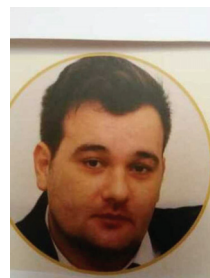
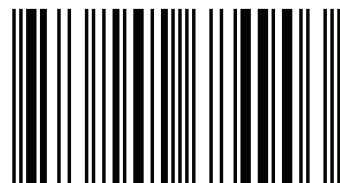


The six chapters of the work represent, each, an independent historiographic issue. The Union was motivated by the Romanian diplomats as having a historical basis that was revealed starting from five main elements. Moreover, it has been tried to be brought forward the manner in which the Romanian borders evolved, in different historical stages. We tried to offer an answer in each of the six chapters of the book. There were brought forward historiographic arguments, along with the documentary ones. We started from the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic space from Antiquity and moved towards the present day period. The struggle of the Romanians for the Union, concomitantly with the fight for Independence, took place in the same moments with that of the most peoples from Europe and the world. Some states were Great Powers, disappeared, reorganised, others transformed from small states into Great Powers. Only by insisting on the correct interpretation of the historical sources, we shall be able to find the answer we are looking for.

THE UNION OF ALL THE ROMANIANS



Florin Nacu is scientific researcher in ICSU "C.S.Nicolaeescu Plopsor" in Craiova. He is a Romanian historian specialized on problems of social structures, social, economic and political importance of Oltenia in the modern history. Also, having a juridical education he made in his scientific works, the connections between law, history.



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FLORIN

NACU FLORIN

# The Union of all the Romanians – from Political Concept to National Ideal

LAP **LAMBERT**  
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## PREFACE

The work “*THE UNION OF ALL THE ROMANIANS – FROM POLITICAL CONCEPT TO NATIONAL IDEAL*” is published in a context dominated by important celebrations held on the occasion of the Great Union Centenary and the Paris Peace Conferences from 1919-1920 Centenary.

It has been rightfully asserted that the Great Union represents the concretisation of the Romanian people’s dream to live freely, in one country, within its historical borders.

The book of the historian Florin F. Nacu unfolds, in a unitary and synthetic vision, all the historical moments related to the Union. His endeavour is a worth appreciated one, being the author who started from the first elements and reaching the nowadays period.

The author affirms that the Union was accomplished neither by chance, nor forced. It was the result of a historical, continuous action, an effort of generations of politicians. Furthermore, along the pages of the work, it is stated that the Romanians accomplished the Union in the same time when, in diverse historical stages, other peoples of Europe and around the world, such the French, the British, the Italian, the German or the American peoples, accomplished their national aspirations of state centralisation, union, and independence. Basically, the author shows that we rose neither above nor below other significant nations from the universal history. An incontestable merit of the work is that the author introduced and commented numerous fundamental texts that refer to different stages of the Union. Even if many of them are well-known, the majority was published in diverse chrestomathies, volumes of documents, which makes it difficult, for the people who are keen on reading history, to put down the historical analysis book and to search those texts published in different sources. The author managed to present the most important sources that are related to the Union, a fact that widens the chance for the book to be read by a larger public. The explanations are offered from the scientific point of view, nevertheless they do not represent an impediment for an uninitiated in the enigmas of history.

The bibliography from the end of the work constitutes the certitude that the author emitted all the views on the subject, the conclusions of the book are the most important opinions, concretised in studies, articles, books, volumes of documents, memoires. Moreover, the author has analysed, in his so far research activity, all the directions presented in this work, his personal conclusions being presented within prestigious national and international conferences, and published in consecrated

history magazines, as much as in volumes dedicated to these scientific manifestations.

The author's merit is that to have also included a cultural approach of the Union, by reading significant literary works of the authors from all the historical regions of Romania.

Moreover, the author had the praising audacity to show which had been the imperfections that led to the collapse of Great Romania, in the tragic summer of 1940, along with the courage, also worth admiring, to answer some questions on addressing the future of the idea of union of all the Romanians.

Thus, the present work enriches the historical research, bringing to the attention of the Romanian public a professional and correct analysis, from the scientific point of view.

**Professor Cezar Avram, PhD**  
**Director of "C.S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor" SHRI, Craiova**

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## THE AUTHOR'S VIEW

The main motivation for writing this book was that we find ourselves within the events generated by the Paris Peace Conferences from 1919-1920, when the acts of union of the territories, taken from the Romanian principalities in 1918, were partially acknowledged internationally.

The six chapters of the work represent, each, an independent historiographic issue. The Union was motivated by the Romanian diplomats as having a historical basis that was revealed starting from five main elements. Moreover, it has been tried to be brought forward the manner in which the Romanian borders evolved, in different historical stages.

The sixth direction was that of an attempt leading towards the naturally arising question: "*Is Great Romania still possible?*" Obviously, it is difficult to provide an answer, from several reasons. One of them is that the issue of Bessarabia is still a sensible one, and the union has a lot of adepts. If we asserted that there are adverse economic, political, geopolitical conditions, there would be many people saying that the historians are badly intentioned and the Ideal of the Union ought to remain a burning flame. It has been attempted, along this study to be shown where the mistake was, and why, after the Union from 1918, the whole unification of Great Romania did not take place. It has been tried the analysis whether the personal ambitions of some politicians that participated to the creation of Great Romania outran or interfered with the interests of Romania.

The inter-war political life looked like a succession of internal fights, the economy was struck by the Great Crisis, while the right and left extremism, fuelled by the revisionist states, marked the Romanian policy. Romania had had a fragile democracy, whose inter-war apogee was the year 1923, but the diversity of opinions, of political schools where the politicians from the both sides of the Carpathians and the both banks of the river Prut had learned, left their marks. Although Romania had concluded the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact, in the years between the wars, the delay of some effective relations with the Great Powers was speculated by the revisionists who began to express themselves freely and to act openly against the interest of Romania.

We tried to offer an answer in each of the six chapters of the book. There were brought forward historiographic arguments, along with the documentary ones. We started from the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic space from Antiquity and moved towards the present day period. The struggle of the Romanians for the Union, concomitantly with the fight for Independence, took place in the same moments with that of the

most peoples from Europe and the world. Some states were Great Powers, disappeared, reorganised, others transformed from small states into Great Powers.

Only by insisting on the correct interpretation of the historical sources, we shall be able to find the answer we are looking for.

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## INTRODUCTION

When the idea of uniting the dwellers from a territory in a political form that would become autonomous and independent emerged, the past represented the basis of that act of will. In the Romanian space, there are two moments that imposed themselves in the Romanian collective mentality, as further targets. The first was the kingdom of Burebista, and the second was represented by the attempt of political union from the age of Michael the Brave. These two moments were again found in the political act of the Great Union from 1918. Yet, when did the idea of uniting all the Romanians in a Romanian national united space occur and take shape? It is obvious that these answers ought to be sought in the profoundness of the historical past. The Romanian space, dwelt by the northern branch of the Thracians, the Getae-Dacians, entered, most of it, in the Roman Empire structure, as a consequence of the daring actions taken by emperor Trajan (98-117 CE). Dobruja, whose coast had been colonised by the Greeks, became part of the Roman world at least one century earlier, before the year 9 CE, the same year the Roman poet Ovid arrived in Dobruja.

If Emperor Aurelian decided, in 270, that it was the moment to leave the Trajan Dacia, an operation ended in 274 CE, other emperors, such as Constantine the Great maintained the interest for the Danubian limes, and he even tried to return to the north of Danube, on the Northern Brazda lui Novac limit. Dobruja had further remained in the compeence of the Roman Empire.

Since ancient times, before the Roman conquest, on the Romanian territory, there was a state of the Getae-Dacians, there were numerous political formations whose leaders are well-known, due to the sources. The Roman conquest contributed to the crystallisation of the Romanisation process, but, in this Greek-Roman cultural environment, the Christianity began to spread too.

There can be fully responsibly asserted that the Romanian people was born a Christian one, both on the apostolic line (in Scythia St. Apostle Andrew, the First-Called, preached) and missionary (the arrived Christians), the first Romanians as Titus, Timothy, Gerontius, Paternus, Ursus, Nicetas of Remesiana, Aeticus Histricus being present in the historical sources, and some of them even mentioned in the works of the important ecumenical synods of the Paleo-Byzantine era<sup>1</sup>.

The numerous paleo-Christian basilicas, the martyr crypts, the baptisteries, the inscriptions, the martyr acts, the attesting of the bishoprics (Histria, Justiniana Prima) and the metropolitans (Tomis) show the intensity that Christianity reached on these Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic realms<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Vladimir Iliescu (coord.), *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae*, The Institute of South-East European Studies, Bucharest 1970, p. 707.

<sup>2</sup> Ioan Barnea, *Les monuments paléochrétiens de Roumanie*, Città del Vaticano, 1977, p.123-128.

Thus, it is cert that the Romanian space remained, as Nicolae Iorga affirmed a “Byzantium, after the Byzantium”, owing to the fact that the Eastern part of the Roman Empire gradually became, after the scission from 395, the Byzantine Empire, where the Greek culture and language gained absolute prominence.

The great migrations caused the situation where the Byzantine Empire had the dominant geopolitical role, the migrators (Germanic, Huns), crossing the Romanian space too, being attracted by the richness of the Western Roman Empire, collapsed in 475 CE. The Slavs were the ones who settled in the Balkans, the Central and Eastern Europe, followed by Pechenegs, Oghuz people, Cumans, Bulgarians, Magyars.

The oriental Romanity survived, dominant in the north of Danube and isolated in the Balkans. The Byzantine Empire entered in conflict with the Pechenegs, the Bulgarians, the Magyars, the Slavs, the Persians, the Arabs and, later, with the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks.

In the same time with the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, in the Balkans, the states of the Serbians, the Vlach-Bulgarians and Bulgarians begin their emergence. Nonetheless, the Vlach-Bulgarian state did not live a long life, due to the complicated political context from the Balkans. The state would become gradually Bulgarian, up to its destruction by the Ottomans.

Statality for the Romanians would become a reality, few centuries later, in the north of Danube, once with the emancipation of the Romanian pre-state formations from the protection of the Magyar royalty. It would later begin a complicated geopolitical game between the Romanians, the Magyars, the Polish, the Byzantines and the Ottomans, until the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Obviously, in this period, the geopolitical reality is completed by the interests of the Italian state-cities of the Papal State, the Roman-German Empire. Later on, the forces configuration would change, new forces appeared, the Habsburg and Russian Empires, besides the Ottoman Empire.

Thus, soon after the emergence of the Romanian medieval states, the alliances policy become vital, due to the fact that it might have led to union actions, even if only temporarily. Nevertheless, the national idea would occur much later, once with the manifestation and the development of the humanism and the enlightenment.

Undoubtedly, among all the currents of the European thinking that exercised a profound influence on the institutional, political and legal modernisation in the Romanian Principalities, the enlightenment had the primordial role.

From well-known historical and political reasons, in the Romanian space, the humanism and the enlightenment reached the apogee, even though in the Occident this apogee had passed. Further on, we are to see to what extent there was an occidental enlightenment influence, and whether we can talk about a proper Romanian enlightenment.

The persistence of the old medieval traditional, of Byzantine origin, corroborated with the foreign domination on the Romanian Principalities led to the existence of a strong delay between the Romanian space and the European one. Yet, for example, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when in France, Spain or England the sovereigns were contributing to the centralisation of the states, in the Romanian space there was the moment represented by the ruling of Michael the Brave, when, for a short period of time, he managed to unite under his authority the Principalities. Evidently, after his death, in the summer of 1601, in the Romanian space, the historical circumstances did not allow anymore the existence of an appropriate continuator.

Yet, the era represented by the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century would have rulers influenced both by the humanism and the enlightenment<sup>3</sup>. There ought to be mentioned Matei Basarab, Vasile Lupu, Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir.

It should not be forgotten that, in 1640, Matei Basarab was issuing in Wallachia "Pravila de la Govora", a code of laws influenced by the Byzantine tradition of the Roman law, printed for Wallachia, but not for Transylvania.

In February 1848, the revolution from 1848 was bursting in Europe, a consequence of the European revolutionaries' activity, grouped around some ideas that were aiming at the radical change of the internal and international situation, the last one controlled by the Holy Alliance, the reactionary body that had been founded after the defeat of Napoleon. The Congress from Wien had been a triumph for Klemens von Metternich, the Austrian diplomat for whom any deviation from the line imposed by the Congress from Wien had to be severely punished.

The period 1814-1832 had been abundant in political confrontations. The movements from Serbia, from Carageorge, those from Wallachia, led by Tudor Vladimirescu, the bursting of the independence Greek war, with its north-Danubian phase (with Alexandru Ipsilanti as the lead actor) and the Peloponnesian phase (Theodoros Kolokotronis, Petros Mavromichalis), the liberation wars from Latin America, the revolution from Cadiz of the Spanish colonel Rafael Riego were showing that the echoes of the Napoleonic wars were not muffled, regardless the efforts made by the Holy Alliance. France wished to hold the first place in the European area (the new paradigm of the international relations, which was continuing that of the European equilibrium, resulted in 1648, after the Peace of Westphalia),

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<sup>3</sup> Alin Mihai Gherman, *Literatură română din Transilvania între preiluminism și preromantism*, Casa Cărții de Știință Press, Cluj-Napoca, 2004, p. 3 and next.

and Russia, after the regulation of the Swedish issue, was desiring the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the gaining of access to the Straits<sup>4</sup>.

The internationalisation of the Independence Greek War, the regulating of the independence of Greece through the Treaty from London (1827) and the Russian military success over the Ottomans, through the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) were showing that the new battle field was represented by the Balkans and the Romanian Principalities, for whom the Habsburg Empire and the Tsarist Russia were infringing their autonomy, seizing important provinces from them, abusively, by obligating the Ottoman Empire to cede territories that, from the point of view of the international law, did not belong to them.

The introduction of the Organic Regulations, the Russian military occupations from the Principalities (1829-1834), the regulation of the immediate intervention of the Ottoman Empire and the Tsarist Russia from the principalities, through the Additional act, voted in 1839 (although its introduction had been desired since 1833) created the premises for a possible Russian annexation. Nonetheless, the Organic Regulations had managed to introduce some modernity element too, which were previously mentioned, especially in the administrative, economic and political areas, having the value of a Constitution, whose power was limited by Russia, as “protective power” and the Ottoman Empire, as “suzerain power”.

The first question that expects an answer in this presentation would be: where was Romania situated in 1848 moment. Practically, 27 years earlier, at 1821, Wallachia and Moldova were stepping out an age of regress, with a strong oriental influence<sup>5</sup>. As a paradox, it was not the West that had opened the door for modernization, although it had had some collateral influences. In 1821, despite numerous Church memoirs and the activity of boyar Dudesco, Napoleon Bonaparte, considered a factor of propagation of the French Revolution in the world, saw the Principalities only as an advantage that could help him win the battle with Russia, involving the Ottoman Empire in this movement. It meant that an exponent of the “West” was allying with a power of the “East”, against another “eastern” power, which had yet progressed under occidental influence, in the era of Peter the Great and the Tsarina Catherine the Great.

The Organic Regulations from 1831 and 1832 constituted constitutional acts that Russia had imposed in Principalities in order to propel them into modernity, replacing the form of the medieval system, of Byzantine and Ottoman inspiration, whose apogee had been the Phanariot Era. The great success of these Regulations

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<sup>4</sup> Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor*, Volume VII, Book I, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică Press, 2003, p.228-229.

<sup>5</sup> Dan Berindei, in Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor...*, p. 56.

was the idea to abolish the internal customs between the Principalities, an essential and necessary premise, on the road towards the political union. Russia could not care less whether it was annexing the Principalities separated or united, because that was the political strategy of the Empire, on medium term<sup>6</sup>.

And the moment of the Revolution of 1848 arrived. A political elite had already been formed, which was including the young sons of the boyars, who had studied in the Occident, where they had come in touch with the revolutionary ideas, especially the French ones. Tudor Vladimirescu had been trained to be a clerk in the country, a military strategist, but, although he had been influenced by some of the occidental ideas, he could not renounce the Russian influence, Russia being, in his conception, the force that could remove the Ottoman oppression. A possible explanation for the mistrust in the Habsburg Empire was the manner in which this power, occidental in organisation, but reactionary and conservative in thinking, used to treat the Romanians from Banat, Transylvania and Bukovina. The echoes of the Austrian military occupation over Oltenia had not been forgotten, an occupation that took place between 1781 and 1739, and which manifested through excessive fiscality, a fact that the Romanians found difficult to endure.

A century before Tudor Vladimirescu, Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir had tried, in their own manner, to become emancipated. Brâncoveanu was orienting towards the Habsburg, Dimitrie Cantemir went open-heartedly to Peter the Great. Nevertheless, the two rulers were bearing grudges against each other, and the intrigues of the Cantacuzino family, eager to seize the throne from Bucharest, led Brâncoveanu before the executioner from Constantinople, along with his four sons and the counsellor Ianache Văcărescu. The diplomatic representatives of France and England, as occidental powers, were present to the execution, but the interests of these great forces of Europe could not be bothered about the execution of a Vlach ruling family. For the Principalities, the Phanariot era had begun, which, with feeble exceptions, was a reactionary one, based on systematic plundering. The reforms of Constantin Mavrocordat, and generally any reform, could not survive a regime in which the rule was to earn as much as possible, until your rival came with a more appealing financial promise.

The status of the Principalities is explained through the fact that they were seen by the Constantinople only as the “emperor’s depot”, an immense, full of products storeroom for the Ottoman Empire. Turnu, Giurgiu, Brăila, Tighina and Hotin were rayas, that is, Ottoman territory cities through which the pashas were controlling the

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<sup>6</sup> Apostol Stan, Mircea Iosa, *Liberalismul politic în România. De la origini până la 1918*, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică Press, 1996, p. 12-15.

economic monopoly, this state of fact prolonging until 1829, when the rayas were abolished<sup>7</sup>.

In 1846, promoting the programme of “Dacia literară” magazine, Mihai Kogălniceanu was expressing a clear standpoint against the imitation of the cultural models, especially the French one, in the Romanian literature. The great politician and culture man was expressly asking the ceasing of translations, the creation of a quality works and of Romanian inspiration:

*“Only a paper, but one that does not debate politics, but would care only about the national literature, a paper that, ignoring the place, would be a Romanian newspaper and, consequently, would deal just with the Romanian creations, from any part of Dacia, on the condition to be of quality, this paper, I say, would fill the great gap from our literature. Such a newspaper we shall try to make through DACIA LITERARĂ; we shall put all our efforts, because we do not wish to do better than our ancestors. Nonetheless, following an already beaten track, using their researches and seeing their temptations, we shall meet fewer difficulties and more opportunities in our endeavour. Dacia, besides the original compositions of the editorial staff, shall receive for its columns the most original pieces of writing that will be found in the Romanian journals. Thus, our newspaper shall be a general collection of the Romanian literature, in which, as in a mirror, there shall be seen the writers from Moldova, Muntenia, Ardeal, Banat, Bukovina, each with their ideas, with their language, with their style.*

*Following such a plan, Dacia can be only well-welcomed by the readers. As far as it concerns the duties of the editorial staff, we shall strain to make morality our permanent rule, and to banish the scandal forever. Our critics shall be unbiased; we will criticise the book, not the person. Enemies of arbitrary, we will not be arbitrary in our literary judgements. Lovers of peace, we will not allow in our paper discussions that might transform into hatreds. Our literature needs to be done in the spirit of the union, and not of the discord; yet, as far as we are concerned, we shall seek not to provide any king of reason that might generate an ugly and unpleasant disunion. Finally, our goal is to accomplish the wish that the Romanians to have a language and a literature common for all.*

*In our case, the need for imitation has become a dangerous mania because it kills the national spirit in us. This mania is especially overwhelming in literature. Almost every day there are printed books in the Romanian language. But this is in vain! They are just translations from other languages, and some of them are not even worthy. The translations do not represent the literature. We shall oppress as much as possible this mania that suppresses the original taste, the most precious quality of the*

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem.*



*literature. Our history has enough heroic events, our beautiful countries are big enough, our customs are picturesque and poetic enough for us to be able to find subjects to write about, without borrowing those from other nations. Our paper shall receive as seldom as possible translations from other languages; original compositions are to fill its columns.*

*Consequently, Dacia will encompass all the branches of our literature and will be divided into four parts. In the first part there will be original compositions of the co-workers at the paper; the second part will have original articles from the other Romanian journals. The third part will deal with the critics for the new published books, in the provinces of the old Dacia. The fourth part, which is called Dacia's Telegraph, will announce us on the books that are about to be printed, the relations from the meetings of the Romanian scholars, news on our men of letters, and, finally, anything will be considered worthy for the Romanian public”<sup>8</sup>.*

Therefore, in the period before the revolution from 1948, the Romanian men of culture wished to develop themselves starting from the French model, without confounding themselves with it.

Nicolae Bălcescu describes the best the moment and the meaning of the Romanian Revolution from 1848. Here it is what the great historian, revolutionary man and Romanian patriot was writing, in 1850, while he was in exile, away from the country, fighting with a disease that would prove to be fatal two years after:

*“The Romanian Revolution from 1848 was not an irregular and ephemeral phenomenon, one without past and future, without any other cause than the random will of a minority, or the European general movement. The general revolution was the occasion, not the cause of the Romanian revolution. Its cause is lost during the days of the last centuries. Eighteen centuries of torments planned it, the sufferance and the toil of the Romanian people itself”<sup>9</sup>.*

Although the revolution from 1848-1849 was defeated, the reactionary Habsburg Empire being saved by Russia, a force equally reactionary, as a reminiscence of the Holy Alliance from 1814, it would not hesitate to support the Ottoman Empire, “the sick man” of Europe, in Crimea War, along France and England, the progressive powers.

In the Principalities, the social condition was a problematic one. The political rights belonged to the wealthy, which were framed in the categories based on qualifications, while the reformers, the exponents of the many without rights, could

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<sup>8</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Introduc%C8%9Bie\\_la\\_%22Dacia\\_literar%C4%83%22](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Introduc%C8%9Bie_la_%22Dacia_literar%C4%83%22), accessed on January 9<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>9</sup>[http://www.istoria.md/articol/469/Revolu%C5%A3ia\\_de\\_la\\_1848\\_%C3%AE\\_n\\_%C5%A2%C4%83rile\\_Ro\\_m%C3%A2ne](http://www.istoria.md/articol/469/Revolu%C5%A3ia_de_la_1848_%C3%AE_n_%C5%A2%C4%83rile_Ro_m%C3%A2ne), accessed on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2017.

barely fulfil these wealth conditions, in order to be elected in the legislative and executive internal instances.

The first major influence of the Occident in the principalities could be seen once with the occurrence of the idea to make a buffer state of the United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia that would stop Russia on its way towards the Straits. The new projected state, a consequence of the Peace Congress of Paris from 1856, and built through the Convention of Paris from 1858, would enjoy the Ottoman suzerainty, along with the collective guarantee of the great powers. Russia had been stripped by the access to the Danube mouths, being taken the south of Bessarabia and joining it to Moldova. Yet, the unity of kin and language, along with the fight of the generation from 1848 created the modern profile of the Romanian unitary national state, formed by Moldova and Wallachia.

The political failure of the revolution did not represent the death of the 1848 generation. A decade later, what had been only a desiderate, became reality. Wallachia and Moldova were united in one state, through the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January and, respectively, the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1859.

In order to surprise the historic mission of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza better, there will be further reproduced the speech that the tireless man of state and culture, Mihail Kogălniceanu, delivered:

*“After 154 years of turmoil, humiliation and national degradation, Moldova regained its ancient right, sanctioned through its capitulations, the right to choose according to its will, the Ruler. By placing him on the throne of Steven the Great, the Romanian nationality was placed there... By electing you as a ruler in our country, we desired to show the world what the entire country wishes: **for new laws, new people.***

*Oh my Lord! Great and beautiful it is your mission. The Constitution from the 7<sup>th</sup> (19<sup>th</sup>) of August shows us a new age and, Your Grace, you are called to inaugurate it!*

*Therefore, be the man of the era; make the law replace the arbitrary; make the law strong, and you, my Lord, as a Ruler, **be kind, be compassionate;** be kind especially with those for which almost all the past rulers were careless or mean... Make only peace and do only right, my Lord; reconcile the passions and the hatreds among us, and reintroduce the ancient brotherhood. **Be humble,** Your Grace, be good, be a citizen Ruler; **may your ear be always open for truth and closed for the falsehood and the fawning.***

*You bear a beautiful and precious name, the name of Alexander the Good. May you live many years, my Lord! Let the justice of Europe, the development of our institutions, your patriot feelings lead us towards the expected glorious times of our*

*nation, when Alexander the Good was telling the ambassadors from Byzantium that Romania has only God and his sword as protectors. May you live long, Your Grace!”*<sup>10</sup>

The ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza was influenced by the political model imposed by Emperor Napoleon III, the president proclaimed emperor. The radical liberals from Romania were animated by the French republican inspiration political ideas, but they were aware that in front of Romania had to be a foreign prince, from a European ruling family. The double election of Cuza had been a “fait accompli” before Europe, but the attitude of winner of the Emperor Napoleon III, after 1856, had imposed the tacit acceptance of the double election by the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, even if only during the life of Cuza<sup>11</sup>. The Civil and Penal Codes, the Procedure Codes, the legal status and the fiscal legislations had undoubtedly as model the code of laws of Napoleon Bonaparte. Yet, the sliding of Alexandru Ioan Cuza’s governing on the slope of authoritarianism, the introduction of the Senate in 1864, as Ponderative Body, had determined a coalition of the extremes, the liberals and the conservatives, who wished to remove the ruler, for a new prince, a foreign one, to bring the idea of parliamentary political life. Obviously, the Romanian parliamentarism that was only in its early days could not reach the efficiency of the British one, hardened during a revolution that had lasted over four decades.

The ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, between 1859 and 1866, had created a united Romania, with reforms of certain occidental inspiration. The edifice created by Cuza through authoritarianism resisted his abdication, the new-comer Prince Carol de Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen being the one who brought, in 10 years, the national independence<sup>12</sup>.

The Constitution from 1866, promulgated by Prince Carol I in July 1866, two months after his enthroning, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1866, was inspired by the Belgian Constitution. This country had gained its independence in the years ’30 of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and had progressed in an astounding manner. The King of Belgium had managed to obtain as personal domain the important African colony of Congo. It should not be forgotten that the Ad-interim Rulers, the leading body after the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 1866, when Cuza was dethroned, had proclaimed the brother of King Leopold II of Belgium king, but he had refused, casting the impression of an imminent dissolution of the united Romania. Nonetheless, Ion C. Brătianu, faithful to

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<sup>10</sup><https://istoriiregasi.wordpress.com/2012/01/11/discursul-lui-mihail-kogalniceanu-cu-prilejul-alegerii-lui-alexandru-ioan-cuza-ca-donn-al-moldovei-la-5-ianuarie-1859>, accessed on January 9<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Nichita Adăniloae, Dan Berindei, *Reforma agrară din 1864*, Editura Academiei Press, Bucharest, 1967, p. 161-215.

<sup>12</sup> Gheorghe Platon, *Istoria modernă a României*, Bucharest, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică Press, 1985, p. 210.

the connection with Emperor Napoleon III, managed to bring in the political arena the young Prussian Prince Karl de Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Prince Carol, relative of Napoleon III. Owing to the fact that France had good relations with Great Britain, the latter having a German origin ruling house, the young prince was accepted by all the powers of Europe: Russia had to gain the prestige severely diminished after 1856, Turkey was indebted to the English and French friendship, which had saved it in Crimea War, and Austro-Hungary, in competition with Germany for accomplishing the German unity, was oscillating with great ability among Italy, Germany and France, because Napoleon III had planned, at some point, to switch provinces, Venice to return to the new-constituted Italy, while Austro-Hungary would have received Romania, made of Moldova and Wallachia, an idea that the Austrians themselves did not like, because it meant they would acknowledge the nationality of the Romanians from Transylvania, and, implicitly, the breaking of Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina by the ruling of Wien. Thus, Austria, which had become Austro-Hungary in 1867, declared itself satisfied with the enthroning of Prince Carol, because it would not have adventured into an anti-Austrian campaign.

The arriving of Prince Carol occurred in a socio-cultural-political environment of Balkan structure, a transition between the Ottoman Orient and the Western Europe, provided by the predomination of the French language, as the culture language, the French model in education, and even in army. Nonetheless, gradually, due to the increase of the conflict potential between France and Prussia, after the defeat of Austria, at Koniggratz in 1866, there could be experienced the thrill of a conflict within the cultural models. Prince Carol introduced the Prussian model in the equipment of the Army and the military regulations, much more favourable for him, but unpleasant for the officers who had been trained according to the French model. Furthermore, the German rigorousness, the intransigence of the young prince, his punctuality, the coldness in the relation with his ministers, placed him under a negative light, a fact that did not weigh accordingly, in the balance with the typical French bonhomie, the occidental model, closer to the oriental-Balkan passivity. The politicians were witnessing the request of the Prince for an absolute veto right in the Constitution, the fact that his ideas were converging towards the conservatives (they would remind more of the Prussian Junkers), not enjoying the radical and moderate liberals who would promote openly their sympathy for France and the Emperor Napoleon III. France and Prussia began, after four years of active sounding out, an open war, a situation that the liberals appreciated. The radicals were dissatisfied with the fact that the Prince did not offer them the full power in the government, while the conservative forces were waiting for the final result after the main external confrontation. The period 11<sup>th</sup> of May 1866 – 7<sup>th</sup> of August 1870 was an agitated one,

from the point of view of the governing. Each govern did not resist more than seven months<sup>13</sup>.

In the summer of 1870, due to the increase of the French-Prussian conflict (the breaking of the war took place of the 7<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> of July 1870), at Ploiești, there was an event that, in the collective memory, was called “The Republic from Ploiești”. Al. Candiano Popescu, Eugeniu Carada, including Ion C. Brătianu, C.A. Rosetti were amongst the conspirators. The pro-French ones were convinced of the eventual success of France against Prussia and were wishing, in this manner, to make themselves remarked in the eyes of Emperor Napoleon III, by removing the prince of Hohenzollern. The rumours on the dethroning of Prince Carol, which Candiano Popescu, self-proclaimed Prefect of Prahova County and occupant of the Telegraph from Ploiești, spread, did not have the expected effect, and certain clerks, called by the conspirators to help, preferred to announce the govern of the moderate Manolache Costache Epureanu. Moreover, the military men, attracted by the plotters, but also most of them, including Ion C. Brătianu and C.A. Rosetti, were proposing the expectative. The broiling of Al. Candiano Popescu was nonetheless fatal to the action, which was annihilated, a fact that determined Nicolae Iorga to call it “the ridiculous few-hour Republic of Candiano-Popescu”. In September 1870, the disaster from Sedan took Emperor Napoleon III out of the history first position, after being taken prisoner by the Germans.

The echoes of this conspiracy did disappear, but the new year 1871 would bring another disorder. Prince Carol was invited by the German Colony from Bucharest to attend the party dedicated to Kaiser Wilhelm I. The population from Bucharest attacked with stones the ballroom, the prefect of Bucharest missing mysteriously from his duties, which generated the idea that he was involved in the conspiracy.

Thus, the preference of the Romanians for the French model was continuing to manifest, the Prince having to use a political manoeuvre, that of miming the intention of abdication. The convoking of the members that formed the Ad-interim Ruling from 1866 fuelled the fear that the Prince might abdicate. The radical liberals stepped back, and for five years the Prince signed the decree of appointment for the conservative ministers.

Yet, the French model continued to exist, because the German culture was making its way with difficulty, the French language persisted as the language used by the diplomacy. Furthermore, the conservatives were not popular due to their opposition on the idea to reconsider the land reform initiated by Alexandru Ioan Cuza in 1864. There could be also felt new anti-dynastic manifestations, powered, this

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<sup>13</sup> Keith Hitchins, *România 1866-1847*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Humanitas Press, Bucharest, 2013, p. 31.

time, by Russia. In 1873, Cuza was dying in exile, after Mehedinți County had offered him the position of deputy in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Constituency. Bringing the body into the country arouse great sufferance amongst the thousands of peasants, who gathered along the way followed by the funeral procession. The Russian propaganda even used leaflets with the portrait of the elder son of Cuza, Alexandru, on which it was written that Russia supported the idea of land reform of the ruler. Alexandru Ioan Cuza himself had been accused of pro-Russian sympathy, when he had sent 30,000 Russian arms to the King of Serbia, Miloș Obrenovic, a fact that supported once more the decision of his dethroning in 1866.

Therefore, due to the lack of popularity of the conservatives, the French model was continuously present, although many of the cultural men and politician as Petre P.Carp, Vasile Pogor, Titu Maiorescu, the younger Mihai Eminescu, Ion Luca Caragiale had become representatives of the German cultural models<sup>14</sup>.

To them, there are added, in the next decades, numerous politicians and men of culture from Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina, who, owing to the persecutions against the Romanians, found in Romania the proper ground for their aspirations.

It was the problem of the Romanians from Transylvania that generated antipathy against the German political and cultural model. Although the attitude of Russia at the Treaty of Berlin was to some extent unfavourable to Romania, meaning that Dobruja became Romanian only after the south of Bessarabia returned to Russia, the political class from Bucharest attributed to Bismarck's Germany a part of the responsibility too.

Basically, in three decades, that is, from 1848 to 1878, Romania registered a remarkable internal and international progress, from two Principalities, "positioned on the way of all the discords", to a national, unitary and independent state.

Only after 1881, the Russian Narodnik influence started to make itself remarked, but the electorate who was voting based on qualifications was little attracted to the ideas that came from the East. The liberals were blaming the conservatives for not solving the agrarian question, which gave a new credit to the French developing model. Paris was influencing the culture decisively, and also the architecture of the cities from Romania. The French architects were more numerous than the German ones, and the builders were Italian. The affinity based on Latinity was another advantage in combating the "Teutonic nature".

During the entire period when Romania adhered to the Triple Alliance, seen by Ion C. Brătianu as a necessary nuisance, but kept hidden from the public opinion, the

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<sup>14</sup>Anastasiu Iordache, *Originile și constituirea Partidului Conservator din România*, Paideia Press, 1999, p.5-9.

attitude of Austro-Hungary had negative repercussions on how the German model was perceived<sup>15</sup>.

An expressive manifestation of the moderate conservatism was *Junimea* (a slightly antiquated Romanian word for "Youth"), but the orientation of this group, more precisely, of the conservatives towards the Central Powers, was again translated through reservation towards the German spirit.

The theory of the contentless forms, enounced by Titu Maiorescu, was another protest against the imitation of the French model. The fact that the Romanians had copied institutions that were glorious in France, the university, the theatre, the opera, without having in Romania good quality literature and talented people who would be remarkable in their country, was criticised by Titu Maiorescu. He wished that the national specificity to be the one improved by the external influence, and not the exterior to be adapted to the Romanian realities.

In 1868, Titu Maiorescu was publishing the study “*În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română*” (“Against the nowadays direction in the Romanian culture”), from which there is further reproduced a quote, essential for the vision of this renowned man of culture and politician, on the relation between the admired model and the originality of the cultural approach: *The fake direction, once created through the three works from the beginning of our modern culture, took the Romanian intelligence further easily on the open way, and, using the same lack of truth inside and the same pretention outside, there have been imitated or faked all the forms of the modern civilisation. Before having a political party that would be useful for a body, and a public that would love science, would need reading, we founded political journals and literary magazines and falsified and despised the journalism. Before having teachers in the villages, we built the schools and, before having capable teachers, we inaugurated secondary schools and universities, and forged the public interaction. Before having a culture grown in schools, we constructed the Romanian athenaeums and cultural associations, and we despised the spirit of the literary society. Before having even a glimpse of original scientific activity, we created the Romanian Academic Society, with the department of Philology, History and Archaeology, Natural Sciences, and falsified the idea of Academy. Before having the artists, we made the music Conservatoire; before having at least one valuable painter, we made the Belle-arte School; before having one worthy drama play, we founded the National Theatre – and continued deriding and faking these forms of culture.*

*Apparently, according to the statistics of the outside forms, the Romanians have at present almost the entire occidental civilisation. We have politics and*

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<sup>15</sup>Apostol Stan, *Putere politică și democrație în România: 1859-1918*, Bucharest, Albatros Press, 1995, passim.



science, we have journals and academies, we have schools and literature, we have museums, conservatoires, theatres, and even a constitution. But, in reality, in all of these, there are dead creations, pretensions without a base, ghosts without a body, illusions without the veracity, and, in this manner, the culture of the higher classes of the Romanians is null and worthless, and the abyss that separates us from the lower classes is increasing by every day. The only real class, in our case, is the Romanian peasant, and his reality is the sufferance, behind which he hides and sobs, due to the phantasmagorias of the superior classes. Because from his daily toil there are taken the material means for sustaining the fictive edifice, which we call Romanian culture, and with his mite we forced him to pay our painters and musicians, the academicians and people in the athenaeums from Bucharest, the literary and scientific premiers from everywhere, and, at least from gratitude, we do not produce any work that would warm his heart and would make him forget, for a moment, the squalid every day existence.

To live in this manner is not possible anymore. The complaints coming from the lower people and ridiculous of the upper ones has reached their top. On the other hand, by making the communication possible, the occidental culture is coming to us, because we did not know to meet it. Under its victorious light, there will be manifested all the artifice and all the caricature of our "civilisation", and the useless forms that we have taken pride in so far shall be revengeful, attracting greedily the solid fund from the foreign heart.

Is there still time to escape? Is there still possible that an energetic reaction to occur in the minds of the Romanian youth and, once with the despising of the so far falsehood, to be awoken the will of placing the true fundament where today are only the illusory pretensions? Maybe the faith will give us time for this regeneration of the public spirit and, before letting the complete careless to insinuate in our hearts, there is the duty of each intelligent person that notices the danger, to fight against it, to the last moment<sup>16</sup>.

Year 1916 was basically a recreation of the pro-French attitude from 1866, that is, half of century before. King Ferdinand was not the short, rigid and impenetrable Carol, who had deceased in 1914, and Queen Mary was much more involved in the political act, her influence on her husband being obvious.

In a nutshell, the French cultural current was obviously superior, owing to the fact that the first politicians of the modern Romania were educated in French schools. Although of Prussian origin, Prince Carol was more related to Napoleon III, than the German ruling family. He understood that the country with a secure future, because it

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<sup>16</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/%C3%8En\\_contra\\_direct%C8%9Biei\\_de\\_ast%C4%83zi\\_%C3%AEn\\_cultura\\_rom%C3%A2n%C4%83](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/%C3%8En_contra_direct%C8%9Biei_de_ast%C4%83zi_%C3%AEn_cultura_rom%C3%A2n%C4%83), accessed on January 9<sup>th</sup> 2017.



was situated at the Lower Danube and in the vicinity of the sea, could not renounce the French culture in which most of the politicians had been trained. Moreover, Prince Carol considered refractory and harmful the attitude of Austro-Hungary towards the Romanian question. If he had refused to marry a Russian princess, his heir, Prince Ferdinand, could not avoid such a marriage, especially after the unfulfilled love with Elena Văcărescu, a story of a romanticism and dramatism typically French.

At that time, the city of Bucharest was called “the Little Paris”, but the expression had been continued by adding the fact that it was situated “in the middle of a big village”. In that period, the political and cultural models were acting on the urban level. The world of the villages knew the French inspiration progress, through the great estate landowners or the industrialists, the bankers, who also had landed property. From the world of the villages, at the most the employees of the proprietors could come in touch with the occidental fashion and culture. The rest of the village remained unchanged in the secular traditions. The relations between the workers and the landowners were close to the “new-serfdom”, theorised by Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea in 1910, when the Occident had extremely different methods of development.

The socialist current had developed in the German Occident, being adopted by the Russian intellectuality, and reaching the Romanian space too. Yet, the critics of the German theoreticians on the history of the Romanians and the reform of Cuza were making the German cultural environment unpopular again, because easy to understand reasons<sup>17</sup>. The collaborationism of the last conservative leader, Alexandru Marghiloman, with Germany, as occupational power, led to the political death of the conservatism, immediately after the Great Union<sup>18</sup>.

The French model won the confrontation with the German political model. As a state positioned between the interests of the great empires, Romania was dependent culturally, socially, politically by the models provided by the developed states that had the status of great power. The Romanian intellectuality did not succeed in finding an original way of development in the modern era. The so-called extremist nationalist movements from the decade had just a feeble Romanian layer, the substrate being found in the occidental extremist ideologies, with racist and xenophobic accents. They represented the matrix in which there were created the Romanian nationalist currents between the wars, as in the left extreme movements in the Francophone space, France and Switzerland. In 1917, Germany was the state that contributed to the promotion of the radical doctrine of Vladimir Ilici Lenin, starting with April 1917, and culminating with the revolution from the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 1917. The ideology of

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<sup>17</sup> Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea, *Neoiobăgia*, Bucharest, 1910, p.50-51.

<sup>18</sup> Anastasie Iordache, *op.cit.*, p.10-15.

the communism took the Soviet Russia out of World War I. Paradoxically, in 1919, Romania removed the pro-Bolshevik government of Bela Kun from Hungary, motivating that it did not acknowledge the historic act from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918.

In conclusion, there had passed 40 years since the gaining of the Romanian state independence, and our country had become Great Romania. The Union brought together the Romanians, the Magyars, the Saxons of Transylvania, the Szecklers, Jews, but also the Lippovans, the Turks, the Tatars, the Serbians, the Swabians, the Ruthenians, but after the disappearance of the German state model from the former provinces of Austro-Hungary, the Romanians were even less tempted by the German model. The reforms of the period between the two wars were continuing having a French inspiration<sup>19</sup>.

The Great Union from 1918 represents the fulfilment of a desiderate of many generations of Romanian politicians. Beyond the historic importance of the union of all the Romanian territories with the motherland, the Great Union had also a determinant role in improving the economic and social profile of the country.

Romania had become a middle-size state, which meant almost the doubling of the population from 7,771,341 dwellers in 1914, to 15,287,528 dwellers in 1919, in other words, Romania became a middle sized country, occupying the 8<sup>th</sup> place, from this point of view, in Europe.

The period of four decades, between 1878 and 1918, marked the existence of some long governments of the national-liberals. Ionel Brătianu, in the period 1876-1888, ceased just once the power, agreeing with the governing of his brother, Dimitrie Brătianu, in the period 10<sup>th</sup> of April-9<sup>th</sup> of June 1881<sup>20</sup>.

“The conservative governments”, the governing of “Junimea” from the years 1888-1889 (Th. Rosetti as premier), or those from 1889-1895 had as premiers: L. Catargiu, G. Manu, I.Em. Florescu, and again L. Catargiu, continued up to a point the liberal initiatives. The liberals had as premiers, alternatively, D.A. Sturdza and P.S. Aurelian, followed again by D.A. Sturdza. The liberals governed again in the period 1901-1904 and 1907-1908, under the command of premier D.A. Sturdza<sup>21</sup>.

Starting with 1908, the liberals governed through Ionel Brătianu: 1908-1910; 1914-1916, the period of the national union government, 1916-1918.

There were periods of the conservative-Junimea governments, as those from the years 1900-1901 (premiers: G.Gr. Cantacuzino, P.P. Carp), 1904-1907 (premier G.Gr. Cantacuzino), 1910-1913 (premiers: P.P. Carp, T. Maiorescu).

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<sup>19</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Viața politică din România 1918–1944*, Albatros Press, Bucharest, 1982, p.41.

<sup>20</sup> Costin Scorpan, *Istoria României. Enciclopedie*, Nemira Press, Bucharest, 1997, p.167-169.

<sup>21</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Carol I. Istoria românilor în timpul celor patru regi*, vol. I, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică Press, 2001, p. 121.

The failure of the German Republic from Weimar, the emergence of the extreme right movement, the ascension of Adolf Hitler, brought again forward, after 1927, the year when the Regency was installed, the influence of the German model. In 1937 already, the right extreme in Romania, which was expecting to become legal by relating to the values promoted by the Nazi Germany, was transforming into the third political force of the country. The world was sliding towards World War II with an unexpected speed.

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## 1. ASSOCIATIONS, PERSONAL UNIONS, PROTECTIONS IN THE MIDDLE AGES (1330-1601)

Since its beginnings, history, as a science, had included in itself the component of presenting the truth, in a complete and objective manner.

The Romanian people formed, in the space between the Danube, the Carpathians, the Dniester, the Balkans and the Black Sea, knowing its largest territorial spreading in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, under the ruling of the Get king, Burebista. The Decree of Akornion from Dionysopolis (49 BCE) acknowledged to Burebista (whose messenger and friend was the Greek Akornion) the authority on both banks of the Danube, calling him “the greatest and the most powerful amongst the kings from Thrace, owner of the territories over and this side of the river (Danube n/n)”.

His most important successor was the Dacian king Decebal, who managed to control a territory, similar in spreading, to the actual territory of Romania.

The Latin historian **Tacitus** was stating that the history ought to be written “**without any anger and bias**” (*sine ira et studio*). Thus, quite often, the historians used different technical artifices, in order to be able to promote the message. One of them was the “excerption” of the predecessors’ works.

**Herodotus**, in “**Histories**” (LXXXI-LXXXIII)<sup>22</sup>, describes the competition between three leaders of the antic Persia for the throne of king, starting from a fight of ideas, between the adepts of tyranny, oligarchy and monarchy. The arguments show good knowledge of Greek political philosophy, in an incredible manner for the Persians, and the contrast between the strength of the debated arguments and the hilarious solution of the problem, shows the diversion from normality. Practically, the three decided that the person who would get the throne was to be the one whose horse would neigh the first at dawn, in front of the gates of Persepolis city. It is useless the say that Darius, the winner, used a trick, a mischief, helped by his servant, who took care of his herd, Darius’s horse neighing the first, due to the deliberate inducing of this gesture. Basically, Herodotus wished to show the supremacy of the Helenian manner of thinking, over the Persian one, but the method that he chose for supporting it was not the historical one. He attributed some discourses to those people who would never have the capacity to voice them, a fact clearly visible in the final chosen solution.

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<sup>22</sup><http://tributistoriei.blogspot.ro/2016/06/herodot-istorii-fragment-din-carte-iii.html>, accessed on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2017.

**Thucydides**, author of the “**Peloponnesian War**” (*Războiul peloponesiac*, V, 1-20)<sup>23</sup>, renowned for its objectivity and the fidelity he depicted the facts and the text of the documents (a treaty concluded between Athens and another Greek city was presented integrally, and after several centuries the stone inscription was discovered at Athens, the author’s text being identical to the one from the inscription, a/n.) offers discourses delivered in the public assemblies by the strategist Pericles. Obviously, at that time, there were not available means of recording the discourses, therefore their fidelity is debatable, not because they would not contain the truth, but on addressing the technique of presentation.

**Diodorus of Sicily** is an ancient historian, whose work, “**Historical Library**”, is made of abstracts and information taken from the works of the other historians. Even if today, from the ethical point of view, the attitude of Diodorus would be reprobated, because he assumed the results of his ancestors’ work, without quoting them.

The medieval historiography used, in creating the biographies of some important names, as the emperor Charles the Great, discourses that are strikingly similar to the ones from the ancient works.

For example, **Xiliphinos**, a Byzantine monk from the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE, summarised the work of the Latin historian Dio Cassius Cocceianus, “**Roman History**”. The notes of this monk were taken by **Patriarch Photios of Constantinople**. Even if the ethics was affected, today, we would not know the details about the fights and the personality of the Dacian king, Decebal.

We chose this example owing to the fact that, in the Romanian medieval age, the historian and chronicler Grigore Ureche, trained in the Polish universities, characterises the ruler Stephen the Great and holy, in a passage from “**Letopisețul Țării Moldovei**” (Chronicles of the Land of Moldavia) that is similar, to identity, with the description that Dio Cassius made for the Dacian king Decebal.

The two descriptions are to be presented further on, in order to illustrate those asserted above:

*“Douras, who had ruled before, handed down the throne to Decebal, who was very skilled in the war plans and capable to fulfil them, knowing how to choose the opportunity when to attack the enemy and retreat on time. Ingenious in setting nets, he was a good fighter, who knew how to use the victory, but also how to manage a defeat. For this reason, for a long time, he was a fearful enemy for his enemies.” - Dio Cassius on the Dacian King, Decebal*<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Lucian Amon, *Acțiunea diplomatică în Grecia antică. Surse literare și epigrafice*, <http://drept.ucv.ro/RSJ/images/articole/2008/RSJ1/16Amon.pdf>, accessed on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>24</sup> <https://istoriiregasite.wordpress.com/2010/07/27/istorii-regasite-izvoarele-istoriei-cassius-dio-istoria-romana/>, accessed on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2017.

*“This ruler, Stephen, was a not very tall man, quick-tempered and willing to shed innocent blood; many times, during feasts he would kill without much consideration. Otherwise, he was a man of integrity, not lazy and he knew how to be a good administrator, and you could find him where he was less expected. He was skilled in bearing wars, he would go where it was needed, for his people to feel encouraged, to not stray away from the battle, and few were the fights that he did not win. And when he was defeated, he did not lose faith, because even if lying in the dirt, he would raise again above the winners”.* **Grigore Ureche-on the ruler Stephen the Great**<sup>25</sup>.

We chose to use these historical discourse fragments in order to show that, even since Antiquity, the Romanian space was well-known. The Roman governance started in Dobruja in 27 CE, continuing with the Byzantine one, until the 14<sup>th</sup> century (with an interruption in the 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century CE). The space between Carpathians and Danube was in the possession of Rome since 102 (after the peace between Trajan and Decebal, in the south of the Carpathians), then, officially, from 106 CE to 274 CE. The Emperor Constantine the Great controlled Oltenia and Muntenia in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, the Roman Empire keeping the area until the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE, the period when the Romanian ethnogenesis was accomplished.

Practically, the territory of Moldova, where the free Dacian people were living, was not part of the Roman world (from the point of view of the belonging to the Roman Dacia). They were in touch with the Roman world, achieving their Romanisation gradually. Thus, the free Dacian people integrated in *Orbis Romanus*, from the cultural point of view.

The Romanian ethnogenesis resulted under the circumstances of the great migrations, the first ancient Romanian culture being the “Dridu” culture, from Muntenia.

The Romanian pre-state formations are those emerged in the 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, in Banat, Transylvania, Banat, Oltenia, Muntenia, Moldova, Dobruja. Transylvania and Banat were the first defeated after the penetration of the Magyars in Transylvania. From there, the Magyar royalty tried to advance towards south and east, where there were already the Romanian pre-state formations. Basarab I in Wallachia, Dragoş and Bogdan in Moldova became emancipated from the Magyar authority and, in this way, in the era before the emergence of the Ottomans in Europe, in the north of Danube, there were the two already formed states, Wallachia and Moldova.

Yet, before the emancipation of these two states, the exponents of the oriental Romanity who used to live in the south of the Danube too, even beyond the Balkans, tried to organise themselves, under the circumstances of weakening the authority of

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<sup>25</sup><http://www.atheneum.ca/atheneum/de-moartea-lui-stefan-voda-celui-bun-va-leato-7012-1504>, accessed on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2017.

the Byzantine Empire. That was the Vlach-Bulgarian state, founded as a consequence of the social movements that had in the centre the Romanians Petru and Asan<sup>26</sup>. Ioniță Caloian<sup>27</sup> even attempted an essential geo-political movement, meaning that he wished to embrace Catholicism (as resulting from the correspondence between the two), being acknowledged by the Pope Innocent III as king, the Pope also acknowledging the Latin origin of the Romanians led by Ioniță Caloian. Nevertheless, during the ruling of Ioan Asan II, the tendencies of adhesion to Catholicism ceased, and the state gradually became predominantly Bulgarian, the Latin-Romanian, element decreasing in intensity.

We present below fragments from this correspondence. The letter of Innocent III sent to Ioniță in December 1199, was writing: *“To the noble man Ioanițiu, Lord has turned His face towards your humbleness and devotion that you show for the Roman Church, and, amongst the waves of wars and dangers generated by conflicts, not only did he defend you with all His powers, but, gratefully and mercifully, He helped you enlarge your possession. And us, hearing that your ancestors originated from the noble kin of Rome, and inheriting from them both the nobleness of the blood and the feeling of the sincere devotion that you show for the Apostolic Chair due to your inheritance, we decided to study you, by means of letters and through messengers; but being occupied with different issues of our Church, we could not do it until now”*.

The letter of Ioniță Caloian to Pope Innocent, from November 1202, was writing: *“To the Venerable and Blessed Father, the supreme pontifex, I, Caloian, the Emperor of the Bulgarians and the Vlachs, wish you happiness and health. We inform Your Grace that we received the holy letter that the faithful archpresbyter of Brindisi brought, and we cherished it more than gold and any gemstone. For it, we are grateful to the Almighty who wished to look into us, his unworthy servants, in his unmeasurable kindness, and gazed into our humbleness and made us remember the blood and the country from which we come. Here is what my kingdom asks from the Apostolic Chair: to belong to the Church of Rome, as the sons of a real mom. Firstly, I ask from the Church of Rome, our mother, the crown and the honour that is due to a beloved son, as our old emperors enjoyed”*<sup>28</sup>

Basically, the Romanian statehood developed in the north of the Danube and the exterior of the Carpathian arch. Inside it, the Romanians preserved their language, the traditions and the national clothes the best.

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<sup>26</sup> Alicia Simpson, *Byzantium's Retreating Balkan Frontiers during the Reign of the Angeloi (1185–1203) A Reconsideration*, in V. Stankovic (ed.), *The Balkans and the Byzantine World Before and After the Captures of Constantinople*, 1204 and 1453, Lanham, MD 2016, 3-22, p.13.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier: A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900-1204*, Cambridge University Press, 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2000, p.301-307.

<sup>28</sup> Bogdan Murgescu (coord), *Istoria României în texte*, Corint Press, Bucharest, 2001, p.77.

From the Middle Ages until the dawns of modernity, the Romanian rulers defended the Christianity, against the menaces that came from outside the Europe. Regardless the Orthodoxy or the Catholicism, after the Schism of 1054, the Romanians guarded “the gates of Christianity”, even when the Christianity itself was willing to conclude treaties with the Muslim Turks.

Obviously, Orthodoxy identified itself with the essence of the Romanian kin, in the context that, assuming an apostolic mission, after the converting to Catholicism of Vaik, the king of Hungary, who became Ștefan, Hungary proposed the bringing of the “schismatic people” under the protection of the Romano-Catholic Church.

The Romanian rulers placed the Church within the state’s important institutions, conferring his leader, the metropolitan, a foremost role in the Ruler’s Council. The choosing of the metropolitans was made with the agreement of the ecumenical Patriarchy from Constantinople, which continued its existence after the falling of the Byzantium, in May 1453.

In Transylvania, the documents from 1347 and 1517, “Unio trium nationum” and “Werboczy’s Tripartitum”<sup>29</sup> were depriving the Romanian population by the natural status of the political right of an acknowledge nation, the Romanians having the status of tolerated people. The Romanians did not have their religion acknowledged, a fact that that made them practically inexistent from the point of view of the political rights, but they were imposed harsh economic conditions, compared to the Magyars, the Saxons and the Szecklers, acknowledged nations in Transylvania.

In the Middle Ages, the relations between the Romanian Principalities were according to the perspective of the times. Until the ruling of Michael the Brave, the effective attempt of political union cannot be considered an issue. In the Middle Ages, the manner in which a ruler was ascending the throne was according to the elective-hereditary principle, that is, elected by the boyars, amongst the claimers with “royal blood”. “The royal blood”, the ascendance from a ruler could also be considered if the claimer married a voivode’s daughter.

Obviously, there were also alliances between the rulers, the same as there were conflicts. If the Romanian political formations from Transylvania were occupied by Magyars, after 1541, Transylvania, entered under the Ottoman control (but preserving the regulations on addressing the privileged nations) becomes closer to the extra-mountainous Principalities.

Mircea the Old (1386-1418) helped Alexander the Good (1400-1432) to become the voivode of Moldova. This was the context in which Wallachia offered

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<sup>29</sup>Werboczius, *Decretum tripartitum juris consuetudinarii*, apud Stefan Pascu, *Crestomație pentru studiul istoriei statului și dreptului RPR*, Vol. II, Editura Științifică Press, Bucharest, 1958, p. 622.



Moldova Chilia, for the Moldavian ruler to become interested in the cooperation against the anti-Ottoman battle front.

On addressing the relation with Transylvania, the rulers from Muntenia and Moldova always had possessions over the mountains: Amlaş, Făgăraş (Mircea the Old), Ciceu, Cetatea de Baltă (Stephen the Great, Petru Rareş), Vinţul de Jos, Vurpăr (Radu Paisie).

Iancu de Hunedoara, voivode of Transylvania, had a conflict with Vlad the Impaler, the ruler of Wallachia, taking his authority over Amlaş and Făgăraş.

Stephen the Great tried to impose two rulers in Wallachia, as allies, Laiotă Basarab and Basarab Ţepeluş, but they betrayed him, becoming the vassals of the Ottomans. Stephen the Great managed to install Vlad the Impaler as voivode, in his third, and short ruling, of almost a month, in 1476.

Petru Rareş, contemporaneous with Suleiman Kanuni-the Magnificent managed to eliminate Aloisio Gritti, the stepson of the Doge of Venice, who wished to be ruler of the three principalities, under the authority of the Turks. Petru Rareş affirmed that “I conquered Ardeal with my sword, and I shall not entrust it neither to Ferdinand, nor to anyone else”.

Another ephemeral ruler, who had some ambitions for an extra-Carpathian political union, was Iacob Heraklid, known as Despot-Voivode, in Moldova.

Nicolae Bălcescu wrote the work “The Romanians under Michael Voivode the Brave” in order to make the first monograph of a Romanian important personality. The style of the work is an ancient one, having strong chronicle influences. Michael the Brave is seen as the unifier of the three Principalities, Wallachia, Ardeal and Moldova. The same idea of the messianic mission of Michael the Brave belongs to Nicolae Iorga. Yet, in presenting the personality of the ruler Michael the Brave, there were shaped two tendencies that are to be analysed from the perspective of the ethics. The first is the creation of the image of the first maker of the Union, at Nicolae Bălcescu and Nicolae Iorga, and the other is represented by the tendency of demythization, used by Lucian Boia.

Nicolae Bălcescu asserts that the father of the ruler Michael the Brave was the ruler Pătraşcu the Good, but this assertion was debunked by Nicolae Iorga. The two historians come from different generations, different moments in the evolution of the Romanian state. Nicolae Bălcescu belonged to the 1848 generation, who would fight for unity and independence, for the access to sources, while Nicolae Iorga had been trained in the Small Romania, fighting for Great Romania, in a time where there were Universities, Faculties of History.

Nevertheless, from the point of view of the research ethics, the both historians tried to position some delicate moments from the ruling of Michael the Brave on the second place. Basically, the treaty of vassalage with the prince Sigismund Bathory

was seen as a disadvantage for Michael. It is incontestable that Michael was braver and more efficient than the instable Bathory, but, due to this treaty, Michael, who had retreated after the victory against the Ottoman avant-garde from Călugăreni, was able to regroup his troops in Ardeal and, from there, to go and destroy the Ottoman army at Giurgiu. His wife, lady Stanca, remained hostage of Princess Maria Christierna I, the wife of Prince Bathory, as a guarantee for the support and the cooperation between the two princes. Practically, Michael retreated and left the country for the Turks to plunder it, in order to control their movements and counterattack, using the tactics of the burned land.

There is another aspect, of the union of Ardeal with Wallachia. In Transylvania, there were Magyar Romanians who were expecting the fight for unity<sup>30</sup>. One of them was the chancellor Ștefan Ioszika (1550-1598), an authentic Romanian, the friend and the effective support of Michael the Brave in Ardeal<sup>31</sup>.

Basically, Michael had a reliable help, a Romanian who led, at different proportions, the fight for the union of Ardeal with Wallachia.

The document dated the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 1600, in which he appears as ruler of the three Principalities, is an internal document. His treaty with Rudolf II had allowed him to conquer Transylvania, but the Austrians never acknowledged his quality of ruler of Transylvania, the correspondence of Michael the Brave showing his endeavours in this respect

There will be cited further on, in order to exemplify, a letter of the Ruler Michael the Brave, to the Emperor Rudolf II, dated at Alba Iulia, the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 1600:

*“I conquered Ardeal (...) risking my body and my life, having alongside my wife and my only son. If a misfortune had happened, then, along with my wife and son and all my people I would have remained there. I strongly hope that His Grace, the Roman Emperor, will give me confirmation, not only with significant honours, but also with imperial flags, letters and sigils. But he desires to send me away from Ardeal, the same way a whore is banished from the country. Only God can do this. I shall not allow for myself to be hunted away, even if I need to pay with my head, because I obtained all with my sword. I served the Roman Emperor not for fear, but from the great love that I have for the Christianity. For the Turkish Emperor I had only disdain and I insulted him as no one can imagine; and now he sends me, in the end, a beautifully saddled horse and 15,000 ducats, a crane feather panache, one of his flags with a sword, a mace, and few kaftans made of gold leaf, and a gift for my boyars that are at my Court, as honour. I showed him only contempt in unimaginable*

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<sup>30</sup>A. Veress, *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, V, *Acte și scrisori* (1596-1599), Cartea Românească Press, Bucharest, 1932, p. 182.

<sup>31</sup>P. Dragalina, *Din istoria Banatului Severin*, II, Dragalina Press, Caransebeș, 1900, p. 55-56.

*manners, and also his messenger in Wallachia. And the Roman Emperor sends me as honour three papers full of venom, disdain and scorn, and wants to send us out, as I have been told. Indeed, I was announced that I should not trust the Germans, because I would be badly rewarded for my faithful service; and that happened precisely. I shall send this letter of his Majesty everywhere, for the entire world to see the mockery and the ingratitude that I was shown, for my faithful service*<sup>32</sup>.

Moreover, the national historiography minimalised the Byzantine plan of Michael the Brave, that of freeing the Balkans and, in this manner, reaching the gates of Constantinople, a fact that resorts from his external correspondence, especially from the 4<sup>th</sup> volume of the work “*Michael the Brave in external documents*”, a fact that interferes with the ethics in the historical research.

The origin of Michael the Brave was presented as purely Romanian, although his mother, Teodora Cantacuzino was a Byzantine origin princess, and Iane Epirotul, the uncle of Michael the Brave helped him climb the boyar hierarchy ladder. Michael the Brave was one of the greatest landowners from Wallachia, although, during the communist regime, this fact was hidden. Michael the Brave was a medieval landowner, a situation that would not allow him to participate to the political act, and the hiding of this reality would show an ethical conflict. The fictive succession from Pătrașcu the Good was used by Michael in order to assure his ascension, but when he had a conflict with the ruler Alexander III the Bad, he denied this origin, because it could have costed him his life, Alexander III the Bad trying to eliminate him, on the grounds that he was a dangerous claimer of the throne.

After 1989, Lucian Boia tried, through “demythization”, to minimize the role of Michael the Brave. This also represents a serious ethical mistake, because when Michael the Brave made the union, states as Spain, England, France, Russia were already centralised. Michael the Brave was contemporaneous with Phillip II, the King of Spain, Elisabeth I, Queen of England, and Ivan the Terrible, the Tsar of Russia, had ruled only a generation before him. Thus, he was contemporary with the main political leaders of Europe.

All these conceptions show some contradictions with the ethics of the research. Those that made the image of Michael the Brave ideal were answering to the idea of national identity consolidation, those that minimize his role are translated into the contemporary tendencies of destroying the Romanian national identity.

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<sup>32</sup>Barbu Berceanu (coord.), *Antologie domnească de la vorbe ocazionale la inscripții în piatră*, Minerva Press, Bucharest, 1999, p. 61–62.

## 2. AUTONOMY, POLITICAL RELATIONS, CONFLICTS, TERRITORIAL RAPTURES (1601-1812)

After the action of Michael the Brave, in the history of the Vlach-Moldavian confrontation, there is also remarked the episode between Matei Basarab and Vasile Lupu, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The step brother of Michael the Brave, Petru Cercel tried as well, as a veritable prince of Renaissance, to bring under the attention of the Occident the faith of Wallachia. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the relation between Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir was not a good one either, because Brâncoveanu had married one of the daughters, Maria, with the ruler Constantin Duca from Moldova, a rival of the Cantemir family.

It is also well-known the “Dacian Plan”, through which the Russian Tsarina, Catherine II, desired the union of Wallachia and Moldova, under a Russian prince. In the Phanariot Era, owing to the circumstances, Constantin Ipsilanti was regarded by Russia as possible ruler of Moldova and Wallachia. Pavel Kisselef also was enjoying the idea of becoming ruler of the Principalities, during the Russian occupation from 1829-1834.

In the entire medieval era, and even in the dawn of modernity (until the Age of the Organic Regulations), the Romanian school was placed on the “threshold of the church”, meaning that the priests were teaching the sons of the rulers and boyars. In 1508, Macarie printed the first Romanian religious book with Cyrillic letters (the Latin writing, specific to Romanian language had been renounced at, as resistance to the forced catholicisation). The monks Eftimie, Macarie and Azarie wrote chronicles. In the same period, more precisely from 1521, there is dated the Letter of Neacșu from Câmpulung to the count Iohannes Beckner of Brașov (Hanăș Beckner in the text of the document), written in Romanian, with Cyrillic letters, which attests the fact that the Romanian intellectuality was using a cult Romanian language.

Scholar Udriște Năsturel (brother of Elina, wife of the voivode from Muntenia, Matei Basarab), Metropolitan Dosoftei, Antim Ivireanul are clergymen who left us masterpieces whose value in today inestimable.

In 1688, Șerban Cantacuzino was making the Bible from Bucharest, with Cyrillic letters, which, for centuries, was the most complete edition of the Bible in Romanian.

The infirmaries from the monasteries had the role of hospitals, the prayers were bringing the rain on time, were fighting against epidemics and natural disasters. Moreover, the Churches were also sentence courts in the communities, moral mentors, and places of penitence for those who would commit severe offences, as it is

shown in “Pravila de la Govora” (The Code from Govora), from 1640, emitted by the ruler Matei Basarab of Muntenia<sup>33</sup>.

In Transylvania, occupied by the Magyars, then by the Turks (1526) and the Habsburg (The Treaty of Karlowitz from 1699), Banat (occupied by the Turks after 1541, and by the Habsburgs, through the Treaty of Passarowitz from 1718), the orthodoxy had to fight for its existence. Oltenia also experienced the Austrian occupation between 1718 and 1739, the year when, through the Peace of Belgrade, it returned to Wallachia.

The Romanians from Transylvania, after “Unio Trium Nationum” (1437) and “Werboczy’s Tripartitum”<sup>34</sup> (1514) became a tolerated nation, although they represented the majority<sup>35</sup>. They were barely allowed to have a church in their language, and that was subordinated to the Mitropoly of Karlowitz. The Romanian rulers, both those from Muntenia and Moldova tried to make the flame of orthodoxy burn in the territories that had the status of possessions of Ardeal, such as Amlaş, Făgăraş, Cetatea de Baltă, Ciceu, Vinţul de Jos, Vurpăr. In the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the activity carried out by the Romanian humanist Nicolaus Olahus represents an example.

In 1698-1701, Athanasie Anghel and 38 bishops decided to create the Greek-Catholic cult, in which the orthodox ritual was still present, but obeying to Rome. The adepts of the new confession could have their confession acknowledged and could have confessional schools, a fact that determined the creation of a cultural elite that would be involved in national politics, in reduced limits<sup>36</sup>.

It did not mean that the orthodoxy disappeared, but it even became stronger. Some monks, as Visarion Sarai and Sofronie from Cioara<sup>37</sup> led resistance orthodox movements. The Romanian monasteries, centres of Romanian traditions and orthodox faith, suffered. The orthodox Romanians could build only wooden small churches, and seldom monasteries. Yet, there were constructed hermitages and reclusories, in which there were monks and nuns who had the gift of either healing, foreseeing or heart praying. The monks and the monasteries managed to keep alive the faith and the national unity, although the Austrian general von Bukow, after taking Bukovina in 1775, ordered the destruction with the cannons of the hermitages from the borders with Moldova and Wallachia, in order to abolish the faith of the Romanians and to interrupt the cultural circuit with the Romanians over the Carpathians. Even in this

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<sup>33</sup> Emil Catrinou, Petre Mateiescu, *Pravila de la Govora, ediție completă și diortosită*, Fortuna Press, 2016, p.5-10.

<sup>34</sup> Stefan Pascu, *Crestomație pentru studiul istoriei statului si dreptului RPR*, Vol. II, Editura Științifică Press, Bucharest, 1958, p. 443.

<sup>35</sup> Constantin C. Giurescu, *Istoria României în date*, Romanian Academy Press, Bucharest 1971, p. 91.

<sup>36</sup> Ioan Z. Boilă, *Biserica Română Unită*, Cluj-Napoca, Viața Creștină Press, 1997, p.10-15.

<sup>37</sup> Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică, *Procesul episcopului Ioan Inochentie Clain*, Caransebeș, 1896, p. 56.

manner, on “tracks beaten only by sheep and goats” and through “the cuckoo’s Customs” (meaning the fraudulent crossing of the imposed borders, on hidden tracks), the Romanians from the both sides of the Carpathians could continue the communication and preserve their faith.

The popular revolt from 1784-1785 that had as leaders Horea, Cloșca and Crișan was also axed on the acknowledging of the Romanian nationality and the abolishing of serfdom.

Yet, the names of some uniate bishops, as Ioan Micu (Inocentius Klein)<sup>38</sup> Igantie Darabant, Ioan Bob are related by a strong cultural and political activity. “Supplex Libellus” from 1744 and “Supplex Libellus Vallachorum” from 1791-1792, are memoires addressed to the Chancellery of Wien, in which there was requested the acknowledgement of the Romanian nation<sup>39</sup>.

The representatives of the Transylvanian School, Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai, Petru Maior, Ioan Molnar-Piuaru helped spreading the ideas of the enlightenment<sup>40</sup>.

In Transylvania, the 30-year War led to the spreading of the ideas of enlightenment during the conflict that, finally, ended with the acknowledgment of the religious freedom and the emerging of the European equilibrium principle, an international law fundamental concept, strongly influenced by enlightenment.

After the short odyssey of Michael the Brave, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in Transylvania, appeared the initiative of “Uniation”, that is the Church United with Rome. Practically, through Leopold’s Diplomas from 1699 and 1701, a part of the Romanian orthodox clergymen, along with the Romanian believers, obeyed the Pope’s Court, keeping their orthodox cult and ritual. This is the reason for which the new confession was called “Greek-Catholicism”. Basically, those who adopted the new confession benefited by the acknowledgement, at least on the individual level, of the political rights, a situation that represented a step forward.

Further on, there is cited a fragment from the Union Act with Rome, from 1698, signed by the orthodox priests at Alba Iulia: “*We, the further signing people of this paper, Notable People, Protopops and Priests of the Romanian churches, wish to announce all the authorities, especially those of the Country of Transylvania. By taking into consideration the changes that occur in this deceiving world and the unchanging and the immortality of the souls, which should be of the greatest significance, though our will, we unite with the Catholic church of Rome and confess our belonging to the Holy catholic Church of Rome, as written in this letter, and we*

<sup>38</sup> Corneliu Albu, *Pe urmele lui Ion-Inocențiu Micu-Klein*, Sport - Turism Press, Bucharest, 1983, p.7-9.

<sup>39</sup> David Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest 1984, p. 281.

<sup>40</sup> Ioan Chindriș, *Correspondență inedită a corifeilor Școlii Ardelene*, in "Manuscriptum", XIX, 1988, p.81-96; no.3, p.9-21.

wish to enjoy the privileges the same as the sons and the priests of this holy Church, as His Royal Highness the Emperor and our Crowned Prince, through the mercy of His Holiness, as coming from this decree, of which we partake. His Highness agreed on our endeavour, as it is supposed to do with His Grace's subjects, and we submit this act to His Grace and the Country of Transylvania, to enforce even more these written here by our hands. It was furthered to Belgrade in the year of God 1698, the 7<sup>th</sup> of October. And in this manner we declare ourselves united and confess to be the sons of the holy catholic church of Rome, but without changing the customs and the remaining traditions of our eastern church, but all the ceremonies, holidays, fasts, as until now and further on, to be free to hold, according to the old calendar. And our faithful notable Athanasie shall not be removed from his chair, until the death of His Holiness. And even in case of death, to be in the power of the synod the election of the notable, which His Holiness the Pope and the Great Emperor to enforce, and the Patriarch who answers to His Highness to ordain. And nobody shall interfere in any manner in the administrations of the protopops, present and future, but they shall exist as until now. And if we and our successors are not allowed to continue as before, our seals and signatures that we put on this act shall have no power. We therefore enforced this document with the seal of our metropolitan. And at the end: And therefore we are united with those mentioned above, and our laws, the services and the calendar, the mass and the fasts and our gifts shall remain unchanged, and if they do not remain unchanged, these seals shall represent no authority for us, and our notable Athanasie shall be the head and nobody shall remove him from the position<sup>41</sup>”

Basically, in Transylvania, the fight of the Romanians was carried out on two battle fields, that of the social fight and the political fight. The Greek-Catholic elite, especially the uniate bishops, would build the first line of the political rights fighters.

After 1711, in Moldova, and in 1714, in Wallachia, the instauration of the Phanariot rulers affected strongly the autonomy of the Principalities, in their relation with the Porte, an empire that, in the last century of the 16<sup>th</sup> century had proved the limitations of its power and strength on the geopolitical level. It is the merit of one of the greatest representatives of the European Enlightenment in showing the limitations of the Ottoman power and the lacks in the strategy the state of the sultans was using for the geopolitical improvement. That was the Romanian scholar Prince, Dimitrie Cantemir, the author of the first history of the Ottoman Empire, called “*Istoria creșterii și descreșterii curții otomane*” (The History of the Ottoman Court increase and decrease), a work that contributed to his appointing as a member in the Berlin Academy.

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<sup>41</sup> Ioan Lupăș, *Documente istorice transilvănene*, vol. I (1599–1699), Cluj, 1940, doc. 198, p. 464–465.

Dimitrie Cantemir tried, unsuccessfully, to liberate Moldova from the Ottoman ruling, initiating diplomatic treaties with Russia of Tsar Peter the Great, and supporting his conflict with the Ottoman Porte. The Treaty of Luțk, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1711 that is dominated by the diplomatic and political abilities of the Romanian Prince, actually a diploma through which Peter the Great was acknowledging the existence of Moldova as independent state in case the Ottomans were defeated, an enlightenment feature document that, along with others, represents the foundation of the Romanian law: “...*The great ruler and Prince of Moldova, Dimitrie Cantemir, as a good Christian and fighter for Jesus Christ, decided that it is for the name of Christ, our Redeemer, to work along us for the liberation of the Moldavian people that he rules over, and which suffers, together with other Christian peoples that are subjugated by the barbarians; sacrificing his life and position, he announced us that he wishes our protection, of the tsar, along with his country and the people of Moldova.*

*Thus...we receive the prince under our merciful protection and we agree with his desires<sup>42</sup>”.*

Even in the Phanariot era, there were attempts to create a legal basis, influenced by the Enlightenment. Yet, due to some rulings when numerous abuses took place, the era was seen more as a continuation of the Middle Ages. The Phanariots, most of them of Greek origin, but some of them having Romanian, or other ethnicity, had worked in the diplomatic, economic and political environment from Constantinople, defending the interests of the Ottoman Empire, in its relation with other states, and were familiar with the innovations specific for the Enlightenment.

Constantin Mavrocordat<sup>43</sup> is, undoubtedly, the best Phanariot ruler. Between 1730 and 1769, he had no less than 10 rulings (six in Wallachia and four in Moldova). He first granted fiscal exemptions for the boyars, in Moldova in 1743. In Wallachia, in 1741-1742 he took some “constitutional” measures, because they were published in “*Mercure de France*” under name “*Constitution*”. In 1741-1743 he made an ample fiscal reform in Moldova, and in 1746 and 1749 abolished “*rumânia*” and “*vecinia*”, two types of feudal serfdoms from Muntenia, and respectively Moldova. It was also Constantin Mavrocordat who imposed money retributions as unique source of income for the boyars with functions in the state, he founded the ruler’s Chancellery, creating the function of chancellor, he appointed sub-prefects in the counties and organised, according to the enlightenment features, the taxing system.

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<sup>42</sup> Georgeta Smeu, *Dicționar de Istoria Românilor*, Bucharest, Trei Press, 1997, p. 218-219.

<sup>43</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *Istoria României*, Corint Press, 2007, p.47-48.



There can be appreciated that, on concept level, the reforms of Constantin Mavrocordat represented an important step forward, for the modernisation of Wallachia and Moldova.

It ought to be mentioned that other three laws from the Phanariot period, which start from the existent tradition, of Roman origin, inherited through Byzantium (ius Wallahicum), but which have enlightenment features, corresponding to the era when they were issued: *Pravilniceasca Condică* (The Code of Laws) from 1775, emitted by ruler Alexandru Ipsilanti (published in Greek and Romanian), entered in force in 1780, *Codul Callimach* (Callimach's Code), emitted by ruler Scarlat Callimachi from Moldova, in 1817, published in Greek and also called "*Condica Țivilă a Moldovei*" (Civil Code of Moldova) and *Legiuirea Caragea* (Caragea's Law) from 1818, issued by ruler Ioan Gheorghe Caragea.

Evidently, these legislative documents had certain limitations, but that was owing to the nature of the Phanariot regime (the rulings were temporary, they were effectively bought with sums of money paid to the sultan and his entourage) that would suppress the internal autonomy of the Principalities, they did not manage to change decisively the rhythm of the society.

In Transylvania, the enlightenment character could also be seen in the powerful popular movement from 1784, led by Horea, Cloșca and Crișan. Having consequences that reached the Imperial Court of Emperor Joseph II, an acknowledged representative of the enlightenment, the movement was suppressed by the emperor, due to the complications that occurred in the geopolitical relations of the Habsburg Empire with the Occident. Yet, the fact that the movement of Horea was featuring elements of the enlightenment, was demonstrated by Jean Pierre Brissot himself, the famous French revolutionary man, who sent a dramatic letter to the emperor, accusing him of the unjust sacrifice of Horea: *You are not similar to the usual despots. How can you borrow the insidious language of the tyrants, you, who are the friend of your subjects and the maker of justice?... Everyone who has written about the revolt of the Romanians seem to have conspired against this unfortunate people, just to encourage you, prince, to punish the leaders with horrible tortures, to subjugate even deeper this people... If I were to sentence Horea as an assassin, I would make the enemies first walk on the scaffold, the enemies that, the same as him, dirtied their hands in blood, and it would not be difficult to prove that the latter ones were even greater murderers. And, because neither of them paid with their heads for their atrocities, I have the right to conclude that, without any details, you were unjust punishing Horea by death, as an assassin, while you spare the life of the noble assassins. If the Romanians are not acknowledged their freedom, it means that all the*

*monarch of Europe need to raise against the United States of America, to outlaw the Constitution of this new state and to condemn as infamous any alliance with it.”*<sup>44</sup>

Shortly after 1784, in Transylvania, there would emerge a movement that all the historians consider the etalon of the Romanian enlightenment, “The Transylvanian School”. It had a cultural role, but also a juridical and political one. The apogee of the movement is represented by the memoire “Supplex Libellus Walachorum” from 1791 (sent by Ignatie Darabant, the unite Bishop of Oradea) and 1792 (sent by Ioan Bob, the unite bishop of Blaj), in which the Romanians were asking political rights to the Imperial Court from Wien.

There is presented below a fragment that demonstrates the rightfulness of the Romanians’ requests, as a synthesis between humanism and enlightenment: *“Most blessed majestic Emperor! (...) The Romanian nation is much older than the nations from Transylvania from our times, because it is a certain and proved fact by the historical sources, of a never interrupted tradition of language, custom and ritual similarity that springs from the Roman colonies brought at the beginning of the second century by Trajan, on countless occasions, in Dacia, with a great number of veteran soldiers, for defencing the Province. The successors of Augustus Trajan ruled over Dacia for few centuries. Under their leadership, in this Province, there has also been spread the Christian faith, according to the eastern rite, owing to the efforts of the bishops Protogenes, Gaudentius, Nicetas and Theotin, especially in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as this entire church history shows us. (...) When the Hungarians, towards the 9<sup>th</sup> century, led by their duke, Tuhutum, invaded Transylvania, the Roman dwellers of these (lands) were called Vlachs, a changed name, according to the oldest writer of Hungary, Anonymous, notary of King Béla: at that time, they were led by their own duke, Gelou, who had supreme power, yet unlucky in the battle that he started with the Hungarians, for the defence of his country, because in that battle he lost both his crown and life.(...)Both the history of our country and the Roman history show us that the Romanians have been living in Transylvania, certainly many centuries before the arrival of the Hungarians, and when, losing their own duke, Gelou, in battle they did not fight against the Hungarians anymore, but, due to their good-will, they allowed the Hungarians to live alongside, to be co-citizens, as the community with country-related rights. The Hungarians were satisfied with this free and spontaneous action of the Romanians, and the both nations found in co-citizenship and the community of rights, their happiness that they refused to entrust the odds of a further war, whose uncertain end could be harmful for the both nations. (...) The fact that the Saxons came in Transylvania in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, (and) the Armenians and the Bulgarians in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and that they (also) obtained the*

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<sup>44</sup> Nicolae Edroiu, *Răsunetul european al Răscoalei lui Horea (1784-1785)*, Dacia Press, Cluj-Napoca, 1976, p. 175.

acknowledging, is attested, besides history, by the princes' privileges and the diplomas. The only remaining are the Germans, citizens of the Country, who, as it is also proven by history, came into the Province especially at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the army of the happy emperor Leopold, and obtained the acknowledgement exactly in the same manner as the Hungarian, who came here towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. (...)'<sup>45</sup>.

In Wallachia and Moldova, new Enlightenment influences begin to show their presence in the age of the great conflicts between the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire, whose battle fields were the Romanian Principalities. In 1699, 1718, 1739, 1775-1776, 1812 there were abusively seizing of territories that the Ottomans had ceased after their defeats, yet without having this right. In 1739, Oltenia was returning to Wallachia, being ceded by the Habsburgs, who would keep, in turn, the Banat, taken in 1718, Bukovina, taken in 1775-1776, Transylvania, occupied in 1699, while the Tsarist Russia had taken Moldova, the territory between Prut, Dniester and the Black Sea, in 1812. It is worth noticed the fact that, despite the territorial raptures, the Principalities enjoyed autonomy (greatly affected, but, at least, it was present!), while the Kingdom of Poland, which had the status of great power in the Middle Ages, disappeared, due to four territorial divisions, between the Tsarist Russia, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Habsburg Empire<sup>46</sup>.

During the Ruling of Tsarina Catherine II, a sovereign with enlightenment visions (on addressing the geopolitical interests of Russia, not other states, or the subjects), the Romanian boyars started to write memoirs, in which to justify the right to autonomy of the Romanian Principalities, and, implicitly, the organic need of gaining independence.

The main argument of these memoirs was constituted by the existence of the Capitulations, meaning that the documents in which there was mentioned the vassalage of Principalities to the Sublime Porte, dating from the era of Mircea the Old (1386-1418), in Muntenia, and that of Stephen the Great (1457-1504) in Moldova. What it is sure, in the context of defeating Hungary, in 1526, at Mohacs, by the sultan Suleiman Kanuni (Suleiman the Magnificent, or the Legislator) and the transformation of the Kingdom of Hungary in Ottoman vilayet (the term of pashalik, from the legal point of view, never existed in the Ottoman legal dictionary, a/n), with the headquarters at Buda, the founding of Vilyauet of Timișoarei (Banatul) in 1552, there is produced a *de facto* regulation of the international status of Moldova and Muntenia (Wallachia), Transylvania, due to the reconfirmation of the *Dar al Ahd* status (House of Peace), which meant that they had internal autonomy, the rulers

<sup>45</sup> D. Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, Editura Științifică Press, Bucharest, 1967, p. 493-509.

<sup>46</sup> Neagu Djuvara, *O scurtă istorie a românilor povestită celor tineri*, Humanitas Press, 2008, *passim*.

being elected by the boyars and confirmed by the sultan (a mixed elective-hereditary system of electing the ruler generated many conflicts amongst the groups around the sultans, the Danube leaders also having influence all the time, and supporting one side or another, a/n)<sup>47</sup>.

Until the changes from 1699 (the occupying of Transylvania by the Habsburgs), in 1718 (the conquering of Banat and Oltenia by the Habsburgs), the installing of the Phanariot rulings (1711 and, respectively 1714), in Moldova and Wallachia, the international status regulated by Suleiman Kanuni remained in force.

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<sup>47</sup> Radu Dipratu, Süleyman și Țările Române, <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/suleyman-si-tarile-romane>, accessed on September 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.

### 3. THE UNION, FROM OBJECT OF THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL INITIATIVES TO EUROPEAN PROBLEM (1812-1856)

There ought to be reminded another aspect, the fact that the argument of the *Capitulations*, invoked also after 1821, especially by the Romanian emigrants from the 1848 period, in the interval of time 1849-1856, was never combated by the Ottomans, although the texts of the Capitulations were not preserved, neither in the Romanian internal archives, nor the Ottoman ones.

The most important memoirs written by the boyars were those from Focșani (1772), Șviștov (1791), “the project-memoir of D.Sturdza” (1802), “Constituția Cărvunară” (1822), “Pontul Popilor” etc. The important personalities of the petitionary activity were: Mihail Cantacuzino, Eufrosin Poteca, Ienăchiță Văcărescu, Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu etc.<sup>48</sup>.

The moment of 1821, which has been already evoked by the previous information, is to be debated again. Tudor Vladimirescu had been trained in the house of Glogoveanu boyars from Craiova and was acting as a “field bailiff”, in Plaiul Cloșanilor, at the frontier between Wallachia and the Habsburg Empire. The fact that he led the groups of pandours (armed volunteers from Oltenia), during the Russian-Turkish wars, brought him the status of Russian subject (that meant diplomatic protection), the degree of officer of the Russian Army and prestigious decorations. In his frequent peregrinations in the Habsburg Empire, at Wien (where he regulated legal matters on addressing the inheritance of the late wife of one of Glogoveanu boyars, who had died there), at Mehadia (where she had been undergoing a treatment in one of the renowned thermal baths since the Antiquity), Tudor Vladimirescu laid the foundation of his revolutionary action, in the circumstances offered by the Congress of Wien and the founding of the Triple Alliance, in 1814-1815. Although Russia was formally not engaging into supporting revolutionary actions, the tsarist government started to support the initiatives of the Greeks and those of the Romanians for emancipation, under the pretext of protecting the Christians oppressed by the Ottoman Empire.

*Cererile Norodului Românesc* – The Requests of the Romanian People (February 1821) is, in this respect, one of the documents that prove the certain influence of the enlightenment, which played the role of Constitution, during the revolution from 1821.

Although defeated, although the leader was killed, the Romanian revolution succeeded in imposing the restauration of the local rulers.

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<sup>48</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *op.cit.*, p.49-56.

The Russian-Ottoman Convention from Akkerman from 1826 brought modifications on the internal status of the Principalities, and the Treaty of Adrianople from 1829 even included a separate act, called “*Osăbitul Act pentru Prințipaturile Moldova și Țara Românească*” (The Special Act for the Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia) that was instituting, besides the Ottoman suzerainty, the Russian protectorate, rather visible after the peace from Kuciuk-Kainadji from 1774.

There shall be cited below the provisions that referred to the Romanian principalities, in the Treaty of Adrianople, along with the “*The Separate Document*”:  
“*Art. V. The Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia placed themselves, after a capitulation, under the sovereignty of the Sublime Porte and Russia guaranteeing their prosperity, it is understandable that they shall keep all their privileges and immunities that they were granted, either due to their capitulations, or the treaties concluded between the two empires or the hatt-i humayuns that were issued in different moments. Consequently, they shall enjoy the free exercising of their cult, in perfect safety, an independent national administration and full freedom of trading; the clauses additional to the before stipulations, considered necessary for providing the two provinces with the possibility to enjoy their rights, are registered in the annexed separate document, which is and shall be considered an integrant part of the present treaty. Separate document, related to the principalities of Moldova and Wallachia. The two contracting powers, confirming everything that was stipulated in the separate act of the Akkerman convention referring to the manner the hospodars are elected in Moldova and Wallachia, acknowledged the necessity to grant the administration of these provinces a more stable basis, and more appropriate with the real interests of these two countries. For this purpose, there has been agreed and permanently regulated that the duration for the governing of the hospodars to not be limited to seven years anymore, as it used to be in the past, but, from now on, they shall be invested with this dignity for life, except the cases of willingly expressed abdication or dismissal because of crimes, provisioned in the already mentioned separate document. The hospodars shall regulate freely on all the internal affairs of their provinces, consulting the councils, yet, not being able to bring any prejudice to the rights guaranteed for the two countries by the hatt-i humayuns, and shall not be disturbed in their internal administration by any order that would act against these rights. The Sublime Porte pledges and commits to supervise scrupulously that the privileges granted to Moldova and Wallachia to not be infringed in any manner by the leaders from the frontiers; to not allow any interference from them in the affairs of the two provinces and to stop any incursion of the riparian people from the right bank of the Danube on the Vlach or Moldavian territory. There shall be considered as an integrant part of this territory all the adjoining islands from the left bank of Danube, and the sailing line of this river (Thalweg) shall constitute the limit of the*

two principalities, from its entrance into the Ottoman states, to its confluence with Prut River. The Turkish cities from the left side of Danube, along with their territories (*rayas*) shall be given back to Wallachia, for uniting, from this moment on, with this principality, and the fortifications that used to exist on this bank, shall never be rebuilt. The Muslims that own immobile goods, obtained not through the usurpation of some private people's rights, either in these cities, or in any point from the left bank of the Danube, shall be compelled to sell them to the indigenous, in the eighteen forthcoming months. The Sublime Porte, animated by the sincere desire of granting the two principalities all the welfare that they can enjoy, and informed on the abuses and offenses that take place when there are gathered the different provisions imposed by consumption in Constantinople, by the supplying of the fortresses situated on the Danube and the needs of the arsenal, renounces entirely and completely its right related to this situation. Consequently, Wallachia and Moldova shall be dispensed for ever from supplying the grain and other goods of consumption, the sheep and the construction timber, which they have been compelled to deliver so far. Moreover, these provinces are not to be requested, in any way, labour for the fortification works, or another type of chores. Nonetheless, in order to indemnify the imperial thesaurus for the loss due to the total renouncing of its rights, independent from the annual tribute that the two principalities have to pay to the Sublime Porte as *haraci*, *idie* and *rechiabie* (as resorting from the *hatt-i humayuns* from 1802), Moldova and Wallachia shall pay, each and annually, as compensation to the Sublime Porte, an amount of money that shall be later determined in common agreement<sup>49</sup>.”

The generation from 1848 would raise to a different level the principles of the enlightenment. There ought to be reminded that, until 1848-1849, when the revolution generated a lot of programmatic documents, two of the acts “*Actul de Unire și Independență*” (The Act of Union and Independence), “*Osăbitul Act de Numire a Suveranului*” (The Special Act for Appointing the Sovereign), drafted by the Illuminist boyar Ion Câmpineanu in Wallachia, even considering the fact that, since 1831 and 1832, the Romanian Principalities of Muntenia and Moldova had each an Organic Regulation, elaborated by the Tsarist government, beneficiating by the consultation with the Romanian boyars. Despite some modern principles that cannot be contested, internally, these acts were very restrictive, especially after 1836-1838, when the Ottoman Empire and the Tsarist Russia reserved their right to interfere with any internal initiative of the two states<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> A. Vianu, C. Bușe, C. Zamfir, Gh. Bădescu, *Relații internaționale în acte și documente*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică Press, Vol. I, 1976, p. 284–287.

<sup>50</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *op.cit.*, p.49-56.

The Romanian revolution from 1848 found a special adhesion amongst the priests, the monks and the high-rank clergymen, both orthodox and uniate.

In Bessarabia, the territory of Moldova between Prut and Dniester, seized in 1821, the Russian Orthodox Church started to impose that the orthodox masses to be carried out in Russian, desiring the denationalisation of the Romanians, who did not even have the right to school in their maternal language.

In Wallachia and Moldova, there was the custom that the rulers and the boyars to offer the monasteries donations as movables (including the right to collect the different taxes for their own use, or the right to administrate other taxes, from which they would take a quota) and immovables.

Some monasteries were even devoted to the Holy Places from Mount Athos and Jerusalem, being administrated by Greek Father-Superiors, and having even Greek monks. Seldom, these monasteries had lost their ecclesiastic role, remaining just simple centres that would generate income for the monastery they obey to, a situation that continued until 1863, when it was adopted the law on the secularization of the monastic estates.

Another ethic problem is that presented by the boyar Dinicu Golescu. He decided to write “*Însemnare a călătoriei mele*” (Notes on my journey), in 1826, after the informing and documentation journey he took in the European Occident. Everywhere, the boyar Dinicu Golescu shows the contradiction between what he saw abroad and the awful conditions from the Romanian society. He also mentions the fact that he belongs to a boyars’ family that deliberately stopped of progress among the Romanian peasants. He blames himself before the posterity, wishing to make the situation right, as much as it was possible. Yet, Dinicu Golescu is not content only with “doing penance in sockcloth and ashes”, he also criticises the neglect, the corruption and the lack of education of the boyars from Wallachia, elements that led to the maintaining of stagnation: “*These people (the Swiss, a/n) live on a rather rocky filed, more than half covered with mountains, than with plains, and smaller than half of Wallachia (that is Oltenia and Multenia, a/n). And now let anyone decide: does this nation, living on such a fruitful land, have the proper leadership, as its population deserves?*” On the contrary, where it is education, the situation is auspicious, and the countries with a surface and population smaller than those of Romania progressed, being united and independent. Dinicu Golescu illustrates this fact, using the example of Switzerland: “*From here we went to the village of Altesten, where, again, a worth mentioning event happened to me. Descending at the inn, a man asked me where we came from. And when I told him that it was Cronștat, he continued: is it Cronștat of Transylvania (Brașov a/n) that borders with Wallachia? Because it is a locality of Cronștat in Russia too, and I needed to make the distinction. Seeing that he had knowledge in geography, I asked the innkeeper: “what*



kind of man was he?" He answered that he was a ploughman, and that they came there because it was the day of the newspapers, and some people were gathering to read them; and if we wanted to read them we can enter the community room, where, entering, we found three or four people like that man, holding newspapers. That moment I started to think to myself, seeing that the peasants from Switzerland who wanted to be up to date with what was going on around the world would gather round and read journals. And, that man who asked me where I was from proved me quite much that he read geography, or, at least, he looked on a map. Oh! What a painful memory! Because, in 1824, while going to Cluj, Peșta (Pesta in Hungary a/n) and Mehadia with my brother, Chancellor Manolache Băleanul, he received a letter from the high chancellery, where, at the addressee section, it was written: "To Mr. ..., at Mehadia, in the land of Transylvania". From here, it can be seen that neither of the chancellors knew that Mehadia is not located in the land of Transylvania, although it is very close to the frontiers of Wallachia too, - and the Swiss ploughman, who lives four lands away, knew where it was and who it was neighbouring with"<sup>51</sup>.

Moreover, he draws the attention, showing that the Italians, although living separately, started to fight for the national unity, having theatres open for the public in their maternal language, the Italian, which is not the case in Wallachia, where the theatres were "French" and not even the boyars could understand the message conveyed by the plays<sup>52</sup>.

The boyar Dinicu Golescu makes the distinction between the state that generates oppression, collects taxes abusively and the progressive state in which there is the interest that all the social "states" to become emancipated, the money of the country being used for education, constructions, progress, science that the unity and the independence of the Principalities were requiring.

The boyar commissions that worked for the **Organic Regulations of Wallachia and Moldova** included the argument of the unity, dissimulated in these constitutional acts imposed by the Tsarist Russia, which, in the 1829-1834 period, had occupied the principalities. The boyars from Muntenia and Moldova, elected from their co-nationals, by them, managed to insert in these acts provisions that would legitimate the Union of the Principalities, which were not identified by the boyars appointed by Russia and the drawing-up Russian commission:

*Art. 371. The beginning, the religion, the customs, the language of the people who live in these two principalities, along with other elements that are necessary and bring them closer to the union, which until now have proved to work against them, and only after accidental circumstances and their consequences, the useful outcomes*

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<sup>51</sup>Dinicu Golescu, *Însemnare a călătorii mele*, Buda, 1826, [www.dacoromania.ro](http://www.dacoromania.ro) .

<sup>52</sup>*Ibidem*.

that might occur from the closeness of these peoples cannot be subjected to doubt; thus, the beginnings have been settled through this regulation, through the similar administrative rules, in the both countries<sup>53</sup>.

**Art. 372** – The dwellers from the both principalities are to enjoy all the trade facilities, according to the stipulations from section V, article 159 of this regulation and are to obtain, both and in each diocese, in case of trade, the same civil rights, similar to the natives. The right to obtain, in one country or the other, movable and immovable goods is also granted to the dwellers from the both principalities. **Art. 374** – The dwellers of the villages that live on the frontier line between these two countries, in case they need to cross the border on the neighbouring estates temporarily, for work, shall be free to do it, yet before talking to the owners of the estates and the officials from the village courts that grant the right to free circulation, without any payment or opposition from the authorities. **Art. 375** – The money shall have the same currency circulation and the same price shall be in both principalities, as according to article 65. **Art. 378** – Any boyar or trader is free to travel abroad, on the places where the personal businesses require him to, without restrictions, except those provisioned by the code of laws<sup>54</sup> - **The Organic Regulation of Wallachia.**

**Art. 425.** The beginning, the religion, the customs and the similarity of language of these two principalities, along with the necessities of both lands, have had since their origin elements that lead towards to union, which has been impeded and delayed by unfortunate occurrences. The beneficial uses that might be brought by the union of these two nations are indubitable. The elements that are generated by the merging between the Moldavians and Romanians are mentioned by this regulation, and the administrations of these two countries<sup>55</sup> - **The Organic Regulation of Moldova.**

Yet, in this period, the founding of public schools in Romanian, the founding of the national army, the regulation of the internal economy, the juridical system contributed to the creation of the political and cultural elite that had started to emerge after 1821, due to the endeavours of some brilliant minds as Dinicu and Iordache Golescu, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, Eufrosin Poteca, Ion Câmpineanu (author of “Actul de Unire și Independență” and “Osăbitul Act de numire a suveranului”). These cultural elite could improve its training in the Occident, at Paris, Padua, Wien, Berlin,

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<sup>53</sup><https://statuldacia.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/regulamentele-organice-ale-valahiei-si-moldovei-1831-1832.pdf>, accessed on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>54</sup> *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldaviei*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1944, p. 130.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*.

and owing to the arrival in the Principalities of some revolutionary views professors, as in the case of J.A.Vaillant.<sup>56</sup>

In March 1848, the revolution had taken in the Italian States, France, the German States, the Habsburg Empire, reaching the Principalities. If at Iași, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March-8<sup>th</sup> of April 1848, the Proclamation Petition from Iași, in 35 points, delivered at “Traian” Hotel from the capital of Moldova did not manage to shatter the throne of the regulation ruler Mihail Sturdza (1834-1848), at Bucharest, Lugoj, Cernăuți or on Câmpia Libertății from Blaj, the Romanian revolution would be carried on differently. Undoubtedly, at Iași, the revolutionary bill had been written with prudence. Russia could interfere anytime, that is why “The Holy protection of the Organic Regulation” had been written at the first point of the bill. After they had been saved from the arrest, the revolutionary men from Moldova, Vasile Alecsandri, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, regrouped at Brașov and Cernăuți, where they elaborated documents as “Our Principles for the reformation of the country” or “The Wishes of the National Party from Moldova”.

At Bucharest, the revolutionary men knew that the Ottoman Empire could interfere, crossing the Danube at Giurgiu, instigated by Russia. As shown in a previous study, Craiova played an important role in creating the bill of the revolution, although the brother of the ruler Gheorghe Bibescu was prefect here. The revolutionaries from Wallachia, among which there are Nicolae Bălcescu, Alexandru G. Golescu, Alexandru C. Golescu, Nicolae Golescu, Radu Golescu, Ștefan Golescu, Gheorghe Magheru, Ioan Deivos, Ion C. Brătianu, Ioan Măiorescu, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, Nicolae Pleșoianu, Christian Tell, Ion Voinescu had proposed to start the revolution from several points (Islaz, Telega, Ocelele Mari), but, due to the controls imposed by the authorities, they could start it only from one point, at Izlaz, the informing between the revolutionaries being codified under the pretext of attending a wedding, on the 9<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> of June 1848.

In Wallachia, the ruler Gheorghe Bibescu signed the text of the Proclamation of Izlaz, but, under the pressure of the Russian consul accredited at Bucharest, he left the capital of Wallachia, which, on one side, could mean a success recorded by the revolution, because a provisory government could be installed, but, on the other side, could represent that pretext that would allow the intervention of the Ottoman Empire, in the north of Danube, because there was infringed the condition provisioned in the Additional Act to the Organic Regulation (any institutional and political change could be done only with the agreement of the suzerain and protecting powers).

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<sup>56</sup> Florin Nacu, *European influences in reforming social structures of modern Romania*, in “Sociology, Education Sciences, International Relations”, Conference GIDNI 2, “ARHIPELAG XXI” Press, 2015, p.274-278.

The revolutionary men from the Provisory Government tried to deal tactfully with the suspicions expressed by the Porte, firstly accepting that Metropolitan Neofit to preside the Provisory Government, and the colonels Solomon and Odobescu to be members in the government, although their anti-revolutionary position was well-known. After these colonels arrested the other members of the Provisory Government, only the intervention of the population from Bucharest, mobilised by Ana Ipătescu, led to the freeing of the arrested. The revolution would enter its radical phase, but it only meant the hastening of the Ottoman troops intervention. Râureni, Vâlcea County, Gheorghe Magheru had mobilised the revolutionary army, although, here too, there were some dissatisfactions generated by the delaying of the agrarian issue that the peasants had attached, similarly to 1821, to the revolutionary ideals that they wished to be fulfilled<sup>57</sup>.

A natural question emerges: why was there not made a compromise between the social and the national element? A possible answer is that the revolutionaries did not have the sufficient military resources for a military confrontation with the Russians or the Ottomans. The conservatives, that is, the adversaries of the Revolution, were familiar to this situation and did not hesitate to spread mistrust amongst the Romanians. They wished to shelter their estates before an Ottoman military intervention, which they were waiting, but in the same time they knew it would be tempered by the Russians<sup>58</sup>.

Confronting to the situation of Danube crossing by the Ottomans, the revolutionists decided to replace the Provisory Government with Ad-Interim Rulers, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July/9<sup>th</sup> of August 1848, which Suleiman Pasha tacitly accepted<sup>59</sup>. The pressure of the Russian and Austrian diplomats determined the Sultan to order the replacement of Suleiman-Pasha with Fouad-Effendi, a more decided man to use force, in order to end the revolution.

The revolutionists from Wallachia, in the last part of the revolution, had a radical attitude, burning Arhondologia (The Almanac of the Nobility) and hanging the Organic Regulation.

A certain fact is that on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 1848, the Commission on Property, with Ion Ionescu de la Brad as vice-president had started its activity, without reaching a solution on the land reform for a month. In fact, the land reform was supposed to be made by paying compensations, but its quantum, the size of the plots

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<sup>57</sup> Corneliu Tamaș, P. Bardașu, S. Purece, H. Nestorescu- Bălcești, *Revoluția din 1848 în județul Vâlcea*, Rm. Vâlcea, 1978, p.8 and next.

<sup>58</sup> These historiographic debates were presented in detail in Florin Nacu, *Aspecte ale istoriei moderne și contemporane a României din perspectiva cercetării istorice naționale și internaționale a ultimilor 25 de ani (1989-2014)*, Tipo Moldova Press, Iași, 2015.

<sup>59</sup> The Centre of Studies and History Research and Military Theory, *Istoria Militară a Poporului Român*, Editura Militară Press, Bucharest, 1987, passim.

that were to be given to the peasants<sup>60</sup> and the percent of expropriation of each estate did not meet an agreement, which led to its self-dissolution of the Commission on Property<sup>61</sup>.

After the battle from Dealul Spirii, which took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 1848, when the Company of Firefighters, led by Pavel Zăgănescu that came to support the Romanian troops from the Capital, led by Nicolae Golescu, engaged into the fight with the forces led by Kerim-Pasha (after an incident when a Romanian lieutenant, hit with the flat of the sword by a Turkish major, shot his the gun, killing the major and shooting Kerim-Pasha's horse), the revolutionaries from Muntenia sought refuge in Ardeal, escaping from the escort that was supposed to take them in arrest. The army from Florești was demobilised, because there was a danger for a double military intervention, which meant the waste of important resources.

In Transylvania, the attitude of the Magyars of voting in the Diet from Pojon, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1848, the union of Transylvania with Hungary and not acknowledgement of the legitimate aspirations of the Romanians, determined the leaders, Avram Iancu, Ioan Axente Sever, Ioan Dobra, to meet in April at Blaj, where they decided to organise, on the 3<sup>rd</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> of May 1848, the Great Assembly from Blaj, on Câmpia Libertății, where the Romanians were to be organised military and to engage in fight with the Magyar troops, led by officers, as general Iosef Bem, or major Hatvany.

There is to be quoted below the Manifest of Simion Bărnuțiu, on the necessity to fight against the Union of Transylvania with Hungary, in March 1848:

*"The Hungarians call the people from Transylvania to the union, Cluj had already declared with solemnity that it desires the union; and so will do the Szecklers; maybe the Saxons will refuse. But what will the Romanians do? On the understanding of this question depends the life and the death of the Romanians. Now it is time the Romanians opened their eyes, because it is due time to obtain anything, if using it properly, and, if using it badly, they will lose everything that they have left, meaning that they will lose their nationality, and with it, everything. Therefore, listen up you great-great children of the Romanians! This is what every Romanian ought to think of and speak about today, either a priest, a noble man, a soldier, a citizen or a villager, listen up what it should be answered today to the Hungarians, the Szecklers and the Saxons!!! We, the Romanians, do not want to talk to you about this union, until the Romanian nation is strong again politically, which you, the Hungarians, the Szecklers and the Saxons, have been impeding. You behaved before our nation in*

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<sup>60</sup> Florin Nacu, *De la "clăcășie" la "neoiobăgie" -repere istoriografice privind evoluția "chestiunii țărănești"* in "Arhivele Olteniei" no.29 (new series), p.126-137.

<sup>61</sup> Idem, *Împlinirea dezideratului revoluționar pașoptist în timpul domniei lui Alexandru Ioan Cuza*, Colecția Opera Omnia, Cartea de Istorie, Tipo Moldova Press, Iași, 2015, p. 10 and next.

*any manner you wanted, you declared in you meetings that the Romanians, the oldest nation from Ardeal, is merely tolerated, and banned, until today, all its highest offices. You kept all the important ones; if any Romanians succeeded in managing any high office, you made him renounce his laws, disowned his mother, subdued him, and disavowed the nation that sent him to school with great efforts. Enough is enough, it is not my desire to count the sins, to not disturb this wonderful holiday that God, the God of the Peoples, gave us to enjoy and delight upon. Today, the sweet word of freedom can be heard in all the cities, and, tomorrow, it shall be heard in all the villages. Today it is the day all the peoples resurrect! Romanians! Listen up, you who have been dead politically so far, only the Hungarians are acknowledged by all the laws of the country, and not the other nations. Therefore you, one million three thousand and more of Romanians, you do not exist as nation of this world. Once more, my brothers! Today is the day our right resurrects. Thus, we wish to turn over the stone on our grave, to untie the strings of the Romanian nation, those of tens of thousands of years, to get out of the tomb and live for ever. Once more, my brothers! Without a nation and a republic, it is nothing than a baneful despotism; the disappearance of serfdom, the Romanian nation as it is rightful, a national congress in which us to make the decisions on how to obtain these. Damned shall be for ever any Romanian who will dare to agree to any union, until the Romanian nation is again politically accepted”<sup>62</sup>.*

The fights around the Apuseni Mountains between the Romanians and the Magyars, the abuses of Lajos Csany, the intervention of Lajos Kossuth led to the radicalisation of the revolution. Avram Iancu even tried to reach an agreement to the imperial troops, with the authorities from Wien, in exchange for the acknowledgement of the Romanian nationality and the orthodox confession.

After the leaders of the revolution from Muntenia reached Ardeal, they tried to convince Avram Iancu to stop the hostility with the Magyars, before the common enemy, the Habsburg Empire. An efficient mediator proved to be Eftimie Murgu. Basically, the revolutionists from Muntenia were asking those from Ardeal a political compromise, that is, something they did not succeed in Wallachia. The national ideas could have been materialised if the Habsburg domination had fell, it was what the revolutionists from Wallachia were affirming.

The project of pacification from Szeged, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> of July 1849, between Avram Iancu and Lajos Kossuth, was acknowledging the rights of the Romanians, but history decided differently. On the 1<sup>st</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> of August 1849, near Arad, at Şiria, the

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<sup>62</sup> Cornelia Bodea, *1848 la români: o istorie în date și mărturii*, I, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1982, p. 401–402.

Russian troops intervened, saving the Habsburg Empire, Russia being called that moment, “The Gendarme of Europe”.

If Avram Iancu retreated disappointed from the foreground of the national fight, names as Gheorghe Barițiu or Simion Bărnuțiu continued to activate in the following years too. The revolutionaries from Muntenia and Moldova went to exile, the Convention of Balta Liman from 1849, where the Romanian Rulers were considered “high officials of the Ottoman Empire” was regulating the duration of the ruling to 7 years and was forbidding the access to Moldova and Wallachia of numerous revolutionists, which the authorities considered extremely dangerous:

*“Art. I. Due to the exceptional circumstances provoked by the last event, the two imperial courts decided that, instead of keeping the provisions of the regulation from 1831, on addressing the election of the hospodars for Moldova and Wallachia, these high officials shall be appointed by His Majesty, the Sultan, this time according to a special manner, on which the both courts agreed, with the purpose to entrust the administration of these provinces to the most worthy candidates, who enjoy the fame amongst their compatriots. Also this time only, the two hospodars shall be appointed just for seven years, the two courts reserving their right that, one year before the expiration of the term provisioned in the present transaction, to consider the internal state of the Principalities and the services that the two hospodars brought, and to consider together on the further decisions. Art. II. The Organic Regulation given to the Principalities in 1831 shall remain in force, besides the changes and the modifications that the experience considered necessary, especially on addressing the elections and stationality, respected so far; because these assemblies generated, and not just once, awful conflicts and even actions of obvious insubordination, their convoking shall remain not settled yet; and the two courts reserve their right to agree on their restoration, on grounds combined with all the maturity requested the moment they shall considered accentuated, without any inconvenient for maintaining the public order in Principalities. Their deliberative functions shall be provisory entrusted to some councils and ad-hoc divans, made of the most notable and worth trusting boyars, along with few of the superior clergymen. The main attributions of these councils shall be the taxes and the examination of the annual budget, between the two provinces.”<sup>63</sup>*

Thus, the terms “national” and “social” are fundamental elements on which the revolutionary ideas from 1848 were founded.

The European revolutionists had tried, until the proclamation of the second French Empire by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, crowned on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1852 as Napoleon III, to make a “European revolution”. They had realised that, acting

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<sup>63</sup> *Relațiile internaționale*, p. 326–327.

individually, they had been isolated and defeated. Obviously that some of the revolutionists wished radical actions, as Giuseppe Mazzini or Giuseppe Garibaldi, others were playing the card of diplomacy, as Camillo Benso di Cavour, Lajos Kossuth, Vasile Alecsandri, Ioan Maiorescu, and even Nicolae Bălcescu<sup>64</sup>, despite the radicalism that used to characterise him. The moment 1848-1849 ended the policy of Metternich, the new emperor from Wien, Franz Joseph being the adept of a more efficient policy, oriented to the expansion of Austria, especially towards the Balkans<sup>65</sup>.

Events as the death of Nicolae Bălcescu and the crowning of Napoleon III ended the plans for a “European revolution”, or contributed to the decrease of radicalism.

What it is certain, is that in the German, Italian, Romanian space, there had been planted the ideas of fight for national unity and independence. Names as Otto von Bismarck, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Vasile Alecsandri, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Camillo Benso of Cavour, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Gyla Andrassy, kings and emperors as Wilhelm, Franz Joseph, Umberto, Napoleon III started to build the image of a Europe of the nations that wished to fight for determination, and of some expansionist empires, willing to support the national causes, as long as they were corresponding to their own interests.

I believe, this is the most important change of paradigm of the 1848 moment. The politicians who were adepts of the national self-determination understood that they needed to oscillate with ability amongst the interests of the great empires, in order to realise their national interest. Furthermore, without the materialisation of the social interest, any national idea was difficult to become reality.

The Congress of Berlin from 1878, three decades after the revolutionary events from 1848-1849, is the complete expression of the new European political establishment.

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<sup>64</sup> Nicolae Bălcescu, *Question economique des Principautés Danubiennes*, în *Opere*, vol. II, Critical edition by Gheorghe and Elena Zane, Bucharest, Academy Press, 1982, p. 76.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*.



#### 4. UNION AND INDEPENDENCE IN THE MODERN ERA (1856-1918)

The revolution from 1848-1849 had created a new political generation that had fought for the union and national independence. The exile from the period 1849-1857 determined the generation from 1848 to have an intense memoir activity. The Crimean War from 1853-1856, when the Principalities were occupied, successively, by the Russians and the Austrians, represented the astral moment when the Romanian problem became a European one, at the Treaty of Paris of 1856, when, from the desire of stopping Russia, in the future, from crossing the south of Danube, it was decided the creation of the premises for a formal union (but in a unique state structure) between Wallachia and Moldova, by putting them, besides the Ottoman suzerainty, under the collective guarantee of the European Powers. A Special Commission had to take care, in the future, of the faith of these Principalities.

There shall be further quoted a fragment from the Treaty of Paris, signed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1856: *“Art. 22. The Romanian Countries (sic!) and Moldova shall enjoy, in the future too, under the suzerainty of the Porte and the protection of the signing powers, the rights and exemptions they are allowed. Neither of the guarantee powers can protect alone any of these countries; moreover, it is not allowed that anyone mingles in their internal affairs. Art. 23. The Porte has the duty to offer the mentioned countries unrestricted and national protection, along with the entire freedom of religion, laws, trade and sailing. The laws and the decisions from today shall be subjected to change. In order to decide on a full agreement on this change, there shall be formed a commission that will meet at Bucharest, along with a Commissary of the Porte, and whose structure shall be agreed on by the members of the commission. The duty of this commission shall be of searching and finding the present state of the mentioned countries, and to show the reasons for the future agreements. Art. 24. The Sultan promises that he will call for a very soon meeting, in each of these two countries, an (ad-hoc) assembly, made of the representatives of all the interests and all the social positions. These assemblies are to be gathered for finally acknowledge the desires of people and the manner their future agreements are to be made. Art. 25. The congress is to regulate the method in which the commission needs to agree on these assemblies. The Commission, taking into account the opinion of the two assemblies, shall send immediately its works to the Congress officials in charge. The agreement with the suzerain power shall be sent in a written form, concluded at Paris among the signing parties; and a hatt-i humayun, according to this agreement, shall finally decide the new state of these countries, which, in the future, shall be placed under the guarantee of all the signing powers of the treaty. Art. 26. It was agreed by everyone that the Romanian countries to have a national*

army, for the inner safety of the borders. No obstacle shall interfere with the unusual measures of defence that, in union with the Porte, these countries will need to take, in case of any foreign invasion. Art. 27. If the internal peace of the countries is threatened, the Porte shall make an agreement with the other signing powers on the measures that need to be taken for restoring or keeping the order. Neither of the powers is allowed, before agreeing with the others, to enter with arms in these countries<sup>66</sup>.”

The Project of the Union Central Committee from Bucharest (30<sup>th</sup> of March 1857)

“The authority of the union is strong, as one that shelters and develops property, commerce, industry, free professions and religion, in a word, the entire elements of a country’s life. The bill of the union established four strong fundamentals on which the edifice of its political organisation is to be built. I. The guarantee of the autonomy and our international rights, as they are both decided through the capitulations from 1393-1460 and 1513, concluded between the Romanian countries and the Porte, along with the neutrality of the Moldavian-Romanian territory. Due to the neutrality of the Romanian territory, and protected by foreign invasions, we shall live peacefully, increasing the material assets and developing the moral ones, the undefended elements of a country’s happiness. II. The union of the Romanian and Moldavian countries in one state and under a single government. The union of the Principalities triggers with itself the national power, that is, the positive material guarantee of our political rights. Only through union we can reach stability, power and strength, and, in this way, we can determine the observing of our rights, both externally and internally. III. A foreign prince along with the inheritance of the throne, chosen from a ruling dynasty of Europe, whose successors, born in the country, we wish to be brought up in the religion of the country. It is well-known, from the very experience of our past, that the ruling of the local rulers generated rivalry amongst the families who lawfully claim the throne of the country; and these desires many times increased in an unstoppable manner, and those people who had the power, in order to oppose the new-formed parties, were struggling to corrupt the weak souls, encouraging through demoralising rewards and opening the doors for all kinds of abuses! Abroad, the concern of the rulers was to interest the foreign powers into their own person, and not the favour of the country, and the claimants were continuously going to the foreigners, in order to sacrifice the interests of the country mercilessly, for their sad vanity! IV. Representative Constitutional government, and according to the old customs of the country, a single National Assembly, which shall be constituted through a wide electoral list, to represent the general interests of the

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<sup>66</sup> A. Vianu, C. Bușe, C. Zamfir, Gh. Bădescu, *op.cit.*, p. 330–331.

Romanian population. Indeed, how can the power of the laws be guaranteed internally, if the power of the government is not limited and answerable before a National Assembly that would improve the laws of the country? This Assembly shall not represent, nor support, the privileges and the interests of a class or caste, as in the past, but the national interests, having in its componse people who are tightly related to the great interests of the country. This assembly shall be regulated in that manner that the property, the trade, the capacity, as in all the countries, shall not be infringed by the big number”<sup>67</sup>.

The draft resolution of the Ad-Hoc Assembly of Moldova (7<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> of October 1857) stipulates that:<sup>68</sup>

“Taking into account that the biggest wish, that general one, nurtured by all the past generations, the one that represents the soul of the actual generation, which if fulfilled will make happy all the future generations, is the Union of the Principalities in one state, a union which is natural, legitimate and undefended, because in Moldova and Wallachia we are the same people, homogenous, identic as no other, because we have the same beginnings, the same name, the same language, the same religion, the same history, the same civilisation, the same institutions, the same laws and customs, the same fears and hopes, the same needs to satisfy, the same frontiers to guard, the same past sufferings, the same future to provide, and, finally, the same mission to fulfil. The ad-hoc Assembly of Moldova, stepping on the way open by the Treaty of Paris, that is, beginning to voice the desires of the country, in all the purity of thought, considering only the rights and the advantage of the Romanian nation, declares that the first, the biggest, the more general and national desires of the country are: 1. The observing of the main rights, and especially their autonomy, as stipulated in the old capitulations concluded with the Porte in the years 1393, 1460, 1511 and 1634. 2. The Union of Principalities in one state, under the name of Romania. 3. A foreign prince and the inheritance of the throne, from a European Ruling dynasty, and whose successors to be brought-up in the country’s religion. 4. The neutrality of the principalities. 5. The legislative power to be entrusted to the National Assembly, in which to be represented all the powers of the nation”<sup>69</sup>.

The Convention of Paris (7<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> of August 1858) has the following essential provisions for the Union:

*The Convention concluded among Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia and Turkey for the organisation of the Principalities, Paris (7<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>*

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<sup>67</sup> C.Colescu-Vartic, Ghenadie Petrescu, D.A. Sturdza, I.I.Krupenski, *Acte și documente relative la istoria renascerei României*, vol. V, 1890, p. 965–966.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VIII, 1900, p. 343–344.

of August 1858). These countries, enjoying full powers, acknowledged in the proper circumstances, met at the Treaty of Paris and decided: Art. 1 —The Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia, constituted from now on as “The United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia”, remain under the suzerainty of His Grace, the Sultan. The Principalities are to administrate themselves, and without any influence of the Sublime Porte, under certain limitations. The laws, having a common interest for the both principalities shall be prepared by the central commission and subjected to vote in the assemblies, by the hospodars. Art. 7 — The judicial power, exercised in the name of the hospodar, shall be entrusted to the magistrates appointed by him, and no one can elude their natural judges. A law shall determine the conditions for the admission and advance in magistrature, taking as basis the progressive applying of irremovability principle. Art. 8 —The Principalities shall pay to the suzerain court an annual tribute, whose total amount is to be established for the sum of 1,500,000 piastres for Moldova and 2,500,000 piastres for Wallachia ... Art. 9 — In case of infringement of the principalities’ immunity, the hospodars shall address an appeal to the suzerain power; and if it is not made justice, the denunciation will be sent, through their agents, to the representatives of the guaranteeing powers to Constantinople. The hospodars shall be represented, in the suzerain court, by agents (capucheai), Moldavians or Vlachs, not being subjected to any foreign jurisdiction, and agreed by the Porte. Art. 10 — The hospodar shall be elected by the assembly for life. Art. 11 — In case of vacancy, and until the installing of a new hospodar, the administration shall pass into the attribution of the Council of Ministers, which shall rightfully take the function. ... Art. 12 —When the vacancy occurred, if the assembly is replaced, in eight days the hospodar shall be elected. If it does not meet, it shall immediately be convoked and met in ten days. In the case it is dissolved, there shall be proceeded to new elections, in fifteen days, and the new assembly will need to also meet in ten days. ... Art. 13 — It is considered eligible for the position of hospodar anyone with the age of 35 years old, born from a Moldavian or Vlach father, who can justify a landed income of 3,000 ducats, on the condition to have held public positions for ten years, or to have been part of assemblies. Art. 14 — The hospodar governs with the help of the ministers that he appoints. He has the right to grant pardon and to commute the criminal sentences, without interfering in the administration of justice. He drafts the laws, showing special interest for the Principalities and especially for the budgets that he subjects to debate in the assembly. He makes all the appointments in the public administration and drafts the necessary regulations for applying the laws. The civil list of each hospodar shall be voted by the assembly, once for good, in the moment he is elected. Art. 15 —Any act that is drafted by the hospodar ought to be countersigned by the resort ministers. The ministers shall be held responsible for the infringement of the laws, and, particularly,

of any waste of the public income. They shall be sentenced by the High Court of Justice and Cassation. Art. 16 —The elective assembly shall be elected in each principality for 7 years, according to the electoral dispositions annexed to the convention. Art. 17 — The assembly shall be convoked by the hospodar and ought to be reunited every year, on the first Sunday of December. The duration of each extraordinary session shall be of three months. The hospodar will be allowed, if the case, to extend the session. He will be able to convoke an extraordinary session or to dissolve the assembly. In the latter case, he has to convoke a new assembly that will have to meet in no more than 3 months. Art. 18 —The metropolitan and the bishops are rightfully part of the assembly. The presidency of the assembly belongs to the metropolitan, the vice-presidents and the secretaries are to be elected by the assembly. Art. 20 — The assembly shall discuss and vote the bills that are handed by the hospodar. It will be able to amend them, under the reserve stipulated by art. 36, on addressing the common interest laws. Art. 22 — The budget of the income and expenses, elaborated annually for every principality through the care of the hospodar, and subjected to the assembly, which can amend it, shall not be final until it is voted by it. Art. 25 —No tax is to be established or collected without the agreement of the assembly. Art. 27 — The Central Commission shall have the headquarters at Focșani. It will be made of 16 members, 8 Moldavians and 8 Vlachs, 4 will be elected by each hospodar amongst the members of the assembly, or the people who held high positions in the state, and 4 by every assembly, from its members. Art. 34 — There are considered general interest laws all those that refer to the unity of legislation, the founding, the maintaining or the improvement in unity of the customs, post-offices, telegraph, establishing of the monetary value and the special matters for the common use of the principalities. Art. 35 — Once constituted, the central commission shall especially deal with the codification of the already existent laws, harmonising them with the constitutive act of the new organisation. It shall revise the organic regulations, along with the civil, criminal, commercial and procedure code, that, besides the laws that have a pure local interest, there shall be just one legislative body in the future, executory in the both principalities, after it is voted by the assemblies, sanctioned and promulgated by each hospodar. Art. 38 — There shall be founded a high court of justice and cassation, common for the both principalities. It can have the headquarters at Focșani. Its constituting shall be regulated by a law. Its members shall be irremovable. Art. 41 — As the high court of justice, it shall have in its attribution the effects initiated by the hospodar or the assembly against the ministers and shall sentence without appeal. Art. 42 — The regulated militias, from the both principalities, shall receive an identical organisation, in need, being able to unite and form a single army. For it, there shall be created a common law. Art. 46 — The Moldavians and the Vlachs shall be all

*equal in paying taxes, and to the same extent admitted in public services, in one principality or another. Their individual freedom shall be guaranteed. Nobody is to be held, arrested or sued against the law. Nobody is to be expropriated illegally, for public interest reasons, and for ransom. The Moldavians and the Vlachs of any Christian rite shall equally enjoy the political rights*<sup>70</sup>.

Vasile Alecsandri was receiving the great mission from the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza. He had to go to the great European capitals, as Torino, Paris, London, to present the Romanian cause.

If in the Kingdom of Sardinia (the political basis on which the Italian state was built)<sup>71</sup>, the greeting was one illustrating that the both states were taking the road for the political union, the true milestones of the political mission of Vasile Alecsandri<sup>72</sup> were represented by France and England. France, led by Emperor Napoleon III, who, after the Crimean War dictated the peace of Paris, was supporting the innovatory ideas of the Romanians from the old group of the 1848 generation, but it he was also concerned not to upset the conservative England, which had very good relations with the Ottoman Empire, whose disintegration did not want, for not playing into Russia's hands. In the same time, Prussia<sup>73</sup>, equally eager to win the competition for accomplishing around it the unity of Germany, for the detriment of the Habsburg Empire, was preserving its neutrality. The Habsburg Empire did not agree with the double election of Cuza, situating on the same position as the Ottoman Empire.

As expected, Vasile Alecsandri planned to reach the British capital, bearing the diplomatic letters of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza, **only after he had explored the field** at Torino and Paris<sup>74</sup>.

Vasile Alecsandri, aware of the important entrusted mission, decided to write on paper, in details, with his incontestable literary talent, all these moments, in which he proved great mastery in the art of diplomacy. In this way the paper "Istoria misiilor mele politice" (The history of my political missions) appeared, a special work for anyone who wishes to enter the universe of the diplomatic fight, for the acknowledging of the union from 1859<sup>75</sup>.

The work contains wide descriptions of the talks, along with the presentation of the manner of travelling, the description of the places, the palaces, the means of transport, the moral and physical profile of his interlocutors. revised

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<sup>70</sup> A. Vianu, C. Bușe, C. Zamfir, Gh. Bădescu, *op.cit.*, p. 334–341.

<sup>71</sup> The Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor...*, p 498.

<sup>72</sup> Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români*, Bucharest, Machiavelli Press, 2007, p.8-10.

<sup>73</sup> Dan Berindei, *Diplomația românească modernă: de la începuturi la proclamarea independenței de stat (1821-1877)*, Bucharest, Albatros Press, 1995, p. 128.

<sup>74</sup> [http://www.romlit.ro/alecsandri\\_diplomat](http://www.romlit.ro/alecsandri_diplomat), accessed on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015.

<sup>75</sup> Vasile Alecsandri, *Istoria misiilor mele politice*, Reviewed edition, postface, chronological table and critical references by Teodor Vărgolici, Bucharest, Gramar Press, 2001.

Basically, Vasile Alecsandri had prepared a set of arguments for finding support for the acknowledging of the double election, and for combating the retorts that the double election was against the provisions from Convention of Paris from 1858<sup>76</sup>.

After he had been received at Torino<sup>77</sup> and Paris, Vasile Alecsandri was heading towards Calais, and from there, after crossing the English Channel, from Dover, he was expected in the capital of the “perfidious Albion”. The duration of the voyage was of about 10 hours.

Vasile Alecsandri was aware that it would not be easy to win the confrontation with the English people. Firstly, he had to write to lord Malmesbury, the head of the Foreign Office to ask for the permission to offer the autographic letter of Prince Cuza, and to be received in audience.

Vasile Alecsandri wished to have meetings with other two important diplomats, lords Clarendon and Russell, asking them to confirm his quality of extraordinary delegate of the Romanian Ruler. The misfortune was that another significant character of the English diplomacy, lord Palmerston to not be in London, making impossible the meeting with Vasile Alecsandri.

The Romanian diplomat intuited perfectly that it was better to approach his mission through meetings with the French diplomats accredited in London, during the seven days that he waited for the affirmative answer from the Foreign Office.

The duke Malacoff, the ambassador of France and Marshal Pelissier, a hero in the decisive fight from Sevastopol received the Romanian diplomat gladly.

The Marshal mentioned from the beginning that the mission of the diplomat was a difficult one, because, in the British Cabinet, there had been created opposition against the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, also amplified by the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire, Musuri.

Vasile Alecsandri, exponent of the 1848 generation answered, animated by a national “feeling” that he is not surprised at all by the attitude of the ambassador Musuri, who had a Phanariot origin and it was known that in their hypostasis of rulers and diplomats, the Phanariots did not take into consideration the interests of the Principalities.

Duke Malacoff replied that the strategy of the national “feeling” will not work with the English diplomats (there was the time of the colonial period, and the English did not imagine that in any colony of theirs would emerge currents of national emancipation). Basically, according to the French diplomat, Vasile Alecsandri had to

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<sup>76</sup>Alexandru Voicu, *Diplomația românească după Unirea Principatelor*, [http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/diploma-ia-rom-neasc-dup-unirea-principatelor](http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/diploma-ia-rom-neasc-dup-unirea-principatelor), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>77</sup>[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vasile-alecsandri\\_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vasile-alecsandri_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29), accessed on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2015.



argue what the English wished to hear: the fact that the double election and the actions that would result from it would not harm the British interests in the region, which the Ottomans respected and did not want to be affected. At that time, the British interests were represented by the preserving of the Ottoman Empire's integrity, that is why Alecsandri had to say that the Romanians were engaging into observing the agreements that they had with the Ottoman Empire, otherwise "he will just lose his time vainly".

There shall be presented below this sequence from the talk:

*"After the usual compliments, the illustrious Marshal said to me"<sup>78</sup>:*

- *Have you come to London to support the events from the Principalities?... Your role is a difficult and even unpleasant one, because the ministers of the Queen are warn against the actions that you had done in the Chambers from Iași and Bucharest.*
- *Oh, I know it very well, Mr. Marshal; His Majesty, the emperor and count Walewski enlightened me on the difficulty of my mission, but I have hope that, with the help of your willing advice, I shall succeed in fighting the preventions of the English cabinet.*
- *Hardly! Your cause has been reinterpreted here wisely by the ambassador of Turkey, Mr. Musuri.*
- *I have no doubts on this, because Mr. Musuri is a Phanariot, and, in all the misfortunes that my country experienced, in all the persecutions of the Romanians, the most restless agents were the Phanariots.*
- *It might be this way, but you ought not to talk in this manner with the English ministers. Here, the policy of the feelings does not own a position. Voice them positively and show them that the interests of England are related to the actual question of the principalities; probe them that you are practical people and that you want to observe the treaties you concluded with the Ottoman Empire, otherwise you will lose your time vainly.*
- *Thank you, Mr. Duke, for this advice and I promise you I shall make the most of it. The talk continued for some time on this subject, then it moved to the shores of Crâm, where I had seen Marshal Pelissier for the first time, during the war".*

Lord Malmersbury announced him through his secretary that he is to receive Vasile Alecsandri the second day, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, as a private person, not as a diplomat, because the double election had not been acknowledged. Thus, the ideas expressed by the French were becoming concrete even in the moment the acceptance was received. Vasile Alecsandri had to use his literary talent in order to fulfil his mission.

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<sup>78</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.



His plan was a simple one. The preliminary talk had to finish with the receiving, by lord Malmersbury, of the official letter of Cuza.

Later, the most difficult part, that of counteracting the English argument that the Romanian attitude was infringing the provisions of the Convention, through the option of the double election, was coming.

The last “best card” of Vasile Alecsandri (the British diplomacy, in the vision of the contemporary diplomats, is similar to a game of bridge) was to be the guarantee for keeping the relations with the Ottoman state, and the fact that the double election of ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza will lead to an improvement in the situation of the British interests in the Principalities.

As it can be observed from the text of the talk, reproduced by Vasile Alecsandri in his work, the diplomatic dialogue was considered a “fight of the titans”<sup>79</sup>:

*“Finally, the day has come, the hour for my meeting with lord Malmersbury has arrived! Going to the Foreign Office, the secretary of the minister led me into the cabinet of His Excellency. I found myself facing a tall, dignified and severe character, to whom I addressed the following words:*

*- My lord, I have been charged by his Highness, Prince Cuza, to bring you this letter that I kindly ask you to receive. Lord Malmersbury, before taking the letter, made the observation that, if he granted me an audience was for a private person, not an official one, because the title of Ruler has not acknowledged by the Powers to colonel Cuza; thus, the letter itself that I was presenting to him, he receives as from a simple colonel, and not the Prince Cuza”.*

In a diplomatic manner, Vasile Alecsandri suggests the receiving of the letter from an officer, who was sitting on a ruling throne the moment the letter was written: *“-Please, be willing, I answered him, to receive it as from colonel Cuza, written on the throne”.*

*-Please excuse me, the lord replied, the diplomatic conveniences do not allow me to yet consider colonel Cuza but a simple colonel, and not to regard this letter but as the private letter of a colonel”.*

A subtle psychologist, Vasile Alecsandri goes even further, asking the diplomat to receive the letter, that he would not have to return it to the ruler, which meant the failure of his mission:

*“-All right, I said; nonetheless, be kind and receive it, for not having to take it back to Moldova.*

*His Excellency took it, but he did not open it in front of me, but he placed it in a box, leaving one corner of the letter out, and promised me that he would read it*

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<sup>79</sup>Leonid Boicu, Gheorghe Platon, *România în relațiile internaționale 1699-1939*, Iași, Junimea Press, 1980, p.231.

later, with all the attention. After this procedure, he invited me to sit on a chair and he took a sit on the chair next to his desk”<sup>80</sup>.

The British external affairs minister started a long accusational speech, in which he was condemning the so-called infringement of the text stipulated by the Convention of Paris from 1858. Lord Malmersbury was relating the double election to the idea of emancipation from the Ottoman suzerainty, which meant the infringement of the Ottoman integrity that the British people wished with any price to avoid<sup>81</sup>. The double election was seen as an infringement of the provision that stated about two rulers in the Principalities. Moreover, the Romanians were seen as having ideas of conquering (a subtle allusion to the fact that the Romanians were living both in Principalities, and in Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Dobrogea, which were under the domination of the neighbouring empires, and that a future Romanian united and independent state would be an invitation for the Romanians living in those provinces to emancipate):

*“A short moment of silence appeared, and after the lord began to speak and, with an extremely severe tone, he said:*

*- My lord... the later events from the principalities had a character of insubordination and contempt for the Convention, which was surprising as coming from a people that had invoked the protection of the occidental powers. Under the influence of a violent party, the votes of the Chambers wandered from the right way and put the same Ruler on the both thrones of the Principalities, an action contrary to the Convention that stipulates that each principality shall have its ruling prince! This act cannot be approved by the government of His Majesty, the Queen of England, because except for his illegal character, he wishes the injuring of the Suzerain Court's interests; it threatens the integrity of the Ottoman Empire through a strong and revolutionary work that intends to take the Principalities out of this empire. My lord, the Romanians committed a huge political mistake, because, due to their impatience, due to their desire of independence that dominates them, to the dream of conquering that they have, not only will they not win anything, but they will also lose the affinities expressed in Europe. England, which proved its sympathy to the Principalities, today has to be reserved on addressing them, because they crossed the limitations of the prerogatives, electing just a Ruler and preparing, as far as I have knowledge of, to proclaim their permanent Union. The reports that I received from Constantinople leave me no doubt on the revolutionary spirit that animates the Romanians, and I declare you, Sir, that England cannot accept the development of such a dangerous spirit in an allied state; therefore, it is not willing to acknowledge the election of*

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<sup>80</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>81</sup>Anastasiu Iordache, *Principatele Române în epoca modernă*, Bucharest, Albatros Press, 1998, p.89-91.

*colonel Cuza as Ruler of the both provinces*".<sup>82</sup>

The diplomate Alecsandri reached the second point of his discussion with the British minister. He appealed to the recent history of the Romanians, in which he showed that, in 1821, (the disavowing of the Romanian and Greek movements by Russia, the breach between Tudor Vladimirescu and Alexandru Ipsilanti), in 1828 (the Russian-Turkish war where the Romanians did not interfere, ended with the peace of Adrianople from 1829), in 1848 (the burning of the Organic Regulation, the negotiation of the Ad-interim Rulers with the Ottoman messenger for avoiding the intervention of the Porte), in the context the events worsened, the Romanians expressed their attachment for the Sultan, did not request the independence from Constantinople<sup>83</sup>. Moreover, within the works of the Ad-Hoc Divans, where an English diplomat assisted, Sir Henry Bulwer, in his quality of commissary, the Principalities wished the emancipation from a foreign prince, for not infringing the initiatives of the allies. Using irony, as a classic of diplomacy, Alecsandri said that maybe the English are afraid that the Romanians might conquer London or Paris:

*"In front of such a formal declaration, inspired by content of some calumniator relations of our country, a sorrowful indignation took possession of me. I raised my head and looking straight into the minister's eyes and I answered in perfect calmness: - My lord, the reports from Constantinople have very serious accusations against my nation, but this is not a surprise coming from Constantinople, where the question of the principalities is wrongly understood. Allow me to answer these accusations that we would despise if they would not lack us of the sympathy and the protection of the willing Government of England. The people who have an interest in compromise our cause spread big words around, in order to be believed, and attributed the Romanians gigantic plans, which, misfortune for us, are that much invented that they fall and disappear into the ridiculous. They say we feed on absolute independence dreams, that we aim for subverting the Ottoman Empire, that we have great conquest projects and more. In order to support such ideas, they certainly believe that we do not have any knowledge of our interests, and this exactly is what proves their poor imagination. All the peoples have an instinctive sense regarding their needs and protection. The Romanians also have this redeeming sense and they have believed since the ancient times in this political truth, that is: their faith is tightly connected to that of the Ottoman Empire, that their integrity is closely related to the integrity of the Turkish territory. The downfall that has menaced them so far does not come from over the Danube, we have always proved to be loyal to the Suzerain Court. The history itself proves it: in 1821, when Ipsilanti entered in Moldova to start the Greek*

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<sup>82</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>83</sup>Dan Berindei, *op. cit.*, p.134.

revolution, from the order of emperor Alexander of Russia, did the Romanians turn against the Turks? No, they did not, although the proclamations of Ipsilanti were drafted in the name of religion and independence. On the contrary, they rose in rebellion against the Greeks, who, under the flag of liberty, were sacking in the most barbarian way. Later, in 1828, when Russia declared war to Turkey, when the armies entered all over the Principalities, did the Romanians participate in that war against the suzerain? No, they did not, they endured silently all the awful occupations of seven years. Twenty years later, in 1848, when the entire Europe, except for England, was shaken by the revolution, which was the character of the movement in the Principalities? The Romanians burnt in the public market the Organic Regulation imposed by Russia and cried: down with the Russian protectorate, long live the Sultan! Did the Ad-hoc Divan, which Sir Henry Bulwer, the English Commissar assisted to, manifest any wish against Turkey's interests? Absolutely not; it requested the Union with a foreign Ruler and the observing of the treaties with the Porte. And finally now, once with the election of the prince, which was the first action of the Chambers? The investiture request at Constantinople! What do all these actions prove? The revolutionary spirit of the Romanians against the Sultan, or their wish to remain attached to the Ottoman Empire, according to the treaties? Your Excellency should judge for Himself. Who can scold the Romanians that they have dreams of independence? Is it forbidden for a clever nation to desire the improvement of its faith, and because that nation behaves wisely and does not attack anyone's interests, does it deserve to be punished? And the fact that the Romanians dream on conquests, this invention is that sublime, in the manner that from sublime to ridiculous is just a step. Conquests? What with? Conquests? Which? Don't they, somehow, wish to incorporate Russia or Austria, or Turkey to Europe that surrounds them, like three giants surround a dwarf? Maybe they aim even further. The conquest of Paris or London? Who knows? In such a joking manner of speaking, all the assumptions are allowed. Lord Malmersbury started to smile and made me a sign to continue, paying great attention to my words”<sup>84</sup>.

And here comes the moment when Vasile Alecsandri uses that “best card”, when it is suggested that the acknowledging of the double election and eventual “independence”, translated as the right of the Romanians to manage their own resources, can be used by the English, for their own interest. As a master of diplomacy, Vasile Alecsandri invokes the famine from the 1846-1848 Ireland, which had been kept under control through the import of wheat from the principalities, considered to be “Granary of Europe”. Vasile Alecsandri went further, saying that Alexandru Ioan Cuza will agree on exporting grain in England, in exchange of the

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<sup>84</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

English industrial products, considered “symbols of the progress”, an expression of invoked “the conquests”. These well-targeted words managed to draw the attention to the British external affair minister:

”— *Indeed my lord, I continued after a short break, it is a conquest that we aspire for with obvious ambition, especially since the year of famine from Ireland; the only conquest that the Musuri people from Constantinople and London did not mention in their reports; I am referring to the conquest of our territorial natural richness, the conquest of the full freedom to improve the work on our land, the intention to exchange the agricultural produce of the Romanian country with those of the English manufacture. In 1846, when the famine in Ireland was fought with the help of the grains from the principalities, in the British Parliament, there was heard a great truth; it was then said that the Principalities from the Danube are the abundant storehouses of England! We wish to sanction this truth and profit on the fruit of our land, in order to introduce in our country, through commercial exchange, the comfort of civilisation, represented by the wonderful products of the English industry. If such an ambition, such desire for conquests represents revolutionary symptoms, then we indeed deserve to lose the sympathy and the protection of Her Graceful Majesty’s Government. Lord Malmersbury had the kindness to answer that owing to the fact that the Romanians will be in charge with the inside improvements and the development of their trade, England will preserve the esteem that the practical people deserve; nonetheless, the added lord:*

- *How is that a people animated by such healthy ideas, forgot the respect due for a European official document, that of the Convention, choosing just one Ruler for the both Principalities? ”.*

Vasile Alecsandri counteracted, for the last time, the question of the British minister, who insisted on the fact that the double election meant an infringement of the text stipulated by the Convention of Paris, sustaining that, in the text, it was not expressively forbidden that a function could be simultaneously occupied by the same person, in the both principalities<sup>85</sup>. Vasile Alecsandri, illustrating the principle of a carriage pulled by horses, showed that the idea of the Romanians was to give the best interpretation to the text of the convention, in order to consolidate its provisions, and apply it:

”— *My lord, I answered, the act of the election that the Romanians did is, on the contrary, the greatest sign of respect for the Convention and the high Powers who signed it.*

—*How is that? asked the minister smiling.*

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<sup>85</sup>Nicolae Isar, *Istoria modernă a românilor. Edificarea statului național (1848-1866)*, Bucharest, University of Bucharest Press, 2002, p.87-89.

—Allow me to explain. That convention can be advantageous or disadvantageous for the interests of the Principalities; thus, the Romanians have the right to apply it or not in the country, and, in the latter situation, the generous Europe would allow them to do their will, because nowadays the laws cannot be enforced to the peoples anymore. Until having the new Convention, the Romanians had the organic Regulation; therefore, they could choose between these two, and, considering the provisions of the Conferences of Paris not applicable, to put it aside and to govern themselves according to the previous regime. If we had done this way, then most certainly we would have proved a flagrant lack of respect for the great Powers that were willing to concern themselves with our faith; but what did we do? Full of gratefulness for them, we received the Convention enthusiastically and wanted to apply it being fully aware, especially that it seemed to encompass the elements that helped us accomplish our wish, the Union. Well, my lord, I confess to you that since the first steps on the way towards the new regime, we understood, in our simpleness of peasants of the Danube, that we were not walking on a smooth road, but within a dreadful labyrinth, from which we can exit only depending on the most practical men of England and France. And, indeed Sir, what guarantee of good administration and progress depicts a governmental regime in which there are dominant the contrary influences of five powers, independent one from another: two Rulers, two Chambers and a Central Commission! How will the Principalities step towards the Union, with the will, the dynastic interests of two Princes, with the split party, with the parliamentary fights of two Chambers, and with the role of legislator, with the indecisive right of control of the Central Commission? As if there would be harnessed five horses on a carriage, three of them in the front side, two in the back, which, pulling in two contrary directions, break the harness and destroy the carriage. All these considered, we did not discourage ourselves; decided to show willingness, and our respect for the official act of Europe, we tried to simplify the pieces of the governmental machine, in order to make it functional in an easier manner. We therefore counted on a saying from the political code, which declares everything that it is not forbidden is allowed, and seeing that the Convention did not forbid us to choose the same Ruler for the both Principalities, we facilitate its application by reducing the number of the constitutional powers from the new regime. Instead of five that I have already mentioned to you, mister minister, we reduced them to four; that is, instead of five wrongly harnessed horses, we left only four, destined to pull all forward, in order to move the carriage of our state. The carriage might be heavy, the road might be untracked, full of obstacles, the horses might not be well-accustomed, but, in the end and in this manner, we are not menaced to stay still; in this slow

*manner we at least proceed to the applying of the stipulations from the Convention, and prove our respect for the will of the great Powers*<sup>86</sup>.

*Lord Malmersbury took a moment for thinking, then he said:*

*—It might be possible for the Convention to have flaws, because it is not easy to create laws for far countries, but you must believe that the intentions of the Powers were all in your favour.*

*—We believe it Sir, that is why we accepted the new law without showing ingratitude, but I consider it is also right for the Powers to believe us”.*

The discussion was skilfully conducted by Vasile Alecsandri towards the abilities and the age of the ruler Cuza, which signified the beginning of acceptance of Vasile Alecsandri's official quality<sup>87</sup>, and, implicitly, the success of the mission. Vasile Alecsandri infirmed the rumours spread by the adversaries of the double election and, implicitly, the full union:

*“Following this, the conversation moved towards the age and the character of colonel Cuza, along with the dissatisfactions that might be created in the Principalities by his ruling, according to the reports drafted by the partisans of separatism, the Turks, the Greeks and the Austrians.*

*I assured the minister that peace rules in the country, that the enthusiasm of the Romanian dwellers is endless and, since the 5<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> of January, far from mourning, the Principalities have been celebrating and waiting with all the trust, from the Powers, the acknowledgement of the patriotic act that they committed”.*

These words, skilfully uttered by the great diplomat Vasile Alecsandri, represented the success of his mission, and, implicitly, the acknowledging, by the Cabinet from London, of the double election. Convinced that the aspirations of the Romanians do not contravene with the idea of having good relations with the Ottoman Empire (did not affect the integrity of the Empire), Lord Malmersbury agreed to acknowledge the double election and the title of Prince of the Ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza:

*“Hearing these words, the lord got up, looked at me with a much more gentle expression and said:*

*— Mister A... I am very satisfied with your visit and the information that you brought on the events from your country. England is the country of freedom and, therefore, it has no interest in objecting to the development of other nations' happiness and freedom. If this is true, as you assured me, that the aspirations of the Romanians are not contrary to the interests of the Ottoman Empire, that they want to preserve the connection with their Suzerain Court, that their intention is to observe the*

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<sup>86</sup>Nicolae Ciachir, *Istoria popoarelor din sud-estul Europei în epoca modernă*, Bucharest, Oscar Print Press, 1998, p.78-79.

<sup>87</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.



*Convention and to take care, as wise and practical people, of the improvement of their internal institutions, I loyally declare you that the Government of Her Majesty will vividly prove you its respect and willingness. It will show even in the further conferences the most favourable dispositions in the question of electing Prince Cuza.*

*— Thank you Sir, in the name of my compatriots, I answered bowing, and, I might add my personal thanks for the kindness that you proved listening to me, and especially for the graciousness with which, now, you granted the title of Prince to colonel Cuza<sup>88</sup>.*

*His Excellency smiled and offered his hand, replying: “From now on, I shall not give him another title.”*

In his notes, Vasile Alecsandri, shows the satisfaction that he felt when he reported the success of his mission:

*“Exiting the cabinet of the lord, my joy was so great that I almost forgot the seriousness of my role of messenger, and started singing out loud: God save the Queen! I almost ran to the hotel, I reported His Highness the result of my conference with the minister of Queen Victoria, and, the second day, I left for Paris, to give the report to the emperor on the good result of my mission in England”.*

Basically, the success of Vasile Alecsandri’s mission in England was related to the fact that the English people had to be convinced that the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza did not mean an attempt of emancipation from the Ottoman suzerainty.

Keeping the *status-quo* with the Ottoman Porte and giving the English economic advantages, the Romanians could count on the English vote for the acknowledgement of the double election that, combined with the French vote (the French wanted the weakening of the conservative powers through the accentuation of the national fight of the oppressed peoples) was making the initiative of positioning Europe before the “accomplished fact” a successful one.

The success of Vasile Alecsandri from London had been prepared by the expected success from Torino and Paris. The triumph from London made the predictable failures from Wien of Ludovic Steege, and from Constantinople of Costache Negri to not affect the importance of the double election<sup>89</sup>.

Finally, the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire acknowledged the double election, during the life of Alexandru Ioan Cuza. The Ottoman Empire would finally offer the investiture firman, in December 1861, which meant that the “accomplished fact” had reached its initial goal.

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<sup>88</sup>[https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract\\_din\\_istoria\\_misiilor\\_mele\\_politice](https://ro.wikisource.org/wiki/Extract_din_istoria_misiilor_mele_politice), accessed on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>89</sup>Gheorghe Cliveti, *România și puterile garante. 1856-1878*, Iași, Axis Press, 1988, p. 55.



Eduard Robert Roesler (1836-1874)<sup>90</sup> was the representative of a theory called “the immigrationist theory”, emitted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, more precisely, in 1871, in the work “*Romanische Studien*” (Romanian Studies), for denying the Romanian continuity in the space between Carpathians, Danube and Sea. He worked on the orders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that, after the Little Union from 1859, of Wallachia and Moldova, was afraid that the Romanians from Banat, Bukovina, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș would emancipate and would decline the authority of the double monarchy. He tendentiously took phrases as “*there were brought colonists from the entire Roman world (ex toto orbe Romano)*”, “*Dacia was exhausted of men*” during the Dacian-Roman wars. He also interprets tendentiously the fact that the Romanian and the Albanian languages have a common Thracian-Illyrian substrate (due to the belonging to the Indo-European linguistic family a/n), affirming that the Romanian people and the Romanian language were formed in the south of the Danube, after all the autochthonous people left Dacia, after the Aurelian withdrawal (271-274 CE), and the Magyars, after settling in Pannonia, colonised the ancestors of the Romanians, at the proposal made by Byzantium. Eduard Robert Roesler ignores the information from “*Gesta Hungarorum*”, “*The Chronicle of Anonymus*”, which affirms that, at their arrival in Pannonia, the Magyars “found there the Romanians, as shepherds of the Romans (*Blacchi ac pastores Romanorum*)”. Eduard Robert Roesler denies the archaeological evidence of the continuity. His theses were also infirmed by his contemporaries. The theory of the continuity was a reality for the Romanian and universal historiography from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Dimitrie Cantemir, Ion Neculce, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu published proofs that would attest the Romanian continuity. Grigore Tocilescu, Vasile Pârvan, Dimitrie Onciul, A.D. Xenopol, Nicolae Iorga represent just few names from the Romanian historiography, whose demonstrations combated the Roeslerian theory.

In the interval 1856-1877, after the Peace Treaty of Paris, when the Romanian problem became a European problem, Russia would lose three counties from the south of Bessarabia, Cahul, Ismail, which would ensure the connection with the Danube. Thus, for the first time, the modern Romanian state had access to the Danube mouth and the Black Sea (Chilia branch). Obviously, the Romanians from the region experienced the reunion of their religious life along with their brothers from Romania.

In 1878, after the Congress of Berlin, Romania would become independent, with the observing of specific conditions. Among these, it had to cede the three counties from the South of Bessarabia, receiving Dobruja. There will be cited, for this

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<sup>90</sup>Milton G. Lehrer, *Ardealul, Pământ Românesc*, Bucharest, Editura științifică și enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1989, p. 13.

reason, a fragment related to the entering of Dobruja under the Romanian administration: *“Law for the organisation of Dobruja (1880) Art. 1. Dobruja, annexed to Romania through the treaty of Berlin, along with the Danube Delta and Insula Șerpilor, is divided ... in two counties .... Art. 3 All the dwellers from Dobruja who, on the day of the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 1877 were Ottoman citizens, become and are Romanian citizens. Art. 4. A special law shall determine the conditions in which they will be able to exercise their political rights and buy rural houses in the proper Romania. Another law shall provision on the representation of the dwellers from Dobruja in the Romanian parliament. Art. 5. The dwellers of Dobruja, who became Romanian citizens, are equal before the law, enjoy all the citizen rights and can be appointed in public positions, without the difference of origin and religion.... Art. 15. The freedom of conscience is absolute. The freedom of all the cults is guaranteed, as much as this does not infringe the public order and good morals. ... Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, Turkey. Art. 16. The Eastern orthodox religion is the dominant religion in Dobruja .... The protopops of the counties and the orthodox clergymen of the cathedrals from Tulcea and Constanța are employed by the state. The clergymen from the other orthodox churches are paid by the communes and communities .... Art. 17. The personnel and the administration of the main Muslim mosques in Tulcea, Constanța, Babadag, Măcin, Medgidia, Hârșova, Isaccea, Sulina și Mangalia ae paid from the state budget .... Art. 18. The clergymen from the other confessions and their churches and temples are to support from the co-religion communities. Art. 20. The education is free, if its exercising does not infringe the good morals, the public order and the children’s health .... It is free for the different communities and private people to open schools, under the control of the public instruction ministry, on the condition that, besides the language chosen by the founders and headmasters, the education in the Romanian language is mandatory. Art. 67. In 10 years from the promulgation of this law, in Dobruja there shall not be recruited people for the line army ... In this 10 year time period, the dwellers from Dobruja will form a body of territorial troops (cavalry men and foot soldiers), for the internal service of this parts of Romania. In normal times, the dwellers that will be part of these troops will be used in service just a week a month, when they will be paid and fed according to the law on the territorial army.... Art. 68. The dwellers of Dobrudja, of Muslim religion, will form separate companies and squadrons of cavalry. In their uniform, which will be paid by the state, there will be preserved the hat and the turban.”<sup>91</sup>*

Romania continued to support the orthodox communities from the territories occupied by the neighbouring empires. Yet, gradually, our country proposed to create

<sup>91</sup> Bogdan Murgescu, (coord), *Istoria României în texte*, Corint Press, Bucharest, 2001, p.150 and next.

a Romanian Orthodox autocephalous Church. The first step was made during the ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, when the metropolitan of Romania started to bear the name of Primate of Romania.

The reforms of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, introduced the civil marriage and the divorce, the legal status, in this way separating the administrative elements from the cultic ones. Yet, the Church continued to play an essential role in the life of the rural communities, especially the priest, who was a counsellor, a mentor, a magistrate, and even the first judge, evaluator of the moral life within the community. Moreover, the legal reform, started by the Organic Regulations, some health measures diminished the role of the Church in these areas.

After the conquest and the full acknowledgement of the independence, in the period 1877-1880, Romania made a step back on this line, in April 1885, declaring the autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

In 1885, beneficiating from the support of Russia, the Prince of Bulgaria, Aleksandr Battenberg, made a rather bold movement – the union of eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria, obviously supported by the Tsarist Russia. The Prince Aleksandr Battenberg had gone even further, wishing to create a project through which Bulgaria would unite with Romania, under the sceptre of King Carol I of Romania, as a personal union. This fact would lead to the de facto proclamation of state independence of Bulgaria, which had remained autonomous in 1878. The Tsarist Russia disavowed the project, menacing with the use of force. Romania already had a secret alliance protocol with the Central Powers, since 1883, and Austro-Hungary wished to take Bosnia-Herzegovina and could do it only when the context allowed it. This move might have led to a crisis in the relations between the Central Powers and Russia, which the European political forces did not wish. Thus, it is very curious the fact that the idea of Prince Battenberg was indirectly reminded of the Romanian-Bulgarian state of Asănești.

Practically, the modernising tendencies, the international acknowledgement of the Union from 1859 and the Independence from 1877 met onerous conditions imposed by the Great Powers, through which they were satisfying their private interests, on the expense of the young Romanian state's economy. Not few times, the situation of the peasantry was a subject of dispute between the liberals and the conservatives as the main political forces, being speculated by the same forces, hostile to Romania. Tactfully, with professionalism, diplomacy, patriotism and spirit of sacrifice, the Romanian politicians and the Romanian leaders knew how to put aside their private interests, for the use of Romania's welfare.

The period 1859-1914 represents for the history of the Romanians, by far, the most important one for the modernisation of the institutions, the legislation, and the Romanian policy. Obviously, the problems of the social structures played an essential

role, because Romania had, in its relation with most of the neighbouring states, a special situation. Most of the population was living in the rural areas, did not enjoy political rights, but, through its work was providing the most important part of the production that was representing the basis of the national economy. The political rights belonged to the land owners, the owners of industrial establishments, those who would exercise liberal professions, the bankers etc.

Since 1821 and 1848, there was tried the finding of a solution to the peasants' problem, but the international context and the situation of the Principalities made the efficient discussions of these issues impossible.

The first major reform on the social structures was the agrarian reform from July 1864, made by Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Yet, it could not be possible without a series of measures that generated disputes and controversies, as the secularisation of the monastic estates, criticised internationally by the monasteries from Holy Mount Athos (they drafted memoires to the Ottoman Empire) and wanted to undermine the image of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Finally, the ruler managed to appease the international conflict that was about to be triggered, admitting compensations, but the properties of these religious places remained secularised, along with the land of the autochthonous monasteries that were not dedicated.

There were two important moments when the situation could degenerate. The Assembly, the legislative institution was dominated by the conservatives, and the first minister, Barbu Catargiu, was vehemently opposing to any ideas of substantial agrarian reform, saying that he would prefer to die, than to infringe the laws. It is not yet known, not until today, who was behind the assault from June 1862, which led to the death of the prime minister, considered the main obstacle in the way of the political dialogue.

The agrarian reform was made through the compensation, in a well-determined period of the former proprietors by the new-appropriated peasants, there were issues related to the lack of modern cartography and land surveying instruments. Yet, there were rumours according to which some of the proprietors opposed to the agrarian reform, both among the peasants, and the Romanian soldiers who were quartered in the military camp from Florești, in the summer of 1859<sup>92</sup>.

The death of Barbu Catargiu did not calm the spirits, which led to the authoritarian action of Alexandru Ioan Cuza and the prime-minister Mihail Kogălniceanu to introduce an authoritarian regime, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 1864. Thus, the legislative power, the Assembly, was completed with the Senate, the moderating body, the Romanian Parliament becoming, for the first time, bicameral, the two chambers having well-delimited attributions. The main constitutional instrument, the

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<sup>92</sup>Dan Berindei, *op.cit.*,p.113-133.

Convention of Paris from 1858, was completed by the Statute expanding the Paris Convention from 1858, finally accepted by the Guaranteeing Powers, as an “additional act”.

The authoritarian ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza was not exempt from tensioned moments, neither before, nor after the moment from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 1864.

In November 1860, Craiova was shaken by “the revolt of the licence holders”<sup>93</sup>, a revolt that involved Craiova, started by the alcohol manufacturers and merchants, to whom other manufacturers joined against the idea of paying “licenses”, that is, those certificates that used to offer the right to exercise those professions. The revolt ended with dead people, wounded people, material damages, being stopped by the intervention from Bucharest of General Gheorghe Magheru, the old pandour and general from the 1848 generation who used his fame to stop the uprising.

Moreover, the agrarian reform of Cuza and the later regulations of the regime of the landed property had kept the peasants basically in an economic dependence from the land proprietors in the area. The plots received during the ruling of Cuza had to be paid by compensation, the lack of money determining the peasants to make appeal either to loans, or the work the boyars’ estates<sup>94</sup>. The ones who had paid the plots, even if they could not sell for a while, had halved them, or divided them in thirds or quarters, according to the number of their children (the average family in the modern age was made of 6-8 people-the mother, the father, four children and two elderly), the land being a type of dowry pursued when contracting the marriages, even for peasants, not only for the boyars’ families.

The industrial development had absorbed a significant part of the peasants who did not own land, who had left into the cities, but many of them were planning to return when earning enough money to buy a plot of land and agricultural implements.

The emerging of the rural credits did not enjoy the expected success, that is why the usurers had flourished, who gave credits in an easier manner, but in case of non-payment of the debts and interests, the peasants would lose the land.

Furthermore, while the economy was evolving, the boyars who had a certain style and a certain conception on life, investing in acquisition of land (the extensive agriculture was dominating the intensive agriculture) and less in the mechanised agricultural implements, were resorting to the season working (generally, the peasants who came from the mountainous areas where the land was scarce) while for the administration of the estates, were requesting the support of the bailiffs. The

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<sup>93</sup> Florin Nacu, *op.cit.*, p.6.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibidem*.

bailiff was either a man with studies in the area, or a former usurer who decided to offer the lease (the rent) requested for the estate in case.

Generally, the sons of the boyars were choosing more liberal jobs that would provide a careless living in the urban centres, few being those who would opt for agronomic studies. And even if a young boyar had ideas for the mechanisation of agriculture, he would meet the opposition of his father, who used to rely on the badly paid work of the peasants from the areas where they owned estates. Moreover, many of the boyars had their sons working as officers in the Army, Gendarmerie, as magistrates, and, if inheriting the wealth of their parents, they could not administrate it properly, preferring a bailiff, instead of relying on a personal administrator who would need the boyar, for any decision he would make.

Nevertheless, the increasing of the category of bailiffs was also caused by the fact that the boyars, many times, in order to ensure the dowry of their daughters or the education of their sons, used to take loans from usurers, counting on the richness of the future wheat or corn crops, but the weather sometimes were ruining the initial plans of the boyars, which led to delays in the payment of the debt and of the due interest. The increase of the debt would make the boyar cede easy under the pressure of the bailiff, either himself a usurer or having a secret agreement with a usurer. Thus, the boyar would accept to allow the estate to be administrated by the bailiff, instead of the debt. There ought to be mentioned the fact that some boyars had become addicted to gambling, had initiated temporary relationships with young models, artists, show girls, new worlds that were merely at their beginning, and, from the desire to make a strong impression, they would resort to loans, sometimes uncovered. Followed by the money lenders and the banks, many of them would lease the estates on almost nothing, or even sell them for very little money.

Obviously, the most affected category was that of the peasants, because the owners, who had the right to vote for the Parliament, or could even be elected or appointed in positions of mayors, prefects, deputy prefects, were directly or indirectly legislating according to the interest of their social category. Thus, having the law on their side, the owners and the leaseholders could manoeuvre the legislative and administrative environment according to their wishes, which transformed the peasants in sure victims.

The boyars (and less the bailiffs) were preoccupied to create on their estates the feeling of connection with the peasants, occurring more from the medieval tradition of the ruler, "the father of the nation". Thus, the boyars, besides the donations to the village church (they were gaining the respect of the peasants), used to be the godparents of the poor peasants, giving their blessing for the marriages, even between men and women from neighbouring estates (in agreement with the other owner), used to help the rural schools (primary education was free, but the books would sometimes

lack, and the teachers, most of the times, used to buy them for the poor children, who proved willing to learn).

The factory owners also used to attract the well prepared apprentices and the journeymen to put them in school, in the country or abroad, in order to increase the quality of the production.

Thus, these situations were not predominant, there was created a de facto, moral alliance between the boyar/owner and their peasants/workers. The priest of the village was also acting as a mediator (obviously more on the side of the boyar), teaching the people at the church about the fact that, respecting the boyar, they would show respect to God.

It must not be forgotten that there was a hierarchy in the world of the village, there were the first, the average and the last peasants. In the village world, many of them had attended, at the most, four primary classes, as a consequence of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza's reform. The only ones who would hope for education over this level were, first of all, the sons and the daughters of the village teachers, who were usually following the footsteps of their parents. The gendarmes who would ensure the public order, the military men from the units of the Army would direct their children towards the military schools, generically called "Schools of the officers' sons. The priests and the parish clerks would send their children to the theological seminary schools. There were also cases, few nonetheless, of hard-working children, both from poor and wealthy families who would send their children to the schools outside the village, to theological seminary schools, to military schools. As a rule, the boys had more advantages, because the girls, after the age of 13-14, had to marry, the wealthier peasants wishing, in this way, to unite their assets through marriage, the sons and the daughters of boyars could attend high-school classes, pension schools, and even faculties, including abroad. There were many families of boyars from the rural areas who would prefer to bring a private teacher on their property, who would teach their children basic scientific knowledge, but especially foreign languages, French, and also English and German being at the top of their preferences<sup>95</sup>.

The great mass of the peasant children had to work the land, the skilful ones being able to do a job (as a mason, carpenter, lumber, tailor, furrier, brandy maker, inn keeper, trader). The apprenticeship period was carried out "for profit", that is the young people were sent to the proprietors of inns, shops, workshops, having an apprenticeship period full of privations. The children of the workers from the cities were expecting the same fate too, the boys going to the factories, and the girls to schools of housewifery, tailoring, sanitary schools.

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<sup>95</sup> Dan Berindei, in Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor...*, p.32-36.

Many times, the apprentices were running from their masters, going to factories or to the railroad company, a permanently developing area, where there was earned more money, although the work was harder.

In 1865, when the internal and external prestige of Cuza had degraded, due to the actions of the “monstrous coalition”, at Bucharest, during the summer, another movement had burst to create disorder. It ought not be forgotten that the full union of Wallachia and Moldova had been acknowledged by Austria and Turkey only during the life of ruler Cuza, which meant that an eventual physical disappearance (the ruler had a weak health, he was especially heart-sick, despite the fact that he was still young) could lead to the request of cancelling the union or preserving just a formal union, by these European powers (Turkey, despite the European collective guarantee, it was still suzerain in Romania). The revolt of the street vendors from Bucharest<sup>96</sup>, who refused to rent their spaces especially arranged for trade, that burst during the period the ruler went to Ems, for the balneary treatment, was showing the public opinion either that the ruler was intending to set up the absolute power, or the Opposition (“the monstrous coalition”) wished to dethrone Cuza. The both variants have enough arguments and supporters to be considered, although, until now, it has not been formulated a final conclusion on the management of the action. The fact that the ruler had officially adopted his children from the relation with Maria Obrenovici generated the suspicion that he wanted to institute his own dynasty, which the boyar families, amongst which rulers had emerged, would never have agreed.

The dethroning of Cuza, in the night of 11<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1866, the setting up of the Ad-interim Ruling, the advancing of the discussions with the Prince Filip of Flanders, then the Prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, generated, until the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1866, a series of tensioned moments, from which the attempts of revolt did not miss.

The frontier guards from the Danube (Bechet, Calafat, but especially Dăbuleni) revolted, refusing to send representatives for the ceremony from Bucharest, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1866<sup>97</sup>. They were afraid that the appropriated families would lose the received land, moreover, their salaries had not been paid for few months, that is, the moment Alexandru Ioan Cuza had been dethroned. Finally, the revolt was put at rest, but it was not the only one. At Iași, it had been proposed the request of secession of Moldova, formulated by the Metropolitan of Moldova Calinic Miclescu, who was discreetly supported by the diplomacy from Sankt Petersburg. There had been shoots, arrests, the metropolitan Calinic Miclescu, was wounded and he was initially hidden in some secret rooms from the Monastery of Golia, where the well-known writer Ion Creangă was serving as deacon. Arrested, the metropolitan Calinic Miclescu would

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<sup>96</sup> Florin Nacu, *op.cit.*,p.21-23.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibidem.*



be pardoned by Prince Carol, who was on his way from Turnu-Severin to Bucharest, where he was about to be crowned<sup>98</sup>.

Period 1866-1871 was a very agitated one, both internationally and internally. Prince Carol offered the governing the liberal groups, being known the fact that it had played a dominant role in his bringing on the throne. The German origin of the ruling prince gradually started to irritate many of the liberals, friends of the Emperor Napoleon III, the one who had supported the dethroning of Cuza and the arrival of Prince Carol. The irritation was increasing while the latent crisis between Germany and France was getting deeper. Germany, in 1866, had won the battle from Koniggratz against Austria, and Austria had lost Venice, for the benefit of Italy, through the mediation of Emperor Napoleon III. Prince Carol wanted to introduce in the Romanian army the Prussian model of instruction, Prussian arms and techniques, which the Romanian officers did not enjoy at all who were the produce of the French military model, being used to the French uniform and arms. French language was the one used in the party halls from the cities of Romania and Paris was a cultural model. That is why, any attempt of the new prince to get closer to the native Germany made him even more unpopular. It also should not be forgotten that the personality of Cuza, who was elected in 1870 deputy in Constituency III from Mehedinți, but he had not received the acceptance to come in the country, in order not to create troubles, was still persistent in the country. This situation led to the moment when Eugeniu Carada, Ion C. Brătianu tried, in the summer of 1870, even the dethroning of Prince Carol, at Ploiești. Eugeniu Carada, the mind behind the modern Romanian banking system, and Ion C. Brătianu, one of the iron-men of the modern Romania, were counting on major Al.Candiano-Popescu, a convinced anti-dynasty person, who would have had to start at Ploiești the action of taking the power. Brătianu, Carada, Candiano-Popescu were promoters of the republican ideas, according to the French model, but had temporarily renounced them, after Napoleon III had proclaimed himself emperor.

Eugeniu Carada and Ion C. Brătianu, “the old conspirers” as they later said at searches, when they said to the investigators that, having that “quality”, they did not leave anything in writing, they wanted to abandon the action, but the radicalism of Candiano-Popescu was stronger and, in this manner, in August 1870, the telegraph from Ploiești, where Candiano-Popescu had taken the control, was announcing the abdication of Prince Carol and the proclamation of the republic. Candiano-Popescu had relied on what we today call “fake news”, that is, an uprising of the citizens, the outskirts, as forces of manoeuvre, but this did not happen and the rebellion failed. When Ion C. Brătianu and Candiano-Popescu became partisans of Carol, Eugeniu Carada refused to accept any official function that might have brought him in the

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<sup>98</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, IBMBOR Press, 1996, p.23-29.

situation to shake hands with Prince Carol. Carada was the behind the scenes as regarding the leadership of the Romanian National bank after 1880, but he refused any direct contact with the Prince, and, later, King Carol I.

The disaster from Sedan, the humiliation of France, on the occasion of proclamation of independence for the German Empire was not well-received by the public opinion from Romania. When, on the 10<sup>th</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1871, the reception held by von Radowitz, the minister of the German Empire at Bucharest on the occasion of Emperor Wilhelm I's anniversary, was interrupted by the protesters from Bucharest, who vandalised the building where the solemn reunion was held, Prince Carol decided to resort to a strategy of control taking, through the instauration of a conservative government, forcing the demission of the liberals. He convoked the Ad-interim Ruling from 1866, affirming that he wanted to abdicate. The idea was not a new one. A letter signed by Prince Carol had already been published on the 15<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> of January 1871, in "Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung". In this letter, Prince Carol was confessing himself to a fictive friend, Auerbach (the second fake-news), sharing him the difficulties that he had in the five years of ruling and asking whether it was not better to abdicate. This strategy worked and, in this manner, it occurred the governing alternation in united Romania, the liberals accepting the step back<sup>99</sup>.

In the end, there were no political problems. In 1876, there was set up the long liberal governing, which lasted until 1888. On the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of March 1888 the capital was the scene of some violent conflicts against the liberal government<sup>100</sup>. Similar to the 1865 moment, the opinions were divided, many considering that the government was behind the movement, in order to continuously maintain the control of a governing that had been eroded in 12 years. Even if in 1877-1878 there was obtained the independence, even if the electoral legislation had been modified in 1884, the prestige of the liberals was diminishing. Year 1888 was also the year of a strong uprising that almost reached the gates of the Capital. Finally, the government renounced the mandate and the conservatives were for the second time in office, following some street disorders.

The right to vote was based on qualification, the constitution from 1866, stipulating that the voting could be done in the four electoral bodies, the last, body III and IV (united through the electoral reform from 1884 in electoral body III) was including the small proprietors, respectively the peasants who owned land were voting indirectly, choosing the delegates.

Obviously, when the socialist groups appeared, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the activists had a quite large public that could be attracted. Only that this public,

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<sup>99</sup> Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români*, Machiavelli Press, Bucharest, 2007, *passim*.

<sup>100</sup> Corbu, C., *Răscoala țăranilor de la 1888*, Bucharest, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, 1978, *passim*.

active in work, could not be politically active, lacking the right to the universal suffrage. The socialists had developed themselves, especially after the uprising from 1888, which did not have the amplexness of that from 1907.

The Romanian socialists had not left the high spheres of elitism. Having models in the occidental socialist fight (even in the Russian Narodniks), the socialists were limiting to press campaigns, publishing newspapers, leaflets (the typograph workers managed to print, somehow clandestinely, these publications, making parcels with their own money or using, without having the permission, the raw material from the newspapers contracted by the owners of the printing houses). “Tipograful român”, in 1865, can be considered the first socialist newspaper. Until 1914, the number of the publications had been increasing, as mentioned above. There was also the tendency among some printing houses owners, who were publishing newspapers and leaflets, when the liberals were in opposition, in order to put pressure on the conservatives, without being directly involved, but even then the owners were charging the few socialists with potential<sup>101</sup>.

Socialist, and somehow hostile views against the Russian Narodnik views were expressed by numerous activists who had come from Bessarabia, as Constantin Stere, one of the founders, along Garabet Ibrăileanu (considered a potential parent of poporanism), of “Viața Românească” magazine. There appeared some literary currents, following the model of “junimișm” (youth), “gândirism” (thinkers), “sămănătorism” (semanatorism), “poporanism” (populism). Yet, Nicolae Iorga, a young historian, promotor of “sămănătorism”, evolved from a Marxist views intellectual to a promotor of nationalism, even with accentuated extreme tendencies, in the inter-war period.

In the period July 1881 – May 1891, Ioan Nădejde and Vasile G. Morțun led the literay magazine “Contemporanul”<sup>102</sup>.

In 1887, there took place, at Iași, an ample manifestation, orchestrated by the Conservative Opposition, whose target was King Carol I. Vasile G. Morțun resorted to few socialist students, to the workers from the industrial areas of Iași, Tătărași and Nicolina, organising a counter-manifestation, therefore supporting King Carol I and publishing a manifesto in which there was explained this political option. From here, it seems that there was always a close relation between the socialist Romanians and the liberals.

Vasile G. Morțun and Ioan Nădejde had managed to obtain mandates of deputies in the Electoral Body II from Roman (1888, 1891, 1895), respectively the Electoral Body III. And yet, why, once reaching the chairs of the Deputy Assembly,

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<sup>101</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist trend in the Modern Romania and its influence on the social structures*, in *Revista de Științe Politice*, No. 55, Craiova, 2017, p.22-31

<sup>102</sup> *Ibidem*.

their discourse did not convince? Firstly, the peasant voters were somehow attracted by the proprietors from the area towards a certain delegate, who was the “boyar’s man”. The same happened with small proprietors from the urban area, because the production line was connected them with the interests of the great proprietors and bankers. Thus, the conservatives, in the rural areas, and the liberals in the urban areas had the monopole of the reforming initiatives that, although they were scarce and were hardly advancing towards laws, did not miss. Ioan Nădejde and Vasile G. Morțun militated for the introduction of the universal suffrage.

In 1895, the governmental rotational programme, that is, the assuming of the governing successively by the liberals and the conservatives, were reserving the act of governing to the two movements that, although opposed, did not lack associations of some currents. Thus, the people from “Junimea” will represent the progressive side of the conservatives, while “the sincere liberals” were adopting certain socialist nature principles.

The law of the Sunday rest (1897, remodified in 1910), Missir law (the law of trades-1902), which caused an international scandal, after the accusations of discriminating the Jew traders, certain laws from the educational sphere (the reform of Spiru Haret), the agricultural law (the Agricultural Credit), the economic law (the law of the subsoil resources) and the medical law (the care of the injured workers) were opening the way for the numerous economic categories, but without economic potential, for an improvement of the situation<sup>103</sup>.

Another problem for the socialists was that, permanently, the conservatives and the liberals were accusing them of keeping connections with the socialist agitators, expelled from Russia, as Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea, doctor Russel and others.

Zamfir Arbore (Romanian intellectual and fighter from Bessarabia) exposed and published in the newspapers “Telegraful”, in 1887, very concluding information on the Russian spying agency that was working in the Russian Legation from Bucharest, led by M.A. Hitrovo, publishing in that newspaper the list with the names, the addresses, the conspirational houses and the sums of money that each Russian influence agent was receiving.

Practically, this major misunderstanding hurried the end of the short socialist parliamentary life. As mentioned before, the Social-Democrat Party of the Workers from Romania was created on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1893, they people who laid the foundation being practically from two groups, one of the “generous”: Vasile G. Morțun (chief of “the group of the generous since 1895”), Ioan Nădejde, Sofia Nădejde (sister of the painter Octav Băncilă and wife of Ioan Nădejde) and one of the “radical activists” (many of them from Russia: Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea,

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibidem.*

Cristian Rakowski, Ilie Moscovici, Ion C. Frimu, Dimitrie Marinescu, Gheorghe Cristescu, Mihail Gheorghiu-Bujor (Nacu, 2013: 315). The first category preferred to migrate towards the liberals: “the Generous” of Vasile G. Morțun reached the liberal party on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1899, and Ioan Nădejde in 1903.

The second category (except for Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Ion C. Frimu, who died in prison in 1919) wished to adopt the socialist model from Russia, which was embracing the idea of revolution, the overthrowing of order, including through anarchist movements. Rakowski reached after 1918 “the banner of Bolshevism” (Mitican, 1983:184,185), and Gheorghe Cristescu-Plăpumarul and Mihai Bujor laid the foundation of the Communist Party from Romania, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1921, as a section of the Socialist International, respecting the indications of the Bolshevik Party from Moscow, which was aiming inclusively the dismemberment of Romania (declared illegal in 1921)<sup>104</sup>.

All these crises, more or less extended, share a series of common elements. Thus, the necessity of the agrarian reform was used by Alexandru Ioan Cuza to impose an authoritarian government, because the Deputies Assembly, dominated by the conservatives, was opposing ab initio to any reform that might have limited its power. The character of the voting based on qualification and, implicitly, the political power, were making impossible an internal reform. Yet, the regime of Cuza was seen by the contemporaries as an excessive one too, the camarilla surrounding the ruler imposing him to make some uninspired decisions too, as accepting the demission of Mihail Kogălniceanu, as a consequence of degrading the relation between the two, after the prime-minister Mihail Kogălniceanu had paid a visit in Oltenia, where, without minimising the role of Cuza’s rulin, had spoken quite a lot on his personal merits in constituting the new political regime after 1859.

Naturally that the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza was tempted, as much as his status was allowing him, to have friendly relations with Serbia, even if it meant to ensure the transit of the Russian weapons, bought by the Serbian prince Miloș Obrenovici from Russia. This action ruined his image in the eyes of Emperor Napoleon III, who, in 1856, had presided over the Peace Treaty of Paris, a congress that regarded the Romanian problem a European Problem and which made official a great defeat for the Tsarist Russia. Thus, “the monstrous coalition” had seen in the authoritarian ruling of Cuza the beginning of a fatal isolation for a recently united country, which was aspiring to independence.

The actions of destruction of the Union from 1859, from year 1866 were not too intense, Russia expecting to belong to the group of the great European Powers,

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<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem.*

when they will prove willing to open its way towards a new conflict with the Ottoman Empire<sup>105</sup>.

Despite the doctrine misunderstandings between the liberals and the conservatives, there ought to be mentioned that, in the case of the secret treaty with Austro-Hungary, Germany and Italy from 1883, the secret was kept because the geopolitical position of Romania was depending on it. The liberals and the conservatives preferred to use the theme of the Romanians persecuted in Austro-Hungary as a political attack mentioned in speeches delivered from the Parliament tribune, or in the press of a party, although, secretly, the both parties, during the governing period, supported the cultural and political activity of the Romanians from the other side of the Carpathians. The both forces were aware that, without an external firm promise, the advancing of the discussions about Transylvania could not occur. Until 1878, Austro-Hungary and Germany were main forces, France had been knelt, and Russia was aiming at the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire. The presence of Carol I on the throne was the guarantee that Romania would never have emitted pretensions on the historic right over the Romanian territories occupied by Austro-Hungary. The entering of Dobruja within the Romanian boundaries, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1878 had somehow attenuated the loss of Bugeac (Southern Bessarabia). Basically many peasants could settle in Dobruja, where there was a lot of land that could be used for appropriation.

There emerged another problem that created much dissatisfaction in the era prior to the obtaining of the state independence of Romania. Thus, in order to be appreciated internationally, Romania had, to a certain extent, to make some compromises. Essentially, the acceptance of the Romanian wishes was conditioned by the acceptance of the foreign investors. Thus, the railway was leased to Stroussberg Trust, financed by Bleichroder-Hansemann Concern. The bankruptcy of Stroussberg, unpopular at that time, was solved by imposing Romania to take over the assets, in 1878, as a condition for the acknowledgement of the state independence.

In 1875, Romania concluded a Commercial Convention with Austro-Hungary (available until 1886), considered damaging for the economy of Romania, which was merely in the phase of organic growth. Basically, Austro-Hungary was invading Romania with its goods, destroying the local production, while the Romanian imports were scarce, especially from agriculture. Yet, there was estimated that this Commercial Convention was the first step on the way towards the political independence of Romania. The Critics of the measure were, obviously, the liberals, because the conservative party was the one who had initiated it.

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem.*

In 1877, the food and other kit supplying of the Russian army that had crossed the Danube in Bulgaria, in the years of the independence war had numerous pauses (there were bought farming products for little money from the Romanian peasants, which were later sold to the Russian army, or even there were commandeered means of transport from the Romanian peasants, without being handed back a/n) and there were corruption suspicions amongst the highest circles. A ferocious critic of mistakes from his age, Mihai Eminescu took a stand in the media, attacking the “Warshawsky Business”<sup>106</sup>, as it was called in that period. The court from Ilfov held an inquiry, but, for certain reasons, among which the desire of not generating international critics that would have affected the acknowledgment of Romania’s independence, the inquiry was cushioned.

Another resounding bankruptcy was “Hallier” bankruptcy, in 1901, when the concessionaire Adrien Hallier assumed the modernisation of Constanța harbour, but he went bankrupt, after incurred unjustified expenses. When Romania asked for external loans, the granting came with one condition, Romania would take over all Adrien Hallier’s debts.

After 1907, the liberals took a series of measures to ease to life of the peasants, such was the emerging of the Rural Credit, the generalisation of the Popular Banks. Despite the fact the agriculture was the main occupation in Romania, and the greatest generator of income for the national economy, the proprietors were continuing to opt for the grain export, the exploiting of the estates with peasant labour, old agricultural implements, based on animal traction. In time, the American grains, much more resistant to draught, of a better quality for the bakery products from the Occident, started to be preferred instead of the Romanian grains. Although allied with Romania, Austro-Hungary was teasing it on addressing the bovine imports, due to the so-called “epizooties”, starting from 1878 (Jinga:1945, p.311-335). There was considered, in an unjustified way, that the bovines from Romania were carrying diseases, because Austro-Hungary wanted to export bovines itself, owing to the increased request coming from Central and Western Europe. Thus, in 1886-1892, there was started the well-known Romanian-Austro-Hungarian customs war, with catastrophic loss for the communities from the south of Transylvania, which were dependent on the commercial contracts with Romania. Year 1886 had been the year when the Commercial Convention with Austro-Hungary had expired.

In 1913, the obtaining of Southern Dobruja (Quadrilateral), which resorted from Romania’s wish to punish Bulgaria for trying to damage the geopolitical situation from the Balkans, and in order to allow the Aromanians, the Macedo-

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<sup>106</sup> Idem, *Conceptul de modernizare a României prin discursuri, inițiative și elemente de strategie politică (1859-1914)*, Craiova, Sitech Press, 2018, p.86-89.

Romanians, the Megleno-Romanians from Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece to settle on the territory of Romania proved more attractive for the Romanians from the Old Kingdom (a popular name for Moldova, Wallachia and Dobruja after 1918, confronted to the new-united provinces ) than for those from Banat and Transylvania.

Fragmentarily, there are to be quoted the provisions from the Treaty of Bucharest from 1913: *“Article I. Starting on the day the exchange of ratifications from this treaty took place, the peace and friendship shall rule between His Majesty the King of Romania, His Majesty the King of Greece, His Majesty the King of Montenegro, His Majesty the King of Serbia and His Majesty the King of Bulgaria, between Their successors, Their States and the subjects. Article II. Between the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Kingdom of Romania, the old border between the Danube and the Black Sea is, according to the minutes concluded by the respective military delegates, and annexed to protocol No. 5 from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July (4<sup>th</sup> of August) 1913 of the Conference of Bucharest, rectified as following: The new border is to start from the Danube, above Turtucaia, to reach in the Black Sea, in the Northern part of Ekrene. Between these two external points, the line of the border is to followed the direction indicated on the maps 1/100 000 and 1/200 000 of the Romanian general staff and according to the description annexed to this article. It is decided that Bulgaria is to demolish, in no more than two years, the works of the existing fortifications, and is not to build others at Rusciuk, at Šumla, in the intermediary parts, and on an area of twenty kilometres around Balchik.”*<sup>107</sup>

The union, the independence and the consolidation of the international prestige of modern Romania were accomplished with numerous human and material sacrifices. As we can notice, from the above mentioned information, and also the multitude of studies, articles, books, documents published in historiography, that, on one side, the national security of Romania was vulnerable due to the social rebellions, used by the Opposition against the Power, used by foreign powers who were hostile to Romania, with the purpose of destabilizing the institutions, the economy of the Romanian state. The modernisation of infrastructure, the development of the national economy were undermined, as price paid for the acknowledgement of the national independence, the medium and long term effects being disastrous.

Despite all these events, the Romanian state, either through the heroism of the Romanian soldiers, or the clairvoyance and the power of decision of some important politicians from the period 1859-1914, or the mediation of the Ruler Cuza or King Carol I, kept its integrity and managed to resist against the threats that, as real as possible, endangered its existence.

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<sup>107</sup> *Cartea verde. Acțiunea României septembrie 1912–august 1913*, Bucharest, 1913.



In 1913, Romania was obtaining two counties in the south of Dobruja, Durostor and Caliacra, as compensation for the fact that, in the Balkans, there lived numerous Romanian communities that had not been acknowledged, and it was hoped that they might come in the territories recently entered in the compentence of Romania.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represented the last period when the Habsburg Empire existed. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the instauration of the Austro-Hungarian dualism had been a geopolitical idea meant to remodel the profile of this multinational state, profoundly affected by the defeat of Austria by Prussia and the abandoning of the race for the unity of Germany by Wien.

In the process of constituting the two political-military sides, the Triple Alliance and the Entente, Austria wished that the other states would obtain a better position both in Europe, and the colonial competition, dominated by France, Great Britain, in which Germany, Austria and Italy were holding secondary positions.

A great problem, during the existence of Austro-Hungary was constituted by the national problem. Along the majority ethnicities, the Austrians and the Hungarians, in this empire, there were Romanians, Czechs, Slovaks, Polish people, Croatians, Slovenians, Serbians, Ruthenians, Jews, Italians. If the Jews had integrated socially in the dominant communities, the Austrian and the Magyar, the other ethnicities, living in the areas where there had been national states along the history, were wishing to emancipate definitively, or to obtain an acknowledged status, within the double monarchy. Therefore, there are shaping two geopolitical tendencies: the national emancipation, going to separation, and the federal based reorganisation.

Unlike the great powers of Europe, which had an ethnic homogenous “mainland”, Austro-Hungary was multinational, trying the imposing of a dualist artificial “mainland”, Austrian and Magyar. Essentially, the difference between the European states can be translated through the fact that Austro-Hungary was behaving as a colonist state, in the very middle of Europe. It ought to be remarked the fact that the European peoples, included in the double monarchy, were on cultural, social and economic levels obviously superior to the colonial spaces from Africa, Asia, Oceania etc. The promoters of the German geopolitics had created the “Mittel Europa”<sup>108</sup> political concept, through which they were trying to prove that Wien and Budapest were the centres of power that could maintain an ethnic conglomerate consolidated by a modern economic organisation, despite the so-called nationalist sideslips, attributed to the irredentists and anarchists.

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<sup>108</sup> Barry Hayes, *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994, p. 16.

The Sovereign of Austro-Hungary, the emperor Franz Joseph was, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, seriously affected by the tragic events, as the assassination of his wife, Empress Elisabeth, the popular Sissi, killed by an Italian anarchist, Luigi Lucheni, and the suspect death of his successor, Prince Rudolph.

After the refuse of his brother to be appointed official successor, the old emperor oriented towards Franz-Ferdinand, his son, a promotor of the federalist ideas. He was himself an example of the liberal views, especially that he had chosen the morganatic marriage in 1900, with a young girl without princely or royal blood, the countess Sophia Chotec, which, in political language, meant that his descendants were excluded from the imperial succession.

The presence as heir of Prince Franz Ferdinand, after 1890, gave hope to the moderate nationalists from the double monarchy, created discontentment among the radical ones and determined the adepts of the already existing order, the Austrian and the Magyars, to show prudence. It is also noticeable the fact that the idea of the economic efficiency of the Austro-Hungarian policy was seen by the United States of America, in 1918, as a factor of maintaining the Empire, even if on federalist bases<sup>109</sup>.

The decisional factors from Wien and Budapest were aware of the fact that, at the frontiers of the double monarchy, there were two states, Romania and Serbia, independent after the Russian-Turkish war from 1877, in which there were people with ethnic correspondences within the Austro-Hungarian state nations. Bulgaria had been proclaimed autonomous (between Danube and the Balkans), but it had succeeded the union with the Oriental Rumelia. Austro-Hungary had obtained in 1878, at Berlin, a protectorate in Bosnia-Herzegovina, although it had actually wanted the annexation, which he would accomplish in 1908, also the year of independence for Bulgaria.

The Austro-Hungarian diplomacy tried two actions: the attraction of Romania in the Triple Alliance, in 1883, due to an attitude manifested by the political class from Bucharest, obviously anti-Russian, this one used by the Tsarist Russia to gain one of the main geopolitical positions in the Balkans. The presence of a German origin prince on the throne of Romania and the failure of the Romanian-Bulgarian unification project, under the leadership of Prince Carol I of Romania, are obvious Austro-Hungarian successes, in the years 1883 and 1885. The freeing of Bulgaria from the influence of Russia, and the closeness to Austro-Hungary, was framing exactly in the logics seen by Wien and Budapest to strengthen the international position in the Balkans, against the background of failure in the colonial competition.

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<sup>109</sup> Dumitru Suciu, *Anul 1918 în Europa Centrală și Răsăriteană. Ideea de Europa Unită*, Argonaut Press, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, p.15-20.

It is obvious that the diplomacy from Wien and Budapest had agreed with the government from Bucharest that the convention from 1883 to be a secret one. Any attempt of criticising shown to Austro-Hungary was seen a benevolent attitude towards Russia. Each time the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic reports were requesting an even greater pressure from Wien, at Bucharest, due to the attitude of some of the Romanian politicians, favourable to the national movement of the Romanians from Transylvania, the Austro-Hungarian diplomats, accredited in the capital of Romania, who were not aware of the existence of the secret convention, were forced to not exceed their attributions.

Between the years 1878 and 1908, that is, between the Treaty of Berlin and the annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina, in 1906, in Austro-Hungary, there could be seen a Romanian initiative. It was the activity of Aurel Popovici<sup>110</sup> (1863, Lugoj, Banat-1917, Geneva), a Romanian politician and jurist from Austro-Hungary, known for his nationalist and anti-Magyar attitude. Although he signed the Memorandum from 1892, an apogee of the Romanian political current of passivism, Aurel Popovici managed to later integrate himself in the group of the intellectuals, created around Franz Ferdinand.

Aurel C. Popovici<sup>111</sup> created a political plan, called “The United States of Great Austria - *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich*”, published at Leipzig, in 1906, in which he was proposing the division of Austro-Hungary in 15 formations, delimited ethnically and called “states”: *Deutsch-Österreich* (German Austria, made of the actual Austria and the Southern Tyrol); *Deutsch-Böhmen* (German Bohemia-The north-western region of contemporary Czech Republic); *Deutsch-Mähren* (German Moravia, the north-east of Czech Republic); *Böhmen* (Bohemia-the centre and the south of Czech Republic); *Slowakenland* (Slovakia); *West-Galizien* (Western Galicia, in contemporary Poland); *Ost-Galizien* (Eastern Galicia, in contemporary Ukraine); *Ungarn* (Hungary); *Seklerland* (the region dwelt by the Szecklers, in contemporary Romania); *Siebenbürgen* (Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina – regions that nowadays are in Romania and Ukraine – Northern Bukovina, ținutul Hertsa province); *Trento* (Trentino, in contemporary Italy); *Triest* (Trieste, contemporary Italy); *Krain* (contemporary Slovenia); *Kroatien* (Croatia); *Woiwodina* (Vojvodina, contemporary Serbia). They were supposed to be governed by a centralised political system from Wien. The official language was to be the German.

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<sup>110</sup> The Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. VII, book II, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 2003, p.338.

<sup>111</sup> Constantin Schifirneț, *Aurel C. Popovici: un punct de vedere conservator asupra națiunii*, în *Geneza modernă a ideii naționale*, Bucharest, Albatros Press, 2001, p.96-116.

His political plan was inspired by the federalist experience of Switzerland, and United States of America. Aurel C. Popovici wanted that the borders of the new states from the componse of Austria to observe the ethnic principle and to have the capacity to govern themselves autonomously, on the internal plan. The specialists relate this model to the neoconservative Jeffersonian one<sup>112</sup>.

The states members were to have their own parliament, government and juridical institutions, and the constitution of the state was not supposed to contravene the constitution of the Empire. The Emperor was appointing a governor the head of the government, chosen from the citizens of that state. He would choose his team, validated by the emperor. The emperor would guarantee the autonomy and the territory of each state, and the states could not act beyond the limits of the general policy, imposed by the imperial government. The states members would send representatives elected through universal secret suffrage, in the Parliament of Austria. The central government was to have 42 members, delegated by the member states, proportionally and according to the share of the population, within the empire. The Germans and the Hungarians were representing 44% of the total population from Austria, which was basically transforming them in minority. Yet, the emperor had the possibility to control the Senate, because in there the members were appointed by birth (from the ruling family), rightful members, elected members and members appointed by the emperor<sup>113</sup>.

The official language of the state was the German language. Each component state would decide its own official language. Where there were national minorities, there appeared the obligation to guarantee the right to identity. The decisions of the Parliament, the Imperial Government had to be translated into the official language of each state. The capital of the Empire was Wien, and each state chose its capital.

There ought to be mentioned that, except for this political plan, Aurel C. Popovici became famous again, this instance, in a negative manner, due to some sideslips in this political thinking, being attracted by the extremist, racist and xenophobe ideas that had started to spread in Europe<sup>114</sup>.

It was understandable the fact that his plan was received with adversity by the Magyars, because he basically wanted the annulment of the Austro-Hungarian dualism from 1867 and the removing of the Hungarian influence, in the political decision of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This project was supported by Alexandru

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<sup>112</sup> Idem, *Aurel C. Popovici despre organizarea statală federalistă a națiunilor*, p. 155-183.

<sup>113</sup> Academy, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. VII, book II, p.338-339.

<sup>114</sup> Virgil Nemoianu, *România și liberalismele ei*, Editura Fundației Culturale Române Press, Bucharest, 2000, p. 110-121

Vaida-Voevod, an adept of the federalism, and criticised by Octavian Goga, Vasile Goldiș, the publication “Tribuna”<sup>115</sup>.

The assassination of the Prince heir Franz-Ferdinand, in June 1914, at Sarajevo, led to the situation that the project, agreed in the circles close to him, to not be applied anymore. A month after the assassination of Franz-Ferdinand, Austro-Hungary, under the leadership of the venerable emperor Franz Joseph was joining World War I. In 1916, at the death of the Emperor, he was followed by Karl of Habsburg. In 1918, due to the defeat of Austro-Hungary and the uprising of the subjected peoples, the federalist manifesto “To my faithful peoples”, launched by Emperor Karl, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1918, did not have any effect, Austro-Hungary ceasing its existence, at the end of the war, on its ruins being built national states as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, other territories entering into the componence of Romania and the Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom (the future Yugoslavia).

Aurel C. Popovici did not live to see the tardive attempt of Emperor Karl to federalize Austro-Hungarian Empire. He died at Geneva, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1917, being later buried in Șcheii Brașovului.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1914, there began what the universal history calls World War I. For Romania, the joining to this war was subjected to a great incertitude. On one side, the public opinion believed that Romania had to fight for the recreation of the territorial integrity, and, on the other side, King Carol I and a part of the government (The President of the Council of Ministers and the Minister of the External Affairs) had to consider the secret treaty with the Central Powers from 1883. The treaty had been kept secret because the behaviour of the Austro-Hungarian Empire on addressing the Romanians from the historical provinces of Transylvania, Crișana, Banat, Bukovina was hardly tolerated by the Romanians from the Old Kingdom. King Carol I and that time first-minister, Ion C. Brătianu, had opted in 1883 for the closeness to the Central Powers, based on the belonging of the German Empire to this military block. Yet, the diplomacy from Berlin managed to avoid the Romanian pretentions elegantly, proposing a treaty with Austro-Hungary, to which Germany to adhere. Thus, it was not about the adhering of Romania to the Triple Alliance, but a treaty of alliance between this block and Romania.

Germany wanted Romania to have an ally in east and south, Romania, positioned in front of Russia that had disappointed it at San Stefano and Berlin, because it received only the protectorate of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and not the annexation, as it had intended<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> Academia Istoria Românilor, vol. VII, book II, p.339.

<sup>116</sup> Gheorghe N. Căzan, Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, *Tratatul secret de alianță între România și Austro-Ungaria din anul 1883*, in “Revista Română de Studii Internaționale”, 1973, no. 1, p. 175-194.

Wien was aware of the hostility of the officials from Bucharest and the public opinion against its policy of denationalisation of the Romanians from the double monarchy, especially that, on the 5<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> of June 1883, the declaration of the senator Petre Grădișteanu, made when it was inaugurated the statue of Stephen the Great at Iași, in which he was requesting that on Romania's crown to reappear the jewellery of the great Stephen's crown, the ruler of Moldova, had stirred up the high level spirits. Austro-Hungary protested vehemently, because the connection was directly made to Bukovina, taken in 1775, along with Putna, where there was the grave of the great ruler. The crisis was later solved, in diplomatic ways, but it remains edifying for anyone who wishes to understand the Romanian state of mind.

The application of the treaty from the 18<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> of October 1883 was exempted from disagreements. Any gesture of kindness of the government addressed to Austro-Hungary was regarded by the Russian Empire and the opposition as suspect (the treaty was kept secret during the entire period), as the attempts for financing the Romanian schools over the mountains were seen as mixtures of the people recognised for their pro-Russian affinities.

The milestone was the attitude of the government from Bucharest against the memorandum movement from 1892-1894.

Here it is what the author, lawyer Iuliu Coroianu, was requesting in the Memorandum that was presented to the Emperor Franz Joseph, at Wien, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 1892, by a delegation of 300 Romanians, after it had been previously adopted at the General Conference of the Romanian National Party, which took place at Sibiu, on the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> of March 1892:

*“Your imperial and royal apostolic Majesty! Graceful Lord! The representatives of the Romanian electors from all the countries of the Hungarian crown of Your Majesty, meeting on the days of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of January of the current year, in Sibiu, at the electoral conference, noticed that their commissioners, dissatisfied with the political situation created by the system of government inaugurated in the years of 1866-1868 and the entire development of our public life from that moment until nowadays, do not trust, according to our polls, the Diet from Budapest and the Magyar government, and, after long and mature debates, all agreed that it is a patriotic prudent decision that the Romanians to not use their right to elect deputies, but to be considered that they are not represented in the diet of their country. Owing to that conference, in which there were represented all the Romanians from Cisleithania, we present with reverential submission to the steps of Your Majesty Throne, to warn Your Majesty on the dangers that result, for the common country, from the actual state policy, and to inform Your Majesty on the facts made the Romanians, the most loyal and patient citizens of the monarchy, renounce, for the time being, the exercising of the most important rights, which they*

*enjoy due to Your Majesty's mercy, and that is after the sacrifice of their wealth and blood that they brought for the glory of the Ruling House and the Monarchy. The attempt to reach the consolidation of the Magyar state proved useless, even after efforts made for a long time.*

*Neither due to the number, nor the culture, nor the political prudence did the Magyar people show enough superiority to be allowed to lead the common country's businesses alone, without support from other peoples, but it fought against them. The idea of transforming the Hungarian state into a polyglot one, through the national unification of its constitutive elements, in a single national Magyar one, proved to be a dangerous utopia. Thus, the actual Hungarian state is just a formation that has only the role to support the Magyar domination at any price, helping the Magyars deprive the other co-citizens and making from the hard work of others condemnable national Magyar settlements, while others lack the most elementary facilities in their cultural effort. Today, after the peoples have been set against each other due to a thoughtless and obstinate policy, and only from the natural mediation of Your Majesty there is expected such a salutary change in our common life"<sup>117</sup>.*

King Carol I involved personally in the releasing of the memorandum supporters, who had been tried and sentenced by the court from Cluj, in 1894.

Basically, before the expiring of the 10 year period, as it was valid, the parties started to test the field for obtaining an extension. It is thought that the Romanian-Austrian-Hungarian dissensions could not be solved by Germany, because Austro-Hungary did not admit under any circumstances the improvement in the situations of the Romanians from the double monarchy, because Hungary, accepting the compromise from 1867, had conditioned Austria to not interfere in the provinces administrated by Budapest.

Although the treaty was renewed for ten more years, in 1892 (basically the treaty had expired de facto), the complication of the geopolitical game from the Balkans showed that the diplomatic relation between Romania and the Triple Alliance was expected to be broken.

Romania and Austro-Hungary had to help each other in case they were aggressed by a third party, a power that was, as it anticipated by everyone, Russia.

Russia tried to interfere in the Balkans, supporting Bulgaria against Serbia, independent since 1878, the same as Romania. In 1885, Aleksandr von Batenberg had managed to unite the Principality of Bulgaria (from the Danube to the Balkans) with the Principality of Rumelia (from the Balkans to the border with Greece), a situation that fuelled the pretensions of a Great Bulgaria. The relation between Austro-Hungary

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<sup>117</sup> *Procesul Memorandului românilor din Transilvania. Acte și date*, Editura Buletinului Justiției din Cluj Press, Cluj, 1934, p. 13–44.

and Serbia was one that evolved from normality to a permanent tension, because the interests of Serbia and Austro-Hungary were similar on addressing the control of the southern Slavs. The Pan-Slavism was a current agreed by Russia that was supporting Bulgaria, an enemy of Serbia, but Bulgaria was dangerously getting closer to Austro-Hungary, because it was considering that this state could help it extend in the Balkans<sup>118</sup>.

Basically, in this area, there was an “apple of discord”, represented on one side by Bosnia-Herzegovina, an artificial province, and, on the other side, by Macedonia. A great part of Macedonia was under Ottoman control, and towards this historic territory were heading, firstly Greece, justifying with the principle its belonging to the Greek ethnicity and culture, along with the other Balkan states, the independent Serbia and the autonomous Bulgaria, because they have a common frontier with Macedonia.

The Romanian state had interests in Macedonia, due to the communities of Aromanians and Macedo-Romanians. Moreover, the incident from Arab-Tabia and the insufficient solution given in case of the southern frontier of Romania with Bulgaria, gave the Romanian government a motivation to obtain a territorial expansion in Bulgaria.

In 1901, the king of Romania and the king of Greece had met in Abazzia, with the purpose to clarify some diplomatic incidents, to declare that they would maintain the status-quo from the Balkans, an opportunity when the two sovereigns observed the situation from the Balkans, which was about to become an explosive one.

On addressing the situation of the Aromanians, the Ottoman Empire offered a solution that would prove to be temporary, in terms of duration, a Decree from 1905, in which the Aromanian minority was acknowledged.

The uprising from 1907, which broke out in Romania was seen, on the external plan, also as an attempt to destabilise Romania, a secret ally of Austro-Hungary, taking advantage of the peasant question, a great weakness of the modern Romanian policy after 1864. The revolt broke out on an estate of Fischer trust, which was the fodder supplier of the Austro-Hungarian cavalry.

In 1908, the independence of Bulgaria and the annexation by Austro-Hungary of Bosnia-Herzegovina showed the fact that Russia and Austro-Hungary were to confront in the Balkans.

Implicitly, everything led to the Balkan Wars. The first one ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece. The second one, provoked by Bulgaria, dissatisfied by the partition of Macedonia, led to the involvement of Romania, a fact that determined the signing of the Peace of

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<sup>118</sup> Ioan C. Filitti, Rusia, *Austro-Ungaria și Germania față de România, până la 1916*, in Ioan C. Filitti, *Omul prin operă* (Georgeta Filitti edition), Bucharest, Pegasus Press, 2004, p. 31-78.



Bucharest. It was the triumph of a generation of Romanian politicians, meaning that Romania was taking the Quadrilateral, that is, the Southern Dobruja, on the line Ekrene-Turtukaia.

Yet, the Romanian public opinion was declared dissatisfied with this Romanian action, in the society there were protests that were sending to "Transylvania". The historian and the politician Nicolae Iorga wrote, as referring to the involvement of Romania in the Balkans that it was actually decided the question of Transylvania.

Although in 1902, 1907 and 1910, the treaty from 1883 was renewed, after 1913 it had become obvious that the Romanian-Austro-Hungarian relations were, in fact, interrupted<sup>119</sup>.

Thus, in the summer of year 1914, when Romania, at the Crown Council from Sinaia, from the 21<sup>st</sup> of July/3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1914 decided to remain neuter. King Carol was then declaring that: "There is carried out a battle in which, for an entire historical period, there will be established the map of Europe and the faith of the peoples. It is certain that in this war there will be winners and losers, but it is certain known ahead and irrevocably that the neuter people are to be the losers"<sup>120</sup>. On one side, they would see their future menaced politically, because of the conservatives, and, on the other side, it would basically mean the renouncing to the pretensions over Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș and Bukovina. It was obvious that if Romania had joined the war along the Entente, the other military block, it would have meant the renouncing to the idea of retrieving Bessarabia. The old King Carol was amidst an unpleasant situation. As a descendant of a German dynasty and Field Marshal of the German army had to observe his family obligations, but, as a sovereign, he had to convince the country that his option would assure his future. As an intervention of the destiny, thanks to the *Memoires* of the important liberal politician I.G.Duca, the Minister of Culture and Public Instruction at that time, we find that the people attending the meeting discovered that Italy had chosen the neutrality<sup>121</sup>. The adepts of Romania's neutrality were arguing that Italy will be neuter, while the adepts for joining the war along the Central Powers, were basing on the fact that Italy will help Austro-Hungary: "*While the dialogue was extremely passionate, the door opened and there appeared a lackey with a telegram on a silver tray. He hands it to Brătianu, who opens it rapidly: it was the official news concerning the neutrality of Italy. It was the greatest stage effect. It could be seen that, following this incident, the King was no longer able to defend his point of view. He became silent, in resignation. We were all happy and were looking at Carp, who,*

<sup>119</sup> The Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor*, Vol. VII, Book II, p.268-271.

<sup>120</sup> I. G. Duca, *Memorii*, vol. I, *Neutralitatea*, part I, Bucharest, Expres Press, 1992, p.59.

<sup>121</sup> Sorin Liviu Damean, *Carol I, 1866-1881*, Paideia Press, Bucharest, 2000, *passim*.

*few minutes earlier, had asserted with such certainty that Italy will not be neuter. He must have unwillingly seen in our eyes that we were all telling him: «can't you see that your arguments have the same value?»»<sup>122</sup>*

Yet, the fact that Italy too, in its quality of member of the Central Powers, had decided to remain neuter, determined the searching of an equitable solution. Basically, the adepts of neutrality adopted the idea, taken from the study of the international law, that is, the interpretation of the “casus foederis” clause. This clause was forcing Romania to intervene in case of aggression against Austro-Hungary. The evidence on the battle field was showing that, de jure and de facto, Austro-Hungary was an aggressor state, by declaring war to Serbia. This explanation could not calm the Austro-Hungarians, but Romania could not be compelled in any manner to change its option.

Nevertheless, a certain aspect of the bilateral Romanian-Russian relations could not remain unseen by the European courts, that is, the pompous greeting that the sovereign of Romania organised for the Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and his family. Although the visit lasted for only a day, the manner in which the population, the politicians and the other notabilities received the visit of the Tsar and the imperial Russian family, was showing that Romania is about to reanalyse its alliance policy.

In our opinion, the keeping secret of the treaty from 1883 constituted a measure of prevention, but also of negotiation of the skilful Ion C. Brătianu. Thus, the government would not renounce the pretensions on the Romanian provinces from Austro-Hungary, but it also did not respond to the accusations of Russophilia, directed against the liberals, by their political adversaries, the conservatives.

The negotiations from the first renewing of the treaty ended in failure. Basically, examining the information carefully, there is drawn the conclusion that, in reality, Romania signed a second treaty with Austro-Hungary, because the date of signing was later than the date of expiring, and the renewing had to normally be before the date when the provisions stipulated in the treaty had expired.

King Carol I died in the fall of 1914, and, according to the rules established in the family protocol, Prince Ferdinand, his nephew, would succeed as king. He had married Mary, a princess from Great Britain, niece of Queen Victoria, the Queen of Great Britain and Empress of Indies, and also first cousin of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia.

The new king, Ferdinand I was a capable man, but not as resilient as his uncle, the late King Carol I, capable to resist the pressure of the entourage. In the same time, the new Queen, Mary, could not resist to not get involved in the politics, as her

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<sup>122</sup> I.G. Duca, *op.cit.*, p.61.

predecessor, Queen Elisabeth had done, who was satisfied with just remaining a poet and supporter of the arts.

The royal family already had a first born boy, Prince Carol, followed by Prince Nicholas, and also the Princesses Marioara and Elisabeta. It was understood that Queen May represented a chance for the British and Tsarist diplomacy, as considering the preference for the Entente.

From 1914 to August 1916, there were two years of diplomatic fight, during the neutrality period. The diplomacy from Bucharest was following the battle-front successes of the Entente, as it was interested in getting guarantee on its legitimate aspirations on addressing the reconstruction of the national unity.

Ion I.C. Brătianu wanted to create, on one side, the proper political and military background for joining the war. On the other side, beyond the legitimate claims of Romania, the Romanian politicians was considering that the Entente could also win something from it, through the fact the opening of a new battle-front in the Balkans could be a huge step forward against the central Powers, to which the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria had adhered, with the latter one Romania sharing the entire southern frontier, fluvial and terrestrial, just because Austro-Hungary had to cross over a part of the Troops that were fighting against Russia, or support Germany in the fight against Romania, which meant a relief on the western front of the first main world conflagration.

Ionel Brătianu knew that, every time he would try to propose the collaboration with the Entente, his political adversaries would retort by reminding him about the unpleasant experience with Russia of his father, in 1877, when, although he had signed the convention from the 4<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> of April 1877 through which the Tsar was committing to observe the integrity of Romania, at San-Stefano and Berlin, Russia had infringed the text of the Convention, annexing the counties from the south of Bessarabia, lost at Paris in 1856, which, naturally, would ensure the access to Danube for Russia.

Yet, as dignified successor of his illustrious father, Ionel Brătianu could rely on the fact that Romania had obtained in 1878 Dobruja, becoming a power riparian to the Black Sea. Moreover, it could not be neglected the fact that, through the Treaty of Bucharest, which had stopped the second Balkan war, Romania was granted a kind of territorial compensation, ignored at Berlin.

Ionel Brătianu was the man of equilibrium and limit. As an engineer, he knew how to combine the complicated pieces of the Balkan geopolitical area, in a manner that the ideal of the national unity for Romania would have the precedence.

Ionel Brătianu considered that the proper moment for the union with Transylvania would not occur later, as King Carol I had suggested. The young liberal knew very well that the vultures would tear each other into pieces for the prey, and, if

Romania did not position itself properly on the political plan, its goal would not be reached.

The military successes of France on Marne, the Russian offensive against the Austro-Hungarian troops, were showing that the Central Powers were rather weak. Austro-Hungary was struggling to resist the advance of Russia. Practically, no observer from the era would have been capable to foresee that, in 1918, Germany, Austro-Hungary and Russia would collapse under their own weight. Although in the country there was an active propaganda of the media, the supporters of Entente to join the war, Brătianu was behaving similarly to the famous Fabius Cunctator. He wanted to wait for a proper moment, along with the obtaining of firm guarantees on addressing the Romanian territories that were under the Austro-Hungarian occupation. Certain Russian failures were determining King Carol I and his adepts to request the President of the Minister Council to join the war on the side of the Central Powers<sup>123</sup>.

It ought to be mentioned that, in this equation of attracting Romania in the war on one side or the other, there were military challenges too. On the night of the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of May/10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1916 the Tsarist troops inexplicably crossed the border, occupied the locality of Momornița and headed towards Bukovina, through Dorohoi. The Austrians replied with artillery fire, which meant there were also affected houses on the Romanian territory.

I.G.Duca was noting in his “Memoires”: *“Could it have been a simple mistake of some local detachments willing to surprise easier an enemy while retreating? But then, why didn’t they consider our protests, why did they fire on our frontier guards, why didn’t they recover to their senses? For two years they were fighting in the same area, they must have known it thoroughly. Why, in the past, had they shown a correct attitude, and why were they now breaking so unexpectedly and flagrantly all the regulations of the international law? We have known that we can expect everything from the Russians, even after forbidding the consumption of alcohol. The incident from Hult was still alive in our memory. Were we not, I wonder, before an attempt of infringing our neutrality, with the purpose to compel the Austro-Germans to have the same attitude and to compel us, transforming our territory into a battle field? The Russians did not manage to attract us into the war through arguments, so were they not trying to force us using brutal means? All the assumptions were allowed”*<sup>124</sup>.

Basically, the Austro-Hungary diplomacy got overheated. The neutrality of Romania had been infringed and the government from Bucharest had not taken any

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<sup>123</sup> Ion Cristoiu, 1914-1916, *Ionel Brătianu, geniul de a aștepta*, [http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/1914-1916-ionel-br-tianu-geniul-tepta](http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/1914-1916-ionel-br-tianu-geniul-tepta), accessed on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>124</sup> I.G.Duca, *op.cit.*, p.121-122.

measure. Ionel Brătianu tried to avoid the Austro-Hungarian vigilance through a communique that was presenting the situation from the north-east frontier as a peaceful one, after there had been requested explanations from the Russian diplomats and military officials. The latter ones classified the incident as an “error”. The Romanian diplomats and militaries were actually questioned by the members of the Central Powers’ diplomacy. Among them, Barbu Știrbei, the confidential person of Queen Mary and the general Dumitru Iliescu, the man of Ionel Brătianu, infiltrated in the army. General Iliescu left instructions for some pretended measures, as symbolic patrolling of the Romanian frontier guards on the line of river Prut. Both Russia and Austro-Hungary had considered “the error” just a pretext to obtain a maximum profit. Yet, they had to remember that Ionel Brătianu was controlling the government in an extremely professional manner. On the internal plan, he managed to insert his trusty people in the entourage of some energetic orators, as Nicolae Iorga, Take Ionescu and even Octavian Goga, creating a protection barrier that would keep their speeches, based on the idea of joining the war, away from the ears of the people who should have heard them.

In the months of June and July 1916, the Entente registered new successes. The Russians entered in Cernăuți, and France started the offensive from Somme. King Ferdinand was willing to cooperate with the Entente, leaving the impression that the dreams of the Germanophiles had died in the same time with King Carol I.

Taking advantage on the fact that there could be seen an openness in Romania, the diplomats of the Entente forces started actions of sustained persuasion. From July 1916, Great Britain and France, along with Russia, began to step back. The most affected was, obviously, Russia. Brătianu knew what he wanted, but the Entente also needed Romania to join the war, as a propagandistic aspect to prejudice the adversaries. Practically, there is verified the theory that the political forces dictate the actions of the army in a state subjected to the rule of law.

The date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1916 represented, as open as possible, the ultimatum from the Entente: “Join now, or never!” It was a message transmitted by all the states members of the Entente together.

On one side, Russia did not want to accept the territorial pretensions of Romania *ab initio*, because the advancing of its troops in Hungary was showing it on a superior position. Brătianu was requesting these guarantees to be sure on addressing the situation of Bulgaria. Yet, his trustful person, General Dumitru Iliescu was presenting him reports of the Romanian military espionage in which Bulgaria was described as weakened. The issue was that the assuring from the Entente was similar. Brătianu decided to gradually exit the citadel of neutrality, when he observed that, at Petersburg, Sazonov, a skilful diplomat, had been replaced from the External Affairs by Sturmer, an unknown character, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1916.

Essentially, as I.G.Duca would later say, this disastrous measure was due to the intrigues of the monk Rasputin. This person, a trustee of the Tsarina because he could keep under control the haemophilia of the Czarevitch, the heir of the imperial throne, had been bought by German secret services that had offered a colossal sum of money, which attracted Rasputin as a magnet. It was the beginning of the end for the Tsarist Russia.

Thus, Ionel Brătianu decided to start the negotiations with Russia, especially that the successor of Sazanov was willing to walk on the way of his predecessor<sup>125</sup>.

The negotiations with the Entente were not easy at all. Brătianu managed to reach his goals. On one side, Romania had motifs to renounce the neutrality because the allies committed to offer military support for the Romanian offensive from Transylvania and, by opening the battle-front at Thessaloniki, to take Bulgaria out of the fight. Actually, the Romanian and foreign informing were showing an apparent weakness of Bulgaria that Brătianu was not willing to believe, but, as any human, he had his limit. In the former two years he had been practically bombarded with requests for joining the war. The summer of 1916 seemed the most appropriate and that is why he did not hesitate to take into account the treaties.

Thus, from July to August 1916, Ionel Brătianu negotiated section by section the text of two civil and military conventions.

Owing to the liberal politician I.G.Duca, Minister of Culture and Public Instruction at that time and participant to the events (he brought his contribution to the drafting of some of the clauses from the conventions), which he mentioned in his memoirs, we now know how the events led to the moment of signing the Political Convention and the Military Convention with the Entente, on the 4<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> of August 1917. Ionel Brătianu signed after the signatures of the diplomatic representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy and Russia had been on the paper:

*“Vintilă Brătianu had prepared, in the middle of the table, a beautiful inkpot and a pen that was to be kept to remember that historic scene. Poklevski, also excited, solemnly silent, signed, one by one, the five copies. Brătianu, the last one, took the pen and, through his signature, tied the faith of the Romanian people by that of the Allies, in this way signing the document that allows the birth of our national unity. Above the table, looking straight at the people who were signing, there was hung, on the wall, the portrait of Ionel Brătianu, the old. The creator of the independence in Small Romania seemed to watch how his successors were building Great Romania. One could have said that his spirit was wandering over us all, in those touching moments”<sup>126</sup>.*

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<sup>125</sup> Florin Nacu, *1916-2016 – un secol de la intrarea României în Războiul pentru Reîntregire Națională*, in “Arhivele Olteniei”, New Series, no. 30/2016, p.65-75.

<sup>126</sup> I.G. Duca, *Memorii*, vol. II, Helicon Press, Timișoara, 1993, p. 145.

I.G.Duca then read, with loud voice, the text of the convention and he remembers that the Russians had acknowledged the fact that Ionel Brătianu had managed to obtain an important thing for Russia, which ought to attract the appreciation of any Romanian: “*After finishing reading, Poklevski (the ambassador of Russia – a/n) turned towards me and said: «As Romanian, you can be happy for what Mr. Brătianu obtained from us»*”<sup>127</sup>.

The two great Romanian political forces, the liberals, the conservatives and their epigones had no other ideas than those regarding the joining of the war, the liberals supporting the Entente and the conservatives the Central Powers.

The Entente supporters had a lot of people who would prove opportunism, although they became great politicians, passing the exams of the political maturity: Take Ionescu, Nicolae Iorga, Nicolae Titulescu, Octavian Goga. The Central Powers supporters were dominated by Petre P. Carp, Titu Maiorescu, Alexandru Marghiloman. The problem was that the both groups had correspondents in the army too.

Basically, the internal political activity was paralysed. The two great desiderates of the internal policy, the revision of the electoral law and the agrarian reform through consensus, put aside for being solved after the war, although an eventual materialisation of the agrarian reform would have generated enthusiasm among the peasants that were to supply the most important part of the Romanian contingents. Essentially, it was more than obvious that the existence of war at the frontiers was stopping the actions of expropriation, of measuring the land, of regulating the rights. The parliament of the country had to think about solutions for endowing the army, for providing the subsistence of the population, for the requisition policy, for supplying, the building of infrastructure.

Romania had made great progress, by increasing the railway network, building the bridge from Cernavodă, extension of the road network, the growth in the degree of urbanisation, the investments in education, culture, the introduction of new industrial proceedings. Although agriculture was still involving the most part of the active population, the industry, the trade, the constructions, the banking and credit system were evidently coming from behind.

Queen Mary, in her private talks, took pride in the fact that the Romanian army, which had around 800,000 soldiers and officers, was ready to intervene, and that such an army, “on a war footing” would represent an advantage for anyone who would have wished to enter an alliance with Romania.

Nonetheless, those were some remarks meant to increase the image of the royal family in the eyes of the contemporaries, to boost the morale of the public opinion,

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<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem.*

but, as it would be noticed after 1916, the military, technical and human infrastructure had great shortcomings, concretised in the failures from the fall of 1916. The armament was not of good quality, while many of the commanders of units and great military units were weakly prepared, as General Berthelot would later notice, the one sent to help the troops from Moldova to resist in the glorious summer of 1917.

Yet, there was one thing that Queen Mary could be sure of, that is, the heroism of the Romania soldiers, most of them peasants, taken away from their ploughs. Practically, all the important political forces wanted the joining of the war, except the socialist movement, which had dispersed itself. The socialists, close to the military socialism ideas, were militating for peace, for not becoming involved in a bourgeois war, but their voice was not heard in 1916, as it did not happen either after the bursting of the Bolshevik counter-revolution of Vladimir Ilici Lenin.

Russia leaving the war, the separate peace with the Central Powers, led to the creation of adversity against the socialist ideas, among the peasants and the workers, because the newspapers and the publications was almost inexistent in the rural regions, and the leaseholders did not leave the workers to rest for attending the manifestations. Moreover, there was accredited the idea that the leaving of the position on the front, by the Russian soldiers, left the Romanian army unprotected before the enemy.

There also ought to be mentioned the fact that, although the army had opened fire on the peasants in 1907, there was no case whatsoever in which a soldier, a corporal or sergeant (that is the hierarchic superior positions occupied by the peasant soldiers) to shoot their superior, of boyar or bourgeois origin.

These are the circumstances in which, on the 14<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> of August 1916, Edgar Mavrocordat presented at Wien the war note of Romania.

Brătianu was absolutely convinced that Austro-Hungary would have categorically refused to give Ardeal to Romania, and Berlin, although tacitly agreeing with the Romanians, did not want a conflict with Wien. Wien was considerably weak, against the pressure of Budapest. Thus, the diplomacy of the Central Powers could be easily explained, it wanted to actually humiliate Romania when concluding the separate peace from 1918. The espionage services of the Central Powers knew about the aspirations of the Romanians – and it was not difficult to discover them, due to the intense public debate – and that is why they did not get involved in the discussions. They knew that the Romanians would take advantage on the military weaknesses of the Central Powers. Therefore, when Germany and France moved to the position war, Austro-Hungary started a fulminant counter-offensive, Romania was already at war, and the disaster that followed in the autumn of 1916, culminating with the occupation of Bucharest and the refuge in Moldova, could not be foreseen.



Oltenia represented a historical region of Romania that had been involving fundamentally in the fight for the territorial unity of Romania.

Oltenia was, in 1916, the year Romania joined World War I, a significant piece in the political-military gearing of the Old Kingdom. Craiova was hosting, after Bucharest, the biggest military structure of the Romanian Army. Oltenia was bordering in the western and northern sides on Austro-Hungary, and in the southern area on Bulgaria. The period of neutrality was one of expectations and exploring. The year 1914 had been chosen by the politicians as a decisive year for debating the rural and the electoral reform, but the beginning of the war had brought the Romanian in the hypostasis of delaying them, because the state of neutrality required attention, and the ideological disputes between the liberals and the conservatives needed to be positioned on the second place<sup>128</sup>.

In the years of the neutrality, Oltenia was tempting for the politicians from over the mountains, in Transylvania, who wanted to try to enter the political scene from Bucharest. In the collective mentality, Michael the Brave had accomplished the first political union of the Romanians, starting from Oltenia. Amongst the Transylvanians who wanted to run for a parliamentary chair, there was the poet Octavian Goga. In 1915-1916, the poet “of our passion”, as he was called, ran for a deputy position from the county of Romanați. He ran in the electoral campaign, in important localities of the county, the county residence, Caracal, and one of the main cities, a Danube port, Corabia. Octavian Goga and Vasile Lucaciu were nominated candidates by the Union Federation from Romania, led by Take Ionescu, Nicolae Titulescu and Nicolae Filipescu. The federation published at Caracal, the administrative centre of Romanați County, the newspaper “Ardealul”, which would make popular the activity of the poet, for the poll from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1916<sup>129</sup>.

The people living in Romanați especially, and those from Oltenia generally, greeted him pompously, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1915, in the train station from Caracal. They were, undoubtedly, eager to see the poet who had written such full of passion lines about the distresses of the peasant, about the national fight, being the author of the famous saying that gave the title of a book of poems, “The Latinity cries in the trenches”. The liberal Mihail Demetrian declared, on the same day, at Corabia, where Octavian Goga had been earlier, that he was withdrawing from the electoral race, in favour of the poet Octavian Goga. Nicolae Titulescu, at that time deputy of Romanați, declared: *“I am content every time I am amongst the people of Corabia. I am even happier today that I have no personal interest, neither for a man to man fight, nor a party close fight, but for a national cause that is shown today, in flesh*

<sup>128</sup> The Romanian Academy, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. VII, book II, p.268-271.

<sup>129</sup> Ion Cristoiu, *1914-1916, op.cit.*, [http://www.history.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/1914-1916-ionel-br-tianu-geniu-l-tepta](http://www.history.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/1914-1916-ionel-br-tianu-geniu-l-tepta), accessed on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2016.

and blood, as the poet Octavian Goga (...) His triumph will not be the triumph of a party, nor all the parties together, but the triumph of the Romania feeling that has to wander serenely over the petty fights that we see every day (...) The free Romania has understood its duty (...) against Goga nobody can fight openly”<sup>130</sup>.

At Corabia, the poet Octavian Goga declared: “If I lost a country, I could find here a piece of land where I can take roots (...) My ancestors sleep their eternity in the earth of Transylvania. I come from Ardeal and You, who live under Romanian leadership, cannot picture the foreign yoke. You do not know that we, in Ardeal, pay twice, once because we are Romanians, and the second time because we are poor, but I am convinced that from here, from the place priest Șapcă left, shall also come the understanding for the sufferance of people from Ardeal (...) I have the faith that in this corner of the country... You shall have the honour to vote with love for Ardeal”<sup>131</sup>.

Yet, at the elections from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1916, Octavian Goga remained for the second ballot with Vasile Oroveanu, although it had been announced that he had obtained most of the votes. Basically, the deputy mandate was obtained by Vasile Oroveanu. Nicolae Titulescu had used his personal prestige to support Goga, but there was a delicate issue, from the international point of view. Nicolae Titulescu did not know that Romania and Austro-Hungary had been secretly allied, since 1883. Austro-Hungary had requested Romania to join the war against Serbia, but the Crown Council from 1914 had decided that Romania had had to adopt the armed neutrality. Italy, rightful member of the Triple Alliance had remained neuter, and, in 1915, it would choose the Entente, hoping to join the regions of Trento, Fiume and the Dalmatian coast, which it considered parts of the Italian areal, also without hiding that it wished a significant part of the German colonial domain, if the Entente won the war. Octavian Goga was for Austro-Hungary an irredentist, and his presence on the lists from Bucharest represented a provocation for Austro-Hungary. Ionel Brătianu understood that there was nothing to be done to oppose the candidature of Octavian Goga, but he had the option to manipulate the situation that he would lose the elections. On one side, Ionel Brătianu, whose father had signed the agreement with Austro-Hungary, did not wish to provoke Austro-Hungary in vain, until the decision of joining the war had been taken<sup>132</sup>, and, on the other side, he was disturbed by the popularity of Goga. Ionel Brătianu knew that the war would trigger troubled times, and the fiery rhetoric of Goga could act to generate a radical land reform. The poems of Goga were talking about the harsh situation of the landless peasant from

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<sup>130</sup> Dumitru Botar, *Marea adunare de la Corabia*, in ”Memoria Oltului și Romaniților”, Year VI, no. 7 (65), July 2017, p.17.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibidem*, p.18.

<sup>132</sup> Gheorghe N. Căzan, Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, *Tratatul secret de alianță...*p. 175-194.

Ardeal, but the message was generally Romanian, the peasantry from the Old Kingdom not being excluded. The system of voting based on qualification was representing another obstacle for Goga. The vote was limited to a category that agreed the nationalist ideas of Octavian Goga, yet, without accepting the messages that would favour the peasantry. Most certainly, the discourses of Goga in the Parliament would have created strong emotions among the peasants from which it was expected to sacrifice in trenches. It is known that in the period between the two world wars, Octavian Goga unleashed, along Constantin Argetoianu, the famous boyar and politician from Dolj County, Breasta, in the Agrarian Nationalist Party, against the liberal policy, Goga being the favourite of Carol II, after the failure of the liberals at the elections from December 1937, when the National Liberal Party did not reach the majority necessary for obtaining “the majority bonus”, although the faction Goga-Argetoianu barely obtained 9%. Carol II had preferred Goga to the iron-guardists of Codreanu and Cantacuzino-Grăniceru, and to Iuliu Maniu who became, along Ion Mihalache, from October 1926, the leaders of the Peasant National Party, through the merging of the Romanian National Party from Ardeal with the Peasant Party from Muntenia. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, numerous Romanian families had been crossing the Carpathians in Oltenia and Muntenia, settling in these areas, in the communities of “ungureni” (approx. Hungarians), keeping the Transylvanian traditions, received as they were by the people from Oltenia<sup>133</sup>.

Thus, Octavian Goga loses the elections from 1916, by entering into the second ballot, orchestrated by Ionel Brătianu. In fact, he is disappointed and does not participate to the ballot.

On the 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> of August 1916, Romania was declaring war to Austro-Hungary, crossing the Carpathians and freeing important cities as Braşov, or Sibiu. Yet, the refuse of the allies to open the front from Thessaloniki, the underestimation of the military role of Bulgaria, determined the interruption of the offensive, after the disaster from Turtukaia. In the fall of 1916, on the rivers Cerna and Jiu, the soldiers from Oltenia had resisted heroically, but the disaster could not be stopped, Turnu-Severin and Târgu-Jiu being occupied by the Germans and the Austro-Hungarians.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1916, after the failure of the heroic Romanian attack from Robăneşti, which had been intended to protect the retreat of the Romanian troops from the fire of the German artillery, in order to resist on the river Olt, Craiova was occupied by the Central Troops. A month later, after the heroic resistance on Olt

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<sup>133</sup> Vladimir Osiac, *Istoria modernă a României*, Craiova, Universitaria Press, 1999,p.147.

and after the defeat from Neajlov-Argeș, Bucharest was occupied by the field marshal August von Mackensen and the marshal Erik von Falkenheim<sup>134</sup>.

Until November 1918, Oltenia would be occupied by the Central Powers, in the big cities being established high commands. Craiova, Turnu Severin, Târgu-Jiu, Caracal, Râmnicu-Vâlcea knew a massive migration of the political elite towards Moldova. There remained phyllo-German partisans and people willing to accept the military occupation. Some militaries, as sub-lieutenant Victor Popescu from Gorj, formed a guerrilla, fighting and harassing the occupation troops, manage to join, in April 1918, Romanian Army, on the front from Moldova, which had resisted heroically, in the summer of 1917, at Mărăști, Mărășești and Oituz, and then had to accept the peace of Buftea-Bucharest, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918, yet not ratified by the Parliament from Iași. Yet, the collaborationist government of Marghiloman supported the union of Bessarabia with Moldova, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1918, after, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1918, the Soviet Russia had made peace, at Brest-Litovsk, with the Centrale Powers<sup>135</sup>.

Without having a mass character, the active resistance of the dwellers from Oltenia had notable effects. There were saved prisoners, there were sabotaged trains that were taking aliments to Germany, there were helped the fugitives, in order to be able to sustain the fight of resistance, or to run in Moldova. If there was a logic of the requisitions, although there were paid amounts of money and there were providing guarantee tickets, the population, especially the peasants, were hardly endure the provisions of the Peace from Buftea-Bucharest, which would show its effects in the next 90 years too (the petrol, the farming products would go to Austro-Hungary and Germany, and Austro-Hungary would occupy the Carpathians)<sup>136</sup>.

In the first lines of the resistance movement there were the members of the socialist group. Even if their activity was not at all close to what the historiography enslaved by the former communist regime of Romania, the socialists tried to protest against the occupant, and to participate to force actions. Yet, the anti-war manifestations from before 1916 were organised in the spirit of the Bolshevik actions that were aiming the destabilisation of Romania. In the period of the occupation, there was intended the defamation of the liberal and conservative policies, guilty, in the eyes of the socialists, by this disaster generated by the occupation. In 1918, the inherent crisis from the end of the war and the foreign military occupation were used by the socialists for protests against the state order and “the imperialist attitude” of Romania. Basically, the circles from Moscow that were commanding the actions of

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<sup>134</sup> Mircea Iosa și Traian Lungu, *Viața politică în România. 1899-1910*, Bucharest, Editura Științifică Press, 1977, p. 243.

<sup>135</sup> Gheorghe Platon, *op.cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>136</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Carol I. Istoria românilor în timpul...*, p. 55.

the Romanian soldiers were dissatisfied with by the union of Bessarabia with Romania and, that is why, the protests justified by the economic crisis, specific to the post-war period, could be an opportunity for destabilising attempts. Nevertheless, all these were limited by the force-showing attitude of the authorities and the veneration that the Romanian soldiers had had for General Alexandru Averescu, who became, due to the influence of the boyar and dignitary Constantin Argetoianu, from Oltenia, head of the People's League and prime-minister of a coalition controlled from the shadow by the "vizier" Ionel Brătianu, who had stepped back naturally to rebuild the NLP force, even in the context in which all the wrongs of the war had been attributed to the pro-German conservative, Alexandru Marghiloman. Thanks to Alexandru Averescu, the Romanian peasants and the workers, representing most of the soldiers from the Romanian Army, refused to take into account the Bolshevik propaganda. They had been promised the right to universal suffrage (only for men) and the land reform, and Alexandru Averescu would be the ideal man to calm the peasants, until Ionel Brătianu was again handling the situation well. Ionel Brătianu had been the minister of the internal affairs in 1907, he had ordered fire against the peasants, and he knew the implications of this aspect<sup>137</sup>.

The Romanian elite started, also encouraged by the Royal Family of Romania, to promote certain folkloric traditions, to portray the Romanian peasant in art, literature, Princess Mary, the future Queen Mary of Romania promoting the Romanian national costume for her and the ladies from her suite. Alexandru Vlahuță published "*România Pitorească*" (The Picturesque Romania), a work written as a travelogue, but in a profoundly literary style.

Left in 1899 from PSDMR (Social Democrat Workers' Party of Romania), Vasile G. Morțun permanently kept in touch with his friend and "fight comrade", Ioan Nădejde. Vasile G. Morțun had studied the dramatic art in Paris, had taken literature courses at Brussels, although he had not taken any degree.

In 1901, helped by Nădejde, he managed to obtain a new mandate in the Constituency II from Roman, on the PNL lists. Vasile G. Morțun was able, due to the PNL results, to fill the position of vice-president of the Deputy Chambers. In 1907, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, Vasile G. Morțun became the Minister of the Public Works, a dignity that he enjoyed until the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1910. Thus, in full rebellion, when the conservatives renounced the mandate, the liberals entrusted to a former member of PSDMR the mandate in an area where Ion I C Brătianu had also started as minister. The actions of the minister Vasile G. Morțun were for the modernisation of transports, on roads, but also on railways or water. Ioan Nădejde, becoming member of PNL, was appointed representative of the Romanian Government, at the ministries

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<sup>137</sup> Apostol Stan, *Grupări și curente politice...*, p. 144-158.

of resort from France, Switzerland and Germany, in order to study the legislative systems on addressing the transports from these countries, where the railway, road and water networks were extended. The two managed to impose in Romania the resting houses for the railway workers (the German model) and the medical and social insurances for the workers (the Swiss model).

But the most serious social revolt was the uprising from 1907. In this case too, the historians had numerous explanations, from the uncontrolled outbreak of the peasants, to conspiring theories, according to which Russia and Austria would have just searched a pretext for interfering. In 1887, Zamfir Arbore had published the payment manoeuvres of some Russian agitators of M.A. Hitrovo, a Russian diplomat at Bucharest. Austria was the secret ally of Romania, and the weakening of Romania could signify a streak for Austria, which, in case the regime was in danger, it could interfere to support King Carol I. There are also known the confessions on the involvement of the Austrian diplomat, Alois von Aehrental, in the events that led to the outburst of the revolt. The main centre was the estate of Flămânzi of the Fischer Trust, the main hay supplier for the cavalry of the Habsburg Army. It is considered that it resorted to the revolt due to the rumours on the refuse of the Romanian Government to extend the leasing contracts and to improve the situation of the peasants, as part of the contract. The conservative government renounced its mandate and the liberal government repressed the uprising, including with the use of the armed force. The ones that see in the uprising foreign influences are counting on the fact that the revolt extended rapidly, that numerous agitators had been reported in the villages, that many primary school teachers had been among these agitators.

It has been also tried to accredit the idea that the movement from 1907 would have had an anti-Semite character, which cannot be justified. The leaseholders were not liked among the peasants, whether Romanian, Jews or Greek, due to the fact that they were abusing the legislation that was favouring them. The share of the Romanian, Jew or Greek leaseholders was balanced, therefore one cannot approach the idea of a certain ascendance of the minorities over the majority. There was also insisted on the fact that a lot of the agitators from Russia had also come in Romania, after the failure of the revolt from December, in 1906, as a consequence of the dissatisfactions provoked by the catastrophic naval defeat of Russia at Tsushima.

In 1914, there occurred the conclusion that the land and electoral reforms had to be debated, but the outburst of World War I, when Romania first declared its neutrality, led to the natural interruption of any type of internal fights and attempts for reforms, because it was necessary the co-working among the main political forces, as much as the ideological orientation of the great parties, the liberal and the conservative, would allow.

The uprising from 1907 represents the moment that rushed the end of the Romanian incipient before-the-war socialism (Nacu, 2017:27-29). The socialist militants accused Brătianu government (Ionel Brătianu also had the portfolio of the Internal Affairs) of extreme repression, the socialist press publishing that there had been 10,000 dead people among the peasants, more than the official version (under 500 dead). King Carol I himself, who had celebrated 40 years of ruling in 1906 (“The Royal Jubilee”) would have said that there had been “many thousands”.

Besides the interpretations on the 1907 moment, it is obvious that the socialist thoughts were spread in the world of the villages, by many socialist students. At Pașcani, in Moldova, a train with arrested peasants was stopped by the railway workers, who freed the prisoners and tried to show opposition against the forces of order.

Some measures taken by the liberals and the conservatives after 1907 were, certainly, lacking substance, nonetheless, in 1910, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea was talking about “the new-serfdom”, resulted from manoeuvring the farming agreement contracts, for the interest of the proprietors, and disfavoured the labour, that is, the peasants.

Orleanu Law (“the villainous law”) introduced the interdiction of the protest movements, in 1910, hitting in this way the socialist activism.

In the same year, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1910, the socialists founded a new party, the Romanian Democrat Social Party (PSDR), made of Ion C. Frimu, Mihail Gheorghiu-Bujor, Cristian Rakowski, Dimitrie Marinescu, Constantin Vasilescu.

The leaseholders continued to prosper, associating with the people who managed the capitals, corn dealers, being interested in laws favourable to raw material exports, and less the processing of it in the country.

In 1912, Vasile G. Morțun tried, successfully, to guide many industrial workers towards the Liberal National Party, due to the fact that the socialists had oriented towards anarchism and the revolutionary spirit that began to gain even greater importance in the Tsarist Russia.

Although of a quiet old age, when Romania declared war to Bulgaria, in 1913, Vasile G. Morțun enlisted voluntarily within a military unit from Roman (Regiment 14 Roman), being promoted by King Carol I, on the battle field, to the rank of sergeant. He also obtained mandates of member of the parliament, including member of the Romanian Senate.

Vasile G. Morțun obtained an important portfolio in the Romanian Government, Minister of the Internal Affairs, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1914, a position that he held until the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1916. His name is among the participants to

the famous Crown Councils from the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 1914 (neutrality) and the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1916 (participation to war)<sup>138</sup>.

In the refuge from Iași, Vasile G. Morțun occupied the position of President of the Deputy Chamber, and in 1916-1917 he presided at the Constituent Assembly, formed with the purpose of adopting the electoral and agrarian reforms, which were exactly the reforms for which he fought all his life, as a socialist.

His death, which occurred prematurely on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 1919, did not allow him to see these reforms materialised, after the war, in 1919, respectively 1921<sup>139</sup>.

The socialists from Romania were protesting against the difficulties caused by the war, a war which they had condemned, even if it had been waged for reunifying Romania. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, there had been strikes in Bucharest, among which, being remarked that of the strike of the typographers, for better working conditions and for obtaining their rights in legislative regulations. One of the significant leaders of the party was the activist I.C.Frimu. In December 1918, PSDR transformed into the Romanian Socialist Party (PSR).

In Hungary, the collapse of the dualist monarchy led the country to revolts. The Bolshevik agitators had manged, taking advantage of the anarchy caused by the collapse of Austro-Hungary, to stage a coup d'état after which there had been proclaimed the Republic of Councils in Budapest, and Bela Kun had become the minister of the External Affairs, and the leader of Hungary was the mason Garbai Sandor, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1919, being removed Mihaly Karoly from the position of president and Berenkey Denes from that of prime minister.

It was obvious that for the Magyar communists, the union of Transylvania with Romania was not a situation that they would accept. Banat was occupied by the French and had proclaimed its independence, becoming Romanian in August 1919, in most of its majority, while a part of it was taken by Hungary and another, significant, to Serbia.

The former Austro-Hungarian armies were to retreat progressively, according to a line of demarcation of the river Mureș, established by the French general Franchet D'Esperey, internationally regulated until the signing of peace with Hungary. The Bolshevik government from Budapest was encouraging unjustified delays in the retreat of troops across Tisa. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1919, a coup d'état, staged by Antal Dovcsak, introduced "the red terror". The Romanian troops, with the principle agreement of the Entente rejected the Magyar attack on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 1919 and counterattacked, occupying Budapest and, later, overthrowing the

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<sup>138</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist...*, p.22-31.

<sup>139</sup> Dan Berindei, *op.cit.*, p.59.



Bolshevik government, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1919. The Treaty of Trianon from the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1920 would definitely provision the union of Transylvania with Romania<sup>140</sup>.

The socialist movement had had in Romania a relatively short and tumultuous life. Disadvantaged by the electoral law, unpopular due to the connections with the socialists and communists from Russia, the Romanian socialist movement seemed advantaged by the transformation that had occurred in the Soviet Russia.

Thus, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, although few days since the entering in Bucharest of the Romanian Army (1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918), the typographers from “Sfetea” and “Minerva” workshops organised a strike, expressing wage and social claims. It was obvious that the internal economic situation was disastrous, after the two years of systematic plunder of the German and Bulgarian occupation troops, which led to the rejection of the list of claims. Ion C. Frimu, Gheorhe Cristescu, Cristian Rakowski (political activists), Iancu Luchwig (typographer), Sami Steinberg (typographer), Marcus Iancu (shoe-maker), Marcel Blumenfeld (compositor), Ilie Moscovici, D. Pop (political activists) were credited as being the authors of the general strike of the 13<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> of December 1918. Almost 600 workers (besides the typographers who came, and other workers from Bucharest) shouted slogans against the King, requesting a republic, while marching towards the National Theatre Square. The Prime Minister Ionel Brătianu answered the report of general Mărgineanu, giving authorisation to the minister of the Internal Affairs, George Mârzescu, to open fire. The manifestation was precluded with gunfire, 16 workers died, other 100 being wounded. The socialists declared later that the number of the dead was of 102, and the wounded of few hundreds<sup>141</sup>.

The following investigation brought forward much evidence, according to which, the manifestation of the typographs would have been transformed towards a Bolshevik revolution, because, among the demonstrators, there were seen Alecu Constantinescu, Jacques Konitz, I.S. Dimitriu, Alexandru Bogdan, well-known Bolshevik agitators, and the policemen and the agents of Security would have discovered, in one of the socialists' main headquarters, a manifest that was instigating to violent overthrowing of the Government. There were arrested the agitators and hundreds of workers. In February 1919, the agitators received 5 years of detention, and the rest of the workers were amnestied, for not aggravating the situation, due to the worsening of the economic situation of Romania, after the war. Constantin Titel Petrescu, Toma Dragu, N.D. Cocea, Constantin Mille, Radu Rosetti, famous socialists became advocates of the workers, managing to fight against the royal prosecutor, meaning that the charge of conspiracy could be considered only in the case of the communist agitators, and not of the arrested workers.

<sup>140</sup> C. Kiriteșcu, *op.cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>141</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist...*, p.22-31.

Ion C. Frimu, badly wounded, beaten as instigator in the Police arrest, died on the 6<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> of February 1919, in Văcărești prison. He became the first great socialist martyr, his tomb was positioned in the exterior semi-circle of the Communist Heroes Mausoleum, built after 1944, in Park Carol from Bucharest. I.C. Frimu borrowed his name to a factory from Sinaia, and several streets from Romania<sup>142</sup>.

Lawyer Constantin Titel Petrescu was remarked as a socialist solicitor, defending the socialist militant Alexandru Nicolau, in 1911, and criticising the incompetence from the Romanian Army (the military campaign from 1913 cost the lives of 5,500 military men, who had died not in combat but because of the dysentery epidemic outbreak), which was giving a clue about the deficiencies that led to the defeat from 1916. He defended the workers who had been arrested after the strike from the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 1918.

Constantin Mille was one of the publicist participants who militated in favour of the human rights, with strong socialist opinions.

Radu Rosetti, deputy of Fălciu, College III, after 1891, prefect of Roman, Brăila, director of the prisons in 1895, chief of “Special and historical works” department of the Ministry of External Affairs, member of the frontier regulation commission with Hungary, despite his noble origin, supported the cause of the socialists, writing papers on the peasant problem, defending, as lawyer, the socialists workers, in 1981.

N.D. Cocea, publicist, lawyer, was also an active supporter of the Romanian socialists that he defended in December 1918, declaring himself an admirer of Vladimir Ilici Lenin.

Year 1917 was finding the Romanian Kingdom and the Russian Empire on the same side. Romania had sent its national thesaurus in the Tsarist Russia, whose ruling dynasty, the Romanovs, was related to Queen Mary, the wife of King Ferdinand. Queen Mary was the niece of Queen Victoria, and also the first cousin of Tsar Nicholas II. In April 1917, when the Tsar had already abdicated and Kerenski government was installed, Romania was still sending parts of the thesaurus in Russia. Kerenski government was also fulfilling its obligations to the tsar, those of continuing the war, but the Bolshevik agitations were continuing. In April 1917, Lenin had arrived in Sankt Petersburg, presenting his well-known “Theses from April”, but he did not have the expected success and had to seek refuge again, waiting and fuelling the discontentment of the population on addressing the continuing of the war.

Thus, the Romanian-Russian cooperation from the Eastern Front was seen as a milestone for the surviving of Romania, on one side, and the triumph of Lenin’s

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<sup>142</sup> Ioan Scurtu, Ion Alexandrescu, Ion Bulei, Ion Mamina, *Enciclopedia de istorie a României*, vol. I, Bucharest, Meronia Press, 2001 1996, 30-31.

ideas, on the other side. Romania, through its Royal Family, was seen as an enemy, in 1917.

After the 25<sup>th</sup> of October/7<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, Vladimir Ilici Lenin sent to Iași, in Romania, one of his trusty men, Simion Grigorievici Roșal, with the purpose of organising a basis for the revolutionary action and to take the command of the Russian troops that were to become Bolshevik. S.G.Roșal was leading a group of 80 fighters who captured the military unit quartered at Socola. Here, Roșal was to create, along Christian Rakowski, an attempt upon the King Ferdinand. Moreover, Rakowski, Mihail Gheorghiu Bujor, Ion Dissescu and Alecu Constantinescu were to form a Romanian Bolshevik government.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1917, with the agreement of the Entente, but also the Central Powers too, the Romanian troops entered Bessarabia. The Moldavian Democratic Republic, newly proclaimed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1917, had required, through its former leader, the Council of the Directors, the Romanian Army to intervene to avoid the annexation to Ukraine.

At Iași, the negotiations between S.G. Roșal and General Dimitri Șerbasev, the commander of the Russian troops that were activating in Romania, carried out in Iamandi house in Copou area of Iași, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1917, ended with the arresting of the Bolsheviks by the guard of General Șerbasev, made of Ukrainians. The Russian general asked the Romanian Army to intervene, which the prime-minister, Ionel Brătianu, did. The Bolsheviks surrendered, without showing a remarkable resistance, and they were arrested, and, later, expelled across the river Prut.

The Bolshevik government, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January/8<sup>th</sup> of February 1918 ordered the confiscation of the thesaurus and the breaking of the diplomatic relations with Romania. This meant that Romania had, at the beginning of 1918, the exterior enemy, the Central Powers, and the interior enemy, the former ally, Russia, which had its armies in great disorder<sup>143</sup>.

After the Soviet Russia signed Peace from Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers, and Romania signed the peace preliminaries with the Central Powers at Buftea, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February/5<sup>th</sup> of March 1918, the Russian troops left Socola train station, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February/9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918.

All these events determined the Bolsheviks to declare, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January/5<sup>th</sup> of February 1918 the state of war between Romanian and the Autonomous Superior Council (RUMCEROD) from Odessa (the city controlled by the Bolsheviks, and the closest to Romania) and to arrest the Romanians (civilians and Military men) from the colony of Odessa.

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<sup>143</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist...*, p.22-31.

After the Peace of Brest Litovsk, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1918, Romania was at the discretion of the Central Powers. The Russian soldiers were committing acts of indiscipline, or they were even trying an intense Bolshevik propaganda in Moldova. In this context, General Alexandru Averescu tried an agreement with the Bolsheviks, an action that could be fatal for his career, equating a betrayal. It is the infamous “Rakowski-Averescu Agreement”, signed between the 20<sup>th</sup> of February/5<sup>th</sup> of March and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February/8<sup>th</sup> of March 1918, considered an agreement between Romania and RUMCEROD, at Odessa, signed by the Romanian prime minister and the External Affairs minister, Alexandru Averescu and the RUMCEROD representative at Odessa, Doctor Christian Rakowski.

There was very much speculated on addressing this document, on the fact that it could also be interpreted as a consent for the retreat of the Romanian troops that, already in Bessarabia, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January/7<sup>th</sup> of February 1918, had occupied Bender (Tighina), trying even the crossing of river Dniester. Practically, General Alexandru Averescu had become engaged in the evacuation of Bessarabia, in two months (except for 10,000 Romanian soldiers that would ensure the guarding of the Romanian warehouses and the safety of the railway transport), a situation described by I.G.Duca in his *Memoires*.

The politician I.G.Duca was right, the Soviets accused Romania of infringing this agreement. The General Alexandru Averescu had justified the signing of this document with the wish of avoiding the conflict with the Central Powers, and also the Soviet Russia, and “*the Romanian occupation in Bessarabia*” used to regard it tactically, militarily, while the Soviets saw it as political acceptance. The Soviets asserted that the union of Bessarabia with Romania was influenced by the presence of the Romanian Army in Bessarabia, a fact strongly contested by the Romanian historiography, which saying that the Country Council decided the Union without the influence of the Romanian Army.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February/12<sup>th</sup> of March 1918, the RUMCEROD representatives from Odessa fled because the Central Powers Troops arrived, owing to the Brest-Litovsk agreement, and the Romanians signed the preliminary agreement from Buftea with the Central Powers, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February/5<sup>th</sup> of March 1918. The Moldavian Democratic Republic did not attend the meetings, and the agreement, due to the circumstances (the flight of the Bolsheviks and the agreement of Romania with the Central Powers) became null.

Ionel Brătianu would make use of Constantin Argetoianu, who presumably had urged Alexandru Averescu to sign that document, in order to determine Averescu to enter politics. The terms “*the retreat of the Romanian troops from Bessarabia*” in two months and “*Romanian occupation in Bessarabia*” would represent two spots on the military and political file of Averescu that could sent him before a Court Martial.

General Averescu had enjoyed the unanimously acknowledged popularity on the front, and the necessary time, after 1918, for making the land reform could pass faster, until PNL, led by Ionel Brătianu, would have escaped the consequences that the war brought to PNL popularity.

The incidents from Socola and “Averescu-Rakowski Agreement” were not the only tensioned moments in 1918, the year of the Great Union.

There shall be cited few fragments from the fundamental documents that attest the union of the territories that had been taken from the country, with the Motherland:

*“The telegram of Ion Inculeț, the president of the Country Council, addressed to king Ferdinand I (March 11 1918). To His Royal Highness, the King — Iași, on the behalf of the Country Council, which represents the Romanian people from Bessarabia, disrobed from the secular oppression, I express the strong faith of the Romanian people from the Eastern Romania for Your Majesty, who, united with the motherland sees the guarantee for its free development, the unwinding path towards the national culture and social justice. — Your Majesty humble servant, — Ioan Inculeț, the President of the Country Council from Bessarabia<sup>144</sup>.*

The declaration of union of Bessarabia with Romania from the 27<sup>th</sup> of March/9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918 was mentioning:

*“In the name of the people of Bessarabia, the Country Council declares: the Moldavian Democratic Republic (Bessarabia); within its frontiers between Prut, Dniester, the Black Sea and the old boundaries with Austria, taken by Russia from the old Moldova, more than a hundred years ago, owing to the historic right and the Kin right, due to the principle that states that the peoples are to decide their own faith, starting from today and for ever, is united with its Motherland, Romania. This union is based on: 1. The present Country Council is further recognised for solving the land reform and making it, according to the needs and the requests of the people. These decisions are to be acknowledged by the Romanian Government. 2. Bessarabia preserves its province autonomy, having a Country Council (Diet), elected, in the future, through equal, direct and secret suffrage, as ruling body and its own administration. 3. The competence of the Country Council is: a) the voting of the local budget; b) the control of all the bodies, Zemstva and cities; c) the appointing of all the local administration clerks through its supervising body, and the high officials are sanctioned by the Government. 4. The restructuration of the army is to be based on territory. 5. The laws in force and the local organisation (Zemstva and cities) are further acknowledged and could be changed by the Romanian Parliament, only after the representative of Bessarabia is present. 6. The observing of the minorities’ rights from Bessarabia. 7. Two representatives are to join the Romanian Ministers Council,*

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<sup>144</sup> Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note politice 1897–1924*, V, București, 1927, p. 228.

now appointed by the actual Country Council, and, in the future, elected among the representatives of Bessarabia from the Romanian Parliament. 8. Bessarabia is to send in the Romanian Parliament a number of representatives proportional to the population, elected through universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage. 9. All the elections from Bessarabia for voloste, villages, cities, Zemstva and Parliament are based on the universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage. 10. Personal freedom, freedom of printing, of speech, of faith, of meetings and all the citizen's freedoms are to be guaranteed through Constitution. 11. Any law infringement, due to political reasons, in these troubled times of the later transformations are amnestied. Bessarabia, uniting, as a daughter to her mother, Romania, is to have the Parliament to decide the immediate calling of the Constituent Assembly, which it is to join proportionally to the population and the representatives of Bessarabia, elected through universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage, in order to decide, together, the stipulation in the Constitution of the above principles and guarantees. Administrative units that belonged to the old Russian system, still in force in 1918. Long live the Union of Bessarabia with Romania, for ever and always! The president of the Country Council, I. Inculeț, secretary of the Country Council, I. Buzdugan<sup>145</sup>.

The motion for the union of Bukovina with Romania (15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of Romania 1918) was stipulating: “The General Congress of Bukovina, met today, Thursday, the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 in the Synod Hall of Cernăuți, considering that, since the founding of the Romanian Principalities, Bukovina, which consists of the old lands of Suceava and Cernăuți, has always been part of Moldova, which was constructed as a state around it; taking into account that, within the frontiers of this country, there is the ancient ruling throne of from Suceava, the rulers’ crypts from Rădăuți, Putna and Suceava, along with many other traces and dear memories from Moldova’s past; taking into account that the sons of this country, fighting along their brothers from Moldova, and led by the same rulers, have defended, along the centuries, their kin against all the invasions from the outside or pagan; considering that, in 1774, cunningly, Bukovina was taken from the body of Moldova and under compulsion annexed to the Habsburg crown; considering that 144 years the people from Bukovina endured the sufferance of a foreign rule, which ignored its national rights and which, through injustice and persecution desired to alter its nature and to make the other nations that it wished to be friend with, fight against it; considering that, for 144 years, the people from Bukovina fought as martyrs on all the battle fields from Europe, under a foreign flag, for the maintaining, the glory and the greatness of its

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<sup>145</sup> *Basarabia și basarabenii, alcătuire, studii și comentarii* by Mihai Adauge and Alexandru Furtună, Chișinău, 1991, p. 246–247.

*oppressors, and, as a reward, they had to endure the diminishing of their inherited rights, the banning from the public life, school or even church; considering that, in the same time, the people living here was systematically stopped from using the richness of their country, being mostly stripped from its inheritance; considering that, all these being said, the people from Bukovina did not lose their faith that the hour of their redeeming has come, which they have awaited with great longing and sufferance, and their ancient inheritance, severed through illegitimate frontiers, is also to be reconstructed through the joining of Bukovina to Stephen's Moldova, and they have always hoped trustfully that the great dream of their kin is to be fulfilled, when tall the Romanian countries, between the rivers Dniester and Tisa, are to be united in one unitary national state; they consider that the hour has come! Today, when after great struggling and sufferance of Romania, and its noble and strong allies, there have been established, in the world, the rightful and humanitarian principles for all the peoples, and when, after the crushing hits, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy shook violently and collapsed, and all the nations imprisoned within it earned their right on free decision, the first thought of freed Bukovina is related to Romania, which has always been our hope for freedom. Consequently, we, the General Congress of Bukovina, representing the supreme power of the country and being alone with the legislating power, in the name of the national sovereignty, decide: The unconditioned and for ever Union of Bukovina, in its old frontiers to Ceremuş, Colacin and Dniester, with the Kingdom of Romania”<sup>146</sup>.*

Year 1918 started for Romania under circumstances that did not announce at all the important events that began the monumental event that we today call the Great Union. Romania was territorially reduced to Moldova, after the catastrophic defeat from the end of year 1916. Although, in the summer of 1917, Romania had managed to make the front from the frontiers of Moldova stable, in the fall of the same year, the Bolshevik counter-revolution was, de facto, taking Russia out from the position of combatant and, implicitly, ally of Romania. De jure, Russia quit the war in March 1918, at Brest-Litovsk, which imposed on Romania the signing, in April 1918, the humiliating separate peace from Bucharest. Yet, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March/8<sup>th</sup> of April 1918, due to the degradation of the situation from Russia, Bessarabia united with Romania, this being the first major event of year 1918 for Romania<sup>147</sup>.

Towards the end of 1918, the situation on the front was about to change. One by one, the allies of Germany: Bulgaria, Turkey, Austro-Hungary, had quit the war. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, Romania was re-joining the conflict, declaring war on

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<sup>146</sup> *Basarabia și basarabenii...* p. 264–266.

<sup>147</sup> Petre Otu, *România în primul război mondial. Marea Unire 1918*, Litera Press, 2017, Bucharest, p. 65.



Germany, the date of 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, when Germany signed the armistice from Compiègne, finding it in conflict<sup>148</sup>.

On the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, it took place the union of Bukovina with Romania. There were left Banat, Transylvania, Crișana, Maramureș. Austro-Hungary was gradually slipping on the route of the collapse of the dualist state, under its own weight.

The Emperor Carol of Habsburg attempted the last resort, at Wien, that of proposing the federalisation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, through the manifesto “To my faithful peoples”, on the 5<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> of October 1918. As a reply, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod read, on the same day, in the Parliament from Budapest, “the declaration of independence and self-determination” of the Romanians from Austro-Hungary: *“Mr. Al. Vaida: We, the representatives of the small nations, have impatiently awaited the attitude of the leading monarchy circles on addressing these stipulations and the non-Magyar nations received with great joy the news that the Ministry of the External Affairs of the monarchy forwarded to Washington the peace proposal, because, in this way, it was officially acknowledged, both from our external affairs representatives and the Magyar government and parties, that we are no longer nationalities, but nations. We are aware of the importance held by the times we live; we know that we cannot deal with these great problems egoistically. We recognize the truth, which resorts from Wilson’s provisions, that we shall not let hate or egoism make their presence, when there are tackled these issues, for which real and serious solution can occur only with the help of entire honesty. Therefore, the representatives of the Romanian national organisation decided to define its attitude on these stipulations and, as it allowed us, I communicate to the honourable chamber the following declaration (exact textul fixat în conferința de la Oradea Mare de la 12 octombrie).*

*«The executive committee of the Romanian National Party from Ardeal and Hungary, as political body of the Romanian nation from Ardeal and Hungary, acknowledges that the consequences of the war entitle the century ago pretensions of the Romanian nation, to its full national freedom. On the ground of the natural right that each nation can alone and freely dispose of and decide its destiny, any right, it is now acknowledged by the Hungarian government too, through the armistice proposal of the monarchy, the Romanian nation from Hungary and Ardeal wishes to use this right now, and, consequently, requests this right for it, free from any foreign intervention, to decide alone its positioning amongst the free nations, along with the*

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<sup>148</sup> Cornel Grad, *Informații documentare inedite privind colaborarea Marelui Cartier General al Armatei Române cu Consiliul Dirigent la procesul de preluare a „Imperiului” în Transilvania, Maramureș, Crișana și Banat (nov. 1918 – iun. 1919)* în *“Armata română și patrimoniul național”*; Editura Centrului Tehnic-Editorial al Armatei Press; Bucharest, 2010, p. 195-203.



*establishing of its coordination connection with the other free nations. The national body of the Romanian nation from Hungary and Ardeal does not acknowledge this parliament and government to be considered representative for the Romanian nation from Hungary and Ardeal at the general peace congress, because the Romanian nation entrusts the defence of its interests to factors designated by its own national assembly.*

*Besides the bodies delegated by the national assembly, or elected among its people, therefore, besides the executive committee of the Romanian National Party, nobody is entrusted to negotiate and decide on businesses that refer to the political situation of the Romanian nation. We declare all the decisions and the agreements that would be taken or made without the approval of these bodies null and worthless, at all related to the Romanian nation. The Romanian nation that lives in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy expects and requests – after great sufferance along the centuries – the affirmation and the valuing of its unchangeable and inalienable rights to its national existence<sup>149</sup>». (...)*

This fact was showing that the age of the federalisation projects had long passed, the oppressed peoples from Austro-Hungary requesting their national rights<sup>150</sup>.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, the last action of the Great Union represents the apogee, the astral moment when Great Romania was born. The importance of this event was noticed by everyone, “from the richest to the poorest”, if it is to quote Uncle Ion Roată, the hero from 1859, depicted in a story by the great prosaist and narrator, Ion Creangă.

There are many people who brought their contribution to the moment that was the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918. We are referring to a lot of people, starting with top politicians, exponents of the national movement, militaries, delegates, and continuing with the enthusiast people that granted the plebiscitary character to the Great National Assembly from Câmpul lui Horea, near Alba Iulia.

And Yet, there were also moments, less known, but profound due to their signification, that led to the union of Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș with the Motherland.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, there was constituted at Blaj the Romanian National Council that was to represent the interests of the Romanians, up to the Union with Romania. Practically, there was made the decision that the Romanians from Transylvania to send a delegation across the mountains, in the Old Kingdom. Several teams tried to fulfil this mission, but the bad weather conditions, along with

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<sup>149</sup> 1918, *Bihorul în epoca unirii. Documente*, Oradea, 1973, p. 112-113.

<sup>150</sup> Mircea Mușat, Ion Ardeleanu, *De la Dacia antică la România modernă*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1985, p. 604.

the German troops that had started to retreat, were difficult to pass obstacles. There ought to be mentioned that two people managed to accomplish the mission. They were the Romanian officer Victor Precup and Nicolae Bălan, teacher at the Theological Institute that was functioning in Sibiu. Victor Precup had deserted the Austro-Hungarian army, enlisting in the Romanian army, where he had obtained the rank of captain. The two left in an automobile from Sibiu, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1918. Their itinerary was: Sibiu-Mediaș-Târgu Mureș-Reghin-Bistrița-Vatra Dornei. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 the two reached Bukovina. Another team then went to Moldova, where the authorities from Iași were informed about the desires of the Romanian people from Ardeal<sup>151</sup>.

The Great Headquarters of the Romanian Army from Iași decided to draft documents that would support the action of the Romanians from over the mountains. Obviously, they were aware of the danger that the documents could be intercepted by the possible frontier patrols of the former dualist authorities, or by the soldiers who were retreating to Germany. Finally, there was decided that the secret documents to be sent to Ardeal on air. It should not be forgotten that Romania had very good and experimented pilots, who could compete with the pilots of the great European armies (the Romanians Traian Vuia, Aurel Vlaicu, Henri Coandă had already made history as pioneers in plane construction), including in the area of the owned planes.

The pilot designated to execute the mission belonged to the F4 Observation, Identification and Light Bombardment Squadron, his name was Vasile Niculescu<sup>152</sup> (1891-1981) and he was a lieutenant. He had graduated the Theological Seminary School, but he decided to follow the military career, enlisting in the Romanian Army in 1915. He was initially a warrant officer, advancing to second lieutenant on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1916, and lieutenant in 1918. He was flying a Farman 40 plane, number 3240. The plane had its cockpit open, which was another difficulty, because it had to cross the Carpathians on a safe height of 2,600m (in order to avoid the currents that had caused the falling and, implicitly, the death of Aurel Vlaicu in September 1913), the pilot needing to face a temperature of -39 degrees Celsius. Victor Precup (1889-1958) was to join the pilot, carrying the sealed military bag that contained the secret documents, including the letter of the Ministers Council President, Ion I.C. Brătianu, for the Romanian National Council<sup>153</sup>.

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<sup>151</sup> Monica Andronescu, *Povestea aviatorului mort în anonim, care a zburat la -40 de grade cu documentele Marii Uniri de la 1 decembrie 1918*, in "Historia", <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/povestea-aviatorului-mort-in-anonimat-care-a-zburat-la-40-de-grade-cu-documentele-marii-uniri-de-la-1-decembrie-1918>, accessed on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018.

<sup>152</sup> Vasile Avram, *Locotenentul Vasile Niculescu - Pilotul Marii Uniri*, Editura Universitară Press, Bucharest, 2008, p. 5 and next.

<sup>153</sup> Nicolae Balint, „Cazul Precup” și conexiunile mureșene ale acestuia, <https://nicolaebalint.wordpress.com/2010/01/30/cazul-precup-si-conexiunile-muresene-ale-acestui/>, accessed on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Lieutenant Vasile Niculescu had the experience of overflying the Carpathians, because he had executed air missions in 1916, when he had spread leaflets in the Romanian localities from Ardeal. Moreover, since 1918, he had also executed missions of identification in Bessarabia, in order to observe the lines and the moves of the Bolsheviks<sup>154</sup>.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1918, the two members of the crew put a thick layer of paraffin on their faces, to prevent the freezing of their cheeks and noses, during the flight. The plane was to launch leaflets over some localities from Ardeal, and then to land at Blaj, a place bearing profound national symbols. Yet, the day of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1918 was one of great endeavour. The crew took off from Moldova, from Bacău, at 10:40a.m. The daring men did not have any armament, or even parachutes on board, which was transforming the journey into a really extreme one. The flight lasted until 1:35p.m., almost three hours. The landing took place at Blaj, on Câmpia Libertății. A team of 8 students from the National Guard took over the guarding of the plane, carrying a machine gun with them. They built a fire in order to prevent the freezing of the engine (the oil had been removed, by the pilot, from the engine's case, to prevent freezing a/n). The crew headed, along with the hosts, to the Metropolitan Palace from Blaj.

Lieutenant Vasile Niculescu was remembering the moment of the landing; *“Shortly after, the plane, from which we had not got off yet, was surrounded by a numerous crowd of people from Blaj and peasants from the near villages, who had crossed the water of River Târnava with their clothes on. I was staying there mute and motionless, observing the enthusiasm of these people when they saw the three-coloured flag on the plane that had arrived from the Old Kingdom, bringing news that was filling their soul with joy. (...) The first messenger that was bringing the redeeming from the Kingdom had arrived. Each person from Blaj and each peasant wanted to shake hands with us, to take any insignificant thing that we possessed, to carry it for us to the place where we had to sleep over night”*<sup>155</sup>.

The newspaper “Unirea” from Blaj published an article, called “Prima solie” (The First Messenger), in which there were written the following enthusiastic words:

*“From Wallachia, there arrived today, at 1 p.m., the pilot lieutenant Niculescu, from the Romanian Army, and captain Precup, born in Transylvania: they arrived by plane, spreading the news for Blaj. They left from Bacău and arrived in Blaj in two hours. The people ran from everywhere, cheering the landing of the plane that was*

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<sup>154</sup>Monica Andronescu, *loc.cit.*

<sup>155</sup> Iulian Bunilă, *Locotententul care a transportat în zbor documentele Marii Uniri: “Am rămas mut la entuziasmul oamenilor când au văzut tricolorul de pe avion”*, in “Adevărul”, 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2015, [https://adevarul.ro/locale/buzau/locotententul-transportat-zbor-documentele-marii-uniri-am-ramas-mut-entuziasmul-oamenilor-vazut-tricolorul-avion-1\\_55eda18cf5eaafab2c5ade52/index.html](https://adevarul.ro/locale/buzau/locotententul-transportat-zbor-documentele-marii-uniri-am-ramas-mut-entuziasmul-oamenilor-vazut-tricolorul-avion-1_55eda18cf5eaafab2c5ade52/index.html), accessed on September 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.

bearing the Romanian colours. After few turns over the city, the plane landed on Câmpul Libertății. All the people hurried to that place, through ice, snow and frozen mud, to shake the hands of our brothers who brought us the message of our redemption. They said that the Romanian army crossed the Carpathians through 2m high snow and that they come to hug us with brotherhood love and to announce the foreign dwellers from the Romanian regions that they are coming in the name of peace and freedom of all nations”.

Lieutenant Vasile Niculescu also wrote about the way the authorities mobilised to fulfil the act of Union of Transylvania with Romania:

*“On the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of November, all the centres occupied by the Romanians were announced of the arrival of the plane, and, in the same time, the Committee decided the Union with the Motherland, and, to show the entire world that the Union is the desire of the Romanians from Transylvania, there was decided, simultaneously, the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia where, in a week, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, there gathered 100,000 Romanians, who declared the Union”<sup>156</sup>.*

The crew participated directly to the elaboration of the decisions that led to the meeting of the Assembly from Alba Iulia, on the night of 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, and after they decided to leave for Romania, preparing the plane professionally for a new flight over the Carpathians, under winter conditions:

*“Along with the correspondence that was including the decisions made on the destiny of our kin, in the morning of the same day, we headed to the place where we were taking off, finding that an even more numerous crowd than the one from the day before, was waiting for us. The frost seemed even bitterer, and the engine that I had to start was my only preoccupation. I heated the oil, which I cautiously had taken off from the case at our arrival, I ran it twice in the engine that also needed to be heated twice, and, after a long time and great effort, I managed to start it. Meanwhile, the people from Blaj were singing national, patriotic songs”<sup>157</sup>.*

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, at 11:25 a.m., the plane left for Bacău, where it landed at 2:00 p.m., two hours and 35 minutes later. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, from Bacău, the crew left, also on air, for Iași, where it arrived at 10 o'clock in the morning. There, they went to the Great Headquarters, where they gave the report about the successful and exceptionally accomplished mission.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 there took place the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia. Today, any historic event enjoys extraordinary mediatisation. The archives keep few photographs of the Great National Assembly, but without the moment when the Union Resolution, from the Union Hall in Alba Iulia, was signed.

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<sup>156</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>157</sup> *Ibidem.*

These photographs exist due to the professionalism and patriotism of another Romanian, Samoilă Mârza (1886-1967). There are also literary texts, such that of the great poet, diplomat and man of culture, Lucian Blaga.

Samoilă Mârza<sup>158</sup> was born in the commune of Galțiu (today Alba County), not far from Alba Iulia (approximately 11 km), on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1886. His parents provided him with elementary and high-school education (his mother died when Samoilă and the other children of the family were little, his father remarried and had other six children, a/n), but due to the material difficulties (although the young Samoilă was showing real abilities for studying), his family decided to have him “learn a trade”. Thus, the young Samoilă became an apprentice at the well-known photographer from Sibiu, Iainek. At the age when he had to do the military service in the Austro-Hungarian Army, Samoilă Mârza was enlisted and assigned in a unit within the Army Topographic Service of the Austro-Hungarian Army. The war had shown many changes, besides the tanks and asphyxiating gases, there was the evolution of aviation, the topographic services, where photography was widely used. Samoilă Mârza became a second officer (unterofizier), owing to his skills (the lack of higher education depriving him of becoming an officer).

Year 1918 had him quartered in his unit, at Trieste in Italy (from 1914 he was in Galicia, and from 1916, on the Battle front from Italy). The capitulation of Austro-Hungary determined the organisation of the soldiers of different nationalities, for joining the national fight. Thus, he decided to head to Wien, according to the decision made by Central Romanian National Council to retreat the Romanian soldiers from the Austro-Hungarian Army. He arrived at Wien on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, and on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 he took three negatives in which he caught the sanctification of the three-colour flag, in the presence of some political representatives and militaries of the Romanians. He then headed towards Timișoara (through Zagreb and Belgrade), moving to his native place, Galțiu. There, he arrived on a bike, carrying his extension bellows camera, only few days before the Great National Assembly, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1918. Samoilă Mârza decided to leave for Alba Iulia, in the morning of the day of December 1<sup>st</sup> 1918, to photograph the signing of the Act of Union. He also wanted to capture his fellow villagers from Galțiu, in two photographs. He arrived on bike (on which he also carried his extension bellows camera, which, at that time, was worth a pair of work oxen, therefore, an important amount of money, a/n) at the Union Hall, around 11.30 a.m., but he could not enter because he did not have an entrance permit, which, obviously, he could not get on time. He was told that the German photographer from Alba Iulia, Arthur Bach, had been invited inside (paid), who did not come to fulfil his obligation.

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<sup>158</sup> Gheorghe Anghel, *Samoilă Mârza, fotograful Unirii (1866-1967)*, in „Apulum”, VII/II, 1969, p. 161-174.

Samoilă Mârza decided to photograph the crown on Câmpul lui Horea, some of the speakers, taking 5 negatives (three with the Popular Assembly and two with speakers reading the Act of Union).

Aurel Sântimbrean<sup>159</sup>, one of the grandchildren of Samoilă Mârza declared: *“He (Arthur Bach, a/n) had been commissioned by the organisers to take photographs on the Union day, but he, probably because he did not belong to our nation, did not agree the Union from 1918, therefore, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, he did not come to fulfil his obligation. The luck and the salvation came from Samoilă Mârza. (...) The moments captured by him are now present in all the history books, a set of photographs including in the peace treaty from Trianon and Versailles, because, after the Union, there was made a photo album, called «The Great National Union from Alba Iulia in faces». It is his major work, in which there are photos with the villagers, photos from Wien, on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1918, where there was sanctified the tricoloured flag and there was inaugurated the first Romanian army, which arrived in Ardeal, after the war was over”*<sup>160</sup>.

Lucian Blaga (1895-1961) was remembering his participation to Alba Iulia in the next manner: *“For the great, historic National Assembly from Alba Iulia, where there had been decided the joining of Transylvania with the mother-land, it was not necessary a special preparation of the public opinion. The preparation had been done in one hundred years. In the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, almost as after a signal, the Romanians left for Alba Iulia (or Bălgrad, as we used to call it) (...), on foot and in carts. We renounced the journey by train, because there were only 16 km to Alba Iulia”*.

The author recalls that the morning was a cold one, specific to winter. Yet, the Romanians were moving forward enthusiastically, while witnessing the retreat of the German troops. Lucian Blaga made an analogy with the retreat from Russia of what had remained from the French armies of Napoleon Bonaparte:

*“It was a cold, winter morning, (...). On one side of the road, there were travelling to Alba Iulia, squeaking through the snowy drifted banks, the Romanian carts. Bunches of cheers and joy, heard in a single cry, and, on the other side, in the same direction, the German army, coming from Romania, was retreating, canon followed by canon, as clutched fists of silence. German soldiers, calmly smoking their pipes, were gazing in wonder at our rushing carts. (...) Look, I say to Lionel (the*

<sup>159</sup> Aurel Sântimbrean, *Samoilă Mârza (1886-1967), fotografatul Unirii de la 1 Decembrie 1918 de la Alba Iulia*, [http://www.dacoromania11.ro/ro/nr33/samoila\\_marza.htm](http://www.dacoromania11.ro/ro/nr33/samoila_marza.htm), accessed on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018.

<sup>160</sup> Dorin Țimonea, *Mărturie despre Samoilă Mârza, fotografatul Unirii de la 1918: “Era un om foarte vesel și plăcut, un mare povestitor”*, in “Adevărul”, 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2018, [https://adevarul.ro/locale/alba-iulia/marturie-despre-samoila-marza-fotografatul-unirii-1918-era-om-foarte-vesel-placut-mare-povestitor-1\\_5a6ec589df52022f75f52eccc/index.html](https://adevarul.ro/locale/alba-iulia/marturie-despre-samoila-marza-fotografatul-unirii-1918-era-om-foarte-vesel-placut-mare-povestitor-1_5a6ec589df52022f75f52eccc/index.html), accessed on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018.

brother of the poet Lucian Blaga, a/n.): in this manner – through frost and snow – Napoleon was retreating in the old days”.

Lucian Blaga could not enter the Union Hall as well, the place where his brother, member of the delegation, managed to enter. Lucian Blaga told, helped by his prose writer talent, the atmosphere from “Câmpul lui Horea”:

*“At Alba Iulia, I could not enter in the Assembly hall. Lionel, who was part of the delegation, could go in. I renounced unwillingly, consoling myself with the hope that I would know everything from my brother. In exchange, I had the advantage of being able to wander, all day, on the field where the people were gathering. It was an unbelievable swarming everywhere. On the field, there were erected, here and there, the stands from where the speakers were talking to the nation.”<sup>161</sup>*

*At that time, there were no microphones, and the speakers, who could not raise their voices for such numerous crowd, were moving from one stand to the other. On that day, I found out the meaning of the national, sincere, spontaneous, irresistible, organic, massive enthusiasm of the speakers... In the evening, while we were returning in the same carriage to Sebeș, both me and my brother were feeling carried by the feeling that we had laid the foundation of another Time, although the only thing we had done was just “to participate”, silently and insignificantly, to an act that was accomplished through the power of the destiny. (...)”.*

At the end of the story, the poet remembers the way in which a child from Lančrăm, the birth place of Lucian Blaga, manifested his joy because Romania united, round (“dodoloață” in the language of the local people – approx. “plump”):

*“When we were passing through Lančrăm, the birth place, the road was winding near the cemetery where, next to the church, our father was sleeping his eternity under the roots of the poplars, the noise of the wheels was certainly piercing his grave and shaking his bones. Oh, only if father knew what had happened, I say to my brother, turning the head towards the cross from the cemetery (...) When we almost got out the village, we heard from a yard, unexpectedly, in the night, the voice of a child, crying: “Long live plump Romania!”<sup>162</sup>*

There ought to be presented some information on the later destiny of the personalities that there have been mentioned above. We consider these specifications necessary, owing to the fact that their posterior destiny influenced the preserving of the memories on the Great Union.

Lieutenant Vasile Niculescu had a rather cruel destiny. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1919, his identification plane was taken down during a mission in Transnistria, being taken prisoner by the Soviets for a month, at Odessa, then freed and sent to Romania.

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<sup>161</sup> Text taken from <https://cersipamantromanesc.wordpress.com/2013/12/01/lucian-blagamartor-ocular-al-adunarii-nationale-de-la-alba-iulia-traiasca-romania-dodoloata/>, accessed on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibidem.*



In 1920-1923 he activated as pilot at the Aeronautic Group 1. He advanced only to the rank of captain, through the Royal Decree no. 5634, issued on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1923, but he was kept in anonymity, without having his merits acknowledged. In 1924 and 1925 he worked at the Aeronautics School Commandment, and in 1926 he took a training course in aeronautics in Czechoslovakia. The man who delivered the secret documents, indispensable to the union, chose to remain on ground in 1926. He activated at the Recruiting Centre of Rădăuți through Order 37368/ 1926, of the War Ministry. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1930, he was transferred to Regiment of Infantry 96n. He quit the Romanian Army on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 1937. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1961, the commander of the Aeronautic Group 2 of Tecuci, Andrei Popovici, sent him a letter in which there were acknowledged his merits from November 1918. It is known that, in order to support himself financially, he practiced the trade of watchmaker.

Captain, (in reserve) Vasile Niculescu lived completely anonymously, dying at the age of 90, in the spring of 1981, being buried at Rădăuți. He was given, post mortem, the rank of major in reserve<sup>163</sup>.

Victor Precup, the grandson of the Romanian front worker Ștefan Cicio Pop, had a career similar to a Hollywood movie. Detached in Bessarabia, he climbed the military hierarchy, but was trialled for killing some refugees who were coming from across the Dniester. It was speculated that he had been involved in espionage (including in the years of World War I). At some point, Victor Precup (who had become a colonel) was involved in a complot aiming an attempt upon King Carol II, discovered by Mihail Moruzov (the assault was planned for the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1934), the SSI head. This event seems strange, because Victor Precup, in 1930, had participated to the bringing into the country of the heir prince Carol (called Carol Caraiman), who crowned himself king on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1930. Victor Precup, reduced to the ranks, ended up in jail, at Doftana, along with the PCdR leaders (a party declared illegal in 1924), getting closer to them<sup>164</sup>. In 1940, he was pardoned and released from jail. Victor Precup started his "Portex" business, specialised in textiles, leather goods, chemical products. Until 1944, he is present in the notes of State Security, as collaborator, and even underground communist member of PCdR. The fact that he had been thought as activating in espionage networks, the fact that he had relations amongst the active officers, made him a trustworthy man of the communists, involving in the attraction of military members as sympathisers of the communists. After 1944, he was reaccepted in the army, obtaining the rank of lieutenant general, a rank offered by King Mihai I, in April 1945. In November 1946, general Victor Precup contributed to the faking of the elections from Cluj, elections won by the

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<sup>163</sup> Vasile Avram, *op.cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>164</sup> Nicolae Balint, *loc.cit*.



communists on national level. He was put in reserve on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1948, enjoying his military pension and all the due honours, until 1958, when he died.

Lucian Blaga became a diplomat of Romania, he wrote a work that places him amongst the top writers of the Romanian literature, but, after the arrival of the communists, he endured difficult times, being excluded and isolated for the so-called sympathy for the right-extreme movement. Lucian Blaga died in 1961.

Samoilă Mârza also had an unhappy destiny. In the years after the Great Union tried to publish few editions of the photo album "*The Great Assembly from Alba Iulia in faces*", with the pictures from the Great Union that he offered to the Royal House, the Government. He spent the little money he possessed, then he had to sell the glass negatives to earn some money. The buyers did not keep them (they would have represented great assets today), but they used for the silver that was plating the glass negatives, for capturing the image. Very late after this moment, in the years of the communism, he sold the photo camera from the Great Union to the History Museum from Cluj. In 1966, Nicolae Ceaușescu visited Alba Iulia and received the last copy of the photo album "*The Great Assembly from Alba Iulia in faces*". Samoilă Mârza bought himself a modern camera for those times, and he lived until the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1967 (he did not have the chance to celebrate the jubilee of the Great Union).<sup>165</sup>

In conclusion, these moments and the personalities who brought their contribution to their accomplishment represent a significant interest for the today historical research, a century after the Great Union. The fact that all these personalities that have been evoked above (except for Lucian Blaga and Victor Precup) had a difficult existence after the moment the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, makes any new information on their life and facts be analysed a real value by the historical research. Moreover, the sad example of the lack of acknowledgment coming from their contemporary fellows must be regarded by us, today, as an incentive to remark and appreciate the life experience and the historical documents that many important personalities, at their venerable age, can offer us, the historians.

There are to be quoted below few of the documents that sanctioned the Union of Transylvania with Romania.

"The resolution of the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia (1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918): *The union of all the Romanians in one state shall be stable and guaranteed by the further history of the world, only if it answers all the questions imposed by the new conception of the civilization, whether it inspires in us the duty to not punish the offspring for the sins of the parents and, consequently, it should provide, for all the nations and the individuals that live along on Romanian ground,*

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<sup>165</sup> Gheorghe Anghel, *op.cit.*, 1969, p. 161-174.

*the same rights and duties. The civilization that freed us pretends respect and obligates us to banish any privilege in the new state and to enforce in the fundament of this state the work and its integral reward. I. The national assembly of all the Romanians from Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian Country, gathered by its rightful representatives at Alba-Iulia on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November/1<sup>st</sup> of December, decrees the unification of those Romanians and of all the territories inhabited by them with Romania. The National Assembly proclaims above all the inalienable right of the Romanian nation to the whole Banat bordered by the rivers Mureş, Tisa and the Danube. (voices saying long live, cheers, approvals) II. The National Assembly grants to the territories mentioned above provisional autonomy until the meeting of the Constituency chosen by suffrage universal. III. Regarding this matter, the National Assembly proclaims the following fundamental principles for the foundation of the new Romanian State: 1. Full national freedom for all the co-inhabiting peoples. Each people will study, manage and judge in its own language by individual of its own stock and each people will get the right to be represented in the law bodies and to govern the country in accordance with the number of its people. 2. Equal rights and full autonomous religious freedom for all the religions in the State. 3. Full democratic system in all the realms of public life. Universal, direct, equal, secret suffrage in each commune, proportionally, for both sexes, 21 years old at the representation in communes, counties or parliament (voices: Long live the women! Long live. Acclamations. The ladies are waving their handkerchiefs). 4. Full freedom of the press, association and meeting, free propaganda of all human thoughts. 5. Radical land reform. All the assets, above all the big ones, will be inscribed. The wills by which the heir consigns the land to a third party will be abolished; meanwhile, on the basis of the right to cut down estates freely, the peasant will be able to his own property (ploughing land, pasture, forest), at least one for him and his family to labour on. The guiding principle of this agrarian policy is promoting social evening, on the one hand, and giving force to production, on the other. 6. The industrial workers will be granted the same rights and privileges that are in force in the most advanced industrial states of the West. IV. The National Assembly would like the peace congress to accomplish the community of free nations so that justice and freedom be ensured for all big and small nations alike and in future war is abolished as a means of controlling international relations. V. The Romanians gathered in this National Assembly greet their brothers in Bukovina who freed from the oppression of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and united in their motherland, Romania. VI. The National Assembly salutes with love and enthusiasm the liberation of the nations subjugated until now in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, namely the nations: Czechoslovak, Austro-German, Yugoslav, Polish and Carpathian-Russian and decides that this greeting should be conveyed to all the other nations. VII. The*

*National Assembly humbly evokes the memory of those brave Romanians, whose blood was shed in this war for our dream to come true, as they died for the freedom and unity of the Romanian Nation. VIII. The National Assembly expresses their gratefulness and admiration towards all the Allied Powers, which by their brilliant battles waged stubbornly against an enemy trained for many decades for war released civilisation from under the terror of barbarity. IX. To continue to manage the affairs of the Romanian nation in Transylvania, Banat and The Hungarian Country, the National Assembly decides to found a Great National Romanian Convention, that will have all the rights to represent the Romanian nation any time and everywhere in the relations with all the nations of the world and to make all the necessary decisions in the interest of the nation. Finally, please receive these resolutions and I shall end saying that the holly connection of the 14 million Romanians entitles us today to declare: "Long Live Great Romania!"<sup>166</sup>*

The speech of Iuliu Maniu (Alba Iulia, 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918): *"...We are feeling today as a blind man who has not seen the light of the day for decades, and when, due to God's mercy, his eyes are opened and he can see the holly light of the sun. We are representing here the eyes of the people who are witnessing today the light of the nations' freedom. For removing any doubts that the foreigners might have on what we intend to do for our union and for our national freedom – The Great Romanian National Council declares that it is not intended an oppressive empire. We do not desire that from oppressed to become oppressors. We want to allow freedom for all and the development of the peoples living along us: our Great National Council wishes to emphasise that we observe an old saying that states: What goes around comes around. We do wish, on the ground of Great Romania, to enforce national freedom for all. We want every nation to be able to become cultivated in its own language, to pray to God in its own faith and to request the justice in its own language. We, who shed tears seeing our language banned from schools, churches, justice, shall not take this away from others. We shall not seize life from others. We do not want to live from other people's labour, because we can live from our diligence and strength, through our work. (Enthusiastic Applauses) Only through a democratic regime we can strengthen our Romanian country, especially when we need to consider the requests of the modern state life. Only through a regime observing rights and freedom inside the country, we shall the strength to validate our cause outside. The entire freedom of all the social classes, - it is a guarantee for the well-being of the country. That is why, the great the Great National Romanian Council included in the resolution bill the stipulation that talks of the carrying out of the democratic regime. Please receive our resolution bill unanimously. This bill*

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<sup>166</sup> 1918 la romani. Documentele unirii, vol. X, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1989, p. 288–289.

*shows the path on which, walking forward, we shall reach our goal and lay the foundation for a Great Romania, a united one, which is to be forever like this, to be fulfilled the spirit of the absolute democracy and the social justice*<sup>167</sup>”.

There was presented, in chronological order the main crises from Romania, in the interval 1859-1918. We do not intend to approach them in an all-inclusive manner, because the space is scarce and, furthermore, a rich historical literature has sprung around them, which, in the years of communism reached great proportions, due to the fact that these movements might have represented, on one side, the justification, the legitimacy of the communists who had the power, and, on the other side, the counts of the charge for the liberals, the conservatives, and, after 1926, the peasants' party, responsible for repressing the strikes from the inter-war period.

The historiography from the communist period, as we have shown in an already published book, overrated the importance of the class fight, in the modern age. Landmark personalities of the modern age, as Tudor Vladimirescu, Nicolae Bălcescu, Alexandru Ioan Cuza were “brushed up” by removing any allusion to the boyar (bourgeois) origin of them. The presence in the modern Romania Parliament of the first socialists was regarded as the result of successful class fight, the accent falling on the 1888 and 1907 moments, purged of anything might have represented subversive interference from abroad, which was aiming the weakening of Romania. It should not be forgotten that, although the alliance of Romania with Austro-Hungary was a secret one, and closeness of Germany and Austro-Hungary was quite visible, and the Tsarist Russia was trying to attract Romania on its side, using different means (there had been tried the marriage of Prince Carol – King after 1881 – with a Russian princess, and it had been a partial success in the case of the heir prince Ferdinand, married with the British-Russian princess, Mary of Edinburgh, a/n).

Obviously that the merits of the socialist activists with communist views were intensively exaggerated, over the real ones that the socialists who did want to choose the revolutionary way, going in the same direction with the PNL party, had considered a “bourgeois party”, by the communist historiography.

In the period of the German military occupation (1916-1918), the socialist militants were included among those who fought in the anti-German resistance movement. The communist historiography almost limited the role of the Tsarist army almost limited the role of the Tsarist army in the military success from Mărăști, Mărășești, Oituz, from the summer of 1917, which cannot be contested. It was the moment when Russia left the War, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1918, that found us completely vulnerable before Germany, Bulgaria, Austro-Hungary, determining us to conclude the peace from Buftea, Bucharest from the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918.

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 290–292.

The socialist leader Ion C. Frimu corresponded, in 1911, with Vladimir Ilici Lenin, a fact that brought him, besides the glorification from the communist period, the presence, in September 1917, at Stockholm, in Sweden, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the Socialist International, which condemned the war that was going on<sup>168</sup>.

PSDR adopted the Russian line of policy, the union of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania being condemned as “actions of conquering” done by Romania, as the Russian directives were stating, whose messenger was doctor Cristian Rakowski. We have mentioned, in a previous article, his attempts to overthrow the Romanian government from Iași and to assassinate King Ferdinand.

Even if after 1974, in the years of the “national communism”, there was nothing said about Bessarabia, the union of Transylvania was one of the main subject. Along with the distancing from Moscow, the idea on Transylvania was taken as a major objective of the socialists’ fight for the Romanian unitary national state, especially that, in 1944, the Romanians fought for the liberation of North-West Transylvania from the Horthysts allied with the Nazis.<sup>169</sup>

In this period, the accent fell exclusively on the class conflict. Today, numerous streets are called “December 13”, and many streets and a factory, as mentioned before, were called I. C. Frimu.

The electoral and the agrarian reform became a reality in 1919 and 1921, but the socialist movement was totally seized by the activists inspired by the Marxist-Leninist direction.

There is another aspect that has not been yet discussed enough. The socialists, and especially the adepts of the Marxist-Leninist direction, were adversaries of religion, while the majority of the modern Romania population was educated “in the church porch”, both from the point of view of the school, culture, customs, social and moral attitude and health (the fasting in different periods of the year was contributing, in the view of the Church, to the strengthening of the spirit and body a/n). It ought not to be forgotten that the Romanian right extreme, promoting the Christian values of the Romanian people, in a radical manner (the even violent resistance of the Christian autochthonous Christians against the non-Christian allogeneous people, going to the chasing of the latter ones, a/n), was much more popular in the rural and urban areas from the inter-war Romania.

As it was seen, among the socialist militants, and their defenders, there were numerous people with noble or bourgeois origin, willing to reform the society in which they were living.

Initially, in the period 1944-1958, they could not even be mentioned, the public, interested in history, paying attention to them after 1964, but especially after

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<sup>168</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist...*, p. 22-31.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibidem*.

1974, because some of them perished in the Romanian military camp system after 1945.

In 1916, Romania became successful after the campaign from Transylvania, the orthodox priests saluting and supporting the Romanian campaign over the mountains. Yet, swiftly, it also knew the bitterness of the defeat and military occupation, from December 1916, until November-December 1918. The orthodox priests who supported the Romanian Army were maltreated with cruelty and tortured because they loved their country and kin.

The Romanian churches and monasteries suffered from the foreign occupation, the clergymen being maltreated, the bells were removed for being melted. These places even became stables for the horses. In some monasteries and churches, there were hospitals for the wounded soldiers.

God made us resist in the summer of 1917, but the events from Russia led to the peace from Bucharest, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April/7<sup>th</sup> of May, and Romania was subjected to systematic economic plunder.

On the 4<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, rather discretely, the occupation troops retreated, after signing the peace of Compiègne, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1918. Although the Germans were writing in their journals about the servilism of the occupied people, even those from Oltenia, the leaving of the occupant was an opportunity to settle the situation between the opponents and the “collaborationists”.

On the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, Bukovina was uniting with Romania. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November/1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 (the 1<sup>st</sup> of December was the date from Ardeal, in Oltenia, Muntenia and Moldova still being used the Julian calendar, with a 13 day delay from that date) Banat, Crișana, Transylvania, Maramureș united with Romania<sup>170</sup>.

Basically, when Transylvania united with Romania, the occupationist had left Oltenia. Thus, there cannot be discussed, on the following days, about very enthusiastic manifestations in press, or about meetings. There were times of crisis, of war, famine and the people were struggling to recover after the harsh period. Yet, in the localities from Oltenia, the newspapers from Bucharest were circulating, and the connections with the cities Iași and Bucharest had been remade. Therefore, we have only the memoirs of the eye witnesses who tell the fact that the enthusiast articles from the Bucharest media found a fertile ground in Oltenia too. At Craiova, in 1857, the Union Hora had been danced, and in 1918, it is expected that, due to those natural circumstances, the people from Oltenia to have manifested the same enthusiasm as regarding the union, the same as in 1857. It is asserted that, at Alba Iulia, there had been accredited approximately 95 Romanian and European journalists, along with

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<sup>170</sup> Ioan Scurtu, Ion Alexandrescu, Ion Bulei, Ion Mamina, *op.cit.*, p. 65.

those from Ardeal and the Old Kingdom. Iacob Mârza, an expert photographer from Galțiu, Alba, former second officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army was not admitted in the Union Hall, because a German or a Magyar had been commissioned, but he did not come. Iacob Mârza photographed his village members of the delegation from Galțiu, aspects with the crowd from Alba Iulia, and he took few snapshots with the speakers from the stand that was positioned in front of the people.

The newspapers from Bucharest published articles on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, the average time of receiving the news at that time expressing the enthusiasm of the Romanians on addressing the Great Union. The newspaper “Universul” from the 19<sup>th</sup> of November/2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2018 was writing, in a rather general note, on the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia, referring to “*the symbolic atmosphere in the name of the metropolis founded by Michael the Brave*”<sup>171</sup>. The articles from “Universul” had as headline the syntagm “**The historic action from Alba Iulia**”. “Universul” was mentioning a precise number “*100,000 villagers and 10,000 intellectuals, with their wise leaders and prelates*”<sup>172</sup>. The newspapers from the Old Kingdom also mentioned the fact that Transylvania entered under the leadership of a Ruling Council that would ensure the leading of Transylvania, Crișana, Maramureș, Banat, until the official relations with the Romanian government would have been established. This executive government was made of 15 members.

“Universul” wrote, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November/7<sup>th</sup> of December 1918 that: “*it shall remain over the centuries in the calendar of our people and shall remind the tomorrow generations, the union of all the Romanians from all the countries of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Ardeal with their motherland, from which they had been separated due to wickedness of a faith that proved to be cruel with this kin of the same blood and language*”<sup>173</sup>

It can be assumed that the militaries who returned home, the traders, those who came from exile, brought with them the news from the papers, sent letters, telegrams. The railway was crossing Oltenia from East to West and from North to South, therefore the stations, the flag stations and the railway workers spread the news<sup>174</sup>.

Oltenia would unreservedly joined the new era of Great Romania, and the Transylvanian Octavian Goga would make the decisive step in the significant politics along Constantin Argetoianu, from Oltenia, nevertheless having a baneful role, estranged from the ideals that the poet Octavian Goga had exposed with such fervour before the Great War. The unexpected death of “the vizier” Ionel Brătianu, on the

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<sup>171</sup> “Universul”, XXXVI, no. 20, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> 1918, p. 1.

<sup>172</sup> “Universul”, XXXVI, no. 25, Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> 1918, p. 1.

<sup>173</sup> “Universul”, XXXVI, no. 25, Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> 1918, p. 1.

<sup>174</sup> <https://cersipamanromanesc.wordpress.com/2014/12/23/marea-unire-de-la-1-decembrie-1918-reflectata-in-presa-din-vechiul-regat/>, accessed on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2017.



24<sup>th</sup> of November 1927, 9 years after the Great Union, would mark the beginning of falling for Great Romania, in which there had been adopted a land reform in 1921, a modern constitution in 1923, a set of laws on administration, monetary reform, towards the tragic summer of 1940.

Yet, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March/9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918, Bessarabia united with Romania, followed by Bukovina, on the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, and Banat, Maramureș, Crișana, Transylvania, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918.

The Greek-Catholic confession continued to function, until its banning by the communist authorities, in 1948.

Yet, the total control of the Romanian authorities was completely possible. Basically, the orthodox confession was acknowledged and the brothers over the mountains could pray freely from the ban of any foreign authority.

In 1922, at Alba Iulia, there was finalised the Orthodox Cathedral of the Union, in front of which King Ferdinand and Queen Mary were crowned, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1922. In all the Romanian territories that had united with Romania, there began the construction of the orthodox cathedrals. The number of the monasteries and hermitages started to increase.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 1920, there was signed “The Protocol of Bessarabia”, but USA did not ratify the Treaties of Paris, Versailles, and Japan did not sign the protocol. Practically, the regulation of the Romania-Soviet border was to be done by the two states, in a later stage, after they had begun again their diplomatic relations.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1921, there was founded the Communist Party from Romania, as a department of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Communist International. The Bolshevik activists as Christian Rakowski and Lev Troțki had arrived in Romanian and had tried to identify the possibility to extend “the revolution export”. At Moscow, Nikolai Ivanovici Buharin had already expressed his rude and untrue thoughts on Romania, which he had called “*the dungeon of the peoples*” and “*the creation of the imperialist circles*” from Occident. Thus, there emerges the natural question: what determined the Soviet communists to see Romania as an enemy, and, implicitly a target for extending “the revolution”?

In 1924, PCdR was banned, due to the agitations that were trying to dismember Romania, agitations that took place in Bessarabia, and also the Quadrilateral. The communist activists had the task to provoke damages, especially to the infrastructure.

In 1925, the Romanian Orthodox Church became the high authority of the Patriarchy. It was the long expected success after a road filled with sufferance, similar to that of Golgotha.



## 5. THE DESTINY, AGONY AND THE DISSOLUTION OF GREAT ROMANIA (1918-1947)

Romania became, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 a medium-size country in Europe, reaching its maximal territorial stretch. The plebiscite action for the union of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș had been acknowledged by the authorities from Bucharest, which put their best efforts to support the Union, considering the inauspicious conditions. Year 1918 did not start favourably for Romania. Reduced territorially to Moldova, where there were the Government and the Constitutional Parliament, with a pro-German governing installed at Bucharest, with the front line relatively established on the direction Mărăști-Mărășești-Oituz, with the chaotic Tsarist Russia army, torn by the Bolshevik counter-Revolution from the 25<sup>th</sup> of October/7<sup>th</sup> of November 1917, with the Soviet Russia leaving World War I, through the separate peace from Brest-Litowsk, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1918<sup>175</sup>, Romania had to also conclude the separate peace from the 26<sup>th</sup> of April/7<sup>th</sup> of May, of Bucharest, under humiliating conditions. In this context, there occurred the Union with Bessarabia. The favourable conditions from the end of the 1918 fall (the capitulation of the Germany's allies: Bulgaria, Austro-Hungary, Turkey), the support of the French Military Mission from Romania, led by General Henri Mathias Berthelot determined Romania to join the war again, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, a day before the Armistice of Compiègne was signed, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1918. Later, Bukovina<sup>176</sup> and Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureșul also united<sup>177</sup>.

Romania faced the disapproval of the Allies from the Peace Conferences of Paris from 1919-1920, on addressing the separate peace. Yet, the Romania political elite from the both sides of the Carpathians and both banks of the river Prut tried, and succeeded, in imposing the Romanian point of view, obtaining the international acknowledgement of the Great Union, less of Bessarabia, which was left for the later negotiations with the Soviet Russia.

Further on, there are to be presented few of the international treaties that sanctioned the national actions from 1918:

*“The peace treaty with Austria (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1919)... Art. 59 – On addressing Austria, it renounces, in favour of Romania, all the rights and titles on the land of the former dukedom of Bukovina, from beyond the*

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<sup>175</sup> Volodymyr Kubijovyč (ed.), *Ukraine – A Concise Encyclopaedia I*. University of Toronto Press 1963, p.744.

<sup>176</sup> Constantin Kirilăscu, *Istoria războiului pentru întregirea României 1916-1918*, Vol. 2, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1989, p.393.

<sup>177</sup> Ion Calafeteanu, Viorica-Pompilia Moisuc, *Unirea Basarabiei și a Bucovinei cu România. 1917-1918, Documente*, Hyperion Press, Chișinău, 1995, p.333-341.

*frontiers of Romania, as it would be later established by the main allied and associated Powers. Art. 60 – Romania agrees on inserting in a Treaty with the main allied and associated Powers of some provisions that these Powers consider necessary to protect, in Romania, the interests of the dwellers that are different in race, language or religion from the majority of the population. Romania also agrees on the inserting in a Treaty with the main allied and associated Powers of some provisions that these Powers would consider necessary to protect the freedom of transit and the applying of an equitable regime of trade with the other nations. Art. 61 – The proportion and the nature of the financial charges of the former Empire of Austria, which Romania shall take over for the territory placed under its sovereignty, shall be established according to art. 203, part IX (Financial Clauses) of the present Treaty*<sup>178</sup>.

The Peace Treaty with Bulgaria was the next (Neuilly sur Seine, 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1919):

*“Part II, the Frontiers with Bulgaria. Art. 27. The frontiers with Bulgaria shall be established as following: with Romania: from the Black Sea to the Danube: the frontier the same as it was on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1914. From here, to the confluence of river Timok with the Danube: the main navigable canal of the Danube upstream. Section V. General dispositions, Art. 59. Starting the present moment Bulgaria declares that acknowledges and accepts the frontiers of Austria, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbian-Croato-Slovenian State and the Czech-Slovakian State, the way these frontiers are to be established by the main allied and associated Powers*<sup>179</sup>.

The Peace Treaty with Hungary (Trianon, 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1920) presents special interest: *“Section III, Romania...Art. 45. As far as Hungary concerns, it renounces, in favour of Romania, all the rights and titles on the territories of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy, situated beyond the frontiers of Hungary, as they are stipulated by art. 27, part II (The Frontiers with Hungary) and acknowledges through this Treaty, or any other Treaties concluded to regulate the present matters, as being part of Romania. ... Art. 47. Romania acknowledges and confirms to Hungary the engagement of provisioning, in a Treaty with the main allied and Associated Powers, stipulations that these Powers shall consider necessary for protecting Romania, the interests of the dwellers of different race, language or religion than the majority of the population, along with protection of the transit freedom, of applying an equitable regime of trade with the other nations. Section IX, General Dispositions. Art. 74. Starting the present moment, Hungary declares that it acknowledges and receives the frontiers of Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania, Serbian-Croato-Slovenian*

<sup>178</sup> “The Official Gazette”, no. 140, from the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 1920.

<sup>179</sup> “The Official Gazette”, no. 135, from the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1920.

*State and the Czech-Slovakian State, as these frontiers are to be established by the main allied and associated Powers*"<sup>180</sup>.

Thus, the next question is raised naturally: why did Romania estranged, in the inter-war period, from its traditional allies, France and England? As a paradox, these powers became less interested in maintaining good diplomatic relations with Romania. In 1921 and 1934, Romania had created the Little Agreement, and the Balkan Agreement, two regional alliances, which lacked the support of the great powers. The Revisionism had flourished in Europe, with the help of Germany and USSR, and Italy, former victorious power, was dissatisfied with the Treaties from Paris-Versailles. Bulgaria, Hungary, and even Poland, had dissatisfactions on addressing the frontiers of the neighbouring states, a situation that only led to the ascension of the revisionism. The publishing, in 1926, of "Mein Kampf", the platform-book of Adolf Hitler, was demonstrating that Germany wanted to obtain a "vital space" and for this, it was encouraging other states to fight for the idea of revising the treaties. On the other side, USSR, founded in 1922, after Stalin had taken the political control, continued to encourage the Bolshevik agitations. Stalin had adopted "the one-country communism" thesis, but he was aware that the communist agitations can weaken the respective states. The Great Depression from 1929-1933 also contributed to the degradation of the European political climate, which led to the collapse of the world market, of the money market. The unemployment was causing devastations, the factories were closing and there were strikes in all the European states. The extremist political currents that were militating for "the new order", both from the right and the left side of the political area, were becoming more and more famous in many European states, with great chances to seize the power, and even succeeding it.

Romania was surrounded by revisionist neighbours: USSR, Bulgaria and Hungary, waiting just for the opportune moment. USSR was continually supporting the agitators from Bessarabia and the Quadrilateral.

In Bessarabia, the Soviet propaganda had an intensive character. For NKVD, the informative and subversive operations could take place easier, owing to the fact that the population spoke Russian, and the connections with the Russian space. Yet, the Romanian population refused to take part to these actions, sustaining the Romanian administration. During the treaties from Wien, between the Romanians and the Soviets, from 1924, the Soviets asked for a plebiscite in Bessarabia, invoking the fact that has been previously mentioned, that of the union between Bessarabia and Romania, realised thanks to the Romanian Army. The Soviets were also invoking the

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<sup>180</sup> "The Official Gazette", no. 36, from the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1920.

agreement between Rakowski and Averescu, which led to the suspension of the negotiations, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1924.

The Soviets decided to take action in Southern Bessarabia, in a subversive manner. The agitators started to cross the Dniester by boat, and to attack the frontier guards' pickets. The leader of these actions was the Soviet commissary Andrei Kliușnikov, nicknamed "Nenin"<sup>181</sup>, helped by Iustin Batiscev. It was founded a revolutionary committee that started the actions of destruction in the telephone lines, of plunder, of crimes against the local authorities, in September 1924. Similar incidents took place at Galilevca, Nerușai, Cișmele. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 1924, USSR founded, on the left bank of the river Dniester, in the componence of the Soviet Ukraine, the Moldovan Socialist Soviet Autonomous Republic, to use it as basis for the further actions. Until 1925, at Chișinău, there was sentenced "The trial of the 500", against the authors and the participants from Tatarbunary. There were convicted 85 participants, Iustin Batiscev receiving life hard labour, while the rest received sentences that started from six months, two years, six years, and reaching 15 years of prison. Practically, neither of them was of Romanian origin.

There is cited below, a document which is revelatory for the tendencies of undermining the Union from 1918:

*"The national problem from Romanian and the duties of PCR (Romanian Communist Party) – resolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> congress of the Romanian Communist Party from Romania (Moscow, 1931). 1. The contemporary Romania does not represent in itself a union "of all the Romanians", but a typical state with many nations, created due to the rapacious system of Versailles, by occupying some foreign territories and through the enslaving of some foreign peoples. 2. The bourgeoisie and the landowners from Romania, carrying out their own imperialist plans and, in the same time, fulfilling the desire of the main imperialist powers from Europe to create, next to the river Dniester, an outpost against USSR, conquered Bessarabia, Bukovina, Dobruja, and are subjected, to an unprecedented national oppression and a semi-colonial exploitation, the 8,000,000 Moldavians, Hungarians, Russians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Germans, Turks and other nations. ... The policy of the Romanian leading classes, in the occupied provinces, has had an obvious imperialist and colonial character. This was mirrored in the systematic move of the industrial enterprises in the Romanian regions. ...4. The policy of colonial exploitation of the occupied provinces and the policy of preparing the anti-Soviet war is accompanied by savage repressions that are continuously worsening, against the workers' and the peasants' movements, along with the national-revolutionary one, and, in the first place, against the leader of these movements – against the Communist Party from*

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<sup>181</sup> Florin Nacu, *The Socialist...*, p.22-31.

Romania.... 5. *The Romanian imperialism, trying to crush the revolutionary movement through a savage white terror, is in the same time struggling to strengthen its base in the occupied regions, leading an active policy of colonisation and Romanisation. ... In Bessarabia, the Romanian imperialism fights to strengthen its position through the intensive Romanisation of the Moldavians, who were declared "Romanians". The numerous masses of the Moldavian peasantry and small bourgeoisie from the cities are similarly oppressed as the Russian, Ukrainian and Jewish population. The Romanian bourgeoisie alone does not trust these "Romanians" that they declared this way. All the superior, civil and military administration is entirely occupied by the Romanians from the Old Kingdom. The Moldavians – and only the young people who attended the Romanian schools and fraternised with the Romanian imperialism – can barely obtain a second-hand administrative positions. The Romanian bourgeoisie not only does it obligate the Moldavians to fulfil their military service outside Bessarabia, but they also divides them in small groups, in different regiments. 7. In its imperialist policy, the Romanian bourgeoisie is supported by all the bourgeois parties. The social-democracy in special is a significant support of the imperialist policy of the Romanian leading classes. The Romanian social-fascists are trying to convince the masses that today's Romania has fulfilled the union of all the Romanians and conceals in different manners the ill-famed policy of the Romanian imperialism, in the occupied territories. The social-democracy fights in the occupied lands, they pretend to be in the name of "the pure class fight". Faithfully serving the bourgeoisie, the social-democracy struggles to weaken and disorganise the workers' movement from Transylvania and Bukovina*<sup>182</sup>.

The Quadrilateral, that is, the south of Dobruja, the inter-war counties of Durostor and Caliacra, was seen by the Bulgarians as the cradle of the "Slavic-Bulgarian state", an extremely important centre in the fight for independence led by Bulgaria. The fact that Dobruja returned to Romania, in 1878, dissatisfied the circles from Sofia, and the promise that Romania would get territorial compensations in the south of Dobruja, after losing the south of Bessarabia, agitated the spirits. Many Bulgarians had lived in the Romanian Dobruja, and at Tulcea, there was a "Leadership and Propaganda Committee" (Tonev, 1962: 18). This Committee later moved its headquarters at Bazargic, in the Quadrilateral, before being taken, in 1913, by the Romania, after the peace from Bucharest. Under these circumstances, the famous Mihai Moruzov started his secret agent activity, the same one who founded the Romanian secret services in the contemporary period.

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<sup>182</sup> *Documente din Istoria Partidului Comunist din România*, vol. III, 1929–1933, Editura de Stat pentru Literatură Politică Press, Bucharest, 1956, p. 371–377.

After 1913, the Bulgarians from the Quadrilateral, most of them left doctrine intellectuals, had founded “Dobruja Society”. The World War I was the moment when the Bulgarian propaganda intensified. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1918, 286 Bulgarians from Dobruja had requested the Central Powers, in a memoire attributed to the “Central Committee of Dobruja” the acknowledgement of the so-called historic rights of Bulgaria, over Dobruja. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918, the Quadrilateral and the southern territory of Constanța became Bulgarian, while the Central Powers were occupying Dobruja, Romanian having access to the Sea only through a commercial route. Constanța became a free city, and the Bucharest- Cernavodă-Constanța railway, the silos from Constanța Port were given to Germany.

The defeat of Bulgaria brought a state of dissatisfaction that led to radicalization. The communist propaganda, supported by Doctor Christian Rakowski, made the Bulgarian Bolshevik talk about the “people from Dobruja”. Although Bulgaria signed the armistice on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1918, the retreat of the Bulgarians from Dobruja took place only on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1918, from the last area, of Caliacra. NKVD and GRU, the two components of the Soviet espionage decided that they could support a series of subversive actions, generically called “popular insurrections”, agitations that would destabilise the situation from the Quadrilateral. This is how the “Komitadji” formations appeared, organised as groups of action, coordinated informatively and according to tactics specific to the guerrilla groups. The “Komitadji” were attacking the Romanian authorities, the pickets of the Romanian frontier guards, and even the Romanian military units. The Soviets founded an espionage-agitation department, in the Balkans, called “Zacordat”. On the territory of Dobruja, two subversive organisations were acting, called DRO-The Revolutionary Organisation of Dobruja (whose beginnings can be placed after 1878), and VDRO-The Inside Revolutionary Organisation of Dobruja, founded in 1925.

The outlawing of PCdR, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 1924, had accentuated these agitations, and the ascension of the right extreme was determining the increase of the menaces on addressing the integrity of Romania. The relation with USSR was practically neglected, until 1934, although, in 1924, at Wien, there had been some negotiations. Romania waited that USSR to become closer to France, Great Britain, to join the Society of Nations that Germany, in 1935, would leave and would reintroduce the mandatory military service.

In the 1930s, numerous Bulgarian Komitadji escaped the Stalinist purges, seeking refuge in Romania. There should be mentioned here Iordan Dragan Rusev (Petar Borilov or Petre Borilă, the future in-law of Nicolae Ceaușescu), Dimitar Ganev, Ghiorgghi Crosnev. Boris Ștefanov an influential Bulgarian activist, was a good friend of Alexandru Iliescu, the father of the former president Ion Iliescu.

Alexandru Ilescu managed to escape the Stalinist purges, being remarked as an efficient contact of the Bulgarian Komitadji from DRO.

In 1928, there took place the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress of PCdR, and the newspaper “Lupta de clasă” from September–December 1928 was writing that, among the decisions of the congress, there was also adopted that of “self-determination for the nationalities from Romania”<sup>183</sup>.

In Romania, the anti-Russian feeling had reappeared as intense as after 1878, due to the behaviour the Bolshevik Russian soldiers had on the front line. The liquidation of Romanov dynasty in the Soviet Russia produced a strong impression at Bucharest. We should bear in mind that Queen Mary of Romania was first cousin with Tsar Nicholas II, executed by the Bolsheviks at Ekaterinburg. Moreover, after the union of Bessarabia, Bukovina, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Transylvania with Romania, at Bucharest, there was constituted a new political class. They were politicians, extremely active in the fight for the right of the Romanians from the occupied provinces, who, at that moment, needed to build a new society, to accomplish the institutional, political, administrative, economic and social union of Romania. Moreover, there were huge differences of infrastructure, and even mentality. The populations, once privileged, were now the minority, and the country needed laws to integrate them into the political, social and economic life of Romania.

Furthermore, the politicians from Transylvania, Bukovina, Banat, or Bessarabia were sometimes regarded with certain reservations by their Wallachian colleagues, owing to the fact that they would become competitors in the political act. The Conservative Party disappeared in 1922, and the void it left on the political stage, would have never been practically filled, and no other new emerged party succeeded in dealing with the entire range that it had been specialised in.

The agrarian reform from 1924, and the Constitution from 1923 tried to offer the background for the later development of Romania. Yet, the adhesion of the peasants and workers to the communist movement was rather reduced after 1924, although, on the occasion of the strikes from Grivița, the Romanian communists were rather vocal, a proof of that being the political processes after 1933, and the prisons from Caransebeș, Doftana, Târgu-Jiu, where there were taken the arrested communists.

Practically, in Great Romania, the adhesion of the peasants and workers to the communist movement was more reduced than the adhesion of a lot of students (in theology, law, education), clerks, priests, but also workers, or peasants to the Iron-Guardist Movement, founded by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. The right extreme from Romania had the advantage of being supported by notorious people, such as

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<sup>183</sup> Costin Scorpan, *Istoria României-Enciclopedie*, Nemira Press, Bucharest, 1997, p.131.



A.C.Cuza, Nicolae Iorga, Octavian Goga, whereas the communist movement did not have highly educated leaders, and the dependence of the communists on Moscow was more evident than the dependence of the right extreme on Berlin. The communists were promoting the proletarian internationalism, which meant even the dismembering of the Romanian state, while the right extreme was talking, in its propaganda, of nation, religion, state and individual, which was perceived as being much more attractive, but which was hiding an anti-Semitic rhetoric, later become viral, which was trying to subordinate Romania, economically and politically, to the German interests<sup>184</sup>. If the communist movement was declared illegal, in 1924, the Romanian right extreme resisted to the many attempts of banning it, in 1923, in 1938-1939, the last being in January 1941. The right extreme was noticed inclusively through violent actions, against the political adversaries, and even those who had decided to leave the organisation, which led to the diminishing in popularity. The ascendancy of right extreme was due to the approaching to Christian values, especially important in the rural regions, while the communists were promoting the atheism.

Germany, wishing to please Soviet Union, Hungary and Bulgaria, agreed, in 1940, on cutting Great Romania in parts, which the right extreme accepted, because they wanted to enjoy the support of Germany.

In Bulgaria, besides the communist revolutionary committees, the right extreme was also extremely active. The Bulgarian "Komitadji" were initiating actions that would weaken the civil and military administration from the Quadrilateral. After the loss of southern Dobruja, in 1940, of Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina, in the same year, the communist agitators grouped more actively in Romania, but they could not act too easily, because of the dictatorship of Antonescu and the Iron-Guard, and Antonescu. Yet, the revisionist behaviours of Hungary and Bulgaria were neglected inexplicably. Might it have been due to the fact that the Romanian politicians, led by the King Carol II, thought that the Versailles system would be defended?

Not only was the external climate unfavourable for Romania. After 1927, the year when the prime minister, Ionel Brătianu, died, Romania became a stage for the fight over power. The Regent Prince, Nicolae, who was ruling instead of his minor nephew, Mihai I, who became a king when he was just 6 years old, and the Regency, assisted to the repositioning of the political parties. PNL, and the newly found PNT, along with the other smaller, but with greater ambitions parties, had an attitude that contributed to the erosion of democracy.

The ascending on the throne, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1930, of King Carol II, returned from the exile, after dethroning his son Mihai, was the first step towards the

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<sup>184</sup> Florin Constantiniu, *op.cit.*, p.341.



destruction of the democracy, and the erosion of Romania's prestige. Carol II was intending the establishment of a regime of authority, built around himself, with only one party, with a devoted government, and a permissive constitution.

The diplomatic Romanian-Soviet relations were to be revived in 1934. In 1936, the treaties from Montreux, between Maksim Litvinov and Nicolae Titulescu were failing. The Romanian diplomat had tried to introduce the Dniester as line of demarcation between the Romanian and the Soviet army, which could be equated to the acknowledgement of the frontier between the two states.

In August 1936, Nicolae Titulescu was reshuffled, King Carol preferring Victor Antonescu for the Ministry of the External Affairs. USSR, which did not wish the continuation of the Litvinov-Titulescu treaties found the pretext, after the dismissal of Nicolae Titulescu, to consider that the attitude of Romania meant the end of the treaties, on addressing the establishing of the Romanian-Soviet frontier. Nicolae Titulescu said that the Soviet-German relation would be a reality, and that the purposes of this connection would be unfavourable for the superior interests of Romania.

Gradually, after 1936, there occurred a closed relation of Romania and Germany, a fact that would have been inconceivable in the first years of the inter-war period. The relation with Germany was much more obvious than the relations with the Soviet Union.

King Carol II achieved his goal, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 1938, instituting the authoritarian monarchy. King Carol II positioned himself against the right extreme, even if he had initially wanted to subordinate it to his intentions. Great Romania was getting closer to the collapse from the tragic summer of 1940.

Basically, the road that Romania took, after 1918, was that from union to unification. The regions newly integrated in Romania were functioning according to the laws of the former neighbouring empires, but their currency was still used, along with the bonds, the cities enjoyed fiscal privileges, the taxing systems were different, the right to vote was different from the one in Romania, the traders had certain interests and specific facilities. Moreover, due to the international treaties, the Jews from the regions newly unite with Romania received the Romanian citizenship, while the Jews from the Old Kingdom were still subjected to the individual naturalisation law.

The peasants from Romania had fought on the battle field also because they had been promised the land and the right to vote, which meant the modification of the electoral law and the switching to the universal suffrage. The land reform was including the correlation of the land surveying, the unification of the monetary, fiscal, measuring and distance control, quantity systems. The Romanian regions that had been under the Austro-Hungarian domination had an infrastructure visibly superior to

the Old Kingdom, and the Old Kingdom was more developed than Bessarabia, for example. Dobruja and the Quadrilateral also had some organisational drawbacks, although the ethnic and confessional problems had been in some way resolved, remaining, nonetheless, the economic ones. In almost half of the Great Romania (the regions newly-united with Romania), Romanian language was not frequently spoken, it was not taught in all schools, the localities did not have Romanian denominations, the Romanian Orthodox Church (still dependent canonically from the Constantinople Patriarchy), but not present canonically. The Romanians, the ethnic majority, had become, due to the force of the events, the political majority, although not that active economically, while the minorities, the only ones active politically in the past and owning the economic monopole, were now belonging to the minorities, forced to enjoy the same rights as the Romanians.

Moreover, it ought to be mentioned that the Romanian organisations that planned the plebiscitary assemblies, in the historical regions united with Romania, acted as executive bodies (de facto governments), the transition from these executive bodies to the Bucharest Government being made with emotions and discussions. The people from Transylvania and Bukovina were the most vocal, Iuliu Maniu and Iancu Flondor<sup>185</sup> being the adepts of some kind of internal autonomy of Transylvania and Bukovina, within the Great Romania. In Banat, the Romanian administration became installed only on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1919, after the disappearance of the meteoric Autonomous Republic of Banat.

The Romanian unionist leaders, who had to integrate in the internal policy initiated by Bucharest, were great names, as Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Iuliu Maniu, Vasile Goldiș, Octavian Goga, Ion Inculeț, Iancu Flondor, Ion Nistor.

They had to confront themselves politically with the politicians from Bucharest. The generation of the forty-eighters had just gone, and a new generation was born. The most important exponents of the Bucharest policy were brothers Ion (Ionel) I .C. Brătianu, Constantin (Dinu) I.C. Brătianu and Vintilă I.C. Brătianu, leaders of the Liberal National Party. Yet, there were leaders coming strongly from behind, as I.G. Duca, Constantin Angelescu, Gheorghe I. Brătianu, Gheorghe Tătărescu (liberals), Take Ionescu (liberal-conservative), Ion Mihalache, Vasile Kogălniceanu (exponents of țăranism- peasants' representatives), A.C. Cuza, Nicolae Iorga (poporanism with nationalism accents), Constantin Stere (sămănătorism, native of Bessarabia), Mihail Manoilescu (corporatist), Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Constantin Titel Petrescu (socialist). This party, although it had been in the first line of the Romanian policy during the War for the National Union, had eroded itself. The situation was even worse for the Conservative party of Alexandru Marghiloman, who

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<sup>185</sup> Mircea Mușat, Ion Ardeleanu, *Viața politică în România 1918 -1921*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Completed Edition, Editura Politică Press, Bucharest, 1976, p.17-18.

had been labelled as collaborationist of Germany (the occupationist), which he could not remove, not even when he failed politically in 1922, when he did not get any seat in the Parliament of Great Romania. Ionel Brătianu had the intuition to play skilfully. After he had stepped back, during the Peace Conferences of Paris, pushing Alexandru Vaida-Voevod<sup>186</sup> in the foreground, as President of the Ministers Council (and to obtain the approval of the Freemasonry - David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau were known freemasons), Ionel Brătianu, helped by Constantin Argetoianu, a character from Oltenia, with a strong appetite for political combinations, placed Generalul Alexandru Averescu on the leading position, who was called “the peasants’ father”, the leader of Liga Poporului (People’s League). Thus, PNL recovered, managing to lead with authority during 1922-1926<sup>187</sup>, when this party basically surpassed the leading dynasty of Romania, Nicolae Iorga stating that the Hohenzollern Dynasty was in the service of the Dynasty from Florica.

Alexandru Vaida-Voevod was the first across the mountains leader who became a President of the Ministers Council (head of the Government). The dwellers from Bessarabia and Bukovina were the most disadvantaged in the new establishment from Bucharest, Ion Inculeț and Iancu Flondor being ministers without a portfolio, having the task to supervise the unification of Bessarabia, and Bukovina respectively. Iancu Flondor was a little more radical, taking position against some corrupt practices of the Government from Bucharest, and he was therefore excluded, the more docile Ioan Nistor being preferred.

Ștefan Cicio Pop and Vasile Goldiș<sup>188</sup> were on the first positions, working for the unification of Transylvania, in the time period we are referring to. They came into conflict with Iuliu Maniu, who decided that the chance to survive politically at Bucharest was to fusion with an ascending party from across the Mountains, in the Old Kingdom. The conservatives had left an empty spot in the right side of the political scene from Bucharest (although a right-side party, PNL had progressive visions), compatible with the vision of the Romanian National Party from Ardeal, who had been left “without the political object”. The leaders from Ardeal, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Vasile Goldiș and Ștefan Cicio-Pop (since 1905 they had sustained the idea of the activism, considered superior to that of the passivism, on addressing the national political fight from Ardeal) disapproved the idea of closeness between Iuliu Maniu and Ion Mihalache, from Muntenia.

For example, in March 1923, Iancu Flondor was writing to Iuliu Maniu: “*I have always considered with great interest your political actions that were*

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<sup>186</sup> Stelian Neagoie, *Oameni politici români*, Machiavelli Press, Bucharest, 2007, p. 707-712.

<sup>187</sup> Ion Bitoleanu, *Din istoria României moderne: 1922-1926*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1981, p. 29.

<sup>188</sup> Gheorghe Șora, *Contribuții privitoare la biografia lui Vasile Goldiș*, Extras din Crisia Press, 1979, p. 10 and next.

*addressing the reestablishment of justice and the legality of the political life from the united Romania, being convinced myself that the future of our country and nation is tightly related by law and legality, and that the secular dream of a united, prosperous and powerful Romania is feasible only on this path*<sup>189</sup>.

After 1926, the year when the Peasants National Party was founded, through the fusion between the political formations of Iuliu Maniu and Ion Mihalache, on the Romanian political scene, there was intensified the number of the Transylvanians in the political life from Bucharest. Iuliu Maniu, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod<sup>190</sup>, Octavian Goga supported the idea of dethroning the liberals, after the death of King Ferdinand I and Ionel Brătianu, in 1927, along with that of bringing Prince Carol back, who had been excluded from succession, on the grounds that the liberals had presumably forced King Ferdinand's hand. Simultaneously, the intensification of the communists' actions imposed the right-side leaders from Romania an attitude that gave the right formations the chance to be able to counterbalance the influence of the left-side extreme, headed towards USSR and destabilising actions.

Practically, since 1923, the Romanian political scene started to be shaped according to the Contemporary Age. The constitution from 1923 was seen by the unionists from the old historic regions, united with Romania, as a force act of the liberals who pressed its adopting by the Romanian Parliament.

As a general line, it ought to be shown that Romania, from 1918 to 1923, went on a sinuous road since the Great Union, towards the political, legislative, administrative, economic, fiscal unification. The unitary development and the attraction in "the big policy" of the leaders from the old historic regions fell behind. Mihai Moruzov, the famous leader of the secret services from the inter-war period, reported the fact that Bessarabia had been already penetrated with information by the Soviet espionage military structures, and that the loss of Bessarabia by Romania was just a matter of time.

As previously seen, in an article from 2017, the socialist movement from Romania started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the socialists managing to obtain even few mandates in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Constituency from the Deputies Assembly.

The newspaper "Adevărul", led by Constantin Mille had preserved ample space for the advice on addressing the health of the people living in villages, especially the women and children. Thus, the women were advised to air and clean the rooms, to whitewash the walls. Moreover, there was recommended the keeping of the hygiene by washing, especially in the summer, when the water was easier

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<sup>189</sup> Gavril Irimescu, *Scrisori către și de la Iancu Flondor din anii 1918-1924 privind viața politică românească*, in "Codrul Cosminului", Scientific Annals of "Ștefan cel Mare" University from Suceava, Series History, 2000-2001, no. 6-7, p. 401 and next.

<sup>190</sup> Nicolae C. Nicolescu, *Enciclopedia...*, p. 328-333.

warmed. In the yards, there was recommended the planting of fruit bearing trees, and in the small gardens vegetables.

The workers from the industry had received the recommendation to drink milk, although it was difficult to obtain it from the markets, the workers labouring, many times, even 12-14 hours per day.

Nonetheless, these newspapers did not have much influence in the world of the Romanian village. First of all, the illiteracy had reached high rates (the reform of education, imposed by Cuza, knew the first attempt of amendment at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through Spiru Haret), the money was scarce, in the rural areas the exchange was in the form of the barter (a product for another product), thus very few people could afford a newspaper subscription.

It ought to be analysed the manner in which the Great Union from 1918 was influenced by both the internal and external context. Undoubtedly, the strongest influence was that of the revolution from 1917, which took place in Russia, and changed the ratio of forces from the Eastern Europe, and determined Romania, along just a year-long period, to pass from the agony created by its disappearance as state, to the euphoria of the Great Union.

In historiography, there is the general perception that the Great Union from 1918 represented the result of the common fight of all the political forces from Romania. Although the Great Union was saluted and celebrated as the most significant event that put an end to the modern era of Romania, as a major success that would be experienced after centuries of aspirations on addressing the national unity and the independence, this significant event had numerous adversaries, which became noticeable during the following political evolution. Romania transformed into a middle-sized state, with a population of 18 million dwellers. Its natural resources and the agricultural production made Romania, during 1918-1920, a country that showed great potential. Nonetheless, Great Romania did not know how to consolidate its status, and how to advance on the way of the democracy. The responsibility of the failure cannot be attributed exclusively to the internal political background. Unquestionably, it played a determined part. But it ought not to be neglected the external context. It must not be forgotten that the spectre of extremism imposed itself in states with a richer democratic tradition than that of Romania. It is certain that a conflict occurred between the right and the left extreme was being orchestrated by Germany and USSR. The civil war from Spain is an extremely important example for this respect.

The system of Versailles had been “a Napoleonic peace with Wilsonian clauses”, as it was briefly put by Ionel Brătianu. This politician had imposed his will for the recognition of the historical rights and the Great Union. He resigned, as a protest against the fact that Romania was about to not be acknowledged as winning

state, bringing forward reproaches on addressing the separate peace with the Central Powers from May 1918. Romania defended its point of view, the Great Union was acknowledged, but the problems did not stop there. It was needed, immediately after 1920, an active Romanian diplomacy and an equally responsible political class. The revisionism was born almost immediately after the Treaties from Paris-Versailles from 1919-1920. Furthermore, the extremist agitations sustained by Germany and USSR contributed to the erosion of the basis on which Great Romania had been founded, starting with 1921-1924.

Gradually, Germany escaped from the initially draconic conditions, but it assured its alliance with USSR, which had not been yet acknowledged. After 1933, although different as ideologies, Germany and USSR began a very close collaboration, especially military, owing to the fact that Germany had been forbidden the arming. USSR was looking for the right moment when it would enter the international arena, on the place that had been once occupied by the Tsarist Russia.

Generally, the historians and the political scientists have the tendency of omitting an essential element: the fact that the Great Union took place in the midst of the Russian civil war, unleashed after the success of the Bolshevik counter-revolution from the 25<sup>th</sup> of October/ 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1917. In the summer of 1917, Romania was heroically defending its severely affected national structure, yet, after the Soviet Russia had made separate peace with the Central Powers in 1918, Romania, with the agreement of the collaborationist government led by Marghiloman and installed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1918, realised, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March/ 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918, the union of Bessarabia with Romania, at that time reduced territorially to Moldova. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of April/ 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918, Romania also concluded a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers, signed at Buftea/Bucharest, but never ratified by the Parliament from Iași, a peace annulled after the re-entering to the war, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1918.

The Romanian literature used, as subject, aspects from the life of the different social categories, especially the peasants, the boyars, the leaseholders, the clerks, and, to a smaller extent, the workers. The platform of the magazine “Dacia literară” from 1840, bearing the influence of Mihail Kogălniceanu was announcing the writers of the necessity of creating works inspired from the historic past, from the Romanian reality.

The modern age represents the moment in which the historic and social subject literature developed significantly, either it is the poetry, the prose or the drama. The facts from this age became subjects in literature, inspiring works that have remained for ever in the Romanian national conscience, along with the Romanian literature patrimony.

The Phanariot rulings represented a subject for the first novel in the Romanian literature, “Ciocoi vechi și noi” (approx. The new and the old exploiters), under the

signature of Nicolae Filimon, in 1863. The novel depicts the ascension of young son of a boyar, sent to learn a trade at the court of a Phanariot, who was part of the suite of a Phanariot ruler Constantin Gheorghe Caragea. Boyar Andronache Tuzluc, had obtained the rank of seneschal rapidly, from a simple “ciohodar” (member of the crew that was driving a carriage) of the ruler. Dinu Păturică is depicted with all the defects of a thruster. The character had enjoyed high education, he was eager to get knowledge, if it helped him in becoming a wealthy man. Becoming the trustworthy man of the boyar, he weaves a plan to corrupt his mistress, and both of them to destroy the boyar socially, with the help of a person from Bucharest, a merchant.

The Romanian boyars of noble descent are portrayed as being honest, the same as the Romanian officials, as the former bailiff of Andronache Tuzluc, who he had left unemployed when his mistress asked him, due to the fact that “the exploiter” Păturică had convinced her to stay besides him when he would ascend the social ladder in a fulminant manner. The novel places Dinu Păturică in the hypostasis of participating directly to the conspiracy that kills Tudor Vladimirescu, which the historiography considers the first reformer of modern Romania. The end of Andronache Tuzluc, of Dinu Păturică, the deceiver Costea Chiorul, seen as punishments of the destiny, the acknowledging of the merits of the former bailiff Andronache Tuzluc show that, from the historical message point of view, Nicolae Filimon<sup>191</sup>, a convinced forty-eighter, tried to point the difference between retrograde character of the Phanariot regime and the innovative one of the local rulers.

The novel was used, in the communist era, as an etalon for the decline of the Phanariot regime and the triumph of good over evil.

In his comedies, Vasile Alecsandri<sup>192</sup> describes the tendency of a certain part from the autochthonous boyars to climb the social ladder, to show that they have knowledge, which they actually do not and will not have, insisting on the contrast between appearance and essence.

Vasile Alecsandri, in the short story “Porojan” presents the moment when the Romany slaves were freed, and how many of them did not know to enjoy the freedom they were granted. The main character was Vasile Alecsandri’s playmate, who, after reaching the school age, was separated from him. Alecsandri went to Cuenim boarding school, and Porojan became apprentice at a bakery. The presentation of the tragic destiny of Porojan is made by Vasile Alecsandri for pointing towards the education of all the dwellers from the country, regarding the rights and the freedoms.

The following stage is that of the literary age represented by Ion Creangă<sup>193</sup>. The author of the book “Amintiri din Copilărie” (Memories of my childhood) talks

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<sup>191</sup> Nicolae Filimon, *Ciocoii vechi și noi*, Cartea Românească Press, Bucharest, 2017, p.10 and next.

<sup>192</sup> Eugen Simion, *Dimineața poezilor*, Cartea Românească Press, Bucharest, 1980, p.11.

<sup>193</sup> Ion Creangă, *Opere*. Critical Edition, coord. Daniel Corbu, Princeps Edit Press, Iași, 2006, p.23-26.



about the years of that beautiful age, spent in the free peasant village of Humulești, where he was born. In the book, there are moments that mention the “honest cholera from ‘48” (the epidemic during the 1848 Revolution that, being just a child, he survived), his school life in the different elementary schools that he attended, along with the orthodox priests, an opportunity to show inclusively the way in which the young men of his times were choosing to become a priest. Obviously, Ion Creangă, being defrocked (excluded from the clergy) the moment he was convinced by Mihai Eminescu to put on paper the moments from his childhood that he was telling the people from “Junimea”, had reasons to not be objective. Moreover, Ion Creangă (deacon in Iași at that time) had been involved in the separatist action from Iași, in 1866, which intended the annulment of Union from 1859, defending the Metropolitan Calinic Miclescu, the initiator of the action, who had been wounded, and who he hid in a house for not being taken by the authorities.

Yet, it is rather surprising to see that Ion Creangă is also the author of two stories, “Uncle Ion Roată and the Union” and “Ion Roată and Voivode Cuza”, in which the peasant Ion Roată, delegate of the Moldavian peasants in the Ad-Hoc Assembly has his own vision on the Union and even seeks his justice before the ruler Cuza, seen as a righteous man, an honest man, despite the fact that, in reality, after 1864, although he made some fundamental reforms, he also encouraged the corruption of the camarilla that was constituted around him.

And here it is another famous writer of the modern age, Duiliu Zamfirescu. He is considered as being the author-initiator of the novel cycle in the Romanian literature. He proposed to depict the life of a boyar family, the Comănescu family, and their relatives. There are five novels in the cycle: *Viața la țară (Life in the countryside)*, *Tănase Scatiu, În război (At war)*, *Îndreptări (Betterments)*, *Anna*<sup>194</sup>.

The first two novels depict the relation between the noble rank boyar, Dinu Murguleț, and the peasants from his estates, in antithesis with the arrogance and the cupidity of the bailiff Tănase Scatiu, who, married to the boyar’s daughter, began to impose on his family, oppressing the peasants, which would finally lead to an uprising of the latter ones, ended with the violent killing of the bailiff.

Duiliu Zamfirescu was the son of a bailiff, but he came from a noble boyar family who had to become bailiffs, in order to keep their social rank. Duiliu Zamfirescu was, most of his life, a diplomat and a politician, therefore, he regarded the life in the countryside as a stream of memories from his childhood. Many of his novels were published before the revolt from 1907 (the period after the conquering of the Romanian state independence), thus the idyllic vision, the fight between the good

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<sup>194</sup> Al. Săndulescu, *Pe urmele lui Duiliu Zamfirescu*, Sport-Turism Press, Bucharest 1989, p.87-92.



(the noble boyar, loved by the peasants) and the bad (the bailiff who became a mean boyar, associated with numerous corrupted usurers and officials)

The period after 1877, until the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was portrayed by Ion Luca Caragiale<sup>195</sup>, a clerk himself, with aptitudes of politician. Caragiale, through his comedies, satirised the society where he lived, mocking the liberal political elite from the provinces, and, in his sketches, he criticised the customs the civil servants had, their families or their children. An exceptional short-stories writer, author of the tragedy “Năpasta” (The disaster), I.L. Caragiale illustrated, maybe the best, the problems in the modern Romanian society, showing the striking contrast between appearance and essence<sup>196</sup>.

It is not by chance that Troțki, one of the revolutionary leaders from 1917 Russia, in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century being at Mangalia, immediately after Caragiale’s death at Berlin, was criticising the bourgeois social system from Romania, starting from the literary work of Ion Luca Caragiale.

Liviu Rebreanu<sup>197</sup>, a Transylvanian writer settled in Bucharest, offers few exceptional works after the Great Union, in which he approaches the Romanian national theme and social.

If, in “Pădurea Spânzuraților” (Forest of the hanged), Liviu Rebreanu presents a drama of his own family (the execution by hanging, on the front from Ghimeș-Palanca, of his brother, Emi Rebreanu, a Romanian officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army, who wanted to cross to the Romanians from the Old Kingdom), and even personal (he was himself arrested because he had tried to desert, but he killed his escort, managing to run across the mountains), in “Ion” and “Răscoala” (The revolt), he portrays the Romanian peasant from the both sides of the Carpathians.

In “Pădurea Spânzuraților”, the Romanian officers and soldiers from Austro-Hungary had to fight against their brothers from the Kingdom, a situation that determined many of them to desert and enlist in the Romanian Army. Apostol Bologa, the hero from “Răscoala” was the son of a memorandum lawyer, who chooses the military life out of a personal whim, is decorated, but, when facing the decision to fight against the Romanians, feels his entire universe collapsed, that is why, allowing to be captured, while trying to cross the front line, considers himself exonerated in the fight with his inner thought.

In “Ion” and “Răscoala”, the author uses a Balzacian technique, meaning that the action starts and ends symmetrically. Duplicated in the character Titu Herdelea, the writer captures, in the first novel, the tragedy of the peasant from Ardeal who

<sup>195</sup> Anatol E. Baconski, *Caragiale și Arghezi*, in “Viața românească”, XV 1962, no. 6 (June), p. 221-222.

<sup>196</sup> Constantin Popescu-Cadem, *I. L. Caragiale, recurs la biografie*, in “Manuscriptum”, year VIII, no. 2 (27)/1977, p. 184-187.

<sup>197</sup> Al. Săndulescu, *Întoarcere în timp: memorialiști români*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, revised and completed, Bucharest, Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române Press, 2008, p. 233–244.

fights for his land, lost by the wasteful father. Ion is the son of a former rich family, who became poor because of an unrestrained father who had spent the money in pubs unrestrictedly, money he had had from selling Ion's mother dowry. Ion gets in touch with many characters, the primary school teacher, Herdelea, the orthodox priest Belciug, the Austro-Hungarian authorities. His target is Ana's father, the man who had bought much of his family's land, managing to take it back after marrying Ana. The tragic death of Ion, killed by the husband of Florica, Ion's first love, and the transferring of the land to the property of the church, the evacuation of Herdelea, because he had presumably offended the Austro-Hungarian leaders, show that the peasant from Ardeal could own land, but he did not enjoy national rights.

In "Răscoala", Titu Herdelea sees the way the peasants are used by the noble rank boyars and bailiffs. The peasants are portrayed collectively, and he maybe insists more on the former demobilised soldier, Petre Petre. They wish the boyars did not sell the estate to some mean bailiffs, but the most intense desire is a land reform that would allow them to become proprietors. Finally, the peasants are forced to start the revolt, and the authorities interfere with the army and repress the uprising violently. Thus, the peasants from "Răscoala" are the slaves of their own co-national fellows, unlike those from Ardeal, who, although lacking their political rights, they could own land, have a social position in the world from the villages.

Liviu Rebreanu shows, as a fine observer from across the mountains, the differences between the peasants from the both sides of the Carpathians. "Ion" and "Răscoala" are finished after the Great Union, when the writer Liviu Rebreanu was already settled in Muntenia and Great Romania was trying to find its European destiny, a middle-sized state.

Zaharia Stancu, in "Descuț" (Barefoot) presents, in a proletcultist manner, the moment 1907, as it took place in the villages from Teleorman, a county from the south of Romania. The young Darie lives the life of a peasant's child who gets to the city, as an apprentice, living the experience of the city of Bucharest occupied by the German Army.

Gala Galaction<sup>198</sup> also presents in his prose moments, as the life of the Romanians after the Revolution from 1821, the short-story "La vulturi" (At the vultures), in which the Turks' invasion causes the flee of a mother with her three children, one of them, hid in a hay stack by the mother who wanted to save the other two, is torn up by the vultures that, during the war time, come to look for food, feeding inclusively from the bodies of the people who are dead in fight, or even the children.

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<sup>198</sup> Camelia Caracaleanu, *Fantastic și folcloric în nvelistica lui Gala Galaction*, Bucharest, 1996, p.15-21

George Călinescu<sup>199</sup>, in “Enigma Otiliei” (Otilia’s Enigma) portrays the life of an intellectual and merchant family from Bucharest, in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Young Felix is initiated in the social life by Otilia, the young woman who he hopelessly falls in love with, by the self-seeker Stănică Rațiu, the landlord Pascalopol, he gets in touch to the family destroyed by cupidity and envy of uncle Costache, his tutor during his years of student.

The tragedy of the World War I, beyond its historic valences, is presented by Camil Petrescu in the novel “Ultima noapte de dragoste, întâia noapte de război” (The last night of love, the first night of war). Young Gheorghidiu, who struggles the everyday life due to the strivings of his father, a poor scientist who becomes the successor of a rich uncle, the brother of his father, that makes him witness the manner in which his young wife, from the in loved and materially uninterested woman, transforms into a semi-modern lady, causing his husband jealousy and unleashing a war within his souls, similar to the real one that he takes part in. Gheorghidiu suddenly finds himself on a much higher than expected social position. The period before the World War I is one of growth, economic development, a flourishing one for the middle men who exploit the workers, eager to obtain fast income.

Marin Preda<sup>200</sup>, in “Moromeții” (Moromete family), volume I, presents the faith of the Romanian peasant after World War I and the land reform from 1921. The action unfolds in the same county from Teleorman, the peasants being tormented by the continuously increasing land taxes, or the instalments for the Rural Credit. The peasants had been exempted from the old instalments, when King Carol II had issued the law of debt conversion and had taken other loans, which, due to a new coming war, had become even more difficult to pay. Aristide, the boyar from that place is seldom mentioned, the accents falling on the competition between the peasants, the authentic character Moromete, who fights to keep the land he had received as a veteran, and the dowry of Catrina, the second wife, also appropriated (illegally, after a love affair with the mayor who had enlisted the first husband of Catrina as dead on the battle field, although he had died of pneumonia, before even doing military service), and the avaricious Bălosu who was speculating any weakness, buying cheap land from the people who had money problems, as the father of Vatică and Irina, the husband of Anghelina, who had sold half of the land to heal from tuberculosis, but finally dying.

Moromete has confrontations with his own sons, from the first marriage, who run away from home to ruin their father, who they blame for favouring the children

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<sup>199</sup> Mircea Zăciu, Marian Papahagi, Aurel Sasu, *Dicționarul scriitorilor români*, Editura Fundației Culturale Române Press, 1995, letters A-C, p.551-517.

<sup>200</sup> Mihai Ungheanu, *Marin Preda: vocație și aspirație*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, revised and completed, Timișoara, Amarcord Press, 2002, p.5-12.

from the second marriage. Moromete sends his youngest son, Niculae, to school, but, after the war, when the story unfolds in the second volume, Moromete changes radically, becoming a small merchant and refusing to understand the collectivisation and the communist regime. Refused by their sons who he asked to return to their village, Moromete makes peace with Niculae, who became a party activist, then an engineer, after the purge from 1945-1958. The death of Moromete is the death of the traditional peasant, representing the disappearance of a social class.

Alexandru Vlahuță<sup>201</sup>, Mihai Sadoveanu<sup>202</sup> or Geo Bogza<sup>203</sup>, in their works, enclose fragments from the life of the Romanians, during some journeys, as memoirs, reportages, travel diaries.

It is obvious that the subject of the literature approaching social issues is far from being used. We chose to refer to the proses because it is the closest to the history as science of sources. In the period before 1989, the social subject novels were made film versions especially for justifying the role of the party that was then governing Romania. The contemporary confessions show that, in order to defeat censorship, the film directors and the script writers were using all kinds of technical artifices, including some deficiencies from the theoretical training of the party activists.

The period 1918-1922 represents a period of recovery, and, in the same time, of institutional regeneration. Practically, it is now that the society moves from the modern age, into the beginning of contemporaneity, in the Romanian history.

In 1918, Romania was the country of contrasts. On one side, it was led by a dynasty that was respected in Europe and in the world, it was a winning state, having the right to position itself in the next alliances, despite the inequality of treatment from the Paris Peace Conference from 1919-1920. On the other side, the reforms did not manage to equilibrate the balance between the classes of the society. Basically, the Great Union showed the contrasts between the Romanians from all the territories, that is, a contrast between the Old Kingdom and the provinces newly united with the Country. In Romania, there lived minorities, privileged before, there was a plurality of visions on the economic development. Owing to the appeasement that allowed the recovery of Germany and the beginning of revisionism, Romania was about to face the Great Economic Depression (1929-1933), which it would leave severely affected. Practically, the political and social elites had two main directions: a doctrine one, of searching for a cultural, moral, social and identity profile, and an economic one, of modernisation.

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<sup>201</sup> Silvian Iosifescu, *Alexandru Vlahuță*, Colectia Contemporanul Press, 1953, p.5-7.

<sup>202</sup> George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, Minerva Press, Bucharest, 1986, p.661.

<sup>203</sup> Al. Săndulescu, *op.cit.*, p. 231.

From the point of view of the social structures, the Great Union meant the fulfilment of the aspirations for the peasants living in the Old Kingdom who were promised, in 1917, the land reform.

Year 1922 brought for Romania a historic moment carrying political significations, the disappearance from the parliamentary scene of the Conservative Party.

Undoubtedly, the moment was still preserving the influences of the past. Further on, there are presented the reasons for which the Conservative Party, founded in 1880, pre-eminently the adversary of the National Liberal Party, founded in 1875, did not manage to maintain itself on the stage of the Romanian political life.

An essential aspect for the Romanian conservatives was the different character of their party, meaning that it constituted a network of clubs, and not a proper territorial structure<sup>204</sup>.

From the ideological point of view, the conservatives always supported the progress through “the policy of the small steps”, while the liberals were promoting a more active policy, whose motto was “through ourselves”. The liberals were identifying, along with the liberal European currents, from the revolutionary inspiration ideology. They were militating for the industrial development, for the circulation of capital, the introduction of the mechanised agriculture, the increasing of the educated population. Most of the liberals had been studying in French, Italian, and rarely German university centres<sup>205</sup>.

The conservatives were made, first of all, of the great landowners who were regarding the land as the most important asset of the country. They had been fierce adversaries of the land reform initiated by the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza. The situation even led to the assassination of the conservative premier, Barbu Catargiu, due to his opposition against a wider reform, the conservatives wishing a smaller one.

Since the beginning, the conservatives understood that their chance to resist on the political stage was the maintaining of the vote based on qualification, on constituencies, according to their wealth. Even if the right to vote was restrained, the conservatives were unpopular for the most of the peasants, even if they did not enjoy the right to vote.

The land reform was made, but at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mentioning it again and re-discussing the electoral question were stringent matters.

In the governing act, the conservatives had been used by Prince Carol I, in 1871, to form the government, despite the radical liberals, who had even tried to force the young prince, due to the defeat of France by Germany, in the autumn of 1870.

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<sup>204</sup> Anastasie Iordache, *Originile...*, p.5-9.

<sup>205</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Viața politică...*, p.41.

In 1895, after the liberals and the conservatives had rotated for governing several times, between 1876 and 1895, there was installed “governmental alternation” according to which, after a liberal government, a conservative one was following, or the other way round<sup>206</sup>.

The conservative leaders had studied in centres from the German world, which was influencing both their political thinking, and the options for the external alliances.

It should not be forgotten that at Iași, under conservative auspices, “Junimea” club was born, a cultural movement that emerged under the protection of a group of conservatives as Vasile Pogor, Petre P.Carp or Titu Maiorescu. Mihai Eminescu, I.L.Caragiale are two names of some adepts of the conservatory current. Mihai Eminescu was one of the most vocal journalists of the conservative newspaper, “Timpul”.

“Junimea” was, by far, the most advanced outpost of the Romanian conservatism. Titu Maiorescu was the parent of “the contentless forms” conception, in which he was criticising the imports and the unjustified applying of some models from abroad, considered inefficient or not having a correspondent in the Romanian tradition.

The conservatives, the same as the liberals, experienced scissions. Usually, the groups that seceded decided that it was the moment to come closer to the other party. Thus, the progressive conservatives were getting closer to the liberals, while the moderate liberals rediscovered themselves in the conservative ideas.

The conservatives were governing in the year of the revolt from 1907, and decided to renounce the mandate. The repressing of the uprising, with the liberals leading, was considered, by the conservatives, a moment when the liberals would compromise themselves, only that, Ionel Brătianu succeeded after his late father, who had passed away in 1890, with an incredible vigour.

After the disappearance of the important members of PNL, Ion Brătianu, D.A.Sturdza and “the Nabab” Grigore Cantacuzino Petre from the conservatives (initially, he had been a liberal, being the one who had built the Conservative Party), Ionel Brătianu, a liberal, would battle in the arena of the Romanian politics with P. Carp, Titu Maiorescu, Take Ionescu.

The conservatives started to also feel the increasing influence of the socialist circles and the emerging of the Social Democrat Party of the Workers from Romania, but the electoral law and the influence of the big parties made the socialists not have an extended echo among the workers, or the peasants. The most well-known socialists ended absorbed by the group of “the sincere liberals”.

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<sup>206</sup> Apostol Stan, *Putere politică... , passim*.

After the Balkan wars ended, with a diplomatic success gained by the Junimea conservatives, a situation remained sure: the land and the electoral reforms had to be made, only that, the sliding of the world into the great world conflagration was obligating the Romanian political class to think on how would Romania position itself within the new reality<sup>207</sup>.

For the honour of the liberals and conservatives, it ought to be revealed that the secret treaty of Romania with the Central Powers from 1883 had remained secret for the representative of each party that succeeded in governing. Yet, the conservatives tried to impose themselves, in 1914, as adepts of Romania joining the war with the Central Powers.

They wanted to use, in the support of their opinion, the fact that the liberals, in 1878, had had their expectations deceived by Russia, and Germany had been the one calming the situation, despite the scandal related to the failure of Stroussberg trust.

Yet, the evolution of the events brought the liberals in the position of winning, because Romania joined the war in 1916, sided with the Entente.

Then, the disaster from December 1916 arrived. The conservatives, led by Alexandru Marghiloman, after the unwilling drawing back of Titu Maiorescu, in 1914, were playing the final act of their political representation, in March-November 1918.

The King, the Parliament, the Government retreated in Moldova, Marghiloman, a convinced Germanophile, having the mission of treating with the Central Powers. The King was convinced that Marghiloman, leading a government from Bucharest, would be able to provide a better situation.

A political rivalry would start between Ionel Brătianu and Alexandru Marghiloman<sup>208</sup>, added by a personal one (Eliza Marghiloman had divorced her husband, marrying his rival, Brătianu), in which both of them performed their duty. Although triumphal on the battle field, in the summer of 1917, Romania was deserted by its ally, Russia, overwhelmed by the revolution. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1918, Lenin was concluding a separate peace with the Central Powers, which was obligating Romania to start going on the same way.

Alexandru Marghiloman would acknowledge the union of Bessarabia with Romania, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March/8<sup>th</sup> of April 1918. And he would then sign the peace from Buftea, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918, considered difficult and shameful. The King never signed it, and the Parliament from Iași never ratified it, despite the immense pressure that King Ferdinand was subjected to<sup>209</sup>.

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<sup>207</sup> Anastasie Iordache, *op.cit.*, p.10-15.

<sup>208</sup> Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români*, Machiavelli Press, Bucharest, 2007, p. 441-446.

<sup>209</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *op.cit.*, p.42.

Practically, the conservatives had been unworthily labelled as “traitors” or “collaborationists”. On the battle field, the star of General Averesu was starting to shine, a man that the liberals would push forward as leader of Liga Poporului, ensuring a kind of interim with popular support, until the political scene would be re-balanced.

The changing of the ratio of forces, the defeats suffered by the Central Powers, the fact that Romania re-joined the war in November 1918, the armistice from Compiegne, the union of Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina with Romania, changed the social configuration of Romania.

The introduction of the universal suffrage and the resolving of the Jewish question led to the moment of disaster for the conservatives. Alexandru Marghiloman endured with dignity when he was catalogued a “traitor”, a “collaborationist”, but he did not give up. He tried to create a new platform for the conservatives, but the fact that the party represented the great proprietors and the fact that in 1917 King Ferdinand had solemnly promised a land reform after the end of the war, prolonged the agony of the Conservative Party. The land reform from 1921, the most extensive from Europe at that time, widely opened the gates for the collapse of the conservative ideology. The result is well-known, that, in 1922, the conservatives did not have a single person in the Parliament<sup>210</sup>.

Alexandru Marghiloman noted these facts in his Memoires, started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in 1897, and finished 1924. He was writing, equidistantly, the fact that “the Providence” had helped Romania, more than the calculations made by the politicians:

*“Great Romania was not created due to either your political conceptions, or our plans... if one of the political conceptions had been a success, we would have lost Bessarabia, if another one had been achieved entirely, we would not have Ardeal. And then, my gentlemen, let us bow our heads before a genius that is greater than ours, before the divinity, which had proved wiser than us. Call it Providence, call it the genius of the race, nickname it whatever you desire; be acknowledged that Romania emerged from the instinct of all the Romanians, not the calculations made by some people (...)*

*Our country increased, but its fame did not. Due to our fault, we did not know to adapt to the new times. We remained tangled in the narrow policy of our parties, with the personal polemics, with the grudges. From here, it resulted a general weakening of the state action. We have, at our borders, neighbours that are on the*

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<sup>210</sup> Nicolae C. Nicolescu, *Șefii de stat și de guvern ai României (1859 - 2003)*, Meronia Press, Bucharest, 2003, pp. 239-240.



*watch and it would be disastrous if we would show weakness in this feeble body of Romania (...)*<sup>211</sup>

*The conservative doctrine is the one that shows the historic truth a real platform, a durable one, which cannot be obtained discontinuously; it can be only the result of a harmonious connection between past and present*<sup>212</sup>.

For the Romanians that lived in Bessarabia, Bukovina, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Transylvania, there started a new era of their experience. Their political and social statute, in the states that had owned these old Romanian territories, had not been an auspicious one. The Romanians from Transylvania were the most persecuted, on ethnic and religious grounds. The only ones that had enjoyed a relatively good statute were those who had accepted the Union with Rome, and their successors.

The states that had dominated these provinces had kept them in different stages of development. Basically, a new age of the Romanian economy history was beginning. In the administration of the government from Bucharest, there were included new or less evolved branches. Moreover, as in the case of Dobruja, in the other provinces, there were the representatives of the old nationalities who had enjoyed a privileged status. Furthermore, the Jewish problem was also appearing. In Romania, the legislation on citizenship, work, and other economic provisions were considered disadvantageous for the native Jews who did not have citizenship. Now, after 1918, there were, within the Romanian borders, Jews who had enjoyed privileges.

Mihail Manoilescu, preoccupied in his writings by the processes that led to the modernisation of Romania, mentioned that “*the foreign countries represent just an intermediary that makes the products of the villages be used for the exclusive interest of the cities*”, and that the social progress “*is measured by the degree of exploitation of the villages by the cities*”<sup>213</sup>. Making a comparison, between the Old Kingdom, Ardeal and Banat, Manoilescu underlines that, in the Old Kingdom, there was an economy of consumption, showing that the bourgeois mentality and life style were just in the beginning<sup>214</sup>. The author of the work “*Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*” (The purpose and the destiny of the Romanian bourgeoisie) divided the Romanian social structures in seven classes: 1. the great industrialists; 2. the great merchants; 3. The bankers; 4. the great farmers; 5. the engineers that private economic functions; 6. the economists that had private economic functions; 7. the fund holders that came from the above mentioned categories. In the same time, he proposed the existence of a class that he called “*pseudo-bourgeoisie*”, made of

<sup>211</sup> Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note politice*, Volume I, Scripta Press, Bucharest, 1993 – 1995, p.230-235.

<sup>212</sup> [http://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Alexandru\\_Marghiloman](http://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Alexandru_Marghiloman), accessed on August 10<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>213</sup> Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, Albatros Press, Bucharest, 2002, p.XXVII.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XXVI.

lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers, civil servants, magistrates, officers, journalists, writers, artists, engineers and economists from the public service area, along with the pensioners and the fund holders from the above mentioned categories<sup>215</sup>.

In addition, after the Peace Conference of Paris, Versailles, there took place the so-called “question of the Hungarian optants” from Transylvania. In fact, the provisions of the treaties with Austria and Hungary were showing, and that was due to the diplomatic efforts of Ionel Brătianu, that the minorities cannot enjoy more rights than the majority ethnic population. The Hungarian optants are those who requested the preserving of the Magyar citizenship and kept properties in Romania. The land reform from 1921 aimed at them too, which generated international protests. There was a trial in which the Romanian side, exceptionally represented by Nicolae Titulescu, won the case with the Magyars, who had delegated count Apponyi.

The land reform from 1921 disposed the expropriation of the estates larger than 250 had from the plain, the leased ones, bigger than 100 ha. Practically, the great propriety lost approximately 66% of its total, for the benefit of 1,400,000 peasants. The hierarchy of the appropriated had in its superior side those who had fought on the battle field, their widows, the people owning less than 5ha of land, and those who did not own land at all. The Constitution from 1923 followed, which generated the legal background for a series of reforms, as the administrative one, the monetary one, absolute necessary for the correlation and the uniformity of economic development, for all the regions of the country.

Basically, King Ferdinand I the Unifier and the Romanian political class understood that the promises from 1917 had to be honoured, that is, the land and the electoral reforms. The introduction of the universal suffrage would mean that the peasants represented two thirds from the electors. It was the most significant “redefinition” of the Romanian electorate in the entire modern history of Romania.

Ion Mihalache and Virgil Madgearu underlined, among the first, “the earthquake” generated, within the Romanian social structures, by World War I and the Great Union. The economy and the social policy were now some realities more noteworthy than ever.

Most of the population, at the end of the war, had the certitude of their active involvement in the war, which ought to be significant in the taken social measures, in the period after the war.

The war, the reforms and the union were the basic poles of the new inter-war society. The socialists, as Șerban Voinea<sup>216</sup> used to consider that “*the universal suffrage did not end, but it barely cleared the way for our democratic*

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 120.

<sup>216</sup> [http://romanian-philosophy.ro/ro/index.php?title=%C5%9Eerban\\_Voinea](http://romanian-philosophy.ro/ro/index.php?title=%C5%9Eerban_Voinea), accessed on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2015.

*development*<sup>217</sup>. The first parliamentary elections from November 1919 were considered, by the socialist thinker Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, published in an article from “Lumea Nouă”: “*a considerable event for the socio-political life of our country. The signification of the first-time expressed universal suffrage was the destroying of a political system based on the ignoble electoral law of the three constituencies. This entire tumbledown construction that has been affecting, for almost half of a century, was torn down*”

The socialist thinker saluted this initiative, considering that it helped introducing the much-expected reforms.

The Conservative Party newspaper, “Steagul”, was insisting on the fact that the universal suffrage and the appropriation were transforming the peasants into the main force of the electorate: “*But the peasantry represents a raw material that needs to be processed artistically, in order to obtain a healthy and durable work*”.

Constantin Angelescu, the minister of the Public Instruction in the liberal government (1922-1926), was underlying the fact that it was “*absolutely necessary that the popular masses to be cultured and enlightened ...in the shortest time possibly, and in the most profound manner*”<sup>218</sup>.

Iuliu Maniu was on the opinion that “the land reform, with its results, would have a greater influence than the law of the universal vote, because the electoral reform creates only the background, the possibility to render valuable the faith and any political influences. The content itself of this background and possibilities is given by the conscience and the political belief of the electors coming from a certain social class. This conscience can be founded durably only through an economic and cultural condition, appropriate for the present times”.

On addressing the national minorities from the territories united with Romania, they suddenly passed from the statute of privileged nation, to a minority that had rights, but without the power of influencing the great decisions.

Ion Clopoșel, a Transylvanian journalist noticed exactly this situation: “*In 1918, they (the Magyars a/n) do not know the minorities problem – he writes – they are autocrats, conservatives, defenders of the regime of restrictions for the minorities ... adversaries of the universal suffrage. Since 1920 forward, they are convinced democrats, they regard the minorities question in its amplexity, they request the completion of the electoral lists and equally entitled rights. It is something tragic in this sudden change of conscience. They now struggle to regard the minority problem scientifically, and they realise, more and more, that only a regime of real democracy can show a satisfying solving of the issue. It is a conversion to reality. An increase of democratic conscience. A good sign*”.

<sup>217</sup><http://www.sferapoliticii.ro/sfera/118/art4-staiculescu.html>, accessed on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>218</sup>Nicolae C. Nicolescu, *Șefii de stat...*, pp. 289–292.

The Romanians from Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania, Banat waited eagerly to be able to vote in the elections from Great Romania.

*Cuvânt strigător* manifesto, edited by the writer Kós Károly<sup>219</sup>, to which many Magyar intellectuals adhered, did not have the expected success, that of keeping the Magyar and Szeckler minority away from the decisions made at Bucharest, because most of these citizens wanted to become involved in the Romanian politics.

In December 1922, there was founded the Magyar Party that adopted a loyal attitude for the Romanian state.

The Germans from Transylvania were also waiting to be involved in the political actions of the reunified state, their main direction being enounced as following: “*it is expected that the people of the Szeckler to be involved in this battle*”. Consequently, the Szecklers imposed themselves the knowing of “*the principles for the behaviour of our people in the present electoral fight*”.

The press release “Politica”, edited by Eugen Kovács, was illustrating the opinion of the Swabians from Banat: “*The Swabians began to behave as an independent minority that united with the Szeckler and German minorities from Bessarabia, and who were struggling to accomplish their ideals*”. In his opinion, it was understood that the Romanians think in this manner on the Hungarians, “*who have been their fiery enemies during the great war*”, than on the Saxons that “*manifested their faith to Romania since 1918, at Alba Iulia, and who formally separated from Hungary*”.

The Jews from Banat, Transylvania, Bukovina, besides the traditional culture, owing to the fact that they had enjoyed political rights, they were close to the Magyar and German cultural sides<sup>220</sup>.

On addressing our spirit, he was noticed by Sever Bocu: “*The war changed us. Prior to making new boundaries, he gave us a new mentality. From the tranches, new moral values emerge. Life spent in misery and common sufferance, always in danger, under the never ending falling shells and the canon pounding, released the soul from the sterile fight of vanity. The battle field made everybody face a rigorous exam of the conscience*”.

In the Old Kingdom, in “*Neamul Românesc*” newspaper, there was pointed the danger that those who were to enjoy the right to vote might be disoriented: “*Even the fully aware citizens, do not know, until the day before the elections, where they vote, or who they vote. Yet, they are sure of an only idea: they do not want the former politicians*”.

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<sup>219</sup>*Istoria Românilor*, vol VII, book II, , p.23-24.

<sup>220</sup>Dumitru Drăghicescu, *Marea Unire a românilor cu românii: 1918. Banatul și Transilvania; Bucovina și Basarabia*, Albatros Press, Bucharest 2001, p.89.

Another political situation was that when “the saviour party”, Liga Poporului, appeared, led by Alexandru Averescu, once with the disintegration and the disappearance, from the political and electoral point of view, of the Conservative Party.

In Transylvania, where there used to be some remaining echoes of the party led by Marshall Averescu, was still predominant the charism of the Romanian national Party, and its leader, Iuliu Maniu, considered as one of the “new people”.

Thus, if in the Old Kingdom there was expected something new, in Transylvania, the Romanians were tributary to the political vision of Iuliu Maniu.

A constant feature of the political life, in which there were involved the new social structures, is represented by the permanent attempt to gain amplexness and electoral capital in the territories newly united with Romania<sup>221</sup>.

A well-known Transylvanian poet and activist, with a relatively significant career in Great Romania, Octavian Goga intuited excellently why the Romanians from Ardeal did not have the political exercise of those from the Old Kingdom: “*the integral group of all the Romanian energies that are fighting the hostile state. A party, in the technical meaning of the word, as it is understood all over, has never been here since the time of the Hungarians*”<sup>222</sup>.

Thus, the adversary of the electoral emancipation had been, for the Old Kingdom, the vote based on qualification, and, for Transylvania, the political persecution of the Romanians.

Soon after, there started a fight for the traditional parties to be grouped around the Transylvanian electorate.

The elections from 1922 and 1926 demonstrated the fact that the Romanians had overcome this major impediment, managing to position themselves properly from the doctrine point of view, as a consequence of the redefinition of the political discourse of the competitors.

It became obvious that, from the inter-wars political discourse, demagogy did not miss. As referring to the demagogues, there were written different assertions in that era, as the following one: “*They (the demagogues a/n) assail the poor confused elector, they intoxicate him with the vulgar wine of the fawning and unattainable promises. In order to reach a good result, it is sufficient for them to have a strong voice, the eloquence that lacks prudence, the inherent cunningness of the frauds. Due to these aptitudes, they steal their votes. Their success is as easier as it is accustomed for us*”<sup>223</sup>, and rather unpleasant to consider prattling an excellent manifestation of the human talent”.

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<sup>221</sup> Catherine Durandin, *Istoria Românilor*, Iași, European Institute, 1998, p. 145.

<sup>222</sup> Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români...*, pp. 330-334.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibidem*.

The vote based of qualification was not representative nationally, but the universal suffrage generated depreciation in the quality of the actors involved in the political show, who, many times, similarly to those before them, were concern only of their own interests.

The main effect of the first elections based on the universal suffrage was that 83% of the deputies were elected for the first time.

Mircea Eliade, a convinced universalist, noticed that, for the first time in the history, Romanians lacked what can be called a “country project”. Romania, due to the efforts of three generations of politicians, from 1821 and 1921, that is, for a century, became independent and reunified. The purpose of the politicians, in the belief of Mircea Eliade, was that to work together for creating the elite that would change Romania spiritually, and would position it among the civilised countries.

Practically, at the end of the War for the National Union, in Romania there were two big parties: the National Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, with a series of parties with close ideology, which were in fact factions of the same formations that in the end used to return to their ideological source.

On the occasion of the first elections, from 1922, the conservatives did not enter the Parliament.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1920, A. Corteanu published in “Curentul Nou” newspaper, an article titled “The Industrial Issue”, in which he was mentioning the preference for adopting the occidental model:

*“The need for life undoubtedly pushes all the states towards Americanisation, the system of the agrarian and industrial industries, with huge success, based on organisation and with an increasing over-production, calculated not in relation to the industrial war, on the victory in the competition from the foreign markets, but on the continuous of the mass power of consumption”<sup>224</sup>.*

The liberals are those who had the initiative of adopting some laws meant to regulate the exploitation of the state’s goods, the natural richness. In “Curentul Nou” newspaper, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1920, there was shown that: *“the present taxes need to be increased and better established, in order to represent a source of income. As for the licences: foreign merchants come to our country, have hundreds of million lei businesses, get rich very fast and leave the country possessing fantastic wealth. They pay 200 lei to the state, the fixed tax, plus a small sum, proportional to the rent. Then the taxes on successions, the gaining after the war, the custom taxes etc. – all revised, increased and positioned on equitable bases, would confer the state income*

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<sup>224</sup>“Curentul Nou” newspaper, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1920, No. 15, p. 8.

that could help covering the enormous present expenses. An important benefice would be the tax on the war gaining<sup>225</sup>”.

It was also A. Corteanu who was underlining: “*the means of production need to be neither destroyed nor limited, as the Bolshevik system, nor increased randomly, as in the case of the national industries, but organised on an even more vigorous production, taking into consideration a world that hopes for comfort and a better living*<sup>226</sup>”.

After the war, the economy developed, along with the chemical industry that was producing electrical energy, the food industry registering significant growth. The railway network had 11,000 km. The new territories, united with the country, enriched the area of metallurgy, timber industry, chemical industry, that of building materials, the annual increase of the industry being of 5.4% a year<sup>227</sup>.

It continued the debate on the main currents, meaning the choosing between an agrarian economy and an industrialised one. To this respect, it can be quoted the contribution of the same A. Corteanu<sup>228</sup>: “*The policy based on agriculture, as the main richness of the states, is an old policy today, the agriculture itself heading towards industrialisation with the help of chemistry and engines, it adopts industrial forms, it serves only for the satisfaction of a people, with all its territorial frontiers, with its traditions, and the same as industry, it produces for the international trade, and produces sufficiently, defeating the competition and the better equipped peoples, as tools and technical preparation*”<sup>229</sup>.

Year 1918, the year of the Great Union is considered the focal point of the modern age and the beginning of the contemporary age.

Romania, after the ending of World War I knew the most important growth, both as a state, and economic force, and at the level of the social structures.

Through the decrees-laws of expropriation from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1918, there was laid the foundation for the laws on addressing the land reform from the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 1921. In November 1919, there could be registered the existence of the first general parliamentary elections based on the universal suffrage. All culminated with the adopting of a Constitution, with an obvious liberal influence, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1923<sup>230</sup>.

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<sup>225</sup>Ioan Scurtu, Gheorhe Buzatu, *Istoria Romanilor in secolul XX*, Paideia Press, Bucharest, 1999, p. 24-28.

<sup>226</sup>[http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/evolutia-economica-romaniei-marea-unire-1918](http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/evolutia-economica-romaniei-marea-unire-1918), accessed on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>227</sup>Virgil Madgearu, *Evoluția economiei românești după război*, Bucharest, 1940, p. 50.

<sup>228</sup>Marian Petcu, *Istoria jurnalismului din România în date*, Polirom Press, Iași, 2012, p.256-258.

<sup>229</sup>[http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv\\_web/general/articol/evolutia-economica-romaniei-marea-unire-1918](http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/evolutia-economica-romaniei-marea-unire-1918), accessed on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>230</sup>Stelian Neagoe, *op.cit.*, pp. 428-434

The same as President Roosevelt proposed the platform “New Deal”, the Romanian thinkers tried to find an innovative discourse, with the role of fundamental ideology. This “**new ideal**” was, for the first time, theorised by Mircea Eliade, in 1927, in *Itinerariu spiritual* (Spiritual Itinerary), a cycle of articles published in the newspaper “Cuvântul”<sup>231</sup>.

If it is to analyse the causes for the disappearance of the second Romanian political current, the conservatism, we can assert that the liberals were more altruist, knowing how to reformate, to maintain itself in power, even by using stratagems of the type used by Liga Poporului. As an irony of the faith, the last conservative remains were absorbed after 1923 by Liga Poporului.

The absence of a counter-weight for the liberalism led to the emerging of a series of political currents that evolved, on a scale, from moderate to radical, as peasants’ movement, national-Christianity, legionary movement, socialism and even communism.

The Romanian political class was especially influenced by the arrival of the Transylvanians, who had ended their national fight for the union, but they were showing pretensions to a political destiny in Great Romania.

In this manner, Europe knew, in the case of Romania, the moment of a great event, the World War I had influenced the disappearance of a party that had existed formally for almost four decades, but which, as ideology, had represented an entire social class on the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century, that is, the great landowners.

As we have tried to show in the other studies that have been published so far, the socialist movement has not been approached for a long time using the historic objectivity. The historians from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century insisted on the baneful influence of the Marxist-Leninist Russian line, ignoring some merits of the Romanian socialists. On the contrary, the historiography from the period 1944-1989 exaggerated the role of the socialists and the social movements, on one side ignoring the socialists and their friends with bourgeois origins, in favour of the harsh, revolutionary line, and, on the other side, in the years of the national communism, excluding from the socialist movement, the subversive elements that wanted even the destruction of Romania were opposing to the national unification war (Nacu, 2015:89-92). Yet, it ought to be mentioned that a part of the social activists, without being adversaries of this war that ended with the constituting of Great Romania, noticed, similar to Constantin Titel Petrescu the major lacks from the endowing, the tactics, the specialised training of the militaries from the Romanian Army, the sanitary protection against epidemics, deficiencies that influenced the disastrous

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<sup>231</sup> [http://www.romlit.ro/mircea\\_eliade\\_politica\\_i\\_politicienii](http://www.romlit.ro/mircea_eliade_politica_i_politicienii), accessed on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.



defeat from the winter of 1916, a defeat that was accepted only thanks to the heroism of the Romanian soldiers at Mărăști, Mărășești and Oituz, in the summer of 1917.

Thus, the socialist movement from Romania, with the both components, the constructive-reforming, national line and the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist line were well-represented in Romania, although, in different ages, they had not been treated unitarily (Nacu, 2017:29-31).

The great disadvantage of the socialist movement in modern Romania was because the political message failed to penetrate from the source to its receptors in the rural and urban areas. The vote based on qualification, the censorship, the limitation of access to basic education, the perpetuation of the medieval economic relations between proprietors and producers, press control expressed by the two important political forces, the liberals and the conservatives, limited the spreading of the reforming message. Some elements of reform were introduced by the liberals, under the influence of the socialist leaders. The ascension of the Marxist-Leninist current, started before 1918 and culminating with the founding of PCdR in 1921, contributed to the dissociation of a great part of the population from the socialist movement.

After the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944, one of the decisive moments that regarded the change of the contemporary Romanian policy course, it had become obvious that the new political power was to be legitimated supporting the thesis of the century fight of the peasants for social rights, also adding the fight of the workers, a new socio-professional category, meaning that in 1944, the Romanian workers was not even a century old., the industrialisation developing in Romania after 1878 and becoming vocal after the Great Union, for “the workers’ fight” to become worse in the context of the Great Depression from 1929-1933.

Great Romania was a geopolitical reality at the end of 1918, although this year had not begun for Romania under favourable circumstances. Despite the fact it had obtained, on the battle fields from Mărăști, Mărășești and Oituz the right to its existence as state, Romania was imprisoned. In front there was the enemy, represented by the force of the Central Powers, and behind there was the ally, Russia, rather fast become potential enemy, and then obvious enemy.

Both the Soviet Russia and Romania had to conclude separate peace with the Central Powers. Yet, Romania re-joined the war and managed to impose itself at the Peace Treaties from Paris-Versailles as winning power and to be acknowledged, with great emotions, the acts of union from 1918. Yet, the question of Bessarabia was left to be debated during the bilateral Romanian-Soviet cooperation, after these states would have re-approached the diplomatic relations, interrupted in 1918.

In Great Romania, the political debate went beyond the background of the modern era. There occurred a transformation at constitutional level, of legislation in

all the fields, but unfortunately, the politicians of the age did not understand the fact that they had to cooperate, to leave behind the regional differences.

Romania became Great Romania through unification, but the union was the occurrence that created the most problems. Great Romania did not manage to become an integrant part of a system of alliances with the Great Powers. The Romanian diplomacy preferred to remain faithful to the commitments from Paris-Versailles, when the signers of these treaties preferred to accept the infringement and even their revising<sup>232</sup>.

The Romanian authorities met in Bessarabia and the Quadrilateral numerous political problems caused by the subversive actions orchestrated by the Soviet Union. Yet, not even these realities managed to make sensible the political factors that made the decisions in Bucharest, in order to take measures for the strengthening of the Romanian diplomacy, on international plan.

The period we refer to was especially delicate in the natural process of territorial, legislative, economic, administrative, monetary unification of Romania. Bessarabia, Bukovina, Banat, Transylvania had been included in different imperial administrative systems (Tsarist and Austro-Hungarian). The inherent troubles emerged once with the collapse of the great empires were keeping the Romanians behind, in their unifying action. Reduced territorially to Moldova, starting from December 1916, Romania started to offer military support to the union of Bessarabia and Bukovina with Romania, before the Bolshevik actions, but also irredentist (in the case of the Magyars from Transylvania or Banat). In the Old Kingdom, there were preserved certain practices and attitudes, which, in the context of the territorial growth of Romania, had to be revised<sup>233</sup>. The economic connections on one side and the other of the Carpathians did not have the expected amplexness, at Bucharest being confronted two tendencies (the openness towards the foreign capital, respectively the development through proper resources), economic and political, liberal and conservative. The Romanian politicians from the new-united territories wanted to promote from the active national stage, a minority that used to lack political rights, to the involvement in the legislative and executive political life, specific for an independent state. Between the politicians from the both sides of the Carpathians, or the both banks of the river Prut, there was created, naturally, a competition, sometimes disloyal.

The political life of the Old Kingdom was dominated by PNL and Brătianu family, who, nonetheless, did not have a generation of successors appropriate to the

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<sup>232</sup> Florin Nacu, *De la Unire la Unificare: Destinele reprezentanților umaniști la București în perioada 1918-1923*, in "Journal of Romanian Literary Studies", no.16, Târgu-Mureș, 2019, p.1466-1470.

<sup>233</sup> Dumitru V. Firoiu, *Istoria statului și dreptului românesc*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică Press, Bucharest, 1976, p.253.

expectations. PNL had survived the crisis that had destroyed the traditional rivals, the conservatives, due to the political genius of Ionel Brătianu, who had arranged, until 1922, the governing of Liga Poporului, with PNL in an active Opposition, and, from 1922 to 1926, a complete cycle of governing and regulation (the liberals were also the ones that would govern compactly once more, in the years between the wars, through Gheorghe Tătărescu, în 1933-1937, Gheorghe Tătărescu being a tool in the hand of the skilful King Carol II, who compromised the idea of democracy and multi-party, slowly but surely opening the way towards the dictatorship).

Romania had been in the humiliating situation of signing a peace, separated, demeaning, with the Central Powers, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April/7<sup>th</sup> of May 1918, at Buftea. Even if the treaty was never ratified by the Parliament from Iași, even if Romania re-joined the war on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, the union plebiscitary acts from the former provinces had to be doubled by a careful political initiative of the authorities from Iași, which returned, in December 1918, at Bucharest, after the retreat of the Central Powers troops.

Banat has a very special situation. Between the 31<sup>st</sup> of October and the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, Banat proclaimed itself a republic, the ephemeral organisation resisting until the Serbian troops entered in Timișoara, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 1918. The problem of Banat was to be a significant further issue for Romania, Serbia, Hungary, until 1919. In January 1919, because the Serbians dominated Banat military, and the Magyars administrated the area civilly (the Germans wanted an autonomous republic, as that from October-November 1918, a fact rejected by the Peace Conference of Paris), to protect the Romanians, an expeditionary French force arrived. Thus, on the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> of June 1919, the Peace Forum from Paris regulated the division in three of Banat (the Serbians had 250,000 co-nationals on the north of the Danube, and obtained, with the complicity of Take Ionescu, the area from the north of Belgrade, motivating that the border with Romania in the vicinity of the Serbian capital, on the Danube, could not be established)<sup>234</sup>.

Romania received the biggest part (including Reșița, thanks to the measures taken by Ana Brâncoveanu de Noailles, who personally convinced Georges Clemenceau to reject the Serbian pretentions that wanted to take Reșița due to the industrial establishments from the region), while Hungary received a small part, next to Ardeal. The authorities from Bucharest officially took Banat on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1919, when the Romanian troops and administration entered in Timișoara.

In the case of Transylvania, the main leading formation, after the Great Union, was the Ruling Council. This instance acted as a real government of Transylvania,

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<sup>234</sup> Petre Dan, *Hotarele românismului în date*, Litera Internațional Press, Bucharest, 2005, p.106-107.

with mixt, legislative and executive, attributions<sup>235</sup>. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1918, the Ruling Council established 12 fields of competence, called *resorts* (a kind of ministries), led by *the chief of resort*. The ruling Council assured the leading of Transylvania in the interval the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1918 – the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1920. The statistics show that, during its functioning and activity, the Ruling Council issued 24 decrees (a legislative instance, a quality that ceased on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 1919, when the first Parliament of Great Romania met). On addressing its functioning, it is estimated that this Council discussed officially, with a fixed agenda, 3,234 points (problems or questions), within 256 meetings, which means that the average of each meeting was of 12-13 questions during each meeting.

A real “cornerstone” was represented by the first legislative document, the Decree 1 from the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1919, in which the Ruling Council decided that any legislative, administrative or coordination act issued before the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1918 remained in force, provisionally, for the defending of the “general interest”. The Ruling Council watch the proper functioning of all the fields of activity in Transylvania<sup>236</sup>.

It needs to be specified that in Transylvania, the Ruling Council extended its authority, including in the areas that went beyond the line of demarcation of Franchet D’Esperey, instituted to ensure the retreat of the Magyar part from the former Imperial Army. The Hungarian crisis, the founding of the Republic of Councils, the menaces of Bela Kun against Romania, determined the Romanian Army to interfere, occupying Budapest in the summer of 1919, in this way ending the attempt to institute the first Soviet republic in Central Europe. The treaty from Trianon, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1920, regulated definitively the question of Transylvania belonging to Romania.

In Bessarabia, the Country Council, once with the majority vote for the Union, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March/9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918, a body that was functioning both as executive and legislative institution of Bessarabia, had established conditions through which Bessarabia would keep a certain individuality, concretised in a relative administrative autonomy. The main desire of the people of Bessarabia was the making of a land reform. It was expected the representation in the Romanian Parliament, according to the population of Bessarabia, the recruiting of the soldiers was to be done respecting the territorial criteria. The Country Council hoped to have the right to vote the local budget. Moreover, Bessarabia wanted to have two ministers in the Government from Bucharest. The vote was to be universal, direct and secret. The minorities were to be

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<sup>235</sup> Radu Săgeată, *Evoluția organizării administrativ - teritoriale a României în perioada interbelică (1918-1940)*, [https://www.academia.edu/.../Organizarea\\_administrativ-teritoriala\\_a\\_Romaniei\\_Mod](https://www.academia.edu/.../Organizarea_administrativ-teritoriala_a_Romaniei_Mod), accessed on February 12<sup>th</sup> 2019, p.1-8.

<sup>236</sup> “*Gazeta Oficială*” – Ruling Council, no.6, 27<sup>th</sup> of January 1919, p. 28.

treated unitary in the entire country. The Country Council wished the amnesty of the facts “from the troublesome times of the transformation”, along with the guarantee of “the individual, civic, thought, printing, meeting freedoms”. The Decree of Union of Bessarabia with Romania was signed on the 9<sup>th</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1918.

The Country Council, met in the second session, on the 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, before self-dissolving, voted a motion through which it was accepting the Union with Romania without any condition, especially that it had been obtained the agreement on the land reform, as it had been provisioned on the 27<sup>th</sup> of march/9<sup>th</sup> of April 1918.

On the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, the General Congress of Bukovina voted the Union with Romania. Through the Decree 3,744 from the 18<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 (published in “The Official Gazette” on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December/1<sup>st</sup> of January 1919), it was sanctioned the Union of Bukovina with Romania. Decree 3,746 from the 18<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 appointed Iancu Flondor (at Cernăuți) and Ion Nistor (at Bucharest), ministers without a portfolio in the Romanian Government<sup>237</sup>.

The date of 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1920, when it was issued the Decree-Law no. 1,462, became the official date when the Romanian Government from Bucharest controlled politically the entire territory of Great Romania. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1929, it was adopted the law of the ministries (ministries with and without a portfolio), defining the executive public system from Romania.

The land reform also met numerous obstacles, because the land surveying systems were different from a region to the other. In the provinces newly-united with the country, the Romanians were willing to be appropriated, most of the proprietors coming from the former privileged classes, while in the Old Kingdom, the proprietors that were the object of expropriation were Romanians. The land reform was made in its final form as following: the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1920 in Bessarabia, the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1921- Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia; the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 1921-Transilvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș<sup>238</sup>.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1923, Nicolae Titulescu and Emeric de Csaki, Ladislau Gasjago concluded a preliminary agreement on the compensations for the Hungarian optants (the Hungarians that had opted to keep their Magyar citizenship, but their properties from Transylvania had been the subject of expropriation through the land reform). Yet, the Magyars encouraged the Magyar nationals to create problems to Romania, sending petitions to the Mixt Arbitration Court. In 1928, Nicolae Titulescu proposed that Romania would renounce a part of the sums of money that it owed, as war compensations, and Hungary would offer money to the petitioners. The Magyar

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<sup>237</sup> Ioan Scurtu, Gheorghe Buzatu, *Istoria românilor...*, p.163.

<sup>238</sup> Victor Axenciuc, Vasile Bozga, *Evoluția economie naționale*, în *Istoria Românilor*, vol VIII, coord. Ioan Scurtu, Petre Otu, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 2010, p. 103.

initially agreed with the idea, but the optants emitted 300,000 million lei in gold pretensions, while Hungary had to pay 16 million lei in gold to Romania. The League of Nations offered its mediation services, after Romania contested the decision of the Mixt Arbitration Court, removing its representative from this institution. Finally, the crisis of the optants ended with the acceptance of the compensations in the limits agreed by Romania, through the Hague Convention from the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1930 and the Paris Convention from the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1930.

Another stringent question was that of the financial reform. On the new territory of Romania, there were several currencies. The exchange rate, in relation to the Romanian leu was made, de facto, according to the market, not being officially regulated yet. The National Bank of Romania decided to stamp provisionally the banknotes issued by the former imperial states, until the instauration, on the entire territory of Romania, the Romanian leu. In the former Habsburg provinces, the Austrian forint had been replaced through the monetary reform from 1892 with the currency called "Austrian crown". In Bessarabia, "the Romanov rouble" was circulating, issued until the month of December 1917, and "the Lvov rouble", named after Gheorghe Evghenievici Lvov, the first revolutionary Bolshevik prime minister and issued to destabilize "the Romanov rouble" economically. Mihail Moruzov, later the first chief of the Special Information Service (back then a clandestine agent of Romania, native from Tulcea), managed to mobilise his clandestine agency that had functioned during the occupation of the Central Powers in Dobruja and the Delta, and to counteract the great number of fake "Lvov roubles" through CEKA (the Bolshevik espionage reorganised by Felix Djerjinski), wanted to undermine the south of Bessarabia and Dobruja economically, in order to facilitate its separation from Romania, in complicity with the Bulgarian "Komitadji".

In 1920, the National Bank of Romania, after some loans, managed to stop the huge inflation (in some regions the prices had increased with 300%, in relation to 1914) and to leave only the Romanian leu operational, on the entire territory of the country, as official currency (yet, the conversions in lei of the foreign currencies generated some considerable financial speculations, which pauperized some of the holders of foreign currencies from the former Empires).

From the administrative point of view, the situation was rather complicated. The main administrative norms in force were: "*The Law of the County Councils*" from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1894 in the Old Kingdom; "*The Decree on the instituting of public services in Transylvania*", no. 3,632 from the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1918; "*The*

*Decree on the instituting of public services leadership in Bukovina*”, no. 3,715 from the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1918<sup>239</sup>.

An issue that found its solution after the Great Union, in Romania, was the “Jewish question”. The international treaties that had sanctioned the historic rights on the former provinces were showing that the nationals from the former empires that were living on the Romanian territory had to receive the Romanian citizenship. Among them, the Jews, which, in the Old Kingdom, were receiving the citizenship through naturalization, but not in mass, after the modification of Article 7 of the former Constitution from 1866, in 1878, as a condition resorting from the acknowledging of the Romanian independence, at the Congress of Berlin from June-July 1878. The Jews from the Old Kingdom received the Romanian citizenship in mass, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1918. The laws for the granting of citizenship were issued on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 1919 and the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 1919.

An essential aspect for the development of Romania was the adopting, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1923, of the United Romania Constitution, a work of the liberal political thinking. Practically, Romania was led in a centralist manner, which meant that the manner of thinking from the Old Kingdom had triumphed. All the foreigners from the former provinces, who lived on the Romanian territory, after unions from 1918, became Romanian citizens, through the law from the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1924.

The administrative unification was made through “*The Law for the Legislative Unification*”, from the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1924, and in July 1925, the entire territory of Romania was organised in counties, cities, communes (rural and urban). Yet, the local separatisms were continuing to persist, which made the legislative and administrative process more difficult. Iuliu Maniu, a Transylvanian who became the president of the Ministers Council, in the interval the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1928-the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1930, decided that on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1929 to promulgate “*The Law on the Local Administration Organisation*”, which, at Article 292, provisioned the founding of 7 ministerial directorates<sup>240</sup> that were corresponding the former Romanian historic regions. A compromise was basically made between the federalist idea (present in the circles of the old provinces) and the centralist idea (specific for the Old Kingdom).

Thus, in 1930, the year in which, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1930, the former prince Carol was proclaiming the king of Romania, the year when the Great Depression started in Romania (1929-1933 in the world), Romania had ended the stage of unification, a stage begun after the Great Union from 1918. Obviously, it needs to be mentioned that it was not ended under the best auspices. The disproportion in the

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<sup>239</sup> Cristian Bețe, *Legile administrative românești din perioada interbelică*, <http://revad.uvvg.ro/files/nr1/Articol%202%20-%20Bente%20Cristian.pdf>, accessed on February 27<sup>th</sup> 2019, p.13-16.

<sup>240</sup> Emil Cernea; Emil Moluț, *Istoria statului și dreptului românesc*, Șansa Press, Bucharest, 1994, p. 245-257.



Romanian Parliament, between the politicians from the provinces and the ones from the Old Kingdom was significant, favouring the people from the Kingdom. The politicians from Ardeal started to create an alternative to PNL that was, until 1927, undoubtedly led, the same as Romania, by Ionel Brătianu.

The death of King Ferdinand and Ionel Brătianu, in July and respectively November 1927, the Dynastic Crisis after which Prince Carol lost the prerogatives of heir prince and the belonging to the Romanian Royal House and the Regency of Prince Nicolae in the name of the minor King Mihai I (1927-1930) led to setting on divergent positions of the politicians that came from different political and social classes, despite the fact that they were ethnically and culturally Romanians.

The new king, Carol II (1930-1940) understood, better than anybody, the rivalries and encouraged them. Unfortunately, Romania did not consolidate itself on the internal or the external plan. Bessarabia and Bukovina remained the most isolated regions, from the political point of view, a fact that led to the accentuation of the Soviet secret service immixture. While the official propaganda of Carol II was mentioning the complete unification of Romania, around the sovereign and the dynasty, in reality, Romania was collapsing from the inside. The royal camarilla, the corruption, the fights between politicians, the inclusion in the equation of power of the right extreme, the labelling of “enemy” of the left extreme (not justified, but the left extreme was not the only enemy of Romania) were the main causes that led to the collapse of Romania in the summer of 1940.

Undoubtedly, an aspect that was ignored in the inter-wars period was that of the international treaties with the Great Powers. The relations with the Soviets were re-begun only in 1934, the formal relations with France are established after the war, in the contemporary manner, only in 1926. In 1921, “The Little Entente” (Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia), and, in 1934, “The Balkan Entente” (Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey) were regional initiatives meant to limit the revisionist pretensions of Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary (the so-called “Danubian Conference”, agreed by the former Austro-Hungarian Emperor, the last emperor from the throne of Wien). Poland, Bulgaria would rush at Czechoslovakia and, respectively, Romania, with the first opportunity. Nonetheless, Hungary would act similarly. In 1936, at Montreux, Nicolae Titulescu and Maksim Litvinov had been on the point to decide that “the Dniester had to be a demilitarised line” between USSR and Romania, which is, de facto, an acknowledgement for Bessarabia belonging to Romania. King Carol II eliminated Nicoale Titulescu from the leadership of the Romanian diplomacy, Maksim Litvinov would be replaced by Veaceslav Molotov, as head of the Soviet diplomacy, a fact that ended definitively the idea of cooperation. USSR, through the Pact Ribbentrop-Molotov from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1939 agreed with Germany (to which it had become closer in 1925, through the Treaty of Rapallo) to not attack one



another, while the secret annexes were referring to the division of Poland, Baltic States, Bessarabia, later, after the invasion of Poland, USSR wanted Bukovina too, limiting itself to the North of Bukovina, because Germany said that there was a German minority in Bukovina. Later, in 1940, wishing to have Suceava-Storoinet railway, Stalin annexed Hertzsa Region too. It was basically re-written the old story from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Great Romania confronted with the emerging of totalitarianism, the right and left extremism, but it also knew the democratic governing. The Great Depression and the erosion of democracies in states with tradition also contributed to the revival of revisionism, to which Romania would surrender in 1940.

Bessarabia, North Bukovina, Hertzsa Region, the Quadrilateral, the North-West of Transylvania were taken, Romania losing approximately a third of the territory and a quarter of the population. Great Romania was, undoubtedly, the most important achievement of the generation of politicians of the modern age. Unfortunately, in the complicated international context from the inter-wars period and due to the dissension from the internal politics, the Romanian politicians that followed after the generation that made the Great Union, and even the politicians that had made the Great Union, did not manage to consolidate Great Romania, or to keep its territorial integrity, in the 22 years that passed between 1918 and 1940.

The communists were continuing to action for crushing the territorial unity of Romania:

*“The Directives of the Communist International for the Communist Party from Romania (the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1940)... Before the Communist Party, the working class and the peoples from Romania, it lies the task to not admit the attraction of Romania in the war. It ought not to be admitted the transformation of Romania into a bridge head of the English and French imperialist, against USSR. It can be done only with the help of USSR and the peoples from the Balkan countries, which also fight against being attracted into the war. The peaceful solving of Bessarabia issue and the litigious problems with the neighbouring Balkan countries – based on the territorial autonomy for all the occupied regions and the acknowledgment of their rights to self-determination, until the separation from the state of the oppressed nations, constitute a necessary condition for getting closer to USSR and the Balkan countries, on addressing a common fight against the attraction into the war, for preventing a war, for peace. It should also be exposed the “national union” that is now created among the National Rebirth Front or around the king, along with the slogan of “frontier*

defence”, exactly as a continuation of the policy of closeness by England and France of the war against Germany and USSR<sup>241</sup>.

The annexation of Bessarabia and the north of Bukovina by USSR took place after a veritable war of the notes of an ultimatum, the Soviet part invoking “the Romanian invasion” of Bessarabia, “taking advantage on the Russian weakness”.

“The note of ultimatum of the Soviet government from the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1940. In 1918, Romania, making use of the military weakness of Russia, took from the Soviet Union (Russia) a part from its territory, Bessarabia, in this manner infringing the secular unity of Bessarabia, populated especially by the Ukrainians, with the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The Soviet Union never accepted the fact that Bessarabia was taken by force, which the Soviet government declared many times and openly before the entire world. Now, when the military weakness of USSR remained in the past, and the international situation that was created is requiring the rapid resolving of the inherited problems, in order to lay the foundation for a solid peace between the countries, USSR considers necessary and opportune that, for re-establishing the truth, to work together with Romania for the immediate solving of the question on addressing the retroceding Bessarabia to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government considers that the question of retroceding Bessarabia is organically tied to the question of giving USSR that part from Bukovina, whose population is connected, in its majority, to the Soviet Union through the community of the historical faith, along with the community of language and national composition. Such an act is as justified as the giving of the northern part of Bukovina to USSR would represent, obviously to an insignificant extent, a means to compensate for the great loss that was caused to USSR and the population of Bessarabia, through the 22 year domination of Romania in Bessarabia. The USSR government proposes the royal government of Romania: 1. To retrocede Bessarabia, at any price, to the Soviet Union; 2. To give the Soviet Union the northern part of Bukovina, with its frontiers, according to the annexed map. The Soviet government expresses its hope that the Romanian government would receive the present proposals of USSR and it would give the possibility to solve peacefully the prolonged conflict between USSR and Romania. The Soviet government is waiting for the answer of the Royal Government of Romania on the current day of 27<sup>th</sup> of June”<sup>242</sup>.

The Crown Council accepted the Soviet pretentions, King Carol II hoping to maintain its position:

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<sup>241</sup> *Documente ale Unirii (1600–1918)*, coord. Constantin Căzănișteanu, Editura Militară Press, Bucharest, 1984, p. 527–528.

<sup>242</sup> A. Vianu, C. Bușe, Z. Zamfir, Gh. Bădescu, *op.cit.*, p. 49–52.

*“Thursday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, 8 o’clock p.m., the Council is meeting and I exit the room feeling embittered and disgusted, all those who had been playing the heroes at noon, were now changed. Only 6 votes, from the 26 present, I sided with the resistance. Their names are worth to be written with golden letters in the book of the Romanian dignity: Nicolae Iorga, Victor Iamandi, Silviu Dragomir, Traian Pop, Ștefan Ciobanu, Ernest Urdăreanu. All the others, more or less, voted for the acceptance of the ultimatum. 1. Angelescu 2. Vaida 3. Mironescu 4. Iorga 5. Argetoianu 6. Ballif 7. Iamandi 8. V. Antonescu 9. Cancicov 10. Dragomir 11. Pop 12. Hortolomei 13. Christu yes (discussions) yes yes no — with conditions yes yes no expecting yes no no yes (discussions) yes (discussion) 14. Gigurtu 15. Ciobanu 16. Macovei 17. Andrei 18. Mitiță 19. Slăvescu 20. Ilcuș 21. Ralea 22. Giurescu 23. Ghelmegeanu 24. Portocală 25. Bentoiu 26. Urdăreanu yes no yes (discussions) yes (discussions) yes (discussions) yes yes yes yes no. They were impressed by the advice that we received from over abroad, and they were also impressed with the idea that we would not be able to win such a war. Some proposed the resistance and, later, the surrendering; t least it would have shown a gesture. A small tragic-comical incident took place when Iorga verbally attacked Țenescu and Slăvescu; I asked him how much he thought it was the price of a bomber, he answered that it was probably 500,000 lei; he was amazed hearing that it was 30 million lei. Longer debates that were futile, so I ended the meeting with a short speech, in which I said that it had been the most painful day of my life, the day when I was supposed to be glad that my son passed his baccalaureate exam. I added that I consider that a huge mistake had been made, that of giving without resistance, almost a quarter of the country, but that I see myself being overwhelmed by the agreement of the great majority, the one from which I asked advice. I left without shaking hands with anyone, deeply sad and convinced that the consequences of those decisions would be extremely severe for the country, even if, the same as Argetoianu thought, very soon we would be give back what we had lost<sup>243</sup>.*

In the answer of the Romanian government from the day of the 2th of June 1940, there was shown that: *“The USSR government addressed the Romanian government a not that was delivered on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1940, at 10 o’clock p.m., by his Excellency Mr. Molotov, the president of the Soviet Union People’s Commissars, a commissar of the people for the Foreign Affairs, to his Excellency Mr. Davidescu, the minister of Romania at Moscow. Being encouraged by the same desire as that of the Soviet government to see all the questions that might cause misunderstanding between USSR and Romania solved peacefully, the royal government declares that it is ready to proceed immediately and willingly to the friendly and commonly agreed*

<sup>243</sup> Carol al II-lea, *Între datorie și pasiune. Însemnări zilnice*, vol. II (1939–1940), Bucharest, Casa de editură și presă “Șansa” Press, 1996, p. 203–204.

discussion on all the problems that might be mentioned by the Soviet government. Consequently, the Romanian government requires the Soviet government to indicate the place and the date for this purpose. As soon as an answer has been received from the Soviet government, the Romanian government shall designate the delegates and hopes that the conversations with the representatives of the Soviet government will create strong relations of harmony and friendship between USSR and Romania<sup>244</sup>.

The note of ultimatum of the Soviet government from the night of the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1940 was extremely harsh, a fact that did not leave the Bucharest Government with too many options: “The USSR government considers that the answer of the royal government from the 27<sup>th</sup> of June is vague, because, in the answer, it is not directly specified that it receives the proposition of the Soviet government to return promptly Bessarabia and the north part of Bukovina. Nonetheless, as the minister of Romania at Moscow, Mr. Davidescu explained that the answer mentioned by the royal government of Romania can be translated as acceptance for the proposal of the Soviet government, the Soviet government, receiving this explanation of Mr. Davidescu, proposes: 1. In four days, starting with 2 o'clock p.m., Moscow time, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, to evacuate the Romanian troops from the territory of Bessarabia and Bukovina 2. The Soviet troops, simultaneously, are to occupy Bessarabia and the north part of Bukovina. 3. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, the Soviet troops are to occupy the following points: Cernăuți, Chișinău, Cetatea-Albă. 4. The royal government of Romania is to be responsible for preserving and not damaging the railways, the depot of locomotives and carriages, the bridges, the warehouses, the airdroms, the industrial factories, the electric factories and the telegraph. 5. To appoint a commission made of representatives of the Romanian government and USSR, two of each side, for settling the litigious questions on addressing the evacuation of the Romanian army and the institutions from Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina. The Soviet government insists that the royal government of Romania to answer the above mentioned proposals no later than the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, 12 o'clock (Moscow time)<sup>245</sup>.

The answer of the Romanian government from the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1940 was just a confirmation of the Soviet ultimatum requests: “The Romanian government, in order to avoid the severe consequences that the resorting to force and the beginning of hostilities in this part of Europe might have, is compelled to accept the evacuation conditions specified in the Soviet answer. Nevertheless, the Romanian government would like that the terms from points 1 and 2 to be extended, because the evacuation of the territories would be extremely difficult to be fulfilled in four days, due to the rains and floods that damaged the railways and roads. The mixed commission

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<sup>244</sup> A. Vianu, C. Bușe, Z. Zamfir, Gh. Bădescu, *op.cit.*, p. 49–52.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibidem*.

*instituted at point 5 might discuss and solve this question. The names of the Romanian representatives from this commission are to be communicated during this day*”<sup>246</sup>.

The Dictate of Wien (30<sup>th</sup> of August 1940) was stipulating that the North-Western Ardeal to become under the control of Hungary, through “the willingness of the arbitrators” – the Nazi Germany and the fascist Italy: “*Here it is the text of the sentence, after the official statement: 1. The definitive line of the frontier that separates Romania from Hungary shall correspond to that marked by the annexed geographic map. A Romanian-Hungarian commission shall determine the details of the line on the spot. 2. The Romanian territory that was attributed to Hungary shall be evacuated by the Romanian troops in 15 days and presented in good order to it. The different phases of the evacuation and occupation, along with their modalities are to be fixed by a Romanian-Hungarian commission. The Hungarian and Romanian governments shall watch that the evacuation and the occupation take place in complete order. 3. All the Romanian subjects, now settled on the territory that is to be ceded by Romania, obtain, without other formalities, Hungarian nationality. They are able to choose the Romanian nationality in a six month time. The people who make use of this right shall leave the Hungarian territory in an additional term of one year., and shall be received by Romania. They will be able to take, without any restraints, their mobile goods, to liquidate their house property, until the moment of their leaving, and to take with them the resulted product. If the liquidation of the property does not succeed, those people are to be paid compensations by Hungary. Hungary shall solve widely and properly all the questions related to the moving of the optants. 4. The Romanian subjects of Hungarian race, settled on the territory ceded to Romania by Hungary in 1919, which remains under its sovereignty, receive the right to opt for the Hungarian nationality, in a six month term. The principles enounced in paragraph 3 shall be in force for the people who use this right. 5. The Hungarian Government engages solemnly to assimilate, along with the Hungarian subjects, the Romanian people, who, based on the above arbitration, will obtain Hungarian nationality. On the other hand, the Romanian government similarly pledges on addressing its Hungarian subjects, who will remain on the Romanian territory. 6. The details resulting from the transfer of sovereignty are to be regulated through the direct convention between the Romanian and the Hungarian governments. 7. In case difficulties or doubts appear during the arbitration, the Romanian and the Hungarian governments shall understand directly. If on addressing a question or another, there is not reached an*

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<sup>246</sup> *Ibidem.*

agreement, the litigation shall be subjected to the governments of Reich or Italy, which shall adopt a definitive solution<sup>247</sup>.

The debates of the Crown Council on the arbitration, concerning the problem of Transylvania, are noticeable through the position of Iuliu Maniu, the leader of the National Peasant's Party, on the

*“His Majesty, the King: Gentlemen, you were called to make a decision whose consequences we all expect to be very serious. Today, I have called you again, to know the effects of the decision from yesterday. In these moments, if I voice these words, it is to show before the entire country, which I am aware that knows what I am feeling, that regardless the struggles of the present moment, whatever the sacrifices that are required, yet, the permanence of our nation is the superior commandment of all the responsive people.*

*Mr. Iuliu Maniu: Sir, I am extremely grateful that you allowed me to voice my protest of Ardeal and Banat in this meeting. It is a sad day, a painful day and it is difficult to calm our nerves and to not be overwhelmed with the pain that takes us. I protest in the name of Ardeal and Banat against any attempt to alienate Transylvania, Banat, Maramureș and Crișana from our state and I protest against any other part to be alienated. I think the observation made by Professor Iorga is very flattering for us and entitled, when he said that Ardeal joined willingly and he also added that, as regarding Ardeal, nobody but the Romanian people from Ardeal can decide. Nobody should decide on Ardeal's faith but its majority. This majority is definitely Romanian. 58.4% of the dwellers are Romanian, and the other minorities are divided in small groups. For that, considering that the point of view of the Romanian people from Ardeal, for hundreds of years, has always required that nothing that concerns the Ardeal should be decided unless the Romanian people from there are consulted, it is distressing that today the faith of Ardeal is decided, without asking the people from Ardeal. The arbitration procedure is a decided verdict, therefore the decision shows our desire too. But, what must be specified firstly is that any decision is made, it should not be understood that it represents the desire of the Romanian people and state<sup>248</sup>”.*

It is not a surprise that, after 1944, the target of the Romanian authorities, coordinated strictly by Moscow, was that to remove the elite that had contributed to the Great Union from 1918, especially the elite from Bessarabia and Bukovina, as much as it remained at that moment. The most tragic end was that of Iuliu Maniu, along with his alliance Ion Mihalache, or their adversary Gheorghe I. Brătianu.

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<sup>247</sup> Mihail Manoilescu, *Dictatul de la Viena. Memorii — iulie–august 1940*, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1991, p. 295–296.

<sup>248</sup> Ion Mamina, *Consiliul de Coroană*, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 1997, p. 262–264.

Obviously, a part of the so-called “guilt” was the attitude against the communist activists in the inter-wars period, and their support for the right extreme actions<sup>249</sup>.

In conclusion, the internal policy of Great Romania, faced a confrontation between the politicians from the Old Kingdom, and those from the historic regions, united with Motherland. These confrontations had virulent accents and degenerated, which undermined the position of Romania on European plan. Practically, Great Romania collapsed in 1940, due to the absence of the unitary internal and external politics. The inter-war regional alliances, the absence of the final agreement with USSR, the closeness by the European right extreme, the neglecting of the relation with France and England, proved to be fatal.

Romania joined the war on the 22<sup>nd</sup> 1941, against the Soviet Union, along the Nazi Germany, freeing the territories lost in July-August 1941, with much sacrifice, the greatest being at Odessa, in the fall of 1941. Yet, Romania was seriously affected, from the military point of view (the corruption from Army and Government, from the 1930s was taking its toll), failing at Stalingrad, Don-bend. The Soviet counteroffensive from 1943 led to the lost, in July-August 1944, of all the territories freed in 1941.

This time, it must be made a specification. After the occupation of Greece by the Italian and German troops, in 1914, the fascist Italy, with the purpose of gaining a good image (the Italian aggression against Greece, started on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 1940 almost finished with a significant failure for Benito Mussolini, if the Nazi Germany had not interfered), wanted the instituting of the “*Latin Principality*” from Pindus that would include the Aromanians from Pindus Mountains. In this manner, Italy was hoping to take advantage on the historic disagreements between the Aromanians and Greeks. In 1905, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Abdul Hamid II had issued a Decree that acknowledged the Aromanians as distinct Latinophone population, but, after the two Balkan Wars from 1912-1913, the states that shared Macedonia (Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria) refused to take into account that Ottoman constitutive document.

The act of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944, the changing of the side against Germany, the armistice from the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1944, the continuation of the war on the Western Front led to the freeing, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 1944, of the North-Western Ardeal, remained under Soviet administration until the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1945, because serious confrontations had emerged between the adepts of Iuliu Maniu and “Sumanele Negre” (the Black Coats) Organisation, on one side, and the Magyar civilians, along Horthyst armed elements on the other side, generating incredible atrociousness and victims on the both sides.

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<sup>249</sup> Corneliu Coposu, *File dintr-un jurnal interzis. 1936-1947, 1953, 1967-1983*, edition revised by Doina Alexandru, Bucharest, Vremea Press, 2014, p. 152-155.



Winston Churchill, the one who, in the interval 1942-1944 had negotiated at Moscow the placing of Romania under Soviet influence, in exchange of obtaining Greece under Anglo-American influence, affirmed, unofficially, that the act from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944, along with the effort of Romania on the Western Front, had shortened the war with six months, and Romania was the fourth power that defeated Germany, as human and material means engaged in the war. Obviously, this did not exempt us from the obligation of the war compensations, at the Peace Conference of Paris from 1947, Romania did not obtain the statute of co-belligerent state.

Finally, the Peace Treaty of Paris from the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1947 was acknowledging the belonging of the North-West Transylvania to Romania<sup>250</sup>: *“Article 1. The Romanian frontiers, indicated in the map annexed to the present Treaty (Annex I) shall be the ones similar to those from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1941, excepting the Romanian-Hungarian frontier that is defined in article 2 of the present Treaty. The Soviet-Romanian frontier is established according to the Soviet-Romanian Agreement from the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1940, and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Agreement from the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 1945. Article 2. The decisions of the Wien Sentence from the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1940 are declared null and void. The frontier between Romania and Hungary is re-established through the resent article, as it was on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1938. Article 22 I. Romania has to pay compensations to the Soviet Union for the damages caused to it through military operations and the occupation by Romania of the Soviet territory, nonetheless considering the fact that Romania had not only quit the war against the United Nations, but it declared war to Germany and had waged war against it, it was decided that the compensations for the above damages shall not be paid entirely, but only a part, that is, 300,000,000 million US dollars, paid in eight years, from the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1944, in goods (petroliferous products, cereals, timber, maritime and fluvial vessels, diverse equipment and other commodities). 2. The basis calculation for the regulation provisioned in this article shall be the American dollar according to the gold parity on the date the Armistice Convention was signed, that is, 35 dollars for an ounce of gold.*

Thus, after the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1945, Romania was looking precisely as in the present territorial configuration. Owing to certain secret arrangements, USSR imposed its control on Serpent Island. In 2008, before the International Court, Romania managed to obtain a part of the aquatic perimeter (continental plateau) from the Serpent Island area, after ultramodern measurement, which is a perimeter rich in mineral resources. Ukraine tried to sabotage the Romanian interests from the Danube Delta region, initiating desilting works of Bystroye Canal.

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<sup>250</sup> România. *Viața politică în documente, 1945* (coord. Ioan Scurtu), States Archives of Romania, Bucharest, 1994, p.92, 97.



## 6. IS GREAT ROMANIA STILL POSSIBLE (1948-2019)?

The great Union is the most important accomplishment of the Romanian policy, after obtaining the independence being the role of interaction between the social classes. The major part was of the peasantry, the workers and, as forces that made the army, and also the bourgeoisie, the great landowners, the bailiffs, who supported the creation of some political and diplomatic personalities that fought the difficult battles in the period 1912-1918. Romania managed to obtain the access to the sea, in 1878, and to take the south of Dobruja, in 1913, being preoccupied by the creation of a space for the Romanians living in the south of Danube.

In the present study, a special accent fell on the contemporary appreciations. It was started from the idea of re-establishing the social relations on new bases. While some thinkers insisted on the economic changes, others accredited the idea that there was reached a superior point, from where it could only be tried to connect Romania to the currents of that time. Yet, Great Romania had a fragile structure. The question of Bessarabia had not been regulated internationally. This fact, along with an unacceptable delay of the stable positioning near the great powers on the external plan, the conflicts between the liberals and the peasants' current, the instauration of the monarchic authority regime, contributed to the gradual destruction of the level that Romania had reached in 1918.

Below, there are presented fragments from the Treaty between Romania and Hungary, necessary for Romania to finish the negotiations for adhering to NATO and EU:

Treaty of understanding, cooperation and good neighbourliness between Romania and the Hungarian Republic (Timișoara, 16<sup>th</sup> of September, 1996) *Romania and the Republic of Hungary, convinced that good neighbourliness, mutual respect and cooperation between the two countries correspond to the fundamental interests of Romania and Hungary, reiterating their commitment toward human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, humanism and the rule of law, and expressing their belief that the affirmation and enrichment of their content represents the basis of liberty, justice and peace, animated of the joint desire that Europe should become a united continent, of peace, security and cooperation for all states and peoples, and determined to act in order to develop such relations which would make the achievement of these objectives possible, recognizing that national minorities are an integral part of society in the state in which their live and considering that their protection is a component part of the international protection of human rights and that consequently their protection is the object of international cooperation and that normalization of their cooperation in this area represents an important contribution to both stability and understanding in Europe and to the consolidation of democracy*

*in the two countries and their integration in European and euro-Atlantic structures, reiterating their determination to act in order to accomplish the purposes and principles of the United National Charter, of the Final Act in Helsinki, of the Paris Charter for a new Europe and of other documents of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, convinced that the irreversible changes which took place in Europe and in the two countries open new perspectives in their bilateral relations, agreed on the following: Art. 3. (1) The Contracting Parties reiterate that in their mutual relations they shall refrain from the threat of force or the use of force, directed either against the territorial integrity or political independence of the other Contracting Party, or in any other way which is incompatible with the goals of the United Nations Organization and with the principles of the Final Act in Helsinki. They shall also refrain from supporting such actions and shall not allow a third party to use their territory to commit activities of this kind against the other Contracting Party. (2) Any differences which might appear between the Contracting Parties shall be solved exclusively in a peaceful way. Art. 4. The Contracting Parties, according to the principles and norms of international law and with the principles of the Final Act in Helsinki, reconfirm that they shall observe the inviolability of their common border and the territorial integrity of the other Party. They also reiterate that they have no territorial claims on each other and that they shall also not raise such claims in the future. Art. 6. (1) The Contracting Parties shall continue to support the development and persistent use of mechanisms of European collaboration, in order to thus actively contribute to maintaining and strengthening peace and security in the region. Art. 13. (1) The Contracting Parties shall cooperate in order to maintain and mutually learn of the cultural heritage of the two nations. (2) The Contracting Parties shall act in order to protect their historical and cultural monuments, of memorial sites of written and material vestiges on their territories, which evoke and conserve moments of the history and culture of the other Party, shall support their conservation and shall facilitate access to them, according to the legislation of each Party. Art. 14. The Contracting Parties shall encourage a climate of tolerance and understanding among their citizens with different ethnic origin, religion, culture or language. They condemn any manifestation of xenophobia, hatred, discrimination or racial, ethnic or religious prejudice and shall take effective measures to prevent any such manifestation. Art. 15 (1) a) The Contracting Parties pledge that in regulating the rights and obligations of persons belonging to national minorities living on their territory, they shall enforce the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe regarding national minorities, if their lawful internal order does not contain more favourable regulations regarding the rights of persons belonging to minorities. b) The Contracting Parties, without infringing upon the contents of paragraph a) above, in order to protect and promote ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of*

*the Romanian minority in Hungary and of the Hungarian minority in Romania, shall enforce, as legal commitments, the provisions which define the rights of these persons, as they are stipulated in pertinent documents of the United Nations Organization, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe .... (2) As such, the Parties reiterate that the persons to whom the preceding paragraph before have the right, exercised individually, or jointly together with other members of their group, to express freely, preserve and develop their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity. Accordingly, they have the right to create and maintain their own educational, cultural and religious institutions, organizations or associations, which can appeal to voluntary financial and other contributions, and to public support, in accordance with national legislation. (3) The Contracting Parties respect the right of persons belonging to the Romanian minority in Hungary and of persons belonging to the Hungarian minority in Romania to freely use their mother tongue, in private and in public, orally and in writing. They shall take the necessary measures so that persons may study their mother tongue and have adequate possibilities to be educated in this language within the state education system, at all levels and in all forms, according to their needs. The Contracting Parties shall ensure conditions which will make possible the use of their mother tongue also in relations with local, administrative or judicial authorities, according to national legislation and international commitments undertaken by the two Parties. These people also have the right to use their first and last name in their mother tongue and shall enjoy official recognition of these names. In areas inhabited by a substantial number of persons belonging to the respective minorities, each Party shall allow traditional local names of geographic places, street names and other topographic names of public use to be displayed, also, in the minority language. (11) The Contracting Parties shall cooperate in order to develop the international legal framework for the protection of national minorities. They agree to enforce, as part of the hereby Treaty, the provisions of international documents by virtue of which they shall also assume other obligations regarding the advancement of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. (12) None of the commitments contained in this article can be interpreted as implying any right to undertake any activity or action against the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, of other obligations resulting from international law or of the provisions of the Final Act of Helsinki and of the Paris Charter of Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, including the principle of territorial integrity of states Art. 23. The present Treaty is concluded for a period of 10 years. Its validity is automatically extended by further periods of five years, unless any of the Contracting Parties notifies in writing*

to the other Contracting Party, at least one year before the expiration of that period, its intention to denounce the Treaty<sup>251</sup>.

In 1997, Romania signed the Treaty with Ukraine, a controversial one, which was basically sanctioning the presence of south of Bessarabia, North Bukovina and Hertza Region in Ukraine. Thus, an eventual idea of union would mean the infringement or the unilateral denunciation of this treaty:

*“Treaty on the relations of good neighbourliness and cooperation between Romania and Ukraine (Constanța, 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1997). Art. 2.1. The contracting parties, in concordance with the principles and the norms of the international law and the principles of the Final Act from Helsinki reaffirms that the frontier between them is inviolable and, therefore, they shall refrain, now and in the future, from any infringement on any request or action regarding the seizing and usurping of a part or the entire territory of the other contracting party. 2. The contracting parties shall conclude a separate treaty on the regime of the frontier between the two states and shall solve the problem on the delimitation of their continental plateau and the economic exclusive areas from the Black Sea, based on the principles agreed on, in an exchange of letters between the ministers of the foreign affairs, made once with the signing of the present treaty. The provisions established in this exchange of letters shall be in force simultaneously with the coming into force of the present treaty. Art. 3. 1. The contracting parties reaffirm that they do not resort, at any time, to the use of force, either against the territorial integrity or political independence of the other contracting party, or in any other manner, incompatible with the UNO Charter provisions and the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki. Moreover, they shall refrain from supporting such actions and shall not allow a third party to use their territory for carrying out activities of this kind, against the other contracting party. 2. Any problems and disputes between the contracting parties shall be solved exclusively in peaceful manner, according to the norms of the international right. Art. 13. 1. For the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the Romanian minority from Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority from Romania, the contracting parties shall apply the international norms and standards in which there are stipulated the rights of the people belonging to the national minorities, that is, those norms and standards provisioned in the European Council Framework Convention for the protection of the national minorities, along with: The Document of the Copenhagen Meeting on the human dimension of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, from the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 1990, UNO General Assembly Declaration on the right of people belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (Resolution 47/135), from the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1992 and The*

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<sup>251</sup> “The Official Gazette”, year VII, part I, no. 250 from the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1996.

*Recommendation no. 1201 (1993) of the European Council Parliamentary Assembly on an additional article to the Human Rights European Convention, referring to the rights of the national minorities, specifying that this recommendation does not refer to collective rights and does not obligate the contracting parts to grant those people the right to a special status of autonomy based on ethnic criteria. 2. The Romanian minority included the Ukrainian citizens, regardless the regions where they live and which, according to their freely expressed option, belong to this minority by the virtue of their ethnical origin, the language, the culture or the religion. 4. The contracting parties reaffirm that the people the article refers to especially have the right, exercised individually or together with other members of their group, to the freedom of expression, to the maintaining and development of their ethnic, cultural, language and religious identity, the right to preserve and develop their own culture, to protection against any attempt of assimilation, against their will. They have the right to exercise fully and effectively the fundamental human rights and freedoms, without discrimination and in conditions of full equality before the law. The people belonging to these minorities have the right to participate, effectively, to the public life, including through representatives elected in accordance to the law, as much as to the cultural, social and economic life. 6. The contracting parties acknowledge that, in exercising the right to association, the people belonging to these national minorities can found and maintain, according to the internal laws, their own organisations, along with education, cultural and religious institutions or establishments. 7. The contracting parties shall observe the right of the people belonging to the national minorities to have access, in their maternal language, to information and mass communication means, along with the free exchanging and sharing of information. They shall not generate obstacles, on addressing the founding and the using, by these people, within the internal legislation of each contracting party, of their own mass information means. The people this article refers to have the right to maintain contacts among them and abroad with the citizens of other states, and to participate to the non-governmental organisations activities, both nationally and internationally. 8. The contracting parties shall refrain from taking measures that, modifying the proportions of the population from the regions where people belonging to the national minorities live, wish the limitation of the rights and freedoms of these people, which resort from the international standards and norms mentioned in paragraph 1 of the present article. 12. The contracting parties, with the purpose to cooperate for the fulfilling of the engagements provisioned in this article, shall create a mixt inter-governmental commission that shall hold at least an annual session. Art. 27. The present treaty is concluded for 10 years. The validity of the treaty is automatically extended, on new 5 year periods, if neither of the parties will*

*not announce in writing the other contracting party about its intention of denouncing it, at least one year before the expiration of the respective validity period*<sup>252</sup>.

It has been said that “Bessarabia is Romania”, a valid statement from the historical point of view. Yet, the historical Bessarabia is today in the Republic of Moldova and in Ukraine. The North Bukovina is in Ukraine. The Republic of Moldova has a part of Ukraine, called “Transnistria”, where there are all the energetic terminals through which the entire economy of the Republic of Moldova is controlled. Moreover, from 1940 to 1991, in Bessarabia and Bukovina, the ethnic configuration was changed, a big Russian-speaking community living here, that would oppose to the Union. Economically, although it struggled, Romania did not manage to solidify the connection with the Republic of Moldova. The Moldavians living across the river Prut see in the connection with Romania the route towards the obtaining of the Romanian ID card and the free circulation in the European Union, which is sufficient for them. In Ukraine, there is a civil war ongoing, Romania is a member of the EU, and a union with the Republic of Moldova should be subjected to the European law debate. Furthermore, the Russian Federation is in full geopolitical offensive. A unique chance of a possible union was that from August 1991, when USSR collapse began, but the chance was missed by both Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Moreover, Romania and Bulgaria liquidated completely the litigation of the Quadrilateral.

Thus, it is difficult that in the near future to be able to see Great Romania again.

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<sup>252</sup> “*The Official Gazette*”, year VIII, part I, no. 157 from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 1997.

## CONCLUSIONS

At present, when the Centenary Year has been left behind and the Centenary Peace Conferences of Paris (1919-1920) is next to us, the discussions on the stages that led to the essential political and national act from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 are more important than ever. The Romanian historiography, especially in the inter-wars period, enounced the principle according to which the action of Michael the Brave represented the model of all the later efforts that led to the Great Union from 1918, the most important supporter being the historian Nicolae Iorga.

The idea is not new, being initially accredited by the historian Nicolae Bălcescu, the first Romanian historian that analyses the economic phenomenon in the Principalities<sup>253</sup>, the author of the monograph “Românii supt Mihai Voievod Viteazul” (The Romanians under the leadership of Voivode Michael the Brave), on which he worked until the moment he passed away, leaving it unfinished (the work stops at Book V, chapter XXXII, and the last “book”, the sixth one, dedicated to the beginning of regeneration from Gorăslău remained in the stage of project).

In the modern age, to which the 1821, 1831, 1848 moments are related to, the action and the inheritance of Michael the Brave were meant to offer the guarantee of continuity, the historical necessity to move forward, to continue the construction of the Romanian state from where the ancestors stopped. Transylvania represented the centre of the Romanian Latinity, the nucleus of statehood, starting with the Dacian-Roman era, the central point of resistance against the migrations.

History showed that the accomplishment of the national-unitary Romanian state did not realise in a traditional power nucleus, from which the centralisation was started, as in the case of Great Britain, France, Spain, Russia. The Union of the Romanians can be compared to the unifying processes from Germany and Italy, processes that took place approximately in the same period.

In the medieval era, Wallachia and Moldova had rulers interested in participating to the anti-Ottoman crusade, even when great European powers wanted, in order to protect their economic interests, to make peace with the Turks.

The medieval rulers were interested in collaborating with each other, but also in having possessions in Transylvania. Thus, Mircea the Old had Amlaş and Făgăraş, Radu Paisie owned Vinţul de Jos and Vurpărul, Stephen the Great obtained Ciceu and Cetatea de Baltă, and his son, Petru Rareş, almost had supremacy in Ardeal, combating the plans of Suleiman the Magnificent to install Aloisio Gritti, the son of the Venetian doge, ruler in Ardeal, and even in Wallachia and Moldova.

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<sup>253</sup> Nicolae Bălcescu, *op.cit.*, p. 76.



Suleiman the Magnificent is the first that offers Wallachia, Moldova and Transylvania a similar statute, unitary in the relation with the Ottoman power, after the liquidation of Hungary and the founding of Buda Vilayet, in 1541. Obviously, Suleiman did not interfere in the internal organisation of Transylvania, meaning that *Unio Trium Nationum* and the *Tripartitum* of Werboczi remained in force.

The Romanian rulers embraced the idea of union of circumstance between Wallachia and Moldova in order to resist better before the Ottoman expansion. Mircea the Old and Alexander the Good enjoyed a very good cooperation, Alexander the Good receiving Chilia from Mircea the Old for making Moldova interested in the common defending of the Danube Mouths.

Stephen the Great tried to maintain his influence in Wallachia, appointing there rulers as Basarab Țepeluș or Laiotă Basarab<sup>254</sup>, counter-acting the power of Radu the Fair, the brother of Vlad the Impaler, but the two interposed betrayed him, becoming associate with the Turks. Stephen the Great helped Vlad the Impaler to ascend the throne, but he was killed by a conspiracy of the boyars, in December 1875, a month after he had ascended the throne of Wallachia, for the third time as voivode.

The ephemeral ruler Iakob Heraklid, known as Despot Vodă<sup>255</sup> also had Latin spirited union plans. The ruler Petru Rareș can be regarded as a precursor of Michael the Brave, but Michael the Brave changes the perspective on the idea of union, for the first time in the history of the Romanians. His origin (posthumous son of Pătrașcu the Good and of Tudora, sister of Iane Epirotul), the quality of nephew of Iane Epirotul opened the perspectives towards the throne of Wallachia. The alliance with Sigismund Bathory, which, as banned as it was by the communist historiography, had helped him in the definitive defeat of the Turks at Călugăreni-Giurgiu in 1595, the friendship with the noble Magyar of Romanian origin, the chancellor Ștefan Ioszika, allowed him to become indispensable, for a while, to the Habsburg Empire that wanted Transylvania away from the Ottoman control.

Michael the Brave managed to take Moldova out of the authority of Movilescu family, subjugated by Poland's interests, a country which was an adept of the peace with the Ottoman Empire. Yet, the fact that Michael was seen as liberator of the Balkans, and even a possible restaurateur of Byzantium, made him undesirable both for the Papacy and the Habsburg.

Once with Michael the Brave, the idea of political union of the three Romanian Countries somehow falls on the second place. There are well-known the political duels between Matei Basarab, the ruler of Wallachia, and Vasile Lupu, the ruler of

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<sup>254</sup> Constantin Rezachevici, *Enciclopedia Domnilor Români. Cronologia domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova*, vol. 1, sec. XIV-XVI, Editura Enciclopedică Press, Bucharest, 2001, passim.

<sup>255</sup> A. Veress, *Documente cu privire la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, vol.I, Bucharest, 1929, p.151 – 158.



Moldova, or Constantin Brâncoveanu from Wallachia Dimitrie Cantemir in Moldova, along with his closeness by Russia of Peter the Great.

And there we basically reach the moment the geopolitical paradigm changed. Obviously, the idea of Dimitrie Cantemir<sup>256</sup> did not have a better faith from the perspective of the Romanian historiography. Many regraded the defeat suffered by Peter the Great and Dimitrie Cantemir at Stănilești as a chance, that of Moldova not stepping on the way of a possible Russian annexation. Nonetheless, based on this idea, there emerges a somehow counterfeit history, as “Russia could have occupied Moldova”, considering what happened, a century later with Bessarabia, in 1912. It is impossible to know what a Russian victory would have really meant in 1711, surely something different. The entering of Russia on the stage generated another perspective on the union of the Principalities. Thus, it is considered that the son of Dimitrie Cantemir, Antioh, one of the greatest writers of Russia, a diplomat in the service of Russia in Europe, would have imagined a plan that provisioned the union of Wallachia and Moldova. The premature death of Antioh Cantemir stopped him from making this information popular among the political circles from Petersburg, but it does not mean he was forgotten.

During the ruling of Mary Therese and her son Joseph II, the Habsburg Empire was controlling Transylvania, Banat, and had even controlled Oltenia. In 1762, at Petersburg, Catherine II started her reign<sup>257</sup>. She wanted to initiate a geopolitical advance plane for Russia. In order to hide the territorial conquering, Catherine the Great took the idea from Peter the Great to obtain the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits. Practically, Catherine II decided to term a locality from today Ukraine (back then the New Russia), after the name of the Greek god Odysseus, Odessa, a feminisation of the antique name of the Greek colony Odessos (Varna). Catherine II decided to baptise her first grandson with the name of Constantin, educating him according to the Greek, Byzantine and absolute spirit. Her plan, and that of Prince Potiomkin, the favourite of the tsarina, was that to create a Byzantine Empire in the Balkans and the region of Constantinople, led by her grandson Constantin. In the Romanian space, Moldova and Wallachia were to form a state, led, most probably by Potiomkin, under the name of the “Dacia Kingdom”. The empress put on the paper “the Greek Project”, as this plan was called, and shared it with the empress Mary Therese and her son, Joseph II. Joseph II, until his mother’s death, in 1789, did not express any opinion, being interested in perfecting himself as representative of the enlightenment. Catherine II, of German origin, was exchanging letters with Voltaire and Diderot, understanding that the state enlightenment can make Russia equal to the Western powers.

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<sup>256</sup> Georgeta Smeu, *op.cit.*, p. 218-219.

<sup>257</sup> Michael Streeter, *Catherine the Great*, Haus Publishing, London, 2007, p. 3-6.

Mary Therese did not agree with the plans of Russia, motivating that the Turks were efficient in administrating the insufficiently civilized provinces from the Balkans and the Orient, including the Greeks, who they considered unstable. By chance or not, Filip II, the King of Spain, the son of Charles V was referring, according to the Spanish historian Ortega y Acevedo, to Michael the Brave (the Vlach does not seem too stable, because he is a Greek).

Yet, Joseph II received the propositions of Catherine II with reservation, mentioning that the success of the plans would depend on the “faith of the war”. The strategists from Wien were cautious, but Joseph II wanted the bridge heads from the region of the Principalities, such Oltenia with Turnu Severin and even Orșova, along with the cities of Vidin, Belgrade and Hotin.

The war from 1788-1792 of Russia, allied with the Habsburg Empire against Turkey, ended indecisively, also influence by the sudden death of Emperor Joseph II, in 1790. Austria concluded a separate peace with the Turks at Şviştov, and Rusia, at Iași, in 1792, ended the hostilities, confining itself to minor successes. The Empress also died in 1796, so those projects remained locked in the cases, on the desks of the Habsburgs and the Romanovs<sup>258</sup>.

In 1806-1807, in the Russia-Turkish war from 1806-1821, Constantin Ipsilanti, a Phanariot ruler in the both Principalities, before the beginning of the war, managed to convince Russia, in 1806 and 1807 to be ruler of both Wallachia and Moldova. Russia expected that the formal union of Wallachia and Moldova would occur in 1830. Yet, the Peace of Tilsit from 1807 between Tsar Alexander and Napoleon I stopped the Russian plans, Constantin Ipsilanti abandoning the throne and seeking refuge in the Tsarist Russia<sup>259</sup>. Obviously, the Greeks, who had become famous merchants in Russia and Austria, understood that they need to have their national cause acknowledged, especially after the Napoleonic epic that affected the absolutism and the European reactionary spirit severely.

In conclusion, the Romanian enlightenment was born under the influence of the occidental enlightenment, evolving along the last manifestation of the Romanian humanism. The international political context, the internal background, the status of the Romanian Principalities conferred an original touch to the Enlightenment, being based both on the memoirs and requests argued through humanist foundations, and literary currents and even political and military actions, which took the form of national revolutions:

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<sup>258</sup> Simon Sebag-Montefiore, *Ecaterina cea Mare & Potemkin: O poveste de dragoste imperială*, Trei Press, Bucharest, 2016, p.594-610.

<sup>259</sup> W. Gordon East, *The Union of Moldavia and Wallachia, 1859 - An Episode in Diplomatic History*, Cambridge University Press, 1929, p.59.

1. The historic documents were used as diplomatic and juridical arguments in the favour of the national idea, respecting the ethics of the research. Unfortunately, there were tendencies of exaggerating their importance, or, respectively, the minimising of their role, fact that contravene with the ethics of research. Some theories, as the Roeslerian one, undermine severely the principles of the historic research ethics.
2. Some historians reproduced accurately the sources, others, from the desire of enhancing the events, transformed them into political speeches, in the spirit of the time, attributed conventionally to the person who delivered it, which is on the borderline of the historic research ethics.
3. Some historians, in order to make evident the importance of an analysed personality copied the description of a character, already consecrated in the historiographic works, bringing their qualities together by starting from the model of “parallel lives” of the historian Plutarch, without mentioning this aspect, which, again, infringes the ethics of the historic research.
4. Other historians minimised the role of some historical personalities, with the purpose of not affecting the image of the dominant personality, as in the case of Michael the Brave and Ștefan Ioszika, which infringes the ethics of the historic research.
5. Some authors, as Dinicu Golescu, take upon themselves the idea of the reforms obligation, offering incredible comparisons between the superior occidental reality and the inferior Romanian ones, respecting the ethics of the historic research.

After the Peace of Adrianople, from 1829, Russia made official the Protectorate in Moldova and Wallachia, a protectorate inaugurated de facto after the peace of Kuciujk-Kainardji from 1774<sup>260</sup>. The Organic Regulations of Wallachia and Moldova were creating the unitary background for the internal development of the Principalities, and they were also mentioning the question of the Union, in separate articles (371-Wallachia, 425-Moldova), in each of them.

Russia was the power that stopped the Revolution of 1848 from the Habsburg Empire, obtaining the nickname of the “Gendarme of Europe”, and imposing itself in the convention from Balta Liman from 1849. Nonetheless, the ambitions of Russia of dividing the Ottoman Empire led to the disaster from 1856, when the Crimean War ended with the defeat of Russia and the loss of the Danube Mouths.

The idea to create a buffer state of the United Principalities of Wallachia and Moldova was used as a boomerang against the Tsarist Russia by the France of the Emperor Napoleon III. The Romanians framed within the general lines of the

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<sup>260</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *op.cit.*, p.49-56.

Guarantor Powers Convention from 1858<sup>261</sup>, but they confronted Europe with a fait accompli, through the double election of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Russia, willing to become a European force again accepted tacitly what the European powers had decided, supporting the arming of prince Milos Obrenovic's Serbia, an action to which Alexandru Ioan Cuza took part. It seems that the ruler Cuza was also interested in the plans of the new European revolution, initiated by the Italian, Polish, Magyar etc. revolutionaries<sup>262</sup>, abandoned after Louis Napoleon proclaimed himself emperor in 1852, as Napoleon III.

Napoleon III agreed that the United Principalities from 1854 to be ceded to Austria, as compensation for the possible ceding of Venice by the Austrians to Italy. The Austrian diplomacy rejected the idea, because, in this manner, the united Romanians would have fought for independence and Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina would have been lost<sup>263</sup>.

Practically, only that moment, the idea of the restored Dacia of Trajan, as it was called in the era, was again the focus of attention, after the actions of Michael the Brave from 1599-1600.

The disappearance from the political stage of Napoleon III, the Russia-Turkish war from 1877-1878 that led to the obtaining of the Romanian independence, changed the relation of forces on the continent. Romania, dissatisfied with the loss of southern Bessarabia in 1878, would shift direction towards Austro-Hungary (the Empire reorganised itself in 1867), concluding, in 1883, the alliance with the Central Powers, which meant, de facto, the renouncing to the possible union with Transylvania, until a new favourable context.

Transylvania also found its way, trying, through the Uniate from 1699-1701 to build another recognised political elite. "Supplex Libellus" and "Supplex Libellus Walachorum" are two fundamental petitions elaborated by the Romanian elite, of uniate confession (Greek-catholic). Along with them, it should be remembered the role of that cultural movement of national regeneration, called "Școala Ardeleană" (The Transylvanian School) that wanted to promote the valences of the Napoleonic ideas from Europe, and to apply the Romanian national needs<sup>264</sup>.

Avram Iancu, the exponential character of the Revolution from 1848 in Transylvania tried to get Transylvania out of the influence of the Magyars, even paying the price of becoming closer to Wien. The forty-eighters from Ardeal

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<sup>261</sup> Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român*, Univers Enciclopedic Press, Bucharest, 1997, p. 230.

<sup>262</sup> Béla Borsi-Kálmán, *Au berceau de la nation roumaine moderne - Dans le miroir hongrois*, Editions de sa archives contemporaines, Paris, 2018, p.46.

<sup>263</sup> Sorin Damean, *Carol I al României 1866-1881*, Paideea Press, Bucharest, 2000, p. 56.

<sup>264</sup> D. Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, 1967 edition, Editura Științifică Press, Bucharest, 1967, p. 493-509.

continued the fight, and, gradually, the elite from Transylvania divided into “passivists” and “activists”. The first, whose apogee was represented by the Memorandum<sup>265</sup>, were considering that they do not need to collaborate with the Austro-Hungarian government, seeking support over the mountains, while the others were saying that they have to become involved in the decisional act, in order to contribute to the emancipation of the Romanian nation. In 1906, Aureliu Popovici was imagining a possible federalisation of Transylvania, in which Transylvania was an autonomous principality, in which the Romanian nationality and the orthodox confession would be acknowledged<sup>266</sup>.

In 1912-1913, Romania was practically detaching from the Triple Alliance, joining the second Balkan war, against Bulgaria and settling the Peace of Bucharest from 1913. In 1914, Tsar Nicholas II paid a visit to Constanța, where he tested the idea of Romania getting close to Russia, starting from the point when the relations had become cold in, 1878-1880.

In the period 1914-1916, the initiative of Russia to play, before the Romanians, the card of Transylvania (the acknowledging of the historical right of Romania over Transylvania) had the expected effect and Romania joined the war on the side of the Entente, against the Central Powers. The defeat of Romania in 1916, the resistance from 1917, the retreat of Russia, affected by the revolution, from World War I, the separate peace with the Central Powers, signed in May 1918 by Romania, the re-declaring of war in November 1918, the actions of the Romanian Army and the Romanian Government from Iași in Bessarabia, in December 1917-February 1918, the capitulation of Germany on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1918, led to the collapse of the European empires and the emerging of states-nations. Finally, in 1918, 318 years after the unifying action of Michael the Brave, there could be mentioned Great Romania.

Although the Principalities always had a delay confronted to Europe, from the above explained reasons, there ought to be remarked the fact that the politicians and the military men from the Principalities were permanently connected to the great events of the era. Thus, the popular uprising of Horea, Cloșca and Crișan was contemporary to the French Revolution, the end of the Independence War of the British colonies from North America, and the revolution from 1821 framed within the world context that included the national freedom movements from Europe and Latin America.

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<sup>265</sup> Corneliu Mihail Lungu, *Diplomația europeană și Mișcarea Memorandistă 1892-1896*, The State Archives of Romania, Bucharest, 1995, p.78-80.

<sup>266</sup> Constantin Schifirneț, *Aurel C. Popovici despre organizarea statală federalistă a națiunilor*, în *Geneza modernă a ideii naționale*, Albatros Press, Bucharest, 2001, p. 155–183.

The Romanian Principalities registered periods of both progress and regress, due to the often changes of internal and external political status, the prejudicing, without a legal reason, of the internal autonomy, provisioned through the Capitulations that the Ottoman side never contested.

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