, iniziavano a guardare in modo critico all'esperienza del “socialismo reale” in Europa orientale. Era ad esempio il caso di Giorgio Amendola, esponente dell'ala “riformista” del partito, quella che riteneva indispensabile dialogare con il Partito socialista italiano e che spingeva per una collocazione più “nazionale” e autonoma dall'Urss dei comunisti italiani. Amendola denunciava, anche alla luce di quanto emerso dal XXII Congresso del Pcus, dell'ottobre 1961, e della nuova condanna portata da Chruščëv a Stalin e al cosiddetto “gruppo antipartito”,

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<sup>38</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, “Considerazioni su una crisi che non c'è e sulle crisi che ci sono,” *Rinascita*, 14, 1957, nr. 1-2: 42-43.

<sup>39</sup> Palmiro Togliatti, “Ancora su socialismo e democrazia (Risposta al compagno Nenni),” *Rinascita*, 18, 1961, nr. 5: 433.



le "corresponsabilità" del Pci con i crimini staliniani. Secondo Amendola, anche se il Pci non fosse stato a conoscenza di tutte le "tremende conseguenze" della politica staliniana, che "sì crudamente contrastano con i principi stessi di libertà e di giustizia per i quali combattiamo", "l'essenziale lo conoscevamo tutti, che avessimo vissuto nell'URSS o non vi fossimo mai andati, perché non ignoravamo le premesse politiche che posero le condizioni di quegli errori e di quei delitti, e quelle premesse le avevamo anzi approvate, perché le avevamo credute necessarie"<sup>40</sup>.

Dal maggio del 1962 iniziò una nuova serie di "Rinascita", che passò ad essere da mensile settimanale, allo scopo di poter seguire meglio l'evoluzione dell'attualità politica e culturale in un mondo che stava cambiando sempre più rapidamente. Era anche un segno, probabilmente, della sempre maggiore apertura della rivista al dibattito interno, che, con l'avvio del "nuovo corso" chrusceviano, e dopo il lancio da parte di Togliatti della prospettiva di una "via nazionale al socialismo" nell'VIII Congresso del Pci (dicembre 1956), rendeva opportuna una maggiore frequenza nelle pubblicazioni della rivista<sup>41</sup>. Per rafforzare ulteriormente questo rinnovato impegno all'osservazione della realtà nazionale e internazionale e stimolare il dibattito intellettuale, nel 1965 - dopo la morte di Togliatti, ma su suo progetto - fu creato un supplemento culturale mensile della rivista, "Il Contemporaneo"<sup>42</sup>.

Di particolare interesse è l'attenzione con cui "Rinascita" iniziò a guardare ai tentativi di riforma economica avviati in Europa orientale, prendendo come riferimento il modello offerto dall'autogestione jugoslava, che, precedentemente criticato e considerato "cripto-capitalista", veniva allora progressivamente rivalutato. Del resto, all'epoca anche nella stessa Urss nuove vie venivano prudentemente esplorate, inizialmente solo a livello teorico, allo scopo di rendere più dinamica l'economia socialista rispetto ai rigidi meccanismi della pianificazione. La "Scuola di Char'kov", che faceva riferimento ad economisti quali Evsej Liberman, propose l'attuazione di un decentramento dell'economia tramite il conferimento di una maggiore autonomia alle singole imprese. Idee simili iniziarono a circolare, fra la fine degli anni Cinquanta e gli anni Sessanta, negli altri paesi del blocco socialista, in cui si guardava al modello jugoslavo come una possibile soluzione dei mali che affliggevano, dal punto di vista economico, i sistemi socialisti: gli economisti Oskar Lange in Polonia e Ota Šik in Cecoslovacchia si fecero portatori di simili istanze di decentramento. Spesso, poi, l'idea dell'autogestione, dalla rivoluzione ungherese del 1956,

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<sup>40</sup> Giorgio Amendola, "Le nostre corresponsabilità," *Rinascita*, 18, 1961, nr. 12: 935.

<sup>41</sup> Si veda quanto affermava Togliatti in proposito due anni dopo: "7 domande al direttore di Rinascita," *Rinascita*, 27 giugno 1964: 9-10.

<sup>42</sup> Albertina Vittoria, *Togliatti e gli intellettuali*, 173-183.

alla “primavera di Praga” del 1968 a Solidarność in Polonia all’inizio degli anni Ottanta, si intrecciò strettamente a progetti di riforma politica in direzione di una maggiore democratizzazione di quelle realtà<sup>43</sup>.

Esempi di tale interesse da parte di “Rinascita” sono una serie di articoli pubblicati in quegli anni. Amedeo Grano, che aveva frequentato la scuola superiore del Pcus a Mosca, specializzandosi in economia e studiando in particolare il sistema degli incentivi nelle economie socialiste, pur mettendo in guardia sul fatto che in Jugoslavia il decentramento economico avesse avuto anche un carattere “iconoclastico” e polemico nei riguardi di “altre esperienze”, riconosceva che la Jugoslavia aveva il “merito” di aver posto il problema della necessità di una riforma del sistema pianificato<sup>44</sup>. Per quanto riguardava la Romania, benché la produzione fosse ancora svolta in base a un sistema rigidamente pianificato, Lisa Foa – attenta osservatrice dei processi di riforma politico-economica dell’Europa orientale – apprezzava lo “sviluppo assunto dall’economia matematica e dall’applicazione delle tecniche matematiche nella pianificazione”, che avrebbe potuto poi aprire la strada a “una riorganizzazione del sistema produttivo sulla base di una rigorosa contabilità nazionale, ossia di un necessario decentramento alle unità produttive di base di una serie di funzioni e responsabilità, oggi affidate agli enti centrali”<sup>45</sup>. Fu poi Ezio Ferrero a prendere in esame direttamente il dibattito sulle riforme economiche in Urss, relativo all’introduzione della scienza economica e dell’econometria nella gestione dell’economia sovietica. Scriveva Ferrero che “la scienza economica dopo il ventesimo Congresso è stata fra le scienze sociali quella che ha dimostrato i maggiori segni di vivacità e di spregiudicatezza, quella forse che ha risentito in modo maggiore dei risultati positivi della politica inauguratasi appunto col XX Congresso”<sup>46</sup>. Interventi simili si susseguirono relativamente ai casi cecoslovacco – fu intervistato anche il principale artefice delle riforme economiche della Cecoslovacchia, Ota Šik<sup>47</sup> – e polacco, anche se in quest’ultimo caso la maggiore autonomia aziendale non significava, si diceva, rinuncia alla pianificazione centralizzata<sup>48</sup>. Sarà soprattutto Lisa Foa

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<sup>43</sup> Su questi temi si veda ad esempio Stefano Bianchini, *Le sfide della modernità. Idee, politiche e percorsi dell’Europa Orientale nel XIX e XX secolo* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2009), 167–229.

<sup>44</sup> Amedeo Grano, “Piano ed economia di mercato nell’esperienza jugoslava,” *Rinascita*, 1° settembre 1962: 14.

<sup>45</sup> Lisa Foa, “I metodi di gestione nell’economia romena,” *Rinascita*, 15 settembre 1962: 13.

<sup>46</sup> Ezio Ferrero, “Il dibattito economico sulla stampa sovietica,” *Rinascita*, 13 ottobre 1962: 22.

<sup>47</sup> k.b., “I “nuovi principi” dell’economia cecoslovacca. Intervista esclusiva col prof. Ota Šik,” *Rinascita*, 28 novembre 1964: 11–12.

<sup>48</sup> Orazio Pizzigoni, “La Cecoslovacchia alla vigilia del Congresso,” *Rinascita*, 27 ottobre 1962: 12–13; Amedeo Grano, “I metodi di gestione nell’economia polacca,” *Rinascita*, 10 novembre 1962: 14–15.

a pubblicare molti interventi sul riformismo e la decentralizzazione economica, concentrandosi sulla "Scuola di Char'kov", su Liberman, sui piani aziendali e sui meccanismi di incentivi aziendali<sup>49</sup>. Particolare attenzione era poi dedicata al caso dell'Ungheria di Kádár, che sembrò realizzare, nel corso degli anni Sessanta e oltre, un progetto riformista più accentuato<sup>50</sup>. Ma in ogni caso, sensibile era allora l'entusiasmo, da parte degli osservatori di "Rinascita", per le economie socialiste, che parevano essere capaci di riformarsi e competere con il modello occidentale:

Quando si pensa che in pratica l'intera area dell'Europa orientale, nel corso del quindicennio seguito alla seconda guerra mondiale ha non solo ricostruito le proprie strutture economiche e avanzato sulla via dell'edificazione socialista, ma è di fatto uscita dalla condizione semicoloniale e semif feudale in cui sembrava essere definitivamente confinata dal giuoco concorrenziale dei grandi monopoli tedeschi, inglesi o americani, non si può reprimere un moto di stupore; tanto più se si constata come attualmente Stati quali la Jugoslavia, la Bulgaria o la Romania puntino nel settore industriale a gareggiare in certi rami con paesi da decenni all'avanguardia della tecnica e della scienza e nel settore agricolo a portare a termine una rivoluzione totale nei sistemi di conduzione e nei metodi di lavoro<sup>51</sup>.

In occasione dei vent'anni dalla fondazione di "Rinascita", Togliatti, oltre a ricordare con orgoglio l'attività della rivista, ammetteva anche gli sbagli compiuti, in particolare durante il primo decennio in cui "prevalevano le posizioni errate legate al culto della persona di Stalin". In tale periodo, ricordava Togliatti, "Rinascita" si era lasciata trascinare da un'impostazione caratterizzata da un "giudizio superficiale, agiografico, privo di ogni motivo di ricerca critica, circa i successi della costruzione economica e politica socialista, sia nell'Unione sovietica, sia nelle democrazie popolari"<sup>52</sup>.

Dopo la morte di Togliatti, nell'agosto del 1964, "Rinascita" continuò ad essere diretta da importanti esponenti comunisti - politici,

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<sup>49</sup> Lisa Foa, "Verso una svolta qualitativa nella pianificazione sovietica," *Rinascita*, 17 novembre 1962: 14-15; Lisa Foa, "Alcuni aspetti delle riforme sovietiche," *Rinascita*, 8 dicembre 1962: 14-15; Lisa Foa, "Prezzi, costi, profitti nel sistema sovietico," *Rinascita*, 13 aprile 1963: 14-15.

<sup>50</sup> Luca Pavolini, "Il Piano ungherese e la democrazia dal basso," *Rinascita*, 15 giugno 1963: 14-15.

<sup>51</sup> Massimo Roberi, "La dinamica dell'economia romena," *Rinascita*, 8 febbraio 1964: 15.

<sup>52</sup> "7 domande al Direttore di Rinascita," *Rinascita*, 27 giugno 1964: 9-10.

giornalisti e intellettuali – fra cui Gian Carlo Pajetta, Luca Pavolini, Gerardo Chiaromonte, Alfredo Reichlin, Luciano Barca, per finire con l'ultimo direttore, Alberto Asor Rosa, nel 1991. Fra gli anni Sessanta e gli anni Settanta – durante le segreterie Longo e Berlinguer – “Rinascita” assunse progressivamente un profilo culturale più aperto, ospitando interventi di intellettuali anche non marxisti, su temi che andavano dalla letteratura alla politica internazionale.

La scomparsa di Togliatti segnò indubbiamente una svolta per i comunisti italiani e per la rivista, che si emancipò gradualmente da una posizione subalterna all'Unione Sovietica e al modello del “socialismo reale”, pur continuando ad individuare nel “campo socialista” il proprio punto di riferimento ideale in contrapposizione al capitalismo e all’“imperialismo” occidentali.

Un momento particolarmente drammatico per il Pci e “Rinascita” fu costituito dall'occupazione della Cecoslovacchia da parte dell'Urss e di alcuni paesi del Patto di Varsavia nell'agosto 1968, allo scopo di stroncare l'esperimento di riforma – la “primavera di Praga” – avviato dal segretario del Partito comunista cecoslovacco Alexander Dubček. Il Pci, con il suo segretario Longo, succeduto a Togliatti al vertice del partito, aveva appoggiato in modo convinto il processo riformista cecoslovacco, considerato funzionale ad una maggiore democratizzazione di quei sistemi comunisti e ad una maggiore autonomia dall'Urss, sostenute da tempo dai comunisti italiani<sup>53</sup>. Alcuni giorni prima dell'intervento sovietico, “Rinascita” aveva elogiato il progetto riformista di Dubček: “Non è stato possibile non riconoscere, negli avvenimenti cecoslovacchi, la prova della capacità del socialismo di rinnovarsi, di procedere innanzi; tutti hanno visto, nell'affermazione e nel consolidamento del ‘nuovo corso’ cecoslovacco, una vittoria della democrazia socialista”<sup>54</sup>. In linea con la posizione del Pci, “Rinascita” criticò l'intervento sovietico in Cecoslovacchia, pubblicando in prima pagina il comunicato della direzione del partito, che in tale occasione aveva espresso – per la prima volta in modo così aperto – “grave dissenso” e “riprovazione” rispetto alle scelte di Mosca e riaffermato “la propria solidarietà con l'azione di rinnovamento condotta dal Partito comunista cecoslovacco”<sup>55</sup>. Sullo stesso numero, “Rinascita” ripubblicò il “memoriale di Jalta” preparato da Togliatti prima della sua improvvisa morte in Crimea, con cui il segretario del Pci avrebbe voluto ricordare a Chruščëv i residui di

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<sup>53</sup> Alexander Höbel, *Il Pci di Luigi Longo (1964-1969)* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2010), 517-550.

<sup>54</sup> Luca Pavolini, “La lunga strada di Yalta,” *Rinascita*, 9 agosto 1968: 1.

<sup>55</sup> “Il giudizio del Pci sull'occupazione della Cecoslovacchia,” *Rinascita*, 23 agosto 1968: 1.

stalinismo ancora presenti nel campo socialista<sup>56</sup>. I fatti cecoslovacchi segnarono in sostanza una netta accelerazione del ricollocamento ideologico del Pci, che tenderà a diventare progressivamente più autonomo da Mosca, anche a livello strategico, pur senza mai voler rompere il legame ideale con l'Urss e il "campo socialista". Da quel momento, i comunisti italiani inizieranno a teorizzare la necessità di costruire una collaborazione con i partiti comunisti dell'Europa occidentale (*in primis* quelli francese e spagnolo), aperta anche alle forze di sinistra e progressiste non comuniste, per trovare una nuova via, diversa da quella sovietica e dei paesi dell'Europa orientale, di transizione al socialismo. Per la prima volta, inoltre, il Pci affrontò in modo più approfondito la questione della "democrazia socialista", e a considerare non puramente "formali" questioni come la libertà di stampa, che non poteva essere negata – si iniziava a sostenere – in un contesto socialista<sup>57</sup>. Su questi complessi problemi, sulla questione dell'autonomia comunista occidentale dalle esperienze del "socialismo reale" dell'Europa orientale, e sulla possibilità dello sviluppo, in una cornice socialista, di libertà considerate – nel blocco sovietico – tipiche della "sovrastruttura borghese", come le libertà civili, si incentrerà il dibattito all'interno del Pci negli anni a venire. Ma per molto tempo ancora, l'ambiguità dei comunisti italiani su questi temi sarebbe perdurata. In particolare, nonostante le progressive prese di distanza dal modello sovietico, di cui si vedeva sempre più nettamente l'aspetto "autoritario", il Pci avrebbe continuato a teorizzare una possibile via, occidentale, al comunismo, che si credeva potesse essere alternativa sia al modello capitalista che a quello socialdemocratico, considerato "un inserimento opportunistico nella gestione del potere"<sup>58</sup>. In ogni caso, dalla fine degli anni Sessanta, la rivista avrebbe ospitato moltissimi interventi relativi alle contraddizioni presenti nei paesi socialisti e in particolare al problematico rapporto fra eguaglianza sociale e libertà individuali e fra ruolo egemone dei partiti comunisti e pluralismo politico. Secondo Pietro Ingrao, rappresentante della "sinistra" del Pci, la partecipazione delle masse alla gestione del potere economico e politico costituiva una necessità per un regime socialista<sup>59</sup>, e per Umberto Cerroni "nessun regime più di quello

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<sup>56</sup> "Il promemoria di Yalta," *Rinascita*, 23 agosto 1968: 1-2. Aldo Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti* (Torino: UTET, 1996), 552-554; Carlo Spagnolo, *Sul memoriale di Yalta. Togliatti e la crisi del movimento comunista internazionale (1956-1964)* (Roma: Carocci, 2007).

<sup>57</sup> Si veda Alexander Höbel, "Il Pci, il '68 cecoslovacco e il rapporto col Pcus," *Studi Storici*, 42, 2001, nr. 4: 1145-1172; Francesco Barbagnolo, *Enrico Berlinguer* (Roma: Carocci, 2006), 229-247.

<sup>58</sup> Achille Occhetto, "Forze rivoluzionarie e lotta per il socialismo nell'Europa capitalista," *Rinascita*, 6 settembre 1968: 3-4.

<sup>59</sup> Pietro Ingrao, "La democrazia socialista è forza della rivoluzione," *Rinascita*, 13 settembre 1968: 5-7.

socialista ha bisogno delle libertà, di ogni libertà, esclusa quella della appropriazione privata della ricchezza sociale”<sup>60</sup>.

Enrico Berlinguer, dal 1972 nuovo segretario del Pci al posto di Longo, sosteneva che si dovesse “mantenere ferma la nostra solidarietà con l’intero schieramento antimperialista superando nel contempo qualsiasi visione mitica nei confronti della realtà dei paesi socialisti”. Secondo Berlinguer, in sostanza, si doveva respingere la tesi per cui le società socialiste portavano a sistemi antidemocratici, ma era vero però che se quelle società avevano fornito le condizioni strutturali per la realizzazione di una autentica democrazia, questa doveva essere ancora pienamente sviluppata<sup>61</sup>. Queste posizioni tenute dal Pci, che, pur tra molte contraddizioni, ne avevano differenziato le posizioni dal Pcus, iniziavano ad attirare al partito italiano l’accusa di “revisionismo” da parte di alcuni partiti del “campo socialista”: nel novembre del 1968 si riportava ad esempio un’accusa del genere rivolta al Pci dal partito comunista (Sed) della Repubblica democratica tedesca<sup>62</sup>.

Fra la fine degli anni Sessanta e l’inizio degli anni Settanta, il Pci si sarebbe impegnato sempre più in un dialogo con le forze socialiste dell’Europa occidentale e in particolare con il Partito socialdemocratico (Spd) della Repubblica federale tedesca, nella prospettiva di un superamento dei blocchi e della distensione fra est e ovest. Su questo tema, “Rinascita” collaborò appunto con la rivista teorica dell’Spd, “Die Neue Gesellschaft”, per appoggiare l’iniziativa lanciata dagli stati membri del Patto di Varsavia per la convocazione di una conferenza sulla sicurezza europea: quel percorso che avrebbe poi aperto la strada alla realizzazione della Conferenza sulla Sicurezza e sulla Cooperazione in Europa di Helsinki del 1973 e poi agli accordi di Helsinki del 1975<sup>63</sup>. Un giudizio positivo sull’Atto finale di Helsinki del 1° agosto 1975 veniva dato da Giuseppe Boffa, giornalista, esperto di politica estera del Pci e storico dell’Urss, il quale peraltro sottolineava che i promotori della Conferenza fossero stati i paesi socialisti<sup>64</sup>.

Indicativa del profondo cambiamento delle posizioni del Pci nei confronti del dissenso all’interno dei regimi comunisti, era la comprensione generalmente mostrata verso le manifestazioni antigovernative che, in

<sup>60</sup> Umberto Cerroni, “Un nuovo partito per un nuovo Stato,” *Rinascita*, 13 settembre 1968: 21-22.

<sup>61</sup> Enrico Berlinguer, “Le contraddizioni delle società socialiste,” *Rinascita*, 27 settembre 1968: 3-5.

<sup>62</sup> Luca Pavolini, “Operai e partiti operai nell’Europa occidentale,” *Rinascita*, 15 novembre 1968: 6.

<sup>63</sup> “Domande sull’Europa,” *Rinascita*, 30 maggio 1969: 3. Su questo tema di veda Silvio Pons, *L’Italia e il Pci nella politica estera dell’URSS di Brežnev*, in *L’Italia repubblicana nella crisi degli anni settanta*, vol. 1, Agostino Giovagnoli e Silvio Pons (a cura), *Tra guerra fredda e distensione* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2003), 63-87.

<sup>64</sup> Giuseppe Boffa, “Adesso la verifica dei fatti,” *Rinascita*, 8 agosto 1975: 5-6.

particolare in Polonia, scoppiarono in differenti occasioni nel corso degli anni Settanta. Ad esempio, "Rinascita" apprezzò il cambiamento al vertice del Partito operaio unificato polacco (Poup), nel dicembre 1970, in seguito alle proteste degli operai di Danzica e del Baltico, e la sostituzione di Gomułka con Edward Gierek: "le manifestazioni avevano un contenuto e partivano da motivazioni sociali e politiche profonde che hanno prodotto conseguenze politiche alle quali andava data una risposta anzitutto politica"<sup>65</sup>. Anche in occasione delle proteste per il rincaro dei prezzi del giugno 1976, "Rinascita" analizzava oggettivamente la situazione polacca e le difficoltà di quell'economia, schiacciata dall'aumento costante del debito estero<sup>66</sup>. Furono proprio le questioni polacche e il prepotente emergere del sindacato di opposizione Solidarność, guidato da Lech Wałęsa, a mettere in seria difficoltà il Pci nel 1980-81. Solidarność costituì un elemento particolarmente arduo da decifrare per i comunisti italiani, in quanto per la prima volta era presente all'interno del blocco socialista un grande sindacato-movimento che vedeva una massiccia adesione da parte della classe operaia e che allo stesso tempo era completamente estraneo al patrimonio ideale non solo del comunismo, ma anche del socialismo e della sinistra. Di fronte a un fenomeno così diverso dal dissenso democratico di sinistra presente in Europa orientale, con cui il Pci aveva intrattenuto un dialogo, seppur difficile, soprattutto nel corso degli anni Settanta<sup>67</sup>, rappresentato questa volta da un sindacato dichiaratamente anticomunista e ispirato ai valori del cattolicesimo, i comunisti italiani si trovarono in imbarazzo. Prevalse però, anche questa volta, in continuità con quanto elaborato negli anni precedenti, la volontà di dare ascolto al movimento di protesta polacco e la convinzione che il Poup dovesse accogliere le richieste di cambiamento, libertà e pluralismo provenienti dal sindacato di Wałęsa. Davanti alla proclamazione dello stato marziale decretata in Polonia dal nuovo segretario del partito comunista, il generale Jaruzelski, nel dicembre del 1981, e alla messa fuori legge di Solidarność, il Pci espresse una condanna ancora più netta di quanto avesse fatto per la Cecoslovacchia nel 1968. La direzione del partito il 30 dicembre del 1981 ribadì infatti la "convinzione che democrazia e socialismo sono indissolubili", e affermò che la "fase di sviluppo del socialismo che ebbe inizio con la Rivoluzione d'ottobre ha esaurito la sua forza propulsiva"<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> Franco Bertone, "La crisi polacca," *Rinascita*, 25 dicembre 1970: 3.

<sup>66</sup> Franco Bertone, "Polonia: il prezzo della «verità dei prezzi»,» *Rinascita*, 2 luglio 1976: 17.

<sup>67</sup> Valentine Lomellini, *L'appuntamento mancato. La sinistra italiana e il Dissenso nei regimi comunisti (1968-1989)* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 2010).

<sup>68</sup> "Risoluzione della Direzione del Partito comunista italiano," *L'Unità*, 30 dicembre 1981. Si veda anche Silvio Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo* (Torino: Einaudi, 2006), 215-228.

Il dibattito ospitato da “Rinascita” in seguito ai fatti polacchi dimostrava la grande confusione presente all’interno del Pci e l’eterogeneità delle posizioni allora assunte<sup>69</sup>. Adriano Guerra rifletteva sul fatto che, “nonostante l’indubbia vitalità che il processo avviato l’estate scorsa dagli operai del Baltico ha dimostrato di avere, non c’è dubbio che da troppe parti si continua ancora a guardare agli avvenimenti polacchi con perplessità, se non addirittura con un po’ di fastidio”. Questo fatto rivelava, secondo lui, “una incomprensione reale sulla natura del processo in corso, e in particolare del suo carattere di rinnovamento, o meglio di critica *socialista* del socialismo polacco”. Soprattutto, Guerra criticava le posizioni assunte dal Pcus, “per cui in Polonia sarebbe in corso non già un processo di rinnovamento del socialismo ma, al contrario, un’offensiva controrivoluzionaria’ contro le basi stesse del socialismo”. Lo stesso Guerra tuttavia mostrava poi perplessità di fronte a “un movimento operaio che si manifesta sostituendo i simboli della tradizione socialisti e comunisti con quelli del culto cattolico”<sup>70</sup>.

L’illusione che il Pci potesse in qualche modo esercitare la propria influenza per trasformare in senso democratico i regimi al potere in Europa orientale emergerà da tutta una serie di interventi ospitati da “Rinascita” allora e nel corso degli anni seguenti. Pietro Ingrao, ad esempio, scriveva che “il caso polacco appariva emblematico: non riguardava solo la Polonia. Era il segnale che l’Est dell’Europa non era un mondo indenne, non era recintabile: era aperto ed esposto, sia pure in misura varia e diversa, all’incalzare della tempesta che veniva investendo il mondo. Il grande quesito era se il potere comunista riusciva [...] a rinnovarsi e a trovare le forme adeguate alla nuova fase dello sviluppo mondiale”. Aggiungeva poi che “la domanda di libertà (ricordiamolo agli stalinisti) non era astratta, non era la pretesa egoistica e privata di qualche intellettuale”: era necessaria “per spezzare la vecchia crosta, per ridare una rappresentanza e una presenza reale alle forze fondamentali del lavoro e della cultura, in uno Stato che si denominava Stato socialista. Dunque: il contrario che tornare al capitalismo”. Il totale smarrimento di Ingrao di fronte allo stato d’assedio proclamato in Polonia dal partito comunista era evidente: “Parlando dei paesi dell’Est, dicevamo: ‘i paesi del socialismo finora realizzato’. Oggi davvero non so trovare una corrispondenza tra la parola ‘socialismo’, tra ciò che questa parola necessariamente richiede come partecipazione di popolo, e il regime militare in atto a Varsavia, dietro il quale abbiamo visto

<sup>69</sup> Si veda Stefano Santoro, *Partito comunista italiano e “socialismo reale”. I casi romeno e polacco*, “Storicamente,” 9, 2013, 159-184 [Dossier: Stefano Bottoni (a cura), *L’Italia e il blocco sovietico fra antagonismo politico e cooperazione economica*].

<sup>70</sup> Adriano Guerra, “L’anomalia polacca. Un’analisi della presenza cattolica «interna» al socialismo,” *Rinascita*, 17 luglio 1981: 7.



scompare [...] anche l'immagine del partito operaio, del partito comunista". Infine, si iniziava a mettere in luce la più grande contraddizione per un comunista italiano, ovvero che un regime comunista avesse dovuto usare lo stato d'assedio per difendersi da "una grande protesta della classe operaia", "della classe cioè che dovrebbe essere il fondamento, la forza egemonica del regime"<sup>71</sup>. Da parte sua, sempre sulle pagine di "Rinascita", Luciano Lama, segretario generale comunista della Cgil, esprimeva solidarietà a Solidarność, affermando che il regime polacco fosse autoritario e antioperaio<sup>72</sup>. E il futuro segretario della Cgil, il comunista Bruno Trentin, rifletteva sul fatto che "le domande di autogestione che sono riemerse con tanta forza nella primavera di Praga come nei movimenti sociali in Polonia avrebbero dovuto spingerci ad una riflessione più attenta sui connotati strutturali delle società socialiste":

In Polonia lo stalinismo e l'identificazione del socialismo con lo stalinismo hanno finito con il portare in un vicolo cieco, nel quale si sono logorate le forze che detengono le redini del potere e le forze che esprimevano una spinta al rinnovamento. Nella coscienza di molti lavoratori, paradossalmente, lo Stato da liberatore è diventato la causa di tutti i mali, il centro in cui confluiscono tutte le responsabilità negative delle cose da mutare<sup>73</sup>.

Progressivamente, "Rinascita" aprì ad interventi sempre più critici nei confronti dei paesi socialisti, come quello dello studioso di relazioni internazionali Carlo Maria Santoro. Per Santoro, il problema delle società socialiste era il "militarismo", che le aveva rese qualcosa di molto diverso da ciò a cui i comunisti italiani pensavano riferendosi alla categoria ideale del "socialismo". Secondo Santoro, infatti, la militarizzazione era "comune a tutte le società e i paesi di 'indirizzo socialista'" e costituiva "una condizione auto-organizzativa, permanente e strutturale, delle società di tipo socialista", un "tratto primario del socialismo reale, nonostante il paravento ideologico". Santoro spiegava che ogni riforma di quei sistemi era impossibile, perché, di fronte all'emergere del dissenso, "il sistema politico 'militarizzato' ha [...] solo due risposte possibili": "la disgregazione del suo stesso sistema di potere" o "la repressione militare della domanda sociale". La conclusione era quindi netta: "Il nostro compito di comunisti italiani è anche quello di

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<sup>71</sup> Pietro Ingrao, "In Polonia e altrove c'era e c'è altro da fare. Riflessioni sulle cause e le conseguenze di un colpo di Stato militare in un paese socialista," *Rinascita*, 18 dicembre 1981: 3-4.

<sup>72</sup> "Intervista a Luciano Lama," *Rinascita*, 18 dicembre 1981: 5.

<sup>73</sup> "Intervista a Bruno Trentin a cura di Lina Tamburrino," *Rinascita*, 25 dicembre 1981: 7.

comprendere i processi in atto, scindendo una volta per tutte [...] le nostre scelte da quelle di chi non ha alternative praticabili oltre quella della 'normalizzazione', o della 'repressione armata', poiché esse non corrispondono né alla nostra collocazione ideale né alla nostra scelta di campo"<sup>74</sup>. Per parte sua, Fabio Mussi affermò che "i fatti di Polonia smantellano amaramente parecchie speranze sulle capacità dinamiche e autocorrettive del 'socialismo reale' europeo"<sup>75</sup>.

Restava però sul campo il tema della differenza fra prese di posizione della classe dirigente del Pci e della Cgil, che sulle questioni polacche avevano fatto una scelta di campo a favore di Solidarność, e gli umori di buona parte dei militanti comunisti italiani, specialmente i più anziani, ancora legati al mito dell'Urss e delle realizzazioni del "socialismo reale". Lo scrittore Francesco Cataluccio, profondo conoscitore della realtà polacca, evidenziava come la stampa comunista italiana avesse forse fatto troppo poco "per informare i nostri lettori e compagni sulla realtà e le contraddizioni dei paesi dell'est" e che anche pubblicazioni come "Rinascita", "pur facendo molto, non hanno fatto abbastanza". Spesso – secondo Cataluccio – la stampa comunista non si era soffermata sui "reali processi in atto nella società sovietica, sulle contraddizioni, positive o negative, che in essa – come negli altri paesi dell'est emergevano". Era però venuto il momento di informare le masse comuniste italiane su "come stanno veramente le cose nell'Europa orientale". Il ragionamento di Cataluccio metteva in discussione tutti i punti di riferimento ideali e ideologici dei comunisti italiani, e il fatto che fosse ospitato sulla rivista culturale del partito comunista fa ben capire la differenza profonda che ormai esisteva fra quel partito e il partito dei tempi di Togliatti:

La bandiera rossa, che nella nostra tradizione è simbolo di lotta per la libertà e l'emancipazione delle masse lavoratrici, in Polonia sventolava [...] sulla casa del partito che da trentacinque anni governa il paese. Il canto dell'Internazionale, che per noi significa un valore molto importante (per il quale, tra l'altro, oggi ci sentiamo vicini al popolo e ai lavoratori polacchi), laggiù purtroppo evoca l'invasione di Praga, i problemi della "sovranità limitata" e quelli di un nazionalismo che si sente oppresso.

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<sup>74</sup> Carlo Maria Santoro, "Tutto, anche il rischio internazionale, discende dalla militarizzazione," *Rinascita*, 8 gennaio 1982: 15-16.

<sup>75</sup> Fabio Mussi, "Oltre Yalta? Anche per questo inseparabili socialismo e democrazia," *Rinascita*, 8 gennaio 1982: 16.

Qui sta la difficoltà: occorre fare uno sforzo di fantasia, oltre che di informazione, per capire che al di là della linea che divide in due l'Europa, tracciata a Yalta, le cose appaiono capovolte, come in uno specchio magico di un Luna Park: quello che qui simboleggia la libertà, laggiù può simboleggiare proprio il contrario. Ma sarebbe drammatico se questo ci impedisse di capire<sup>76</sup>.

Non era un caso che, di fronte a queste idee, il "Kommunist", rivista teorica del Pcus, prendesse posizioni di netta condanna, accusando il Pci di mettere sullo stesso piano occidente capitalistico e oriente socialista, facendo quindi "il gioco dell'imperialismo", collocandosi "nello stesso campo dei nemici del socialismo" e pretendendo di indicare ai partiti comunisti al potere in Europa orientale quale fosse la via giusta per il socialismo, sostenendo che quella da essi percorsa fosse quella sbagliata<sup>77</sup>.

Lo storico Paolo Spriano acutamente notava come, inevitabilmente, le riflessioni che i comunisti italiani facevano sul "socialismo reale" dell'Europa orientale erano "sempre più diventate un aspetto, un tratto intrinseco delle riflessioni su loro stessi, sulla propria strategia politica, sulla propria storia e identità, sulla propria cultura". Era quindi ineludibile continuare a studiare quelle realtà, così come aveva fatto l'Istituto Gramsci, che già nel 1972 aveva creato il Centro di studi e di documentazione sui paesi socialisti<sup>78</sup>.

E sarebbe stato proprio l'Istituto Gramsci uno dei principali luoghi di riflessione, accanto alla stessa "Rinascita", sulla crisi del socialismo reale dell'Europa orientale negli anni Ottanta, per mezzo del contributo di studiosi, generalmente di area politica comunista, esperti dell'Europa orientale<sup>79</sup>.

Anche il mito dell'autogestione come possibile soluzione all'autoritarismo dei regimi socialisti, tanto coltivato fra anni Sessanta e Settanta, pareva subire una battuta di arresto in un'intervista ad un autorevole dirigente della Lega dei comunisti jugoslavi, dove si affermava che "il complesso sistema autogestionario [...] ha senza dubbio consentito alla Jugoslavia di raggiungere un livello di partecipazione di massa senza paragoni nella storia [...], ma non ha forse ancora compiuto il salto che

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<sup>76</sup> Francesco M. Cataluccio, "Perché con Solidarnosc: ma abbiamo finora informato abbastanza?," *Rinascita*, 8 gennaio 1982: 16-17, 25.

<sup>77</sup> "L'articolo del «Kommunist»,," *Rinascita*, 5 febbraio 1982: 15-18.

<sup>78</sup> Paolo Spriano, "Le riflessioni dei comunisti sul «socialismo reale»,," *Il Contemporaneo*, supplemento di *Rinascita*, 12 febbraio 1982: 21.

<sup>79</sup> "Polonia: la riforma è ancora possibile? L'analisi e gli interrogativi proposti a un convegno dell'Istituto Gramsci," *Rinascita*, 2 aprile 1982: 16-18.

consenta un pieno dispiegarsi di una organica egemonia”, in quanto “anche qui, statalismo e burocrazia tendono e tenderanno per un lungo periodo a riprodursi”<sup>80</sup>.

La nomina di Michail Gorbačëv a segretario generale del Pcus nel 1985 costituì l’ultima speranza per i comunisti italiani nella possibilità di una riforma non solo nell’Urss ma in tutti i paesi del “socialismo reale” in senso democratico e pluralistico. Adriano Guerra individuava in Gorbačëv il punto di riferimento per le ormai ineludibili riforme di carattere democratico che avrebbero dovuto investire i regimi comunisti: “non è di fatto lo stesso segretario del Pcus, Gorbačëv, nel momento in cui dedica gran parte del suo tempo a parlare con la gente, a riunire, prima di prendere decisioni, economisti, pianificatori, tecnici, colcosiani, sociologi, a dirci che questa questione della partecipazione dei cittadini alle scelte è, e rimane, il nodo da sciogliere?”<sup>81</sup>.

Lo storico Fabio Bettanin metteva realisticamente in evidenza come il successo di Gorbačëv non fosse garantito, in quanto gli mancava una base di consenso popolare, e come le sue riforme economiche avrebbero necessariamente portato con sé la necessità di profonde riforme politiche, che avrebbero presumibilmente messo in crisi il sistema sovietico<sup>82</sup>. Sempre più spazio la rivista comunista dedicava al coinvolgimento di studiosi, anche stranieri, sui temi della possibilità di un rinnovamento, anche tecnologico oltre che economico, di Urss e paesi dell’Europa orientale: era ad esempio il caso di Julian Cooper, del Centre for Russian and East European Studies dell’Università di Birmingham, considerato tra i principali esperti in Europa di economia sovietica<sup>83</sup>.

La caduta del Muro di Berlino nel novembre del 1989, la fine dei regimi comunisti dell’Europa orientale e la scomparsa dell’Urss nel 1991 rappresentarono per il Pci la conferma definitiva che la riforma del “socialismo reale” in senso democratico fosse impossibile, portando, nel 1991, all’autoscioglimento dello stesso partito italiano e alla sua travagliata trasformazione in un partito di ispirazione socialista e democratica. Nel luglio 1990, intervistato da “Rinascita”, l’ultimo segretario del Pci Achille Occhetto, continuava a teorizzare, nonostante tutto, la possibilità per i paesi dell’Europa orientale di imboccare una “terza via” fra comunismo e

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<sup>80</sup> Bruno Schacherl, “Il socialismo jugoslavo alla prova della crisi,” *Rinascita*, 4 giugno 1982: 28.

<sup>81</sup> Adriano Guerra, “Il segnale che viene da Budapest,” *Rinascita*, 13 luglio 1985: 39.

<sup>82</sup> “Le scelte di Gorbaciov. Tavola rotonda con Fabio Bettanin, Paolo Calzini, Gianni Cervetti, Julian Cooper, Antonio Gambino, Adriano Guerra e, per «Rinascita», Guido Vicario,” *Rinascita*, 20 luglio 1985: 34.

<sup>83</sup> Julian Cooper, “Come cambia l’economia sovietica. Scienza, tecnologia, impresa secondo Gorbaciov,” *Rinascita*, 12 ottobre 1985: 28-29.

capitalismo occidentale, definendo “per lo meno ingenua l’idea che questi paesi siano, più o meno, dei territori da anettere all’Occidente”, cioè alle sue strutture economiche e militari come la Cee e la Nato. Occhetto ammoniva che “l’elemento positivo della riconquistata libertà”, non doveva nascondere il fatto che, caduti quei regimi oppressivi, stavano riemergendo “problemi antichi” rimasti congelati, come “nazionalismi, particolarismi, razzismi”. C’era quindi il pericolo di un’“involuzione a destra di queste realtà”. Il segretario del Pci vedeva nei paesi dell’Est un rinnovato orizzonte per la sinistra: secondo lui, quei regimi autoritari avevano avuto il merito di aver realizzato “un fortissimo Stato sociale” e la loro scomparsa improvvisa avrebbe potuto “far riemergere una voglia di socialismo autentico”. Il Pci, ormai in fase di trasformazione e di abbandono dell’ideologia comunista, avrebbe potuto continuare a giocare un ruolo importante per quelle realtà, facendosi portatore di istanze politico-sociali progressiste, per impedire “una semplice estensione del modo di vita, del sistema economico, politico e militare dell’Occidente all’Est europeo”<sup>84</sup>.

Su una linea analoga si muoveva Adriano Guerra, denunciando la politica di privatizzazioni e di totale smantellamento di quanto di positivo, dal punto di vista sociale, avevano realizzato quei regimi, e l’apparente ritorno dell’Europa orientale all’epoca dei nazionalismi interbellici. Anche in tal caso, si auspicava un’azione delle sinistre dell’Europa orientale e occidentale, in uno sforzo congiunto, nel nome di un socialismo moderno, democratico e rinnovato, “che sia in grado di impedire che attraverso la via del puro e semplice rigetto del vecchio sistema si torni alla vecchia Europa moderata e conservatrice degli opposti nazionalismi”<sup>85</sup>.

La rivista fondata da Togliatti ha quindi attraversato tutte le “ere ideologiche” del comunismo italiano, partendo dallo stalinismo per approdare infine alla socialdemocrazia. Attraverso la sua analisi, come si è visto, è stato possibile verificare quanto importante fosse l’Europa orientale per il Pci e la sua evoluzione. Quei regimi socialisti, insieme all’Urss, avevano infatti progressivamente evidenziato lo scarto esistente fra ciò che l’ideale utopico del comunismo rappresentava in Italia e quella che invece era la sua realizzazione pratica. La presa di coscienza, problematica e sofferta, dell’irriformalità di quei sistemi e della loro natura autoritaria e il crollo del “socialismo reale”, ormai preda delle proprie insanabili contraddizioni politiche ed economiche, avrebbe quindi provocato,

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<sup>84</sup> “Il partito che verrà,” *Rinascita*, 1° luglio 1990: 12-13.

<sup>85</sup> Adriano Guerra, “Lo spazio della sinistra,” *Rinascita*, 15 aprile 1990: 82-84.

contestualmente, la fine dell'esperienza del Partito comunista italiano. "Rinascita" accompagnò il partito fino alla fine, ben rappresentando lo smarrimento dei politici e degli intellettuali comunisti e il loro tentativo di ritrovare una nuova dimensione – quella del socialismo democratico europeo – in cui collocare la propria azione<sup>86</sup>.

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<sup>86</sup> Si veda Adriano Guerra, *Comunismi e comunisti*, 336–338.

## Book Reviews

**Laurențiu Vlad**, *Istoria românești ale ideii de "Europa", secolele XVII-XXI (imagini, note, reflecții)*, Iași, Institutul European, 2021, 340 p.

Europe, and Romanian stances on the European paradigm seem to no longer represent today's topics of keen interest for Romanian readers with a penchant for history, unlike in the 1990s, when collections such as "The Construction of Europe" or "The Third Europe" were published by Polirom, and when authors such as Alexandru Duțu, Adrian Marino or Victor Neumann wrote about such issues. Notwithstanding all this, Professor Laurențiu Vlad from the Bucharest University has deliberately ignored this recent trend and, under the auspices of the European Institute, brought back to our attention the Romanian histories of the European idea, convincing us that they deserve to be further explored.

Laurențiu Vlad is an author who is well known to the public interested in modern Romanian history, particularly thanks to his works dedicated to topics such as the construction of national identity or the history of Romanian conservatism. His training as a historian, as well as his work as a professor at the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Bucharest, has steered him to study the history of political ideas, mentalities and ideologies. In connection with the above-mentioned research directions, Laurențiu Vlad has researched, for several decades, the history of the European idea in the Romanian space, with a focus on the nineteenth century. He has published a significant series of studies and articles on this topic and taught university courses at the universities of Bucharest and Sibiu.

This year, the Bucharest University professor has brought this research interest to fruition by publishing a volume which, based on previous contributions, manages to provide an overview on the genesis, evolution and basic features of the European idea in the Romanian space. Even if we are not dealing with a complete and systematic history of the analyzed phenomenon, but (as the title of the study suggests) with a series of episodes that mark its evolution, the juxtaposition of the "histories" laid down in writing by the Bucharest-based professor outline an expressive mosaic of Europe as it was imagined by the Romanian scholars of the modern era. In keeping with the author's area of expertise, the focus of the work falls on the nineteenth century, with forays into the centuries that frame this period of genesis and consolidation of the European idea in Romanian culture.

The volume contains five chapters. The first is dedicated to the historiography of the subject (itself a fascinating research topic). The second discusses its prehistory, analyzing the image of Europe as it was envisioned by Romanian chroniclers of the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries. The third focuses on European echoes in the pages of *Albina Românească* (one of the first Romanian-language political and cultural periodicals), while the fourth examines the European references in the writings of Barbu Catargiu (an essential, albeit too little researched representative of Romanian conservatism). The fifth chapter explores the magazine *Ideea Europeană*, which made, in the interwar period, one of the first well-articulated efforts to promote the European (and pan-European) model in Romanian culture. What is also of great interest is the anthology of period texts on the history of the European idea offered by Laurențiu Vlad. The end of each chapter reproduces fragments from the most important historical sources that illustrate the subject.

For readers who have had the opportunity to watch “live” how this research topic has evolved over the last four to five decades (a category that also includes the author of this review), this volume offers a pleasant, colorful reading through nostalgic lenses. From the valuable analyses (some of which may seem surprising, in the context of that epoch) on the theme during the communist period, culminating with the rich production of the first decades after 1989 and continuing at a somewhat slower pace in recent years, the interest of Romanian authors for the symbolic relationship between the small country “at the mouths of the Danube” and “enlightened” Europe has not ceased to produce valuable works. The book authored by Laurențiu Vlad, a former student of Alexandru Duțu’s, carries on this tradition, standing as erudite proof of the fact that in Romania’s relationship with Europe the suffix “exit” has not yet managed to dislocate the prefix “enter”.

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**Angela Lumezeanu**, *Infrastructuri digitale pentru istoria socială. Construirea bazelor de date istorice*, Cluj-Napoca, Mega, 2021,, 196 p.

The monograph by Angela Lumezeanu represents a recent addition to the Digital Humanities (DH) research trend developed at Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca during the 2010s by the scholars in the field of Humanities who are mostly but not exclusively historians. The author is a Junior Researcher at Babeş-Bolyai University, Centre for Population Studies and software engineer at “George Bariţiu” History Institute of The Romanian Academy in Cluj-Napoca. She has a formal education in both History and Computer Science and has a solid experience working on DH projects, the best-known of which is the *Historical Population Database of Transylvania*.

The book under scrutiny in the present paper represents the translated published version of her doctoral dissertation (completed and defended in English) and an absolute novelty within the Romanian scientific environment. Its main aim is to provide a coherent overview to how historians approach and employ information technology, and in particular relational databases, to correct some of the most frequently encountered errors in their work, and to provide best practice models in this regard. Thus, Angela Lumezeanu’s work represents a milestone, as well as a guide for a research area still under development in Romania.

In addition to the introductory and the conclusive sections, the book is structured on four chapters, dealing with the topic from general to particular. The first chapter [*Bazele de date și cercetarea istorică: un instrument inovator* (p. 19-44)] provides an overview of how databases have been implemented in historical research since the second half of the last century. The author notes that the first use of quantitative means for storing data in historical research dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century, but it was not until the turn of the millennium that the digital approach triumphed. Historical databases are further divided into two categories: *source-oriented databases* and *method-oriented databases*. However, as the author underlines, there is no pure form of these two types and the two above-mentioned categories represent rather two theoretical poles, with the bulk of the databases filling the space between them.

The chapter also includes a presentation of the databases associated with the European Historical Population Samples Network (EHPS-Net), which was created in 2011 as an information and dissemination space for historians dealing with quantitative history. The historical databases briefly presented are the following: Swedish demographic databases (POPLINK, POPUM and FOLKNET), Norwegian Historical Population Register

(NHD), Integrated Microdata Series (IPUMS and NAPP), MOSAIC database, Karelia database (KATIHA), Scanian Economic Demographic (SEDD), Antwerp database - \*COR, Hungarian Historical Demographic Database, Historical Sample of Netherlands, Historical Population Database of Transylvania (HPDT) and the aggregator tool Intermediate Data Structure (IDS). Angela Lumezeanu concludes the chapter by highlighting the common features of the above-mentioned databases: source orientation, relational nature, institutionalization and a long implementation time.

The second chapter [*Ce este o bază de date? Principii de bază ale funcționării bazelor de date* (p. 45-63)] focuses on the defining features of a database and on the latter's operating principles. In order to be considered a database, one or more datasets must, on the one hand, include data and the relationships between them, and on the other hand provide an easy way to access the stored data. Various types of databases are presented and their operating principles are also discussed.

The next two chapters follow two types of databases: source-oriented and method-oriented, starting from two research projects in which the author was involved: the Historical Population Database of Transylvania [*Bazele de date orientate către sursă. Historical Population Database of Transylvania* (p. 65-136)] and the Historical Data Grinder [*Bazele de date orientate către metodă. Modelul entitate-atribut-valoare și Historical Data Grinder* (p. 137-164)]. We must note a discernable disproportion between the two chapters, the one devoted to source-oriented databases being significantly ampler than the one devoted to method-oriented databases. However, the disproportion is partly due to the fact that the architecture of the source-oriented databases is more complex and they are more widespread than method-oriented databases.

In the analysis of source-oriented databases, the author mainly focuses on their sources - in particular, for the Historical Population Database of Transylvania, the parish registers. From 1895 onwards, parish registers, which have been preserved since 1638 in Transylvania, lose their official character in favor of civil registration. General information about each type of register is given, followed by an explanation of how different typologies of sources have been accommodated into the database.

Beyond the sources of the database, the three components of the database are considered in separate subchapters: the database of the sources, the standardized database and the relational database. While the database of the sources closely reproduces parish registers in four major tables, the standardized database contains logically inferred and standardized information. The relational database is the result of linking

data (*record linkage / entity resolution*) and merges entities that appear in multiple sources. Last but not least, the database also includes a publicly accessible interface.

The issues addressed in the chapter concerned with method-oriented databases are partly discussed in a previously published study.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to source-oriented databases, method-oriented databases start from a precise research question and are built accordingly. The model analyzed in this chapter is the *Entity-Attribute-Value model*, and its implementation is detailed using as a case study Historical Data Grinder, a tool from the prosopographical research field.

To conclude, the book by Angela Lumezeanu represents a landmark for Romanian historians dealing with the use of databases. It stands out due to the detailed information on historical databases, but especially due to the contextualization of two aforementioned tools developed in the Romanian research environment.

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**Ágoston Berecz**, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries: The Entangled Nationalization of Names and Naming in a Late Habsburg Borderland*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2020, 350 p., 14 illus.

The last few years have marked a steady increase in the interest manifested by younger generations of historians in approaching some seemingly exhausted research topics in terms of sources and methods. One of these topics refers to the history of nationalism and nationalities from the multinational empires, for which there is a rich secondary bibliography, as well as multiple primary sources. However, contemporary historians are innovating and enriching the knowledge using some original sources, new methods or perspectives, far more detached from the nationalist fever that characterizes a significant part of the existing researches. Apparently, the names of people, towns and places, as well as the naming processes, do not have a close connection with the history of nationalism, which is why their study was not given much attention. However, Ágoston Berecz, in his most recent book, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries: The Entangled Nationalization of Names and Naming in a Late Habsburg Borderland*, addresses the issue of

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<sup>1</sup> Angela Lumezeanu, "A Database Model for Social History. Historical Data Grinder and the Transylvanian Society of the 19th and 20th Centuries", in *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XXVIII, no. 2, 2019, p. 100-111.

the processes through which the names and denominations had become part of the evolution of national policy and of nationalism in a multiethnic area of Europe: the provinces of Transylvania and Banat, during the nineteenth century. The result of his research is not only a source of useful information for researchers interested in this subject, but also the outcome of the new trend of historiography, characterized by approaching innovative sources and methods which are quite difficult to relate to the history of nationalities, in order to finally bring a fresh perspective upon some much researched topics.

The structure of the paper aims to achieve the research objectives that the author presents in the introduction. The first part, entitled *Peasants*, seeks to determine the extent to which the naming processes within the social category of peasantry have reflected the acquisition of a national identity. Therefore, Berecz establishes a relationship of equality between the naming processes and the censuses or other indicators that could provide information on the extent to which the peasantry was national, in the absence of direct sources on this issue. The second part of the paper, *Nationalisms*, focuses on the methods through which the nineteenth-century nationalists turned the names of people and places into symbols of memory, on the effects of popularizing these new meanings, and the way they reflected national ideals. The third part, entitled *The State*, presents how the governmental authorities have managed these naming processes, integrating them into the larger category of national policies. Finally, the whole work achieves another goal mentioned by the author, who wants to draw the attention to the significance of proper names, which are seen as carriers of ideological messages.

Each one of the three parts of the book contains three chapters dedicated to first names, family names or names of places. The first part is dedicated to peasantry's situation. Berecz reiterates and re-argues an idea increasingly more often mentioned by the recent years' historiography, according to which the nation was, in fact, built by the elites. As for the peasantry, ethnicity differences became significant during the nineteenth century, as a result of two processes: through the national activists' propaganda, the nationality overlapped the ethnicity, initially as a factor of social mobilization. Eventually, the ethnically diverse local communities were replaced by imagined, national communities. The Romanian national elites, for example, encouraged the adoption of Latin names among the peasantry, in order to argue the idea of Roman descent and the continuity of Romanians. One of the institutions by which this idea was promoted was the church, through its priests, who militated for the choice of Latin names, although this would have meant agreeing with the replacement of the traditional names, inspired by the Christian calendar. However,

especially at the beginning of the nation-building process, the peasants opted for the preservation of Christian names, as evidence of the persistence of medieval thought patterns; radically influenced by faith and religion, they were uncomfortable with the thought that their newborns would not be under the patronage of a saint.

Beyond the first name, the surname or the toponyms were not of much interest to the peasants, as they were to the national elites; the second part of the book focuses on this subject. Since the nineteenth century, for the national activists, every aspect of the naming process was an opportunity for promoting nationalism and for building the national identity. Beginning with the 1848 revolution, many of the Romanian national activists opted for the Latinization of their own names, either by adding the suffixes *u/iu* at the end (*Alduianu, Casianu*) or by adopting the system of three names, which characterized the Romans (*Ioan Axente Sever, Alexandru Papiu Ilarianu, August Treboniu Laurianu*). However, as proof of the fact that the codes of nationally appropriate behavior were nowhere clear-cut, lay the numerous references of the Romanian elites to the names of places, cities, still using the traditional, Hungarian terms.

The same process of nationalizing the names included the travel diaries, published by various members of the national movements, who gave national names to the various natural destinations, thus nationalizing the territories through which they traveled. The traditional, Romanian names of these places, mostly mountainous, also reflect the demographic distribution in the region. Hungarian nationalists have tried to Magyarize some of these place names. The Common Army was one of the institutions that kept its distance from these attempts, although some of the regiments were asked to use Hungarian toponyms over some places with Romanian majorities, otherwise known as Romanian. This is another argument that supports the idea that the army was "beyond nationalism".

The third part of the work focuses on the measures taken by the state and the official authorities regarding the processes of naming, first names, family names or place names. The interests of the Hungarian state were often the same with those of the Hungarian national elites; this fact created various tensions between them, on the one side, and the national activists of Romanians and Saxons, on the other. By changing the toponyms, the Magyar nationalists wanted to draw the attention of the national minorities to the elements that differentiated them from the Hungarians. However, they overlooked the fact that, up to that point, the national identity was rather an extension of the local one, and the names of the places could serve as symbols of identity. One argument in favor of this hypothesis and the one regarding the existence of peasants' attachment regarding the traditional symbols of the places is the resistance of some

Romanian citizens to the initiative of the Hungarian authorities over the disambiguation of the Magyar name of the village they were living in. Finally, changing the toponymy also reflects the struggle for authority or legitimation of power: the German versions were the result of Vienna's efforts to impose itself, the Hungarian version reflected the efforts of Budapest, and the Romanian versions, those of the Romanian national activists. In this matter, the Hungarians had the most important stakes: on the one hand, they wanted to show the Hungarian ethnic structure of the regions, and on the other hand, they wanted to prove that these regions were under Budapest's administration.

Berecz's book ends with a series of conclusions in which the author reiterates some of the issues already mentioned in the introduction. The results of Agoston Berecz's research are satisfying not only for the curiosities it identifies in the history of nationalities in Southeast Europe; they also draw the attention of researchers of local history, the Hungarian language system, etymology and of the history of names and naming processes. On the one hand, it can be a subject of macro-history, but on the other hand, it could also be a subject of micro-history by referring to many localities and communities of Transylvania and due to the use of various primary sources. The most important aspect, however, is that none of the subjects of historical research can ever be completely exhausted and explained, especially the history of the nationalities in areas as heterogeneous as Transylvania and Banat. The results of Berecz's work demonstrate that nationalism has penetrated all manifestations and actions of communities and its documentation is possible by addressing various types of historical sources.

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**Petronel Zahariuc, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu (eds.),** *160 de ani de la Unirea Principatelor: oameni, fapte și idei din domnia lui Alexandru Ioan Cuza*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" din Iași, 2020), 666 p.

The latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought forth a new dimension with regards to the further development of the Danubian Principalities. Even though foreign historiography tends to gravitate in its analyses towards the reign of King Charles the 1<sup>st</sup>, the beginning of the "modern Romanian state" is placed at an earlier date. With the year 1859 comes the unification of the two separate states into one nuclear entity under the rule of prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866). An iconic moment, with a

plethora of ramifications and effects, both internal and external, the union truly marked the beginning of a new era. The historiography of his reign is a vast, but not an exhaustive one. The findings of new sources in the archives, the rapid development of technologies and methodologies applied to this area of study, or simply new interpretations of arguments already formulated, are of help in expanding not only the quantity, but also the quality of historical writing. The volume *160 de ani de la Unirea Principatelor: oamenii, fapte și idei din domnia lui Alexandru Ioan Cuza* can be placed in such coordinates. Being the written form of papers presented at a homonym symposium held in Iasi in 2019, the book honors the memory of Alexandru Ioan Cuza and his actions which aided the development of the unified Romanian state.

Regarding the editors, Petronel Zahariuc is a Romanian historian and university professor at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, the Faculty of History. His area of expertise lies mainly in the medieval and early modern Romanian history, the history of the Church, social history. He is a prolific researcher, having authored several books, articles, studies, collaborations in different volumes. For his PhD thesis, in 2005, he was awarded the “A.D.Xenopol” prize of the Romanian Academy. Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu is also a Romanian historian and lecturer at the same university as Petronel Zahariuc. His area of interest concerns diplomatic relations in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, focusing on the case of Russia and Romania between 1878 and 1893, which was the topic of his PhD thesis. In 2019 he was the recipient of the “Nicolae Iorga” award offered by the Romanian Academy. Each of the editors has contributed to the present volume, with studies that stray a bit from their usual research interest, without diminishing the quality of their work.

Grouping several well-established Romanian historians and PhD students, alongside international names, the book manages to bring forth fresh theories, arguments, and presentations of diverse aspects of the period 1859-1866. In its 666 pages, the publication is comprised of a total of 22 studies, grouped in four big chapters: “People”, “Facts”, “Ideas”, and “Alexandru Ioan Cuza’s posterity”. The studies are not divided equally between the four, but the order follows a logical and thematical succession of events.

The book opens with Mihai Cojocariu’s study, “From the history of a night: Iasi, during the night of 3 to 4 January 1859”, which showcases the discussions, tensions that had happened on the night before the Moldavian election. With the use of memoirs as a primary source, the historian tries to highlight whether Cuza’s election was a premeditated action or a rather spontaneous one. The author considers that the real “mastermind” was

Anastasiu Panu, backing his arguments by correlating the remaining historical evidence.

The next two studies focus solely on the princely personality of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, analyzing his actions in different manners. First, Dumitru Vitcu, "Cuza Vodă- «an exemplary historical personality»", articulates a study that showcases the success of Cuza's reforms in their entirety. Next, Paul E. Michelson, "Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1859-1866: A developmental assessment", applies a specific methodology in the survey of Cuza's reign. A distinguished American historian with a well-established background on Romanian studies in the modern period, using the theoretical model elaborated by Lucian W. Pye, his paper tries to find an answer to the following question: "How well did Romania do under Alexandru Ioan I in dealing with the problems of development?". Michelson chose to focus, due to spatial limitations, on the problem of Romanian national identity, the problem of establishing regime legitimacy, and the issue of political participation in the new Romanian state. On the first two fronts the Romanian prince is awarded a good evaluation by the author, the final one remaining lackluster, a truth that remains valid for the upcoming decades.

The next three studies focus on different personalities of the epoch. Ștefan S. Gorovei, "A Moldavian scholarship recipient in Turin (1860)", wishes to bring to the attention of other historians the existence of Petre Borș, one of the first Romanian students awarded a scholarship to facilitate his studies abroad, in Turin. Petronel Zahariuc signs the paper concerning the personality of Scarlat (Sofronie) Vârnav, titled "«Father Vârnav says yes! » New information concerning the biography of a Unionist: Scarlat (Sofronie) Vârnav". The author's aim is to further enrich the knowledge surrounding him, painting a chronological picture of his life, which captures the complexities of the character. The final study of the first big thematic group, is written by Ion I. Solcanu, "The «voyages» of Princess Elena Cuza to the Romanian Principalities and to Paris (1862-1863)". The author undertakes the task of revealing the itineraries and goals of Elena Cuza's voyages in the years 1862-1863. Making use of historical documents from the archives, correspondence between county officials and the press of the time, Ion I. Solcanu adds a new puzzle piece to the picture of the era.

The second section of the book shifts away from the people of the epoch, focusing more on the events that shaped it, with a special attention being given to the European context in the aftermath of the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Paris Peace Congress of 1856. Both events left Russia in an unfavorable position, an aspect which reflected in its future diplomatic relations with Romania, more so as the young state was fighting for the



international recognition of the union. Cristina Țurcan, "Notes on the instructions received by N. K. Giers around the time of the Union of the Romanian Principalities", opens this section with a case study on the instructions received by the newly appointed Russian consul in Bucharest from the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister, A. M. Gorceakov. The set of guidelines from the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 1858 constitutes, from the author's perspective, a landmark in the new approach of Russian diplomacy, an aspect very few have explored previously.

Eugen-Tudor Sclifos's study, "France, Russia and the *«fait accompli»* (January-February 1859)", is complementary to Cristina Țurcan's in both subject and analysis. The historian from Chișinău aims to capture, based on research done in the Russian archives, the shifting attitudes of Imperial Russia in its foreign affairs policy. The context this time moves to the years 1859-1860, relating to the way in which the Great Powers reacted to the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Without a shadow of a doubt, Russia orchestrated her actions to obtain a positive and friendly outlook from France, by "wholeheartedly" supporting the union of the Principalities.

On the same topic, of Romania being caught in the machinations of the Great Powers on the diplomatic scene, the following two studies can be included: Gheorghe Cliveti, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza and Napoleon III during the difficult years, 1863-1865", and Ion Varta, "Contributions to the history of the Russian-Romanian diplomatic relations during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza". Professor Cliveti's paper illustrates the ways in which during the end of Cuza's reign there had been a subtle, but notable shift in the relationship between the Romanian prince and Napoleon the third of France. Moreso, it highlights the apprehension shown by the powers to the internal reforms system perpetuated, rather aggressively after 1864 by Cuza, and the ways in which such attitudes further impacted his demise in 1866. However, Ion Varta pays attention to the development of the relationship between Russia and Romania. A plus point of Varta's presentation lies in the fact that he addressed the thorny problem of the Romanian Orthodox church in the larger context on Russian Orthodoxy and the impact of the reforms concerning the clerical sphere initiated by Alexandru Ioan Cuza.

If one searches for studies that show how an internal matter is perceived and reinterpreted in the paradigm of the foreign countries, two very good analyses can be found in this volume. First, a researcher from the University of Roma Tre, Antonio D'Alessandri in "The fight for the Union of the Romanian Principalities and the Piedmont of Cavour", considers that Cavour's attitude was a direct result of the Kingdom of

Sardinia's own goals in resolving the "Italian question". Gheorghe Negru, a historian from Chişinău, in "The Union of the Romanian Principalities and the impact of this event on Bessarabia (the years 1860)", sets his sights on Bessarabia. A former province of Moldavia, it is interesting to see how the union of the two Romanian states had a twofold impact: on the alignment of the Romanian cultural and political movements in Bessarabia to the ones in Romania, and on the demeanor of the Russian administration. Overall, the context after the loss of the Crimean War, drove Imperial Russia to reform itself on the inside, starting with an aggressive russification policy of the different disparate provinces.

The second part of the publication ends with one of the editor's own works, "The Establishment and Organisation of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign and State Affairs (1862-1866)" by Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu. His study begins with three essential questions: which were the most important moments pre-1862 in the making of the Foreign Affairs ministry and how they influenced the further organization of it, what were the main legislative changes from 1862 up to 1866, and who were the people that helped build the ministry. By investigating these issues, he brings a great contribution to the study of the evolution of Romania's diplomatic legislation, which tends to focus on the period after 1878.

The penultimate part of the book contains the most thematically diverse studies. Bogdan Mateescu, "The agrarian issue during the Union year. A comparison between the obligations of the corvée labourers and the wealth and income of the corvée labourers", opens with a call to revive the study of the Romanian agrarian question with a new, more rigorous methodology. The author advises historians to begin focusing on points, such as the integration of geography, statistics in historical research. For the sources, he relied mainly on the population censuses of 1850 and 1860. Overall, Bogdan Mateescu puts into discussion a new and modern inquiry method, with the added plus of concentrating on its interdisciplinary applications. Nicoleta Roman in "The orphans of the reigning princes, the children of the nation. The feminine side of the 19<sup>th</sup> century", brings to the attention of the reader a lesser-known part of the Romanian society of the time, by focusing on the orphans of the epoch, and the ways in which women organized societies in order to offer help and support.

The following two papers, signed by Simion-Alexandru Gavriş and Bogdan Popa, talk about the press of the period. Simion-Alexandru Gavriş, in "A Iaşi based conservative newspaper: Viitorul (1861)", chose this particular newspaper due to its importance to the incipient conservator movement in Moldavia, being its only media outlet during the reign of Cuza. His study adds new prospects to the study of the media history of

the epoch. Bogdan Popa, "Cultural modernisation as a second effect. «The Press Act» of 1862 and the book trade in Romania", has a different approach, with the analysis of the law mentioned. Although the main objective of such a law was to control what was written in the press, the author's argument is centered around it helping propel the development of written culture in Romania. It managed to strengthen the relations between libraries, editors, and the authors. With these two studies, readers begin to understand that during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, reforms were not merely implemented at a high level, lacking concrete implications in the micro-zones of the community. They impacted all aspects of society, with durable results for the future reign of King Charles the 1<sup>st</sup>.

A similar approach is taken by Ioan-Augustin Guriță, "The law of the secularization of monastery wealth and the monastic establishment of Iași", who pieces together an important picture of the mechanisms implemented once the secularization law was proclaimed. As he admits in the beginning of the paper, his interest lied on the people chosen by Cuza to undertake the process of secularization in the monastical area of Iași. The subject of the modernization of society is predominant in the study of Vitalie Văratîc, "Jibreni: the project of the first Romanian harbour at the Black Sea in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century". The last one of the "Ideas" chapter, the author summarizes the history of such a project, that ultimately never came into fruition.

The final section of the book, suggestively titled "The posterity of Alexandru Ioan Cuza", is comprised of studies that highlight the historiographical legacy of the Romanian ruler. Silvana Rachieru, "Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Constantinople: protocol dilemmas and places of memory in the official travels within the Ottoman capital (1860, 1864)", presents a compelling narrative concerning the remembrance in the collective memory of Cuza's two visits in Constantinople. Making use of the surviving artistic renditions of the event, combined with accounts of participants, the author analyses the ways in which prince Cuza was received by the sultan, comparing the two different occasions (1860 and 1864). Directly contradicting existent historiographical perceptions, she underlines the importance of understanding and acknowledging the reforms (*Tanzimat*) that reshaped the Ottoman Empire. It is naïve to talk about the antithesis of modern, European (Romania) and traditional, oriental (Turkey), which so often characterizes the relationship between the two states in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Mircea-Cristian Ghenghea, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza- the «tyrant» and the «immortal». Little-known images in the press of 1867 and 1908", preoccupies himself with the image of Alexandru Ioan Cuza in two main

sources: a calendar for the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 1867 (a year after his abdication) and an almanac from 1908. Both are, as the author rightfully underlines, means of propaganda, used either to bring out the negative (the calendar), or the positive (the almanac) traits of the ruler, by referring to the contrasting image of King Charles the 1<sup>st</sup>. The final paper, signed by Andi Mihalache, “The construction of the Romanian pantheon and the structuring of the modern Romanian space: the funerals and statufication of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1873, 1912)”, is a study of the history of collective memory, of how the death of a political personality impacts his further legacy, applying this to the case of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, who died in exile in 1873.

This book brings paramount contributions to the historiographical landscape regarding the first ruler of unified Romania, Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866). It manages to compile different perspectives, themes, and approaches into a singular volume, that never once suffers from a lack of cohesion in speech, a remarkable aspect for such a large body of work. Basing their work on extensive study of archival documents, memoirs of the time, newspapers of the epoch, or other fruitful primary sources, each author presents their arguments in a concise, pertinent, and logical manner. The reader of such a volume, a researcher in its own right or not, can savor each page, despite the book’s monumental length, due to the wide array of well-written provocative topics.

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**Alexandru Lupeanu-Melin**, *Evocări din viața Blajului*, Edited by Cristian Bădiliță in collaboration with Veronica Isăilă, Bucharest: Editura Vreamea, 2020, 270 p.

The book *Evocations from Blaj's life* by Alexandru Lupeanu-Melin was published for the first time in 1937, but it was republished in 2020 by Cristian Bădiliță in collaboration with Veronica Isăilă. It was republished in 2020 as it was part of the *Mica Romă XII* Collection, which aims to bring lesser-known authors who have written about Blaj into public view.

Cristian Bădiliță is an essayist, theologian and contemporary poet. He studied at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest and theology in Madrid. He has authored many theological articles. Veronica Isăilă is a student of the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, at the

Faculty of Letters. She was the one who transcribed the text from the 1937 edition and added several explanatory notes.

The subject of the book is a compilation of texts that evoke the most remarkable moments and personalities of Blaj. It is a memoir because the author, Alexandru Lupeanu-Melin, drafted short stories from his own life, as well as stories about the events that had taken place in Blaj, events that outline the history and characteristics of the city. The book originally appeared on the occasion of the bicentennial of Blaj; it was compiled by collecting several articles published by Lupeanu-Melin in the *Unirea Poporului* newspaper. Many authors compared his style with that of Ion Creangă or Ioan Agârbiceanu, which is why, for the reader, it is a truly pleasant read. The purpose of the *princeps* edition was to provide the Blaj public a view on the importance of their city for the national culture and to offer them anecdotes about the past, which they would thus come to know in detail. The edition published in 2020 brings forth the works by lesser-known authors, works that nonetheless contributed to the formation of the historical past of the city of Blaj and its importance for national history.

The book is structured in the form of a collection of short stories, organized chronologically, written in an accessible manner, thus making the most popular events of Blaj easy to understand. The 37 stories are preceded by a prologue and the volume ends with a postface. The prologue is written by Ștefan Manciușea, who was a contemporary of Alexandru Lupeanu-Melin. He was a teacher, a geographer, and a Greek-Catholic priest from Blaj. He presents Lupeanu's activity within the associations and institutions where he worked. Thus, we come to know that Alexandru Lupeanu lived between 1887-1937, as well as additional information regarding the school he attended, his professions, namely that of a teacher, director of the Blaj Girls' High School, director of the Blaj Central Library, editor for many publications and founder of *Unirea Poporului* newspaper, and a member and president of major associations such as ASTRA. The postface is authored by Ioan Buzași, a literary historian from Blaj whose works investigate the literary past of this city, but also that of its important figures. It summarizes aspects of the author's life, but it also analyzes the importance of this book for the literature of Blaj.

Because of the fact that it is a collection of short stories that recount certain episodes from the lives of certain figures or from within the larger historical events, and it is not a scientific approach, we cannot talk about a certain methodology used in its elaboration. The style is literary, it uses an archaic language, characteristic to the region and period in which the book

was written. All these variables make it possible to integrate the book into the memoir genre.

The sources used are newspaper articles, in which Alexandru Lupeanu-Melin recounted his memories of his school years, the events of 1918 in which he took part, as well as several eulogies he had given for certain figures. He also used the memories that the priest Nicolae Coroiu from Bucium-Saşa left in a manuscript. The book does not differentiate between the memoirs of the priest (he is not even mentioned as a source of inspiration) and those of Lupeanu, the stories are written in the first-person singular from the author's perspective.

The book is an interesting read to those passionate about history and it offers new perspectives to those who desire to find out more about Blaj's past in the form of anecdotes, which are not recorded in other sources, and which show the specifics of this city. It begins chronologically (and it includes a legend) with the founding of Blaj by Ionochentie Micu Klain; it then speaks about the figures who marked Blaj's education and church life: about Timotei Cipariu, Ioan Fechetu Negruțiu, Augustin Bunea, Ioan Moldovan or Vasile Suci. About lesser-known events, about the Revolution of 1848 and about how the achievement of the Union of Romania in Blaj was seen. Other interesting stories depict the recounted events about what was happening in the lives of the students from Blaj, how they learned to pass on lessons even through plays during the summer holidays, the accommodation conditions and the habit of picking grapes, details that are truly little known. The book reveals the names of the first engravers from Blaj and the institutions of that time. The volume includes figures such as Rozalia Munteanu, who was the first Romanian teacher from Transylvania.

However, the book cannot be considered history, it is somewhere between history, memoir and literature, but it can be used to extract little known information about people and facts from that city, about the life of students before the Union of Romania. It is written with accents belonging to the romantic style, Lupeanu being known for his nationalism.

The 2020 edition is thus a welcomed publication, as it allows today's readers to easily read text that is difficult to understand because it uses archaic language, but also full of toponyms and figures that deserve to be explained. This republication answers these needs by providing all the necessary information.

My opinion is that *Evocations from the Life of Blaj*, the 2020 edition is worth reading by all those interested in the history of Transylvania, but also by those who want to know several beautiful stories about the

Romanians' past, having been written in a literary manner that is easier to understand due to the explanatory notes made by the editors. But we must not forget to apply a grid of objectivity because subjectivism is a major characteristic of this book.

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