



VLAD GEORGESCU

IDEILE POLITICE
ȘI ILUMINISMUL
ÎN PRINCIPATELE
ROMÂNE

Vlad Georgescu

**Political Ideas
and
the Enlightenment
in the
Romanian Principalities**

(1750 – 1831)

Lucrarea își propune să prezinte evoluția ideilor politice din Țara Românească și Moldova în răstimpul cuprins între mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea și anul adopțării Regulamentelor organice (1831), adică perioada cunoscută sub numele de „epocă a luminilor”. Cercetarea, întemeiată pe izvoare variate — proiecte de reformă, scrieri istorice și literare, texte juridice, etc. — a pornit de la analiza concepțiilor asupra omului și societății, pentru a trece apoi la studierea modului în care înțelegeau cărturarii români ai vremii problema formelor de guvernământ, a conducerii statului. O atenție specială s-a acordat concepțiilor privind statutul internațional al Principatelor, strădaniei lor pentru obținerea independenței și a creării unui stat românesc unitar modern; idealului național și patriotic, așa cum a fost el înțeles de cărturarii studiați, l-a fost închinat un capitol special.

Lucrarea pune în lumină o gândire politică extrem de complexă și dinamică care va duce nu numai la o mai bună înțelegere a iluminismului românesc dar și la stabilirea mai riguroasă a izvoarelor gândirii generației de la 1848.

I

D. lui profesor

Engel Stoenescu,

cu o fire de recunostinta si respectuasa.

ofertina,

VLAD GEORGESCU

i. Hied profesor

POLITICAL IDEAS

AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT

IN THE

ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES

(1750—1831)

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CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	7
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PART I

CRISIS OF A FEUDAL SOCIETY

Crisis of the socio-economic basis and of the political structure	19
The rise of criticism	30

PART II

THE WRITERS AND THE SOURCES OF THEIR THOUGHT

The writers	47
Romanian sources	59
European dynamism	65
Southeast European elements	75

PART III

SOCIO-POLITICAL IDEAS

Views on man and society	83
The social structure	93
Political structure. Forms of government	104
The theory and practice of state leadership	124
The international status and the problem of sovereignty	146
The new patriotic and national ideal	170
<i>Conclusions</i>	189
<i>Bibliography</i>	199
<i>Index</i>	223

INTRODUCTION

Historiography

In the long succession of centuries which constitute the chronological background of Romanian history, the 18th century though not altogether ignored, has been discussed more superficially and interpreted less comprehensively. In contrast to the brilliance of the 17th century and the impressive achievements of the 19th century, the culture of the 18th century appears at first glance devoid of originality, bending under the weight of foreign and feudal oppression which would not allow the spirit to soar, to be creative.

At a very early period, the history of the 18th century became the object of a fierce polemic the central point of which was the character and role of the Phanariot regime in Romanian development. Thus, in *Mișcarea literară din Țara Românească în secolul al XVIII-lea* (1869), Alexandru Odobescu looked upon the 18th century as an “epoch of sore distress” during which “The Principalities were overcome under the humiliating and denationalizing yoke of the Greek princes”. According to Odobescu the Greek cultural domination hindered the development of the Romanian culture and language.

On the other hand, A. D. Xenopol’s estimates were less biased and more critical and he pointed out both the negative and positive points of this troubled century. He was the first historian to state that the beginning of the Phanariot epoch was not in 1711—1716, as there had been Greek princes and high officials in the Principalities even before that period. Xenopol felt that the Phanariots were only continuing a process of decline which had started long before, during the time of Matei Basarab (1633—1654) and Vasile Lupu (1634—1653). This decline had strong internal causes, primarily of a social nature.¹

But, despite this partial “rehabilitation” of the Phanariots, Xenopol nevertheless agreed that during their rule, the country experienced “the

¹ A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria românilor*, VIII, pp. 138—139; IX, p. 5.

lowest degree of political decay of the Romanian people.” The economy was unable to progress, the morals and manners were orientalized, and, the Phanariot element was the “last and heaviest link in the chain of the Turkish oppression.”²

The opinions of Xenopol on the place and role of Greek culture in the Principalities are contradictory. On the one hand, he spoke of the danger of the “suppression” of Romanian culture, a danger more serious than the domination of Slavism; but on the other hand, he held that the Greek language and culture “refined and polished the intelligence” of the Romanians thereby facilitating contacts between them and the West. Xenopol was inclined to grant great importance to a French influence on the culture of the Principalities, to such an extent that he believed that “la civilisation entière roumaine est due à l’imitation de la civilisation française” and that the entire modernization and Europeanization had a starting point in the contact between Romanian society and French values.³ P. Eliade expressed similar opinion in two works that are rich in information but lacking in original interpretation.⁴

The research carried on by V. A. Urechea certainly enriched our knowledge of the Phanariot epoch, but his conclusions generally followed the line opened by Xenopol. Like Xenopol, Urechea pointed out that princes of Greek extraction had also ruled before 1711, that princes of Romanian extraction mounted the throne after that date, and that if a Phanariot epoch ever existed, it began after 1774 with the support of Russia.⁵

Unlike V. A. Urechea, who was particularly concerned with political and economic aspects, the studies of C. Erbiceanu dealt mostly with problems of culture. Erbiceanu agreed that the Phanariot epoch was a time of political and economic decline, but he believed that from a cultural point of view the Greek presence played a progressive role, by contributing to the revival, to Europeanization.⁶ N. Iorga, who at the beginning of his activity, used extremely strong language against the Phanariots and their influence on the Prin-

² See *Societatea și moravurile în timpul fanarioților*, Arhiva, 1 (1889); *Starea economică a Țărilor Române în epoca fanariotă*, Arhiva, 2 (1889); *Ideile conducătoare în dezvoltarea poporului român*, Arhiva, 6 (1890); *Originile partidului național în România*, Analele Academiei Române, M.S.I. II/8, 1905–1906.

³ See *Ideile conducătoare*, passim, *Istoria Românilor*, IX, p. 6; *L’influence intellectuelle de la France en Roumanie* (1914), p. 205.

⁴ *De l’influence française sur l’esprit public en Roumanie* (1898), *Histoire de l’esprit public en Roumanie*, I–II (1904–1914).

⁵ *Istoria Românilor*, I, p. 1, 5.

⁶ *Priviri istorice și literare asupra epocii fanariote*, M.S.I., II/24, 1901.

cialities, changed this opinion in *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea* (1901), in which he resumed and enlarged upon Xenopol's interpretations aiming at including the Phanariot epoch in the natural course of development of the Romanian people. This interpretation, present in *Istoria Românilor*, is most clearly put forth in the article *Au fost Moldova și Țara Românească țări supuse fanarioților?* (Were Moldavia and Wallachia Countries Held in Subjection by the Phanariots?), published in 1937. Iorga held that the idea of disparaging the Phanariots was new and not Romanian, and that the Phanariot princes did not consider themselves the beginners of a new regime, but invariably tried to "become part of the country's history." According to Iorga "it were these foreigners who buried Slavonism," so they possess uncommon cultural merits. On these grounds and based on the fact that the Mavrocordats were related to the natives, Iorga believed that until 1774 the Phanariot regime actually meant only a prolongation of the former state of affairs.

D. Russo wrote in *Elenismul în România* (1912), which though not the most interesting, is at any rate his most illustrative work, that the Phanariot epoch was a period of cultural progress and civilization mainly due to the Greek influence; he spoke of "the overwhelming influence exerted by the Greek culture on the Romanian" and believed that if the results of this influence were not more striking, it was due to the unreceptive native environment, particularly the conservatism of the boyars.

In addition to historians, literary historians, and philosophers, sociologists too, were concerned with the problems of the 18th century. Among them were C. Rădulescu-Motru, G. Ibrăileanu, E. Lovinescu. In *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, 3 vols. (1924—1925), Lovinescu approached these problems from the broad viewpoint of the formation of a modern civilization; the idea underlying his work was that up to the 19th century, that is, including the period under consideration, the Romanians lived in a cultural environment that did not correspond to their Latin structure and that there could be no real progress until they had completely joined the cultural European community.⁷

Rădulescu-Motru expressed original opinions in *Psihologia poporului român* (1937), *Conștiința etnicului și conștiința națională*, *Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, vol. 4, (1942), and *Etnicul românesc* (1942). Motru was one of the few thinkers who attempted to define the mental traits of the Romanian people, to discover the factors that influenced Romania's formation and line of evo-

⁷ See especially vol. III; Ibrăileanu expresses the same idea in *Spiritul critic în cultura română* (1922).

lution, and to study from a philosophic point of view the stages of development of the national consciousness; but, unlike his predecessors and contemporaries who looked upon Western culture as the sole model to follow and whom integration with this culture was not only the outcome of a natural course but the only way to fulfilment, Motru held that the Romanian mental type was far from tallying with the Western and the modernization process at the beginning of the 19th century meant, in fact, the beginning of decline and not of progress, due to its breach with tradition. It is clear that such an interpretation made the Western values themselves questionable.

It was also in the pre-war period that some works of literary history were published, among which were those of S. Pușcariu and G. Călinescu, which expressed many conflictive views. In *Istoria literaturii române* (1920) Pușcariu considered that the flourishing of Hellenism represented a decline of the national culture, while for Călinescu “the Phanariot epoch contributed to the desorientalization” . . . “as men of Greek culture, they were Europeans, as simple Romanians, they were people of Oriental makeup.”⁸

There is no doubt that the work of D. Popovici, *La littérature roumaine à l'époque des lumières* (1945), is still the most valuable contribution to the understanding of Romanian culture in the 18th century, and, at the same time, the most serious attempt to include the Romanian cultural phenomenon within the movement of ideas in the period of the Enlightenment. Popovici believed that the Romanian Enlightenment covered the years 1779—1829 and represented the first stage in the formation process of modern Romanian culture. The merits of Greek culture are often underlined, while the idyllic picture of the spiritual fraternity between the two nations, of the fusion of their outstanding intellectual personalities dominates the entire work.

It was in 1945 that Professor A. Oțetea published his work *Tudor Vladimirescu și mișcarea eteristă în Principatele Române*. It comprised a severe characterization of the Phanariot regime and concluded that “there was no question of any rational management and of any cultural policy. The Phanariot regime which our whole ruling class associated with was a system of government which sucked the very marrow out of a defenseless peasantry and drained the country's very sources of production.” In subsequent studies, as well as in the treatise *Istoria României*, vol. III (1964), A. Oțetea enlarged upon these ideas, dwelling on the fact that the difficult condition of the country was not due to the foreign princes but to the feudal character of production and to the conservative character of the ruling classes.

⁸ G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1941).

In the same work, in the chapter “*Cultura în Țările Române în veacul al XVIII-lea*” (Culture in the Romanian Lands in the 18th century), professor M. Berza considered that “the setting up of the Turkish-Phanariot regime in Moldavia and Wallachia did not represent a deviation from the natural development of Romanian culture and even less so an alienation,” an interpretation reiterated in other syntheses.⁹

Foreign historians have, generally speaking, avoided the problems of the 18th century, preferring to deal with other, less intricate periods of Romanian history. Those who did not avoid it were usually interested in rehabilitating the Phanariot regime and pointing out its positive aspects. For example, according to M. Botzaris the Romanians owe the Phanariots “their earliest written laws, the encouragement of education, the arts and letters as well as the introduction of maize growing.”¹⁰ W. Th. Elwert whose conception of the epoch is revealed by the title of an article¹¹, R. Florescu in *The Phanariot regime in the Danubian Principalities*, Balkan Studies, vol. 2 (1968) and C. Tsourcas, in *Les débuts de l’enseignement philosophique et de la libre pensée dans les Balkans* (1968) are also engaged in a partial rehabilitation.

We thus find that in the main works of a general character devoted to the period between 1711 and 1821 the principal aspects raised for discussion were the essence and the character of the Phanariot regime and the part played by Greek culture in the Principalities. Before Popovici nothing had been written about the Enlightenment, and though in recent times this term has been frequently used, its definition and use have not yet been effected.

We have now to further review the studies devoted to *socio-political thought*. Though there is no general work on this problem as yet, there are several studies devoted to specific problems; for example the problem of the formation of the national consciousness and the development of the ideas of national union and independence were granted great importance. Among works devoted to these problems are N. Iorga’s studies, *L’origine des idées d’indé-*

⁹ *Istoria gândirii sociale și filozofice din România* (1964), G. Ivașcu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1969); M. Constantinescu, *Istoria României — Compendiu* (1970); *Istoria poporului român* (1970). P. P. Panaitescu, however, believes that due to the control exerted by the princes and boyars “no real progress in thinking and the form of expression can be detected until the end of the century,” *Istoria literaturii române*, I (1964).

¹⁰ *Visions balcaniques dans la préparation de la révolution grecque* (1962); it would be superfluous to insist on the fact that both the written laws and maize growing were known in the Principalities long before the Phanariots.

¹¹ *Zur Griechisch-Rumänischen Symbiose der Phanariotenzeit*, Beiträge zur Südost-europa-Forschungen (1966).

pendance balkanique (1927) and *Origine et développement de l'idée nationale surtout dans le monde oriental* (1934) and Gh. Brătianu's *Origine et formation de l'unité roumaine* (1943). For the majority of researchers, the formation of the national consciousness meant primarily, the development of the consciousness of Latinity, the ethnical consciousness, and its transformation from a scientific concept into an *idée-force*, under the influence of Western values, and particularly French ones.

The analysis of this process was resumed, extended, and understood in its entire complexity in studies written in the last ten years. These include E. Stănescu's *Premizele medievale ale conștiinței naționale românești, Studii*, 5 (1964) and *Roumanie. Histoire d'un mot*, *Balkan Studies*, I (1969); Al. Dușu's *National and European Consciousness in the Romanian Enlightenment*, *Studies on Voltaire*, 5 (1967); and V. Al. Georgescu's *La philosophie des lumières et la formation de la conscience nationale dans le sud-est de l'Europe*, *Association Internationale d'Etudes Sud-Est Européennes, Bulletin*, 1—2 (1969). Owing to these studies the formation process of the national consciousness is comparatively well known, though a number of aspects, mostly of a legal nature, have not been dealt with yet; we refer, for example, to the evolution of the concept of *pămîntean* (native) and to the appearance of the concepts of citizenship and nationality.

Almost all other aspects of the socio-political thought have been entirely ignored. With few exceptions, such as N. Iorga's *Le despotisme éclairé dans les Pays Roumains*, *Bulletin of the International Comitee of Historical Sciences*, 2 (1937); D. V. Barnoschi, *Originile democrației române* (1922); and I. G. Vîntu, *Primele proiecte de organizare a Principatelor Române* (1941), researchers did not give their attention to problems connected with the ideas regarding the political structure and the forms of government. The same may be said of the conceptions on the social structure, except for the studies of Fl. Constantiniu, *Quelques aspects de la politique agraire des phanariotes*, *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 4 (1965) and V. Al. Georgescu and Em. Popescu, *La législation agraire de Valachie, 1775—1782* (1970), or on theoretical and practical problems of state leadership. We may, therefore, consider that, despite numerous studies on the epoch, research on socio-political thought is still scanty and that a number of aspects of this thought need to be studied.

Sources

The difficulty of writing a synthesis on the political thought consists, first of all, in the want of specific sources; there are few works specifically

devoted to these problems. This has made it necessary to extend the investigation to all categories of writings and sources.

Writers

As the bibliography indicates, the investigation is based primarily on the works of 79 writers. Some are authors of political writings, such as Mihail Cantacuzino, Ion Cantacuzino, Ion Tăutu, Simion Marcovici, while other of literary, juridical, theological, historical, and philosophical writings, and still others authors of notes, commentaries, and letters. The investigations in the archives have resulted in the establishment of the authorship of a considerable number of writings, to this point considered anonymous, and in some cases have led even to the identification of authors of political writings, until now unknown. However, as we have already pointed out, there are no numerous texts by authors, and this has compelled us to extend the investigation to a wider category of sources which we shall discuss.

Political texts

To this category belong, in the first place, the reform projects, drafted individually or collectively. The existence of 208 such writings has considerably enriched our knowledge of political ideas. Due to their problems which were extremely extensive and varied, these petitions and reform projects were actually the main form of expression of political ideas and, implicitly, the main basis on which new ideas were formulated.

Apart from treatises on politics and draft reforms, in the Romanian Principalities there circulated an entire political literature which, though it did not approach problems from a general, theoretical standpoint, contained a great amount of material on the ideas, mentality and reactions of contemporaries to events, politics, and problems of Romanian society. Pamphlets, proclamations, and the speeches, some anonymous and others delivered by well-known scholars, belong to this category.

Legal and administrative texts

These writings represent complementary sources without which political thought so concerned with the concrete as the Romanian was, would be difficult to understand. The study of such texts is also necessary for it enables us to follow the extent to which general concepts influenced the real situation and the extent to which we can thus speak of their finality. Thus, the critical editions of the codes drafted beginning with the second half of the 18th century

have been most useful; so also are the juridical and administrative deeds adopted in various circumstances, whose preambles are often rich in political ideas.

Historical literature

This is a very good source especially for the understanding of the conceptions of national sovereignty and national consciousness in the Principalities, so much the more as most of the authors of political writings had a thorough knowledge of the Romanian and Southeast European past. For this reason the *Istoriile* of Mihail Cantacuzino, Enăchiță Văcărescu, and Dionisie Fotino and the historical studies of Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Naum Râmniceanu, and Ion Tăutu have not only a scientific value, but a political one too, becoming instruments of arguments for the national cause. The "theory of capitulations," manufactured in its modern form in 1772, precisely in order to justify the Romanians' claims to autonomy or independence, is the most illustrative example in this respect.

Philosophical literature

Though there are fewer works in this area, the philosophical literature nevertheless contains interesting ideas, which can contribute to our understanding of the mentality of the age regarding more general problems such as the place and sense of man in the world and the relationship between man and God. Interesting views on these problems are found in the theological writings, though the majority of these do not exceed the limits of a very Orthodox dogmatism. A number of prefaces to these writings are more important, especially when written by outstanding scholars such as Bishop Chesarie of Râmnic and Metropolitans Leon Gheuca, Iacob Stamate and Veniamin Costache.

Literary texts

Literary works should also be taken into account if we wish to understand the various aspects of Romanian political thought, especially the reaction to various events, the state of affairs, and political personalities. Militant prose and poetry, aspiring to certain ideals and political aims, is a precious source as is philosophical poetry also. Among these works are the poems of Văcărescu, illustrative of the frame of mind of the poet's generation, and those of Ion Cantacuzino, Râmniceanu, Alexandru Beldiman, C. Conachi, and many others. To the same category of literary texts belong the notes on the

events of the time at home and abroad; the travel notes, those of Barbu Stirbei (1797), Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu (1818), and Dinicu Golescu (1826), seem to be the most interesting as well as the private correspondence of various scholars and politicians. The investigation of the Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Ion Tăutu, Mihail Sturdza archives, very little known until now, has provided precious additional information.



Having outlined the background of the problem, it would be appropriate to discuss the way in which we intend to deal with the history of political ideas in the Romanian Principalities during the Enlightenment. The term political thought is used in a broad sense based on conceptions of man, nature, the state, and society. It has therefore been considered necessary to organize the material into three parts — one devoted to society, the second to the writers, and the third to the ideas of these people, which were designed to transform society and guide it toward new and theoretically better horizons.

Chronologically, the work covers the period from 1750 to 1831, the two limits marking, in our opinion, the moment of the qualitative transformation of political ideas, as well as a change in culture, mentality, and social psychology. 1750 not only marks the year of the first direct translation of a French book into Romanian, but the beginning of a new attitude to the Phanariot regime and to the values of culture and civilization dominated by the Ottomans. By the year 1831, when the Organic Regulations were adopted, most of the proposed projects beginning with those of 1769 had been carried out. After that date political thought was directed toward other aims, though it did not lose certain ideas inherited from the period prior to the Regulations. We should add that political ideas in this period evolved against the background of the disintegration of feudalism and the appearance of the new capitalist relations.

The present study does not propose to investigate the entire history of Romanian political thought, but only that in Moldavia and Wallachia. Though we have excluded Transylvania, whose cultural movement is at any rate far better known among other facts due to L. Blaga's excellent essay *Gîndirea românească din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea* (1966), we did not overlook the constant, direct contact between the three countries or the similar ideas that sprung up on either side of the Carpathians. On the contrary, they have been emphasized and compared every time an opportunity presented itself.

We have preferred to deal with our subject by following the evolution of the main concepts rather than by studying the writers monographically. We have had to do so, first at all, because of the documentary material, as few writers wrote works of a general character, referring to all the fields of political thought. We must also point out that what interested us in the first place was the general, theoretical aspects rather than those of practical politics. The reform policy interested us only to the extent that it had a theoretical justification or that it represented the putting into practice of a number of general conceptions. This will be clearly outlined in the chapter on conceptions on the social structure in which the problem of agrarian relations, vital to Romanian history, is nonetheless mentioned very seldom. The lack of discussion in this area is due to the fact that this problem was not usually included in the political programs; it was seldom theorized, never exceeding as a rule the importance of a problem of social history.

Romanian social and political thought during the Enlightenment possessed a very marked, concrete character. Its problems were strongly influenced by the immediate reality, and it was more concerned with the political life in the Principalities than with general concepts. There were, of course, general concepts, but they usually provided the basis, the theoretical foundation, for concepts connected with the requirements of the society in Moldavia and Wallachia. The social and especially the political ideas were used for urgent purposes and for the ideals of a group, a party, a class, and at times of all Romanian society. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage, the latter more obvious for those more interested in theory rather than practice. However, it has the advantage of facilitating the study of the political ideas in close connection with the entire course of Romanian society. We have therefore felt at times inclined to try to understand the epoch in the aggregate, to characterize it, and to outline its type in the succession of centuries and eras that make up the history of the Romanian people.

The task is no easy one, and we are fully aware of the imperfections of the study we have undertaken. We however express our hope that by bringing forward for discussion documentary material unpublished until now and by expressing new opinions, this work will nevertheless contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of a problem, of a period of great importance for Romanian spirituality.

I could not have engaged in this investigation without the aid and understanding of the Institute of South-East European Studies of Bucharest which allowed me three years for its elaboration. I must first express my gratitude to Professor Mihail Berza, the director of the institute, whose observations and opinions have always been of great help; and I thank Professors Stefan

Pascu, Valentin Al. Georgescu, and Eugen Stănescu for the trouble they took in reading the manuscript and in providing me with valuable suggestions.

Finally, I cannot conclude these lines of thanks without expressing the deep gratitude I feel to Professor Eugen Weber of the University of California at Los Angeles, who was the first to read my manuscript and to advise me to have it published in the United States and to Professor Stephen Fischer-Galati of the University of Colorado whose friendship and understanding made possible the putting into practice Professor Weber's advice; I am equally grateful to Mrs. Mary Lăzărescu who translated the manuscript into English and Mrs. Helen Gregory who revised it and made acceptable for the American reader a rather difficult text.

PART I
CRISIS OF A FEUDAL SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

CRISIS OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASIS AND OF THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

International Background

Romanian political thought like the history of the Romanian countries in the 18th century developed against a background of international relations fundamentally different from those existing in the previous century. First of all there was a considerable change in the character of Romano-Ottoman relations. Despite the Porte's ever more obvious decline, it succeeded, through the setting up of the Phanariot regime (1711/1716), in transforming Moldavia's and Wallachia's relative independence into a state of relative dependence and thus changing the natural evolution of the Principalities. The state's external function was completely restricted while the internal policy was orientalized both in structure and mentality and turned into an instrument of oppression and plunder of a kind the Romanians had never known before. This led implicitly to changes in the essence and form of expression of political thought.

But the change in the character of Romano-Ottoman relations represented only one aspect of the transformations that occurred in the international relations of Central, East, and Southeast Europe. A second aspect, as equally important in terms of consequences, was the appearance of new political forces and the establishment of the center of gravity of the Eastern question in the Balkan region and the Danubian basin. In the 18th century the Principalities had new neighbors, since Poland, with which Romanian medieval history had been so closely connected, had disappeared from the political map of Europe. At the Eastern frontier of the Principalities Poland's place had been taken by the young and active empire of the Romanovs, while at the North and West the presence of the Habsburg empire was making itself increasingly felt.

In the epoch we are dealing with, the fate of the Principalities depended to a great extent on the ratio of forces between the three neighboring powers — the Turks, the Russians, and the Austrians — each of whom intended to draw the Romanians into its own sphere of influence. This situation was

reflected in Romanian political thought which constantly sought solutions to insure the maintenance of the state and its territorial integrity and which played upon Russo-Austrian-Turkish ambitions contradicting with a view to extending their own rights and liberties.

The internationalization of the Romanian problem, within the general compass of the Eastern problem, had considerable practical consequences. Steering their course adroitly through the intricate network of interests and contradictions of the three great powers, the Romanians succeeded in bringing up their viewpoint at all international congresses and conferences, and in obtaining at Kuciuk-Kainardgi (1774), Shishtov (1791), Jassy (1792), Bucharest (1812) and Andrianopole (1829) the guarantee of almost complete national autonomy, which such once powerful countries as Hungary and Poland no longer enjoyed.

This was the complex international background against which Romanian political and social thought developed during the 18th century and whose concrete forms will be analyzed in the following chapters.

Evolution of Economy

In the 18th century the economic structure of Moldavia and Wallachia was generally of a feudal character. Nevertheless after 1774 the capitalist forms developed rapidly, speeding up the disintegration process of the feudal social system and producing, as a direct result of the clash between the old and new elements, a manifest crisis of the economic structure.

The crisis phenomena were emphasized by the extremely hard conditions under which the economy of the Principalities developed. We must first of all recall that the many wars fought on Romanian territory created a tremendous drag on the Romanian economy. The enormous amount of grain that was commandeered and the requisitioning of cattle, means of conveyance, and manpower not only deprived the population of its means of subsistence but profoundly prejudiced many branches of production, especially agriculture, which were deprived of the indispensable elements of a normal development.¹

¹ Between 1769 and 1829 the Austrians, the Russians, and the Turks fought five wars on the territory of the Principalities. During these 60 years, the Romanians spent 19 in a state of war under foreign occupation, which drained the country of its natural resources and crushed the country under the burden of providing the armies with supplies. During the 1806–1812 Russo-Turkish war, for example, the Wallachian taxpayer was compelled to pay 14 lei a month for the maintenance of an occupation army, while the Moldavians paid, for the same reason, in 1810 alone, the incredible amount of 5,830,300 lei. We recall as a comparison that the Organic Regulations established an individual tax of 30 lei per year and that in 1810 Moldavia's budget was 1,443,047 lei.

Yet, it was not the Russo-Austrian-Turkish wars that were the main obstacle to the development of the country's economy, but the unprecedented aggravation of the Ottoman oppression which demanded heavy pecuniary obligations to the Principalities. The most burdensome of these obligations was the buying and confirmation of the throne. Considerable amounts of payment were sent to Constantinople under various forms of tribute or as additional and unexpected exactions. In many cases it was not only the possession of the throne, but the very life of the prince that depended on the honoring of these exactions: the country's economy incurred great losses also because of the obligation to provide supplies.²

The Ottoman domination further aggravated the people with the plundering committed by the Phanariots. Alexandru Suțu, the last Phanariot prince of Wallachia, came to Bucharest in 1819 with a retinue of 820 persons, 80 of whom were his relatives, and with bills of exchange amounting to 5,000,000 piastres. The consul Pini estimated the amount lost in "legal" forms by Wallachia at 63,000,000 piastres during the reigns of Ioan Caragea and Alexandru Suțu (1812—1821),³

Under these difficult conditions of development, the index of demographical increase in the 18th century was very low; in fact some contemporaries — Raicevich (1788), Langeron (1791), Parrant (1798) — thought the index was decreasing. This decrease in population growth brought about a lag in certain economic branches, especially in agriculture which was deprived of manpower. No doubt the main cause was the abusive Phanariot fiscal policy, as well as the frequent wars on the territory of the Principalities. After the removal of the Phanariots in 1821 and the creation, through the treaty of Adrianopole (1829), of a climate of stability and safety, the demographical index showed a rapid increase which was particularly evident in the plain areas which were in a bad economic state.⁴

² As result of the requisitionings, and of the difference between the price in force and the market price, Wallachia lost between 1812 and 1819 the amount of 21,168,558 piastres, and Moldavia 12,000,000 piastres, A. Vianu, *Pierderile suferite de Moldova în anii 1812—1816 la furniturile către Poartă*, Romanoslavica, XI (1965), p. 323. The Russian consul Pini estimated the amount of grain sent to the Porte by the Principalities on the eve of the 1821 revolution at 1,000,000 chilas; and the English traveler Wilkinson at 1,500,000 Constantinopole chilas, *Istoria României*, III, p. 667.

³ *Istoria României*, III, p. 617, 858; A. Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu*, p. 35; the Turkish-Phanariot plunder and the enormous amounts sent out of the country hindered in the first place the primitive accumulation of capital, a process indispensable to the development of the new capitalist relations.

⁴ In 1830 the population of the Principalities was 3,000,000 inhabitants, *Istoria României*, III, p. 674.

During this period and up to 1829 the main sources of wealth continued to be agriculture and particularly livestock breeding because of the lower coefficient of risk and the possibility of a safer sale on the foreign market. While feudalism disintegrated, the state of agriculture remained much the same for conditions did not yet lend themselves to the development of an intensive capitalistic agriculture. Due to the state of permanent insecurity and the lack of external outlets, the cultivated areas grew at a very slow rate, and the "explosion" occurred in this department only after 1829 when the Turkish commercial monopoly was abolished.

The rate of industrial development was slow too. There were approximately the same number of factories in the years 1829—1832 as at the end of the 18th century. Capital and skilled labor were scarce, and the sales market limited and insecure. Still, despite difficulties, Bois le Comte recorded that in 1831 in Wallachia there were 1617 factories most of which were turning out foodstuffs and textiles.

In the Romanian economy from 1750 to 1829, the predominant feature was the existence of an "under-production" crisis due in large part to the antiquated structure favored by the foreign rule. This fact must be emphasized because its various aspects represented a permanent concern for political thinkers. It stimulated them to look for solutions and to set forth theories which we shall consider in the following chapters.

Social Classes

In this period the boyars were still the country's main economic and political force, though numerically this class was smaller. With the selling of titles, a device which brought the Phanariot princes large incomes, the number of the boyars grew to a certain extent but in 1832 in Wallachia had not exceeded the percentage of 4.65 per thousand families.

The boyar class in the Principalities was surprisingly uniform from an ethnical point of view. In 1810 a list drawn up of all the boyars in Moldavia (465) mentioned, in a separate column, only 17 Greek boyars; and in Wallachia, according to the almanac of the nobility of Grigore IV Ghica (1822—1828), the number of Greek boyars amounted to 62. This ethnical uniformity accounts, to a great extent, for their national position and for the consistency with which they struggled to set up a unitary independent Romanian state.

Though owners of vast estates, the Romanian boyars were not favored by the Phanariot regime from an economic point of view. Thus the boyars were interested in the restriction or abolishment of foreign domination, the extension of trade, and a more profitable cultivation of the soil. This attitude

became evident in the second half of the 18th century, when the great estates could not be operated at a profit because of the Ottoman and Phanariot domination and thus did not produce the pecuniary income the boyars, a very extravagant class, required. The search for money that ensued perpetuated a hunt after offices which under so corrupt an administrative regime became an inexhaustible source of income, greater than the one resulting from exploitation of the estates. But in this field too, the native boyars came into conflict with the Phanariot princes who resorted to the selling of high offices in order to keep a tight control over the native boyars, to satisfy their own favorites, and, naturally, to secure as large incomes as possible for themselves.

Some of the landed proprietors tried to make profits off their estates by setting up market towns and fairs; others engaged in trade and even became members of commercial companies; some set up manufacturing companies which, lacking means and unprotected by the government, failed very soon. All this leads us to conclude that, from an economic point of view, the boyars were dissatisfied with the conditions under which Romanian society was developing and intended to change these conditions. In fact, most of the boyars who were interested in finding new economic formulas were also at the head of the anti-Ottoman and anti-Phanariot movements and in the first ranks of the struggle for a reform of the state and society.

The peasantry was the country's largest class. Until the Organic Regulations (1831), there was plenty of land and it was at the disposal of anybody willing to work it. The corvée was not burdensome and the price of redeeming was in general, low.⁵ But nevertheless the poverty and suffering of the peasantry were immense and reached limits never seen before. This was due, in the first place, to the corruption of the administrative system and worsened by the Phanariots, the heavy fiscal oppression, and the general condition of continual insecurity. All this tended to disconcert and disorganize the peasants, from an economic and political point of view, so that they had no special political manifestations and contended themselves with actions regarding local economic and social claims.

In this period, the bourgeoisie was still weak and bewildered; its small economic base would not permit it to carry on any independent political action. However, the most active elements realized that the development of capitalism could not be normally achieved under foreign rule, and therefore they joined the forces that were struggling to shake it off, to carry out a general reform of society.

⁵ In Wallachia in 1741 the price paid for one work day was 15 bani; by the end of the century it was established at 1 leu, a price enacted by law by the *Legiuirea Caragea* (the Caragea code) in 1818. As for the corvée, the number of days varied between 3 and 12, but the landed proprietors were unable to enforce the maximum figure before 1831.

The fact that the boyars represented the main economic and political force in the country and that their interests were endangered by the Turko-Phanariot regime accounts for their dynamism and their uninterrupted struggle against this regime which was the main obstacle to progress. The peasantry and the bourgeoisie followed the boyar class, often carrying things further than the boyars' programs, which were very limited from a social point of view. But, generally speaking, the clash between the classes did not assume theoretical forms, and there is no mention anywhere of the peasantry or bourgeoisie claiming political power. These classes acknowledged the leading role of the boyars in the struggle against the foreign rule that was equally detrimental to all classes.

Crisis of the feudal state

In the Phanariot epoch the political subordination of the Principalities to the Porte took on new forms. The setting up of the rule of Phanariot princes, by which means the Porte could control the Principalities more easily, meant a serious violation of Romanian autonomy and an aggravation of the vassalage regime enforced in the 16th century. After the peace of Kuciuk-Kainardgi (1774), these bilateral relations were replaced by international laws, introduced and guaranteed by the big powers. However, despite the international treaties and the numerous hattı-sherifs and firmans of privileges granted by the Porte, the situation in the Principalities worsened, reaching its most acute forms in the last two decades of the Phanariot epoch. The return to the system of native princes (1822) and the Akkerman Convention (1826) greatly contributed to the normalization of the state of affairs, but it was only the treaty of Adrianople (1829) that brought about a real and basic transformation of the international statute of the Principalities.

During the Phanariot epoch the state's external function, so strongly emphasized by Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688—1714) and Prince Dimitrie Cantemir (1710—1711), was completely altered. The Phanariot princes played a comparatively important part in Ottoman diplomatic life. They kept resident envoys in certain European capitals; they acted as the Porte's informers and, in this capacity, often influenced its foreign policy. Still their diplomatic activity was carried on in their capacity as Ottoman officials, and not as Romanian princes. In this period the Principalities had no initiative in foreign policy. They no longer carried on negotiations or concluded treaties. The Porte took upon itself directly these prerogatives, as well as the defense of the country. The result was the transformation of the Principalities into compensation countries. Their territory was negotiated to

suit the interests of the big neighboring countries, and their defense depended upon the ratio of forces between these great powers.

The Phanariot administrative system created a state of permanent crisis for the institutions and, particularly, for the central power.⁶ Their complete dependence on the Porte was pointed out by almost all the foreigners who traveled in the Principalities: "Ils sont dans la dernière dépendance... il ne leur est pas permis de penser à la moindre institution sociale, aux plus légères innovations," wrote the French consul Parrant in 1798.⁷ In order to better supervise its favorites and to drain the Principalities of even more money, the Porte shortened the period the princes were to rule, starting a genuine merry-go-round of princes which exhausted the treasury and made impossible the establishing of any continuity in the administration.⁸

The Phanariot princes lived in a state of permanent insecurity and fear. Many were executed by the Turks; many tasted of the cruelty of jails and exile; many, more cautious, fled the country before the executioner's arrival.⁹ All this made the history of the Phanariot princes a tale of never-ending crimes and sanguinary executions, of endless Eastern intrigues perpetrated by the various rival factions and all aimed at securing the right to drain the Romanian Principalities as best as possible.

The instability and corruption of the princes were the main cause of the instability and corruption of the administrative system during the Phanariot epoch. The prince held absolute authority; the role of the prince's divan was insignificant. Appointments to the divan were made by the prince; and thus this important institution, which varied from prince to prince, was completely

⁶ «... la dégradation résidait dans le fait que ces princes entraînaient ainsi dans la hiérarchie des fonctionnaires de l'empire» reducing the rule «au niveau d'un poste d'avancement pour fonctionnaires turcs», N. Iorga, *L'origine des idées d'indépendance balcanique*, pp. 14–15.

⁷ *Documente privind istoria României*. Colectia E. de Hurmuzaki, Supliment I³ p. 518 (henceforth cited as *Hurmuzaki*).

⁸ In Moldavia between 1359 and 1711 (i.e., 352 years) there reigned 89 hospodars, while from 1711 to 1821 (96 years) there were 36; in Wallachia in 406 years (1310–1716) 86 princes ruled, while from 1716 to 1821 (i.e., 92 years), 39; this means the reduction to less than a half of the term of rule; the 7-year term of rule was introduced only in 1802, and the life term, theoretically, only in 1829.

⁹ Among the princes killed by the Turks were Grigore Callimachi (1769), Grigore III Ghica (1777), Nicolae Mavrogheni (1790), Constantin Hangerli (1799), Alexandru Ypsilanti (1807), Scarlat Callimachi (1821); among the fugitives, Alexandru Mavrocordat Firaris (1787), Ioan Caragea (1818) and Mihai Suțu (1821). In 1800 a manuscript was circulated in Bucharest with the names of the patriarchs, princes, and bishops killed by the Ottomans.

lacking in continuity. The system of annual auction of the high offices resulted in an improvised administrative apparatus, which made correct and stable governing out of the question.

No doubt there were also princes who tried to improve the administrative structure, but, generally speaking, it was impossible to put into practice any reforms and such reforming princes were obliged to bow to the facts. Through its very nature the Turko-Phanariot regime would not permit any structure reforms; they permitted only limited reforms, and even these were difficult to carry out because of the discontinuous character of the government.

The Phanariots disbanded the army of the Principalities leaving the countries unable to withstand the Tartar and Turkish raids.¹⁰ The princes' inability to insure the country's protection provided tragic when, in the first two decades of the 19th century, the attacks of the Turks from the Danube citadels transformed the southern part of Wallachia into a deserted area.¹¹ All this created a state of constant insecurity, which proved equally detrimental to the economy, the social-political life, and the culture. This insecurity brought about the temporary migration of a large number of inhabitants to the highlands areas and even over the border. The Wallachians usually sought shelter across the Carpathians, especially in Braşov and Sibiu, while the Moldavians went to Bukovina and Bessarabia. This "collective emigrations" which first occurred in 1769¹² became gradually more frequent and a mass phenomenon after 1800, with the increasing oppression of the Phanariot regime and the intensification of the struggle aimed at overthrowing it. Thus between 1800 and 1807, almost all the Wallachian boyars followed by large numbers of town populations refuged repeatedly in Braşov. An impressive exodus took place in 1802, when, as a contemporary recorded "only a few of the Romanian natives in the suburbs have stayed on in Bucharest." Dionisie Fotino, an eyewitness of the event, related that "this impressive emigration

¹⁰ The Tartars attacked Moldavia and burnt down the town of Birlad in 1762; the town was to be burnt down again, this time by the Turks in 1784. The last Tartar raid in Moldavia was in 1799. In the notes of contemporaries the Tartar raids were mentioned among the natural calamities such as earthquake.

¹¹ The bands of Pasvant-Oglu, pasha of Vidin, attacked Craiova for the first time in 1799. The years 1800–1802 were particularly difficult when Pasvant-Oglu's men and the imperial troops plundered in turn Wallachia as far as its highlands. Ravaging raids took place in the years 1806–1807 and 1814–1815 too.

¹² Unwilling to collaborate with the generals of Catherine II, 30 big boyars, headed by Enăchiţă Văcărescu, took refuge in Braşov. Massive emigrations of boyars took place in Moldavia in 1777 and 1778, and in Wallachia during the reign of N. Mavrogheni (1786–1790).

of the people, running away like flocks of sheep running away for fear of the wolves, was terrifying.”¹³

The longest and largest emigration took place in 1821 when the fear of the Turks, the Hetairists, and Tudor Vladimirescu forced 17,000 Wallachians to settle temporarily on the border of Transylvania. After 1822, refugeing as a reaction of physical preservation disappeared; there was only emigration for political reasons, which was in any case limited to restricted circles of politicians and did not tell on the country's economic and social life.

The Turko-Phanariot domination not only exerted a negative influence on the economic and social life of the country but also acted as an obstacle to the normal evolution of Romanian culture and civilization. The way of life acquired Eastern traits, while the customs, manners, morals and dress became orientalized. Social life took refuge in the princes' and the boyars' residences, which were surrounded by walls and permanently in a state of alarm.¹⁴

The crisis of the economic and social structures and the political regime produced a state of strain and discontent — a practical, critical, and theoretical hostility — which brought into question the entire system of values underlying society in the Principalities. This shall be discussed briefly before tackling the detailed analysis of its socio-political program.

¹³ Dionisie Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, II (1859), pp. 99, 210. In 1802 official Austrian sources estimate the number of Romanian refugees in Braşov at 3,048, and those in Sibiu at 2,375. New emigrations, almost as large, took place in 1806 and 1807.

¹⁴ Unlike the epoch of Constantin Brâncoveanu which showed a tendency toward open and comfortable residences, the Phanariot epoch represented a return to strengthened settlements with regard to civil buildings. The concern for security preceded utilitarian and aesthetic considerations. The manor houses were fortified and in Oltenia there appeared *culas* (two-storeyed buildings with towers and small windows used as a refuge and place of defense). This exerted a strong influence on the Romanian way of life and rendered difficult the penetration of modern civilisation.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF CRITICISM

Practical aspects : social and political movements

The aggravation of the Ottoman domination on the one hand and the intensification of feudal oppression on the other led to the sharpening of conflicts between the classes. The protests and discontent of the peasantry were expressed in the usual forms, but at a higher degree of intensity. The non-observance of obligations to the feudal masters, flight from one estate to another or even abroad, and increased petitioning activity represented the most widespread forms of opposition. Local uprisings occurred, too, and were the prelude to the popular movement led by Tudor Vladimirescu (1821). Still it was only the year 1821 that marked a turning point in the psychology of the peasantry, replacing the relative passivity they had shown so far by an aggressiveness and dynamism never witnessed before: "I cannot order the peasantry," wrote the superintendent of an estate in 1821, "for they are no longer what they used to be, as you used to know them. Now they are the masters and I am very afraid of them." The spirit of revolt continued to manifest itself after 1821 too, breaking out violently in Moldavia in 1831 when the government was compelled to call in the army to suppress the peasants' uprisings.

The unrest and agitation of the town bourgeoisie, caused both by the fiscal policy and by the tendency of the ruling princes and their favorites to monopolize the estates or even the precincts, were also very strong.

There was no end to lawsuits between the townpeople and the princes and boyars, lasting in certain cases dozen of years; when justice was denied then, the townpeople's discontent turned in violence and resulted in open uprisings, such as those in Bucharest (1753, 1764, 1765), Tîrgoviște (1820), and Jassy (1759 and 1819). The movements were well planned, the townsmen having at times set up real organizations. We know, for example, of the oath taken in 1807 by the inhabitants of Piatra-Neamț who promised themselves "to stand together united, in all the troubles that may occur."

The spirit of discontent of the townpeople reached a climax also in 1821, when the atmosphere in Bucharest was so strained that “no one dared to walk around wearing fine clothes, for after looking at those wearing them as if they were wild beasts, they insulted them, calling them by the scornful popular name of *ciocoi* (upstart).”

The social movements were a practical, concrete aspect of the discontent that had spread through Romanian society, but more often than not they were of a spontaneous, non-organized nature and lacked any theoretical basis or justification. However, political movements and, particularly, those organized by the natives against the Turko-Phanariot rule were entirely different in character. Their existence reflected a remarkable consistency and political tenacity, an uninterrupted struggle for the attaining of their national ideals.

The earliest anti-Phanariot political movement that purposed the re-establishment of the native princes dates from 1716, followed in the years 1736—1739 by the action of the brothers Constantin and Dumitrașcu Cantemir who intended to gain back the country’s independence with the aid of Russia. After 1750 the political movements of the natives became more frequent. In 1753 in Moldavia they were aimed at Prince Constantin Racoviță, and in Wallachia at Prince Matei Ghica. A violent uprising led by two brothers, Ștefan and Barbu Văcărescu, and by Constantin Dudescu was also aimed at C. Racoviță, who in June 1753 had been transferred to Bucharest. This movement whose political program was aimed at national, anti-Phanariot goals was fiercely repressed and its leaders were imprisoned and exiled.¹ The movements aimed at Ioan Theodor Callimachi (1758—1759) and Grigore Callimachi (1767) were also ineffectual.

The period of the 1768—1774 Russo — Turkish war was a moment of great importance in the liberation struggle; extremely daring and original ideas were expressed — the boyars even elected a native prince. The return of the Phanariot princes in 1774 did not reduce the political unrest. In Wallachia Alexandru Ypsilanti had to repress the conspiracy of the boyar Cîndescu, and in Moldavia Grigore III Ghica and his successor Constantin Moruzi, had to cope with the movement led by the native boyars Manolache Bogdan and Ioniță Cuza. Bogdan, whom Carra considered “celui pour lequel la nation moldave a le plus de penchant et de respect,”² intended to overthrow the rule of the Phanariot princes, to liberate Moldavia from Ottoman suzerainty and to introduce an enlightened administrative regime. His activities,

¹ Among the leaders were Chesarie of Râmnic, Mihail Cantacuzino, and Sandu Bucșănescu. The repression was merciless; Barbu and Ștefan Văcărescu were exiled to Cyprus, while Dudescu, Cantacuzino, and Bucșănescu were imprisoned.

² J. Carra, *Histoire de la Moldavie et de la Wallachie* (1777), pp. 181, 189.

which seem to have been closely connected with the newly founded Freemasons lodge,³ began as early as 1774. Not until 1775 did he resort to violent tactics when the Jassy inhabitants headed by the metropolitan Gavril Callimachi besieged the prince's court; and in 1777 a number of boyars fled to Hotin, contributing directly to the execution of Prince Grigore III Ghica. The killing of Ghica did not placate the boyars who, after a few months, organized a conspiracy with the purpose of deposing Moruzi and putting Manolache Bogdan on the throne thus ridding the country of Turkish domination. The conspiracy was discovered, Bogdan and Cuza were beheaded, and their followers imprisoned or banished. The movement of 1778 was the most important political action of the opposition during the whole Phanariot epoch and the cruelty of its repression indicates that the Phanariots were well aware of the danger it represented to their rule.

The executions of the boyar's political leaders did not however stifle national aspirations; political agitation continued and the anti-Phanariot movements stepped up efforts to undermine the authority of the prince and the Porte and thus testify to the Romanians' determination to fight at any cost for the extension of their political rights.⁴ These efforts were increased

³ We know the foreign Freemasons existed in the Principalities as early as 1743, but the first Romanian lodge was not founded until 1772 at Jassy. The influence exerted by the Freemasons must have been comparatively strong since the patriarchate of Constantinople found it necessary to anathematize them in 1776-1777. In 1787, at the request of boyar Iordache Darie Dărmănescu, a former participant in the boyar movement, the future bishop of Roman, Gherasim Clipa, translated into Romanian abbot Prau's book *The mystery of the Freemasons*. He was obviously in sympathy with the author's opinions. It is very likely that Metropolitan Leon Gheuca was a member of the Freemasons' circle in Jassy. Information regarding the Freemasons in Wallachia is scantier, but Prince Mavrogheni's frequent attacks on them may justify the idea that a lodge had been founded in Bucharest too. The Wallachians must have carried on activities at the lodge in Sibiu, though the known list of members includes only a certain Alexandru Moruzi and a Toma Villara. Among the Freemasons who played an important role in the movement of ideas in the Principalities after 1800 were I. Catargiu and Barbu Știrbei.

⁴ In Moldavia agitation was carried on by the bigger and middle boyars in 1782 and their activities led to the deposing of Alexandru Mavrocordat Deli-bei (1785). In Wallachia the writer D. Fălcoianu was persistent opponent who was arrested, beaten up and banished in 1785 and again in 1795. The strained relations between prince N. Mavrogheni and the boyars, as well as the firm attitude of the latter during the war of 1787-1791, are well known. Still led by Văcărescu, opposition continued under Mavrogheni's successor and had the support of the Oltenian boyars led by Grigore Jianu and Nicolae Greceanu. In 1794 the Moldavians Teodor Balș and Ioniță Cantacuzino attempted to depose Mihai Suțu but failed and fled abroad, while in 1796, still in Moldavia, a secret anti-Phanariot society announced its existence. The ever strained relations between the natives and the Phanariot princes, which among other things led to the execution of Prince

in the last two decades of the Phanariot epoch, when apart from the "legal" opposition of the boyars,⁵ there was the important Wallachian conspiracy of 1810—1811, the movements in Moldavia against Scarlat Callimachi,⁶ those in Wallachia against Ioan Caragea,⁷ and the continual disturbances in both Principalities during the last three years of the Phanariot epoch—1818—1821.⁸ All this political unrest reached a climax in the revolution of 1821 which should be viewed as an inevitable, natural event, embodying century-old political and social aspirations. With the way paved for the 1821 revolution, Tudor Vladimirescu was chosen to organize the uprising by three leaders—Grigore Ghica, Barbu Văcărescu, Grigore Brâncoveanu—belonging to the native boyars' party, who in the last two decades prior to the revolution had always been at the head of the national movements.

The movements we have examined played an important part in the development of the Romanian political thought; they stimulated it and pointed out its lines and often its aims. They represent a direct, practical form of the social and political protest, of the critical spirit which, in one way or another, had spread to the entire Romanian society.

C. Hangerli (1799), was concisely expressed by Galaction of Agapia in the sentence "there was enmity between the boyars and the princes." In 1800 the Russian consulate reported that Stolnic Drugănescu had drawn up a pamphlet against the prince, for which he was tried and expelled from the ranks of the boyars and banished to the monastery of Snagov.

⁵ It is well known that Alexandru Suțu and the natives were on bad terms, to the extent that the prince was sequestered of Văcărești. The same may be said of the enmity between C. Ypsilanti and the divans of Wallachia and Moldavia.

⁶ The boyars first started their activities in January 1813, and in 1814 the great paharnic Nicolae Dumitriu was deprived of his rank because he uttered hostile words against the prince. In 1816 a conspiracy, probably masterminded by Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, led to the banishment of his nephew Ștefan Rosetti to Athos, while in 1817 the same Rosnovanu, supported by Metropolitan Veniamin Costache, asked Russian ambassador in Constantinople to intercede to put an end to the abuses of the prince.

⁷ Caragea started his reign by banishing the leaders of the native movement—Grigore Ghica, the future prince; Constantin Bălăceanu; and Constantin Filipescu (1813). Iancu Cocorescu (1813) and Apostol Racoviceanu (1815) were also banished for opposing the prince. In 1815 fearing an uprising of the pandours, Caragea requested the Porte to send troops to the country, and in 1816 he had to cope with the Gross conspiracy, most likely still inspired by the boyars. Filipescu, who was exiled in 1813, returned to the capital later and began to make conspiracy plans again, and died very soon afterwards under mysterious circumstances. Finally, shortly before the prince fled the country in 1818, violent pamphlets began circulating in Bucharest against him.

⁸ In 1818, Zilot Românu! mentioned a movement that was intended to drive the Phanariots out of the country. In 1820 there were secret anti-Phanariot meetings in the house of the Filipescu family. In Moldavia, Mihai Suțu came in constant conflict with the natives' party led by I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, which finally compelled him to abdicate

Theoretical Criticism

The scholars of the Enlightenment call into question the entire system of values underlying the social and political life in the Principalities and continually underline its anachronistic character. In 1810 Naum Râmnicéanu wrote: "What do we see all around us? We see some people buying their boyar castles, others their offices, others princely favor and so on . . . the functions of ispravnic, (prefect), the rank of polcovnic (colonel) . . . What are the consequences of all this? Endless hardships, endless burdens, abuses, injustices, plunderings, devastations . . . Oh, what a misfortune, what a shame! The whole nation suffers because of all that, the churchmen, the civilian population, the people in the districts, in the suburbs, the towns and the country . . ." ⁹ The petitions of the boyars often spoke of "les maux actuels de l'état," while Alexandru Beldiman, Zilot Românul, Dinicu Golescu, and other writers described the country's decline and called for its economic, political, and cultural revival.

The wretched conditions of the peasantry were described in a petition of the Moldavian free peasants written 1799, and in 1826 Dinicu Golescu wrote that villagers in other countries were "happier than our peasants." ¹⁰ Even Mihail Sturdza, the future prince, was impressed by the sufferings of the peasants and wrote in a petition dated 1829: "oui, elle est misérable la condition du paysan moldave et valaque: envisagé comme un être qui ne doit exister que pour les caprices d'autrui; presque réduit à l'état abjecte de brute; abandonné à la rapacité de tous les employés, depuis le clergé, depuis le plus grand fonctionnaire, jusqu'au plus petit collecteur." ¹¹

The boyar class was bitterly criticized by representatives of the popular classes, such as Zilot Românul, Naum Râmnicéanu, and Tudor Vladimirescu. The big boyar class had to cope with the often violent attacks of the middle or smaller boyars among whom there were a few representatives of great theoretical polemical value such as Ion Tăutu or Vasile Pogor. Even from a number of bigger boyars critical accents and reforming ideas were heard. Mihail Sturdza, for example, spoke of his own class as of "personnes vivant aux dépens du peuple," while Grigore IV Ghica used harsh words to describe the economic inactivity and the social parasitism of the boyar class.

Even the clergy was not spared. Anonymous pamphlets attacked the metropolitans reproaching them for cooperating with the Phanariots, for mercilessly exploiting the people. The parasitism of the monks and the priests'

⁹ C. Erbiceanu, *Viața și activitatea literară a lui Naum Râmnicéanu* (1900), p. 17.

¹⁰ See D. Golescu, *Însemnare a călătoriei mele* (1910).

¹¹ *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment I ⁵, p. 30.

lack of culture made Dinicu Golescu demand a reform of the clergy: "it is high time, brethren, that the clergy be set in order." A letter addressed by Constantin Brăiloiu to his father illustrates the mood of 1830. In the letter the young Wallachian spoke of the "imperfections and the evils of our social organization." He believed that "the time has come for us to think of the future seriously. We need to improve our political constitution . . ." ¹²

The Romanians' feelings were decidedly anti-Ottoman. The Porte was considered the main cause of the country's decline and was criticized on every occasion. As early as 1769 the plundering of the country by the Turks was criticized, and the economic difficulties the Turks caused the country were clearly revealed in petitions. The divans of Bucharest and Jassy opposed the exactions of the Porte in 1774, 1782, 1783, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1791, 1793, 1803, 1818, 1822, 1824, 1827, by drawing up petitions demanding a limitation and reduction of the Principalities material obligations.

The Romanians were particularly hostile to the Phanariots whose regime was considered directly responsible for the country's plight. Contemporaries wrote of the princes' inability to insure the peace and defense of the country, especially during the two troubled decades at the beginning of the 19th century. An anonymous person in 1801 wrote: "you must have heard of the country's sorry plight and of the terrible burning down of Craiova where now no one remains to mourn for it, of merchants robbed and ladies raped by the heathens." There is another letter of the same year written by an Oltenian merchant who complained to C. Hagi-Pop, a merchant of Sibiu: "Our poor town of Craiova which had adorned itself with big houses and beautiful shops is nothing but dust and ashes today . . . The town of Craiova, a big town you know, is all gone; everywhere there are ashes and only the black walls have been left standing." ¹³

In 1815, referring to the Turks' raids launched from their citadels on the south bank of the Danube, Tudor Vladimirescu directly charged the central authority with its inability to protect the country and insure the peace and quietude of its inhabitants: "Then see what destruction the incapacity of the masters of our country has caused us! May God punish them! Couldn't they have spared us this havoc? So great a government was unable to forbid so unimportant a thing, but could only let us suffer and perish completely." ¹⁴

The Romanians continually and systematically criticized the Phanariot administration and launched political programs emphasizing ideas that were first set forth in the petitions of 1769. The terms used were generally devoid

¹² N. Iorga, *Scrisori vechi de studenți* (1934), p. 6.

¹³ N. Iorga, *Studii și documente*, VIII, pp. 114–115.

¹⁴ *Documente* 1821, I, p. 89.

of the most elementary respect, even when they referred directly to the prince. For example, in 1783, the metropolitan Iacob Stamate used extremely vehement language to describe the reign of Alexandru Mavrocordat, while in 1802 a certain Anton Hagi Teohari dared to call prince Mihai Suțu "a blackguard." Vasile Pogor called the Phanariot regime "an awful system," and Gheorghe Bogdan, the nephew of the politician beheaded in 1778, wrote in 1819 from Florence: "Will they drive the Greeks out of Moldavia? There is no other way of making out country happy . . . And then the poor shall be happy."¹⁵ The upset caused by the Phanariot rule must have been very strong, since even in 1830, nine years after the overthrow of the Phanariots, a Moldavian noted on his prayer book "deliver us from the Greek rule." Numerous foreign travelers noticed and justified these anti-Ottoman and anti-Phanariot feelings. De Tott (1757), Boscovich (1762), Raicevich (1788), and Langeron all accepted the idea that the Phanariot regime had seriously impeded the development of the Principalities.

We have already pointed out that in the epoch we are dealing with the Romanian territory was occupied several times by foreign armies and governed by temporary military administrations and every time this led to conflicts, often of a violent character, between the Romanians and the foreign occupants. This spirit of criticism was most notable in its opposition to the various exactions and abuses of the occupying bodies. There were moments when this opposition was particularly felt, in 1769—1774, 1787—1791, 1806—1812, 1828—1829 and it often turned into downright hostility that led to open conflicts. This happened for example in 1790—1791, when the Austrian military authorities had to cope with the opposition set up by the divan of Wallachia.

The inhabitants of the Principalities realized they were living in a period of insecurity and that this hindered the country's development and their welfare. A Wallachian petition dated August 31, 1821, complained of the fact that in the course of a single generation "our houses and estates were laid waste for four times and to save our lives we had to go into exile."¹⁶ In reading the writings and documents of the time, it is surprising to note how often people spoke of the fear they felt.¹⁷ Fear prevented people from

¹⁵ N. Iorga, *Vicisitudinile celui dintii student moldovean la Paris*, M.S.I., III/14, p. 375.

¹⁶ *Documente* 1821, II, pp. 324—325.

¹⁷ In 1770 a prelate admitted he was "filled with fear of the heathens," while Metropolitan Gavril Callimachi mentioned the fear "that made all hearts shake". In 1775, the same Callimachi expressed his regret that "no one can hope to have peace in these parts." Barbu Știrbei wrote to Hagi-Pop in 1801, "you must have heard of the trouble I have gone through; God only knows how I suffered," and in 1806 a native of Craiova wrote: "Craiova is still removed and we look around with fear."

expressing their thoughts openly. They concealed their feelings and shrank into themselves. Even Barbu Stirbei, the big boyar, expressed his hatred for prince Al. Moruzi only after the latter had been deposed (1796), for before that he "could not speak." The feeling of insecurity and fear created a state of bewilderment which Enăchiță Văcărescu expressed so suggestively on the eve of 1770: "struggle against misfortune . . . up to the neck in torments . . . trying to find a way out . . . but I feel unable."¹⁸ Văcărescu and his contemporaries firmly believed that the general condition of the country had a negative influence not only on the social and political structure but also on the mental state of the people. This idea, which certain foreign writers such as d'Hauterive mention too, is clearly expressed in the writings of Dionisie Fotino, Zilot Românul, Naum Râmnicéanu, and Mihail Sturdza. They all considered that first of all "il nous faut de l'ordre et de la stabilité."¹⁹

One of the widespread forms of expression of discontent was the pamphlet, ranging from so-called satirical and moralizing verses to the open attacks upon the boyars, the state, and the Phanariots. Naum Râmnicéanu, Ion Tăutu, Vasile Pogor, Alexandru Beldiman were some of the most important authors of pamphlets, but many pamphlets, such as *Talk on the Country of Moldavia* or the famous one of 1804, were released anonymously. In the 1804 pamphlet the violent tone of criticism leveled at the ruling class was echoed throughout Moldavian society. The government charged that authors threatened the country with the spectre of the French Revolution, and, in order to prevent any possible uprising, the divan demanded that strict measures be taken against the instigators. Numerous pamphlets were directed at the Phanariot princes,²⁰ whose administrations were repeatedly denounced in petitions to the Porte.²¹ Of all the various kinds of pamphlet, however, the political petitions were the most creative and dynamic form of expression of the critical spirit; they developed genuine programs for the country's reorganization. The "peak" moments when such writings were drawn up were the years 1769—1774 and in particular 1821—1831, but, otherwise they occurred in a comparatively uniform manner throughout the whole period under consideration. These writings which differed from the usual applications

¹⁸ N. Gheorghiu, *E. Văcărescu popularizat în apus*, Viața Românească, 12 (1939), p. 55.

¹⁹ *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment I⁴, p. 90.

²⁰ We consider the pamphlets aimed at Mihai Suțu (1795), Alexandru Callimachi (1796), and Ioan Caragea (1812—1818) the most significant; the anti-Hetairia and the anti-Greek lampoons of 1821 constitute a separate category.

²¹ We cite here the petitions against Grigore III Ghica (1775), N. Mavrogheni (1786, 1790), Alexandru Ypsilanti (1787, 1788), Constantin Ypsilanti (1806), Ioan Caragea (1818), Mihai Suțu (1819—1821).

and complaints brought up for discussion all aspects of life in the Principalities, ranging from the institutional to the social, economic, and cultural problems. They constituted the most original way of expressing the political thoughts of the period and, at the same time, gave proof of a remarkable dynamism and tenacity and of the existence of vigorous principles that had been handed down from one generation to another and that, in the end, succeeded in compelling recognition.²²

The Idea of Modernism and the Concept of Europe

Every generation cherishes the feeling that it is the bearer of a new quality and that the epoch it lives in has other traits, even opposed to those of the past epochs. In Romanian political thought, the term of "modern" was used even by Cantemir who made a distinction between "La Moldavie ancienne et moderne." With him the sense seems to be chronological rather than contradictory. It was in the second part of the 18th century that these two categories were set in contrast when young Wallachians started declaring "we have French books and novels, all other books are melancholy (!). We are enlightened, students of philosophers; all the old writers are hypocrits."²³

The spirit of renewal was more evident still with the coming of the 19th century which Constantin de Buzău and Constantin Filipescu considered different from the previous century and which Dionisie Fotino called "modern times" and Daniel Philippide "philosophical times." The author of the petition to Napoleon in 1807 also had the feeling that the times were new; and so did the generation of 1831. And this modern era required the replacement of the old forms of Romanian life with new ones, European ones.

The Romanians were aware of the fact that Tudor Vladimirescu's uprising put an end to a distressing period in their history, The new epoch was pre-saged as early as 1820 through the formula "Brethren and fellow countrymen, a new epoch has appeared,²⁴ and the year 1821 was seen as the beginning of this epoch. In 1825 a priest wrote, "Oh, you year 1821; though your coming caused bitterness to the Romanians, you also brought revival . . . your moments thrust themselves in the feelings of the Romanians like bright mes-

²² For data regarding these petitions see Vlad Georgescu, *Mémoires et projets de réforme dans les Principautés Roumaines, 1769—1830* (1970), (henceforth cited as, *Mémoires*).

²³ A. Camariano-Cioran, *Spiritul revoluționar francez și Voltaire în limba greacă și română* (1944), pp. 64—66.

²⁴ B. Mumuleanu, *Rost de poezii* (1820), p. 1.

sengers.²⁵ To the joy caused by the end of a hateful regime was added in 1822 the hopes that the new rule of native princes would lead the country to prosperity. "Here comes justice! here comes the golden ange!" exclaimed Ion Tăutu. This feeling was strengthened by the news of the favorable clauses of the Akkerman Convention (1826) and of the Andrianople treaty, (1829) so bombastically praised by poet I. Heliade Rădulescu. Finally the authors of the *Organic Regulation* (1831) considered their work to represent a crucial moment in Romanian history. In 1830 the revising Assembly considered that "a new epoch is opening up for us today" and Asachi wrote the poem "1830, the New Year of the Moldo-Wallachians."²⁶

What were the characteristics the new epoch was credited for? We learn of them in an article "Character of Our Epoch" published in 1830 in the daily *Curierul Românesc*. The author held a mechanistic view of the epoch and did not consider it heroic, religious, or philosophical. According to him "this epoch is the epoch of machines . . . no doubt the power of the human race has produced those miraculous products." The anonymous author felt that the great economic transformation would decisively influence the evolution of civilization and bring about great changes in the "social system." The article rendered a dynamic picture of society and mentioned progress and transformations in all areas, which arose from the economic revolution.²⁷

The outlook on the generations was closely connected to the feeling of modernism. Young people felt they were the bearers of the new ideas; they called themselves "young people" differentiating themselves from the "old people," whom they nevertheless continued to ask for advice and political support.²⁸ The two generations still cooperated in 1821, "the old ones" with their experience and "the young ones" with science — a formula that revealed an increase in the influence of youth. Moreover, in 1822, when Ion Tăutu addressed them as "Young people on whom the homeland bases the hopes of its splendor," it was clear that he assigned to them the role of principal promoters of country's revival.²⁹ In 1828, the neologism *junimea*

²⁵ See E. Vîrtosu, *Tudor Vladimirescu. Glose, fapte și documente noi* (1927). The same feeling is met with in the writings of Gheorghe Hagi Peșakov and other contemporary writers.

²⁶ With the subtitle "In the course of which the Organic Regulation was drafted, that first administrative and legislative law of Moldavia." Gheorghe Asachi, *Scrieri literare*, I (1957), pp. 56—59.

²⁷ *Curierul românesc* (1830), pp. 399—400.

²⁸ In 1811 the "young" boyars applied to the "old" boyars asking them to organize the opposition against the Phanariots, as they possessed more experience and wisdom.

²⁹ E. Vîrtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 2 (1965).

(youth) made its appearance, and in the same year, in a letter of Constantin Brăiloiu, the idea of an open conflict between generations was first mentioned.³⁰

For the scholars of the Enlightenment period the feeling of modernism was closely connected with the idea of Europe. In the Romanian Middle Ages, political leaders and scholars were very much aware of a close contact with Europe and of their affinity with an area of European culture and civilization. Mircea the Old, Stephen the Great, Michael the Brave considered themselves the flank representative of a Christian Europe stretching from the Atlantic to the Bosphorus which they protected not only against the heathens but also against a foreign, oriental, culture and civilization. They looked upon themselves as a shield placed at Europe's Eastern frontier.

All the scholars before the Phanariot epoch — Grigore Ureche, Nicolae Costin, Dumitrie Cantemir, Constantin Cantecuzino, Nicolae Milescu — who studied, traveled, and lived in Europe, entertained this political feeling combined with a strong appreciation of European culture.³¹

After 1711, the feeling changed and dwindled. The Phanariot regime raised a barrier between the Principalities and Europe; it incorporated them into the way of life, the civilization, and at times the culture of the Ottoman empire, a civilization and culture of Oriental character.³² The generation that followed immediately after the establishment of the Phanariot regime only moderately enjoyed the feeling of being European, and the cosmopolitanism peculiar to the 18th century was pre-eminently directed towards the Greek-Turkish world, not towards the Western one. But the crisis of the European feeling was short-lived, and after 1750, the Romanians renewed their interest in all that was happening beyond the frontiers which had been closed arbitrarily. A new image of Europe gradually took shape. Many people became acquainted with it only through books, but they felt inevitably attracted to this new Europe primarily because they considered it a source of culture and light.

This idea was expressed for the first time by the Metropolitan Callimachi in 1773, but the clearest description of this frame of mind was made by the

³⁰ N. Iorga, *Scrisori vechi de studenți*, p. 7.

³¹ This is the feeling the Moldavians refer to in 1825 when, in a petition addressed to the emperor of Austria they stated: « La Moldavie, Sire, eut la gloire de servir plus d'une fois de barrière aux invasions des barbares; son sol est arrosé du sang de nos ancêtres qui repoussèrent vaillamment leurs hordes destructives ». *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment I⁴, p. 82.

³² The scholars were aware of this phenomenon and Manolache Drăghici wrote: "through the Phanariot princes and only by them, the form of Turkish administration was introduced into the Principalities," *Istoria Moldovei*, II, p. 85.

Archimandrite Chiriac Râmniceanu in 1798: "The people of Europe have subtle minds, they are determined and brave." In Europe "there were born so many wise men, so many law-makers, physicians, orators, and distinguished princes who subdued, taught, and defeated all the other nations of the world by the power of their mind, their tongue and their hand . . . in it there blossomed and still blossoms sciences, trades, gentle manners, and kindly feelings." This is the reason why "it is appropriate that this Europe should be called the ornament of the world."³³ And Naum Râmniceanu, Paris Mumuleanu,³⁴ Dinicu Golescu,³⁵ and Simion Marcovici³⁶ described Europe in the same way.

When the Romanians were rid of the Phanariot princes, they felt that they returned to their place among European nations which formed one large family united through common culture, civilization, and interests. In 1824, Grigore IV Ghica wrote that an event happening in any part of Europe had repercussions on the whole continent, that "aucune affaire ne peut être discutée en Europe sans attirer plus ou moins l'attention générale". He reached an entirely new conclusion for the times, namely that "toutes les puissances de l'Europe forment pour ainsi dire une famille inséparable."³⁷ Eufrosin Poteca voiced the same idea in 1828 pointing out that Europe extended from Portugal to Siberia.³⁸

The place of the Principalities within the European family was often and clearly stated; they were members of the "large European family" wrote Barbu Stirbei in 1833.³⁹ The same idea was expressed by Grigore Pleșoiianu when he wrote that "the Romanian nation counts with good reason among the nations of Europe",⁴⁰ and in 1827 Poteca spoke of "our European brothers."⁴¹ In this European community the preferences of the Romanians were

³³ B.R.V., II, p. 406.

³⁴ "That all the nations of Europe are polished by education we see through the light of the science we get from them." P. Momuleanu, *Rost de poezii* (1820) p. 1.

³⁵ With him the name of Europe was accompanied always by the word "enlightened." People who were not scholars held the same idea; for example, the *spătar* Brăiloiu sent his children in 1822 to "the enlightened Europe to study science and foreign languages." N. Iorga, *Studii și documente*, VIII, p. 63.

³⁶ He seems to have been the author of the article "Europe" published in *Curierul românesc*, I (1829), pp. 124–126. It is pointed out that "Of all continents it is the smallest but the most densely populated and the most enlightened."

³⁷ Vlad Georgescu, *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești*, p. 126.

³⁸ C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Autobiografia lui E. Poteca* (1943), p. 11.

³⁹ B. Știrbei, *Raport către Kiselef*, Convorbiri literare (1888), p. 751. The term "European family" was used by Asachi too in *Albina Românească* of June 1, 1829, republished in *Uricarul*, III, pp. 107–108.

⁴⁰ Introduction to *Dialoguri francezo-române*. (1830), B.R.V., III p. 701.

⁴¹ G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui E. Poteca* (1883), p. 57.

naturally for the nations of Latin origin, and thus the term of "Romance Europe"⁴² (i.e., of Latin origin) appeared.

The Romanian concept of Europe was not a geographic one; it was not opposed to other continents. It possessed a political and cultural content and was opposed to other spheres of culture and political organization, particularly to the oriental one. This opposition was first visible in Cantemir's writings. It was expressed in petitions dating back to 1769 and became — due to the birth of the ideas of revival, reform, and modernization — a leitmotiv in Romanian political thought. The Ottoman system and administrative usages were severely censured in the petition sent by the Moldavians to Napoleon in 1807, pointing out that the Principalities would never be able to prosper and develop unless they ridded themselves of the Turkish influence.⁴³ This idea was reiterated by Naum Râmniceanu,⁴⁴ by Mihail Sturdza, by members of the society founded in 1827 by Dinicu Golescu, and by I. Heliade Rădulescu. The inability of the oriental culture and civilization to insure the dynamic development of the country was clearly expressed in petitions of the years 1821—1822,⁴⁵ as well as by Manolache Drăghici.⁴⁶

Consequently, on the one hand, there were words of praise for the culture of Europe, on the other the criticism of oriental routine and inerteness. The Principalities, considered to be European countries, were isolated from the rest of the continent and compelled to acquire backward, foreign customs and institutions. This led to the theory of the necessity of getting the Principalities out of the sphere of oriental influence and of restoring them to their place in the great European family.

⁴² C. Flechtenmacher, *Lecture on Roman law*, (1830), Uricarul, XIX p. 489.

⁴³ E. Virtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte și dorințele moldovenilor*, pp. 416—418. Prince Mihai Suțu also admitted that the Ottoman political usages differed from the European ones; He wrote in 1821: "I have succeeded in reigning over Moldavia only by employing the means always currently used at Asiatic Courts." *Documente* 1821, IV, p. 119.

⁴⁴ "For we are unfortunately uder Asiatic yoke, we are seized with Asiatic imbecility, utterly lacking learning and other necessary and useful sciences." C. Erbiceanu, *Viața și activitatea lui Naum Râmniceanu*, p. 23.

⁴⁵ "It is naturally impossible to change anything of the characteristics of this Ottoman nation" runs the petition of Brașov dated June 1, 1822. *Documente* 1821, III, p. 106.

⁴⁶ Drăghici considered the system and customs of the Porte "rusty and rigid" *Istoria Moldovei*, I, p. 103. The attempts at modernizing the Ottoman empire were not unknown, but aroused little interest. The Turko-Phanariot regime is charged with reducing the Principalities to a more wretched condition than "the peoples of Africa and America." *Documente* 1821, V, p. 531. The contrast between the presumed happiness of "those black Africans" who "have rid themselves of sufferings" and the misfortunes in the Principalities can be found in a petition of I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu (1818), *Documente* 1821, I, pp. 121—124.

For the Romanians, revival meant modernization, and modernization was tantamount to Europeanization. The Romanians realized that a state structure, a culture, and a modern, dynamic civilization could not be created unless the institutions, customs, and morals and manner of the Turkish-Phanariot East were abandoned. The revival at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th was based on Romanian traditional values, but followed European models⁴⁷ with a view to setting up structures similar to them. A passage in the Calimah Code illustrates this view: "We have decided to change the system and to start from the most recent European codes."⁴⁸

By the year 1830 this was the general frame of mind of the Romanians, and as we have already pointed out the Organic Regulations served as an instrument of Europeanization⁴⁹ that ended a period of stagnation and opened up an era of development and progress.

Thus in the Romanian Principalities, the political writers made a precisely defined concept of Europe — Europe did not represent a geographic area, but the area of culture and civilization most favorable to the blossoming of a society. Europe opposed and struggled against the oriental world. And the old writers considered, with good reason, that the very future of the society in the Principalities depended on the result of this struggle, they hailed the victory over the Turko-Phanariot world as a victory over the past, as a victory of the modern world over the feudal one.

⁴⁷ In 1827, Poteca openly recommended borrowing: "I wonder whether we could not borrow from them?" G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui E. Poteca*, p. 57. We must point out that the comparison with Europe plays a creative, stimulating role, as the Romanians aimed at attaining in the field of economy, politics, and culture, the level of the nations they looked upon as brothers in origin and as equals with regard to moral qualities.

⁴⁸ *Calimah Code*, p. 51. Pleșoianu also demands a radical, essential modernization, "So that we may call ourselves Europeans, not only in name but in deeds as well." *B.R.V.*, III, p. 658.

⁴⁹ The abandoning of the Eastern patterns was illustrated in the opinions of dress. D'Hauterive had already pointed out that the measures taken by the Phanariot princes had contributed to the orientalization of the costume. Prince Ioan Caragea tried to oppose the modernization of the costume, but he failed; the incompatibility of the Eastern costume with a dynamic society is also mentioned in a petition addressed to Russia in 1807. In 1827 E. Poteca proposes "A beautiful and useful reform in our homeland even regarding the fashions in clothes."

PART II

**THE WRITERS AND THE SOURCES
OF THEIR THOUGHT**

CHAPTER III

THE WRITERS

The three generations

During the period of the Enlightenment there were three generations of writers, each of them existed during a particular historical moment, each of them possessed specific characteristics. There was an interval of about 30 years between the generations. With a few exceptions, the writers of the first generation were born in the twenties and thirties of the 18th century and lived till the last decade of the century; the second generation covered the period from the 1750s to the 1830s; while the third generation was born between 1790 and 1800 and lived until the middle of the 19th century.

Though the average age limit of the writers was 60 to 70 years old, the most dynamic moment of their activity occurred around the age of 30 to 40. It was then that the most daring ideas were born, the most dynamic ideals were espoused, and the most resolute struggle was carried on for their fulfilment. After that period new ideas were fewer in number, conservatism gained ground, and cautious waiting took the place of dynamism.

The first generation consisted of extremely active and pugnacious personalities. They were connected with the wars of 1768—1774 and 1787—1792 and drew up an impressive number of political programs. It was also a generation of men of great culture, first of all great lovers of history who took over and developed the traditions of 17th century historiography and who represented the link with the modern school of history of the mid = 19th century. The most remarkable political thinkers of this generation were Mihail Cantacuzino (1723—1793/1796),¹ Enăchiță Văcărescu

¹ M. Cantacuzino was a political writer of great importance. His finest contributions were the 7 petitions he drew up in the years 1772—1773, five of which were submitted to the delegations of Austria, Russia, and Prussia at the Congress of Focșani (1772) and the other two to Count Obrescov (1773). His correspondence with Russian high officials in the 1769—1774 period is also most interesting. *Istoria Țării Românești* (History of Wallachia) written between 1774 and 1776 and *Genealogia familiei Cantacuzino* written in 1787 are important sources of his political ideas.

(1740—1793),² and Gavril Callimachi (about 1690—1786),³ who were authors of petitions and of literary and historical writings. Their works were generally of a pronounced practical character, with the theoretical passages subordinate to the concrete necessities. It is believed that this trait contributed to the rapid dissemination of their ideas which became very soon the ideals of the struggle carried on by all Romanians.

Cantacuzino, Văcărescu, and Callimachi were the main thinkers of their generation but not the only ones. There were numerous other writers, besides them, who, though not of the same value and not having written outstanding political works, deserve to be mentioned for their ideas. Among the less celebrated writers were the learned boyar Dumitrache (about 1725—1796)⁴ and the group of prelates consisting especially of Arhimandrite Vartolomeu Măzăreanu (about 1720—1780), Bishop Chesarie of Râmnic (who died in 1780),⁵ and Metropolitans Iacob Stamate (1749—1803) and Leon Gheuca (about 1735—1789).⁶ We must also point out that, besides Romanian writers, the first and second generations included Greek writers who, having settled in the Principalities, held interesting political ideas. It is fit that we should mention first Dr. Petre Depasta (who died in 1770)⁷ and the Phanariot Prince Alexandru Ypsilanti (1728—1807),⁸ a person who was less greedy and more concerned than other princes.

² Recent researches have disclosed the writing *Oblăduirea domnilor celor mai vechi* (The Government of the Earlier Princes) written by Văcărescu in 1772 and submitted to the vizir on behalf of the Romanian emigrants in Braşov. In fact, his ideas were included in numerous petitions signed by the whole divan and particularly in the one addressed to Prince Repnin in 1775. Due to the difficulty of establishing a precise paternity, we considered, when analyzing his ideas, only the work mentioned above, his *Istoria prea puternicilor împărați otomani* (The History of the Mighty Ottoman, Emperors) written between 1788 and 1794, and the preface to *Gramatica românească*, published in 1787.

³ Ideas recorded in his correspondence with the Russian generals and the court of St. Petersburg in the years 1769—1774, in the *Anaforaua* (Petition) submitted to general Stoffel (1770), and in the preface to the *Învățătura Ecaterinei a II-a* (The Nakaz of Catherine II) published in Jassy in 1773.

⁴ We refer to *Istoria evenimentelor din Orient* (History of the Events in the Orient) (probably written in 1775) and *Cronologia tabelară* (Tabular Chronology) drawn up subsequently.

⁵ His prefaces to the *Mineie* (1776—1780) contain numerous important ideas.

⁶ His petition dated April 1787 submitted to Catherine II has not yet been found.

⁷ His *Cronical asupra vieții domnitorului Constantin Mavrocordat* (Chronicle of the Life of Prince C. Mavrocordat) is of great interest.

⁸ He was Prince of Wallachia from 1774 to 1782 and from 1796 to 1797 and of Moldavia between 1787 and 1788. His memoir on the reorganization of the Ottoman empire has not been found; however we know of the one addressed to Prince Repnin in 1775. His political conceptions can be better understood through an analysis of the reforms promulgated during his first reign.

From a social point of view this generation was very homogenous as it included only big boyars and high prelates. This homogeneity was absent in the second generation which also included representatives of the lower and middle nobility and of the bourgeoisie. This generation burst into political arena by means of a radical program that was drawn up by Ioan Cantacuzino (1756—1828) and submitted to the peace congress of Shishtov (1791). Among his Wallachian contemporaries Prince Grigore IV Ghica (+ 1834) and Dinicu Golescu (1777—1830)⁹ also held very original ideas. In addition there were many interesting Moldavian writers such as Dumitrache Sturdza (+ 1852),¹⁰ Alexandru Beldiman (1760—1826),¹¹ Veniamin Costache (1768—1846), and particularly Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, an important high official not known to be a political writer. The discovery of the archives of Rosnovanu, who was vistier (treasurer) of Moldavia for several years, has put into scientific circulation a considerable number of reform projects which make of him one of the most prominent political writers in the first three decades of the 19th century.¹²

All these writers were representatives of the big boyar class; they were thinkers possessing advanced political and national ideas but only limited programs for social reforms. During this time the early bourgeois writers, members of the lower and middle nobility, began to appear. Among them were Dionisie Fotino (1769—1821), Gheorghe Lazăr (1779—1825), and Tudor Vladimirescu 1780—1821.¹³ The monk Naum Râmniceanu (1764—1839),¹⁴ a

⁹ Besides *Însemnare a călătoriei mele* (1826), (My Travel Notes) interesting ideas can be found in the prefaces to the translations he made in the years 1826—1827.

¹⁰ He is the author of the writing *Plan sau formă de oblăduire republiciană aristocratică* (1802) (Plan or Form of Republican, Aristo-Democratic Government)

¹¹ *Tragedie, sau mai bine a zice jalnica Moldovei întimplare după răzvrătirea grecilor* (Tragedy, or better said the pitiful state of Moldavia after the Greek uprising) and *Stihurile făcute în Tazlău* (Verses written of Tazlău) include interesting political ideas.

¹² The works in the Rosnovanu archives include: *În scurt luare amintire pentru îndreptări în administrația Moldovei* (1818), (Brief Note on the improvements of the Administration of Moldavia), *Exposé des tributs de toute nature et des pertes supportées par la Moldavie* (1818), *Mémoire sur la Moldavie* (1818), *Proiect de reformă fiscală* (1818) (Draft Fiscal Reform), *L'état de la Moldavie* (1818), *Réflexions sur la Moldavie* (1821), *Réfutation* (1824). The petitions of 1818 were drafted at the request of Count Stroganov, Russia's minister at Constantinople, and served as a basis for the discussions between Stroganov and high Ottoman officials on the adoption of a statutory deed referring to the Principalities.

¹³ *Cereririle norodului românesc* (Claims of the Romanian People) (January 1821) certainly represent the main political writing of Vladimirescu; his proclamations and his letters are also extremely important.

¹⁴ His main works were written in 1821—1822: *Cugetul adevăratului român către frații săi români* (The Thoughts of a True Romanian to his Romanian Brothers), *Tratat important*, (Important Treatise) and *Izbucnirea și urmările zaverei din Valahia* (Outbreak and

very peculiar figure —, a propagandist and a patriot, and the Prince Constantin Ypsilanti (+1816) held many interesting views regarding the national sovereignty for the Principalities. Most of these writers were included in the Romanian and Greek movements of 1821, and they continued their activity in the following decade which ended in the drafting and adoption of the Organic Regulations in 1831. They were assisted in this work by the third generations of writers who began their activity around 1821.

With this generation, Romanian thought rose to a new level. Until then, political ideas had been more often than not of a pronounced practical character because they were closely linked to the actual problems of the Romanian society. With this new generation, the theoretical level became popular — abstractions were more numerous and philosophical reasonings more profound. The most remarkable thinker of this generation was Ion Tăutu (1795—1830), the first Romanian author to write a treatise on politics.¹⁵ Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu (1796—1858),¹⁶ Mihail Sturza (1795—1884),¹⁷ and Barbu Stirbei (1795—1877),¹⁸ were also of this generation. The middle boyars (or the newer ones) besides Tăutu, were represented by Alexandru

consequences of the Greek uprising on Wallachia). With regard to his historical conceptions see *Cronica inedită de la Blaj* (The Chronicle of Blaj), *Cronicul Țării Românești* (The Chronicle of Wallachia), and *Despre origina românilor* (On the Origin of the Romanians).

¹⁵ We mention *Cuvîntul unui țăran către boieri* (1821) (Speech of a peasant to the boyars), *Srîgarea norodului Moldovei* (1821) (Call of the People of Moldavia), *Constituția Cărvunariilor* (1822) (The Carbonaris' Constitution), *Politicești luări aminte asupra Moldovei* (1822) (Political Thoughts on Moldavia) and the writings of the period 1828—1829, when he intended to be a candidate for the throne of Moldavia: *Asupra meșteșugului oclîmîrii* (On the Art of Government), *Memoir addressed to the English Ambassador in Constantinople on causes having brought about the decline of Moldavia and Wallachia*, *Fragment of a work on Moldavia's foreign policy*, *Reflections on the manner in which Government must insure the interests of the citizens in their existence and activity*, *Fragment of correspondence regarding the power the prince should enjoy*.

¹⁶ *Memoir on the history of the relations between Moldavia and the Porte* (1821), *Aperçu sur l'état actuel de la Moldavie et sur les intérêts qui constituent ses rapports avec l'empire de Russie et la Porte ottomane* (1826), *Réflexions sur le droit d'élection* (1826), and *A letter on the advantages of industry over trade* (1830).

¹⁷ The following writings are representative of the period under consideration: *Petition on the administration of Moldavia* (February 1, 1823), *Petition addressed to Consul Minciaki* (November 16, 1823), *Petition on the administrations of Caimacan Vogoride and Prince Ionijă Sandu Sturdza* (1824), *Considérations sur la Moldavie et la Valachie* (1825), *Petition on the dedicated monasteries* (1827), *Petition on the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman empire* (February 28, 1829), *Petition on Catholicism in Moldavia* (1829), *Petition on the finances in Moldavia and the condition of the peasants* (1829).

¹⁸ In 1827, Știrbei wrote *Aperçu sur le mode d'administration de la Valachie* and, in 1833, *Raport asupra stării Valahiei* (Report on the State of Wallachia).

Villara (1786—1852),¹⁹ Manolache Drăghici (about 1802—1887), Vasile Pogor (1792—1857), and Grigore Pleșoianu (1808—1857). There are in addition representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, newly raised to the rank of boyar, such as Gheorghe Asachi (1788—1869), Christian Flechtenmacher (1785—1843), and Simion Marcovici (1802—1877), the author of important theoretical works.²⁰ And finally the monk Eufrosin Poteca (1785—1858), an interesting nonconformist,²¹ should also be included in this list of the third generation writers.

Those were the three generations of political thinkers, those were the writers whose ideas will be analyzed in the following chapters. Very often and especially with regard to social problems, the conceptions held by the different generations were antagonistic. Still there existed a common and very important stock of values that was handed down from generation to generation; this common interest was particularly obvious in administrative policy and the national sovereignty of the Principalities. That is why we find it hard to define which of the two aspects, the antinomic or the traditional, was predominant. In the end this was a problem every writer solved in its own way, depending on the social environment and the political group he belonged to and on the scope of his knowledge. A knowledge of this social, political, and cultural conditioning is most important if we are to understand the ideas of every writer. Therefore, it is necessary to give a brief analysis of these aspects.

Social and Political Personality

The great majority of the political writers were boyars, generally members of the big nobility. This lent to the Romanian political Enlightenment a nobiliary character, as happened in fact in such other East European countries as Russia, Hungary and Poland. The facts, described in the preceding chapters indicate that, in dealing with national problems, the activities carried on by a considerable part of the boyar class was of a progressive character. This progressive element led the country in the struggle for independence and detachment from the Porte's political system. Internally, however, and especially in the realm of agrarian problems, the Romanian boyar class, like the European aristocracy, in fact was very unwilling to accept any novel idea, often taking up the extreme, conservative position. This position hampered the modernization process of the administrative and social structures.

¹⁹ Villara was certainly the author of numerous petitions in 1821—1822; at the present stage of research he may be certainly considered the author only of *Petition addressed to the Czar of Russia* (1821), and of the *Project for the union of the boyars of Wallachia* (1822).

²⁰ S. Marcovici, *Ideie pe scurt asupra tuturor formelor de oblăduiri* (1830) (Short Idea on all the Forms of Government).

²¹ His ideas were expounded especially in the speeches given in Bucharest in 1825—1828.

The domination of the boyars and their internal policy encountered no real theoretical opposition until 1831. The gentry dealt with the social problems from a nobiliary angle too, while the programs of the bourgeoisie and the few peasant initiatives maintained a very pragmatic character. The programs of the clergy (who played an important role in Romanian political thought and whose many metropolitans, bishops and even monks often expressed ideas and suggested solutions) from a national point of view were of an advanced character, but in social aspects were conservative, as a rule supporting the boyar programs.

The nobiliary character of the political Enlightenment in the Principalities is most strikingly set off by an analysis of the social composition of the first generation of writers. Mihail Cantacuzino and Enăchiță Văcărescu were big boyars, the descendants of or related to princely ruling families. Almost all the clerical writers belonged to the high clergy, such as Metropolitan Gavril Callimachi and Iacob Stamate and Bishop Chesarie. In the first generation there was only one representative of the bourgeois circle, who held bourgeois views, Petre Depasta. In the second generation the domination of the big boyars was very powerful too. Ioan Cantacuzino, Dumitrache Sturdza, Iordache Catargiu, Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, and Dinicu Golescu, all representatives of the old Romanian aristocracy, held important offices and, in the case of Grigore IV Ghica, ascended the throne. There were representatives of the church, too, in this generation, among them Metropolitan Veniamin Costache. But, it is noteworthy that the number of thinkers belonging to the lower and middle boyar class was increasing and that, next to them there appeared the first genuine bourgeois writers such as Dionisie Fotino, Gheorghe Lazăr, and Tudor Vladimirescu. Linked to the bourgeois production relations and interested in the abolition of the feudal restrictions that hindered the development of the country, the representatives of the bourgeoisie put forward ideas contrary to the boyar ideal, even attempting — as Tudor Vladimirescu did — to overthrow it. These writers found devoted allies among the representatives of the minor clergy, such as Naum Râmniceanu who, discontented with the abuses of the high clergy and the boyars, fought for social reforms.

The social composition of the writers was to change even more in the third generation. The big boyars still succeeded in carrying their point of view in 1831 and adopting an Organic Regulation that promoted their interests. And they still had a number of valuable young writers such as Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Sturdza, and Barbu Stirbei. But new, dynamic ideas no longer originated in this camp, but in that of the liberal boyars of smaller or middle rank. The interpenetration of this group with the most

advanced bourgeois elements gave birth to a social stratum of intellectuals, non-existent until then. For these intellectuals, who were to become a real political force in 1848, narrow class interests were less predominant, which allowed for more consideration for general socio-political ideals. This is the basis underlying the ideas of the *cărvunari* (carbonaris). of Ion Tăutu, Eufrosin Poteca, Simion Marcovici.

Thus, in the course of three generations the social composition of the Romanian political writers had widened. The absolute domination of the big boyars in the mid-18th century was weakened with every passing generation, and by 1830 the liberal elements, which had sprung from the smaller and middle boyars and from the bourgeoisie, were predominant, both in quantity and value. This liberal group was to constitute a new social stratum, that of the intellectuals.²²

From a political point of view all these writers were very closely connected with the events of the time in which they played an important role. Thus, Mihail Cantacuzino led the liberation movement of 1769—1774; after the defeat he was obliged to leave his country for good. Enăchiță Văcărescu too played a leading political part and his persistent opposition to prince N. Mavrogheni (1786—1790), ended in a long exile at Nicopole and the Isle of Rhodes. Gavril Callimachi carried on hostile activities to the central power for almost three decades. This was the most violently anti-Ottoman and anti-Phanariot of the three generations; it was the generation that strove the most energetically to do away with foreign domination.

The interweaving of political theory and practice was present in many cases with the second generation, too. The activity and political destiny of Ioan Cantacuzino resembled in many aspects, the activity and destiny of his uncle Mihail. Iordache Catargiu hoping to put his ideas into practice with the aid of Napoleon I traveled to Paris and on returning to Moldavia was

²² Statistics of the signatories of reforms programs are as follows:

	1769—1800	1801—1830	Total
Princes	5	3	8 (4%)
Big boyars and high clergy	17	69	86 (45%)
Big boyars and small boyars	12	51	63 (33%)
Small boyars	2	25	27 (15%)
Bourgeois	—	4	4 (2%)
Free peasants	2	—	2 (1%)

It is strange that the number of the Phanariot princes (7) who drew up memoirs or reform plans is very small and so is in fact the number of their writings — 10 in all *Mémoires*, p. IX.

arrested (1810). Veniamin Costache was not only a highly cultivated clergyman but a brave politician who fearlessly defied the occupation authorities, for which he was compelled to retire, temporarily, from his post in 1808. The big boyar Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu clashed with both the Phanariot princes and the generals of the Czar whose friend he had always been; he paid for this by being exiled to the Ukraine (1829). We encounter examples of the interweaving of theory and practice in the activity of Grigore IV Ghica, one of the initiators of Tudor Vladimirescu's movement and later prince of Wallachia (1822—1828), and naturally in that of Tudor Vladimirescu who gave up his life for the attainment of his ideal.

All this leads to the conclusion that the socio-political literature of the Enlightenment in the Principalities was a committed literature. The political writers were closely connected with reality and actively fighting to transform it.

The cultural personality

As far as the spiritual evolution was concerned, the 18th century was a time of great importance in the formation of modern Romanian culture and civilization.

In the epoch of Brâncoveanu and Cantemir, Romanian culture had fully developed; it had given shape to a positive system of values and had acquired specific traits of its own. The Romanian language had triumphed at last over Slavonic which had been the official language. There were permanent ties with Europe, and Latin culture had gained ground. These favorable conditions, aided by the comparative political stability of the second half of the 17th century, enabled an entire generation of writers to develop original and vigorous ideas. With the establishment of the Phanariot regime, the natural development of the society in the Principalities was hindered, not only in political matters but in cultural ones as well. Fearing the people they ruled over and not trusting the country's boyars, the Phanariots attempted to raise a wall between the Principalities and the rest of Europe to prevent the Romanians from having contact with ideas, facts, and people that might encourage them to fight against foreign domination. The Phanariots emphasized Greek culture to the detriment of the Latin culture and prevented the development of the Romanian language. The outcome was a half-century of confusion, in which spiritual values were few and scholars comparatively lacking in personality. As N. Iorga points out: "at a time permeated with foreignism, when everyone copied the behavior and speech of the Greek who wielded the sword and the sceptre, Romanian thinking could not germinate and bear fruit."²³

²³ N. Iorga, *Manolache Drăghici*, pp. 682—683; see also *Istoria literaturii române în veacul al XVIII-lea*, I, p. 440.

This situation changed after 1750. The Phanariot rule did not change its character but the continual struggle of the Romanians and favorable international conditions enabled the Principalities to abandon their isolation and to gradually resume communications with Europe.

In defining the cultural personality of the political writers it is necessary first, to establish the sources of knowledge, the extent of knowledge, and the scope of the culture. It is also useful to delimit the zones of influence, establish the relationship between the various types of culture, and interpret the results of these interferences. As a rule, the writers were among the most learned people of the time. As most of them were boyars, they were able to elude any excessive Greek influence and to maintain contact, sometimes close, with European culture. They had at the same time a thorough knowledge of Romanian history which some of them — Enăchiță Văcărescu, Mihail Cantacuzino, Dumitrache, Dionisie Fotino, Naum Râmniceanu, Manolache Drăghici — dealt with in works of ample proportions. This thorough knowledge of the past was to be of great help to them in proposing and especially arguing their political ideas. In modern historiography — both Romanian and foreign — it has often been alleged that the Romanian boyars and scholars became Phanariotized and estranged from the language and culture of their own country. We hold that this idea lacks any documentary basis. Foreign travelers mentioned that the boyars spoke to one another in Romanian and that the elderly ones always refused to learn Greek;²⁴ the business correspondence between the boyars and the commercial companies of Transylvania was carried on in Greek and Romanian. The scholars we are dealing with were also the main supporters of the printing of books. They were extremely interested in the development of original literature in the Principalities and in the introduction of the outstanding European literary works into Romanian culture.

During the Phanariot epoch, Greek culture overlapped this Romanian fund. It was not the first time that Greek culture had appeared in the Principalities; it had first spread north of the Danube in the 17th century under the form of a world culture and language, as the Latin language and culture had done in the west. Under the Phanariots, however, Greek culture became an instrument of oppression. By the end of the 18th century especially and the beginning of the following century, these conflicts became violent, concurrently with the awakening of the Romanian and Greek national awareness. The struggle between the Romanian and the Greek schools is a striking example.

This, however, did not prevent a considerable number of Romanian writers from acquiring a fair knowledge of the Greek language and culture — a

²⁴ Raicevich, *Voyage*, p. 146; C. I. Karadja, *Contele Lagarde și călătoria sa*, *Revista istorică* 1—3 (1923), p. 9.

culture descended from ancient Greece and more than one millenium of Byzantine tradition. Many of the political writers knew Greek: Enăchiță Văcărescu, Mihail Cantacuzino, Gavril Callimachi in the older generation; Alexandru Beldiman, Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Sturdza, Eufrosin Poteca in the younger one. Some of them, such as Naum Râmniceanu, were even teachers of Greek. At the same time, there were writers, clergymen and laymen, who did not know the Greek language, such as the *medelnicer* Dumitrache, Grigore IV Ghica, Dionisie the Ecclesiarch, Ilie de la Butoi, Manolache Drăghici, Chiriac Râmniceanu, and others.

In any case, the importance of the Greek culture decreased with every generation and, after 1821, lost almost completely its former position. There are few instances in history in which one century of political and cultural domination has left so few traces. There are many explanations, but the main reason lies in the oppositions of the ideals represented by the two cultures, the Greek culture being the bearer of values which the Romanians had continually opposed. Another cause was the very character of the Greek culture in the Principalities. With some exceptions of course, this culture was of a static character, adhering to traditional ways and hostile to the West and its ideas. The Greek writers had little to offer and did not serve as an example to the Romanians. So the Romanians turned to Western culture and civilization. It is a noteworthy fact that the great majority of the political writers had a good knowledge of European languages and culture, and that some of them were educated by French, German, and Italian teachers. The number of European teachers grew particularly after 1774, when they were invited to the houses of Metropolitans Gavril Callimachi and Ignatie and to those of some Phanariot princes and boyar families such as Văcărescu, Conachi, Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Catargiu, Balș, Paladi, Stirbei, Sturdza, Bibescu. Though, as a rule, the influence of these teachers was limited to the learning of European languages and to the conveying of elementary knowledge, their language training enabled scholars to become directly acquainted with Western writings. It is indeed of great importance to establish the percentage of persons familiar with European languages in order to understand Romanian political thought as well as the relationship between the Greek and Western cultures. We can state that the overwhelming majority of Romanian writers knew at least one western language, French being the most common, then German and Italian. That meant that through books a direct contact had been established between the European culture and the Romanian writers, even before the frontiers were opened and traveling in Europe was unrestricted.²⁵

²⁵ A knowledge of European languages was not reserved to scholars only; Carra (1777), Salaberry (1791), Bantas-Kamenski (1808), Thornton (1812), Langeron (1824),

An investigation of bookshops and libraries reveals the degree of circulation of western books east and south of the Carpathians. Thus, there was a book auction in 1790 and among the suppliers of books were the Pulio brothers, Vlachs from Vienna;²⁶ the Sibiu merchants Paciurea and C. Hagi-Pop; Zaharia Carcalechi; and even the purveyor of the French Royal Court.²⁷ A certain Dumitru Braşoveanu and one Atanase Gani sold books in Jassy at the beginning of the 19th century. In 1829 the variety of books titles in Bucharest bookshops impressed Russian officers, who found many books there that were banned in Russia. Soon after presses were censored in the Principalities too, the Jassy booksellers Alexa Emanuil, Gavril Braşoveanu, Iosif Franţuzul (Iosif "the French"), and Alexa Hiotu were required to send the censor catalogues of their books (1832), which showed a great variety of interests. The same year there was a bookshop opened in Bucharest, the property of a Frenchman, G. Thierry.

The intensification of book circulation by the end of the 18th century led to an increase in the number of libraries. Among the "public" and well stocked ones were those of the princely Academies in Bucharest and Jassy, those of the metropolitan churches in the two capitals, those of the monasteries of Ghighiu and Cernica, and those of the seminary at Socola. Already by the end of the 18th century there were well-known libraries belonging to the boyars Ioan Canta, Leon Gheuca, Manolache Bogdan, Iordache Catargi, and to the Rosnovanus, the Brâncoveanus, the Sturdzas, the Balşes, and the Văcărescus families.²⁸ The most famous of all was, no doubt, the library at Stîncea, set up by Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu and enlarged by his son Nicolae. These libraries were tremendously useful in spreading culture; the books they contained were lent, and they circulated among learned people in Bucharest and Jassy. All this leads to the conclusion that books, original books coming straight from France or Germany, represented the main channel through which European ideas reached the Principalities.

Direct contacts between Romanian writers and the European world also played a comparatively important role. We have already pointed out that,

certify that they were used in Bucharest and Jassy drawing-rooms. One set of statistics on languages of draft reforms indicates that there were 91 in Romanian, 71 in French, 16 in Greek, 1 in Russian and 1 in Turkish. *Mémoires*, p. VII.

²⁶ The censor forbade one of their transports of books in 1797. A. Camariano-Cioran, *Spiritul revoluţionar francez şi Voltaire în limba greacă şi română*, p. 71.

²⁷ This purveyor supplied Rosetti-Rosnovanu family with books. I. Balş' library possessed the latest books published which he got from Barbié de Bocage, a well-known French man of letters.

²⁸ After 1800, among the well-known libraries were those belonging to the Conachi, Ghica, Paladi, Bălăceanu, Bantas, and Negruzzi families, and Gh. Lazăr's library.

generally speaking, this contact was very restricted by the Phanariots and that, in this period, the Romanians were denied the right to travel freely in Europe. This interdiction was absolute in the first half of the 18th century and very strict in the second half when, among the writers we are dealing with, only Enăchiță Văcărescu traveled in the West.²⁹ After 1800, however, direct communication became more frequent but still was not common.³⁰ Direct contact with the West exerted a real influence only on the writers of the third generation who were not content to visit Russia or Austria; almost all of them traveled to Italy, France, and even England. Yet even during this period and for all the political writers, the direct communication with Europe, either in the form of travel abroad or with Europeans visiting the Principalities,³¹ played a secondary role in their spiritual training. This role was to become important only after 1831.

In the spiritual training of the political writers there were three main coordinates: the old Romanian culture, the European culture, and the Greek culture. During this period the fundamental Romanian culture acted as the basic element, and the various foreign influences were grafted onto it. The problem of the relationship between these influences is very complex and has been the object of long debates in Southeastern European historiography. However, the following statistics are very suggestive: they comprise a list of books in two large libraries — one a Wallachian and religious library, the second a Moldavian and lay one — drawn up for every group of languages. The library of the Bucharest Metropolitan Church lists 2275 titles in Latin, 1497 in French, 300 in Greek, 49 in German, 18 in Turkish, and 13 in English³² while the catalogue of the Rosnovanu library records 439 titles in French, 75 in Greek, and 8 in German.³³ We believe that these figures indicate the direction of cultivated people's tastes, the cultural direction the Romanian society was assuming.

²⁹ Among the members of this generation, Depasta also visited Europe but before settling in the Principalities, and M. Cantacuzino but after he had left the country for good.

³⁰ Eight writers of the second generation traveled to Central Europe; only I. Catargi and D. Golescu got as far as the West of the continent.

³¹ In our opinion the role of the Western secretaries of the Phanariot princes has been exaggerated. They were, in general, men of no spiritual distinction, kept outside the movement of current ideas. The exceptions, for there were some, do not entitle us to mention them among the main factors that contributed to the modernization of culture in the Principalities.

³² This catalogue was drawn up by P. Poenaru in 1836 but certainly reflected former situations. *Library of the Academy of the R. S. Romania*, Mss nr. 2693.

³³ This catalogue was probably drawn up in 1818–1827. *State Archives*, Bucharest, A. N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu Papers CCLX/16.

CHAPTER IV

ROMANIAN SOURCES

The Chroniclers and Dimitrie Cantemir

In a preceding chapter we underlined the importance of the second half of the 17th century for Romanian culture. Due to an interrupted succession of writers, ranging from Grigore Ureche to Dimitrie Cantemir, the content of values and the form of expression had reached maturity and acquired a specific, original character. In political thought, this epoch witnessed feverish attempts to solve the crisis of the nobiliary state by setting forth numerous new political ideas. Most of those ideas were reiterated by the following generations and were the basis for political thought during the Enlightenment period.

The works of Grigore Ureche were valued and utilized by Dionisie Fotino and by Ion Tăutu, who included Ureche in a list of the remarkable men in Romanian history.¹ Miron Costin's works were largely circulated too and utilized by Mihail Cantacuzino, Dionisie Fotino, Vasile Pogor, and Naum Râmniceanu. Some other well-known writers of the time were Metropolitan Dosoftei, Ioan Neculce, and even Nicolae Milescu. Through the influence exerted on Mihail Cantacuzino and Dionisie Fotino, Constantin Cantacuzino's *Istoria Țării Românești* played an important role in the evolution of political ideas and historical thought.

But it was the writings of Dimitrie Cantemir that were of the greatest importance in the formation of Romanian political thought during the Enlightenment. In his short reign (1710—1711), the philosopher-prince tried to create an absolutist monarchic system like the one introduced in Russia by Peter the Great. The theoretical aspects of this form of government, already described in his early writings, found their clearest expression in the works written after 1711 when, as the Czar's adviser and minister, the exiled prince

¹ E. Vîrtosu. *Din scrierile inedite ale comisului I. Tăutu* (1939), p. 9. For the circulation of the manuscripts containing the writings of the chroniclers, see M. Tomescu, *Istoria Cărții Românești* (1968).

contributed to the theoretical substantiation of the absolutism of Peter I. His ideas, well known to and highly appreciated by the writers of the Enlightenment, inspired a great number of writings and reform projects and played an important role in the Romanians' struggle for national independence. The "theory of capitulations" and numerous arguments regarding the historical rights of Moldavia and Wallachia were also inspired by Cantemir.

The ideas of Mihail Cantacuzino and Enăchiță Văcărescu on these problems are obviously borrowed from the writings of Cantemir. Mihail Cantacuzino, especially, whose political destiny so strikingly resembled that of Cantemir, used the prince's writings to the full, both in his *Istoria Țării Românești* and in *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor*.²

Toward the end of the 18th century³ and in the beginning of the 19th, the influence of Cantemir's ideas increased with the translation of some of his writings from the original Latin into Romanian. In 1810, Gheorghe Asachi read Cantemir's works in Rome; jurists consulted his writings on problems of law; Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Sturdza, and Ion Tăutu used his thoughts in their petitions on problems of foreign policy; and the committee of 8 who drew up the Organic Regulations found valuable solutions to administrative and constitutional problems in his works. The position of the writers of the third generation is strikingly illustrated by Manolache Drăghici, who considered Cantemir not only "the most learned of princes and the most enlightened of the writers of this country and of the Ottoman," whose writings "spread to and were appreciated by all learned people," but also a "patriot of renown" who, "though not reigning a long time,

² He dwelled on the genealogy of Cantemir who was married to a Cantacuzino; the influence of the prince of Moldavia on the Wallachian writer must have been very strong during the later's exile in Russia when he had the opportunity to read, *The History of the Ottoman Empire* (1734), the Russian editions of *Evenimentele Cantacuzinilor și Brâncovenilor* (1772) (The events of the Cantacuzinos and Brâncoveanus), and *Viața lui C. Cantemir* (1783) (Life of C. Cantemir). Cantacuzino seemed to have had knowledge of Cantemir's diary, too, written by his secretary Ivan Ilinski. As for Văcărescu, he quoted *The History of the Ottoman Empire* and used data borrowed from *Descriptio Moldaviae* which he may have known in the German edition of 1769–1771.

³ At the end of the 18th century, he was taken over by the Transylvanian School. By 1730 a copy of the *Hronical Vechimii româno-moldo-vlahilor* (Chronicle of the Ancientness of the Romano-Moldo-Wallachians) had been purchased by Bishop I. Micu-Clain, while *Divanul sau glîceava înțeleptului cu lumea* (The Divan or the Quarrel between the Sage and the World) was being circulated in manuscript. S. Micu-Clain, Gh. Șincai, and P. Maior frequently quoted him, grounding their theories on the origin and unity of the Romanian people and language on the material provided by Cantemir. The philosopher-prince was praised by foreign travelers such as D'Hauterive and Carra, and admired even by Phanariot prince such as N. Mavrogheni.

revealed very wise political thoughts regarding the state of Moldavia in that critical time.”⁴

The philosopher-prince was not only considered a regional personality, and a Moldavian writer, but also as a person representing general Romanian values, whose ideas influenced in equal measure the writers of the three Romanian Principalities. This feeling was clearly expressed by the Transylvanian V. Pop who in 1827 wrote that Dimitrie Cantemir was not “the glory and the honor of the Moldavians only, but of the entire Romanian nation.”⁵

Parenthetic Literature

Parenthetic literature, the moral and political guide used by the royalty, a literary genre widely circulated and very popular in the Middle Ages, is a type of literature that should not be ignored. In the 18th century, when other kinds of literature gained popularity and new emphasis was put on moral and philosophic content, parenthetic writings lost some of their importance and their political influence. They were read as “philosophical examples,” rather than as handbooks of political education.

One medieval Romanian parenthetic work which was highly valued was *Invățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Teodosie*. (Teachings of Neagoe Basarab to his son Teodosie) Unfortunately we do not know how well known the *Sfaturile lui Matei al Mirelor către Alexandru Iliș* (Advices of Matei al Mirelor to Alexandru Iliș) were, nor do we know how extensive the circulation was of Metropolitan Petru Movilă’s work addressed to his brother, Prince Moise, a work full of political ideas and patriotic feeling. On the other hand, documents indicate a wide circulation of *Ceasornicul Domnilor* (The Princes Clock) reworked by Nicolae Costin after the Spaniard A. Guevara. The work was kept in manuscripts from 1712, 1714, 1731, 1736, 1738, 1801, 1808, and a complete edition was published in 1828.

Among the parenthetic works which exerted an influence on Romanian thought during the Enlightenment was *Sfaturile creștine și politice* (Christian and Political Advices) written by Metropolitan Antim Ivireanu in 1715. The ideas of this determined enemy of the Turks and Phanariot princes were adopted by the national party and were later included in certain petitions drawn up in the second half of the 18th century.

The work *Sfaturile răposatului domn Nicolae Mavrocordat către fiul său Constantin Vodă* (The Advices of the late Prince N. Mavrocordat to his son Prince Constantin) written in 1726, was a classical handbook of political

⁴ M. Drăghici, *Istoria Moldovei* (1857), p. 221.

⁵ *B.R.V.*, III, p. 550.

Phanariotism, illustrative of the fear and terror under which these Ottoman officials lived, but did not have a wide circulation; the work tended to teach the prince how to defend himself rather than how to govern a country. On the other hand, *Teatrul politic* (The Political Theatre) by Ambrosius Marlianus, translated into Greek by Ioan Avramie in Bucharest (1716), was widely read and a very successful book up to the beginning of the 19th century.

Documentary Sources

Romanian political thought had a very concrete character; the main object of its analysis was Romanian reality. Therefore, documents and factual material played an important role in the process of elaboration of certain theories. Among documentary materials that were widely read were chronographs and chronologies, particularly those referring to the political history of the Principalities, from which writers derived invaluable information. The chronologies we found in almost all the libraries of boyars and of monasteries provided the basis for most historiographic works in this period and were frequently quoted by Mihail Cantacuzino, Enăchiță Văcărescu, and Naum Râmniceanu.

There were other documented sources that also received wide circulation. The library of Dumitrache contains a famous collection of princes' charters, and his writings made use of information gathered from diptyches found in monasteries, and from inscriptions. His contemporary, Mihail Cantacuzino, based his arguments on documents in the records of the Cantacuzino family, on princes' charters, on letters written by boyars, and on the correspondence of Prince Serban Cantacuzino (1678—1688), Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688—1714), and Constantin Cantacuzino with the Austrians and Peter the Great. The writings of Enăchiță Văcărescu, Dionisie Fotino, Manolache Drăghici, Naum Râmniceanu — the latter very keen on collecting charters and documents — had a strong documentary basis.

The petitions of Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu were grounded on an enormous amount of documented material, and included details and references to all branches of political, social, and economic life in the Principalities. The same is true of Mihail Sturdza who in 1823 drew up a *Material istoric* on which he based his petitions. In 1826 a valuable piece of documented material was placed at the disposal of writers when Dinicu Golescu published *Adunării de tractaturi ce s-au urmat între prea puternica împărăție a Rusiei și Inalta Poartă* (Collection of Treatises between Russia and the High Porte). In addition, documented sources played an important role in the proceedings of the Committee of 8 who were entrusted with the drawing up of the *Organic Regulations*. No doubt the importance of this category of sources is limited,

still, due to the very pragmatic character of socio-political thought in the Principalities, they were a great help in the formulation and the argumentation of numerous theories.

*The influence of the first generation writers
of the Enlightenment*

The chroniclers, Dimitrie Cantemir, and the documentary sources provided valuable stock of facts and ideas for the writers coming after 1750. Sometimes their influence was exerted directly, sometimes through some intermediary. The writers of the first generation were very receptive to the ideas of Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir's time which they re-worked and handed down to those who had no direct contact with the original source. This same generation set forth its own ideals and principles which obviously made themselves felt in succeeding generations. We therefore think it would be interesting to examine the manner in which the ideas of the generation of Mihail Cantacuzino, Enăchiță Văcărescu, and their contemporaries contributed to the development of the socio-political writers belonging to the next two generations.

Despite the fact that Cantacuzino spent the last years of his life in Russia, his writings were widely circulated in the Principalities; *Istoria Țării Românești* (The History of Wallachia) which existed in several manuscript copies was a basic source for all writers, particularly for Dionisie Fotino and Naum Râmniceanu. Mihail Cantacuzino also exerted a decisive influence on his nephew Ion Cantacuzino whom he brought up in Russia in 1774—1784, and whom he inspired with his political beliefs. Ion Cantacuzino's political action and his ideas materialized in his petition of Shishtov (1791). They represented a continuation of the ideas and policy of his uncle and were the evidence of a direct filiation between the two generations of Cantacuzinos.

Enăchiță Văcărescu, too, had an overwhelming influence on the following generations both as a writer and a politician. His views on the world and society were developed in his historical and also his literary works. His *Istoria prea puternicilor împărați otomani* (The History of the Omnipotent Ottoman Emperors) was well known to writers. His poetry was circulated in drawing-rooms, while his ideas on the origin of the Romanian people, synthesized especially in the preface of the grammar of 1787, contributed greatly to the development of a national consciousness. It is thus not surprising that he was praised in the writings of Dionisie Fotino and in Tudor Vladimirescu's correspondence, and was mentioned in the petitions of Mihail Sturdza.

Chronicler Dumitrache "an old native of the country," as one source called him in 1797, exerted a smaller, but on no account negligible influence. Bishop Chesarie whose cultural center at Râmnic contributed to the forming

of writers like Naum Râmniceanu, Dionisie the Ecclesiarch, and Chiriac Romniceanu played an important part especially with the clerical writers.

The second generation boasted a few personalities who left their stamp on the spiritual moulding of the next one. The influence of Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu on his son Nicolae is obvious; so is that of Dumitrache Sturdza on Mihail Sturdza. We also believe that the family milieu was a very important factor in the filiation of ideas, as the Phanariot epoch had a number of families which handed down their political ideas from generation to generation. Such examples are found in the families of Văcărescu, Cantacuzino, Bogdan, Stirbei, Bucșănescu, Ypsilanti, Cuza and others ⁶.

Romanian sources contributed greatly to the development of political ideas. Perhaps the limitation of contacts with Europe made writers feel a still keener interest in the history of the Principalities and the ideas set forth by the preceding generations. The value of the Romanian sources is so much the greater as it concerned all the three Principalities. Cantacuzino and Văcărescu influenced both the Moldavians and Wallachians. Dimitrie Cantemir contributed to the crystalizing the ideas of the Transylvanian School. The Romanian basis of the movement of ideas during the Enlightenment strengthened the unitary character of the culture of the three Principalities and hastened the formation of the national consciousness.

We have set off the basic importance of the Romanian sources, nevertheless political thought did not develop in isolation but in contact with outside influence. Other influences did act upon it, in various ways and with various effects; the contact with European ideas especially was of great importance. It is this contact we shall examine in the next chapter.

⁶ E. Văcărescu's grandfather was killed by the Turks in 1714 together with Constantin Brâncoveanu. His father and his uncle were the leaders of the movement of 1753, while his nephew Barbu was to be one of the initiators of the movement led by Tudor Vladimirescu. In many respects, Mihail Cantacuzino took over and then transmitted to his nephew Ion the ideas set forth by Șerban Cantacuzino and Constantin Cantacuzino. The ideas of M. Bogdan, the leader of the movement of 1778, were reiterated by his adoptive nepphew Barbu Știrbei, the future prince. Among the leaders of the movement of 1753 there was a Bucșănescu, and most probably it was his grandson who was the author of the petition in which the Moldavians protested against the provisions of the Bucharest treaty (1812). It is obvious that Alexandru Ypsilanti's programs inspired his son's programs; such examples are to be found also in the history of the Filipescu, Golescu, Bălăceanu families. The history of the Cuza family illustrates eloquently the spirit of continuity prevalent in the epoch under consideration: Dumitrașcu Cuza was executed by the Phanariots in 1717; his grandson, Ioan, had the same fate in 1778; the next grandson, Ioan, was the author of political petitions and a member in the delegation of Moldavia to Constantinople in 1822. Finally, as a crowning of these efforts, in 1859 Alexandru Ioan Cuza became the first prince of the United Principalities.

CHAPTER V

EUROPEAN DYNAMISM

The Romanian writers in the later half of the 18th century were well acquainted with the events in Europe. Clergymen such as Bishop Chesarie were conversant with the facts regarding the history of Poland, the abolition of the Jesuit order, and the coup d'état of Gustav III, the king of Sweden. Naum Râmniceanu copied not only the provisions of the treaty of Kuciuk-Kainardji (1774), but also those of the Paris treaty (1783) regarding the United States of America. Dumitrache often made use of the Russian and Austrian sources and dealt with the events in Moreea, Anatolia, Egypt. We need not dwell on the knowledge of European history that Enăchiță Văcărescu, Mihail and Ioan Cantacuzino, Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, and Dumitrache and Mihail Sturdza possessed. There was a strong interest in international politics, resulting from an awareness that it was closely connected with the Romanian situation, and the interest was often noted by foreign travelers. To meet this interest, certain general works of information were translated, such as *Political Survey of Europe in the Year 1825* and *Debates of the Vienna Congress*.

Information concerning events in Europe reached the Principalities indirectly through foreign travelers and directly through books and newspapers, which the Romanian boyars ordered from abroad in great number.¹ A know-

¹ The earliest readers of the Western press were the Phanariot princes who were obliged to know all about the events of the time and keep the Porte regularly informed; about 1740, C. Mavrocordat received Dutch, German and Italian papers. Grigore III Ghica received also English papers. The court of Grigore IV Ghica was well provided with Western papers; he even offered to supply the Russian embassy in Constantinople with them. Even prelates such as Chesarie of Râmnic, Bishop Filaret, and Metropolitan Leon Gheuca were acquainted with the French and German papers. At the beginning of the 19th century, the library of the Metropolitan Church of Bucharest received the *Journal général de la littérature étrangère*, *Journal des Savants*, *Journal encyclopédique*, etc. By the end of the 18th century there were numerous boyars subscribers to Western papers. The ones more widely circulated were *La Gazette de Vienne*, *Le Journal Encyclopédique*, *Le Journal de Francfort*, *Notizie del Mondo*, *Le Spectateur du Nord*, *Le journal Littéraire*, *Le Mercure*

ledge of the state of affairs in Europe created a favorable setting for the penetration of ideology and the circulation of socio-political works.

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The School of National Law. The writings of the jurists belonging to the school of natural law were read quite extensively in Moldavia and Wallachia and influenced the political theories of some writers. This will become evident when we analyze these theories, but in the following we only wish to call attention to these writings and to the circles where they aroused a strong interest.

Thus we find that in the library of Stinca, belonging to the Rosetti-Rosnovanu family, there were numerous works on natural law, primarily those of S. Pufendorf and H. Grotius.² The library of the Bucharest Metropolitan Church was well stocked with works on natural law³, which indicates the interest that not only lay circles felt for this doctrine, but clerical ones too.

In Moldavia the influence of the theories of natural law also exerted itself through the works of the Austrian Zeiller author of *Das privat Recht* (Vienna, 1802, republished in 1808) and of a four-volume commentary on Austrian civil law (1811). The works of this distinguished professor of the University of Vienna and strong advocate of Kantian natural law were used by the authors of the Calimah Code (1817), particularly Christian Flechtenmacher.⁴

Future investigations will certainly enrich our knowledge of the circulation of natural law writings in the Romanian Principalities. Nevertheless, we

de France, Il redattore Italiano, and Die vereinigte Post und offener Zeitung. Papers of all tendencies were read ranging from the liberal *Revue encyclopédique* of M. Jullien, a former follower of Babœuf, to the reactionary *Courrier de Londres* of Abbot Callone. The words addressed by Constantin Oteteleşeanu to the Transylvanian merchant C. Hagi Pop show the thirst for information and the store set by European papers: "No matter how many papers arrive, please send them to me."

² Both *De jure belli ac pacis* and *De jure naturae et gentium* existed in several editions — in Latin, German and French. The writings of these two jurists belonging to the school of natural law had been in the library of the Mavrocordats, and at the beginning of the century the monk Sava had translated Grotius' work *De aequitate, indulgentia et facilitate*. V. Al. Georgescu, *Cultura juridică română în secolul XVIII-lea*, pp. 219—221.

³ Besides the two works mentioned above existing in several Latin and French editions, the library also had Pufendorf's other important writing, *Les droits de l'homme et des citoyens tels qu'ils sont présentée par la loi naturelle*, and other works on natural law by less famous authors. The influence of Grotius is present in the *Codes* of Al. Ypsilanti (1775—1777, 1780), in the *Manual juridic* by Al. Donici (1804, 1814), and in the *Caragea Code* (1818). See V. Al. Georgescu, 'H. Grotius dans la culture juridique roumaine au XVIII-e siècle,' *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, 2 (1969).

⁴ V. Al. Georgescu, *Trăsăturile generale și izvoarele Codului Calimah*, *Studii*, 4 (1960), p. 96.

trust that the data mentioned above, already justify their being included among the sources of the political ideas of certain writers. ⁵

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The Ideology of Enlightened Absolutism and the Spirit of the Restoration. The writings of enlightened despots and of their followers were wide spread in the Principalities, beginning with the *Thoughts* of the Swedish count Oxenstiern. One of the main works of the European Enlightenment, it was translated as early as 1750 and many manuscript copies were circulated in addition to the original French edition. Fénelon was also one of the precursors of the ideology of enlightened absolutism; the first translation of *Les aventures de Télémaque* was made at the request of the Moldavian Freemason and conspirator Iordache Darie Dărmănescu, in 1772. Several original French and numerous Greek editions of Fénelon's works were also circulated. ⁶

We believe that another person who influenced Romanian political ideas was Count d'Hauterrive, a Frenchman who lived a good many years in Moldavia. As secretary to Prince Alexandru Mavrocordat-Firaris and Prince Alexandru Ypsilanti, the count had a good knowledge of the Romanian situation and expressed interesting critical appraisals. Thus, it is not surprising that some of the ideas expounded in his work *Mémoire sur l'état de la Moldavie* (1787) were to be found in the political programs of the natives; this work was also used as a source in historiographical writings.

The ideology of enlightened absolutism also reached the Principalities through numerous German works, particularly those of C. Wolff, author of widely read and highly influential works in the 18th century. Costache Conache, Eufrosin Poteca, Gheorghe Lazăr, Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu valued his works and bought them for their libraries. Wolff's ideas were spread abroad together with the ideas of his patron Frederic II and those of the other enlightened despot, Joseph II. The Romanian libraries contained a great many books dedicated to those monarchs, especially the writings of Lanjuinais. ⁷ The philosopher-emperor and his counsellors, Kaunitz and Brukenthal, must have had a strong influence on Enăchiță Văcărescu who had the opportunity of conversing with the emperor twice, at Brașov and Vienna.

⁵ We recall what E. Poteca wrote in praise of Grotius and Pufendorf and the circulation in both Principalities of J. P. Mazioli's writing, *Principes de droit naturel* (1803).

⁶ Metropolitan Leon Gheuca intended to print *Télémaque* in 1783, and so did N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu in 1818, but their plans were not carried out. The most wide-spread Greek edition was that printed by Gobdelas, in 1801.

⁷ His work *Le monarque accompli* (1774) was the most widely circulated. In the Rosnovanu library and in Gheorghe Lazăr's, there are a great many works on the emperor of Austria.

The contact with Russia and especially the personal sympathy the “enlightened despots” enjoyed helped the ideology of absolutism to reach the Principalities. Peter the Great, whose foreign policy was so closely linked with Romanian history, was greatly admired. The Romanian translation of *Viața lui Petru cel Mare* (The Life of Peter the Great) circulated in numerous manuscript copies,⁸ as did also a collection of his sentences and maxims. The Romanian writers felt drawn to the Czar not only because of his anti-Otoman foreign policy, but also for his modernization policy.

The prestige of Peter the Great as well as Russia’s strong influence in Southeast Europe facilitated the infusion of the ideas of Catherine II who influenced not only writers who had met her personally, such as Mihail and Ion Cantacuzino, but all the writers of the first generation who pinned great hopes on the help of the “Semiramis of the North.” Her *Nacaz* was translated in Moldavia following the initiative of Gavril Callimachi (1773) and represented a basic source for the Romanian Enlightenment. In Wallachia its principles influenced Enăchiță Văcărescu, Dinicu Golescu, and Paris Mumuleanu.

During the French revolution and the fears of the Napoleonic empire, there were many circles in Bucharest and Jassy of emigrants who propagated the ideology of enlightened absolutism, but from an extremely conservative and reactionary stand. Led by Gaspary de Belleval and the marquis of Saint Aulaire, these emigrants systematically slandered the ideas of the revolution, championed the former regime, and circulated the royalist paper “Le courrier de Londres” edited by Abbot Callone.

After the fall of Napoleon, the restoration enforced a system of political values that continued to a certain extent the ideas of the enlightened absolutism. The principles prevalent in the epoch of the restoration reached the Principalities through Russian and Austrian sources. Through the intermediary of the Chevalier de Gentz, they influenced a number of Wallachian princes, foremost of them, Grigore IV Ghica, whose correspondence bore the stamp of Metternichian legitimism. And Austrian reformism penetrated into the Principalities also through the intermediary of the Austrian civil code (1811), well-known particularly to Moldavian jurists.

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Enlightened criticism. The enlightened absolutism ideology was the conservative and reformist aspect of the European political thought during the Enlightenment period. It penetrated into the Principalities concurrently with the Enlightenment philosophy proper, represented in most cases by the French

⁸ M. Fărcășanu translated the writing in 1749; there exist also copies dated 1755, 1756, 1767, 1784, 1788, 1799.

thinkers. The Romanians were familiar with the precursors of the Enlightenment — Malebranche, Pascal, Bayle — whose works were present in the boyars' libraries. Descartes was valued especially after 1800 when he came looked upon as the starting point of modern philosophy. As Poteca wrote in 1825, "Descartes' system brought about the entire reform of philosophy in the whole of Europe dethroning Aristotle, though after Descartes there came into the philosophical field other ones, better than him, the Locks, the Newtons, the Leibnizes, the Wolffs and the Kants." Kant acquired the same importance as Descartes. He was quoted by E. Poteca, by V. Vîrnav, and especially by Gh. Lazăr who supported him enthusiastically in his lectures at the Sf. Sava college (1818—1821).

The influence of Mably, whose works were in the Romanian libraries and whose *Dialogues* were translated into Greek by Ecaterina Suțu in Jassy (1819), has not been yet successfully studied. However recent research has brought forward the great appreciation enjoyed by Beccaria, whose works had been used by jurists as early as 1775.⁹ We can also establish, with relative precision, the circulation of the *Encyclopédie* and of the writings of the Encyclopedists. Ianache Cantacuzino possessed volumes of the *Encyclopédie* as early as 1777, and Chesarie de Râmnic was trying to get them in 1778. By the end of the century this fundamental work of the Enlightenment was in the library of the princely court, as well as in the collections of Leon Gheuca, Bishop Filaret, and Metropolitan Iacob Stamate. The writings of Diderot and d'Alembert enjoyed the same circulation and a great number of them were bought from France.¹⁰

The sensualism of Condillac and that of his disciple Destutt de Tracy were very highly thought of in Wallachia, and were taught at the princely Academy in Bucharest. Condillac was known and appreciated both for his

⁹ See *Pravilniceasca Codică* (1957), p. 16; indirectly Beccaria's ideas had penetrated earlier still, through the intermediary of the *Nakaz* of Catherine II, translated in 1773. At the beginning of the 19th century they were found again in A. Donici's *Manual Juridic* (1804), in *Condica criminalicească a Moldovei* (1820—1826), in the draft reforms of 1821—1822 and also in the *Constitution of the Carbonary* by Tăutu. V. Vîrnav translated *Dei delitti e delle pene* in 1825 after Corais' Greek edition of 1802, while at Pisa C. Moroiu studied with C. A. Carmignani, an illustrious post-Beccarian jurist. His dissertation on the prison system is influenced to a great extent by the penal principles of the Italian jurist of the Enlightenment. V. Al. Georgescu, *Contribuții la studiul iluminismului în Țara Românească și Moldova*, Studii, 5 (1967), 4 (1968).

¹⁰ There were numerous copies in the Rosnovanu and Balș libraries and in that of the Bucharest Metropolitan Church library. In 1805 Barbié de Bocage sent to I. Balș three volumes of D'Alembert's works. Passages from the works of Diderot were translated into Romanian by V. Pogor.

philosophical and political works and for his work on linguistics.¹¹ Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu granted it great importance and studied it systematically, translating certain passages and adopting numerous philosophic, political, and economic ideas.¹²

It seems that Rousseau's influence was not as great, though Carra, Sulzer, and the Hungarian newspaper *Magyar Kurir* (1791) stated that the Romanians valued him. Indeed, Golescu made note of Rousseau's house in Geneva, and Professor Vardalah called him "the wise author of Emilie."¹³ We may even consider that the sentimentalism of C. Conachi was due in part to Rousseau's influence. Still, his political writings were read superficially, and his ideas on society were accepted with reserve even by such a profound writer as Tăutu. The radicalism of "the citizen of Geneva" could not easily find followers among such a generally conservative group of writers.¹⁴

Voltaire's influence was stronger and more effective and most of the writers were familiar with his works in their original editions. In 1772, prompted probably by Catherine II, Voltaire's well-known anti-Ottoman writings *Le tocsin des rois* and *Traduction du poème de Jean Plokkov* were translated into Romanian; in 1792, Gherasim Clipa translated Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII*, a work which had circulated in the Greek version of E. Vulgaris and N. Caragea, the former prince of Wallachia. The performing of his plays, the *Mort de César* especially, gave rise to patriotic demonstrations in Bucharest usually organised by the Greek youth.

However, at the same time, the clerical and the reactionary circles of the Ottoman empire viewed Voltaire's influence with concern. Carra pointed out that the Romanians would read the French writer's works more eagerly still, if the patriarch of Constantinople urged by the Porte had not menaced with the vengeance of heaven those who read "Roman-catholic books and especially those of Voltaire".¹⁵ In the notes of some contemporaries the "spirit of Voltaire" was the cause of all calamities, the main accusation against him being his

¹¹ His *Logics* was translated as early as the second half of the 18th century and re-translated by V. Virnav in 1825, together with a chapter from *Traité des sensations*. In 1829, on Grigore Băleanu's insinuations the *Cours d'étude pour l'instruction du prince de Parme* was also translated. A Greek translation of the *Logics* printed by Philippide in Vienna in 1801, was also circulated.

¹² The economic ideas of the Moldavian writer were influenced especially by the writing *Le commerce et le gouvernement*.

¹³ Al. Dușu, *Ecouri rousseauiste in cultura română, Viața Românească* 7 (1962), p. 80.

¹⁴ The fact that his first work translated into Romanian was *Narcise ou l'amant de lui-même*, while the *Social Contract* was not translated until 1830 seems to us significant.

¹⁵ See the very good survey of A. Cioran Camariano, *Spiritul revoluționar francez și Voltaire in limbile greacă și română* (1946).

lack of religious faith; the epithet often accompanying his name was “the godless.”¹⁶

At times, the hostility toward Voltaire and toward Western culture in general became fanatic. Such was the case of the writing *Apologia creștinească* (Christian Defense), printed in Constantinople in 1798, in Jassy in 1816, and in Bucharest in 1819. The attack aimed at the West were violent and full of abuse; the author demanded that steps be taken to protect the Greek-Orthodox world against the baneful influence of Western atheistic philosophy. We find attacks against Voltarian anti-clericalism in the Romanian translation of *Cărticica îndeminatică* by N. Papadopol, brought out in Jassy in 1819, though the translator, Veniamin Costache, praised Western culture and avoided condemnig it to any great degree.

The Enlightenment criticism was an important element in the evolution of modern Romanian thought. It underlay the various liberal trends in the 19th century and played a great part in the intellectual moulding of the 1848 generation. Unlike the ideology of enlightened absolutism which gave rise to reformist and conservative ideas, Enlightened criticism guided Romanian thought along a dynamic progressive path.



The Ideas of French Revolution. Despite the opposition of the Porte, the Romanian boyars and most of the princes showed sympathy for republican France even at a time when, due to the campaign in Egypt, the Romanians had to pretend to have hostile feelings for it. The ideas of the French revolution reached the Principalities through the intermediary of the republican agents in the Principalities, such as the Jacobin merchant Hortolan who was in Bucharest between 1793 and 1795, as well as through the consular staff. The Jacobin consul Emile Gaudin, for example, was a frequent visitor to the drawing-rooms of the metropolitan, of *spathar* Manu and *ban* Ghica. His successor, Gh. Fleury, appointed in 1796, followed his example and was on good terms with the Brâncoveanu, Ghica, and other boyar families. In Jassy in 1798 Consul Parrant organized a parade of French subjects wearing the tricolored cockade. The Greeks G. Stamati and P. Codricas, the authors of plans for a regular organizing of revolutionary propaganda in the Ottoman empire, helped spread revolutionary ideas in the Principalities. Codricas, secretary to Prince Mihai Suțu then secretary of the Porte's embassy in Paris,

¹⁶ These words belong to the monk Vitalie of the Neamț monastery. Vitalie, a disciple of Paisie Velicicovski, ascribed the French revolution to the influence of Voltairianism and called Napoleon “a direct disciple of Voltaire.” I. Corfus, *Un vag ecou al războaielor lui Napoleon la mănăstirea Neamțului*, *Revista Istorică Română*, 2 (1945).

was executed by the Turks in 1802 for his subversive ideas. The Polish emigrants in the Principalities, whose revolutionary ideas and intense anti-Russian activity often alarmed the Czar's consuls in Bucharest and Jassy, the more so as the princes were in contact with Kosciusko, had also some influence on the more liberal boyars. In 1806 there circulated in the Principalities the proclamations of General Dombrowski.

Revolutionary writings made their way into the Principalities very early. People read, for example, books like *De la souveraineté du peuple* (Paris, 1790) *Le manuel du citoyen* (Paris, 1791), and various histories of the revolution. Among the writings translated there was an anonymous treatise on *Revolutions* and a speech of Carnot's; around 1800 the *Appeal Addressed to the Peoples* was also translated. Still, due to the still little developed bourgeoisie, these revolutionary ideas exercised only a limited influence. The boyars retained the idea of national sovereignty, but rejected the social program of the revolution.

During the Napoleonic empire French influence became stronger. Like most of the peoples of East and Southeast Europe, the Romanians saw in the emperor a way to free themselves from foreign rule, a means of setting up a modern independent state of their own. His proclamations and speeches and the army bulletins were read with great interest. The song sung by the Transylvanians, "Bonaparte is not far, hurry and come to do justice," was popularized by I. P. Molnar in Jassy drawing-rooms in 1798, to the great indignation of the Russian consuls. In 1815 a melancholy song — "Bonaparte's Journey to St. Helena as a Slave" — made appearance. Humble monks mentioned him in their notes; even Lazăr called him "the most famous hero of all times."¹⁷ But the Romanian's hopes for liberation were not fulfilled, and the petitions and delegations sent to Paris were ineffectual, for Napoleon considered the Principalities as only something to barter with in his political combinations.

All these examples of Romanian interest and sympathy for republican and imperial France should not lead us to believe that there were not hostile attitudes too, encouraged mainly by the conservative circles for which the ideas of social and national freedom being spread by France were a direct threat. The center of the anti-revolutionary campaign was the patriarchate of Constantinople which published a number of works justifying the Ottoman domination and vehemently condemning the idea of national independence.¹⁸

¹⁷ Gh. Bogdan-Duică, Popa-Liseanu, *Viața și operele lui Gh. Lazăr* (1924), p. 32. After 1815 there was still a vivid interest in the emperor, and the Romanians received from abroad various works on his life and reign, the maps of the famous battles, and even his memoirs.

¹⁸ We must recall that *Învățătura părintească* (Paternal Teaching) printed in Greek in 1798 termed the idea of independence "a disturbance and modification of the just

The radicalism of the French revolution frightened some of the writers in the Principalities; even outstanding ones such as Naum Râmniceanu, Dionisie Fotino, or Daniel Philippide condemned it, sometimes, in severe terms. In certain cases there was the same feeling for Napoleon too, who in the Principalities was condemned by an entirely hostile literature imported from Austria and Russia.¹⁹ In spite of all this, the signs of hostility were obviously surpassed by the proofs of interest and sympathy. The orientation towards France was ever more pronounced and its influence stronger and stronger.

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Liberal tendencies. The influence of liberal ideas was not as strong as that of the ideology of enlightened absolutism, of the Philosophes, or of the French revolution. England was the main source of liberalism, and at the same time it was a country Romanian writers were less familiar with, though they valued its culture and its institutions. One of its admirers, Dumitrache Sturdza, considered it “the free country worthy of being used as example” and Ion Tăutu went so far as to consider English institutions superior to the French ones.²⁰

In the epoch we are dealing with the first Romanian writer to visit England was Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu (1818). He traveled to London, was received in the circles of the British aristocracy and became acquainted with Lord Guilford — well-known for his pro-Greek attitude — and his nephew Frederic Douglas.²¹ The letters of Rosetti-Rosnovanu describing London and its surroundings were read with great interest in Moldavia. His stay in England and his contact with English culture had a strong impact on the Moldavian writer, especially with regard to his economic conceptions. He was well versed in the theories of J. B. Say, Adam Smith, and David Ricardo, whose writings were in the library at Stînca and whose ideas were to be carried on in his own writings.

rule.” This work which aroused the indignation of the liberal Greek circles had only a restricted circulation in the Principalities; it was not translated until 1822. A. Cioran-Camariano, *Spiritul filozofic și revoluționar francez combătut de patriarhia ecumenică și Sublima Poartă* (1941), pp. 127–133, 135–136.

¹⁹ *Trista întâmplare a cetății Dresda* (1814), *Scurtă arătare despre luarea Parisului* (1814), *Întâmplările războiului francezilor și întoarcerea lor de la Moscova* (1814), *Napoleon Bonaparte, ce au fost și ce este* (1815), *Vrednică de pomenire biruința* (1815), *Oștirea francezilor în Rusia la leat 1812* (1826).

²⁰ E. Vîrtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte și proiectul unei republici aristo-democraticești în Moldova*, p. 34. E. Vîrtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 279. Among his papers there are, in fact, extracts from the English Constitution. State Archives Jassy, p. 126/324.

²¹ Rosnovanu kept in touch with his English friends even after his return to Jassy. He corresponded with them mainly on the problem of alilodidactic education and the setting up of a university in the Ionian isles.

For want of thorough knowledge of English thought,²² the liberal ideas reached the Principalities through French channels, most important of which were the works of Montesquieu, the father of liberalism who was known to and highly appreciated by all the writers among the boyars. *L'esprit des lois* influenced the authors of the "*Pravilicești Condiți*" (1780), those of the draft education reform of 1792. The "profound Montesquieu," as Metropolitan Jacob Stamati called him, was quoted by jurist Toma Carra and by I. Tăutu; the latter based many of his theories, and particularly his political treatise on the art of governing, on the principles of the French thinker.

We still know very little about the extent to which the writers in the Principalities were conversant with and influenced by the physiocrats. Since there were obvious physiocratic elements in Romanian thought during the Enlightenment, we may assume that the writings of the physiocrats, which in fact were included in many libraries, were well-known and accepted. Around 1830, we can speak of a "Filangeri moment," as fragments of his works were translated by S. Marcovici and E. Poteca. Ion Tăutu was also influenced by the ideas of the Italian thinker.²³

Liberal ideas were able to penetrate into the Moldavian thought through the agency of M. A. Jullien as well, a former Jacobin who had changed to a liberal stand and, in 1817, was the publisher of the periodical *Revue Encyclopédique*. Thanks to Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, who during his stay in Paris had attended the circle of Jullien, this liberal and rationalist periodical was widely circulated in the Principalities and throughout Eastern Europe.

²² Apart from Rosnovanu the only Romanian who traveled to England before 1831 was Petrache Poenaru. The principles of English law influenced C. Moroiu who, in 1827, wrote a *Dizertație pentru îndreptarea pușcării din București, cu o arătare pe scurt de sistema temnițelor englezești*, (Dissertation on the reform of prisons in Bucharest with a short note on the system of English gaols) see V. Al. Georgescu, *Contribuții*, II, pp. 687–688. We are not in a position yet to establish how well J. Locke was known, though he is mentioned in the works of the time. The English philosopher was translated into Greek by E. Vulgaris, who was in close contact with the writers in the Principalities; some of his theories were used by I. Mesiodax, professor at the Jassy Academy, in the second half of the 18th century.

²³ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 280.

CHAPTER VI

SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN ELEMENTS

Ancient Greek Influences and Byzantine Remains. The influence in the Principalities of ancient Greek culture had certainly been felt for many centuries. The 18th century in many respects, merely carried on from previous century. Nevertheless, during this epoch Greek culture was considered in a new light, and preferences went to other writers. We discover at first a change in the views concerning Aristotle. Although the libraries at Văcărești and Stînca contained his works, as did the library of the Bucharest Metropolitan Church, they circulated among only a small group of writers¹, who in any case, more often than not rejected his theories. This hostility to Aristotle dated from Cantemir who never passed up an opportunity to criticize him.² The philosophical and political ideas of the Stagirite were almost completely absent in Romanian political literature of the 18th century; at the beginning of the 19th century this indifference turned to hostility and the Greek philosopher was considered a hindrance barring the way of progress in human thought.³

We discover, on the other hand, a growing interest in Plato who was read, appreciated, and praised by many writers. The *Republic* and other writings could be found in the libraries of boyars and of monasteries, and Metropolitan Leon Gheuca translated from the French an analysis of his dialogues about Socrate. His ideas on law provided a model for Metropolitan Iacob Stamate and his collaborators in the drawing up of a draft education reform (1792). We find him mentioned in princes' characters, texts of laws, and in the writings of Naum Râmnicéanu.

¹ I. Carra states that Aristotle was read by the boyars, *Histoire de la Moldavie et de la Valachie*, p. 188; E. Văcărescu got to know him through the intermediary of Coridaleu.

² D. Bădărău, *Filozofia lui D. Cantemir* (1964), pp. 7, 265. The lack of influence of Aristotle was underlined by N. Iorga, *Nouvelles notes sur les relations entre roumains et grecs*, (1921), pp. 11–12; see also P. Vaida, *D. Cantemir și antichitatea*, *Revista de filozofie*, 8 (1965) and *D. Cantemir și aristotelismul*, *Revista de filozofie*, 5 (1966).

³ E. Poteca wrote in 1825 "Aristotle's system enslaved the human mind up to the beginning of the last century." G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și opera lui E. Poteca*, p. 29.

In the present stage of the investigations we cannot justify satisfactorily, the preference for Plato and the lack of popularity of Aristotle; we think however that we can establish a connection between Plato's ideas and the plans for an aristocratic republic drawn up by a number of writers. In the 18th century Plato was appreciated because most of the writers were boyars and because they found in the political ideas of the Greek philosopher a model and a justification of their own ideal.

As far as the Byzantine influence was concerned, we may consider it extremely limited. "Byzance après Byzance," Iorga's formula, did not survive the 17th century; the continuation of the Byzantine tradition which suited princes like Matei Basarab, Vasile Lupu, and Constantin Brâncoveanu, rulers of countries possessing great possibilities for internal and foreign political initiative, did not suit the servile and narrow policy of the Phanariot princes.

Of course, this does not mean that writers had no knowledge of Byzantine history; in their works, Mihail Cantacuzino, Naum Râmniceanu, Dionisie Fotino, and Enăchiță Văcărescu made use of numerous Byzantine sources. Parenthetic works were circulated for the amusement of the sons of boyars and princes, such as *Capitolele lui Agapet către împăratul Leon* (The Chapters of Agapet to Emperor Leon) or *Ale lui Vasile împăratul grecilor cuvinte de învățătură* (The Teachings of Basil, Emperor of the Greeks); but, from a political point of view, their importance was very small. Romanian writers no longer took an interest in Byzantium; their attention was now concentrated in other directions.

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The Neo-Greek Channel. The term "channel" here is not used hazardly, but with a view to define the place of Greek culture amid all the sources of Romanian political thought, during the period of the Enlightenment. The term reflects precisely the role of intermediary played by this culture between Romanian thought, on the one hand, and the European ideas, on the other. At the same time, both in Romanian and Greek historiography the importance of this channel has been very much exaggerated, and the assertion that it represents the main way in which Western culture penetrated into the Principalities is unjustified. The data revealed by the preceding chapters prove the direct ties between the Romanian writers and Western ideas and show that the secondary channels, the Greek one included, were of less importance. We therefore consider that, once more it should be stressed that the majority of the political writers we are dealing with had a fair knowledge of Western languages, possessed libraries of their own, and were thus able to gain a direct knowledge of Western ideas and values.

It is true that some political writings came to be known through the Greek editions and that the Romanian translations were made later. But to draw the conclusion that Greek political ideas were the predominant influence in Romanian thought would be rash. In the last analysis it is the influence of the work translated, not that of the intermediary, that counts, no matter after what language the translation was made. Therefore we hold that, in order to outline the relationship between the two cultures, it is important to investigate the extent to which Greek political ideas circulated and were adopted in the Principalities, and not the amount of Western writings translated from Greek into Romanian.

As we shall have the opportunity to show, there existed in the Phanariot period a divergence between the Romanian and Greek ideals. Romanian political thought developed in conflict with the political values of the Phanariot society, and this situation was by no means of a nature to promote mutual political influence. Both the Romanians and the Greeks felt this divergence increase in the second half of the 18th century, when a Romanian national consciousness was taking shape and when the Greek culture was changing from a universal culture like the Latin one into a national Greek culture.

This mutual political hostility brought about a surprising lack of coordination between the two national movements, even an antagonism detrimental to both causes.

If the opposition of the Romanians to the Phanariots is easily accounted for, it is difficult to understand the Romanian writers' indifference to the Greek national movement. It is odd that the great Greek patriot Rhigas Velestinlis, who lived in the Principalities for several years, had such little influence. Though it is likely that his writings were known, the Romanians did not take up his ideas. His works were discussed only in Greek bourgeois circles in Wallachia and Moldavia.⁴ It is significant that his famous constitution was not translated into any Balkan language — a fact that testifies its limited influence in the Southeast European world.⁵

In the Principalities the Greek ideas on national liberation at the beginning of the 19th century met with a very wary reception. No doubt it was not a matter of opposition on principle, but of the fact that one of the basic ideas of Romanian political thought was a dissociation from all Southeast European trends, irrespective of orientation, and the development of the Principalities in their own direction. This position was clearly revealed both during the reign of Constantin Ypsilanti, whose plans for Balkan cooperation were systema-

⁴ Al. Elian, *Sur la circulation manuscrite des écrits politiques de Rhigas en Moldavie*, Revue Roumaine d'Histoire, 2, (1962).

⁵ M. Botzaris, *Visions balkaniques dans la préparation de la révolution grecque*, p. 26.

tically rejected, and especially in 1821 when the two national liberation movements whose aims were similar came into a direct military clash.

All this leads us to believe we can speak of a relative importance of the Greek cultural channel, but of an unfortunate absence of relations between the political ideas of the two nations. ⁶



Other contacts. It is also interesting to examine the relations between Romanian and Ottoman political thought. Taking into account the great divergence of interests between the Romanians and the Turks, the areas of contact between the two were limited, and of little importance. Nevertheless, though the problem has almost never been examined we can point out a few aspects that seem interesting and deserve consideration.

With a few exceptions, the Romanians did not know Turkish so that Turkish writings had no public in the Principalities. In 1786, Prince N. Mavrogheni, shocked that "no boyar could speak Turkish" though "it is the most necessary language in this country," decided to send seven sons of second rank boyars to Constantinople to study the language of the suzerain country. However his plans was never carried out and the Ottoman culture continued to be unknown to the great majority of Romanian writers. ⁷

It would be interesting to learn if the reforming movement of Selim III had any influence on the political thought in the Principalities. Under the reign of that sultan, the Ottoman empire was more receptive to European influences; it took up numerous new ideas which, through the intermediary of the Phanariot princes who were all connected with the sultan's court, succeeded in penetrating into the Principalities.

One might perhaps establish a connection between Selim's reforms, the draft reform of the empire drawn up by Alexandru Ypsilanti, and the reforms of this prince in the Principalities. At any rate we consider that the epoch of the Nizam-i-Djedid facilitated the infusion of Western ideas into the Principalities and encouraged the Romanian writers to express more liberal opinions.

Thus, on each occasion when a new prince was appointed there were political ideas and recommendations made by the Porte. Unfortunately the speeches were hackeneyed — the new ruler was advised in a very general

⁶ This is of course valuable only for the political thought and not for the whole field of cultural Greek-Romanian relations.

⁷ V. A. Ureche, *Istoria Românilor*, III, p. 78; the prince's statement was an injustice to boyar Enăchișă Văcărescu, the author of a history of the sultans and the possessor of Romano-Turkish and Turkish-Romanian dictionaries. About the same time there circulated a very naive manuscript regarding the customs of the Turks with regard to marriage and death.

manner to watch over the happiness of his subjects and to look after the general welfare of the Principalities. We have mentioned them, however, as they appear in the preamble to numerous princes' charters and were quite widely circulated.

The contact between Romanians and Serbians may have been of certain importance, a contact which was effective in both directions. For the Serbians, who were under the complete political domination of the Porte, the example of the Principalities was a model to follow, and their demands for autonomy submitted at Shishtov (1791) used the political statute of the Principalities as a guide. The plans Ypsilanti had made regarding Serbia and the help he granted Caragheorghe's insurgents are well-known. But there were also influences in the opposite sense. Dositei Obradovici, the Serbian writer, entertained close ties with Moldavian writers, among whom Metropolitan Leon Gheuca and some members of the Balș family. The ties between Tudor Vladimirescu and the liberation movement in Serbia also deserve to be mentioned, and especially the fact that the *Adunarea norodului* (the People's Assembly) seemed to be of Serbian inspiration. Thus Romano-Serbian relations were tied in a new and institutional aspect, which unfortunately had no consequences.

PART III
SOCIO-POLITICAL IDEAS

CHAPTER VII

VIEWS ON MAN AND SOCIETY

Theological ideas. The setting up of the Phanariot regime struck a blow not only to the boyars' political influence, but also to the power the Orthodox church had enjoyed until then. Afraid of the firm attitude of Metropolitan Antim Ivireanu, executed in 1716, and taking advantage of the fact that his successors were, in general, prelates devoid of any distinctive character, the first Phanariot princes endeavoured to isolate the clergy and prevent it from mixing in politics. But, in the second half of the century the church had at its head an impressive succession of great prelates who were also writers and politicians carrying on an intense activity in all areas of political and cultural life. Among them were the Metropolitans Gavril Callimachi, Iacob II Stamate, Leon Gheuca, Veniamin Costache, Grigore Dascălul, Dionisie Lupu; bishops as Chesarie of Râmnic, Amfilochie of Hotin, Gherasim Clipa of Roman, Iosif of Argeş; and clergymen with more humble administrative functions such as Vartolomeu Măzăreanu, archimandrite of Putna. The intensifying of the church's activity after 1750 was, to a certain extent, due to the reforming activity of Paisie Velicicovschi, whose actions extended to both Principalities. In Wallachia the bishopric of Râmnic played a considerable political and cultural role and opposed the metropolitan bishopric of Bucharest as the latter was for a while dominated by the Greeks.

The energetic activity carried on by the church came also as a reaction to the general decline of the religious faith; during this period there were public demonstrations of faith, but they were only a disguise of real decrease in religious feeling. Monastic rules were often broken; the morals of the priest became less strict; the lack of respect for places of worship was demonstrated by numerous thefts in churches and by the frequent irregular ordainings. The weakening of the faith or, at any rate, the decrease of interest in its exterior manifestations went so far that even the princes were alarmed. A very significant order was issued by Mihail Suțu (1783) reproaching the inhabitants for "having again forgotten to lead a decent christian life, for having forgotten about the past and for not going to church on the great divine holidays." The prince ordered the ispravnic (prefects) "to advise them, but kindly and

warningly, after which to force them and threaten them with the yoke and other punishments, showing them that besides the working of the land, they must not forget to go to church on the proper days.”¹

The church laid the blame on the newly-introduced western ideas and especially on the French atheists. In order to counteract their influence, a number of religious books were printed expressing the church's point of view particularly in regard to the problems on the relation between man and divinity; but, generally speaking, the dogmatics were left unchanged, the Orthodox church proving it was incapable of adapting itself to the new realities.

It is interesting to examine, in connection with the theme of our work, the religious element in works of a socio political character. We thus discover that all the writers granted the divinity an important role: Depasta, Daponte, C. Caragea, Beldiman, Fotino, Dârzeanu, Serban and Grigore Andronescu. They often invoked religious beliefs in order to explain facts, phenomena, and occurrences. Still, the invocation was usually very general and declarative in character, the attributive role of the divinity never exceeding the stage of a primary nebulous causality. Except for the monk Naum Râmniceanu who considered that the divinity was “the cause of all things,” that truth could be obtained only through faith, and that science could explain the problem of existence only partially,² the other writers avoided making such categorical statements. In fact, with every generation the weight of the divinity decreased while the interest in rationalist explanations grew to such an extent that the rationalist philosophers were mentioned and even appreciated by monks such as E. Poteca.³ We thus witness a laicizing process of thought — the

¹ V. A. Ureche, *Istoria românilor*, I, pp. 370—372; similar orders were sent to the ispravnicis by his predecessor N. Caragea. Metropolitan Iacob II Stamate and Veniamin Costache printed leaflets urging people to observe the holidays.

² Naum Râmniceanu, *Despre origina românilor*, pp. 235, 252. The plan announced for a future writing on dogmatics will show what this writer meant by cognizance. He wrote that “Volume II, in part I, will deal with the cognizance of creatures, of the sky, of the air and the earth. Part II of self cognizance, distinguishing from animals, corporal through activity and spiritual through the link. Part II with the cognizance of God, intellectual, energetical and sensuous, as much as it is possible for men.” So Râmniceanu mapped out a cognizance program in three stages, starting from the material world and ending with God and his relationship to man. His theory had a few new traits that diverge from the theological dogmas, such as the importance granted to empirical cognizance and the stressing of reason's regulating character.

³ He held that “the system of Descartes accomplished a reform in the philosophy of all Europe, dethroning Aristotle, though after Descartes there came in the field of philosophy better others than him, the Locks, the Newtons, the Leibnizes, the Wolffs and Kants.” G. Dem Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui E. Poteca*, p. 29. We see thus that Poteca mentioned only rationalist and empirist philosophers.

replacing of theological arguments by philosophical ones — a process which will be completed after 1831. The evolution of the term “philosophy” seems to us significant in this respect. Thus, for Mihail Cantacuzino philosophy was still the sum of sciences, and philosopher was a synonym for scholar, wise man, man of great learning. With Depasta, however, who spoke of “philosophic thinking” and who followed the principles of Vico, and with Văcărescu, who separated philosophy from the exact sciences, the modern sense was predominant.



Rationalism and Deistic Principles. We may thus consider that the Romanian writers of the Enlightenment granted the divinity — perhaps an Aristotelian influence — only the role of first stimulus of existence; after the world was created it developed on a basis of its own, on the grounds of a certain specific laws, no longer controlled by the divinity which could be known and understood by the human mind.⁴ The incipient deism of the Romanian writers in this period gave rise to an optimistic state of mind which constituted a favorable psychological background for the action aimed at reforming the society. Thus, for example, a Moldavian petition dated 1775 pointed out that, though the fate of the world lay in the hands of the divinity, people “ne cessent pourtant de tâcher humainement pour l’amélioration de leur état.” Society’s relative freedom of evolution, as well as man’s ability to influence its course of development, was most clearly asserted by Naum Râmniceanu in *Despre originea românilor*: “My brothers, we who are men, created for greater hopes and grace, must not travel over the road of this life, blindly, like animals, but gain a very detailed knowledge of all the gifts God has given us.” The meaning of Râmniceanu’s words is clear: man was endowed with qualities which enable him to develop independently and to influence the evolution of the world he lives in.

But what is the stimulus of this development? The great majority of the writers agreed that it was reason. This was clearly said, for the first time, by P. Depasta in his chronicle: he considered the world to be “well governed by the helm of the guiding reason existing in it.” Depasta accompanied the term reason with the adjective “regulating” and opposed it to the “irrational gambols of abnormal passions.” He was not the only writer who spoke highly of reason. In his *Attempt at an analysis of thought different from previous ones*, printed in Greek in Vienna (1817), Daniel Philippide endeavoured to prove that

⁴ In fact, this idea had been expressed earlier by D. Cantemir; “We ourselves can have knowledge of facts, naturally and rationally.” I. Sulea-Firu, *O scriere inedită a lui D. Cantemir—Monarchiarum physico examinatio*, Studii și cercetări de bibliologie, V, p. 267.

reason was superior to the senses, rationalism to empiricism. The increased use of the term reason made the authors of the *Calimah Code* consider necessary to mention it and explain it in the index.

Reason was considered to be a specific human quality which bestowed on man his role as "leader of all that is on the earth." The placing of man in the center of reality, the idea that "man is the world's greatest ornament" proved the existence in the Principalities of an anthropocentrism peculiar to all the European Enlightenment.

When they analyzed the relationship between man and his surroundings, the Romanian writers had to consider the controversial problem of the natural qualities and rights. It has already been pointed out that the writings of jurists of the natural law school were widely circulated and highly appreciated by political writers. But we must also add that the theory of natural law popular during the Enlightenment period had appeared before this time in Cantemir's works, especially in his book of political theory *Monarchiarum phisico examinatio* (1714). The learned prince used the terms of *lex naturae, ordo naturalis et necessarius, juxta propriam naturae normam*; and he considered that "the uninterrupted order of nature" was carried on according to "nature's own laws." In his writings, Cantemir introduced the idea of the existence of a natural law, of an aggregate of laws which men enjoy and which cannot be broken.⁵

Consequently, the theory of natural law was spread not only through Western writings, but directly through the intermediary of D. Cantemir. This may better account for its wide circulation, for the references to the natural law in writings of various character and even in certain literary texts. The terms used by Romanian writers were *drit fireasc, legea cea firească, drept naturalnic, fireasca dreptate* and *drept natural*; these terms referred to an aggregate of qualities and rights that a human being possessed, which were inborn and contained in him and which no one had the right to violate. For D. Sturdza, for example, the capacity for an individual to be free resulted from "his natural and political state," while I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu spoke of "les facultés inhérentes de l'homme" and considered that to submit them to the arbitrariness of central power would violate them.⁶ The petition of Grigore Băleanu of 1821 and the writings of I. Tăutu contained similar ideas.

⁵ D. Bădărău, *Filozofia lui D. Cantemir*, p. 293. See also I. Sulea-Firu, *O scriere inedită a lui D. Cantemir*.

⁶ D. Sturdza, *Plan, sau forma de oblăduire republicească aristodemocraticească* (1802), p. 36; I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé des tributs de toute nature et des pertes supportées par la Moldavie* (1818).

The idea of natural law could even be found in codes and was specifically stated in Moldavian laws. According to the *Calimah Code* "all men have natural rights," while A. Donici pointed out in his *Manual Juridic* (Juridical Handbook) that these natural rights have existed "not since the day when they were written, when the codes were written, but from the very beginning and forever."



The Origin of Society and its Evolution. After examining the thoughts on man, on his nature, and on the qualities he possesses in a primitive state, we shall now take a look at the manner in which the writers imagined the evolution of these primitive men and the ways that led in the end to the birth of the political society. Their ideas were, in general, vague and not very original, reproducing in a simplified form the theories circulating in European thought. Still, it is important to mention their existence and to see what they were, because it throws significant light on the writers' general position and on the lines along which their ideas developed.

In this field too, the new ideas made room for themselves by struggling with the old theories of the christian Middle Ages. The church continued to maintain the idea that civil society was a divine creation and that it developed along immutable ways, fixed once and forever by the creator. This theory came into direct conflict with the opinions of most contemporary writers, who felt society had sprung up in a natural way without the help of the divinity.

But what were these ways? How did the state appear and what was the sense of its appearance? This question so often posed in the 18th century was answered by the theory of social contract. It is hard to establish which of the social contract theories had a dominant influence, the formulations being too vague to enable us to establish accurately the source of inspiration. The latter must, however, have been very varied. Depasta, for example, who thought that people had willingly formed civil societies to ensure better living conditions and to protect their lives from hard natural conditions and the encroachments of their fellow creatures, seems to have been influenced by Locke.⁷

The idea of social contract was widespread at the beginning of the 19th century when it was mentioned in charters, in the programs of 1821, and in

⁷ "...people had all subjected their free will to power, with the object of insuring good order and the consolidation of society; that was how empires were founded and dynasties were strenghtened with the assent and consent of the people. At the same time there appeared the rulers and the authorities whose aim it was, besides the attainment of a happy life, to facilitate all that was necessary and to keep in check people who indulged in wickedness." *Cronicul*, p. 300.

the political writings immediately preceding the *Organic Regulations*; ⁸ the general opinion is that the social contract was adopted because man was by nature a social being, ⁹ and because the social contract would ensure more favorable conditions of development to the human being. Thus Poteca speaks of “the advantage of social life over the solitary lives.” ¹⁰ And Golescu, after describing the savage and primitive nature of the first men, showed that they were “forced by their natural helplessness to ask help from one another, and they gathered together and gradually formed villages, towns, kingdoms, and empires.” ¹¹ The same conception was expressed in a text of 1830, which considered that “political institutions are founded in order that people should not live like animals but as they please.” ¹²

In M. Sturdza’s work *Considérations sur la Moldavie et la Valachie* (1825) we come across interesting ideas with a surprising Rousseauian character: “tout homme dans l’état de société civilisée se livre par un contrat social à cette société, qui est d’abord sa patrie. Dès lors il ne s’appartient plus à lui seul, mais tous y appartiennent à tous et chacun doit, quand il le faut, tout sacrifier pour la conservation de l’ensemble.” ¹³

Thus most of the time when the idea of a social contract was mentioned, stress was laid on the guarantees of stability and safety offered by it as compared with the instability and unsafeness of primitive life. In this way the writers tried, indirectly, to supply a theoretical justification of their anti-Ottoman and anti-Phanariot attitude and to point out, — and in the following

⁸ “. . .how very brutal and wicked was the life of the ancient people, resembling that of animals without reason, in spite of the bodily and spiritual gifts holy nature had beautified them making them differ from them. . . And after a short time they acquired the following characteristics: they lived in towns and villages, they invented handicrafts which made life useful, and in order to maintain a common and civil life quiet they adopted laws. . . they introduced the sciences which reform and prepare the spirit and advance man,” Wallachian Charter from 1814. V. A. Ureche, *Istoria Românilor*, XA, pp. 347–348. The word “contract” first appeared in Dionisie the Ecclesiarch’s writings, but not with a social or political sense. We believe that the first writer to use the term social contract in Romanian was S. Marcovici, in *Idee pe scurt*. In the *Constitution of the Carbonari*, Tăutu used the expression *legături socialicești* (social ties); the Romanian writings worded in French used it at an earlier date.

⁹ “. . .human nature was created. . . to be communicative, that is to live together with others in society, communicating with one another and helping one another.” *Legământ pentru unire* (Convention for Union). E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date și fapte noi* (1932), pp. 183–184.

¹⁰ Speech of 1828, C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Din autobiografia lui E. Poteca* (1943), p. 8.

¹¹ Preface to the translation of *Elemente de filozofie* (1827) by N. Vamva, *B.R.V.*, III, p. 533.

¹² S. Căpătâneanu, *Biblioteca desfătătoare*, (The Delightful Library), *B.R.V.*, III, p. 628.

¹³ *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment, I^a, p. 63.

chapters we shall return to this problem — the incompatibility between the foreign domination and the natural laws of development of society and the provisions of the social contract.

The origin of the civil society, therefore, was accounted for with the help of the theory of the social contract; we still have to examine the opinions of the political writers on the evolution of society constituted in this manner and on its directions and ways of development.

No writer acknowledges the idea of immutable social and political forms, created once and forever. In fact, C. Cantacuzino and D. Cantemir were illustrious precursors of the Romanian evolutionism. It was they who developed the theory of the three stages in the evolution of any political society — the growth, the equilibrium, and the decline — a well-known theory in European thought.

The supporters of evolutionism in the Principalities did not innovate; they developed, with Western influences, ideas already set forth at the beginning of the century. Among them we recall especially Depasta and Chesarie of Râmnic who thought that nature and society were in continually change and that because of this Europe itself would experience a decline.

Though the idea of evolution was unanimously accepted, there were few who tried to discover its cause. We find an interesting explanation in Naum Râmniceanu's *Cronica inedită*; he felt that the source of change in the world was a moral cause, namely the unsteady character of the human nature. Gh. Lazăr, more philosophically, following the example of Horche-nau, regarded history as the contradiction between good and evil, which were considered dialectically forces able to become converted into one another.¹⁴

The theory of cycles, which at the beginning of the century was brilliantly represented by Cantemir, had a single proponent in the period we are dealing with — Depasta. Unlike Cantemir whose ideas were based primarily on the works of Aristotle, Depasta was influenced by Vico whose theories he had learned of during his stay in Italy. He admitted that “the very harmonious and well-knit system of the universe is conserved by a circular motion of the facts and by an uninterrupted rotation of coming and going”; he referred to a “rhythmic law” which was nothing but Vico's theory of the rhythm of events of world history.¹⁵

¹⁴ D. Popovici, *La littérature roumaine à l'époque des lumières*, pp. 338–339.

¹⁵ Dynasties, institutions, everything changes “on account of the circular motion of things that meet again; in the course of time these fall and are transformed and as if seized with circular motion they change in turn into various forms, now and then combining and re-made differently”. *Cronicul*, pp. 295–296, 302.

The theory of the ages was more widespread than the theory of cycles. Romanian writers like other European thinkers divided the world into the ages of gold, silver and bronze. Each age was criticized, appraised, and compared with the others on the basis of general criteria. Romanian writers reached the conclusion that society followed a descending curve, that the modern world was not better or happier than the primitive one. It was in this way that the conclusion was reached that the primitive order was superior to the civilized one, the idea of the noble savage, perhaps taken over from Rousseau. Lazăr expressed this belief very clearly in a speech he wrote: "how happy the poor Americans were living in loneliness in their simple dress with simple customs, living simple and natural, a life of plenty from the fruits of the earth. They did not know what envy was, they had no wars and were governed naturally by the power of lightning."¹⁶ The same idea was present in Fotino's *Istoria Daciei*: he considered that, from a moral viewpoint at least, the ancient society was superior to the modern one.

The widespread dissemination of the theory of ages was also due to the fact that it represented, for most writers, an illustration of the history of their country. As early as the 17th century, the chroniclers set off the decline of the Romanians' political and military power; after 1711/1716, when the setting up of the Phanariot regime actually meant a deviation of the Principalities from their natural course, this conception was strengthened. The generation coming after 1750 saw the Phanariot epoch as a separate epoch in Romanian history, an "age" of decline which they sometimes opposed to the idealized "golden age" of the past. It is very interesting to note that the golden age was not considered the time of Stephen the Great (1457—1504) or Michael the Brave (1593—1601), but rather the era immediately preceding the Phanariot epoch. The writers considered the second half of the 17th century a period of political stability and cultural blossoming as opposed to the Phanariot epoch, which brought political, economic, and cultural decline to the country. The same idea was put forth in a Wallachian petition of 1769 and recurred continually in almost all the political writings. It can, for instance be found in the Wallachian petitions of August 1775, and May 1791, in the Moldavian petition of 1796, and in the programs drawn up by Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Cantacuzino, Chesarie of Râmnic,¹⁷

¹⁶ Gh. Lazăr, *Cuvîntul* (The Speech) (1822); Gh. Bogdan-Duică, Popa Lisseanu, *Viața și opera lui Gh. Lazăr* (1927), p. 9.

¹⁷ Both insisted on the detrimental effect of the appointment of the first Phanariot prince: "since then the Turks began to ruin the country." M. Cantacuzino, *Istoria Țării Românești*, pp. 153—154; "...since Prince Constantin Basarab [the state of the country] changed, as everyone knows." Preface to the *Mineul* (January, 1779), *B.R.V.*, II, p. 236.

Mihail Sturdza, Gheorghe Asachi, Ion Tăutu, Manolache Drăghici, Grigore Băleanu were among the writers who severely condemned the Phanariot regime; the latter even suggested that 1709 should be considered the date of the beginning of the Phanariot regime, the first reign of Mavrocordat, and not 1711, the year of Cantemir's defeat. Writers of Greek origin such as Daponte and I. Fotino underline the negative effects of the Phanariot regime.¹⁸ Of the 208 draft reforms drawn up between 1769 and 1830, 46 described the Phanariot domination as a period of decline, and not a single one considered it a time of progress. As for the cause of the decline, 67 percent of the writings discussing this problem ascribe it to the Phanariots, 15 percent to the Turks, 13 percent to the native boyars.¹⁹

The fact that all the writers dwelt so long on the idea of decline might lead one to believe that theirs was a predominantly pessimistic state of mind, that these writers were resigned to the unfavorable realities. However, as a matter of fact, and we shall have the opportunity of learning it in the following chapters, Romanian political thought in the period of the Enlightenment was very dynamic. The discussions of the state of decline had no note of resignation but in fact were aimed at stimulating consciousnesses and inducing people to strive for a political revival, for a reorganizing of the life of the state in all its departments. In the long course of Romania's history, the writers felt that the Phanariot epoch though a moment of great darkness, did not stop the Romanians' advance. Had this feeling of optimism or the confidence in progress not existed, we could not account for the large number of political movements, petitions, and writings all aimed at the revival of the Principalities.

The idea of progress, mentioned also in certain legal texts such as the *Calimah Code*, was expressed by I. Tăutu in the clearest and the most original manner. Using the analogy of a garden the Moldavian writer held that society developed in three stages: in the first stage society was like a wasted area that could be cultivated for a garden, then in the second stage it resembled an old and deserted garden; and in the third, a well worked and productive garden. From this analogy we arrive at a theory which supposes that development is a

¹⁸ "Those times, the epoch of Brâncoveanu was of gold, very happy, unlike the present time, of iron and very wretched." C. Daponte, *Catalogul istoric al oame-nilor însemnați din secolul al XVIII-lea* (Historical Catalogue of the Eminent Men of the 18th century), pp. 172–173, 188. Ilie Fotino considered that the driving away of the Phanariots (1821) "contributed greatly to the social and political development of Romania." *Tudor Vladimirescu și Alexandru Ipsilanti în revoluțiunea de la 1821* (T. Vladimirescu and A. Ipsilanti in the 1821 Revolution), p. 198.

¹⁹ *Mémoires*, pp. X–XI.

process from a lower to a higher condition, like an ascenic curve, in continual progress.²⁰ In Wallachia this belief was stressed by E. Poteca: "... all the wise men of Europe boldly assert that the civil development of the human race can no longer stop and return to barbarism, as long as our globe shall preserve its place among the heavenly bodies."²¹ In these words Poteca asserted not only his confidence in the progress of mankind, but also in the irreversible character of this progress.

²⁰ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 268.

²¹ G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui E. Poteca*, p. 54.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Notion of Class. How did the Romanian writers envision the structure of society? What importance did they grant the social factor? What did they think of the social classes and of relations between them? Those are, in short, the questions we intend to answer in this chapter.

We have to mention that, generally speaking, social problems were approached pragmatically and that the few theoretical solutions offered for the writers were, first and foremost, concerned with the Romanian realities. However this did not prevent them from expressing a number of general ideas and, first of all, from outlining a social picture of reality different and broader than the political one. The concept of social order dealt with two opposing groups — the privileged people and the common people — called *popor* or *norod*, terms lacking a political and national significance in this context. The concept included all the classes of society except the boyars and the clergy; that was how Mihail Cantacuzino, D. Fotino, Dârzeanu, Drăghici, and numerous petitioners used it. A clear expression of the social sense of the term, as the ensemble of the oppressed class having an antagonistic position to the privileged classes, was employed by Tudor Vladimirescu when he wrote to N. Văcărescu “but, most probably, you consider worthless the people on whose blood all the boyarskind has fed and thrived, and you call only the plunderers homeland.” Thus, Vladimirescu expressed the idea that the people were the real producer of goods, while the nobility was a parasitical class living on the labor of the people.

This division into oppressors and oppressed is a first and certainly simple structuring of society. Concurrently there was a wider concept, a theoretical one, namely the one of “estate”; the term was quite frequently used, especially in political petitions that speak of “les états de la Valachie” or of “tous les ordres de la nation.” It is interesting to note that, unlike Western Europe, no political writing considered the clergy a separate estate and most writers included it in the boyar class. This may seem surprising in a society in which the church was supposed to have a strong political influence, but, except for

Zilot Românul, the writers all agreed to grant the clergy a purely spiritual role, devoid of any political significance.

In a petition of 1807 addressed to Russia we find an interesting conception of the social states in the Principalities. The anonymous author divided the population of the country into three categories. The big landowners and the clergy represented the estate from which the high officials were recruited; the small landowners and the "cultivators" represented the industrious estate whose economic activity made the existence of the state possible; and finally the merchants, those engaged in handicrafts, and the men of law were supposed to be the growing class, economically active and politically riotous, cherishing the chimera of democracy. The author of the petition seemed to include the entire boyar class and the clergy in the first category; in the second, the free peasants and the bondsmen; and in the third, the bourgeoisie. However, he dwelled the fact that these categories were not closed, but their members belonged to the same homeland, that they had the equal right to serve it and to be rewarded accordingly. He felt the boyar class should be an open class which all those having served their country usefully and faithfully should be able to join.¹

Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu too expressed his views on the problem of the estates in a petition dated 1824. According to him only the boyar class deserved the name of estate, and it could be divided into three categories: the big landed proprietors and the members of the country's most illustrious families; the boyars who, for various reasons, having fallen from the first category were engaged in minor offices, and, finally, those who owed their title to the favors of the princes and not to their ancestry or the amount of land they owned.²

As we can see the notion of estate was not identical with that of class, but rather of social stratum. The concept of class was still vague and the term was seldom employed even after 1800. In a petition of 1826 Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu counted the following classes: the boyars, the peasants, the merchants, and the slaves.³ Manolache Drăghici gave the same division: "the whole population of Moldavia falls into 5 classes or estates of people: (1) the boyars or the landed nobility, (2) the merchants, (3) the artisans of all trades, (4) the tillers of the land — the peasants, and (5) the do-nothings who are also in great number."⁴

¹ P. P. Panaitescu, *Correspondența lui C. Ipsilanti cu guvernul rusesc*, pp. 72—86.

² *Réfutation*, passim; Rosnovanu considered that in his time, under the reign of I. S. Sturdza, Moldavia was led by the second estate supported by the third estate.

³ *Aperçu sur l'état actuel de la Moldavie*, passim.

⁴ M. Drăghici, *Istoria Moldovei*, I, p. 80.

These classes were not generally considered separately, and some writers, such as Tăutu, suggested clearly enough that they were in close interdependence. To get a better knowledge of this aspect of the social thought, we must first examine the manner in which each separate class was considered.



The Boyars. Problems connected with the history of the Romanian boyars as a class — their origin, evolution, and the role they played — have been the object of highly interesting discussions in modern Romanian historiography. The very character of this class was discussed, some considering it a nobility of blood of the Western type, others seeing it as a nobility of “robe,” of office. Thus, we shall examine the opinions held by the writers of the time on these matters.

What was the opinion of the boyars themselves of their class? At the beginning of the 18th century, Cantemir wrote that the nobiliary class had been formed around the founding of the Principalities when the princes, wishing to have devoted high officials and soldiers, distributed titles of nobility and vast estates as recompense for the services rendered.⁵ This theory on the birth of the boyar class, in fact similar to those circulating in the rest of Europe, was revived by writers after 1750. Thus D. Fotino, for example, opposed the old nobility to the new in stating that “. . . except for the big boyars. . . really noble both due to the ancientness and splendor of their family, and to the services rendered by their ancestors to the homeland, the nobility of the others is false and dates only since they downed the caftans, introduced by the princes according to the customs of the Turks.”⁶ With Fotino’s words in mind it becomes evident that in this time there were two different opinions on the Romanian nobility. The first was that it was a very old aristocracy of blood; the second, that, it was a nobility of the “caftan” defined according to the ranks held in the administrative order. The preference of the writers for one or the other of these opinions depended on a great many factors, and more often than not was of a personal character. We may however state that, in general, the first theory was preferred by the Romanian writers, especially by the boyars, while the second was supported particularly by writers of foreign origin who had come to the Principalities in the 18th century and had

⁵ D. Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, pp. 174, 220—221. At the beginning of the 19th century there circulated *Catalogul mai multor boieri care au slujit țării pe vremea invaziunilor* (Catalogue of the boyars who have served the country during the invasions).

⁶ D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III, p. 139; M. Drăghici was of the same opinion, and so was N. Râmniceanu.

been included in the social order due to the ranks they considered the main sign of nobility.

The native writers — and this is one more aspect of their strong anti-Phanariot feelings — dwelt on the ancient character of the nobility, considering this ancientness the main character of a boyar. “The nobility rises according to the ancientness of the family” stated Chesarie of Râmnic in 1779, an idea present in the writings of Mihail Cantacuzino, who was in fact the author of the earliest Romanian genealogy. The concern for genealogy was continually increasing; the boyars carried out investigations to prove an origin as remote as possible and at the same time to prove a direct line from the founder of the family. The development of nobiliary feelings should also be ascribed to the ever increasing contact with the European nobility. As a result of this contact the Romanian boyars started matching their titles with those of other European nobles. The English consul Wilkinson noted, for example, that the big boyars considered their titles equal to those of count and marquis and claimed that there was no purer nobility anywhere else in Europe.⁷ This state of mind was reflected by the frequent use of Western titles in the Principalities; for example, from the middle of the 18th century, the Dudescu boyars bore the title of count and were imitated by Nicolae Rosetti and by Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu. It was from the West too that the custom of coats of arms and family escutcheons was borrowed, a new custom unknown in the past in the Principalities, but illustrating the tendency of the native nobility to distinguish itself from the new nobility and to identify itself with the country’s historical past. The importance granted to the ancientness of the family is revealed also by the concern felt in certain boyar circles for the perpetuation of the old families and the preventing of their economic ruin. The manner in which the problem of the privileges of boyars no longer holding an official post and the rights of the descendents of boyar families brought to ruin, indicates that the Romanian boyars considered themselves to be nobility of blood. We also consider they actually were.

The insistent and repeated underlining of this character must also be ascribed to the growing importance of high offices especially after Mavrocordat’s administrative reform. The Phanariot princes tried to neutralize the rebelliousness of the native boyars, to reduce their economic power and to make it dependent upon the princes. The Phanariots never missed an opportunity to point out the dependence of the boyars on the prince and to state that the central authority was the main creator of this class. But natives always denied this, stating that nobility, which was based first on origin

⁷ W. Wilkinson, *Tableau historique de la Valachie et de la Moldavie* (1822), p. 50.

and secondly on the possession of land, could not be granted in accordance with the office held. This was the reason why they criticized Mavrocordat's social reforms. The latter "had subjected the landowners to detrimental laws through which property was arbitrarily disposed of, gave the boyars afterwards *scutelnici* and *poslusnici* (fiscal categories) so that they should better realize they were servilely dependent on the government."⁸ The fact that, in the opinion of the native boyars, the office did not imply the quality of nobleman is also revealed by a letter of Tudor Vladimirescu's. Unlike Depasta and Daponte who considered themselves boyars because they were doctors and secretaries of princes, Tudor Vladimirescu, though a *sluger* (small boyar), wrote to the boyars who had refuged at Benești: "though I am not of noble blood, I nevertheless feel the grief of the nobles."⁹

Even in certain princely deeds, a differentiation was made between the nobility of blood and that of office. This is indicated by the fact that very often the boyars bore a different title than the office they held. It is significant that there was a standard difference made between the *boier pămintean* (native boyar), who was both a high official and a nobleman, and the *boier grec* (Greek boyar) in which stress is laid on the office.¹⁰ This opposition was conspicuous in the discussions on the *scutelnici* and *poslusnici*, for the native boyars felt that they were the only ones entitled to this right, as they had always owned serfs, and that it could not be granted to those who were merely high officials.

The problem of the boyars' titles of nobility was the object of endless and heated discussions during the first decade of the 19th century, when the big boyars, wishing to maintain their political domination, stubbornly opposed the granting of higher titles to the smaller and middle boyars and of any titles in general to persons not of noble descent. Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu and Mihail Sturdza were among the most firm proponents of this position. The boyars of the second rank set forth their position in texts such as the *Anafora* (Report) of 1804 and the petition of July 1, 1830, addressed to General Kiselef. The authors of this petition stated that there was only one boyar class and that the division into categories according to the office held was artificial since the capacity of boyar was "eternal" and independent of the office.

⁸ B. Știrbei, *Report on the state of Wallachia*, pp. 744–755.

⁹ *Documente* 1821, I, p. 318.

¹⁰ This differentiation, made by Mavrocordat as early as 1716, was very frequent in M. Cantacuzino's writings who opposed the "Greek boyars to the country's boyars." Grigore Andronescu also makes a clear separation; he showed that "the boyars were divided into two classes, the Romanian boyars of purely Romanian stock and the boyars of Greek origin." "Greek boyars," "the boyars of the Phanar," "Phanariot boyars" were expressions often used in the writings of the time.

Thus, on the eve of the adoption of the *Organic Regulations* (1831), the problem of the structure of the boyar class drew the general attention of writers and of politicians. The regulations adopted comparatively liberal lines, acknowledging that "if any Romanian who, though not of noble rank, shall distinguish himself in public service, the Prince will ask the General Assembly to grant him the right to nobility either for himself alone or to be inherited by his descendents, according to the importance of the services he will render."¹¹ The acknowledging of this principle contributed to the liberalization of the Romanian social life, by including among the boyar class many bourgeois and intellectuals who, by the middle of the century, were to represent the radical wing of this class. At the same time it undermined the importance of the boyar rank as such and contributed to the action aimed at doing away for good with all titles of nobility (1858).

Such were, according to the opinions of the writers of the time, the main problems regarding the origin and character of the Romanian aristocracy. We still have to further examine the ideas of the same writers on the place and role of the boyar class in the political and social life of the Principalities.

As was to be expected, most of the writers who were boyars, believed their class represented the country's main political force. The *spathar* P. Sturdza, for example, the author of a well-known anti-Hetaeria proclamation of 1821, stated that the big boyars were the "support of the country and the parents of all the people." Both in Wallachia and in Moldavia general petitions and reform programs identified the interests of the boyar class with the country's general interests. However, there were many writers who were not of this opinion. The criticism of the boyars' attitude toward the productive classes, and the fact they entered in a compact with the Phanariots, recurred in numerous writings. Thus a petition of the smaller Moldavian boyars of 1796 charged the big boyars with draining the wealth of the country and becoming rich at the expense of the population. In 1799 the free peasants in Moldavia lodged a complaint in which they revised these accusations and added new threats of revolution. Ion Tăutu often dwelt on the reactionary character of the boyars' policy,¹² an idea also encountered in the writings of the supporters of the 1821 uprising.

One of the bitterest critics of the boyar class was Naum Râmniceanu. He charged the boyars with "having forgotten they are just people like all the other subjects," that they were not "the creations of some other God." The propagandistic monk demanded they change their policy, for they "are

¹¹ *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 125; II, pp. 335–336.

¹² See especially *Strigarea norodului Moldovei* and *Cuvîntul unui țăran către boieri*.

obliged to always observe the laws and rights of the homeland while the patriots are not obliged to indulge in pride, greed and pleasures! It is time you learn the truth! You cannot be nobles if you are not first patriots! The nobles cannot create the homeland, it is the homeland that creates the nobles!"¹³

All this clearly points to the fact that there was bitter discontent in the Romanian society on account of the privileges of the boyar class which were considered a heavy burden for the state. It is evident that the idea of a reform to put an end to these privileges was gaining ground. A big boyar such as Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu thought that a fiscal system which exempted the ruling classes of taxes was an anachronism and asked that a sole tax be introduced, which would be payable by all the inhabitants of the country, irrespective of their social position.¹⁴ Mihail Sturdza also held the same progressive ideas; he described his own class as a selfish social group who only sought profits and looked upon everything "from a lucrative point of view, legally or illegally." In 1829 the future prince suggested measures that would transform the boyar class from a parasitical class, from "des personnes vivant aux dépens du peuple," into a dynamic productive class. He recommended that honorary titles be done away with and the havaets (tax for the obtaining a post) abolished.¹⁵

The *Organic Regulations* adopted most of the proposals made by the reformist boyars, theoretically proclaiming "the abolishing of abusive privileges," but they maintained the principle of a class that was privileged from a socio-political and economic point of view. Their very limited provisions succeeded in fact only in accentuating social inequality and in causing numerous demonstrations of opposition which were to culminate in the 1848 revolution.



The Peasants. There were fewer ideas expressed concerning the status of the peasant class, and they were generally connected with the problem of agrarian relations.¹⁶ However there were some theoretical stands taken which we shall try to analyze.

Writers concentrated their attention on the problem of serfdom, its character, and on the way it was abolished. The principle of abolishing serfdom,

¹³ N. Râmniceanu, *Tratat important*, pp. 23–25.

¹⁴ Taxes were to be paid by "the inhabitants of all estates... indiscriminately. There should be absolutely no privileges and no privileged as regards the paying of taxes." I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Project of Fiscal Reform* (1818), pp. 603–609.

¹⁵ *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment, I⁵, pp. 23–32.

¹⁶ The term *țăran* (peasant) appears in an early definition in Cantemir: "we call peasants... all those living in villages" (*Descrierea Moldovei*, p. 232). There is a similar definition in the *Calimah Code*, p. 835: "Țară (country) in Moldavian plain and tilled land, hence țăran (peasant), the man of the plain, from the country." The term *țăran* is often

as it was expressed in the reforms of C. Mavrocordat (1746—1749), was approved and supported by all the writers in the period of the Enlightenment. However, the Enlightenment ideology approached the problem in a new way by raising not only the religious arguments, such as those expressed in the petition for the abolishing of serfdom in Wallachia, but philosophical arguments as well. Depasta, for example, thought that the cause of the liberation “from the arbitrary serfdom” was the fact that “the greatest part of the peasants were deprived of natural liberty from the very first.”¹⁷

Mihail Cantacuzino, also, saw serfdom as an unnatural state of slavery and approved its abolishing. However, he proved more liberal than the authors of the reform pointing out that the reform didn't lead to a complete and real liberation that its positive effect was limited because of the numerous restrictions that hampered the peasants' freedom to move.¹⁸ P. Depasta was also critical of the way in which the liberation was carried out. Barbu Stirbei was surprisingly radical, he held that the peasant problem would not be solved until personal freedom was accompanied by the peasant's ownership of the land.¹⁹

Daniel Philippide showed a real sympathy for the peasantry. Perhaps influenced by the physiocrats he considered the peasantry “the most precious part of the population, the basis of the whole people, the parents and suppliers of the towns.”²⁰ His contemporary, Ion Tăutu, expressed the same idea in *Cuvîntul unui țăran către boieri* (1821), which proved to be a fierce indictment against the boyars and their class selfishness. In 1822 carried away by an exaggerated optimism Tăutu, in a pathetic tone, addressed the peasants asking them to demand their rights and trust in the future.²¹

present in the documents of the 18th century; it is also used in the *Organic Regulations*. In the evolution of the agrarian relations and in the struggle of the boyars to transform feudal titles of possession into full bourgeois property, there appear new terms that underlined the functional character of the peasant's life on an estate. Thus, there appeared *lucrătorii de pământ* (tillers of the land), *plugar* (ploughman), “inhabitants” the latter often accompanied by “who reside on the estate.”

¹⁷ *Cronicul*, p. 318; speaking of the abolishing of serfdom a petition of the Moldavian divan of 1775 added “as is right fit” and the *Legiuirea Caragea* (Caragea Code), p. 6. considered the state of dependence as an unnatural phenomenon which happened by chance,

¹⁸ M. Cantacuzino, *Istoria Țării Românești*, pp. 32—33.

¹⁹ B. Știrbei, *Raport asupra stării Valahiei*, pp. 744—745.

²⁰ N. Bănescu, *Viața și opera lui D. Philippide*, p. 150; the same idea was present in M. Drăghici's works who considered that “the tillers of the land... carry all the load of the country, through their labor” (*Istoria Moldovei*, I, p. 93).

²¹ “You the tillers of the land! Supporters of all the people! Dare! Your fields will no longer be watered by tears. You who have been used to bow under oppression, rejoice! You are destined to reap sheaves happily!” E. Virtosu, *Din scrierile inedite ale lui I. Tăutu*, p. 10.

The Romanian writers of the Enlightenment dwelt on the fact — and legally it was correct — that Wallachian and Moldavian peasants were free men. The writers opposed this privileged situation of the feudal dependence which, in many European countries, tied the peasant to the nobleman. They considered that, juridically, the feudal regime in the Principalities had been abolished between 1746 and 1749.²² Nevertheless, the wretchedness of the peasants was obvious. Most writers justly blamed the corrupt administrative regime and the excessive taxation system that caused the economic ruin of the villages. They advised the government to revise its policy toward the peasants, for they believed that without the progress of this class, the country's revival was unconceivable.²³ Unfortunately, however, this idea, though laid down in the *Organic Regulations*,²⁴ was to remain a desideratum. The situation of the peasants instead of improving, was to grow worse, and the bitter words of the peasants who were delegates to the 1848 property commission were well founded: "Serfdom was not so fierce before the *Regulations* as it has been since then."²⁵



The Bourgeoisie. In the epoch we are dealing with the bourgeoisie²⁶ did not yet represent a considerable political force. The unfavourable circumstances in which Romanian economy developed impeded its natural development. Though there were ever more numerous and active bourgeois elements, they did not play an independent political role and could not claim to lead the national liberation movement. During the Enlightenment the bourgeoisie in the Romanian Principalities was still used as a manoeuvre mass by the boyars whose national programs it backed as it met its own interests.

²² « Le paysan moldave est libre, il peut faire le commerce dans l'intérieur, il peut posséder des terres en son nom ou être copropriétaire » wrote N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu in *Aperçu sur l'état actuel de la Moldavie* (1826). The *Organic Regulations* confirmed the eternal validity of C. Mavrocordat's reform.

²³ Writing to his father in 1828 Brăiloiu said: "It is the duty of all of you to think of insuring the happiness of the wretched peasants, to design good laws, and to base a new administration on justice and equity, in order to insure a brilliant future, for it is only then that the country will be able to prosper." N. Iorga, *Scrisori vechi de studenți* (1934), p. 5.

²⁴ "The taxpayers who are tillers of the land and whose labor and effort bring abundance to human communities should be especially privileged and see to it that their condition should be improved day by day." *Organic Regulations*, II, p. 265.

²⁵ D. C. Sturdza-Scheianu, *Acte și legiuri privitoare la chestia țărănească*, I, p. 474.

²⁶ The term *orășeni* (townsfolk, from oraș, city) is often used in the deeds of the time, unlike Cantemir who often used *tîrgoveți* (from tîrg, town).

This accounts not only for the absence of any remarkable bourgeois writers in the intellectual movement of the time but also for the minor place occupied by the problems connected with the bourgeoisie in the political writings.

With a few exceptions, the Phanariot princes were on bad terms with the towns both because of their taxation system and because of their repeated attempts to dispossess them of their estates. Towards the end of the 18th century, the conflicts multiplied and by the beginning of the 19th century became violent. The bourgeoisie was seldom urged to cooperate; and even when it was urged to do so, it was in a vague manner obviously of feudal inspiration. The carbonari were the first to point out the necessity of a policy supporting the towns and townspeople since the future development of the country depended on their flourishing condition. Thus Ion Tăutu's draft constitution asked the government to carry on a policy that would encourage "towns to be founded, as it is common knowledge that the wretchedness of towns and markets causes the wretchedness of the tillers of the land and of trade."²⁷ In Wallachia this idea was supported by Marcovici who advised the prince "to prove undeniably to all townspeople that they have sacred and stable rights as well as indispensable duties."²⁸

Of all the strata forming the bourgeoisie the greatest attention was given to the merchants considered a dynamic social category — stimulating for the economy and, in the last instance useful to the country. According to the *Organic Regulations*, "the merchants who in the human society start all kinds of industries and make trade blossom are granted rights that will increase the number of industries and establish new ones."²⁹ Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu³⁰ and M. Drăghici also expressed an awareness of the importance of the merchants.

The increase of the importance and influence of the bourgeoisie in the ten years between Tudor Vladimirescu's rising and the adopting of the *Organic Regulations* was reflected in the change of the terminology employed. For example, a Wallachian memoir used the term *le capitaliste* and indicated that his goods and initiative should be protected and guaranteed. The term *capitaliștii* (the capitalists) was present in a Moldavian petition of 1822 along with the idea of the necessity of guaranteeing "personal rights" and of taking liberalizing economic measures. All these transformations were mirrored by the Organic Regulations which used terms such as *fabricanți* (manufac-

²⁷ I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunarilor*, p. 15.

²⁸ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, p. 126.

²⁹ *Organic Regulations*, II, p. 263.

³⁰ In *Aperçu sur l'état de la Moldavie* (1826) N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu agrees to the idea of ennobling the merchants.

turers), *industrie* (industry), and *industrieri* (industrialists); the *Regulations* introduced an administrative regime favoring the rapid development of the bourgeoisie.



Before concluding this chapter, we think it would be interesting to examine the manner in which the problem of the gipsy-slaves was understood. These people represented an oppressed group over whom the masters had the power of life and death and who were often sold off by the weight. There did exist, however, certain stands taken in favor of this social category. Starting from the *Sobornicescul Hrisov* (Oecumenical Charter) (1785) which established a number of measures in favor of the gipsies, their situation continued to improve. There was a ever-growing concern for the arbitrary restrictions imposed upon them and even attempts to change them into a sedentary population.³¹ The *Calimah Code* did not consider slavery a natural state; on the contrary it stated that slavery was "opposed to man's natural right." E. Poteca started from the same theoretical basis when in 1827 he called for the liberation of the slaves.³² The *Organic Regulations* stated "it is absolutely necessary that the government should take proper steps and earnestly endeavour to improve the fate of this category of people to make them lose their habit of living a nomad life and to attach them to the land by any incentive."³³ No doubt these theoretical ideas were not enough to actually improve the situation of the gipsies but they deserve mention for they were premises on which Al. I. Cuza based the emancipation carried out during his reign.

³¹ I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunarilor*, p. 20.

³² C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Din autobiografia lui E. Poteca*, p. 10.

³³ *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 26; II, p. 258.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICAL STRUCTURE. FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

General Problems. Generally speaking there were a great many opinions on what the political structure should take. Fighting for the transformation of society in the Principalities, the Romanians were concerned both with the practical aspects of the problem and with the general theoretical ones.

Thus Ion Tăutu had a most scientific explanation of the variety of forms of government. These forms depended on the level of historical development and on the degree of civilization of the people; they were not uniform, identical, or fixed.¹ Among his Wallachian contemporaries it was Marcovici who took a great interest in the problem of the forms of government. In his article "Brief note on all Forms of Government" (1830) he classified them according to their degree of public utility. He included in the first category the constitutional monarchy, the aristocracy and the republic, forms "which are grounded only on the common good," and in the second category he included tyranny, oligarchy, and ochlocracy "in which no account is taken of this good." Marcovici believed the best choice that men could make at the moment of the conclusion of the social contract was the constitutional monarchy, a form of government which, he thought, was based on observance of the laws. However, he recognized that a conflict might occur if the people decided to set up a republic, or if the aristocracy became an oligarchic regime. According to Marcovici, both the republic and the oligarchy are by nature bad and temporary, and only "a limited and hereditary monarchy is of long standing."²

¹ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 268.

² "The nobles have always been proud and rely on an origin different from that of other people; all their knowledge and business is to keep for themselves the rights and to burden the people they call peasants with all the duties." Marcovici insisted on the necessity of a hereditary dynasty pointing out that "elected governments either kings or aristocrats are very dangerous, all the more so when the elected ruler has not the right to rule all his life" (*Idee pe scurt*, pp. 125, 171—174). It is clear he is hinting at the Phanariot princes.

The writers considered most of the forms of government natural forms resulting from a more or less free evolution and selection. However they admitted that sometimes under special circumstances unnatural forms of government may appear, detrimental to the natural development of society. Despotism was the first form of this kind, which according to Dionisie Fotino “gradually exhausts all the sources of life, is stagnant and hinders the elements of the soul and finally causes a mortifying standstill in the whole social body.”³ Marcovici also criticized despotism. He believed that under this form of government the ruler, instead of attending to the people and to the observance of the laws, “obliges the people to hate him and the social contract is abolished. . . . A tyrant turns all the powers of the estate against the people, he breaks the regular laws; he grabs. . . . the wealth of the subjects, dishonors their families and leaves them nothing but the feeling of their wretchedness.” A tyrant hires his watchmen from among foreigners because they will not hesitate to cut down a country which is not theirs. “A tyrant ruins all the best patriots,” and prevents the development of culture “particularly of philosophy and of the philosophical sciences that teach us which are the rights of mankind.” He opposes “patriotic assemblies,” establishes an atmosphere of distrust, fills the country with spies; “he observes the dogmas of religion more strictly than is fit” in order to show his people he is chosen by Lord. Marcovici did not support the idea that a despotic government “becomes lawful” if it is accepted by the people, and in fact he stated that he did not know of a single instance in history when the people had of their own will made such a choice.⁴

Ion Tăutu too condemned forms of government he considered backward: “le despotisme d’un seul, la tyrannie de l’aristocratie, l’anarchie de la foule, sont les trois maux également meurtriers pour la société, également meurtriers pour l’état, de sorte que personne ne peut dire lequel des trois est le moindre.”⁵

We thus see that the main attacks were aimed at despotism and at the boyar state, that is to say at certain forms of government which had prevailed in the political life of the Principalities during the 17th and 18th centuries and which had proved to be equally incapable of contributing to the progress of society. Their rejection meant also the rejection of the past, of an unsuccessful experiment. But what were the proposals for the future?

³ D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III, p. 144.

⁴ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, pp. 153–154. He was obviously hinting at the Phanariot system again.

⁵ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 270.



The Monarchy. The Romanian writers considered that the form of government of the Principalities was of a monarchic type. Both Râmniceanu ⁶ and Fotino held that the Romanian monarchic type was only a regional variant of the monarchic type characteristic of European countries. ⁷ This idea is to be found in the *Caragea Code* which used, for example, the term “the monarchic regime of Wallachia.” Though most writers generally acknowledged the monarchic character of the form of government in the Principalities their opinions differed on what type of monarchic regime it was.

Absolutism. Absolutism, which was a popular form of government up to the beginning of the 18th century, had many supporters and adversaries in the Principalities. On the one hand were the centralizing tendencies of the princes, eager to rule according to absolute principles, and the centrifugal tendencies of the boyars, who aimed at setting up a nobiliary state similar to the Polish one. The clash between the princes and the boyars was reflected in many writings — the political programs submitted to Poland by Prince Grigore I Ghica and Ștefan Petriceicu (1673), or the historiography of the time, which was generally favorable to the boyars.

Cantemir expressed the most interesting and original ideas on absolutism. The Moldavian prince who attempted to introduce this form of government into his country but failed, defined it as “the rule which rules alone, like that in Turkey, Germany and Russia.” He resorted to arguments of a historical nature, stating that absolutism had been a long-standing form of government in the past of the country, that the prince’s authority was absolute from the very first, and that the suzerainty to the Porte did not essentially modify its character, though it had diminished the princely authority. According to Cantemir an absolute monarchy could ensure the well-balanced development of a society; on the eve of enlightened absolutism, the philosopher-prince depicted the monarch as a cultivated, wise, and careful administrator, who acts in the national interests of the people. ⁸

However the victory of the Ottoman army over the Russian-Moldavian forces in 1711 and the setting up of the Phanariot princes changed the elements of the problem. The Romanian writers in the period of the Enlighten-

⁶ He established three successive grades — the empire, the kingdom, and the dukedom — and included the Principalities in the latter, *Cronica inedită*, p. 65.

⁷ “The form of government is monarchic in Moldavia and in Wallachia too; it differs from the European monarchies only by the fact it is subjected to the Sultan,” D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III, pp. 239, 337.

⁸ D. Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, pp. 92–96, 108, 144–145; P. P. Panaitescu, *D. Cantemir*, p. 85.

ment rejected absolutism, while the Phanariots adopted it into their political system. The Phanariots repeatedly emphasized the divine origin of their authority which in fact relied solely on the Porte's political power.⁹ How did the Phanariot princes conceive of their role as absolute princes? A few "statements of principles" have been preserved. These were speeches given by the princes when mounting the throne, in which they proclaimed their good intentions regarding the country and their desire to let justice reign and to insure the peace and prosperity of the people. C. Hangerli, for example, promised to administer the country in such a way that the inhabitants would be "as lucky as in an age of gold." Generally these professions of good intentions, even when not repeated in the hackneyed way of chancellory deeds, had no practical consequences, and the rule of foreign princes failed to play a positive role in the society of the time.

This also accounts for the fact that before taking up the problem of the form of government, the Romanian writers and politicians struggled consistently for the removal of the Phanariot princes and a return to the system of *pămîntean* (native) princes. The entire national movement in the 1769—1774 period was centered around the desire to obtain independence and the right to elect Romanian princes. The failure to get Ștefan Pârscoveanu appointed prince and the return of the Phanariots in 1774¹⁰ caused an increase in the number of petitions claiming this right. We recall especially the petition drawn up by Ioan Cantacuzino and submitted to the Congress of Shishtov (1791), and the numerous writings of the period 1818—1822.¹¹ The struggle put up by the native boyars to obtain a native ruler was described by the Hetairists Pavel and Dimitrie Macedonski: "the Wallachian boyars have been trying for a long time in secret to find ways and means to remove the main

⁹ According to Mihai Suțu the source of the power was twofold: "we were entrusted [with the throne] by the merciful Lord and by the mighty Sultan." V. A. Ureche, *Istoria Românilor*, I, p. 428. The Phanariot princes of Romanian origin — Ghica, Mavrocordat, Racoviță, Callimachi — vindicated their claims to the throne by the ancient rights of their families.

¹⁰ The very year of the Phanariots' return a Wallachian petition of August 12 and a Moldavian one of September 10 demanded they be driven away and native princes appointed; both petitions were submitted to the Porte. The same was demanded in the petitions addressed to the Russian marshal Rumiantzev in August.

¹¹ In the year of the 1821 revolution the application is repeated by Tudor Vladimirescu in February, by Grigore Băleanu in April, and by the boyars who had emigrated to Brașov in August; the delegation of Wallachia, which in the spring of 1822 was in Constantinople demanded that a native prince be appointed. In Moldavia this claim was also made in the petitions of March, September, and October of 1821 and in that of the country's delegation to Constantinople in the spring of 1822.

Phanariot rulers from Wallachia. They never missed a single opportunity they thought favourable for such an attempt. But they were discovered and that is why some were banished, and some even lost their lives.”¹²

The tough fight the Romanians put up against the Phanariot regime was rewarded in 1822 through the return to the system of native princes. The contemporaries placed all their hopes in this event, considering it a new era of prosperity and progress in the country's history. “This is the day which marks the end of the complaints of the past... The wall separating us from happiness has fallen,” wrote Ion Tăutu.¹³

Enlightened Absolutism. The problem of the existence in the Romanian Principalities of enlightened absolutism as a practical form of government has been the object of lengthy debates in Romanian and foreign historiography, and generally obtained an affirmative answer. In our opinion this gives to the Phanariot epoch a trait which facts do not always justify. We think it is unsuitable to call the grasping, oriental absolutism of the Phanariot princes enlightened absolutism. We might, at most, speak of enlightened traits in the policy and conception of certain princes who, under the influence of Western ideology, and wishing to be called “enlightened despots,” “attempted to put into practice a number of reforms of an enlightened character. At the same time we shall find that many Romanian writers and politicians considered the enlightened absolutism an alternative to the oriental Phanariot absolutism. Thus the problem has two opposing aspects which we shall examine successively.

From the very first, the Phanariots realized that the setting up of their reign was an act of repression of the Romanians' desire for independence and this is why they repeatedly underlined the difference between their loyalty to the Porte and the Romanian boyars' lack of loyalty. Still, they tried to establish a *modus vivendi* with them as indicated in the advice of N. Mavrocordat to his son: “do your best to make the natives love you.”

¹² *Documents* 1821, III, p. 376; in all, from 1769–1821, the demands for the driving away of the Phanariots and for the restoration of the native princes is repeated in 21 petitions, *Mémoires*, p. XIII. We do not know of any petition or draft program supporting the Phanariot regime and justifying its existence.

¹³ E. Virtosu, *Din scrierile inedite ale lui I. Tăutu*, p. 6. Alexandru Beldiman and Gheorghe Asachi hailed the appointment of Ioniță Sandu Sturdza in dithyrambic terms, the latter was the author of a poem *La Moldoveni, La restatornicirea domnilor pămînteni* (To the Moldavians on the Restoration of the Native Princes) (1822). In Wallachia the appointment of Grigore IV Ghica was hailed by Gheorghe Lazăr who wrote a patriotic speech and by Grigore Andronescu, Zilot Românul, Ghenadie Pirvulescu, I. Dârzeanu, Chiriac Romniceanu, Eufrosin Poteca, Dinicu Golescu.

We should mention one of the princes who endeavoured to follow this advice given by the first Phanariot prince. Alexandru Ypsilanti was not content with declaring that "there is nothing fairer and no greater duty of the princes whom the Lord has entrusted with sovereignties than the good of society." He also tried to put into practice the ideas of the European Enlightenment.

Ypsilanti's political petitions are of the greatest importance if we wish to understand his ideas. Unfortunately, we do not know the text of the petition addressed to the sultan in which he proposed the modern reform of the Ottoman empire. Another petition however has been preserved; it was drawn up in 1775 and submitted to Catherine II. It refers to the Principalities. In it Ypsilanti proposed the appointment of princes for life, the reduction of tributes paid, the liberation of the Wallachians taken prisoners by the Turks, the retrocession of land occupied by the latter around the 3 Turkish fortresses on the Northern bank of the Danube, the acknowledgment of the right of the Russian minister at the Porte to protect the diplomatic agent of the Principalities in Constantinople, and the reduction of the country's payments to Constantinople.¹⁴ All this was, naturally, very different from the radical demands of the natives in 1769—1774; nevertheless Ypsilanti's recommendations reflected his wish to contribute to the improvement of the country's condition. For this reason and for his reforms he can, with good reason, be called an "enlightened despot."¹⁵

Ypsilanti was not the only Phanariot prince who drew up petitions. His successor, N. Caragea, also wrote two petitions while in Moldavia his example was followed by Alexandru Mavrocordat-Firaris (1783) and by Alexandru Moruzi (1806). All these Phanariot petitions had a common trait—their main purpose was to limit the material obligations of the Principalities to the Porte, which meant implicitly a reduction of the prince's charges. They took over several points of programs drawn up by the natives, such as the establishing of a single pecuniary obligation payable to Constantinople, the freedom of trade, the forbidding of Turks to enter the Principalities, the forbidding of Moslems to have property in the Principalities, and the strengthening of the prince's authority.

Constantin, the son of Alexandru Ypsilanti was prince of Wallachia from 1802—1807 and one of the enlightened Phanariots who in many res-

¹⁴ *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, pp. 97—98; a letter addressed by Prince Reprin to Catherine II mentions also a second petition which unfortunately has been lost.

¹⁵ For his reforms in administration, justice, and education see *Istoria României*, III, p. 708. However his relations with the boyars were somewhat tense; he even complains of this in a letter addressed in 1789 to an Austrian minister, *Haus, Hof und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Moldau und Walachei*, I/7.

pects continued his father's policy. But his ideas were more ambitious; they aimed at the union of the Principalities and the creation of a kingdom of Dacia, which would be ruled by the descendents of the Ypsilanti family.¹⁶

The personality of the absolute monarchs in Europe held a strong attraction on Romanian writers and politicians, as early as the middle of the 18th century,¹⁷ and their ideas on the subject could be found in numerous political programs. But, unlike the princes mentioned above, the natives considered that there was an antagonistic relation between enlightened absolutism and the Turkish-Phanariot regime and that the former could not be introduced into the Principalities as long as they were ruled by foreign rulers. The Romanians had a very high opinion of what princely authority should be. Wallachian conspirators in 1811 wrote: "dans tous les pays du monde un gouvernement a deux devoirs à remplir: l'un consiste à veiller sur la conservation politique du peuple; l'autre à l'observation de toutes les institutions spirituelles qui inspirent au public l'ardeur de sa foi et la fidélité envers le souverain."¹⁸

The most remarkable supporters of enlightened absolutism were Prince Grigore IV Ghica and the future prince Mihail Sturdza. The former reigned like an absolute monarch over Wallachia; his policy toward the boyars and his opposition to introducing any fundamental acts that would restrict the prince's authority are illustrative in this respect.¹⁹ In spite of all this, due to the emphasis put on education, the reforms he planned and partially executed, and his internal policy that promoted economic development, he proved to possess an enlightened mind, open to renewals.

In the early years of the 19th century before becoming prince, Grigore IV Ghica had been one of the main leaders of the national movement. He struggled consistently against the Phanariot regime, which he considered "an innovation and a blow" dealt to the rights of the Principalities, and he was one of the three boyars who entrusted Tudor Vladimirescu with the task of reviving the country. Appointed prince in 1822 he tried systematically

¹⁶ Hurmuzaki, Supliment I², p. 293; V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, pp. 6-7; *Istoria României*, III, p. 690.

¹⁷ Enăchiță Văcărescu, for example, described Joseph II as "a man full of wit and much science" (*Istoria prea puternicilor împărați otomani*, p. 287).

¹⁸ T. G. Bulat, *O conspirație boierească contra mitropolitului Ignatie*, partea I-a, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ In 1824 he criticized: "le projet ridicule dans tout autres temps, désagréable dans les circonstances actuelles, d'une constitution... qui devait avoir une forme représentative et tendant à restreindre considérablement le pouvoir du prince." Vlad Georgescu, *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești*, p. 121. The project so flatly disparaged was the Carbonari's Constitution drawn up by I. Tăutu.

to extend the autonomy of the prince's power beyond the suzerain power, and this brought him repeatedly in conflict both with the Porte and the Paschas at the Danube.

One of the main actions for the reform of the state undertaken during his reign was the beginning of the proceedings of the committee drawing up the *Organic Regulations*. Addressing its members in 1827, he advised them to carefully examine the ways in which the country could be reformed and not to delay in drawing up so important a document from which "the patriots" were expecting "the redressing of many abuses which crush them down to no small degree."²⁰

In Moldavia, enlightened absolutism had a staunch supporter in Mihail Sturdza, an original political thinker and the author of a number of important programs aimed at reforming the Principalities on the basis of modern, European principles.

Sturdza was in favour of a monarchy and opposed to a republic, irrespective of type. Even Platonic political thought he held to be "une théorie inapplicable." As for democracy he considered it a form of government susceptible to civil war and violent social upheavals. The theories of the future prince were developed in close connection with the political and social changes occurring during his time and in particular with the struggle for power between the conservative and liberal wings of the boyar class. We must point out that Sturdza was equally hostile to both approaches. He believed that the big boyar class was divided into too many rival factions and did not enjoy "un respect stable" on the part of the population to an extent that would enable them to rule.²¹ At the same time he opposed the liberal ideas of the carbonari whom he considered to be "innovators," and the supporters of a regime that "would interfere with the prince's authority." Sturdza studied Tăutu's constitution in detail and criticized especially the very broad prerogatives of the Assembly.²² But what were his preferences?

Sturdza was a belated supporter of enlightened absolutism. He built up the image of a state in which the prince, without being constrained or obliged, based his government on observance of the laws and of the citizens' rights and was concerned with the country's economic progress, the welfare of all classes, and the spread of knowledge to all strata of society. The most urgent practical measure to be taken, with a view to introducing this regime in his country, was the strengthening of the prince's authority through the

²⁰ *Analele Parlamentare*, I¹, pp. 55–56.

²¹ M. Sturdza, *Considération sur la Moldavie et la Valachie* (1825), pp. 66–69.

²² *Petition on the administration of Moldavia* (1823), pp. 7–8.

setting up of a hereditary dynasty; the first prince was to be elected by an elective assembly consisting of "les principaux de l'ordre de la noblesse."²³

In Sturdza's opinion the prince's power was absolute, but not abusive. Sturdza, in fact, was one of the first Romanian politicians who recommended the adoption of an *Organic Regulation* which, without encroaching on the prince's authority, would provide for a stable setting, as a sort of guarantee for the country; in this way the central authority will act according to a number of coordinates set up for the public good, without becoming a despotism similar to the Phanariot regime.²⁴ Indeed, Mihail Sturdza was one of the authors of the Moldavian *Organic Regulation* and, in this sense, we may consider his ideas were put to use and that they played a positive role in the constitutional evolution of the modern Romanian state. This role came to an end in 1831. After that date and especially after his election as prince (1834), his conceptions and his policy came into conflict with the ideals of the new generation, and thus, became a hindrance to progress.



The "restricted" and representative Rule. We have pointed out that in the 17th century, there had existed two main opposing conceptions on the form government should take. The first, represented by the princes and theorized especially by D. Cantemir, had fought to create a centralized state led by a prince possessing absolute power; the second, supported by the boyars, struggled to create a boyar state, like the Polish one, in which the prince should be mere a tool in the hands of the aristocracy.

In the 18th century, these theories diversified. The principles of Cantemir's absolutism provided the basis for the absolutism of the Phanariot princes, the theory of enlightened absolutism, and the theory of the monarchy restricted in the discharge of its functions, by the existence of a fundamental act. At the same time, the principles of the boyar state were developed by those who supported the idea of a government controlled by big boyars and by those who supported an aristocratic republic.

The absolutist ideas and those of the enlightened absolutism were presented in the preceding paragraph. In the following paragraph we shall examine the problem of the limited monarchy: limited, on the one hand, by the

²³ Letter addressed to the Russian ambassador Ribeaupierre (1827), *Hurmuzaki*, Supplement I, p. 97; *Petition on the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman empire* (1828), pp. 25–27.

²⁴ *Ibid.* Like all his contemporaries, Sturdza was very hard on the regime of the Phanariot princes whom he called "pashas in disguise" and "instruments of oppression" and whom he blamed not only for the country's political and economic decline, but also for its cultural decline. *Considération sur la Moldavie et la Valachie* (1825), pp. 63–66.

privileges of the boyar class, which is the theory of the boyar state, limited on the other hand by the existence of certain fundamental acts, this being the theory of the constitutional monarchy.

The supporters of the boyar state expressed their opinion as early as 1782 at Jassy when they drew up the program entitled "Union of the native boyars." Its authors — big boyars who remained anonymous — intended to unite and to cooperate in order to "step any foreigners or natives from acting in a way injurious to the honor of the boyars and to the good of the homeland, and all of us will do our duty openly or in secret in order to obtain the rights and privileges of the boyar state and of the homeland." ²⁵ The struggle aimed at ensuring the domination of the central authority by the boyars, gathered momentum at the beginning of the 19th century when the Moldavian boyars again demanded a guarantee of their class rights ²⁶ and the adoption of a law "that will put a stop to the misuse and free will of the princes." This idea was revived after the appointment of Ioniță Sandu Sturdza in a petition addressed by the emigrants in Cernăuți, on August 5, 1822, to the czar. According to the petition "the rights of the prince's power should be fixed by durable regulations in order that the rights of persons and the inhabitants of all the estates should not be submitted to ill will or injustice." ²⁷ The clash between this political ideal, which Alexandru Beldiman also dreamt of and the liberal ideas of the carbonari prevailed all during Ioniță Sandu Sturdza's reign. It ended finally in 1827 with the adoption of the *Anaforaua pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (Decree concerning the privileges of Moldavia) which meant the temporary triumph of the big boyars.

In Wallachia there were far fewer supporters of the boyar state. We can cite as evidence of support only the petition submitted to the Porte by a delegation of Wallachians in the spring of 1822. But we must also take into account the fact that it was written before it was known that the Porte had decided to appoint native princes. Thus we can consider the clauses aimed at restricting the prince's authority natural and in keeping with the usual lines of the anti-Phanariot verbal abuse. After the native princes had been appointed the provisions of the ruling were violated first of all by their main author — Grigore IV Ghica — now a prince and a supporter of enlightened absolutism.

While the theory of the boyar state did not, generally speaking, enjoy the support of ardent advocates and clever theoreticians, the theory of a constitutional rule, of various shades, was tremendously popular and was supported

²⁵ *Uricarul*, VI, pp. 460—462.

²⁶ *Petition addressed to the Porte* (March 31, 1821), and *Petition of the emigrants in Cernăuți* (September 1821), *Documente* 1821, I, pp. 441—442; II, pp. 347—349.

²⁷ *Ibid*, III, pp. 146—150.

by such remarkable writers as Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Ion Tăutu, Naum Râmniceanu, and Simion Marcovici. The first plea for a constitutional regime appeared in an anonymous Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon I in 1807. The author of this strange petition, a firm believer in democracy, demanded that the prince should govern on the basis of a constitution that would be “conforme à notre gout.” The whole petition was dominated by the idea that the new prince, who should be of French or Italian origin and of Roman-Catholic religion, must according to law, observe the rights and liberties of the citizens and work for the general good of the country.²⁸

The important and numerous works written by Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu contained similar ideas especially during the periods 1818—1821 when, through the setting up of the Phanariot cartel (1818), relations between the prince and the boyars became extremely strained.²⁹ The two Rosnovanus repented to the Porte's attempts to strengthen the authority of the Phanariot princes through a number of petitions aimed, on the contrary, at limiting the prince's authority. They recommended that this authority be restricted in order to avoid further abusive maneuverings to equal limits provided for by fundamental deeds, guaranteed by the great powers.

The writing *In scurt luare de amintire pentru oareșari îndreptări în administrația Moldovei* (1818) by I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu suggested as the first step the limiting of the legislative power of a Phanariot prince, so that “his will should no longer be law.” The legislative power was to belong to the General Assembly, while the prince was to be left the right only to “improve the law of the land, and not change it or modify it.”³⁰ In another petition also dated 1818 Rosnovanu suggested the limiting of the prince's judicial power by the setting up of a “general divan”, while the court should remain only a place of appeal. His executive power would also be restricted by changing the court from a ruling body into a body of control and supervision. Rosnovanu insisted upon the necessity of freeing key institutions, such as the *visteria* (the finance department) and the *ispărvnicia* (the prefectures), from the prince's authority. He recommended that the prince's power over fiscal policy be revoked, leaving this domain to the native *vistier*. This was an entirely new thing for

²⁸ E. Virtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte și dorințele moldovenilor la 1807*, pp. 411—420. The demand for a foreign prince is older, it appeared for the first time in 1802, in Wallachia.

²⁹ In a letter dated February 1819, N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu besigned the act according to which the Porte limited the number of Phanariot families from which princes could be appointed to four and obliged the Principalities to pay pensions to the families excluded — as an absurd and abusive act violating the rights of the Principalities, *State Archives Bucharest, A. N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu papers CCLIII/49*.

³⁰ *Documente* 1821, I, pp. 123—124.

a society in which abuses and corruption reigned supreme; it formulated the principle of responsibility for the administrative bodies, first of all for the *vistier*, demanding that a guarantee on property be introduced. Rosnovanu wrote again about these problems in 1821, suggesting that an Organic Regulation be adopted to set up a General Assembly with broad privileges and to limit the prince's initiative almost completely.³¹

All these writings contained many progressive ideas such as the restricting of the prince's power, the existence of a body of fundamental laws, the setting forth of the principle of the separation of the state organs. But the formulations were still vague; no mention was made of how Rosnovanu imagined the composition of the Assembly, an institution which represented the principal leading organ of the country, in his opinion. Most likely he considered this institution as an instrument to be used by the government of the big boyars. The system would be constitutional since it was based on an Organic Regulation and on the principle of the separation of the branches of power, but it would not be representative because the leading organs were in the hands of a single class. In fact, the Moldavian writer was only describing a modern form of the old idea of the boyar state. His son Nicolae, who was more liberal-minded, suggested that the prince be elected by all those possessing boyar rank and landed property, irrespective of its size. He thought that, in this way, the majority of votes would be cast by the smaller landowners, a social category he considered the most dynamic and productive part of the population. Election was to be carried out by the direct and secret vote of those electors, gathered in Jassy, and the candidate who carried an absolute majority was to be immediately proclaimed prince. In the case that such a majority was not obtained, the author had made provisions for two further ballots, the last proclaiming as prince the candidate with the simple majority of votes.³²

The writings of Ion Tăutu contained even more radical ideas. Tăutu made the enlightened monarch and the theory of constitutional and representative monarchy the key-stone of his entire political system. Tăutu envisioned a mechanistic image of the state which he considered "un organe mécanique" whose parts "doivent être en harmonie" if the whole was to work well.³³

³¹ I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé des tributs de toute nature et des pertes supportés par la Moldavie* (1817) and *L'État de la Moldavie* (1818).

³² N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Réflexion sur le droit d'élection* (1826), pp. 135–139.

³³ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 262. Around 1827 Tăutu drew up a draft reform of the Ottoman empire in which the central idea was the reorganization of finances and the creation of a mint which should print paper money. In a letter addressed to the sultan he volunteered to teach the Porte's high officials not only the rules of European politics, but French and history too. *State Archives, Jassy*, p. 126/386–389.

He thought that to achieve this harmony the best form of government was the constitutional monarchy. This idea had already been clearly developed in *Constituția Cărvunarilor* (1822) which proposed that power should be transferred from the prince to a "general assembly" invested with great attributions and becoming in fact the country's principal governing organ. The Assembly was first to possess legislative power; on it depended all the "general laws" and the "improvement of the laws, adding to them or omitting from them, or still renewing them, as necessary." At the same time, by virtue of its obligation to be concerned with the "general good," the Assembly was to control the policy of the "improvement of agricultural economy, the setting up of trade, the spiritual development, the opening of schools and other public institutions, the good functioning of churches and monasteries."

The problem of the relationships between the prince and the Assembly was solve din favour of the latter. Should any decision of the Assembly disagree with the prince's wishes, the Assembly's decision would prevail. The top officials of the country could be appointed only with the consent of the Assembly which even had the right to directly appoint metropolitans, bishops, and superiors of the monasteries in Moldavia. As for the judiciary it was almost completely removed from the prince's hands, and even the right to judge in the last instance was transferred to a special divan of appeal. In this way the prince who, according to Tăutu, should possess perfect moral and intellectual qualities, became a guardian of the laws, a coordinator of the administration, rather than a genuine ruler.

Tăutu's political regime, based on the observance of the "country's constitution" was no doubt a constitutional regime.³⁴ But was it also a representative one? No, it was not. Tăutu increased the number of people who could enjoy political rights but still maintained the power in the hands of the boyar class. The predominance of the smaller and middle boyar class in the General Assembly, as well as the introduction of a system by which the prince, was elected by all those of boyar rank from the *logofăt* to the *șătrar*, would have, however, meant an increase of the bourgeois and intellectual elements.

It is well-known that during the reign of Ioniță Sandu Sturdza (1822—1828), Tăutu played a particularly important political role and in 1829 even aspired to become prince. This new ambition made him somehow alter his ideas and, in the first place, grant greater importance to the prince's role and position. He now condemned the principle of the people's sovereignty

³⁴ *Constituția Cărvunarilor*, pp. 7—20. Tăutu demanded that the constitution be worded in Romanian not in Greek and represent a synthesis of the country's laws; the basic character of this constitution is set off also by the use of the term *pravila fundamentalică* (the basic law).

and that of the republican form of government. He praised the role of personality in history, considering that “aucun peuple, nulle part et jamais, n’a pu se gouverner soi-même, toujours un seul individu a été celui qui a pu diriger les peuples.” Unlike his earlier works, the writings of 1827—1829 conferred to the prince the most extensive prerogatives, in particularly those of a legislative nature; it thus became incumbent on him to promulgate a constitution³⁵ based on the observance of the natural law and the observance of civic rights.

In 1829 Tăutu drew up a draft regulation regarding the election of the prince in which he took a more democratic stand than in 1822. It was a radical idea for the times. He admitted that theoretically, on the grounds of the natural law “tout individu qui à juste titre porte un intérêt à sa patrie”, in other words, everyone who had a rightful interest in his country had the right to participate in the election of the prince. But considering that all the citizens were not capable of enjoying this right, he restricted it to “tout citoyen moyen possédant une terre de 145 hectares, ou bien un revenu annuel de 1.000 lei.” Consequently, unlike his contemporaries who conditioned the granting of political rights by a social criterion — affiliation to the boyar class — Tăutu granted these rights on the basis of an economic criterion. His draft project would have allowed a considerable number of small landowners, boyars without functions, or even free peasants to be on the register of votes and might, doubtlessly, have led to important changes in Romanian political life.³⁶

Tăutu’s political theory combined principles characteristic of enlightened absolutism and constitutionalist concepts. His ideal of a prince was no doubt inspired by the model of the enlightened despot, but the importance he granted to the constitution, the manner in which he conceived the relationship between the prince and the assembly, and the observance of natural law and civic rights lead us to believe that he was a supporter of a constitutional monarchy.

Naum Râmniceanu did not possess Ion Tăutu’s wealth of information or his ability to theorize, but he was a resolute opponent of absolutism which he believed was the cause of the decline of many nations, including his own. At the time of Tudor Vladimirescu’s movement, like many other writers he drafted several writings in which he set forth his opinions on the future organization of the state and on its form of government. In Râmniceanu’s

³⁵ Tăutu did not use this term gratuitously, as he makes a difference between “la constitution et le règlement.” E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, pp. 276—283.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 271. Also, Tăutu introduced into the political thought of the Principalities new elements of procedure such as secret ballot, election by simple majority of votes, etc.

projections the prince's authority was limited by basic acts, by a "law of the country" which he called for in *Tratat important* (1822). He also insisted on the necessity of an Assembly whose powers he did not enumerate but which seemed to be considered, together with the prince, the main leading organ of the country. But unlike the boyar plans which stipulated that, in a possible Assembly only the boyar class would be represented, Râmniceanu felt that every district should be represented by two deputies "who like the guardians of their fellow-countrymen should take part in all General Assemblies having their say and voicing their opinion as regards all that interests their districts."³⁷ Râmniceanu's opinions on this problem are not clear enough. For example he did not indicate what social categories had the right to elect or be elected; nor did he delineate the rights the deputies enjoyed in the Assembly and the extent to which they could deal with general issues of the country, rather than being restricted to the problems of their own districts. Nevertheless, the learned monk's ideas were very valuable because they pointed out the necessity of a geographical representation in the supreme organ of the country as well as the obligation of the central authority to take into consideration regional grievances and demands.

It was in Wallachia too that the theory of the constitutional monarchy found a staunch supporter in the person of Simion Marcovici, the author of *Idee pe scurt asupra tuturor formelor de oblăduire*. For the Wallachian writer the criterion for classifying "governments" was precisely the degree to which the government could act for "the general good". He considered that this function was best performed by what he called a "restricted monarchy." Marcovici supported the theory of the social contract and felt that the people entrusted the monarch with power in order that he should defend them and protect their general interests. But, by virtue of this contract his power was restricted, on the one hand by the obligation of observing the natural rights, on the other by the existence of certain representative bodies possessing vast powers—the authority to legislate was entrusted to a "legislating senate" the judiciary to another senate, both elected for a period of five years. The prince was left mainly with executive duties, but in this area too, particularly with regard to important decisions such as declaring war or concluding peace, he had to take into account the opinion of the two senates.

This "restricted" monarch, whose dynasty was hereditary should possess the qualities of an enlightened prince. He should be wise and learned; he should be able to meditate on the nature of the power he has been entrusted

³⁷ N. Râmniceanu, *Tratat important*, p. 27.

with, love his people, and endeavour to defend their interests. All these ideas were naturally meant to be applied to the situation in the Principalities. It is for this reason that Professor E. Vîrtosu believed that the 13 points concluding the article and bearing the title *Așezămînt politicesc* (Political Charter) represented in fact a draft constitution.³⁸

Apart from the works of well-known authors, the theory of constitutional monarchy was also set forth in a number of anonymous works, most of which were written in the 1821—1831 decade. Thus, for example, the recommendations for a “general law of the country” of a constitutional character and for a General Assembly with delegates from districts and towns were mentioned in *Legămînt pentru unire* (Convention for Union) of the small Wallachian boyars (1822).³⁹

We also come across very interesting ideas in a wallachian petition of 1829 which demanded that “the form of government of these two provinces should be a restricted monarchy, a hereditary one”; the prince, who should be German but of the Greek Orthodox faith, should “govern according to a constitution all his life” and should have to take an oath that he would abide by in front of all the people.⁴⁰

All these ideas regarding the form of government and particularly the restricted monarchy were to bear fruit on the occasion of the adoption of the *Organic Regulations*, fundamental acts based mostly on the theories examined, which brought to the Principalities a system of restricted, almost constitutional rule. Though the prince’s power was alleged to be sovereign,⁴¹

³⁸ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, pp. 125—126, 151—152; E. Vîrtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 280.

³⁹ In the years 1821—1822 these ideas were widely circulated, which accounts for the similar formulations in various writings. *Legămîntul pentru Unire*, for example, demanded the adoption of the law in terms very much like those used by Naum Râmniceanu in *Tratat important*; but the ideas on the representation in the Assembly differ considerably. The *Legămîntul* provided for the sending of “one deputy elected by the whole population of the district, bearing a written certificate given by his fellow citizens showing he had been elected to represent them all and as having full power to speak and act on their behalf.” Bucharest and Craiova were the towns which were to send two delegates each. Unlike the delegates in N. Râmniceanu’s work, they were entitled to discuss the issues “regarding the whole country.” E. Vîrtosu, 1821 : *Date și fapte noi*, pp. 208—210.

⁴⁰ *Wallachian unionist petition* (1829), art. 16—25, *Hurmuzaki*, X, pp. 648.

⁴¹ *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 130; II, pp. 183, 341—342. Referring to the character of the prince’s power, Nesselrode defined it as “an elective sovereignty” and a “supreme power.” The chancellor of Russia was in fact the one to insist that very extensive powers should be granted to the prince, because he did not want to replace the arbitrariness and vexations of the previous regime with the disorders of anarchy and the complicated system of representative voting.

he had to govern according to a number of basic principles and was accountable to the General Assemblies.⁴² At the same time the separation of powers, achieved for the first time in the history of the Principalities, and the delegation of extensive powers to the Assembly, restricted the prince's authority, which until then had been boundless.

The Republic. We have already seen that "the republic, state governed by many" as P. Mumuleanu put it was a form of government that writers did not seem to trust. Still there were a few political programs that aimed at setting up a republican regime in the Principalities. Generally speaking their authors represented the country's most conservative forces — members of the big boyar class — who, not satisfied with indirectly controlling the prince's authority, wanted their own class to hold the reins of power. Along with this group, were some representatives of the liberal boyars whose republican ideas were based on democratic progressive principles.

Aristocratic Conservatism. The earliest demand for the setting up of an aristocratic republic can be found in the Moldavian petitions drafted in 1769 and submitted to Catherine II in March 1770. The authors, leaders of the national movement and determined opponents of the Phanariot regime, probably thought that by setting up a republican regime dominated by boyars they would succeed in avoiding a return of foreign princes. Therefore they believed that the state should be governed by the "aristocracy" represented by twelve big boyars — six of whom would have legislative powers and six judiciary powers. The administrative apparatus was to consist of smaller and middle boyars. The petition also mentioned the practice of taking oath upon assuming office and of reviewing an official's value when he left office. It also stipulated that high officials found guilty of abuses or irregularities should be eliminated forever from the ranks of persons eligible for office. Though the authors of the petition did not voice a demand for some fundamental deed, they stated the necessity of adopting new written laws to serve as guide to the rulers of the country.⁴³

There is no doubt that the main object of this petition was to set up a boyar state. We also think that the personality of the principal author — metropolitan Gavril Callimachi — lent the petition a progressive character — especially in terms of the Phanariot regime which, was aimed at abolishing. The administrative problems, the economic policy, and the cultural policy were expressed in new terms which, if put into practice, might have represented a positive alternative compared to the old state of things. There-

⁴² The *Regulations* included the practice of the oath taken at the enthroning in which the prince promised "to preserve exactly the laws of the Principality."

⁴³ *Arhiva Românească*, I, pp. 202—210.

fore we think that in 1769 this petition had a national and progressive character which was to diminish in the coming decades.

The reactionary character of the idea of an aristocratic republic became very obvious in the period of the 1821 revolution, when the big boyars openly attempted to set up a government dominated by their own class. Thus in a petition dated October 1821 and addressed to the pasha of Silistra, the emigrants of Cernăuți, referring to the expenditures required by the existence of a princely court, asked the postponement of the appointment of a prince and establishing at the head of the country of a council of boyars possessing full powers. The demand was resumed in a petition addressed to the Russian consul, Minciaki in 1822 and in the proposals submitted to the Porte by the delegates of Moldavia who had come to Constantinople in the spring of the same year. In Wallachia similar ideas were expressed in an anonymous petition of October 1821 and in the petition entitled *Îndreptarea țării* (The Improvement of the Country), drafted one year later.

The plans for an aristocratic republic were not, generally speaking, very popular with the writers at the time. Marcovici in Wallachia, and Tăutu in Moldavia criticized them severely, emphasizing their regressive, conservative character. One of the most determined criticism was that made by the big boyar Mihail Sturdza who opposed aristocratic government categorically on the grounds that the boyar class was not homogeneous, could not act uniformly and efficiently, and did not enjoy "un respect assez stable."⁴⁴

We do not know of any plans that proposed of a bourgeois republic in the place of an aristocratic one. Moreover, the writers criticized vehemently the idea of bringing the people to govern the state. Tăutu, for example, spoke of "l'anarchie de la foule" and criticized the republican regime set up by Frenchmen in 1789.⁴⁵ Terrified by the proportions of the popular movement of 1821, Naum Râmnicéanu and Ilie Fotino categorically condemned what they looked upon as an anarchic regime.⁴⁶ As for Mihail Sturdza, he believed that government by the many inevitably led to violent unrest and civil war.⁴⁷



Representative nobiliary democracy. Concurrently with the plans for an oligarchic boyar republic, in 1802 it appeared in Moldavia a plan for a

⁴⁴ M. Sturdza, *Consideration sur la Moldavie et la Valachie*, pp. 63–69.

⁴⁵ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de Ion Tăutu*, pp. 270, 279.

⁴⁶ N. Râmnicéanu, *Despre originea românilor*, p. 243; I. Fotino, *Tudor Vladimirescu și Alexandru Ipsilanti*, p. 50.

⁴⁷ M. Sturdza, *Considération sur la Moldavie et la Valachie*, pp. 68–69.

republican form of government which, though dominated by the boyars, possessed very marked democratic and progressive traits. We refer to the writing of the *logofăt* Dumitrache Sturdza entitled *Plan sau formă de obləduire republicească aristo-democraticească*. Sturdza did not tackle all the problems involved in reforming the structure of the Moldavian state, which he intended to reserve for another work. His plan discussed only the form of government and the way on which the main institutions will function, leaving the details to be worked on at a later date.

The Moldavian writer considered that "a republic is the best government for the happiness of a country" and that of the different types of republic the best for Moldavia was "the aristocratic-democratic one." This plan designed the government in such a way that the main institutions would be controlled by the boyars but also included in the process of administration the representative of all levels of the social stratum without whom the government could not function.

In Sturdza's plan the country's main institutions was "the high divan," a sort of supreme council with extensive powers that would "watch over all that is necessary and over the order of the republic." The divan consisted of fifteen members, all big boyars, who were elected from "among the boyar families in the country"; it was divided into five departments, all direct organs of the executive. Consequently, the divan had executive functions, and it replaced the authority of the prince with a collective boyar organ.

The judiciary was entrusted to a "judicial divan" composed of fifteen members, elected for life from all categories of boyars. In the districts the mission of administering justice was to be entrusted to certain specified local boyars.

Sturdza clearly mentioned that the big divan was not entitled to interfere with the authority of the judicial divan. One was in no way subordinate to the other. The two organs were separate and independent, and they cooperated only in the adoption of new laws. Laws were to be written up by a committee of six members, three from each divan, and voted on by both organs jointly. Thus, the executive belonged to the first divan, the judiciary to the second, and the legislative to both. The project also mentioned the setting up of another "lower divan" composed of the representatives of all social categories and possessing primarily fiscal powers. It would convene every six months, and it was to debate the financial policy of the big divan and to vote on the taxes, and accept or reject the demands of the executive.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ See D. Sturdza, *Plan*, pp. 32–37.

Sturdza's plan left many problems unsolved. He did not show, for example, who was to elect the deputies to the first two divans, and how the elections were to be carried out. He did not explain how the executive would function, nor did he discuss any constitutional problems. All this can be accounted for if we understand Sturdza's plan as the first part of a master project of reform which was not written, or if written was not preserved. At any rate, Sturdza's work is one of the most important political writings of the time; it certainly was modern in character and more advanced than the usual draft reforms. The author was obviously influenced by English parliamentarism, by the system "used in England" as he himself admitted. The representation of the popular strata was still insufficient, but before this it had not even been mentioned. The limits of this form of democracy may be questionable, but nevertheless the separation of powers, the way in which they would function, and the right granted to the lower divan could have insured a liberal constitutional evolution and might have created an administration by far superior to the existing one. In spite of certain inevitable limits, this makes us consider Sturdza's plan as a progressive program, advanced for the Moldavian society of the time.

CHAPTER X

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF STATE LEADERSHIP

Political Science. The terms “political” and “politics” were often employed in Romanian texts of the Enlightenment, but the meanings were not always the same. Some texts used the adjective “politicesc” to distinguish the laymen from the clergy, thus giving the term the meaning of civilian. From this initial differentiation between laymen and clergy, between the “civilians” and the “churchmen”, the term was written into laws where the “political judgement” differed from the canonical and from the criminal, a differentiation very clearly made in the *Caragea Code*; this sense resulted from the way the Greek title “Codix Politicos” (Civilian Code) of the *Calimah Code* was translated into Romanian.

Besides this meaning, the people of the Enlightenment age attributed the terms “political” and “politics” with an administrative sense. This was the meaning used in certain formulas such as “the political customs and regulations” or “political privileges.” Dionisie Fotino used the words with this sense and called the chapters devoted to the administrative division of the Principalities “Moldavia’s Political Geography” and “The Political Division of Wallachia.” In fact, long before the age of the Enlightenment, this identification of politics with administration had led, to the recognizing of the existence of a political science. Cantemir had defined it “l’art de gouverner” which included all the problems connected with the administration of a country.¹ In the period we are dealing with the existence of a political science was acknowledged both by certain princes and by several writers. Alexandru Ypsilanti mentioned “economic and . . . political science,” and Enăchiță Văcărescu talked of “the science of political governing.” The idea that a state was not governed at random but on the basis of this science was supported by Eufrosin Poteca, Ion Tăutu, and

¹ D. Cantemir, *Histoire de l’empire Ottoman*, I, p. 71.

Mihail Sturdza, too, who dwelt particularly on the necessity for the prince to have “une connaissance profonde de la science politique.”²

What was the aim of politics, what direction must the administration of a country take? Taking up a somewhat national stand, the men of the age of the Enlightenment considered, that the main purpose of a government was, on the one hand, “la conservation politique du peuple”³ and, on the other, the creation of internal conditions favorable to its development. In the following we shall analyze the actual way in which these ideals were to be attained.



The Reforms. We have already pointed out that during the Enlightenment, discontent with the unjust social and political structures often took the shape of downright opposition which culminated in 1821 with the uprising of Tudor Vladimirescu. Alongside these violent forms of opposition, but as an expression of the critical spirit too, there existed already in the middle of the 18th century a strong current of opinion in favour of reform. As it was to be expected, the representatives of the ruling classes were reformist thinkers. They were interested in the modernization of the social and political structures, but eager to carry out this process through steps taken from above, steps well controlled, that would not prove too great a blow for the privileges they enjoyed.

As a matter of fact, and as numerous petitions and political programs revealed, the action of reform covered a very large area, going as far as reorganizing administrative structure and dealing with problems of economic and cultural policy. For most writers, the reforms had to be the work of a “gouvernement éclairé,”⁴ of a “régime créateur.”⁵ Their aim should have been the introduction of a stable and dynamic administration which “could bring to the country its old splendour, to erect from the ruins so many towns that existed before and to establish so many villages” that had become “sad remnants.”⁶ “A beautiful and useful reform in our country” was what Poteca demanded in 1827.⁷ Tăutu said that “nous avons besoin d’institutions” and promised to change “la face du pays.”⁸ Iordache and Nicolae

² *Petition on the finance of Moldavia and the condition of the peasants* (1829), pp. 29–30.

³ *Petition of 1811*, G. Bulat, *O conspirație boierească contra mitropolitului Ignatie grecul*, part I, pp. 3–4.

⁴ B. Știrbei, *Raportul asupra stării Valahiei*, p. 738.

⁵ *Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon* (1807), p. 416.

⁶ D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III, pp. 136–137.

⁷ Gh. Rădulescu-Motru, *Din autobiografia lui E. Poteca*, p. 10.

⁸ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, pp. 266, 273.

Rosetti-Rosnoveanu and Mihail Sturdza were also among the firm supporters of the reforms.

It is interesting to examine how the political writers of the Enlightenment viewed the reforms undertaken during the reign of Constantin Mavrocordat in the first half of the XVIIIth century. Generally speaking the writers of the first generation approved the reform policy of the prince, considering it would have favorable consequences for the country. This was the opinion of not only those close to the prince, such as Petre Depasta, but of those who like Mihail Cantacuzino were at the head of the struggle against the Phanariot régime. Cantacuzino held that the reforms represented a moment of "transformation of all the country's institutions" and that, it was due to them that "the country had started being organized and was progressing and gathering in it people from over the Danube and from Hungary."⁹ But the importance of these reforms did not prevent him from stressing the difficulty of erecting them under the conditions of the Turkish-Phanariot domination; in fact, in the following years Mavrocordat himself was obliged to reconsider some of them.

The writers of the second generation followed, in general, this interpretation, praising the idea of reform and its potential value, but regretting its want of practical viability. But, the tone changed with the appearance of the third generation. Filled with strong resentments toward the Phanariots, these writers reversed the attitude of previous generation and put emphasis on the negative points of the reforms. Barbu Stirbei, for example, saw the strengthening of Phanariot absolutism the real object of the reforms and not the country's progress. He criticized the fact that "everything was at the mercy of one person" and pointed out that, though Prince Mavrocordat's intentions may have been good, he was not able to rise to the height of a real legislator.¹⁰

Reform, during the Enlightenment, meant first of all the reorganizing of the corrupt and unstable administrative apparatus. The programs drawn up by Wallachians and Moldavians would have aided in stabilizing the administration by appointing officials for a fixed time and by forbidding their dismissal without a well-founded reason. Thus the Wallachian petition of 1769, submitted in Petersburg in March 1770, suggested that officials be appointed for one to three years, beginning every year on January 1. Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu in his *L'État de la Moldavie* (1818) demanded that appointments be made for the same period of time with interdiction of premature

⁹ M. Cantacuzino, *Istoria Țării Românești*, pp. 48—50, 157—158.

¹⁰ B. Stirbei, *Aperçu sur le mode d'administration de la Valachie*, pp. 157—158; *Raportul asupra stării Valahiei*, pp. 744—746.

dismissal. Tăutu, Stirbei,¹¹ and the Committee of 8 entrusted with the drafting of the *Organic Regulations* also criticized the instability of the state apparatus and made proposals that would obviate it.

All these writers and politicians turned most of their attention to the cause of the corruption prevailing among the officials, the system of remuneration. The selling of offices was bitterly condemned by Tăutu, Golescu, I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, and Stirbei. The *Cererile norodului românesc* (1821) drawn up by Tudor Vladimirescu mentioned that "all the offices of the country... from the lowest to the highest should not be assigned for money, in order that an end be put to the robbery existing in the country."¹² The reforms suggested pursued extremely important aims for the country's evolution, the transformation of prince's employees into government officials, into creative instruments of administration. According to Tăutu "no public office,... should be considered a property to be left as inheritance, or as means of getting rich." And numerous writings suggested that the *havaet* (fees paid for the office) should be abolished and a sufficient monthly salary introduced.

The new kind of public official had to meet new criteria in order to be appointed. According to the Moldavian petition submitted to Catherine II in 1770, administration was a thing that had to be learnt, and certain functions should be given only to competent persons.¹³ It was in Moldavia too in 1775 that Grigore III Ghica promised in to give promotions according to merit and education and not according to rank and wealth. After 1800 the increasing importance of the bourgeois and intellectual elements helped to make merit and culture weigh more than name and wealth. The writers in contact with the bourgeois circles demanded that the country's offices be accessible to all "patriots" who due to their education and ability deserved to enjoy the country's confidence. The general tide of opinion favouring of personal merits made its way into boyar programs too and even into the conservative *Anafora pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (Petition for the Privileges of Moldavia) (1827).

Then the concept of responsibility began to appear. It was expressed for the first time in the Moldavian petition of 1769 which suggested that every

¹¹ Știrbei accounted for the corruption and unsatisfactory functioning of the administration by the fact that as the officials knew they would be changed by the end of the year, they took no real interest in their obligations (*Aperçu sur le mode d'administration de la Valachie*, pp. 150–154.).

¹² T. Vladimirescu, *Cererile norodului românesc*, p. 273.

¹³ *Arhiva Românească*, I, pp. 202–203; the petition suggests that the sons of boyars, who do not learn the technique of administration should not be promoted to higher ranks "lest wise governing be disorganized."

official "should account for the work he had performed." Similar ideas, accompanied by proposals for the punishing of incapable or dishonest officials, can be found in the works of Iordache Rosetti-Rosnoveanu, Ion Tăutu, and Barbu Stirbei; in the instructions of Prince Scarlat Callimachi to his officials; and in the petitions of the years 1821—1831.¹⁴ Consequently, when the *Organic Regulations* were adopted, included were the idea of a single salary and the principle of responsibility for those now officially called *funcționeri*, or civil servant.

Special attention was also paid to fiscal apparatus and fiscal policy. Thus in his *Plan* of 1802 Dumitrache Sturdza recommended that all taxes be abolished and replaced by a single tax, fixed for each district according to the inhabitants' income. Its amount was to be established by the "lower divan," whose duties regarding fiscal policy have already been mentioned. Sturdza felt that, in this way, taxes would not longer be a means of enrichment for the princes and corrupt officials, but rather means of placing at the disposal of the government the funds necessary for the development of the country and the well-being of the population.¹⁵

As for the nature of the tax or more precisely the object and social category to be taxed, two main conceptions came into conflict. Traditionally, imposts were levied on people per capita with the clergy, the boyards, and some privileged categories being exempted. This system had become so frequently used that it was included even in certain liberal plans such as *Constituția Cărvunariilor* (1822). It was reaffirmed in the *Anafora pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (1827) which laid particular stress on the fact that it was the physical person and not the property that was liable to be taxed. This principle, accepted with certain alterations by Mihail Sturdza too,¹⁶ was adopted by the *Organic Regulations*.

Thus, in 1831 the reactionary principle of levying taxes on persons won the day, with complete exemption for the boyar category. But its supporters had to cope with the opposition of those who, with a knowledge of the principles of political economy, tried to violate tradition and obtain the establishment of a general tax, without class exemption, that would be levied according to property and income. The first to express such ideas was Dionisie Fotino who believed that "if the taxes were levied on the pro-

¹⁴ For the echo of these problems in the projects of reform see *Mémoires*, pp. XV—XVI.

¹⁵ D. Sturdza, *Plan*, pp. 34, 36; Sturdza insisted upon the fact that a "republican" could not be compelled to give money "unless sure that the amount was really necessary to the republic."

¹⁶ However the future prince admitted that a single tax should be introduced. *Petition on the relations between the Romanian principalities and the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 27—29.

ducts of the land, and not on the persons, it is obvious that both the rich and the poor would bear together the difficulties of the country." At the same time he thought that a tax on individuals was "detrimental to the spirit and causes a multitude of evils" while "an indirect tax on the products of the land... contributes to the increase of the people, to the multiplying of the cattle, it stimulates trades and commerce and lends an impetus to the human spirit in general."¹⁷

Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu who for several years was the head of Moldavian finances had a thorough knowledge of fiscal matters. In a petition of 1818 he suggested a fiscal reform that would abolish all taxes and replace them with a single tax levied on property; in this way "all the estates of the inhabitants shall pay in one and the same way, without any kind of difference, privileges or privileged people as regards the paying of any tax there shall not be at all." Rosnovanu used the *falca* (about 14,322 sq. m) as the taxable unit, so that an inhabitant with 15 falcas would have to pay "22 lei a year representing all his tax and nothing more."¹⁸ In Wallachia, Marcovici held the same ideas. In 1829 he recommended that all the inhabitants pay "for the necessity of the state, according to their incomes."¹⁹

Unlike the Phanariot princes who thought of the state's income as of their personal property, Fotino, Rosnovanu, and Marcovici dwelt upon the fact that fiscal policy should aim at creating the material means the state required. Taxes don't represent a means of enriching the boyars and princes, but an amount of money paid by every citizen for what Marcovici calls "the necessities of the state." This implied not only an alteration of the fiscal policy, but a reorganizing of the whole apparatus that levied taxes, an apparatus which in the last decades of the Phanariot epoch had become the most dreadful instrument for the draining of the population ever known in Romanian history.

The most important programs for the reorganizing of the finances were those of Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu in Moldavia and of Barbu Văcărescu in Wallachia. The former drew up a plan that would deprive the prince of his power over fiscal policy, leaving him only a honorary right of control. All the powers connected with the levying and spending of taxes would be assumed by the *visțier* who would be "responsable envers son pays de toute contribution illégale" and who would furnish "un cautionnement sur les

¹⁷ D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III; p. 214.

¹⁸ Rosnovanu's tax is therefore 8 lei smaller than the bill the *Organic Regulations* were to fix (*Draft Fiscal Reform*, pp. 603-605).

¹⁹ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, p. 151.

immeubles.”²⁰ Almost identical ideas could be found in the plan for administrative reform drawn up by Barbu Văcărescu.²¹

The struggle carried for a reform of the financial policy should be viewed as a phase of the struggle between the prince’s absolutism and the constitutional tendencies of a considerable part of the writers and politicians. Through the adoption of the *Organic Regulations* which granted the right of levy taxes to the General Assembly, this struggle was once and for all won by the writers and politicians.



The Economic Policy. With the modernization and development of the country depending on the evolution of the economic situation, there was a general concern for economic policy. Many thinkers wrote extensively on the subject: Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, both thoroughly competent in the problems of political economy as well as Tăutu, Grigore IV Ghica and Golescu. Unlike the men of the 18th century who generally thought the state should not play an active role in economic policy, these writers, who all had thorough knowledge of European economic literature, believed that the central government should pursue a well-defined economic policy and aim at transforming the sources of wealth into real wealth.²²

But this required special knowledge based on an “economic science” a term used as early as the 18th century to change afterwards in the more general “political economy”. The writers realized that the economy of the Principalities would not develop normally as long as their political and economic situation was dominated by the Ottomans and their foreign trade was monopolized by the Porte. Trade was thought to be the most dynamic element of economic life, and the development of all the other branches of government depended on its liberalization.

Trade. In the words of Dionisie Fotino, “trade in the present century is the main source of enrichment and power of states and at the same time

²⁰ I. Rosétti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé* (1818).

²¹ Văcărescu too believed in the necessity to concentrate fiscal policy in the hands of the *visțier*; he even suggested that the latter should have right to appoint the *ispravnic* (*Draft Administrative Reform in Wallachia* (1819), p. 124).

²² In a charter dated 1824, Grigore IV Ghica stated that “to improve the well-being and prosperity of a country means to compel the governor and master of that place to improve and to increase by all means all that is necessary to the place, by bringing what is lacking and the best learning even from foreign parts, to create abundance in this land, and, if possible, to produce even an excess that could be sent to other parts, for the profit of the natives and at the same time bringing about well-being and profit to all its subjects,” *State Archives, Bucharest*, M.A.I. Comunale, dos. 109/1845, f 59—62. Dinicu Golescu defined economy as “what creates the well-being and virtue of a nation which wishes to be rid of wretchedness,” *B.R.V.*, III, pp. 522—523.

the constant study of the most learned minds.” Fotino deplored the poor development of trade in the Principalities but explained that it was impossible for the Romanians to carry on this lucrative activity.²³ In this way Fotino got at the core of the problem of Romanian trade, the Ottoman monopoly. Other writers also condemned this hindrance to development. Tăutu, for example, wrote that due to the monopoly, Moldavia “never had one hour of trade,” and Stirbei called it “the cause of the country’s poverty.”²⁴ The demand to do away with the monopoly first appeared in the petitions of 1769. It was also included in the petitions of 1774, in the petitions of N. Caragea (1783), and in the program of I. Cantacuzino (1791).

Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu referred to Romano-Turkish economic relations as “préjudiciable au pays” and called for freedom of trade. He demanded the systematic promotion of trade which would be the most efficient means of attracting money into the country. In 1821, the proposal of transforming Galați into a free port²⁵ was added to the above proposals. The petition of 1821—1822 also demanded the abolishing of the Turkish commercial monopoly.²⁶ Just on the eve of the Convention of Akkerman (1826), the Moldavians again denounced “le poids de l’odieux monopole” and insisted it should be abolished.²⁷ The convention itself was received with reserve, as the Romanians wanted not just an improvement of the situation but its complete transformation, and not only the freedom to market the products the Porte did not require, but the full liberty of trade.²⁸ As a result of these persistent efforts, this freedom was finally obtained in 1829.

²³ D. Fotino, *Istoria Daciei*, III, p. 143; a prince’s charter had proclaimed as early as 1783 that trade “is one of the most necessary institutions for the embellishment and prosperity of a nation.”

²⁴ E. Virtosu, *Din scrierile inedite ale comisului I. Tăutu*, p. 10; B. Știrbei, *Raportul privind starea Valahiei*, p. 751.

²⁵ See I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé des tributs de toute nature et des pertes supportées par la Moldavie* (1818); *Réflexions sur la Moldavie* (1823), and his letter to Stroganov of 1820, *State Archives*, Bucharest, A. N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu papers CCLIII/76. It was due to his relations with Stroganov that Rosnovanu obtained that the right to free trade be put down in the draft regulation deed discussed at Constantinople in 1818, but left, unfortunately, ineffective.

²⁶ See especially the Moldavian petitions of October 1821, and August 5, 1822; the petition of the emigrants of Brașov to the czar (1821); the petitions submitted to Constantinople in the spring of 1822 by the delegations of both Principalities; and the Wallachian program of December 1822 which also demanded the right to build a commercial fleet of any tonnage.

²⁷ *Hurmuzaki*, Supliment I⁴, pp. 89—91.

²⁸ In reform projects (1769—1829), the demand for the abolishing of the Turkish trade monopoly was made 22 times in all. *Mémoires*, p. XI.

However the liberalization of trade was not restricted to its external aspect only. At the beginning of the 19th century the country's economic development was hampered by the existence of numerous internal customs taxes, which were a genuine obstacle to the setting up of a single market. There were consequently frequent demands calling for their abolishment, such as those of Vladimirescu in *Cererile norodului românesc* (1821) or those of Tăutu in *Constituția Cărvunariilor* (1822). Grigore IV Ghica, too, stressed the necessity of suppressing all that could hinder the freedom of trade and proposed a plan for doing away with internal customs.

All these ideas were taken into account by the authors of the *Organic Regulations* (1831) which proclaimed the complete liberty of internal and external trade, and this new freedom created the conditions for the rapid economic development that was experienced during the thirties and forties of the 19th century.

Agriculture. The ideas on agriculture are less numerous than we should have expected on the part of the writers of a country in which it played so important a role. The Phanariot princes had no clear agrarian policy, as their initiatives were first of all connected with fiscal problems. Unlike the reforms of C. Mavrocordat, the substratum of which was obviously pre-enlightened, the attempts of reform made by the princes after 1774 had some immediate practical purpose and lacked any theoretical grounds. However there were statements made by the government in 1802 that urged the peasants to work the land as "this was the country's first duty," and in the same year Prince Alexandru Suțu, declared that from the working of the land "there rises the general happiness of the world and the separate well-being of every individual." But these statements had only a general meaning. The Phanariot administration had to frequently tell the peasants to go and do field work indicating that the Phanariots were unable to create favorable conditions of development in this economic sector.²⁹

Besides these practical stands, there were after 1800, a few formulations of a theoretical nature. Thus, the anonymous translator of the writing *Oarecari secreturi ale lucrării pământului* (Certain Secrets of the Tilling of the Land) (1796) criticized the backward condition of agriculture in the Principalities and the lack of interest for foreign techniques. He wrote that "our ploughmen have no knowledge of their trade, they do not want to hear of discoveries,

²⁹ The *ispavnici* (prefects) often got instructions to urge "all the inhabitants of the region to plough and sow as much as possible and those among the inhabitants who do not understand it is to their profit, should be compelled to do it." Gh. Platon, *Cu privire la dezvoltarea pieței interne a Moldovei în preajma Regulamentului organic*, *Analele științifice ale Universității «Al. I. Cuza», secția III, tom V (1959), p. 27.*

or of other useful methods, but stick to what they learnt in their villages and that is why they cannot extend the sown areas and increase the crops.”³⁰

The ideas on agriculture were generally influenced by the physiocrat theories. The article “Ithicon adeca moral” (Ethics, that is morals) stated, for example that “neither more education, nor an increase in the number of factories and of trade can bring real happiness to the Romanians. This can be achieved only by a thorough working of the land.”³¹ In 1825 Poteca called the peasants “the nourishing parents of the state”³² and Marcovici considered agriculture “the greatest and the soundest wealth of any state.”³³

Industry. All the writers and political thinkers agreed that handicrafts and factories should be supported. The arguments set forth were more often of a mercantilist nature, as the following charter of privileges granted to a cloth factory in 1794 shows: “. . .the first sign of abundance in a country is the increase of the number of tradesmen and especially of the various trades and handicrafts and, so that the country no longer needs objects coming from foreign parts which means loss of money, but can make money by sending things to other parts.”³⁴ Most of the princes supported the factories, and it was rare to hear such words as those of Hangerli who said about a factory that “in these times it is of no use.” The princes’ policies were, in fact, supported by the Porte, which in the period of the nizam-i-djedid encouraged the setting up of factories.³⁵

After 1800 the idea that industry played an important role in the development of society by leading it a specific character was ever more widespread. For the anonymous author of *Haracterul epohi noastre* (Character of Our Epoch), “this age is the age of machines,” and “the power of mankind has . . . achieved wonders.” The era has achieved “better dwellings, better clothes and better food.”³⁶ It was this mentality that made writers stress the need to develop industry and industrialize the Principalities.

Thus the petitions of 1821—1822 demanded that “we may be able to open factories of any kind and market what they produce.”³⁷ Golescu suppor-

³⁰ *B.R.V.*, II, p. 389.

³¹ E. Virtosu, *1821: Date și fapte noi*, p. 204.

³² G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui E. Poteca*, p. 37.

³³ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, p. 126.

³⁴ V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, V, p. 295.

³⁵ In 1793, for example, the Porte advised Prince Mihai Sutu that, according to the “new order,” he was to found factories useful to the natives. M. Guboglu, *Catalogul documentelor turcești*, I, p. 130.

³⁶ *Haracterul epohi noastre*, pp. 399—400.

³⁷ Al. Villara, *Petition addressed to the czar* (1821), p. 126; the demand was repeated in the petition of December 1822.

ted this policy with sound and convincing arguments: "It is a great loss when a country has to buy all kinds of objects from other countries and the latter do not buy any manufactured products from it; how unfortunate our country is which has two frontiers, one to the South, one to the North and keeps exporting its money through both of them and never gets a copper for itself through them." And Stirbei regretted the fact that "industry is almost non-existent... and we have nothing to offer to foreign countries."³⁸

In Moldavia Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu was the most fervent supporter of industrialization. He expressed his opinions in a *Letter regarding the advantage of industry over trade*. He tried first of all to answer the question why "l'industrie agricole présente moins de bénéfice que l'industrie commerciale et manufacturière." The answer, according to Rosnovanu, was that, firstly agriculture was unable to permit a sufficient division of labor, and that secondly capital invested in industry paid off faster than an investment in agriculture and thus brought in greater income, in a shorter period of time.³⁹ Rosnovanu's letter presented a convincing and scientific argument in favor of industrialization, an idea which the *Organic Regulations* later confirmed as useful and necessary.⁴⁰

But industrialization could not be carried out without capital, raw material, qualified manpower, and, especially, an efficient protectionist policy. Were the writers of the time aware of this?

Because of the Ottoman rule, the Principalities had no national monetary system, which was extremely detrimental to the economy, and thus had to cope with the varying rates of exchange of Ottoman currency and of other currencies circulating in the Principalities. The monetary chaos was made worse by the frequent introduction of spurious currency and by Russia's monetary policy, which during every occupation altered the rate of exchange by flooding the market with large amounts of paper money and issued spurious coins. All this accounts for the reason why, during the period of Phanariot rule when the autonomy of the Principalities was less respected, the problem of credit could not be solved. The attempts made in Moldavia in the years 1769—1770, and in Wallachia during the reign of Grigore IV Ghica were ineffective⁴¹; it was only the *Organic Regulations* that were able to take res-

³⁸ See D. Golescu, *Însemnare a călătoriei mele*, pp. 142—143, and B. Știrbei, *Raport privind starea Valahiei*, p. 751.

³⁹ *State Archives*, Bucharest, A. N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu papers CCLIII/95.

⁴⁰ The General Assembly was given the mission of "considering how to find means to enliven the country's industry and to facilitate the opening of the factories in the country." *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 79.

⁴¹ In his correspondence with the Russian general Stoffel, Gavril Callimachi proposed measures should be taken to stabilizing the rate of the currency entitled to circulate in Moldavia; the Wallachian prince's policy had the same aim in view.

trictive steps regarding the circulation of foreign currency and to lay the basis of a national monetary system.

People were extremely concerned with preventing money from going out of the country, and we have already had the opportunity to mention a few opinions in this respect.⁴² There were times when even the prince attempted to restrict these losses, taking such steps as forbidding loans to foreigners; but in this field too the results were almost nil. And so writers had to content themselves with demanding the liberty to export, seeing in it the main means of attracting money into the country. Among the supporters of this scheme were Tăutu, the two Rosnovanus, Tudor Vladimirescu, and the Wallachian petition of 1822, which even used the term *valuta* (foreign currency). In 1831 the *Organic Regulations* tried to solve the problem of credit by setting up a National Bank, but the plan was not carried out.

The setting up of factories also raised the problem of raw material. Already at the beginning of the 18th century, Cantemir had pointed out that the Moldavians were afraid to develop the riches of the subsoil lest they fall into the hands of the Turks. This idea was re-emphasized by the English traveller Wilkinson at the beginning of the following century. Nevertheless, in the programs that militated in favour of independence or of real autonomy, the problem of mining the riches of the subsoil was often discussed and looked upon as an essential element in the country's economic recovery. Expressed for the first time in the Wallachian petition of 1769, the idea was revived during Tudor Vladimirescu's movement; one writer demanded that "we should bring up all the metals our soil can give, take them and get the country to use them through free commerce."⁴³ This problem too was solved only by the adoption of the *Organic Regulations* which stimulated the mining of the subsoil, giving self-employed people complete freedom to mine in exchange for a tax of 10 percent of their benefits.

The lack of qualified manpower also hindered the development of factories. The impracticality of training native personnel gave rise to the idea of importing Western colonists. First suggested by Carra and by d'Hauterrive, this idea was also present in the *Cererile norodului românesc* (1821), in the petition of Al. Villara to the czar (1821), and in I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu's *Réflexions sur la Moldavie* (1823).

Many writers considered the liberalization of internal economic life and the adoption of a protectionist policy essential conditions for a real "indus-

⁴² The first mercantilist ideas appear in fact in D. Cantemir's *Descrierea Moldovei*, pp. 232-233.

⁴³ Al. Villara, *Petition addressed to the czar*, p. 126; see also the Wallachian petition of December 1822, pp. 230-231.

trialization" of the country. Liberalization meant firstly the abolishing of the foreign monopolies in Romania and also the open acceptance of competition, principles which triumphed in 1831 when foreign monopolies became forbidden. As for protectionism, vague formulations first appeared in the middle of the 18th century when the Moldavian and Wallachian merchants demanded that their commerce be protected from foreign competition. In 1821 the petition of the emigrants at Braşov addressed to the czar demanded that the customs tariffs be recalculated, native customhouse officers be appointed, and certain Ottoman products considered competitive be forbidden to enter the country. The Committee of 8 charged with the drafting of the *Organic Regulations* proposed that extremely strict protectionist steps be taken, which displeased Nesselrode. He questioned why they should be altered on the grounds that the Principalities were "not acknowledged to be independent powers." However the *Organic Regulations* preserved the idea of protectionism, granting the General Assembly the right "to stimulate the native industry... and if, to this end, it will be found necessary to stop bringing from abroad certain wares and objects, then the prince will intercede with the Porte to strengthen the measure and duly publish it."⁴⁴



The Cultural Policy. Like other European writers of the Enlightenment, the Romanian writers granted considerable importance to culture, which was considered as an essential factor in the progress of society. They therefore stated the necessity of an active policy of "Enlightenment," of spreading "light" among the people. This was not the first time that these terms were used. They were present in works written before the period of the Enlightenment, but evidently had a Christian meaning. Though this meaning was also preserved after 1750,⁴⁵ it lost its religious connotation and gradually acquired a more modern meaning, the spread of culture and its effects on the population. The "Enlightenment of the mind" no longer meant a mystical contact with the divinity, but, as a Wallachian boyar said in 1820, "the enlightening of the people." Prince Ioniţă Sandu Sturdza, Grigore Pleşoianu, and Simion Marcovici all speak of the "enlightening of the nation."

The cultural Enlightenment in the Principalities, the endeavouring to enlighten the people, was based on the idea that it was part and parcel of

⁴⁴ *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 78; II, p. 276.

⁴⁵ In the *Octoih* published in 1750, Grigore of Râmnic means by "Enlightenment" the knowledge of the Orthodox dogmas; sometimes the term had a mystical sense too, as in the *Antologhion* printed in Bucharest in 1766; even Chesarie of Râmnic used the term "enlighteners" for the translators of religious books.

the general Enlightenment of all nations. It was part of what Veniamin Costache, Mihail Sturdza, and Gheorghe Asachi called "the Enlightenment of the epoch."⁴⁶ But there was also the belief that the Romanian Enlightenment had a special character, that it was in fact a revival, a return to sound, specific values which had been over shadowed by the foreign rule, especially of the Phanariots.

One of the eminent supporters of the idea of cultural revival was Naum Râmniceanu, who deplored the lack of education of the "Homeland's Sons," and Ion Tăutu, who could not imagine the development of society without a corresponding development of culture; in his writings Tăutu emphasized that "nous avons besoin d'instructions, de lumières", that "nos lumières sont trop peu nombreuses" and that if this state of things was not mended "nous ne serons jamais ce que nous devrions être... une nation éclairée."⁴⁷ The speeches of Poteca (1825—1826) and the writings of Fotino and Drăghici also stressed the government's obligation to carry on an active cultural and educational policy.

In actual fact, the cultural policy consisted mainly in the circulation of books and the development of education. The translation and printing of books in Romanian was considered a most important and efficient element in the spreading of culture, in the enlightening activity. Great stress was laid on the accomplishments of the printing houses which, in 1811, the Moldavians called "the country's finest ornaments," and in 1820 Metropolitan Dinicu Lupu described as "the light of knowledge and pursuits." A few years later Dinicu Golescu circulated an appeal for the translation "of books into the national language," and the authorities exempted foreign books of customs duty on the grounds that they were used for "people's enlightening." Carcaleki, Căpățâneanu, and Marcovici also stressed the enlightening effects of the circulation of books.

Like other Europeans of this time, the Romanian writers paid great attention to education. By the end of the 18th century there was a general desire for education throughout the country which had spread to all levels of society. And consequently many schools were opened, some even at the demand of the peasants.⁴⁸ The theoretical justification of this policy has often a christian, even medieval basis, but the formulations bearing the stamp of the Enlightenment were more numerous and obviously richer in

⁴⁶ The charter for the founding of the Trei Ierarhi School (1829), *Uricarul*, III, p. 35.

⁴⁷ E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 267.

⁴⁸ In 1797 the big boyar Radu Golescu pointed out that in the Muscel district a few villages "with all their inhabitants, ask that a teacher of Romanian be send to teach them." V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, VII, p. 340.

consequence. There were extremely interesting ideas expounded in the charter of promulgation of the educational reform in Wallachia (1776), according to which the value of education consisted in the fact that it accustomed people to live "in keeping with reason." With education people learn "about things and beings," and they feel inclined to meditate on the "nature of things." They become civilized, learn to entertain friendly relations and to become "better, more submissive as it makes them use only reason and have no other aim but the common good."⁴⁹ The same year, similar ideas are stated in the charter for the reorganizing of education in Moldavia.

At the beginning of the 19th century, when the national conscience had crystalized and the struggle for a national education had gathered momentum, interest for the problems of education was more often and more determinedly underlined, setting off the fact that "the founding of schools is indeed the first thing a country requires" and that "with all well constituted nations, the preserving of education is considered the first and last duty of a well founded government."⁵⁰ Golescu and Mumuleanu were among the most fervent supporters of the development of education; the latter was even the author of "Ode on the Striving after Education." The importance granted to this problem was also indicated by its inclusion in so many programs of reform, beginning with that of 1769.⁵¹ Dumitrache Sturdza's *Plan* called for education for both sexes, directly controlled by the higher divan whose object was to create "from one generation to another good inhabitants of the republic."⁵² The project aimed somewhat at the democratizing of education resuming Al. Ypsilanti's idea that schools must "benefit the sons of boyars and others, lower down."⁵³ Comparatively liberal ideas are to be found in *Constituția cărvunarilor* too, which demanded schools be opened in "all the towns of the country. . . for the general good and progress."⁵⁴ The indefatigable writers and teachers Naum Râmniceanu and Eufrosin Poteca were also greatly interested in education. The conceptions of the Enlightenment period in culture were reflected in the *Organic Regulations* which enforced the principle that it was incumbent on the state to support and guide education, to support the printing and dissemination of books.

⁴⁹ V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, I, pp. 83—84.

⁵⁰ Wallachian charters of the years 1813—1814; V. A. Urechea, *Domnia lui I. Caragea, Cultura publică*, pp. 6, 13—14.

⁵¹ The Moldavians' petition submitted to Catherine II demanded that "from the incomes of the country, academies of science, trades and languages should be set up" (*Arhiva Românească*, I, p. 212).

⁵² D. Sturdza, *Plan*, p. 32.

⁵³ V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, I, p. 82.

⁵⁴ I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunarilor*, p. 19.



The Rights of Man and the Political Liberties. The period of the Enlightenment represented in the Romanian Principalities as in other countries, the triumph of individualism, the denying of the old medieval collectivist ideals, and the pre-eminence of personal interest over the abstract, universal ethic and socio-political values. The evolution of the individualist conception was strikingly reflected by the transformation of the ideas concerning property. The earliest signs of the new bourgeois mentality appeared in *Sobornicescul hrisov* (Oecumenical Charter) of 1785 which defined the law as an instrument for the defense and guaranteeing of personal property. Thirty years later this mentality was fully developed; the *Calimah Code* (1817) elaborated a genuine bourgeois theory of property which defined "eternal ownership" as an absolute and intangible right, revolutionizing the old doctrine by introducing the concept of *bun* (possession).⁵⁵ To back the new conception, the writers resorted to the natural law, stating that property was "a natural right" and admitting the idea that everyone was "free to do with what belongs to him, what he pleases."⁵⁶

The problem of ownership was also a concern of authors of reform proposals, who, generally speaking, were in favor of bourgeois individualism and of the setting up of a climate of security for owners and for their property. In the opening articles of the *Constituția cărvunarilor* Tăutu stressed the absolute and intangible character of the right of property, forbidding the seizure of possessions without "legal reason." The big boyars Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu embraced the same bourgeois point of view. Their petitions often used the formula "the protection of the sacred rights of property," and they aimed at transforming the feudal titles of ownership of boyar estates into full, bourgeois property. Economic individualism gained ground through the adoption of the *Anafora pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (1827) and triumphed completely when the *Organic Regulations* came into force.

The concept of property represented only the economic aspect of bourgeois individualism. But bourgeois individualism gained much attention in problems of legislation, the law representing the philosophic and juridical basis on which the citizens' rights were claimed and political liberties demanded. This position was less frequent in the writings of the 18th century which were still in search of abstract truth and justice of divine inspiration. The

⁵⁵ *Calimah Code*, pp. 223, 855; the Code divided possessions into five categories: state, princely, public, common, and private. See also Gh. Zane, *Doctrina economică a Codului Calimah*, Arhiva, 3-4, 1927; 1, 1928.

⁵⁶ A. Donici, *Manualul juridic*, pp. 20-21.

Calimah Code however appeared greatly concerned with the problem of law which was considered “absolutely necessary for the founding of the human community and the happiness of people.”⁵⁷ The necessity of governing according to the law, “the most valuable support of mankind,” was stated in the Wallachian charter for the reorganizing of the princely academy (1816).⁵⁸ Unlike the writings of the 18th century which saw the law as a governing instrument established by the divinity, the writers after 1800 stressed its natural character and therefore felt the necessity to apply it strictly. Tăutu for one was a fervent backer of the idea of legality. He considered the law “the principle underlying the stability of the entire freedom” and recommended for the state a sound legal structure of bourgeois essence representing all the existing branches of the law.

On this legal basis the writers and political thinkers built up the theory of a genuine Romanian “habeas corpus act” designed to guarantee the safety of persons, their rights, and their liberties. The ideas hesitatingly expressed in the petition of Mihail Cantacuzino of August 6, 1772, were again considered by the Wallachian divan in 1791 and explicitly formulated in the sentence “the first and proper (right) of a free people” is “not to suspend the honor and liberty of anyone... without investigating or without guilt.”⁵⁹ In Moldavia similar ideas were expressed by Dumitrache Sturdza and Rosetti-Rosnovanu. Stirbei’s *Aperçu* (1827) emphasized the idea that the insecurity felt by the population during the Phanariot epoch impeded their general development: “le seul but vers lequel doivent tendre tous les efforts d’une administration éclairée c’est la sûreté des personnes, des propriétés et de l’honneur.”⁶⁰ Due to these repeated and determined stands taken, the principle of the “habeas corpus act” made its way into legislation and was specially mentioned in texts such as *Condica criminalicească* (1820), *Anaforaia pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (1827), and the *Organic Regulations* (1831). We must

⁵⁷ *Calimah Code*, pp. 45, 51. For the way in which the problem of the law and of the legislative power was posed in the projects of reform see *Mémoires*, p. XII.

⁵⁸ V. A. Urechea, *Domnia lui I. Caragea, Cultura publică*, p. 38.

⁵⁹ Letter addressed to the Austrian general Entzemberg, V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, IV, p. 477. The principle of inviolability of the domicile had been laid down already in 1765 in the Code drawn up by M. Fotino for prince Ștefan Racoviță. The paragraph on inviolability pointed out that “...in this town of our prince’s residence we have discovered an evil and abusive thing... not contrary to christian laws only but to pagan one as well, namely that day and night houses could be violated and those found in them dragged away by force. We found it right... to declare that everyone’s house is a safe refuge, a place of shelter. V. Al. Georgescu, *Contribuții la studiul iluminismului în Țara Românească*, I, p. 951.

⁶⁰ B. Știrbei, *Aperçu rapide sur le mode d’administration de la Valachie*, p. 151.

also point out that with the only exception of I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu it was applied to the entire population irrespective of social category.

The theory of legality and of habeas corpus represented only one aspect, the passive one, of the relationship between individual and the state, indicating the limits within which the government can act upon private persons. But what were the civil and political rights of the latter? The fact that personal liberty, "la liberté individuelle" as the Moldavians expressed it in 1807, was a juridical reality as early as the middle of the 18th century, facilitated, theoretically at least, a solution to the problem of equality before the law, in a democratic sense. Dumitrache Sturdza stated that "all the inhabitants of the republic, belonging to any estate, from the highest to the lowest shall all obey the laws given by the care of the legal divan."⁶¹ The *Calimah Code* accepted the principle, and a few years later Tăutu's Constitution re-affirmed that "before the law all shall be considered equal indiscriminately, the law being one and the same for all."⁶² Pogor and Marcovici, in their turn, contributed to the popularizing of this idea and to its inclusion in the *Organic Regulations*.⁶³

One of the political rights considered implicit in this new equality and freedom was the liberty of speech, the right of free expression. In this respect the Phanariot princes were very strict and repeatedly forbade political discussions, or those hostile to the government to be held in public places.⁶⁴ But this did not prevent Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu from demanding the right to freely express any opinion about the country's leaders.⁶⁵ Marcovici too, believed that every citizen should enjoy the freedom of speech, so that "each patriot should express his ideas... on the state of the country, on the renewals to be made and even on the actions of the government which being paternal does not fear its sons."⁶⁶

The liberty of speech was closely associated with the freedom to publish, the freedom of association, and the freedom to travel abroad. The Phanariot

⁶¹ D. Sturdza, *Plan*, p. 29.

⁶² I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunarilor*, p. 7.

⁶³ "All the inhabitants of the Principality, irrespectively are subject to the juridical regulations of the law courts." *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 109; II, pp. 297, 317.

⁶⁴ See, for example, the orders of M. Suțu (1783) and N. Caragea (1782), V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, I, pp. 307–308. In 1817, I. Caragea forbade the teachers of the prince's academy to deliver "lessons contrary to the Orthodox faith or to the constituted political authority," *ibid.*, XA, p. 383. At the beginning of the century C. Ypsilanti had forbidden the boyars to contact the French diplomatic agents in Bucharest, and even dismissed those who disobeyed the order.

⁶⁵ I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé*, and *În scurt luare aminte*, p. 124.

⁶⁶ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, pp. 151–152.

epoch introduced the first interdictions in these fields. The possibilities of association were limited,⁶⁷ and the liberty of printing was restricted for the first time in 1741.⁶⁸ Though the freedom of printing was considered an essential condition to progress, an idea often expressed by Poteca and Marcovici it was not achieved during this period. The demand for freedom to travel abroad was more successful. It was a right the Phanariots had at first forbidden fearing the effects contact with Europe would have on the Romanians. The demand appeared for the first time in the Wallachian petition of 1769 and again in the petition of August 22, 1774. After 1800, it was promoted particularly in the writings of Rosetti-Rosnovanu who claimed not only the right to travel, but the right for every Moldavian to live and carry on activities abroad without this being detrimental to his interests and position at home.⁶⁹ During the proceeds of the Committee of 8, Conachi called for an official stand in this respect, and it was probably due to his influence that the *Organic Regulations* permitted inhabitants of the Principalities the right to travel freely abroad.⁷⁰

While discussing the rights of the citizens, it would be appropriate to examine the way in which the problem of religious liberty was posed. The general decrease of religious feeling and the assertion of the lay spirit facilitated the adoption of a broad tolerance. There were as usual dogmatic Orthodox writings criticizing catholicism and the non-christian religions, but for most Romanian writers and political thinkers the opposition between Greek-Orthodox and Roman Catholics, or even between Christians and Moslems, was devoid of dogmatic content. They opposed Roman Catholicism not as a religion, but as a political force, as a means of penetration of the Austrian or papal influence. This was clearly revealed when, at the beginning of the 19th century, the Moldavians and Wallachians resolutely opposed the setting up of a number of Roman Catholic bishoprics. The opposition to Islam had a similar political substratum. The systematic struggle to forbid conversion to Islam inside the frontiers of the Principalities and refusal to recognize religious rights of Moslems north of the Danube⁷¹ were intended to strike

⁶⁷ "Unpardonable associations are those strictly forbidden by laws, or those obviously hostile to the general security or to good customs, or to morality." *Calimah Code*, p. 81.

⁶⁸ In 1784 Mihai Suju strengthened again the order forbidding the printing of any book without approval; in 1817 the owners of the printing house in Bucharest were reminded of the same thing.

⁶⁹ I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *În scurt luare*, p. 124 and *L'État de la Moldavie*.

⁷⁰ *Organic Regulations*, I, p. 130; II, p. 342.

⁷¹ The petitions submitted to the Porte by both Principalities in August 1774 made provisions for the interdiction of going over to Moslemism on their territory and the automatic loss of all successional rights by those converted outside the Romanian fron-

at the Turks not in their capacity of followers of Mohammed, but as subjects of the Porte.

Because there was an absence of any dogmatic spirit, the various non-Orthodox faiths, except for Islam, were able to enjoy religious tolerance; and as long as their followers did not represent the interests of some foreign power, they would enjoy the same political rights as the Orthodox inhabitants. This religious tolerance permitted the building of houses of worship, the granting of fiscal exemption and economic facilities to the various churches, and the admittance to public schools of all children regardless of religion.⁷² The absence of religious discrimination was plainly asserted by Tăutu, and it was provided for by laws which stated that "the difference of faith exerts no influence on the civil rights."⁷³

Thus, Romanian political thought acknowledged the existence of certain natural rights and liberties that all citizens could enjoy. The majority of writers held that these rights should be granted by the state through reforms. But if the state would refuse to promulgate them and govern tyrannically, contrary to the natural law and to the natural development of society, what did the writers propose? Should the people rise up and overthrow the regime by violent means? Should they do justice through violence?

In the period of the Enlightenment the fighting spirit of the exploited social classes was continually becoming stronger, impressing even foreign travelers and leading them to believe that by nature the Romanians were a rebelous people.⁷⁴ Even the terms revolution and uprising, no difference had as yet been made between them, changed their meaning. New stress was put on the social aspect, with the people rising up against the domination of the propertied classes.⁷⁵ During Tudor Vladimirescu's movement this was often emphasized, sometimes going as far as the idea of a civil war.⁷⁶

tiers; the interdiction of the right of the Turks to possess estate, houses, shops or to build mosques north of the Danube recurred regularly in petitions, although these privileges were respected by the Ottomans.

⁷² A right mentioned in a Moldavian charter of 1803, *Uricarul*, III, p. 26. The *Organic Regulations* decreed the admittance to school of Jewish children (II, p. 266).

⁷³ *Calimah Code*, pp. 47, 81.

⁷⁴ D'Hauterrive, *Mémoires*, p. 81-83.

⁷⁵ Cantemir and the writings of the early half of the 18th century meant revolution by the term uprising, that is the passing of the political power from the hands of one political group to the hands of an opposite group, while the writings of the Enlightenment period define an uprising as an action in which "the people rise against the government." (*Calimah Code*, p. 743).

⁷⁶ See the letter addressed by the divan to Tudor Vladimirescu on February 7, 1821. I. Dârzanu, *Revoluția de la 1821*, p. 45.

This radicalization of Romanian social life led to the division of the writers into two camps: a number of writers condemned the idea of revolution, while others justified it. The first group belonged to the general trend of European reaction which, headed by Czar Alexander I and Metternich, was trying to check the revolutionary wave and to enforce the legitimate principles of the Holy Alliance. For Mihail Sturdza, for instance, the revolutionary unrest in the Principalities was only the local expression of the general European unrest. Grigore IV Ghica, directly influenced by the Austrian chancellor and by the chevalier of Gentz, condemned the revolutions in Spain and Greece as well as the Decembrist movement and called for their suppression in the name of the principle "généralement admis, d'étouffer partout la révolution."⁷⁷ It goes without saying that most of the writers who were boyars condemned Tudor Vladimirescu's revolution, accusing it of aiming at "la dissolution de tous les liens sociaux," calling its principles "faux et pervers... fléau de presque l'Europe entière," and asking for the support of the Holy Alliance for its suppression.⁷⁸ Similar ideas were held by some bourgeois writers such as Z. Românu, Dârzeanu, and I. Fotino.⁷⁹ However there were a number of writers who supported the idea of uprising and were against the more conservative viewpoint which denied the subjects' right to overthrow an oppressive government and asked them to wait patiently for the promulgation of certain reforms. The earliest statements which showed the influence of the French revolution are to be found in the anonymous petition addressed to Metropolitan Iacob Stamate in 1796⁸⁰ and in the petition of the Moldavian freeholders, of March 1, 1799. The latter complained of the merciless exploitation they were subjected and wrote that "we have stood it until now, all our blood has been drained, we have torn our flesh too and now we are at the end of our rope." They demanded that the wrongs be set right and threatened the government with "the decision caused by despair... to repay you as you deserve... for we have been left no other way."⁸¹

⁷⁷ Vlad Georgescu, *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești*, pp. 74, 81, 108, 198–200.

⁷⁸ See especially the petitions of the emigrants of Brașov of March 30, June 1, July 12, August 30, 1821, and that of the emigrants of Sibiu of September 12, 1821.

⁷⁹ We must mention that certain judicial texts put down uprisings in the category of criminal offences (*Legiuira Caragea*, p. 154). In Moldavia *Condica criminalicească* stipulated that "of all guilty facts, the worst is considered to be the rising against the government and against the general laws of the country's government" (pp. 37–38).

⁸⁰ The author or authors of this letter were precursors of the romanticism of the carbonari and of the 1848 generation, rather than the supporters of a popular movement, *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, pp. 767–768.

⁸¹ Al. Vianu, *Manifestări anti-fanariote în Moldova*, pp. 924–925.

Tăutu was one writer who saw the inevitability of a peasant rising if a corrupt and incapable administration was maintained. In *Cuvîntul unui țăran către boieri*, he vividly described the wretched life of the peasants and asked the boyars to willingly reform the unjust social structure. In a heated revolutionary tone that he was to abandon, later he gave warning to the boyars: "why should you lean on our backs and feed on our sweat, why should we toil for you to gather . . . ; no more of this. We can no longer be patient. You must do us justice, or we will do it ourselves."⁸² A similar call to revolt was made in Naum Râmnicéanu's writings. The Wallachian monk was in fact opposed to violent methods and preferred reforms; but at the same time he believed that the people had "natural, universal rights"⁸³ which no government could ignore, and this belief led him to support the people's resort to armed force in the case that these rights were violated. He wrote in reference to the 1821 revolution that "no divine or natural law can condemn a nation for demanding its public rights." Râmnicéanu accused the boyars of having brought the people to despair through their merciless exploitation and asked them to "mend your ways lest the humiliation and despair of the nation give birth to other Tudors."⁸⁴ His contemporary Marcovici shared the same idea, admitting that when the government "compels the people to hate it on account of its oppression . . . the social contract crumbles completely" and the people has the right to overthrow the ruler.⁸⁵

⁸² I. Tăutu, *Cuvîntul unui țăran către boieri*, pp. 327–332.

⁸³ Zilot Românul and A. Donici also believed in the existence of such rights; in 1820 these rights were strongly stressed in an anonymous Wallachian manifesto; "it seems they (the rulers) do not read the papers or they would learn what is going on in Spain, in Naples and in other countries, and that the peoples' privileges are becoming stronger everywhere." *Documente 1821*, I, p. 187.

⁸⁴ N. Râmnicéanu, *Tratat important*, p. 25; his ideas are all the more precious as he was an opponent of Tudor Vladimirescu due to the latter's alliance with the Hetairists.

⁸⁵ S. Marcovici, *Idee pe scurt*, pp. 153–154.

CHAPTER XI

THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS AND THE PROBLEM OF SOVEREIGNTY

At the beginning of the 18th century Cantemir stated plainly and in perfect keeping with the real state of things that despite its having submitted to the Porte, Moldavia "has preserved its entire civilian and religious organization unimpaired."¹ This idea whose validity was restricted but not annulled by the setting up of the Phanariot régime, was revived by the writers of the Enlightenment period and was used as the basis of the conceptions on the international status of the Principalities. Mihai Cantacuzino, Enăchiță Văcărescu, Petru Depasta, Dionisie Fotino stressed the fact that Wallachia and Moldavia had always had an existence separate from that of the Ottoman empire and that the latter had never destroyed their political existence. In order to emphasize this, Naum Râmnicéanu compared the situation of the Romanians, dominated "only under the form of protection... by means of contracts" to that of the Greeks who had lost their own political organization and whose country was called "Turkey not Greece."² This theory and this mentality were reflected in the correspondence of Prince Grigore IV Ghica who did not hesitate to state that "dans tous ces firmans la Valachie est représentée formellement comme un pays séparé du reste de l'Empire ottoman, ayant ses propres usages et son gouvernement à part."³

The assertion of a separate political existence possessing acknowledged rights and privileges obliged Romanian writers and politicians to state their attitude on the factors that encouraged or, on the contrary, hindered this existence. The main danger for enhancing the status of the Principalities was evidently the Porte and its wish to change the titles of suzerainty into sovereign rights. The feelings of the Romanians which were always clearly anti-Ottoman reached a climax during the 1768—1774 war. The petitions drawn up during this period expressed an aggressive hostility to the Porte, who was referred

¹ D. Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, p. 243.

² N. Râmnicéanu, *Tratat important*, p. 18.

³ Vlad Georgescu *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești*, p. 97.

to as "the common enemy," "the enemy of mankind," and described as a permanent peril to the independent political existence of the Principalities.⁴

Toward the end of the 18th century the attitude toward the Porte underwent a change. The general tone was naturally still hostile and the protests against the abuses continued, but, with few exceptions, the Romanians were no longer afraid of "the sick man." They realized his offensive strength was exhausted and that, at any rate, he could no longer impose upon the Principalities a modification of their political status. This change of opinion was only the effect of the changes that had occurred within the Eastern problem. The idea of the inevitability of the decline of the Ottoman empire, voiced so much earlier by Cantemir, was strengthened by the great number of defeats suffered by the Turks in the wars against Russia and Austria. At the beginning of the 19th century, booklets were circulated in Bucharest regarding the possibility that European Turkey might be divided up, and the boyars openly discussed this possibility. Prince Ion Caragea and Tudor Vladimirescu also believed in the possibility of the disintegration of the Ottoman empire.

Concurrently with the diminishing fear of the Porte, there was an increasing fear of the intentions entertained by the great neighboring powers who might be possible successors to the Ottomans. The Romanians were acquainted with the various plans for the partitioning of the Principalities between Russia and Austria. They realized that in the plans of European monarchs, ranging from Catherine II to Napoleon, their territory was but a mere object of barter. They remembered Poland which had disappeared from the map of Europe even before the death of writers who, in their youth, had looked upon it as a great power. The events connected with the successive partitionings of Poland were mentioned in many Romanian writings, usually with a tone of regret. Naum Râmniceanu and public opinion in general sympathized with the fight that Kosciusko put up. When a large number of Polish revolutionaries took refuge in the Principalities (1794—1797), the sympathy for the Polish cause and hostility toward the great powers increased sizeably seriously alarming the consuls of Austria and Russia.⁵

The partitioning of Poland increased the Romanians' fear of their neighbors' intentions. Because of this expansionist policy, on the one hand, and of the rising of national feeling on the other the Romanians developed a

⁴ M. Cantacuzino even drew up *The ruin of the Romanian Country*, in which he not only insisted on the violation of the autonomy and on the economic plundering, but set off also the attempts made by the Porte to transform the Principalities into a pashalic. *Second petition addressed to Count Orlov* (1772), pp. 500—505.

⁵ In 1794, at Jassy, funds were collected to help the Poles, and Vasile Carp was to leave on a mission to Kosciusko, *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, p. 543.

xenophobia often expressed in violent terms. The Romanians no longer trusted the liberating missions of the neighboring christian powers and came to believe, as the author of the Moldavian petition of 1807 did, that their interventions “nous ont rendu toujours plus malheureux.” The writer exposed “les vues perfides de nos voisins sans foi et sans loi, leur astuce à nous diviser, leur artifice à nous surprendre” and considered that all this made the Romanians “détester toutes liaisons et toute communication avec eux.”⁶

The Austrians never really had any valuable and influential supporters in the Principalities, and Vienna's irresolute and indefinite policy estranged the Romanians, with the sole exception of Grigore IV Ghica. But at the same time the Habsburgs' annexation tendencies and the frequent frontier clashes along the Carpathians were sufficient reason for distrust, soon furnishing hostility. The relations with Russia were more complex. In the second half of the 18th century Russia enjoyed great sympathy in the Principalities as a natural ally in the fight against the Turks. Remarkable personalities were members of the pro-Russian party. Among these were Gavril Callimachi, Mihail Cantacuzino, and sometimes even Enăchiță Văcărescu, the author of an enthusiastic biography of Catherine II.⁷ Văcărescu's enthusiasm however soon decreased as the real plans entertained by the Romanov empire became known. The initial dislike for the empire expressed by such writers as Dumitrache turned into antagonism and open opposition during the military occupations of 1806—1812 and 1828—1834 when, in order to suppress the opposition of the national party, the czar's generals arrested and deported not only the prince of Moldavia I. S. Sturdza and the Metropolitan of Wallachia Grigore Dascălul, but even Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, until then the head of the pro-Russian party. A big boyar expressed most graphically the feelings of the Romanians for Russia the hopes and their wariness. “C'est une opinion généralement reçue, que les Principautés de Moldavie et de Valachie sont partisans de la Russie. Cette opinion a besoin d'être discutée; elle est vraie si l'on considère ce penchant comme un besoin, une demande de protection, mais si on le considère comme un besoin de passer sous la domination russe, cette opinion n'est plus fondée.”⁸

Thus the Romanians declared they had an existence separate from that of the Ottoman empire, and at the same time rejected the prospect of entering Russia's or Austria's sphere of influence. They chose their own direction

⁶ E. Virtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte și dorințele Moldovenilor în 1807*, pp. 411, 415—416.

⁷ The empress was described as “the first heroine of our age and one of the choicest and most remarkable persons having seen the light of day until her time.” *Istoria prea puternicilor împărați otomani*, p. 278.

⁸ *Petition on the international status of the Principalities (1812—1820)*, passim.

with the aim of gaining full independence and setting up a free and united Romanian state, in forms we shall discuss further.



The Idea of Sovereignty and the Struggle for Independence. The writers belonging to the Cantacuzino family which, even at the beginning of the century, had often shed the blood of its own members for the fulfilment of its political ideals were the main adherents and supporters of the idea of independence. The plans of independence cherished by Serban Cantacuzino, Constantin Brâncoveanu, and Constantin and Iordache Cantacuzino were resumed in the years 1736—1737 when, due to the relations between the Cantemir brothers and the Cantacuzinos, their cousins, and Russia, the latter requested the Porte to grant the Principalities full independence.⁹

The desire for independence was strongly felt during the war of 1768—1774 when, encouraged by the Russian military successes, the Moldavians and the Wallachians demanded the granting of independence. The Cantacuzinos, the brothers Pârvu and Mihail, were this time too at the head of the action. They carried on a direct correspondence with the empress and were assured by the latter that Russia would support “the saving of your homeland and of all the Christians, from Turkish bondage.”¹⁰ With such encouragements the Romanians first expressed their wishes in the petitions of 1769, repeating them later in the petitions written by Mihail Cantacuzino and submitted to the delegations of Russia, Austria, and Prussia at the congress of Focșani (1772). They pointed out that it was a favorable moment when “we could claim back our rights and be in a state of independence which all those who have ever tasted its sweetness crave for.”¹¹ In the years between the Congress of Focșani and the peace of Kuciuk-Kainardgi (1774), the Wallachians repeatedly proposed the granting of independence, most certainly hoping they would obtain it when peace would be signed. In the petitions addressed to Russia they dwelt on the role they

⁹ Al. Vianu, *Din acțiunea diplomatică a Țării Românești în Rusia în anii 1736—1738*, Romanoslavica, VIII (1963), pp. 20—21.

¹⁰ Letter written by Catherine II to Pârvu Cantacuzino on January 19, 1769, N. Iorga, *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor* (1901), pp. 423—424. Major Karazin, sent to the Principalities in 1768, had promised the boyars that Russia “would remove Wallachia from the tyrannical yoke of the Turks” (*ibid.*, pp. 155—156).

¹¹ *The second petition addressed to the Austrian delegation*, pp. 488—490; in the first petition it had been shown that “the freedom and slavery of a considerable part of christendom” depended on the decision of the congress and that the Principalities were resolved “to shake off forever the grievous yoke under which they had been groaning for such a long time,” *ibid.*, pp. 487—488.

had played during the war and on the assistance they had given the Russian army, wishing apparently to appear as belligerents. They also stressed the fact that they had joined the Russia forces of their free own will and that they had done so in order to win their own independence.¹² Catherine II was often reminded of the importance of the country's independence for its general development, even up to the eve of the peace of Kuciuk-Kainardgi, the provisions of which the Romanians not without reason feared. In June 1774 Mihail Cantacuzino submitted to the empress a petition reminding her, on behalf of the boyars, of the promises made and of the fact that her manifestos made provisions for "the freedom of all Christians and ours" and asked her "to keep your imperial promises . . . and save us from the yoke of tyranny." A month later, not knowing that their fate had already been decided, the Wallachians wrote to Rumiantzev that "our Romanian country has pinned all its hopes on you . . . that you will do what everybody hopes you will do," namely to consolidate "its liberty and happiness in the most favorable way."¹³

The failure of this attempt did not discourage the Romanians. In 1783 a Balș talked to the Russian consul Severin about the possibility of Moldavia's liberation, and in Bucharest the same year there were rumours that Austria and Russia had put pressure on the Porte to grant the Principalities independence. Taking advantage of the new Austro-Russo-Turkish war, the plan for independence was proposed again in both Principalities in 1789¹⁴ and again in Wallachia in 1791.¹⁵

¹² In March 1774 the Wallachians wrote to Count Panin that their country had joined Russia "of its own movement and will, for independence and Orthodoxy, the two dearest things in the life of a man." N. Iorga, *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor*, pp. 518–519.

¹³ *Uricarul*, I, pp. 173–175.

¹⁴ Hurmuzaki, XIX¹, p. 570; the petition of the Wallachians signed by the whole divan of Wallachia including Ștefan Pârscoveanu, the former pretender to the throne in 1774; Metropolitan Cosma; the future Metropolitan Filaret II; and Dumitrache demanded that on the signing of the peace the great powers should "nous soustraire au joug de la Porte ottomane, de nous laisser dans l'indépendance, dans la jouissance de nos anciens lois, coutumes et prérogatives, de nous permettre aussi qu'à la Moldavie des princes régnants de la Nation. . . » *Mémoires*, p. 42.

¹⁵ I. Cantacuzino's petition, submitted at Shishtov, said nothing about independence, but the fulfilment of the petition's provisions were liable to create an almost complete de facto independence. The petition demanded the retrocession of the rayahs, the setting of the frontier on the thalweg of the Danube, the discontinuing of all ties with the Porte except for a symbolic tribute sent to Constantinople every two years. The problem of the granting of independence to the Principalities was also discussed in the correspondence of the Austrian ambassador in Russia, L. of Cobenzl to Joseph II, most certainly in connection with the plans of a Dacian kingdom. (*Haus, Hof und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Russland*, II/215).

After the turn of the century, the plans for independence become still more numerous. The reforms foreseen by Dumitrache Sturdza were to be applied to a free state, to an "entirely free nation." The same ideal was fostered by the Oltenian boyars who proposed the grand duke of Tuscany as candidate to the throne of Wallachia (1802), and by Constantin Ypsilanti who, in the same period, aimed at setting up a unitary independent Romanian state. In 1807, the Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon pointed out that "l'indépendance de la souveraineté est si essentielle pour constituer une nation que sans cette qualité elle cesse de l'être" and demanded the granting of an independence which shouldn't depend "sous quelque titre que ce fut que d'elle même."¹⁶ A few years later, Prince Ioan Caragea and Prince Scarlat Callimachi were studying the possibility of granting independence while Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu was drawing up a petition in which the only tie between the Principalities and the Porte was a symbolic yearly tribute of 4,000 ducats.¹⁷ All these demands paved the way for Tudor Vladimirescu's national program; the alliance with the Hetairia and the hopes of Russian military aid lent his action an anti-Ottoman character from the very first. In March 1821 he told his solidiers that the object of the movement was "not only our salvation, but that of the whole Greek nation too . . . The Russians will help us to conquer the Turkish citadels on the banks of the Danube which are on our side and then they will leave us free and independent."¹⁸ Grigore Băleanu had similar hopes for Russian aid, and he requested the czar "to restore our people as an entirely free people, sovereign and autonomous."¹⁹

In the ten years that elapsed between Tudor Vladimirescu's uprising and the adoption of the *Organic Regulations* the desire for independence reaffirmed ever more strongly. The consuls of the great powers mentioned it in many of their reports, and the political programs listed it as their main goal. In 1825, under the initiative of Mihail Sturdza, the Moldavians planned to take advantage of Nicholas I's ascension to the Russian throne and ask him to grant independence. And in 1826 Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu stated once again that the general development of the country "n'est compatible qu'avec une organisation et une administration indépendante de la Porte ottomane."²⁰ Finally we mention the petition of 1829, which proposed the unification of the Principalities and the purchase of independence at a price

¹⁶ E. Vîrtosu, *Napoleon Bonaparte și dorințele moldovenilor la 1807*, pp. 415–416.

¹⁷ I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *L'État de la Moldavie*, passim.

¹⁸ *Istoria României*, III, p. 878.

¹⁹ *Documente 1821*, II, pp. 54–56.

²⁰ N. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Aperçu sur l'Etat actuel de la Moldavie*, passim.

equal to the tribute paid by both countries. The new state was to be independent completely and enjoy all the attributes of sovereign states, including the right to coin money.²¹



Autonomy or limited Sovereignty. There is no doubt that independence was the principal goal of Romanian foreign policy during the Enlightenment, but the difficulty of achieving this led to the development of another idea, that of a limited sovereignty which would allow a broad autonomy but still retain some ties with the Ottoman Porte. In fact this autonomy, as it was conceived and claimed by the Romanians, was tantamount to de facto independence because the nature of the ties would be such that the Principalities would quickly be rid of Turkish influence and control. Autonomy meant limited independence, not liberal dependence.²²

It is hard to establish which of the writers and political thinkers were in favour of complete sovereignty and which in favour of limited sovereignty. In fact the two notions are facets of the same national ideal; they are two ways of expressing it, depending on the political moment. When they considered that the international situation was favourable to them, the Romanians reviewed the demand for independence. When there was a lull, or in moments of reaction, they insisted only on autonomy. This was the reason why most writers expressed successively both theories, though in fact, almost all of them believed autonomy would lead to the final aim of independence.

In the 18th century the principal proponent of autonomy was Văcărescu. His pro-Turkish position and his mistrust of the Cathrine's promises increased after 1774, when the plan for independence proposed by his cousin Mihail Cantacuzino failed and the Principalities returned to the sphere of Ottoman influence. Preferring a real, immediate autonomy to a hypothetical independence full of surprises, he fought to obtain concessions from the Porte and Phanariot princes and to improve his country's political and economic situation.²³ His immediate successor seemed to be Ion Tăutu who defined auto-

²¹ *Hurmuzaki*, X, pp. 647–649.

²² We must also point out that the struggle for autonomy did not mean claiming it, since theoretically it was acknowledged by the Porte; it meant, however, a steady effort to have it observed, to restrict arbitrariness of the Porte, and also to extend the autonomy.

²³ We must also mention the efforts made to get the autonomy observed by the Phanariot Princes Al. Ypsilanti and N. Caragea. The latter grounded his claims on the argument that the Principalities were not a part of the empire, that even the Porte's firmans acknowledged they were «*détachées des autres possessions ou provinces de sa domination*». *Pétition addressed to ambassador Bulgakov* in April, 1783, p. 215.

nomy as a state in which "the people of Moldavia . . . enjoy the sacred privilege of independence and its right to govern by its own rules and by its own laws under the protection of the mighty empire."²⁴ Similar ideas could be found in some of the writings of Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu and Mihail Sturdza, in *Anaforaua pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (1827), in the correspondence of Grigore IV Ghica. It was this perseverance that brought about the recongnition of the Romanians' rights at Akkerman (1826) and at Adrianople (1829) and which led to the setting up of a regime that, according to Nesselrode "a rendu la suzeraineté du sultan nominale et son autorité nulle."²⁵



The Historical Right and the Relationships with the Porte. What were the bases of the demands made by the supporters of independence? What arguments were advanced by the supporters of autonomy? What was the actual content of the two notions?

We have already shown that in certain writings the demand for modification of the international status was based on the idea of natural law. The enlightened monarchs seemed none too eager to recognize this right, and so the Romanian writers and politicians used as the basis for their argument the historical rights. Irrespective of details, all the writings began with the statement that the Romanians "were a free and unsubjected people from the very first"²⁶ and that the status they claimed was nothing new, only a return to their former political position. The idea that the Principalities had voluntarily submitted to the Porte's rule was first created in the 17th century by Cantemir and the chroniclers. They thoroughly investigated the theory that the Romanians had, of their own free will, put themselves under the Porte's suzerainty in return for military protection. After 1750, however, these ideas, until then of a purely historical nature, acquired a very marked political character, being known as the "theory of capitulations."

In this modern form, the theory of capitulations first appeared during the congress of Focșani (1772) which, apart from the general problems of the war, was to debate the future status of the Principalities. In order to justify their claims for independence expressed in the petitions addressed

²⁴ I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunurilor*, p. 4.

²⁵ Letter addressed to General Kiselev, on November 27, 1830, *Central Historical Archives*, Leningrad, fond 958, op. 1, delo, 623.

²⁶ I. Bianu, *Catalogul manuscriselor românești*, I, p. 27. None of the reform projects referred to the natural right; on the other hand 32 ground their argumentation on the historical right, *Mémoires*, p. XVII.

to the delegations of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, the Wallachians included supplements drawn up by Mihail Cantacuzino and called "Supunerea Țării Românești la turci" (Submission of Wallachia to the Turks), "Firmele care întăreau privilegiurile țării" (Firmans Strengthening the Country's Privileges), "Stricăciunea privilegiilor și ruinarea Țării Românești" (Breaking of the Privileges and the Ruining of Wallachia), and "Despre zahereaua de primăvară și de toamnă" (On the Supplies of Spring and of Autumn). They reviewed in detail Romano-Turkish political and economic realtions. They described the submission of Mircea the Old in 1393 which was renounced three years later and the new surrender of the country in 1462 and analyzed the clauses of the treaties with the Porte, the rights granted to the Principalities, and their subsequent violation.²⁷ In Moldavia the theory of capitulations appeared in 1772 also, when a writer, whose name is not known, drafted a brochure "Tractaturile prin care s-au închinat țeara de către Bogdan Voevod, Domnul Moldovei" (Treaties by which the country was submitted by Hospodar Bogdan, prince of Moldavia). In August 1774 the theory was mentioned again in the petition addressed by the Moldavians to the Porte and it was systematically repeted in various writings down to the epoch of unification.

The theory of capitulations which reflects, perhaps, a historic truth, was very popular and was often utilized as justification for Romanian claims until about the middle of the XIXth century. The influence of the writings of Mihail Cantacuzino and Enăchiță Văcărescu and the wide circulation of the Moldavian brochure made the theory well-known to almost all writers and politicians. During this time, it recurred often in petitions and reform programs and was disussed in the writings of Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Ion Tăutu, and Mihail Sturdza.

Thus, the Romanians demanded a return to the former state of things, to what they considered had been once the international status of the Principalities. But what was in fact this status? In this respect the difference between the programs demanding independence and those favouring autonomy was very small. The difference consisted in whether the prince should be subordinate to the sultan, for the rest of the claims were liable to achieve acomplete detachament of the Principalities from the Porte's political and economic system. The term autonomy should not be misleading, for it was only an euphemism for independence. Considering themselves separate

²⁷ The annexes were submitted to Count Orlov on August 30, as a supplement of the petition addressed to him on August 6; the first time the theory of capitulations was set forth was in the petition of July 24, 1772, addressed to Austria's delegates; for further data see *Mémoires*, pp. 6-7.

states, the Principalities tried to obtain the transformation of their agencies at Constantinople into missions of a national character and of diplomatic rank. That meant in the first place the replacing of the Phanariot diplomatic agents by native Romanians, a right won in 1822²⁸, and secondly their assimilation to the diplomatic representatives of the other European powers. Already in 1775 the Wallachians demanded that "le droit des gens soit accordé au chargé d'affaires de Valachie,"²⁹ a demand which the Porte naturally rejected. This did not prevent it from being reiterated in a clearer form up to the year of the treaty of Adrianople, when another Wallachian petition proposed that each Principality should have "its minister at Constantinople" and consuls "in all the citadels on the Danube."³⁰

All the political programs granted special attention to the problems of Turko-Romanian economic relations and to the Principalities' material obligations to the Porte, which, as has already been pointed out, represented a heavy burden for their economy. Some of the petitions proposed that all the charges be abolished and replaced by a yearly tribute. Seeing the opposition of the Porte, writers of other petitions recommended the limiting of payments and the restricting of abuses.³¹

Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu concerned himself to the utmost with the material obligations to the Porte. Basing his opinion exclusively on statistical data and being very technically-minded, he drew up several petitions on this matter, the most important being *Exposé des tributs de toute nature et des pertes supportées par la Moldavie* (1818). In this writing, probably meant for ambassador Stroganov, the former *visitier* of Moldavia expounded at length on the Porte's violations of the peace treaty of Bucharest (1812), with regard both to the problem of exempting tribute and problem of payment for other obligations. With the help of yearly statistics he proved that, with the levying of illegal taxes and the committing of several abuses by the Porte and Phanariot princes, in the period 1812—1818 Moldavia lost the impressive amount of 15,350,866 piastres. From this he concluded that "les rapports avec Constantinople . . . sont préjudiciables au pays" and

²⁸ This demand recurred in almost all the petitions, beginning with those of 1769.

²⁹ *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, p. 110.

³⁰ *Hurmuzaki*, X, pp. 647—649.

³¹ Among the first category were the Wallachian petition of July 22, 1774, submitted to Rumiantzev; the Moldavian one sent to the Porte in August 1774; the petitions sent to Repnin in 1775 by the Wallachian and Moldavian boyars and by prince Al. Ypsilanti; the petition of N. Caragea in 1783; the petition drafted by I. Cantacuzino and addressed to the Congress of Shishtov (1791). The second category included the petition sent to the Porte by the Wallachians in August 1774 and the Wallachian petitions addressed to the Porte in 1776 and 1791.

called for the abolishment of all charges to the Porte. Should Stroganov fail to compress the Ottoman ministers with this claim, Rosnovanu suggested another plan that would consent to the delivery of supplies, but would establish accurately the prices for which the various products were to be delivered.³²

The persistence with which the Romanians pursued the regulation of material relations with the Porte obliged the suzerain power to issue a number of firmans and hatt-i-sherifs restricting the possibility of exploiting the Principalities.³³ And finally, under the treaty of Adrianople (1829) the Porte had to give up all rights to use them. The economic and political emancipation of the Principalities was reflected in the demand for the right to coin money "like the other free states"³⁴ and especially in the obtaining of the right to forbid the entrance of Ottoman money into the country and its non-recognition as official state money.³⁵ In this way in 1829 sixty years after its initial efforts were launched, the Principalities were almost free completely from Ottoman influence over the economy.

To this point we have seen how certain aspects of the relations between the Romanian states and the Ottoman empire were viewed; those relations represented the mere beginnings of an international law. However this was accompanied by an unstated international law, of norms regulating the relationships between the inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia and the Ottoman subjects. The Ottomans had always been in a difficult position in the Principalities. According to Del Chiaro, secretary of Prince Brâncoveanu, they looked "like foreigners rather than masters of the country." This situation changed a little after 1711/1716, when the Turks tried, though not very successfully, to work their way into various spheres of the economic and social life of the Principalities and to assume the rights they naturally should possessed in territories that were part of their empire. The Romanians

³² I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *Exposé des tributs*, and *În scurt luare aminte*; both petitions were extremely technical, and almost exclusively based on statistic data. With regard to prices, for instance, Rosnovanu points out that in 1818 the Turkish merchants paid 3 lei for one sheep instead of 10, i.e., "only the price of the skin"; he fixed the price of a tree at 5 lei and a day's work at 50 parale per peasant and 100 parale per cart. Under his influence the draft regulations deed which Stroganov discussed with the Turkish ministers in 1818, agreed to the country's right to fix the prices of the products demanded by the Porte, it forbade the increase of the pecuniary contributions and granted the Principalities the right to carry on trade with foreign countries after Constantinople had been supplied. *Hurmuzaki*, XVIII, pp. 383–386.

³³ Such deeds were issued in 1774, 1783, 1784, 1791, 1802, 1806, 1826.

³⁴ *The Wallachian petition of 1829. Hurmuzaki*, X, pp. 647–649.

³⁵ *Curierul Românesc*, II, 1830, pp. 2, 81, 118.

reacted by demanding that the Ottoman subjects of the Porte be forbidden to enter the Principalities. In a very aggressive tone the *Anaforaua pentru privilegii* (Raport on Privileges) submitted by the Wallachians to Rumiantzev (July 22, 1774) demanded that the Turks be forbidden to circulate freely in the Principalities regardless of their rank or occupation and be denied transportation.

This demand which used the theory of capitulations as its basis was reiterated in the petitions submitted in August 1774 to the Porte by the Wallachian and Moldavian delegates and was finally accepted.³⁶ Because of the non-observance of the hatt-i-sherif, it was repeated in many other petitions, until after the convention of Akkerman which decided in its favour for good.

The attempt to close the frontiers to the Turks was accompanied by one recommendation that they be refused all civil and political rights on Romanian territory. The interdiction of religious rights and the permission to build mosques, though mentioned in certain petitions, was never a real topic of discussion, as the Moslems did not try to obtain such privileges. Still, the problem of restricting their economic rights and especially the right of property was of great importance for the country's general development. Beginning with the *Anaforaua* of 1774 these demands were repeated in several writings indicating that despite the fact the Porte recognized them they were very difficult to enforce.

Another category of claims aiming at detachment from the Ottoman political system dealt with the problems of legal action between Romanians and Turks. In 1734 Sultan Mahmud I decided that all litigations should be judged in front of the *cadi* at Giurgiu, according to the Moslem law. This decision was strongly criticized by the Romanians who demanded and obtained in 1774 the recognition of the jurisdiction of Romanian princes in all the cases between Christians and Moslems. With a view to supporting the liberation struggle of the peoples in the Balkans, some of the petitions even suggested granting asylum to Ottoman subjects refugeeing north of the Danube and not allowing their extradition on the Porte's demand.³⁷ Thus we find that, as far as the relations with the Porte's Moslem subjects were concerned, the Romanians remained adamant and refused to recognize any Ottoman

³⁶ That hatt-i-sherif of September 1774 forbade the Turks access to the Principalities, except for the merchants "who have an authorization"; the hatt-i-sherifs of 1783 and 1784 strengthened and completed these measures. See also *Mémoires*, p. XVIII.

³⁷ *Anaforaua pentru privilegii* (July 22, 1774), p. 538. *The petition addressed to Bulgakov* by N. Caragea (April 1783), asked in return the obligation of extradition of persons prosecuted by Wallachian justice refugeeing south of the Danube.

rights north of the Danube. But what was the attitude toward Christian subjects of the empire, especially the Greeks?

The great majority of the native writers and politicians identified the Greeks in the Principalities with the Phanariot regime. This interpretation, though not in keeping with the historical truth, gave rise to an uninterrupted succession of anti-Greek demonstrations of feelings, meant to drive the Phanariots from the Principalities. The reason for this position was very complex; these feelings were part of the general xenophobia the Romanians felt during the epoch of the Enlightenment and should in the end be attributed to political causes. The Romanian national feeling, now very vigorous and combative, was constantly being hurt by the great number of Greeks brought to Romania by the Phanariots. They represented foreign interests and were an obstacle to Romanian political programs. The struggle against them was one aspect of the general struggle against the Turko-Phanariot domination and for the strengthening of the country's autonomy. Looked upon as one means the Porte used to bring the Principalities to a state of decline, the Romanians felt the Greeks, citizens of the Porte, did not belong in a Romanian state detached from the political system of the Turks.

In this climate of opinion the reform proposals systematically tried to withdraw all political rights from the Greeks. This position was stated most clearly in the petition submitted to the Porte in 1774 demanding that "les gens étrangers de quelle condition qu'ils soient ne puissent pas s'insinuer et parvenir aux charges de notre pays tant par commandement que de quelle autre manière que ce peut être."³⁸ In the petitions of 1775—1783, attempts to deprive Greeks already living in the Principalities of political rights were accompanied by an effort to limit their travel and forbid their immigration across the Danube.³⁹

One of the most violent attacks against the Greeks was outlined in the petition of the Moldavian freeholders, dated March 1, 1799, which said that "they come with the prince only to plunder us and fill their pockets."⁴⁰ The conspirators of 1811 took an equally impressive stand. In the

³⁸ *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, p. 109.

³⁹ On the one hand it was thought necessary that the right to enter the country should be granted only when the Greeks were called to serve the prince, and on the other to delimit the number of officials the prince could bring along from Constantinople. See the petition submitted by the Wallachians to Reprin (1775), *Hurmuzaki*, new series, I, pp. 110—111; and the letter addressed by Consul Severin to Bulgakov (August 1/12, 1783), *ibid.*, pp. 244—245.

⁴⁰ Al. Vianu, *Manifestări anti-fanariote în Moldova*, pp. 924—925.

petition addressed to the Russian synod, they charged the Greeks with the general decline of the country, called them the Turks' secret agents, and concluded that the complete divergence of interests between them and the natives "rend impossible toute réconciliation politique."⁴¹ Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu was a persistent political opponent of the Greeks in the Principalities. He tried to explain to the Russian ambassador Stroganov "les malheurs qui résultent pour le pays de l'introduction des Grecs dans les charges et les raisons qui doivent les en exclure" and to stress that the Greeks should occupy only offices connected with the court of the Phanariot prince.⁴² The Russian ambassador to Constantinople admitted the justice of Rosnovanu's arguments and included them in the draft regulation deed discussed in 1818 with the Porte.

The expression of anti-Greek feelings reached a climax in 1821. In various forms, the request to "take pity on us and uproot from this earth the Greeks and the Arnauts, and never let them live with us"⁴³ appeared in almost all petitions and culminates in those submitted by the Principalities in the spring of 1822, in the writings of Tăutu and Râmniceanu of the same year. With the disgrace of the Greeks brought on because of the Hetairia and the war for independence, the Porte finally listened to the Romanians' claims. Immediately after appointing native princes, the sultan announced that he agreed to the removal of all Greeks from office, to be replaced by Romanians.

From this point on the show of hostility toward the Greeks ceased. In fact there were many cases where the Romanians actually protected them despite the ever stricter orders of the Porte. This change of heart seems to indicate that the anti-Greek feelings were not chauvinistic and were not aimed at the Greek people, but at the Greek elements that identified themselves with the Ottoman political and economic system, with the system the Romanians wished to be rid of. This antagonism toward the Greeks was in fact one aspect of the fight for Romanian autonomy and independence and for the assertion of its national existence, and it lasted only as long as the Greeks represented a danger to these precious goals.

The broad right enjoyed by Ottoman subjects however, were matched with the privileges enjoyed by the subjects of European states, only these were equally dangerous and more difficult to combat. In the second half

⁴¹ T. G. Bulat, *O conspirație boierească contra mitropolitului Ignatie*, part I, pp. 3—11.

⁴² I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu, *În scurt luare aminte*, pp. 121—124 and *Exposé des tributs*, pp. 47—69.

⁴³ *Petition of the Moldavians* (March 31, 1821), *Documente* 1821, I, pp. 441—442. The Arnăuts were mercenary soldiers of Albanian origin especially.

of the 18th century, at the time when the Principalities were included in the Porte's system of capitulations, the subjects of the great powers who were living in the two Romanian countries were granted rights similar to those they enjoyed in the rest of the empire. These privileges, however, clashed with Romanian ideas of autonomy. Thus the problem of the *sudiji* (foreign subjects) was brought up constantly in petitions, and for this reason efforts were made to restrict what the boyar Racovița called in 1800 "this unbearable and unrestrained impudence of those robbers of foreign subjects." One of the real rights foreigners were deprived of was that of "buying movables in the country" or even of taking estates on lease⁴⁴. A steady struggle was also waged to subject foreigners to native jurisdiction and to prevent them from holding offices in the administrative apparatus. Though these principles were laid down in the country's legislation, in the *Calimah Code* for example, their practical effect must have been very small, for there were continual conflicts between the native princes on the one hand and the foreign subjects and their consulates on the other. The problem was solved only through the *Organic Regulations* which, despite protests from Austria, decided that all foreign subjects should be registered as foreigners. All those born in the Principalities or in the Ottoman empire, and living in Moldavia and Wallachia were denied the right to any other citizenship. In addition, the *Regulations* limited the rights of the consulates and declared that all foreign citizens were subjected to native jurisdiction.

With the battle for economic and administrative autonomy going on, many political writings also raised the problem of religious autonomy, which indicates the complexity of the idea of autonomy. In fact for the Romanians autonomy meant complete separation of the Principalities from all that was under Ottoman domination or even influence. Solutions to religious problems were no aim in themselves. They were part of the vast offensive to achieve basic rights and to create favorable conditions for the obtaining of independence.

In striving to achieve ecclesiastical autonomy, there were three problems to be dealt with: the position of the Greek clergy in the church of the Principalities, the situation of Romanian monasteries dedicated to holy places, and finally the hierarchical relations between the church of Wallachia and Moldavia and the patriarchate of Constantinople. With regard to the Greek clergy, the general attitude was to refuse the Greeks the rigt

⁴⁴ See, for example, the prince's orders of 1791, 1792, 1800, V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, IV, pp. 66, 454—455; VIII, p. 45. Those who broke the law were compeged to renounce their purchase, as happened to an Austrian subject in 1794, *ibid.*, V, p. 258.

to hold office in the ecclesiastical apparatus. They should be driven out of the Principalities and forbidden any future access to the country, this latter opinion being repeatedly emphasized. Both demands were not granted by the Porte until 1822.⁴⁵

The dedicated monasteries presented a more complex problem for which no solution was found. The existence of these settlements administered directly by the patriarchate of Constantinople, Mount Athos, or the Holy Land, represented a direct encroachment upon the autonomy of the Principalities. At the same time, they were another contributing factor to economic ruin for the monks and administrators sent their incomes abroad. For these reasons, both political and economic, political writers felt that either Romanians should take complete control of the dedicated monasteries or, if this were not possible, they should at least be allowed to control their administration. The bases for their arguments were usually the poor administration of the monasteries and the non-observance of their founders' wishes. And by the end of the 18th century the Romanians were granted the right to forbid the dedication of new monasteries. In 1821, taking advantage of the Porte's mistrust of the Greeks, the Romanians demanded and obtained the right to put the monasteries, under their own administration. However this success was short-lived, since in 1827, despite the efforts of Grigore IV Ghica and Mihail Sturdza, Russia supported the Greeks and leadership of the dedicated monasteries was returned to them.

The problem of the dedicated monasteries was not the only time when there was a direct conflict between the Romanian church and that of Constantinople. In the case of the metropolitan church of Proilava, there was strong concern in the Principalities that the territories occupied by the Porte and subjected to the jurisdiction of the Constantinople patriarchate be returned to Romanian jurisdiction.⁴⁶ There was another serious conflict between the Moldavian church and the patriarchate regarding the problem of the appointment of Metropolitan Leon Gheuca in 1786. The clash between the

⁴⁵ In 1752 there was a *Deed of the bishops of Moldavia, deeding, under a curse, that no foreigner should be elected metropolitan or bishop, all should be elected from among the natives*. In 1753 the Synod of Jassy strengthened this deed; in 1786 the Moldavians opposed the appointing of a Greek metropolitan and maintained that the Porte should agree to the appointing of Leon Gheuca. We also recall the strong Wallachian conspiracy aimed at the Greek metropolitan Ignatie. Vladimirescu and I. Tăutu were among those who supported the driving away of the Greek clergy from the Principalities. Among the anonymous petitions demanding this was the one submitted by the Wallachians in Constantinople, in the spring of 1822.

⁴⁶ Scarlat Callimachi, Vlad Georgescu, *Mitropolitul Callimachi și Rusia, B.O.R.*, —10 (1961), p. 806.

Moldavians who wished the native Leon to be appointed and Patriarch Procopie who, supported by Prince Alexandru Moruzi, backed the candidature of the Greek abbot Iacov, hit upon the very essence of church autonomy, the right to choose its own leader. Desregarding the patriarchate's opposition, the Moldavians appointed Leon as metropolitan, and then, referring to the country's former rights guaranteeing the freedom of choosing the head of the church, they succeeded in obtaining from the sultan the confirmation of the appointment.

The conflict between the Romanian church and the church of Constantinople was not limited to top-level problems. The Romanians did not recognize ordainings performed south of the Danube and prohibited the activity of priests and deacons ordained in that way, even if they were natives. In 1784, for instance, the Wallachians underlined that to accept ecclesiastical ranks from foreign dioceses was "against the laws and tenets of the church and against a custom of the country." And ten years later Alexandru Moruzi ordered the bishop of Râmnic to deprive the priests having broken this rule of the right to officiate in church; the order was renewed in 1803.

Thus, there were constant efforts to remove foreigners from the church hierarchy, to return Turkish controlled dioceses to Romanian jurisdiction, to recognize only the ordainings performed in the Principalities, and to forbid clergymen ordained in Turkish dioceses the right to officiate in church. The final step, a direct demand for an autocephalous church was taken in 1829 when the Wallachian unionist petition so often quoted demanded that the church of the independent Romanian state be "completely independent of the great church of Constantinople and should be governed by a local synod, by itself."⁴⁷



The problem of the Territory. In the struggle for national independence, the Romanian writers and politicians had also to deal with the problem of territory and frontiers, so much the more as they were continually endangered by the expansionist policy of the great neighboring powers. The earliest mention of territorial losses appeared in the petition submitted to the Porte in 1774. It pointed out that though Moldavia had been "de tout temps et toujours comme un fief séparé, indépendant," its privileges had been violated and "plusieurs de nos terres nous furent revies dans des différentes parties de la Moldavie."⁴⁸ In 1775 the Moldavians' petition to Repnin covered this problem in detail, formulating the theory that the Porte had bound itself through the

⁴⁷ Hurmuzaki, X, pp. 647—649; *Mémoires*, p. XVIII.

⁴⁸ Hurmuzaki, new series, I, p. 108.

capitulations to observe the Principalities territorial integrity and to protect them against any attempt at annexation. The authors complained that “d’un côté les autrichiens, de l’autre les turcs de Hotin et les tatars partagent comme une proie assurée notre misérable pays” and pointed out that if “la Porte a des différends avec les autrichiens notre patrie n’est pas tenue à les accommoder par son démembrement.”⁴⁹ With slight variations this idea recurred in the works of many writers the most notable of whom were Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Naum Râmniceanu, Zilot Românu, and Grigore Băleanu. In 1829 Mihail Sturdza went so far as to explain to the czar that the Porte had bound itself to protect Moldavia against any aggression “et de la maintenir dans son intégrité antérieure sans jamais lui faire ou bien tolérer qu’on en fasse le moindre partage ou séparation.”⁵⁰ Here the idea of territorial integrity was accompanied by the concept of natural frontiers. As Grigore Băleanu put it “our homeland with all its natural frontiers, from the Carpathian mountains to the center of the river Danube, should be freed.”⁵¹

These ideas permanently aroused the opposition of the great neighboring powers. Chronologically the earliest territorial litigations were those with the Porte. Both the Moldavians and the Wallachians had always considered the Ottoman citadels on the north bank of the Danube as Romanian territory and claimed they should be abolished and the frontier settled on the Danube thalweg.⁵² The problem of the fortresses was a matter of constant concern for Mihail Cantacuzino. He included in his petition of August 6, 1772, a paragraph called “On Citadels” describing the circumstances under which the Turks occupied the three fortresses on the left bank of the Danube at the beginning of the 16th century. He discussed the same idea at length in *Istoria Țării Românești* in which, on the basis of documents, he tried to prove the historic right of the Principality to the fortresses.⁵³ The petitions written after 1774 generally made use of Cantacuzino’s historical arguments, emphasizing the necessity to reach an early solution of the problem of the Turkish enclaves north of the Danube. Some of the petitions addressed to the Porte, and as

⁴⁹ *Mémoire présenté à S. A. l’ambassadeur Prince Repnin par les boyards de Moldavie*, pp. 101–102.

⁵⁰ M. Sturdza, *Petition on the relations between the Principalities and the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 23–25.

⁵¹ G. Băleanu, *Petition of Câmpulung* (April 1821), pp. 54–56; the idea was repeated in almost the same terms in the *Unionist Wallachian petition* (1829), pp. 647–649.

⁵² Gavril Callimachi was the first to formulate this demand in a letter addressed to Rumiantzev (December 1769). The stand taken by the Wallachians was expounded in the petition drawn up in 1769 also and submitted to Catherine II, in Petersburg, March 1770.

⁵³ M. Cantacuzino, *Second petition addressed to Count Orlov*, pp. 506–508, and *Istoria Țării Românești*, pp. 86–99, 101–102.

such more cautious, called only for retrocession of the territory of the fortresses without asking that the citadels be removed. However most writers were aware that true independence or even autonomy could not be achieved as long as the Turks occupied these bridgeheads and called for the removal of the Turks positions on the northern border of the Danube for the settlement of the frontier on the Danube thalweg, and for the retrocession of all the isles situated in the northern half of the river. This stand, so firmly taken at the end of the 18th century by Ioan Cantacuzino,⁵⁴ represented the general feeling during the period of the 1821 revolution when Tudor Vladimirescu himself announced that the insurgents intended to occupy the fortresses on the Danube. A similar attitude was expressed in petitions drafted by boyars, which stressed the fact "they /the fortresses/ were not built on money from the Ottoman treasury but through the sweat and toil of Wallachia."⁵⁵ During the Russo-Turkish war of 1828—1829 the Wallachians and the Moldavians dwelt repeatedly on this problem, and finally through the treaty of Adrianople their claims were satisfied.

The territorial litigations with the Porte were first of all, a political problem. The suppression of the *rayahs* was an absolute condition for the actual detachment of the Principalities from the Ottoman political system. The arguments taken were reasonable, devoid of any emotion, and did not resort to the national feeling. However Romanian reaction to the expansionist policy of the Habsburgs or of the Romanovs was more impassioned indicating the existence of a considerably stronger national feeling.

The territorial conflicts with Austria were not limited to Bukovina and the 18th century. The annexation plans of which Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688—1714) had already been aware of, had clearly been launched with the occupation of Oltenia in the first half of the 18th century. After 1750 the constant violations of the frontier and the arbitrary moving of the imperial eagles into the country's territory led to numerous conflicts lasting until the late 19th century.⁵⁶ To this was added in 1775 the unexpected annexation of the northern part of Moldavia.

⁵⁴ *The petition of Shishtov* (1791), p. 1130.

⁵⁵ *Petition of the emigrants in Braşov addressed to the czar*, p. 125. The demand recured in the *Wallachian petition on the reorganization of the country* (December 1822), p. 225.

⁵⁶ We mention first those of 1782 and 1784 when the country's interests were defended by Hagi Stan Jianu. In 1791, Mihai Suţu set up a commission to investigate "the frontiers on the side of the mountains and see if they have not extended in this direction." New conflicts in 1793, 1794, 1803, 1804. In 1817 Vladimirescu, as subprefect in a mountain district, started together with Iordache Oteteleşeanu an action aimed at correcting the frontier violated by the Austrians. Grigore IV Ghica also took steps against illegal encroachments.

Before the conclusion of the convention between the Porte and Austria, the Moldavians had appealed to Fieldmarshal Baiko for an explanation of this occupation of northern Moldavia by the troops of the empire. As soon as the divan had learnt the provisions of the convention, it urged the prince to protest to the Porte and even threaten to request Russian aid. In the summer of 1775 Chancellor Kaunitz was informed by his minister in Constantinople that the Moldavians were continuing "to use with utmost stubbornness the most extreme means to arouse everywhere hatred against the convention concluded with the Porte."⁵⁷ The reaction was not restricted to Moldavians; one of the most vehement anti-Austrian attacks was written by the Wallachian Zilot Românu. Zilot was not content to denounce the Austrians' territorial encroachments and the annexation of Bukovina, but also accused them of having annexed Transylvania "which was a part of old Dacia inhabited and still inhabited by Romanian brothers of ours."⁵⁸

In the treaty of Bucharest (1812) the territorial provisions referring to Moldavia aroused great concern, giving rise to protests in 1812, 1815, 1818, 1821, and 1829. Concern for this annexation was shared both by the Moldavian divan and such writers as I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu and Mihail Sturdza.

The problem of territory and the struggle for recognition of natural frontiers provided a forum in which national feelings were first able to express themselves, with incipient irredentist features, including the entire territory inhabited by the Romanians, the old Dacia "whose borders, oh! if God would ever help us to recover, and bring back to the former condition."⁵⁹

On Army and War. The ideas on the army and on war were consistent with all the theories regarding the international position of the Principalities and with the struggle for autonomy and independence. The general attitude favoured the setting up of powerful native forces whose main function was to defend the country and to maintain its liberties. Almost all the writings emphasized the Romanians' natural valour and extolled the victories of Mircea the Old, Stephen the Great, Vlad the Impaler, and Michael the Brave. They compared the ancient military glory of these leaders with the decline of their descendants during the Phanariot epoch. The disbanding of the native army by Constantin Mavrocordat was bitterly criticized and considered an attempt of the Porte to deprive the Principalities of any possible means of defense. The natural consequence of this was the attempt to re-establish a native army. This idea was first suggested in the petitions of 1769 which proposed

⁵⁷ N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente*, II, p. 82; A. D. Xenopol, *Originile partidului național în România*, An. Acad. Rom. M.S.I. II/28, p. 589; V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, I, p. 153.

⁵⁸ Zilot Românu, *Dăslușire*, p. 310.

⁵⁹ N. Râmniceanu, *Cronica inedită*, p. 90.

the establishment of a corps of 20,000 men with cavalry and artillery units in Wallachia, and of 12,000 men in Moldavia. The plan was reiterated in the petitions of 1772, in petitions from 1788 to 1791, in the writings preceding the 1821 movement and naturally in those directly connected with Tudor Vladimirescu's uprising. Among the latter there were first the writings of Vladimirescu himself as well as the petition of Grigore Băleanu, the petition of the emigrants in Braşov addressed to the czar (1821), the petition of December 1822, and the work "Îndreptarea Țării" /Reform of the Country/ (1822). The Moldavians also called for the establishment of an army in the petitions of October 1821, and of August 5, 1822, as well as in the petition addressed to the Porte by a delegation called to Constantinople in the spring of the same year and in those submitted to the czar and the Russian consul Minciaki at the end of the year.

The native princes Grigore IV Ghica (1822—1929) and Ioniță Sandu Sturdza (1822—1828) tried to put these ideas into practice by forming detachments of Romanian soldiers. But the Turks were resolutely opposed to these initiative. Through the Pasha of Silistra, the Romanians were informed that the Turks "do not understand the purpose of this recruitment" and order it be stopped. Still the struggle continued and was intensified on the eve of the treaty of Adrianople when the native army idea was transformed into the concept of a national army. In this connection S. Marcovici in his *Idee pe scurt asupra tuturor formelor de oblăduiri* spoke of "a national army sufficient to defend the country against any danger", and the author of the Wallachian unionist petition dated 1829 believed that in order to achieve this task the country's army should possess an effective force of 25,000 men, trained "according to European tactics", and a military flotilla on the Danube of at least 25 vessels.

Thus beginning with 1769 both the Wallachians and the Moldavians tried repeatedly to gain the right to re-establish the army which the Turks and the Phanariots had disbanded, fearing the action of D. Cantemir would be repeated. The Romanians' persistence was due to the fact that the establishment of a military force would lend strength to political programme and aid in protecting newly gained rights. The offensive character of a Romanian army was brought out during the Turko-Russian wars when the Romanians organized active units of volunteers and also during the 1821 revolution when both Tudor Vladimirescu and the boyars who supported him believed that "without weapons we shall never be able to save our country from the hands of those who have been devouring it for so many years." It was then also that Grigore Băleanu in the *Petition of Câmpulung* defined the army as a force designed to "resist and beat off any greedy attempt which coming from some

other part might dare disturb the quiet and sovereignty of this province within its borders and do the slightest injury to its integrity.”



Neutrality and the European Protectorate. The existence of a permanent external danger, the impossibility of concluding any lasting and sincere alliances, and the difficulty the Romanians had in maintaining their separate political unity had led, by the middle of the 18th century, to the development of the idea of neutrality.

Certain political thinkers and authors of reform programs, continuing the line of Cantemir, tried to enforce their autonomist programs with the aid of Russia and to exchange the suzerainty of the sultan for the protectorate of the czar. We must, however, point out that this idea was not by any means a popular one. The authors were not sincere, and were once referred to by Marshal Rumiantzev as “double-faced Janus.” This idea often served as a diplomatic introduction to demands which, as we have already said, tended to disengage the Principalities from any foreign influence. If the idea of passing under the Russian protectorate was only a figure of speech, the struggle for the recongition of Petersburg’s right to intercede in favor of the Principalities was a sincere and justified wish. Writers and politicians realized that the Russians’ influence might counterbalance Ottoman influence and aid in Romanians’ political and economic emancipation from Ottoman control. With this in mind on July 22, 1774, the Wallachians proposed that the Russian minister to Constantinople should have the right to intercede in favour of the Principalities, that the latter should have a diplomatic agent at the Russian court and that Russia should in its turn establish a consulate in Bucharest and a vice-consulate in Craiova and in all the towns along the Danube line. The Wallachian petitions in the following years added the recommendation that the country’s diplomatic agent in Constantinople should enjoy the protection of the Russian ambassador. The Moldavian petitions followed the example of the Wallachian ones, claiming the right to have in Petersburg an “accredited deputy” (1783). Therefore, the provisions of the peace treaty of Kuciuk-Kainardgi (1774), which granted certain rights to the Russian ambassador and permitted the establishing of consulates, were actually Romanian claims. These provisions were an attempt at internationalizing the problem of the Principalities and, in this way, at restricting Turkish encroachments. As Grigore IV Ghica put it, “l’influence russe nous est nécessaire pour contrabalancer d’une bonne manière les prétentions exorbitantes des autres.”⁶⁰ But as we have seen, czarism was interested

⁶⁰ Vlad Georgescu, *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești*, p. 154.

not in Romanians' rights but in pursuing its own expansionist policy. Consequently, the feeling of sympathy and trust felt by the Romanians towards the Romanov empire in the 1760s had turned into fear and distrust by the early decades of the following century. Some writers were aware that all the great neighboring powers were in fact interested only in their own aggrandisement and that any one of them could be equally as dangerous for the Romanians as the Ottomans. These writers considered the best formula to insure the protection of the Principalities' own interests would be the creation of a buffer state that would be neutral and under the joint protection of the great powers. The idea of a buffer state had first appeared in Cantemir's works, but a precise plan was not worked out until 1772 when Mihail Cantacuzino suggested the creation of an independent principality "under the protection of the three autocracies: Russia, Austria and Prussia." A few months later, in a petition addressed to Count Obrescov he pointed out the advantages of a Romanian buffer state which "should serve both as boundary between all, being protected by all, and completely prevent any casual conflict." In 1774 Cantacuzino proposed once again to the Russians the instituting of a Russo-Austro-Prussian protectorate.⁶¹

Though implicit in all these petitions, the principle of neutrality was clearly formulated only in 1787 when Metropolitan Grigore and Enăchiță Văcărescu tried to obtain from Vienna recognition of Wallachia's neutrality in case of a Russo-Austro-Turkish conflict. This idea was further developed in the petition submitted at Shishtov (1791), in which, on behalf of the divan, Ion Cantacuzino proposed that in time of peace the Principalities be under the joint protection of Russia and Austria, that no neighboring country have the right to keep troops on their territory, which in wartime would be declared neutral.⁶² The Moldavians put forward similar ideas in the petition addressed to Napoleon in 1807. To impress the emperor, the anonymous author emphasized the Russian peril and requested aid in establishing a Romanian buffer state "barrière redoutable entre le nord et le midi", placed under the guarantee but not the protectorate of the great powers.⁶³ And once again on the eve of the treaty of Adrianople, the call was made for independence and unification "sous un seul chef, protégé de toutes les puissances, pour que toute influence et prépondérance soit intérieure soit extérieure y cesse à jamais."⁶⁴

⁶¹ M. Cantacuzino, *Second petition addressed to Count Orlov*, p. 494 and *Second petition addressed to Count Obrescov*, p. 513; N. Iorga, *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor*, pp. 181—192.

⁶² *The petition of Shishtov*, p. 1131.

⁶³ *Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon*, pp. 415—419.

⁶⁴ *Moldavian petition of 1829*, Hurmuzaki, XXI, p. 146.



Southeast European Cooperation. As we have seen, most writers saw the historical evolution of the Romanian people as a struggle between East and West, between European and Asiatic forms of organization, culture, and civilization. This conception prevented strong political ties from forming between the Romanians and other Balkan peoples who, though involuntarily, found themselves in the sphere of domination from which the Romanians were trying to disengage themselves as completely as possible.

With few exceptions, there was no pan-Balkan conception in Romanian political thought. In the middle of the 18th century the Slavs south of the Danube did not represent any political force yet, and, as far as the Greeks were concerned, there were more points of divergence than agreement. Still, there were moments when there existed the idea of a joint effort against the Ottomans, based both on the community of religions and, particularly on promptings on the part of Russia. The period 1768—1774 was one of those moments, when Catherine II unfurled the banner of an anti-Ottoman crusade, calling upon all the Christian subjects of the Porte to rise up. Thus on January 19, 1769, the empress wrote to Pârvu Cantacuzino — brother of Mihail — that the aim of the war was “the saving of your homeland and of all the Christian neighbors from the Turkish bondage.”⁶⁵ The pan-Orthodox ideal appeared in numerous writings of the time. Among them were the correspondence between the wives of Wallachian boyars and Catherine II, the pastoral letters of Gavril Calimachi, the petitions submitted in Petersburg in 1770, and the petition addressed to Obrescov in 1773. On the eve of the peace of Kuciuk-Kainardgi this ideal was still upheld by Mihail Cantacuzino who requested that the empress ensure “the freedom of all Christians, and ours.”⁶⁶

We do not know what role Prince Alexandru Ypsilanti assigned to the Romanians in his plans for the establishment of a Balkan state, which a nephew of Catherine II was to rule over. We also know very little about the project of Prince Alexandru Mavrocordat-Firaris, which was planned to stir up the Greeks and the Romanians against the Porte.⁶⁷ At any rate the plans of the two Phanariot princes were not discussed in any great depth by Romanian political writers; nor were the federalist plans of the Greek patriot Rhigas Velestinlis.

⁶⁵ N. Iorga, *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor*, pp. 423—425.

⁶⁶ *Uricarul*, VI, pp. 173—174.

⁶⁷ I. C. Filitti, *L'ancienne solidarité balcanique et la Roumanie*, Les Balcans, 5—6 (1934), p. 427; M. Botzaris, *Visions*, pp. 19, 74—75.

At the beginning of the 19th century, encouraged by Adam Czartoryski and by the military successes of the Serbians, Constantin Ypsilanti expressed some federalist ideas, which included the creation of a large Christian Balkan state governed by his family. To achieve his aims, the prince of Wallachia actually supported the Serbian uprising by sending weapons, supplies, and even a small army corps. The Romanian boyars supported this attitude and spoke "openly of their wish that Serbia should detach itself from the Ottoman empire"⁶⁸; they contributed, independently of the prince, to the material aid of the insurgents. Politically, however, the boyars were opposed to any attempt at involving the Principalities in federalist action and refused to support Ypsilanti's political and military plans. This opposition was due to the fact that the Romanians were not totally in favour of pan-Balkanian since at that time they did not believe in an identity of interests with the Balkan peoples. The boyars approved and encouraged their struggle for independence but meant to preserve full liberty of action. Constantin Filipescu, the leader of the national party in 1817, said "let the Greeks and the Bulgarians do as they please in their country while we Romanians shall do as well as we can to free ourselves from the evils lying heavy on us."⁶⁹

The fact that the Greeks did not observe this favourable neutrality led, in 1821, to a direct clash and to the obvious divergence of interests between the two nations. The differences between the two movements was the central point of discussion in the writings of Zilot Românul, Naum Râmnicéanu, Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Sturdza, and of other minor writers such as Gh. Peşacov, V. Pogor, G. Pîrvulescu and I. Dârzeanu. In fact only two of the 208 petitions and reform projects drawn up between 1769 and 1830, included proposals on possible cooperation with the peoples south of the Danube against their mutual oppressor.⁷⁰

The immediate result of this mutual hostility was the murdering of Tudor Vladimirescu and the defeat of the Hetairists at Drăgăşani (1821) so that, for the moment, all federalist and Balkan cooperation plans were given up. However the clash did not last long and the removal of the Phanariot princes, followed by the provisions of the peace of Adrianople, radically changed the feelings of the Romanians for the Greeks especially, and for the Balkan problems in general. This change of attitude led to the creation of a new policy of Southeast European cooperation, a policy that would be realistic and efficient.

⁶⁸ French consular report of 1804, *Hurmuzaki*, XVI, p. 66.

⁶⁹ N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, VIII, p. 234; V. Papacostea, *Date nouă despre viaţa şi opera lui D. Fotino*, Balcania, VII (1944), p. 327.

⁷⁰ *Mémoires*, p. 19.

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW PATRIOTIC AND NATIONAL IDEAL

Ethnic Consciousness and the Problem of the Origin of the Romanians.

The ethnic consciousness represents the first stage in the development of a national consciousness, a stage which, due to writers like Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Constantin Cantacuzino, and Dimitrie Cantemir had already been covered by the end of the 17th century. During this time the Latin origin of the Romanian people and language had been identified in the three Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania.

This theory was developed by the writers of the Enlightenment age, who constantly proclaimed their Latin origin and considered the theory of the ethnic unity an argument in favour of political unification. With the writers the problem of origin transcended the scientific sphere to become a weapon in the struggle for implementation of a national program. This was illustrated in the period 1769—1774 when, probably under the influence of Mihail Cantacuzino,¹ the Romanians called themselves “the colonists of the Romans” and claimed their rights as descendants of the masters of the world.

The problems connected with the origin of the Romanian people were discussed in many purely political writings, which testifies to the importance these problems were granted. Some writers were satisfied with general statements, such as “the Romanian blood had as ancestor the blood of the Romans,”² while others endeavoured to prove it in detail. The anonymous author of the petition addressed to Napoleon in 1807, for example, dwelt at length on the Dacian wars, the colonization process, and the Daco-Roman continuity in Transylvania after the withdrawal of Emperor Aurelian.³ The idea of Roman origin also played an important part in the moderni-

¹ The problem of the origin of the Romanians takes up an important place in his writings, especially in *Istoria Țării Românești*. Cantacuzino was a convinced supporter of the theory of his people's Roman origin, of the idea of continuity after the Roman withdrawal, and of the unity of origin of the Wallachians, Moldavians, and Transylvanians.

² E. Vîrtosu, 1821 : *Date și fapte noi*, p. 204.

³ *Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon*, p. 411.

zation and Europeanization process of Romanian society. The writers opposed the Roman world, the glory of the empire, to the decline of the descendants, considering that the Latin origin entailed the obligation that the descendants should be worthy of their ancestors. Those were the thoughts fostered among others, by Chesarie of Râmnic, Dinicu Golescu, Gheorghe Lazăr and Naum Râmniceanu.

Another important element in the forming of the national consciousness was the Dacian feeling which came to life now for the first time. Rome represented a political and cultural value, a title of nobility, which the descendants prided themselves in and which bestowed on them certain rights other people lacking so noble a descent did not possess. But the Romans were aliens to the land they had occupied for it was first inhabited by an older population, the Dacians. By claiming descent from the Dacians, the Romanians drove their origin way back into the dark periods of history, and they proudly asserted an uninterrupted presence of almost two millenniums on their own land.”⁴

This Dacian feeling was peculiar to the period of the Enlightenment. It had not really existed before it because the writers of the 17th century had considered themselves pure Romans, rejecting the possibility that the two peoples had mingled. The earliest stand made against this position was offered by Văcărescu's who proudly proclaimed his Dacian origin and presented king Decebal as an anti-Roman value.⁵ After 1800 the idea of Dacian origin became even more popular; it was referred to in pamphlets, petitions, and official documents; and many writers began using the generic term Dacian both for the Wallachians and the Moldavians, and Dacia for the territory of both Principalities.

No doubt the most ardent admirer of the Dacians was Naum Râmniceanu. For this monk of Transylvanian stock, the Roman origin of his nation was an axiom; he admired Rome, its culture, and civilization and was proud to descend from so famous a people. His writings *Despre origina românilor*, *Cronica inedită de la Blaj*, and *Tratat important* presented strong arguments for the Latin origin which, he knew, was contested by those he called “the eternal enemies of our nation.” Despite strong evidence of Latin origin however, Râmniceanu felt the Dacians also had played an important role in the Romanian genesis. He believed that the Romanians were the result of the fusion between the conquerors and the conquered. Rejecting the idea

⁴ “Seventeen centuries have elapsed since these dioceses of Moldavia and Wallachia were begun to be inhabited by a gathering of wellknown people.” *Anaforaua pentru pronomiile Moldovei* (1827), Uricarul, II, p. 199.

⁵ Preface to *Gramatica românească* (1787).

that the Dacians were annihilated, Râmniceanu believed that "after the Dacians had learnt the Roman language they not only got on well together but they mingled by becoming related; the Romans married the daughters of the Dacians and the Romans gave their daughters in marriage to Dacians." The result of this process was that "the Dacians were Romanized, and the Romans were Dacianized." But the Wallachian writer asserted not only Dacian continuity after the conquest, but Daco-Roman continuity after the abandoning of Dacia by Emperor Aurelian. Based on quotations from Greek and Roman authors, he believed that "our ancestors stayed on," and withdrew only temporarily to the mountains of Transylvania because of the barbarian migrations.⁶

With Naum Râmniceanu the theory of Dacian origin had a precise political character. The writer used this argument to challenge those who denied the continuity of the Romanians on the territory of the three Principalities and to justify with historical arguments the necessity of political unification. On the grounds that "the origin of the Dacians goes back to the dispersing of the peoples, their land stretches from the Pontus Euxinus to the Tisa," he launched his famous pan-Romanian appeal: "Come all, from one end of Dacia to the other, from the Prut and the Dniester, to the Tisa beyond the river Mureș, and from the Danube, from the mouth of the Tisa into the Danube and again from the mouth of the Danube in the Pontus Euxinus as far as the boundaries of Poland and Hungary."⁷

Consequently we see that compared to the 17th century the desire to form one nation was considerably stronger; it represented the basis on which the various elements of the national consciousness developed which we will now examine.



The Concept of Citizenship. In previous chapters we have investigated numerous ideas, attitudes, and actions that reflected the existence of a certain degree of development of the national consciousness. The general background against which the 18th century Romanian society developed as well as the constant conflict between the natives and adverse external forces hastened the awakening of this consciousness. The Romanians' national feeling was of a militant character, not connected with general concepts but with a practical reality; it was a reaction to all the perils threatening

⁶ N. Râmniceanu, *Despre origina românilor*, pp. 245—246, and *Cronica inedită*, pp. 84, 87—88, 92.

⁷ N. Râmniceanu, *Despre origina românilor*, p. 249.

the country, the people, its culture. Its active, often aggressive character was due to the fact that the danger they felt did not only come from outside the country, but from within the borders as well. The presence of the Phanariots and their internal and foreign policy obliged the Romanians to define their position. If this hostility had been aroused by a native rule it would have assumed a social and political character, but as it was aroused by a foreign rule it inevitably became national.

In a study devoted to the origin of national feeling in Southeast Europe, N. Iorga found that it appears as a desire for dissociation from aliens and a consciousness of a different political form. The Romanians possessed this feeling to a very high degree which the chapter dealing with the international statute clearly illustrated. The struggle for independence, relations with neighboring states, and the existence of a territorial problem, all attest the presence of certain constituent elements of the national consciousness, as early as the middle of the 18th century.

The systematic discrimination between the inhabitants of the Principalities and the subjects of other states led to the appearance of the concept of citizenship. The notion of *pămîntean* (*pămînt*=earth), native, a very old notion possessing at first only an ethnic sense and used to distinguish a Moldavian or a Wallachian from a foreigner was enriched in the period of the Enlightenment and acquired a political-administrative value expressing, apart from the ethnic aspect, a relation implying rights and obligations between the inhabitant and the socio-political community he belonged to. This led to the crystalizing of a *drit de pămîntean* (native right) which granted "the full enjoyment of political rights"⁸ and which, for precisely this reason, was granted with ever greater difficulty to aliens.⁹

Among all the writers we are dealing with, Ion Tăutu held the clearest conception of citizenship. In *Constituția cărvunarilor* he termed "pămîntean al Moldovei" (native of Moldavia), "all those born in Moldavia of free Moldavians and having settled their domicile in Moldavia." The constitution granted naturalization only after 10 years of married life with a native "possessing immovables", but at the same time granted the government "the right to admit or not to admit as *pămînten* any foreigner it deemed." Tăutu also stipulated that the native right should be taken from those who "will be proved to have committed any criminal deed, or who

⁸ *Calimah Code*, p. 81.

⁹ In 1808 the divan refused to naturalize Gh. Ventura, a former high official, as "he never settled on the land of Moldavia, nor ever had right to marry a native," R. Rosetti, *Arhiva senatorilor*, III, p. 68. The *Calimah Code* made provision for a strict checking of foreigners before granting them naturalization (p. 93).

have been mixed in conspiracies against the government" or from those who subsequently chose some other citizenship.¹⁰

In 1822 therefore in the term of native right, citizenship was conceived in its modern meaning, as legally defined quality that could be acquired, implying rights and obligations, and could be lost or not properly observed. But what kind of citizenship did the term mean, Wallachian or Moldavian?

There was never any distinction made between the citizenship of Moldavians and Wallachians, only between them and aliens. The boyars of one Principality were always able to hold offices in the other. Termed *confrați* (confreres) by Naum Râmniceanu, the Moldavians in Wallachia were never subjected to the rigid treatment applied to aliens, and a charter of 1764 by Prince Ștefan Racoviță stipulated this clearly. The Wallachians called Moldavia the country "beyond," "on the other side," Property denied aliens was given to the natives, irrespective of their principality, and the boyar ranks were treated as equivalent. Finally the expressions "native of Moldavia" and "native from here" used in a Wallachian charter of 1793 indicated that it was the capacity of native that counted, and not the principality granting it. This system of common citizenship was confirmed and legalized by the Organic Regulations which, in the article entitled "The principles of nativeness and fellow-citizenship between the inhabitants of both Principalities" granted to all Wallachians and Moldavians the same civic and political rights.



Homeland and Patriotism. It was during the period of the Enlightenment that patriotism, in its modern sense, made its appearance in the Romanian Principalities. The țara (country) became *patrie* (homeland) and love of one's country lost its abstract character and became a concrete all-inclusive feeling, a generator of clearly defined rights and responsibilities. The earliest modern formulations were evident in the period 1769—1774 when the term *patrie* was ubiquitous in writings of a political character, often entitled such. For Gavril Callimachi the attitude to the *patrie* acquired an ethic and political value summed up in the advice "fight for faith and for the Patrie."

The term was often used by Chesarie of Râmnic too, by Enăchiță Văcărescu, and even in a number of Phanariot documents. In 1802 Sturdza's "Plan" ascribed to it the sense of general community of all the inhabitants. This definition was also expounded by the Wallachian Serban Grădișteanu

¹⁰ I. Tăutu, *Constituția cărvunarilor*, p. 6.

who in 1811 wrote: "by this word we mean the entire society, that is to say, all the natives. And we all worry for the community, for we are all natives belonging to the same nation and our hearts bleed for one another, no matter what their rank."¹¹ This definition which mentions the ruling classes and the ruled ones in the same breath was bitterly criticized in the writings of 1821—1822. Tudor Vladimirescu wrote to Nicolae Văcărescu: "for you probably think little of the people whose blood fed and enriched the whole boyar class, and you call only the plunderers Patrie... How is it you don't understand that it is the people and not the clique of the boyars, that represent the Patria."¹²

The generation of the 1821 revolution dwelt on the fact that the notion of patrie had two coordinates one vertical, the community and historical continuity, and the other horizontal, the community of interests between the members of a society that was historically constituted. An anonymous writing showed that "the place where a society of numerous people lives is called Patrie, after the name of the parents, grandparents, and ancestors who lived there in society. It is not the land that is called Patrie but the civil life, that is the society of those who live together, are employed together and sharing everything with one another and all this binds the love, interests and benefit of the community, proving that that multitude is one body made up of members."¹³

The idea that there could not exist a Patrie without a past and without a historical tradition was repeatedly emphasized by Naum Râmniceanu. He was also the author of an anthropomorphous image of the Patrie represented as a mother speaking to her sons, scolding them or praising them, rejoicing or grieving about their behavior. This romantic image was also used by Zilot Românu, Alexandru Beldiman, Dinicu Golescu and was taken over by the 1848 generation.

The notion of patriot developed simultaneously with that of Patrie. In the 17th century the term of "sinpatriot" meaning compatriot or native was very popular. It was used in this sense by Enăchiță Văcărescu and found in many writings up through 1821. In 1804, for example, the big boyars called

¹¹ T. Bulat, *O conspirație boierească*, part II, p. 196.

¹² *Documente* 1821, I, pp. 258—259. The same idea was expressed in an anonymous Wallachian writing of 1822: "mind, brethren, that the few who through injustice make use of the Patrie, cannot be the Patrie! And all the mob that through violence are oppressed by the few, those... those are the Patrie," E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date și fapte noi*, p. 211. And N. Râmniceanu identified the patria with the oppressed: "therefore be united with one voice and constant in everything for the benefit of the Patria for you are the Patria" (*Tratat important*, p. 22).

¹³ E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date și fapte noi*, p. 184.

the authors of the pamphlet that denounced them as the country's oppressors "the invisible patriots," while other writings used the expressions "good patriot" and "bad patriot." But during this time a new meaning for the term was formulating. Patriot was being defined in accordance with the undivided's ethnic and political values and the relationship between these values and the Patria. All the "Patria's sons" were not patriots; only those "whose hearts bleed for the country,"¹⁴ and who with "all their heart, with zeal by deed and with pains and unsparing sweat" fought for its happiness. Naum Râmnicăneanu, the author of this quote, dwelt on the thought that a patriot must "show proper love and honour for his sinpatriots, and serve as much as possible the common interests of the Patrie."¹⁵

This was how the notion of patriotism evolved. Patriotism meant, in the first place, love of the Patrie, but not passive love, not as an abstract emotional state, but as a feeling implying certain obligations. According to a text of 1822, "man has three duties, to God, to his parents, to his Patrie."¹⁶ These obligations were often recalled by Donici and also by Mumuleanu who even used the expression "national duties."

The purpose of these duties, the ultimate aim of the love for country, should be, according to the writers of the time "the common good," "the general happiness." This concept was first expressed in the petitions of 1769—1774 which justified their claims by the necessity of insurrecting "the country's happiness." Dumitrache Sturdza in 1802 and the author of the petition addressed to Napoleon in 1807 submitted their programs in the name of the inhabitant's happiness. Tudor Vladimirescu also promised "general happiness" and "common happiness without which there cannot be happiness for any separate person."¹⁷

One of the most fervent patriots of the time was Naum Râmnicăneanu who was more romantic than most: "Patrie, sweet name, like an ancient memory, the first heirloom the heart becomes attached to! You are better than all I could wish for and are always present in my mind. . . Oh, Patrie! who could praise you and sing you as you deserve? For the bitter and the sweet are both

¹⁴ The expression belongs to Grigore IV Ghica. I. Dârzeanu, *Revoluția de la 1821*, p. 160.

¹⁵ N. Râmnicăneanu, *Despre origina românilor*, p. 247 and *Tratat important*, p. 26.

¹⁶ Preface to a book on patriotism, E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date și fapte noi*, pp. 216—222.

¹⁷ Proclamation to Bucharesters on March 20, 1821, *Documente 1821*, I, p. 385. Other writings that considered the struggle for the country's happiness an essential feature of a patriot were: *Constituția Cărvunarilor* and *Cuvîntul unui țaran către boieri* by I. Tăutu, *Însemnare a călătoriei mele* by D. Golescu and *Idee pe scurt* by S. Marcovici. The Organic Regulations frequently used such terms as "national happiness," "public happiness."

in you. . . Oh, you, ancient land of my Patrie, may the Lord keep you always prosperous until the end of time.”¹⁸ To sacrifice oneself for the good of one’s country was another romantic idea expressed by E. Văcărescu, and repeated in the writings of the 1821 generation. Marcovici, for example, considered that a patriot must “always be ready to give up his life for his Patrie,” and Tudor Vladimirescu proved by his heroic death that his patriotic proclamations were not mere figures of speech.

There were even works devoted entirely to subject of patriotic feeling. Among them were *Manualul de patriotism* (Handbook of Patriotism), published by Iancu Nicola, Iași, 1829, with the financial backing of metropolitan Veniamin Costache and *Ispită sau cercare de patriotism* (Tempting, or Testiug of Patriotism) a work that circulated throughout Wallachia in manuscript form in the same period. In the preface to the first, Nicola stated that “of all the virtues of a civil society, the patriotic virtue is the one that produces the most and the best advantages, because through it whole nations can improve, the tyrannical yokes are shaken within, fine constructions are raised; it also brings happiness to all classes.”¹⁹

This patriotism was not contemplative but militant; it did not yearn for abstract happiness but for a real and immediate revival. The theme of revival, so popular during the period of the Romanian Enlightenment, was the logical conclusion of the historical evolution of the Principalities. There was an awareness that in the 18th century Moldavia and Wallachia no longer held the place they did during the time of Stephen the Great and Michael the Brave and that the system of values underlying society under the Phanariot rule was a deviation from the ancient system of values. Certain writers ascribed to the term revival in Romanian *renaștere* — a predominantly political meaning, considering that the revival and reform of the country meant first of all the recovery of independence. Others such as Chesarie of Râmnic, Chiriac Romniceanu, and almost all the writers after 1800 gave to the term an ethic and cultural sense as well. Thus a complex definition of the idea of revival developed; it included political independence, cultural development, and moral regeneration.

This revival, or “*renégération*” as the Moldavian petition of 1807 called it, must be the creation of the Romanians themselves. The writings of the time abounded in exhortations like “we sleep, brothers, we sleep,” “Come, brothers, come, hurry up, wake up”, or “up brothers, Romanians! Let’s clear the country of these harmful weeds so that we shall no longer be the laughing

¹⁸ N. Râmniceanu, *Despre origina românilor*, pp. 247–248.

¹⁹ *B.R.V.*, III, pp. 631–632.

stock of foreign nations.”²⁰ The Romanians self-inspired revival was sung by Gheorghe Asachi in the poem “The Future” (1812), by Zilot Românu, Vasile Pogor, Gheorghe Lazăr, Alexandru Sturdza.²¹

One of the most fervent backers of the struggle for the country’s revival was Naum Râmniceanu; he believed that the explanation for decline should be looked for in “ourselves.” “Because even in the past we never did our duty, but let pride, strife, greed and lies settle among brothers, which brought about the ruin of our country and let foreigners benefit by our troubles.” But Naum Râmniceanu was confident in his people’s ability to rise above moments of crisis, and he urged his compatriots to “call our nation back to life and reform our country, for it is not too late and we have not lost hope.”²²

This sentence leads us to another popular idea of the time the unity of all Romanians working in cooperation with each other to achieve the revival. Cantemir too had spoken of this, but in the restricted sense of the rallying of the boyars around the prince. In the Phanariot epoch, unity was advocated as a weapon the natives could use against foreigners. In the period 1821—1822, however, the concept of unity was democratized, social criteria were replaced by national ones, and the call was no longer addressed to a certain class but to all Romanians, as members of the same nation. These thoughts were prevalent in writings such as *Ipac pentru Unire*, (Exhortation for Union) *Îndemn la unire* (Advocating Union), and *Actul de înfrățire al boierilor de clasa a doua din Moldova* (Union of the second class Boyars in Moldavia). And Naum Râmniceanu promoted this idea by writing that “a unification for the general benefit can be carried out only by the many, nay, even by the whole community.” It was only in this case that it could actually become “the most invincible fortress of a nation.”²³



The National Idea in Culture. The writers who supported ideas of common origin, patrie and patriotism and who, as we shall see, stressed the principle of nationality and political unification of all Romanians also underlined the existence of a unique Romanian spirituality, different from other nationalities. Chesarie of Râmnic and Gheorghe Lazăr spoke of “a

²⁰ E. Virtosu, 1821 : *Date și sapte noi*, p. 219; P. Mumuleanu, *Rost de poezii*, p. 2; *Documente* 1821, I, p. 187.

²¹ “Let us at last show we are a nation. Fear and silence bear no fruit, only loss, alienation, destruction.” *Documente* 1821, III, pp. 163—164. Al. Sturdza lived in Russia and these lines were addressed to his cousin Mihail Sturdza.

²² C. Erbiceanu, *Viața și activitatea literară a lui N. Râmniceanu*, p. 22; *Tratat important*, p. 26.

²³ N. Râmniceanu, *Cugetul adevăratului român*, pp. 349—350.

Romanian spirit” and a Moldavian petition of 1829 mentioned “l’esprit de notre patrie.”²⁴

All writers believed that this spirit acquired a modern, national character in the conflicts with other cultures, specifically Slavic and Greek. There was a general feeling of hostility toward them, for writers felt that no Romanian cultural revival was possible without separating from foreign cultures and returning to the Latin structure, the only natural one. “This Romanian nation,” ran a Moldavian text of 1815, “has become estranged from its language, has renounced its Latin books and their letters.”²⁵ In a theological writing printed in Vienna in 1823, the monk Macarie pointed out the negative effects caused by abandoning the Latin culture, and he believed that the Greek influence “hinders the enlightening” of the Romanians.²⁶

The national idea was able to manifest itself most actively in the fields of linguistics and education, both extremely important for the development of the Romanian society and both equally threatened by foreign influence. In this domain too, Cantemir exerted a strong influence on the writers of the Enlightenment period. The “barbarous act” of replacing the Latin language with the Slavonic language, the harmful influence this change had on the evolution of culture in the Principalities were ideas first voiced by Cantemir and picked up by later writers. But in the 18th century the danger no longer came from that direction. The Romanian language, which one century before had succeeded in asserting itself, was now being threatened by the expansion of the Greek language and culture, a culture which had also become nationalistic and intolerant. The dislike for the Greek language was already apparent at the beginning of the Phanariot epoch,²⁷ but it became the expression

²⁴ The church played a comparatively important role in the bringing forth of the consciousness of a specific spirituality. Towards the end of the 8th century, the disciples of Paisie Velicicovski, the abbot of the Neamț monastery, scattered in the two Principalities carried away with them not only a new monastic theory, but the spirit of unity of all the Romanians. At the same time there were close ties between the metropolitan churches of Bucharest and Jassy, between the Wallachian and the Moldavian clergies. Grigore Dascălul who was to become metropolitan of Wallachia during the reign of Grigore IV Ghica lived for a time at the Neamț monastery in Moldavia. His Moldavian friend Gherontie printed books in Bucharest. In 1811 Bishop Iosif of Argeș (Wallachia) was negotiating the printing of a church book at Buda on the name of the Moldavians. Books published at Neamț were prefaced by Wallachian bishops, and those printed in Bucharest praised the Moldavian Metropolitan Veniamin Costache.

²⁵ *B.R.V.*, III, p. 131.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 422–424.

²⁷ Twice, in 1716 and 1717, the teacher of Greek, Constantin, complained to patriarch Hrysant Notara that the boys stated they would not let their children learn Greek. St. Bărsănescu, *Academia Domnească din Iași* (1962), p. 122.

of marked national sentiment only in the second half of the 18th century when the first practical steps were taken against it. Thus in 1771, Gavril Callimachi tried to equalize teachers wages and to put an end to the habit of considering the Greek teachers superior to the others. This proposal, made by the Moldavians ultimately aimed perhaps at restricting the learning of Greek, was rejected by the commanding officer of the Russian occupation army on the strength that "this language is useful."²⁸ The reforms undertaken by the Phanariot princes after 1774 took a direction contrary to those demands. The princes' Academies were transformed into an almost independent institution and the privileged position enjoyed by Greek teachers was strengthened. All of this of course increased the natives' animosity toward the Greeks.

As a result emphasis on the need for Romanian education and language and the importance granted to the Latin language became ever more evident.²⁹ The discontent created by the Greek culture in general and particularly by the role played by the Greek teachers became unanimous on the eve of Tudor Vladimirescu's revolution. It was a reflection of the general clash of interests between Romanians and Greeks. The natives criticized the fact that the Greek clergy and officials brought to the Principalities by the Phanariots³⁰ did not know Romanian. They questioned the Greek teachers' and the cultural value of the Greek school³¹ which hindered the develop-

²⁸ *Arhiva Românească*, I, 1860; see also V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, II, p. 269; Scarlat Callimachi, Vlad Georgescu, *Mitropolitul Gavril Callimachi și Rusia*, pp. 808–810

²⁹ We mention, in the first place, E. Văcărescu's well-known *Literary Testament: Văcărescu descendants / My bequest to you is / The growth of the Romanian language / and the honoring of our country*, P. Papadopol, *Poezii Văcărești* (1940), p. 45. To show the importance granted to Latin see especially the draft educational reform drawn up by Iacob Stamate in 1792, *Uricarul*, III, pp. 13–23.

³⁰ The Wallachian petition of March 6, 1811, points out that metropolitan Ignatie "n'a premièrement la plus légère connaissance de la langue valaque; par quel organe pourra-t-il donc approfondir et diriger les affaires ecclésiastiques, ne pouvant rien voir ni entendre," T. Bulat, *O conspirație boierească*, partea I, p. 3. In Moldavia, the Phanariot officials' ignorance of Romanian was severely criticized by I. Rosetti-Rosnovanu and considered a hindrance to the modernization of the administration (*În scurt luare aminte*, p. 121).

³¹ Already by the end of the 18th century young people considered the teachers of the Greek schools ignorant, A. Cioran-Camariano, *Spiritul revoluționar francez și Voltaire în limba greacă și română*, pp. 64–66. In 1814, impressed by the way education was organized in Austria, Tudor Vladimirescu advised N. Glogoveanu to send his children to school in Vienna, "to grow up and learn properly, as people learn here and do not remain ignorant as people in our country," *Documente 1821*, I, pp. 87–88. There was violent criticism of the Greek schools in N. Râmniceanu's *Tratat important*.

ment of Romanian culture.³² In actual fact this frame of mind materialised in the struggle for the assertion of the Romanian language in education, for the founding of higher education schools with tuition in Romanian, a struggle crowned with success due to the activity carried on by Gh. Lazăr and Gh. Asachi at the beginning of the XIXth century.³³



Romanian Unity and the Nationality Problem. To this point we have examined the manner in which national consciousness manifested itself in ideas on the origin of the Romanian; in certain new concepts such as patrie, patriotism, and citizenship, and in the struggle for a national culture. We shall now have to establish precisely to what extent "Patrie" meant România, how consistent the concept of citizenship was with nationality, and if the Moldavians and the Wallachians considered themselves not only the same people, but members of the same nation as well.

During the 18th century communication between the two Principalities increased and journeys from one province to the other were more common. This new exchange helped to omogenize Romanian society, to attenuate regionalisms, and to develop a common national consciousness.³⁴ In all important political activities, Wallachians and Moldavians acted jointly, as members of the same people representing common interests. Their petitions, beginning with those sent to Petersburg in 1770, were the product of uninterrupted, fruitful consultations and incorporated the same demands and often almost identical programs.³⁵ Cooperation between the writers and politicians of the two Principalities became even closer during the period

³² Gh. Asachi, for example, held that, owing to the Greek language "the national language... was obviously losing the condition it had been brought to two centuries before by the learned metropolitan Dosoftei and by Prince Cantemir" (*Relație asupra scoalelor*, p. 236).

³³ Among the writers who headed this struggle were E. Poteca, L. Asachi, I. Tăutu, the monk Macarie, V. Virnav, D. Golescu, I. Nicola, S. Marcovici.

³⁴ To illustrate this situation with respect to the group of writers we are investigating, we recall the frequent journeys to Moldavia made by Mihail Cantacuzino, E. Văcărescu, Moldavian extraction, and his family's kinship through marriage with that of Metropolitan Veniamin Costache. Ioan Cantacuzino held high offices in Moldavia and printed a volume of poetry in Jassy. Numerous Moldavians came to Bucharest during the 1806—1812 war, among them C. Conachi. C. Filipescu, the leader of the Wallachian national party refugeed in Moldavia due to the Turkish inroads. E. Poteca traveled also to Jassy. In 1814 Vladimirescu inquired after the Moldavians living in Vienna.

³⁵ Among them were the parallel petitions of 1775 submitted to Prince Repnin, the petitions of 1783 submitted to ambassador Bulgakov, the petitions of 1787 submitted to Catherine II, the petitions of 1802 and 1807 submitted to Napoleon, the petitions of 1807 submitted to General Apraxin, and the petitions of 1822 submitted to the Porte.

of the 1821 revolution when the Moldavians stationed permanent liaisons in Bucharest and Braşov and were thus in close contact with the Wallachian leaders. Consequently it was not surprising that the Wallachians submitted a strong apology to Ioniţă Sandu Sturdza when he was appointed prince of Moldavia (1822) nor that the reform projects drawn up after 1822 in Moldavia dealt closely with the problems of the neighboring principality.

The idea of political unity stems first of all from that of ethnic unity and, in this respect, the use of the term "Dacian" as a generic name for all Romanians is very revealing.³⁶ Grounded on the same national consciousness, the terms "Moldavian" and "Wallachian" developed into the single term "Romanian", while "neam" (people) became "naţiune" (nation) and Moldavia and Wallachia became România.

Recent studies have shown that the process of formation of the national consciousness can be traced back to the Middle Ages and the use of the noun "român" (Romanian) and of the adjective "românesc" (Romanian) is very relevant in this respect. These terms had three meanings: a general ethnic one distinguishing the Romanians of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Transylvania from the aliens; another special ethnic meaning referring only to Wallachia (in Romanian Wallachia was called Țara Românească, which meant Romanian Country); and a third with a social meaning denoted the dependent peasants. It is noteworthy that the term "român" was used just as frequently in Transylvania as in Moldavia and Wallachia and that the use of the form spelt with *o* instead of the one spelt with *u* (Rumân) served to underline the Roman origin.³⁷

During the Enlightenment period when serfdom was abolished, the social meaning disappeared; the regional one continued to circulate in Wallachia. The general one, however, the one until then used only by a small group of writers, became popular and was given not only to Moldavians and Transylvanians but to the Macedo-Romanians too. It was mentioned frequently by Philippide, Fotino and, on the eve of the 1821 revolution, by Poteca, Leon Asachi, Haği Gheorghe Pesacov, and Râmniceanu, the latter being the author of a writing entitled *Cugetul adevăratului român* (The Thought of the True Romanian). In an anonymous work we find the words: "First love your country, then yourself, then your neighbor and if you are Romanian who is your nearest neighbor but the Romanian."³⁸

³⁶ D. Fotino speaks of the "Dacias, that is Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldavia" (*Istoria Daciei*) and N. Râmniceanu of "Dacian Wallachia" and "Dacian Moldavia" (*Despre origina românilor*).

³⁷ E. Stănescu, *Premisele medievale ale conştiinţei naţionale româneşti*, *Studii*, 5 (1964).

³⁸ *Ithicon adică moral*, E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date şi fapte noi*, pp. 202–205.

During the decade prior to the drafting of the *Organic Regulations*, the term “român” with a manifest national character was present in Mumuleanu’s work, in official Moldavian documents, in I. Nicola’s *Manualul de patriotism*, in the title of the first newspaper printed in Romanian in Moldavia (*Albina Românească*, 1829), and in the writings of Ion Tăutu.³⁹

So also the terms “neam”, “nație,” and “națiune” became widely used. The noun “neam” meaning people was used often in reference to the Wallachians and Moldavians. After 1800 however “neam românesc” became a popular expression used in both Principalities and in this way acquired a modern sense. Its usage as well as the use of the neologism “națiune” indicates beyond all doubt that the writers had once and for all risen above the stage of regional consciousness to attain a Romanian national consciousness. This thought was expressed in the Moldavian unionist petition of 1807, and also in the widely circulate work *Gheografia* published in Buda in 1814—1815. In this later work the anonymous author spoke of “the Romanian nation in the Principality of Moldavia” and “the Romanian nation in the Principality of Wallachia,” indicating clearly that he recognized the existence of one single Romanian nation, temporarily under different forms of administration.⁴⁰ Golescu and Nicola held similar ideas.

The new sense taken on by the terms “român” and “națiune” led to the appearance of the adjective “național.” We have already noted its use in the field of education and linguistics, but it was also used with reference to politics administration, economy. Thus a Moldavian unionist petition spoke of “notre bonheur national,” while the volunteers who took part in the 1806—1812 war called themselves “oaste naționalnică” (national army). Mumuleanu referred to “mîndria cea națională” (national pride) and the *Organic Regulations* added the qualificative “national” to all the institutions they set up or re-organized.

The term “românime” (Romanian “Commonwealth”) used for the first time by the Moldavian Veniamin Costache had the precise meaning of nationality. It was used again a few years later by Naum Râmnicéanu and Hagi Gheorghe Peșacov. In all these writings it denoted a unitary people possessing a common spirituality and identical political interests.

All this naturally led to the claim that the Romanians needed to be united into a single state. It is believed that one of the writers who inspired the Dacian

³⁹ His manifesto *Frères roumains* addressed itself “à tous les moldaves et à tous les valaches,” E. Virtosu, *Les idées politiques de I. Tăutu*, p. 265, and in a letter to the English ambassador Stratford-Canning (1828—1829) he pointed out that “les Moldaves et les Valaques s’appellent Roumains,” *Mémoires*, p. 170.

⁴⁰ *B.R.V.*, III, p. 297.

project of Catherine II was Mihail Cantacuzino. At any rate it was he who expressed for the first time in 1772 the wish that the Romanians unite. In a petition signed, among others, by Nicolae Dudescu, Pană Filipescu, Pantazi Cîmpineanu, Grigore and Ioan Băleanu, and Ștefan Topliceanu, Cantacuzino pointed out to Austria the advantages the Principalities would enjoy if they united and if the new state had the joint protection of Russia and Austria.⁴¹ Ioan Cantacuzino, Mihail's nephew, reiterated the idea of a unitary and independent Romanian state in petitions, lost today, addressed to Potemkin, Repnin, Suvorov, and Galitzin (1790).⁴²

At the beginning of the 19th century, the number of unionist programs increased. Among these programs were Constantin Ypsilanti's plan to set up a Dacian kingdom ruled by his family⁴³ and the petition ascribed until now to his secretary, the marquis of Saint-Aulaire.⁴⁴ In addition, the Moldavian petition submitted to Napoleon in 1807 strongly and convincingly advocated the necessity of the union. In the introduction the author, having a thorough knowledge of Romanian history, pointed out the similar origins of the Moldavians and Wallachians. He affirmed the political unity of the Romanian territory in ancient times and described the resemblance between the social and political structures of the two Principalities. And finally he emphasized the fact that their severance was contrary "de nos vrais intérêts" and advocated the creation of an independent united state under the name of Dacia or "La Grande Valachie."⁴⁵

Though not so precisely stated, the idea of common interests stand by Moldavians and Wallachians was also present in Tudor Vladimirescu's mind. He requested the divan to cooperate with the Moldavians "in order that we should obtain the rights of those principalities by helping one another... like people belonging to the same nation, having the same faith and living under the same rule and defended by the same power."⁴⁶ The possibility of a political unification was also discussed in 1822 at Brașov by Nicolae Văcărescu, Grigore Băleanu, and Constantin Cămpineanu.⁴⁷ Apparently

⁴¹ *Mémoires*, p. 38. It is most likely that the other petition drawn up on August 4, 1772, at Golești and addressed to Prussia and Russia should have included the same demand for the political unification of Moldavia and Wallachia; unfortunately nothing has been preserved except the introductory paragraphs.

⁴² A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor*, XII, p. 191; N. Iorga, *Ceva despre ocupația austriacă din anii 1789–1794*, An. Ac. Rom., M.S.I., II/33, 1910/1911, p. 225.

⁴³ V. A. Urechea, *Istoria Românilor*, IX, pp. 6–7; M. Botzaris, *Visions balkaniques*, p. 44

⁴⁴ P. P. Panaitescu, *Correspondența lui C. Ypsilanti*, pp. 72–86.

⁴⁵ *Moldavian petition addressed to Napoleon*, pp. 411, 415–416.

⁴⁶ *Documente* 1821, II, p. 33.

⁴⁷ E. Virtosu, 1821: *Date și fapte noi*, p. 25.

shortly before the treaty of Adrianople and the adoption of the Organic Regulations some circles of intellectuals and politicians thought unification might be achieved. It was for this reason that unification was so often mentioned in the political life of the two Principalities between 1827 and 1831 and was supported by such personalities as Dinicu Golescu, I. Heliade Rădulescu,⁴⁸ Iordache Catargi⁴⁹, and Costache Conachi.⁵⁰ Among the anonymous unionist petitions was one drawn up in Wallachia in 1829 demanding that "Wallachia and Moldavia unite and form one principality"⁵¹ and another, probably of 1829, which made provisions for the establishment of a "gouvernement monarchique permanent qui unirait les deux provinces."⁵²

These hopes were not fulfilled by the *Organic Regulations*, but under the influence of Conachi, Catargi, Mihail Sturdza, Gheorghe Asachi they created the necessary basis that would insure the achieving of unification in the near future. The *Regulations* theoretically substantiated the necessity of unification⁵³. In addition, they suggested the unification of legislation and of the currency system, laid the basis for close economic ties, and accepted the concept of common citizenship. They achieved, at least partially, the ideal for which three generations of writers had struggled, a national and pan-Romanian ideal.

⁴⁸ I. Heliade-Rădulescu, *Echilibrul între antitesi* (1859–1869), p. 78. Referring to the Wallachians probably, Bois le Conte pointed out that in 1827 they demanded the unification of the Principalities and their placing under the protection of a great power; P. P. Panaitescu, *Unificarea politică a Țărilor Române*, Studii privind unirea Principatelor (1960), pp. 89–90.

⁴⁹ According to Bois le Conte, Catargi seems to have suggested unification during the proceedings of the Committee of 8. Russia seems to have agreed with it, on principle, but reconsidered its decision when Catargi demanded that the prince should not be chosen from among the citizens of the neighboring great powers, *Hurmuzaki*, XVII, p. 394; R. Rosetti, *Arhiva senatorilor*, III, p. 109.

⁵⁰ See G. Kirileanu, *Ideea unirii la marele logofăt C. Conachi*, Convorbiri literare XLIII/1909, *Analele parlamentare*, I², p. 59.

⁵¹ *Memoriu unionist muntean*, p. 647.

⁵² *Hurmuzaki*, XXI, p. 146. We think that the fact that the Wallachian newspaper *Curierul românesc* published the news referring to Moldavia under the title "Internal News" illustrates the unionist mentality of the writers of the time.

⁵³ Under the title *Beginnings of a closer union between the two Principalities*, the *Organic Regulation* of Wallachia wrote: "The origin, the religion, the customs and the common language of the inhabitants in these two principalities, as well as all they require are sufficient elements for a closer union between them, which until now has been forbidden and delayed on account of casual circumstances and their consequences. The gains and useful consequences that would arise from closer relations between these two peoples cannot be doubted, so the beginnings have been laid down in these regulations, by the setting up of similar administrative institutions in both countries" (I, p. 130). The *Moldavian Regulation* expressed themselves almost identically (II, p. 341).



Can we state that in 1831 the basic elements of national consciousness had been formed? We think so. Indeed the principal elements regarding national unity, economic community and common culture, language, and territory were manifest. The epoch of the Enlightenment witnessed the knitting together of a united system of political, philosophical, legal, and ethnical values. This unity was evident in people's customs, beliefs, and feelings and in a particular way of acting. Moldavians and Wallachians had the same ethnic consciousness of a common origin; the same consciousness of their individuality, of the fact they have special traits that distinguished them from other peoples, the same consciousness of the necessity to achieve national unity; the same will to live together, to have a certain mission; the same sense of their duty in the destiny of the country and people.⁵⁴ The Transylvanians possessed many of these traits too. We must however point out that though there was a national consciousness, it was expressed only by a small group of writers and penetrated little into the mass of the population. It was only after 1831 that these elements were to be found in all strata of society; they were to change into real *idées-forces* and carry out the foundation of the Romanian national state.

⁵⁴ For a very good theoretical exposition of the problem see A. Gavrilă, "Conceptul de conștiință națională," *Revista de Filozofie*, 9 (1968).

CONCLUSIONS

Now that we have reached the end of our investigation it would be appropriate to draw a few conclusions referring to the main coordinates of the political thought in the Principalities during the period 1750—1831. We should also define the role Romanian enlightened political thought played in the history of Romanian political ideology and its place in the evolution of ideas in Europe.

This investigation started with the ideas on man, and with general thoughts on society and went on to lengthier considerations of ideas regarding the social and political structure, the theory and practice of state governing, the national sovereignty of the Principalities, and the shaping of new patriotic and national ideals. This approach to the problem illustrates one of the main traits of Romanian political thought, its concrete, pragmatic character. It is closely connected to Romanian reality and concerned only to a smaller degree with the theoretical aspects of the problem. In emphasizing the basic values of this political thought we are taking the liberty of reversing the logical order of values and of recalling them in the order the Romanians of the time thought it was important for them.

No doubt that the main problem of the political thought in the Principalities between 1750 and 1831 was that of national sovereignty. Of all the political problems, this one was considered the most important. And so we can conclude that the writers of the time believed that the general progress of the country was closely related to its degree of independence, and that the internal progress could be lasting and productive only after a release from any foreign influence, political or economic. This attitude gave rise to a rather strange phenomenon: while an external political movement of dynamic, liberal character was striving to meet the interests of the people on the whole, there was a conservative trend within the country seeking to meet the interests of only one social class.

Problems of political structure and theory and practice of state government take second place in the order of importance. In this respect the clash

of opinions was fiercer, and various parties and social groups had different interests at stake. While everyone was more or less in favor of national sovereignty, great divisions developed when problems of internal politics arose with regard to the form of government; conservative conceptions of a boyar state or an aristocratic republic came into direct conflict with the modern, liberal plans for a "limited" and representative rule or nobiliary representative democracy. Differing opinions were expressed on reform policy, too, and on its purpose, character, and extent. The conceptions on economic policy, on cultural policy, and on the rights and liberties of citizens were less antagonistic.

And finally we have the questions related to the social structure which were of less importance, since even the agrarian problem, for instance, was hardly mentioned in the socio-political works.

Thus we find a constant concern in foreign politics, vast diversity in problems of internal politics, and moderation in respect to social problems. This phenomenon is not accidental; it can be well understood if we recall the people who expressed these ideas and the sources of their thoughts. Indeed, the large majority of writers belonged to the boyar class and very often were big boyars and members of the high clergy. This, of course, left its mark on their thinking and on the manner in which they conceived of their interests and the wider sphere of national interests. From the view-point of social thought most of these writers were prisoners of their social interests and expressed either conservative ideas or no ideas at all.

Their conceptions on the political structure, on the form of government, and on the practice of state government also reveal a relative conservatism, since many of the writers who were boyars proposed plans to modernize institutions to the benefit of their own class. But besides these self-seeking plans, there were also numerous liberal proposals designed to actually modernize the state, proposals at times even opposed to the interests of the social category the author belonged to.

The conservatism of social thought and the many conflicting ideas in the sphere of internal policy was in sharp contrast with the obviously progressive nature of ideas on external policy and on the Principalities' place in Central and South-East Europe. This compels us to interpret the role of the boyars, with shades of differences and to avoid passing an absolute and a prior judgement on them, the judgement that has been inflicted on them almost exclusively in the last few decades. Indeed, the most important ideas expressed in this respect were those presented by big boyars, by men like Mihail Cantacuzino, Enăchiță Văcărescu, Ioan Cantacuzino, Iordache and Nicolae Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Mihail Sturdza, while middle and lower boyars

such as Tăutu, usually considered to have been liberal, had less bold ideas and influenced to much smaller extent the shaping of the national consciousness and the struggle for the unity and independence. As for the representatives of the bourgeoisie, their role in outlining a foreign policy was practically nonexistent.

This hierarchy of problems raised by the socio-political thought in the Principalities can be justified also by a careful examination of its sources. Romanian writers after 1750 began to manifest themselves at a time when opposition to Ottoman domination and the Phanariot regime was intensifying and at a time when communications with the rest of Europe were being renewed after a lapse of 60 years. The necessity that a political belief be accompanied with a theoretical argument as well as the absence of contact with current ideas made the writers resort to the stock of ideas expressed at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century, to the period they justly considered as a period that witnessed a climax in the assertion of Romanian spirituality. At the time of Costin and Cantemir, of Brâncoveanu and Constantin Cantacuzino, political thought was particularly interested in the problems implied by the struggle between the prince and the boyars, that is with problems of political structure; it was also concerned with the question of national sovereignty. These problems were taken up by the first generation of writers of the Enlightenment for whom they were an important source. And thus the basic modern ideas concerning national sovereignty appeared between 1769 and 1774, to dominate, unquestionably and for a long time, the entire spectrum of Romanian political thought until the epoch of unification. It was therefore the internal conditions that determined the importance of problems on political thought in the Principalities. This hierarchy of problems differed, for example, from that of Transylvania, it was peculiar to Moldavia and Wallachia. Another trait, as we have already mentioned, was its concrete, pragmatic character. Romanian political thought was not concerned with abstractions but with facts, which led it to develop a strong, militant character, committed to its cause. The most remarkable political writers were in the center of the struggle waged by the Romanians for their national independence, while their writings were more often than not placed in the service of this cause.

We now have to define that last and most important character of the socio-political thought in the Principalities, between 1750 and 1831. Can we call it enlightened and consequently include it in the general movement of ideas of the times? The question is so much the more justified as we saw that before Popovici, historians never mentioned a Romanian Enlightenment, and after him, though the term was used, it was the reader who was left to define it.

In our opinion the fact that writers of the time called for the abolition of serfdom, the granting of individual liberties, and the development of culture does not necessarily mean political thought was enlightened. In fact, the founding of schools and the enlightening of the people had also been claimed by men of the classical and the romantic periods. It is not the idea itself that we find important but its theoretical, philosophical justification. Now when things are seen in this way, we think we can speak of an Enlightenment and of an epoch of Enlightenment in Moldavia and Wallachia. In truth, Romanian sources were at the basis of ideas expressed by the earlier generation of writers and dominated the discussion of national sovereignty for a long time. But besides these Romanian sources representing the main stock of values there circulated a great many European ideas of enlightened character. These ideas helped to mould Romanian values. Freed from the domination of Eastern values imposed by the Turks and Phanariots, the Romanians first used European ideas to get their bearings and gradually took on the social political concept and structures which were natural to it.

Consequently political thought in the Principalities was of an enlightened character since it employed enlightened concepts, that did not exclude the use of other concepts such as traditional-medieval or Christian ones. What was important was the predominant note, the main course of the evolution.

However the Romanian political thought was enlightened not only because of the concepts it utilizes but also because of the way in which it applied them. A predominant trait of the Enlightenment was criticism, the wish to transform, to replace all that is old by new states of affairs. This characteristic was particularly obvious in Romanian political thought which, through its most active representatives, considered itself as an instrument for the transformation of society.

It is well-known that the Enlightenment did not encompass a uniform ideology. It included various, contradictory conceptions of reality and ways to transform it. Which of these trends did the Romanian one belong to?

The type of economic development in the Principalities, the existence of a still strong feudal reality and the social origin of the majority of writers determined, to a great extent, the trend of the Enlightenment here. The problems it had to solve, the way in which it solved them, and the social background of the writers, all made the socio-political movement in the Principalities a nobiliary, reformative Enlightenment, predominant in Eastern Europe. From all points of view, it was more similar to the Polish or Russian Enlightenment rather than to the neo-Greek one.

This statement leads us to underline once again the theoretical interpretation we have given the 18th century which, we think, began at the moment

of the setting up of the Phanariot regime and lasted until 1831, the year the *Organic Regulations* were adopted. We must first discuss the sense we have attributed to the terms of Phanariot, and Phanariot epoch.

The chapter dealing with historiography emphasized the great diversity of interpretations given to the Phanariot epoch; some condemned it categorically while others tried the most subtle ways of rehabilitating it. For almost all historians the Phanariot epoch was the period of rule by princes born in the Phanar. The problem of ethnic origin was, in the last instance, the essential criterion that determined the category of *pămîntean* (native) or Phanariot. The proponents of Phanariot regime argued that Callimachi, Racoviță, and Ghica were not Greeks and that Greek princes had ruled even prior to 1711—1716. We do not consider this an essential element. The history of the Callimachi and Ghica families are the best proof of this. Ion Theodor Callimachi, whose former name was Calmășul was brought up in Poland and ruled as a typical Phanariot prince; his brother, Gavril Callimachi, raised in Constantinople, metropolitan of Moldavia was for almost thirty years the leader of the native anti-Phanariot party; and a third brother, Dumitrașcu, remained a simple country boyar, entirely indifferent to the political opinions and activities of the other two. As for the Ghicas, Grigore III identified himself with Phanariot interests, while his nephew Grigore IV, in 1802 became one of the leaders of the anti-Phanariot party and in 1822 became the first native prince after the Phanariot century.

The Phanariot epoch can be defined only from an axiological point of view, from the viewpoint of values. Value here is defined as the social relation between the object and the subject that expresses the value of qualities, processes, or facts. How the Phanariot regime was valued in the Principalities has been clearly described in the pages of this work. Using an axiological interpretation we are bound to conclude that the Romanians constantly and categorically denied Phanariot values; they struggled incessantly to elude this foreign influence, and they viewed the Phanariot epoch as a period of great decline in the history of the two Principalities.

However does this contemporary interpretation represent the true situation? Certainly there have been epochs and historical personalities that were inadequately rated by their own contemporaries and their real value is understood only later.

As far as the Phanariots are concerned we think we can accept the view of the contemporaries and consider their time a period of decline, not only with regard to economy and politics, but a decline in culture and civilization too. We have reached this conclusion through a comparative historical analysis with the centuries preceding and following the 18th century and through

a comparative study of Romanian culture with the rest of European civilization during the 18th century.

For us decline means the discontinuation of a course full of promise, the interruption of an evolution that had given birth to specific values under specific forms, peculiar to the Romanian people. It is evident that the 18th century began with this type of interruption, which left a strong impression on the writers and on the collective psychology. The execution of two princes, Brâncoveanu (1714) and St. Cantacuzino (1716); the defeat and exile of a third, Dimitrie Cantemir (1711); the execution of a metropolitan, Antim Ivireanu (1716) and of a scholar as remarkable as Constantin Cantacuzino (1716); the temporary or permanent exile of many other writers as Dosoftei, Milescu, Neculce, represented a series of events which would have been traumatic for any country. The Phanariots were not directly to blame for the tragic fate of all these writers, but the fact remains that their rule represented the triumph of the circles opposed to native interests and values.

The Phanariots did not continue the evolution of Romanian culture begun in the 17th century. The Latin orientation evident in schools and in preferences of the writers was replaced by an orientation towards neo-Greek culture which, in this period, was poorer in ideas, less dynamic than it had been in the 17th century, and, at any rate, alien to the natural structure of Romanian culture.

This decline meant the adoption of foreign non-integrable values which the course of history was to finally abandon. All this caused a cultural crisis, there was little creativity and minor values were cultivated to the detriment of major ones. The fact that in the 18th century more manuscripts were copied than in the previous one cannot, we think, entitle us to speak of progress, for what is important is not the increase in volume but in quality. Though indeed more was copied that cannot conceal the fact that the old form of spreading the texts was still being used, while on the rest of the continent people were mostly concerned with printed works.

As the Romanian Principalities stepped into the 19th century, their culture and civilization lagged behind that of Central and Western Europe, a lag which, as far as writers were concerned, had been far slighter two centuries before. The causes usually cited, the feudal production and social relations and the cultural domination of the boyars, are apparently logical explanations which, however, we think are not applicable to the Principalities. Culture in an aristocratic society is not necessarily inferior to the culture of a bourgeois society; aristocracy can create modern cultural values. Of the four constituent moments of a culture, the first three: the cognitive moment (cognizance), the axiological moment (value), the creative moment (creation)

were all within the boyars' reach, and some of them passed through all these stages. What a nobiliary culture cannot achieve is the fourth moment, the praxiological moment. It involves the critical assimilation, the social generalization of the cultural values; it is the moment when culture is integrated into the social praxis.

Therefore, the gap between the Romanian and European cultures cannot be accounted for only by social causes. This can also be supported by the fact that countries with similar socio-economic systems have different levels of cultural development. Consequently this cultural lag can be ascribed to the domination of foreign forms of culture and civilization, non-integrable in the native stock of values, in this case to Phanariotism. For us this term implies not only a political regime, but a complex structure of culture and civilization, theoretically based on the conservative, traditional, Orthodox elements, on neo-Greek culture and clothed in oriental garb due to historical circumstances.

This general definition does not of course exclude the existence of certain Phanariot individuals who opposed the values of their own structure, but such isolated cases only emphasize the general character of the epoch and justify the opinion held by contemporaries who considered that the modernization and Europeanization meant first of all a change of this style.¹

The domination of Phanariotism exerted only a slight influence on political thought compared to that exerted on other areas of culture, such as literature and art, or on certain aspects of daily life such as dress, customs, morals and manners. Political thought was the instrument that gave unity of direction to all native values and at the same time the main channel through which the European ideas reached the Principalities. In the general outlook of the Principalities in the 18th century, political thought constituted first of all an element of resistance, then one of progress, incorporating all other domains of society. In this way the 18th century marked the beginning of a new phenomenon in Romanian culture, the domination of the political sector over the other sectors of culture.

We now have to establish in concluding the relationship between political thought in the Principalities and in Transylvania. There were many common points, but certain differences too. Both were grounded on ideas belonging to the trend of the Enlightenment, both had a pronounced practical character, both were militant and working for the national cause.

The different historical conditions under which the three Principalities developed also gave rise to certain differences. In Transylvania the influence

¹ This fact holds good for the Greek society too.

of the German and Austrian Enlightenment exerted a stronger influence than the French Enlightenment while in Moldavia and Wallachia it was just the opposite. There was also a different hierarchy of the political problems: in the Principalities it was the national sovereignty that played a leading role, while in Transylvania it was internal politics. We can also detect in the political thought in the Principalities a more dynamic note, greater interest in immediate political achievements, while political thought in Transylvania had a deeper theoretical foundation and a stronger philosophical and meditative character. That would account for the fact that ideas of independence and unification appeared and developed first in Moldavia and Wallachia; but apart from these differences which are in any case difficult to establish for they are not essential, the ideas of the Romanians on both sides of the Carpathians are complementary and form a whole.

What was the ultimate finality of political ideas in the epoch under consideration? Was there a fulfilment, a putting into practice of these ideas, can we consider them not simple concepts, but real *idées-forces* which contributed to the transformation of society? We think so. The finality of the political ideas is clearly revealed when we study them in the context of Romanian political history. Thus we can point to the real influence exerted by the reform programs and petitions on Russian and Austrian diplomacy and to that clauses in peace treaties and international conventions regarding the Principalities. We should also recall the influence of Romanian political ideas on the manner in which the Porte's conceptions of direct Romano-Ottoman relations developed, and the fact that most of the clauses favorable to the Romanians mentioned in the hatt-i-sherifs, seneds, hatt-i-humaiums were the results of Romanian proposals. And in the third place we should note the influence of the ideas of the Enlightenment on the internal policy carried on by the princes, both Phanariot and native, and the enlightened theoretical basis of the attempts at reforms. A knowledge of the ideas peculiar to the Enlightenment solves, to a great extent, the problem of the genesis of the *Organic Regulations*, too, which cannot longer be considered either the work of Kiselev or exclusively of the generation coming after 1821, but as a result of the development of Romanian political science and thought from the generation of Mihail Cantacuzino and Văcărescu to the time of Știrbei and Mihail Sturdza.

Finally, we can speak of the role played by the political ideas in the creation, preservation and transmission of a certain state of mind, of a collective psychology, grounded on the new nationalism and patriotism and designed to represent an essential element in the moulding of the modern Romanian nation.

The period from 1711 to 1821 was no doubt, first of all, the Phanariot epoch, but its second half was at the same time the era of the Enlightenment. It was an era of light, at first feeble and frail, then bolder, more prying, and directed toward all the recesses of the Romanian heart, mind and reality. It was the time when the structures of the modern Romanian society crystalized. It was a time which has to be understood if the history of the following two centuries is to be explained. We can speculate on the road the Romanians might have taken in different historical conditions. We may look with a critical eye at many of its aspects, sometimes even regretting their existence, but, in the last instance, irrespective of our interpretation we have to conclude that the 18th century was a turning-point in Romanian history. It was a century that left its stamp on the subsequent evolution of the Romanian people, even though, for the progress of this very evolution, a process of negation of the negation was necessary.

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For the intellectual backgrounds of all these writers and the cultural atmosphere in Moldavia and Wallachia, the following works will be useful: Al. Duțu, *Les lumières en Moldavie et leurs contextes sud-est européen*, *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 2 (1967); N. Iorga, *Istoria literaturii române în veacul al XVIII-lea I—II* (1901); D. Popovici, *La littérature roumaine à l'époque des lumières* (1945); G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1941) and *Istoria literaturii române*, I—II (1964—1968); Al. Piru, *Literatura română veche* (1964); and *Literatura română premodernă* (1964); G. Ivașcu, *Istoria literaturii române* (1969).

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CHAPTER IV

The importance of the XVIIth century for the history of the Romanian political thought has been pointed out by N. Iorga, *Cîteva note despre cronici și tradiția noastră istorică* (1910); P.P. Panaitescu, *Perioada slavonă la români și ruperea de cultura apusului* (1944); E. Stănescu, *Essai sur la pensée politique roumaine dans la littérature historique au Moyen Age*, Nouvelles Etudes d'Histoire, II (1960).

Among D. Cantemir's most read works we mention: *The History of the growth and decay of the Othoman Empire*, London, I—II, (1734—1735); *Descriptio Moldaviae*, P. Pandrea ed. (1955); *Monarchiarum phisico examinatio*, I. Sulea Firu ed., Studii și cercetări de bibliologie, V. (1963); for *Hronical vechimii româno-moldovlahilor*, and other writings less important for our topic, see *Operele principelui D. Cantemir*, I—VIII (1872—1901). His ideas on man and society have been discussed by P. P. Panaitescu, *D. Cantemir* (1958); D. Bădărău, *Filozofia lui D. Cantemir* (1964); P. Vaida, *Moștenirea filozofică a lui D. Cantemir*, Cercetări filozofice, 3 (1964). C. Cantacuzino, *Istoria Țării Românești în Cronicari munteni*, I (1961); A. Ivireanu, *Predici*, G. Stempel ed. (1962) and Miron Costin, *Opere*, P.P. Panaitescu ed. (1958) are, along with Cantemir, basic sources for the political thought after 1750.

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CHAPTER V

Very little has been written about the influence of natural law theories on Romanian thought. We could mention only V. Al. Georgescu's *H. Grotius dans la culture juridique roumaine du XVIII-e siècle*, Revue roumaine d'histoire, 2 (1969).

On the contrary, French cultural impact has been studied very carefully: A.D. Xenopol, *L'influence intellectuelle de la France en Roumanie* (1914); P. Eliade, *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie* (1898); N. Iorga, *La France dans le sud-est de l'Europe* (1936); G. Lebel, *La France et les Principautés Danubiennes* (1955), are the best general works. The different relations during the Revolution and Napoleon's time have been discussed by N. Iorga, *Les Roumains et Napoleon I-er*, Revue historique du sud-est européen, 4—6 (1932); C. Andreescu, *La France et la politique orientale de Catherine II*, Mélanges de l'école roumaine en France, VI (1927), IX (1929); N. Iorga, *La révolution française et le sud-est de l'Europe* (1934); I. Corfus, *Un vag ecou al războaielor lui Napoleon la mănăstirea Neamțului*, Revista istorică română 2 (1945); Al. Dușu, *L'image de la France dans les pays roumains pendant les campagnes napoléoniennes et le Congrès de Vienne*, Nouvelles Etudes d'Histoire, III (1965).

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Italian influences: R. Ortiz, *Per la storia della cultura italiana in Rumania* (1916); Al. Marcu, *Athènes ou Rome? A propos de l'influence italienne en Roumanie vers 1820* (1930); A. Camariano-Cioran, *L'œuvre de Beccaria Dei delitti e delle pene, et ses traductions en langues grecques et roumaines*, *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 1—2 (1967); V. Al. Georgescu, *Contribuții la studiul luminismului în Țara Românească și Moldova. Locul lui Beccaria în cultura juridică românească și în dezvoltarea dreptului penal*, *Studii*, 5 (1967), 4 (1968).

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For the time we are dealing with, English culture had little influence upon Romanian intellectuals; some informations could be found in P. Grimm, *Traduceri și imitațiuni românești după literatura engleză*, *Dacoromania*, III (1920); N. Iorga, *Ce datorăm cărții engleze* (1938); E.D. Tappe, *Bentham in Wallachia and Moldavia*, *Slavonic and East European Review*, XXIX (1950).

For Oxenstiern, whose "Pensées" have been the first translation made into Romanian direct from French (1750), see Al. Lambrior, *Tălmăcirea românească a scrierilor lui Oxenstiern*, *Convorbiri literare*, 9 (1873) and St. Birsănescu, N.C. Enescu, *Oxenstiern și mișcarea pedagogică din Moldova*, *Analele Universității Al. I. Cuza, B*, IX (1963).

CHAPTER VI

Ancient Greek Influence and Byzantine Remains: V. Al. Georgescu, *Ecouri clasice în cultura juridică a secolului al XVIII-lea în Țara Românească*, *Studii clasice*, IV (1962); P. Vaida, *D. Cantemir și aristotelismul*, *Revista de filozofie*, 5 (1966); *D. Cantemir și antichitatea*, *ibid*, 8 (1965); C. Noica, *Aristotelismul în Principatele Române în secolele XVII—XVIII*, *Studii clasice*, IX (1967).

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CHAPTER XI

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I. Nistor, *Un proiect de organizare a oștirilor pămîntene din 1812*, *M.S.I.*, III/22 (1939/1940); Al. Vianu, *Note privitoare la participarea voluntarilor români la războiul ruso-austro-turc, 1787—1792*, *Analele româno-sovietice*, 3 (1956); Gh. Platon, *Unele mărturii documentare privind voluntarii din războiul ruso-turc, 1828—1829*, *Analele științifice ale universității Al. I. Cuza*, IX (1963).

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¹ When the place of publication is not mentioned it is Bucharest; the dash means that the periodical is still published.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice — *M.S.I.*
Analele Academiei Române., Memoriile Secțiunii Literare — *M.S.L.*
Bibliografia Românească Veche — *B.R.V.*
Biserica Ortodoxă Română — *B.O.R.*
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INDEX

- Adrianople*, treaty of, 22, 23, 26, 39, 153, 155, 156, 164, 166, 168, 170, 186.
- Africa*, 42.
- Agapet, 79.
- Agavrioloaie, Gheorghe, 210.
- Akkerman*, convention of, 26, 39, 131, 153, 157.
- Albanians, 159.
- D'Alambert, Jean 69.
- Alexa, Emanuil, 57.
- Alexandrescu-Dersca, Matilda, 217.
- Alexandru I, 51, 72, 131, 133, 135, 144, 166.
- Alexandru, D., 208.
- Alexianu, Gheorghe, 200.
- America*, 42.
- Americans, 90.
- Amfilohie, Hotiniul, 83, 202.
- Anatolia*, 65.
- Andreescu, Constantin, 213.
- Andronescu, Grigore, 84, 97, 108, 202.
- Andronescu, Șerban, 84, 202.
- Apraxin, Stepan S., 182.
- Aricescu, C. D., 201.
- Aristotle, 75, 76, 84, 85, 89.
- Arnauts, 159.
- Argeș*, 83, 212.
- Argyropulo, Pericle, 204.
- Asachi, Gheorghe, 39, 41, 51, 60, 91, 108, 137, 179, 182, 186, 202, 203.
- Asachi, Leon, 182, 183.
- Athos*, mount, 33, 161.
- Atlantic*, 40.
- Aurelian, emperor, 171, 173.
- Austria*, 21, 22, 40, 47, 58, 73, 147, 148 154, 160, 164, 165, 168, 185.
- Austrians, 148, 164, 165.
- Avramie, Leon, 62.
- Babœuf, Gracchus, 66.
- Bădărău, Dan, 75, 86, 212, 216, 218.
- Bagdasar, Niculae, 216.
- Baiko, field marshal, 165.
- Bălăceanu, family, 57, 64.
- Bălăceanu, Constantin, 33.
- Bălcescu, Nicolae, 203, 217.
- Băleanu, Ion, 185.
- Băleanu, Grigore, 185.
- Băleanu Grigore, 70, 86, 91, 107, 151, 163, 166, 185, 203.
- Balkans*, 11, 21, 157, 169, 170, 215.
- Balș, family, 56, 57, 69.
- Balș, B. von, 202.
- Balș, Ion, 57, 69.
- Balș, Teodor, 32.
- Balș, 150.
- Bănescu, Nicolae, 100, 206, 207.
- Bantaș, family, 57.
- Bantaș-Kamenski, 56.
- Barbié de Bocage, I.B., 37, 69, 207.
- Barnovski, D. V., 12, 216.
- Bârsănescu, Ștefan, 24, 80, 214.
- Basarab, Matei, 7, 76.
- Basarab, Neagoe, 61, 212.
- Basarab, Teodosie, 61, 212.
- Basil, I, emperor, 76.
- Bauer, F., 200.
- Bayle, Pierre, 69.
- Beccaria, Cesare, 69, 214.
- Beldiman, Alexandru, 14, 34, 37, 56, 84, 108, 113, 176, 203.
- Belleval, Gaspary de, 68.
- Benești*, 97.
- Bengescu, George, 200.
- Bentham, Jeremy, 214.
- Berechet, Ștefan, 200, 201, 202.
- Berza, Mihai, 11, 16, 199, 201.
- Bezdechi, Ștefan, 208.
- Bezviconi, Gheorghe, 201, 214.
- Bianu, Ion, 153, 200, 208, 209, 211.
- Bibescu, family, 56.

- Birlad*, 28.
 Blaga, Lucian, 15, 199.
 Blancard, T., 207.
Blaj, 50, 172, 208.
 Blendy, G., 204.
 Bodea, Cornelia, 219.
 Bogdan, III, 154.
 Bogdan, family, 66.
 Bogdan, Gheorghe, 36.
 Bogdan, Manolache, 31, 32, 57.
 Bogdan-Duică, G., 72, 90, 206, 207.
 Bois le Comte, 24, 186.
 Bojincă, Damaschin, 203.
 Boroş, I., 202.
 Boscovich, I., 36, 200.
Bosphorus, 40.
 Botnoski, H., 218.
 Botzaris, M., 77, 169, 185, 215, 218.
 Brăiloiu, Constantin, 40, 101.
 Brăiloiu, spătar, 41.
 Brâncoveanu, family, 57, 60.
 Brâncoveanu, Grigore, 33.
 Brâncoveanu, Constan tin, 26, 29, 35, 54
 63, 64, 71, 76, 90, 149, 186, 191, 194, 215
Braşov, 28, 29, 42, 48, 67, 107, 131, 136,
 144, 164, 166, 183, 185, 202, 211.
 Braşoveanu, Dumitru, 57.
 Braşoveanu, Gavril, 57.
 Brătianu, Gheorghe, 12, 216, 218.
 Brukenthal, Samuel, 67.
Bukovina, 28, 164, 165.
 Bucşănescu, family, 64.
 Bucşănescu, Iordache, 203.
 Bucşănescu, Sandu, 31, 64.
Bucharest, 23, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35,
 51, 57, 58, 62, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72,
 75, 83, 114, 130, 131, 134, 136, 141, 150,
 167, 180, 182, 183, 211, 215; treaty of,
 22, 64, 165.
Buda, 180, 184.
 Buffier, Claude, 202.
 Bulat, T. G., 110, 125, 159, 176, 181, 201.
 Bulgakov, I. I., 152, 158, 182.
 Bulgarians, 170, 215.
 Burada, Teodor, 203.
 Buşe, Constantin, 204.
Byzantium, 56, 76, 214.
 Callimachi (Calmăşul), family, 107, 193,
 203.
 Callimachi, Alexandru, 37.
 Callimachi, Dumitraşcu, 193.
 Callimachi, Gavril, 32, 36, 48, 52, 53, 56,
 68, 83, 120, 134, 148, 163, 169, 175, 181,
 193, 203.
 Callimachi, Grigore, 27, 31.
 Callimachi, Ion Teodor, 31, 193.
 Callimachi, Scarlat, prince of Moldavia,
 27, 33, 128, 151.
 Callimachi, Scarlat, 161, 181, 203.
 Callone, abbot, 66.
 Călinescu, George, 10, 204, 206, 207, 208,
 211.
 Camariano, Nestor, 200, 205, 213, 215.
 Camariano-Cioran, Ariadna, 38, 57, 70,
 73, 181, 213, 214, 215.
 Canta, Ion, 57.
 Cantacuzino, family, 47, 60, 63, 64, 149,
 150, 168, 169, 211.
 Cantacuzino, Constantin, 59, 64, 89, 149,
 171, 191, 194, 205, 212.
 Cantacuzino, Ianache, 69.
 Cantacuzino, Ion, 49, 52, 53, 63, 65, 68,
 107, 131, 150, 164, 168, 182, 185, 190, 203.
 Cantacuzino, Ioniţă, 32.
 Cantacuzino, Iordache, 149.
 Cantacuzino, Mihail, 13, 14, 31, 47, 48,
 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65,
 68, 76, 85, 93, 90, 97, 100, 126, 140, 146,
 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 154, 163, 168,
 169, 171, 182, 185, 190, 196, 203.
 Cantacuzino, Pirvu, 149, 169.
 Cantacuzino, Şerban, 62, 64, 149.
 Cantacuzino, Ştefan, 194, 212.
 Cantemir, Constantin, 31.
 Cantemir, Dimitrie, 26, 38, 42, 54, 59, 60,
 61, 63, 64, 75, 85, 86, 89, 91, 95, 101,
 106, 112, 124, 135, 143, 146, 153, 166, 167,
 168, 171, 179, 180, 182, 191, 194, 212, 214,
 Cantemir, Dumitraşcu, 31.
 Căpăţineanu, Stanciu, 88, 137.
 Capodistria, Ioan, 204.
 Caracaş, Constantin, 203.
 Caracaş, R., 200.
 Caradja, C. I., 55, 204, 205, 212.
 Caragea, Constantin, 84, 204.
 Caragea, Ioan, 23, 27, 33, 37, 43, 138, 140,
 141, 147, 151, 204.
 Caragea, Nicolae, 70, 84, 109, 131, 141,
 152, 157.
 Carataşu, M., 215. Carcalechi, Zaharia,
 57, 137.
 Carmignani, C. A., 69.
 Carnot, Lazare, 72.
 Carp, Vasile, 147.
Carpathians, 15, 28, 57, 148, 163, 196.

- Carra, Jean, 31, 56, 60, 70, 75, 135, 200.
 Carra, Toma, 74.
 Cartojan, Nicolae, 213.
 Catargiu, family, 56.
 Catargiu, Iordache, 32, 52, 53, 57, 58, 186.
 Catherine II, 28, 48, 68, 69, 70, 109, 120,
 127, 138, 147, 148, 149, 150, 163, 169,
 182, 185, 203, 213, 214.
 Catholics, 142.
Cernăuți, 113, 121.
Cernica, monastery, 57.
 Cesar, 70.
 Charles XII, 70.
 Chesarie of Rimnic, 14, 31, 48, 52, 63, 65,
 69, 83, 89, 90, 96, 136, 172, 175, 178, 204.
 Chițu, V., 156, 216.
 Christians, 142, 149, 150, 157.
 Ciachir, Nicolae, 204.
 Cicanci, Olga, 204.
 Cimpineanu, Constantin, 185.
 Cimpineanu, Pantazi, 185.
Cîmpulung, 166, 203.
 Cindescu, 31.
 Ciorănescu, Alexandru, 202.
 Ciubotaru, I. C., 211.
 Ciurea, Alexandru, 209.
 Clipa, Gherasim, 32, 70, 83.
 Cobenzl, Louis, of, 150.
 Cocorescu, Iancu, 33.
 Cocora, G., 206, 208.
 Codrescu, Teodor, 199.
 Codricas, P., 71.
 Comnen-Ipsilanti, Athanasie, 204.
 Conachi, Costache, 14, 56, 57, 67, 70,
 142, 182, 186, 204.
 Condillac, Etienne, Bonnot, de, 69.
 Condurachi, I., 217.
 Constantin, teacher, 180.
 Constantin of Buzău, 38.
 Constantinescu, Miron, 11, 199.
 Constantinescu-Iași, Petre, 214.
 Constantiniu, Florin, 12, 216.
Constantinople, 23, 32, 64, 65, 69, 70, 71,
 72, 78, 107, 109, 121, 131, 150, 154, 156,
 159, 160, 161, 162, 166, 167, 193, 211.
 Coray, Adamatios, 69, 209.
 Corfus, Ilie, 202, 203.
 Coridaleu, Theofil, 75.
 Cornea, Paul, 204.
 Cosco, O., 213.
 Cosma, metropolitan, 150.
 Costache, Veniamin, 14, 33, 49, 52, 54, 71,
 83, 84, 137, 180, 184, 204.
 Costin, Miron, 59, 171, 191, 212.
 Costin, Nicolae, 61, 213.
 Crăciun, I., 200.
Craiova, 28, 35, 36, 167.
 Crișan-Körösi, Ștefan, 204.
 Cronț, Gheorghe, 211, 215.
 Cupărescu, N., 202.
 Cuza, family, 64.
 Cuza, Alexandru Ioan I, 64, 103, 132.
 Cuza, Dumitrașcu, 64.
 Cuza, Ioan, 64.
 Cuza, Ioniță, 31, 32.
Cyprus, 31.
 Czartoryski, Adam, 170.

Dacia, 90, 95, 106, 110, 125, 129, 131,
 150, 165, 171, 173, 183, 185, 205, 219.
 Dacians, 172, 173.
 Daicoviciu, Constantin, 199.
 Danielopolu, Cornelia, 212.
Danube, 28, 35, 55, 109, 111, 126, 142,
 143, 150, 151, 155, 157, 158, 162, 163,
 164, 166, 167, 169, 170, 172.
 Daponte, Ch., 84, 91, 97, 204.
 Dărmănescu, Iordache, Darie, 32, 67.
 Dârzeanu, Ioniță, 84, 93, 108, 143, 144,
 170, 177, 205.
 Dăscălescu, Ștefan Scarlat, 205.
 Decebal, 172.
 Depasta, Petre, 68, 52, 58, 84, 85, 87, 89,
 97, 100, 126, 146, 205.
 Descartes, René, 69, 84.
 Destutt de Tracy, 69.
 Diderot, Denis, 69.
 Dima-Drăgan, Corneliu, 212, 215.
 Dimitrescu-Iași, C., 207.
 Dinekov, P., 215.
 Dionisie the Ecclesiarh, 56, 64, 88, 205.
 Djordjević, Dimitri, 215, 218.
Dniester, 173.
 Dombrowski, 72.
 Donat, Ion, 205.
 Donici, Alexandru, 66, 69, 87, 139, 145,
 177, 205.
 Douglas, Frederic, 73.
 Dosoftei, metropolitan, 59, 182, 194.
 Drăghici, Manolache, 40, 42, 51, 54, 55,
 56, 60, 61, 62, 91, 93, 94, 95, 102, 137, 205.
Drăgășani, 170.
 Dresden, 73.
 Drugănescu, 33.
 Dudescu, family, 96, 185.
 Dudescu, Constantin, 31.

- Dumitrache, *the medelnicer*, 48, 55, 56, 62, 63, 65, 148, 150, 205.
 Dumitrescu, Al. T., 200.
 Dumitriu, Nicolae, 33.
 Durak, V., 206.
 Dușu, Alexandru, 12, 70, 199, 206, 211, 213, 215, 218.
 Egypt, 65, 71.
 Elian, Alexandru, 77, 215.
 Eliade, Pompiliu, 8, 199, 213.
 Elwert, W. Th., 11.
 Emile, 70.
 Enescu, N. C., 202, 214.
 England, 58, 73, 74, 123.
 Entzemberg, 140.
 Erbiceanu, Constantin, 8, 42, 46, 109, 179, 204, 205, 207, 208, 210, 215.
 Europe, 21, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 64, 65, 66, 89, 92, 96, 101, 106, 142, 144, 159, 166, 169, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195. Central, 21, 58, 190, 194. Eastern, 21, 51, 72, 74, 192, 213. Southeast, 14, 21, 58, 68, 72, 75, 77, 169, 170, 213. Western, 58, 71, 93, 95, 96, 108, 194.
 Fălcoianu, Dumitru, 32.
 Fărcașanu, Matei, 68.
 Fénélon, François, 67.
 Filangeri, Gaetano, 72.
 Filaret II, 65, 69, 150, 203.
 Filipescu, family, 33, 64.
 Filipescu, Constantin, 33, 38, 170, 182.
 Filipescu, Pană, 185.
 Filitti, Ioan C., 169, 201, 205, 214, 216, 218.
 Fischer-Galati, Stephen, 17.
 Flechtenmacher, Christian, 42, 51, 66, 205.
 Fleury, Ch., 71.
 Florea, L., 206.
 Florence, 36.
 Florescu, Radu, 11.
Focșani, congress of, 47, 149, 153, 203.
 Fotino, Dionisie, 14, 29, 37, 38, 49, 52, 55, 59, 62, 63, 73, 76, 84, 90, 93, 95, 105, 106, 124, 125, 129, 130, 131, 137, 146, 170, 183, 205.
 Fotino, George, 206.
 Fotino, Ilie, 91, 121, 144, 205.
 Fotino, Mihail, 140.
 Forăscu, Alexandru, 205.
 France, 57, 58, 66, 69, 71, 72, 73, 213.
 Francfort, 65.
 Frățiman, I., 217.
 Frederic II, 67.
 Furnica, Dumitru, 201.
 Furtună, Dumitru, 216.
 Galaction of Agapia, 33.
 Galan, M., 201, 216.
 Galați, 131.
 Galitzin, 185.
 Gani, Atanasie, 57.
 Gaudin, Emile, 71.
 Gavrilă, A., 187
 Geneva, 70, 206
 Gentz, Frederic of, 68, 144, 213, 214.
 Georgescu, Valentin Al., 17, 66, 69, 74, 140, 200, 205, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218.
 Georgescu, Vlad, 38, 41, 110, 144, 146, 161, 167, 181, 199, 200, 203, 206, 209, 214, 221.
 Germany, 57, 106.
 Gheorghiu, N., 37.
 Gheuca, Leon, 14, 32, 48, 57, 65, 67, 69, 75, 79, 83, 162, 205.
 Gherontie, 180.
 Ghibănescu, Gheorghe, 209.
 Ghica, family, 57, 71, 107, 193.
 Ghica, Grigore I, 106.
 Ghica, Grigore III, 27, 31, 32, 37, 65, 113, 127.
 Ghica, Grigore IV, 24, 33, 34, 41, 49, 52, 54, 56, 68, 106, 108, 110, 113, 130, 132, 134, 144, 146, 148, 153, 161, 164, 177, 180, 193, 205.
 Ghica, Matei, 31.
 Ghica, ban, 71.
Ghighiu, monastery, 57, 212.
 Ghițescu, Dimitrie, 206.
 Giurescu, Constantin, 217.
 Giurescu, Constantin C., 199.
Giurgiu, 157.
 Glogoveanu, Nicolae, 181.
 Gobdelas, P., 67.
 Golescu, family, 64, 206.
 Golescu, Dinicu, 15, 34, 35, 41, 42, 49, 52, 58, 62, 68, 70, 88, 108, 127, 130, 134, 137, 138, 172, 176, 177, 182, 184, 186, 206.
 Golescu, Iordache, 206.
 Golescu, Radu, 137.
Golești, 185.
 Göllner, Carol, 202.
 Grădișteanu, Șerban, 175.
 Greceanu, Nicolae, 32.
 Gregory, Helen, 17.
 Greece, 144, 146, 202.

- Greeks, 36, 48, 54, 55, 77, 83, 97, 151, 158, 159, 161, 169, 170, 180, 181, 193.
- Grigoraş, Nicolae, 202, 216.
- Grigore II, metropolitan, 168, 206.
- Grigore Dascălul, metropolitan, 83, 148, 180, 206.
- Grigore of Rîmnic, 136.
- Grimm, P., 214.
- Grosul, V., 217.
- Grotius, Hugo, 66, 213.
- Guboglu, Mihail, 133.
- Guevara, Antonio, 61, 213.
- Guilford, lord, 73, 209.
- Gustav III, king of Sweden, 65.
- Habsburgs, 21, 148, 164.
- Hagi-Pop, Constantin, 36, 57, 66.
- Haivas, Em., 209.
- Hajdeu, Bogdan-Petriceicu, 217.
- Hangerli, Constantin, 27, 33, 107.
- D'Hauterrive, Alexandre, 37, 43, 60, 67, 135, 143, 200.
- Hetairia, 37, 98, 151, 159.
- Hetairists, 29, 107, 145, 170.
- Hiotu, Alexandru, 57.
- Hodoş, N., 200.
- Horchenu, 89.
- Hotin*, 32, 163.
- Hortolan, 71.
- Hungary*, 22, 126, 173.
- Iacov, abbot, 162.
- Iancovici, Sava, 215.
- Ibrăileanu, Garabet, 9, 202.
- Ignatie the Greek, 56, 110, 125, 159, 161, 181, 211.
- Ilarion of Argeş, 206.
- Iliaş, Alexandru, 61.
- Ilie of Butoi, 56, 206.
- Ilieş, Aurora, 200.
- Ilinski, Ivan, 60.
- Ionaşcu, C. I., 206.
- Ionaşcu, Traian, 215.
- Ionescu, Alexandru Sadi, 200.
- Ionescu, D., 216.
- Ionescu, G. M., 203.
- Ionescu, I., 205.
- Ionescu, Tr., 217.
- Ionescu-Dolj, I., 217.
- Ionian*, isles, 73.
- Iorga, Nicolae, 8, 11, 12, 27, 40, 41, 54, 75, 76, 150, 165, 169, 170, 174, 185, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218.
- Iosif of Argeş, 83, 180.
- Iosif Franţuzul, 57.
- Irimia, I., 209.
- Isar, Nicolae, 204, 209.
- Isopescu, Claudiu, 202.
- Istrate, C., 216.
- Italy*, 58, 89, 202.
- Ivănescu, Gheorghe, 203, 216.
- Ivaşcu, George, 11, 211.
- Ivireanu, Antim, 61, 83, 194, 212.
- Janus, 167.
- Jassy*, 30, 32, 35, 48, 57, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74, 113, 115, 147, 161, 178, 180, 182, 216.
- Treaty of, 22.
- Jews, 143.
- Jianu, Grigore, 32.
- Jianu, Stan, 164.
- Joja, Athanasie, 218.
- Joseph II, 67, 110, 150.
- Jullien, Marc-Antoine, 66, 74, 209.
- Kant, Immanuel, 69, 84, 213.
- Karazin, 149.
- Kaunitz, Wenceslas, 67, 165.
- Kaouchanski, D., 214.
- Kirileanu, G., 186, 204, 211.
- Kiselev, Pavel, 41, 53, 97, 196, 209, 214.
- Kogălniceanu, Mihail, 203, 211.
- Kosciusko, Thadeus, 147.
- Kuciuk-Kainardji*, treaty of, 22, 26, 65, 149, 150, 167.
- Lagarde, count, 55.
- Lambrior, Alexandru, 214.
- Langeron, A. 23, 36, 56.
- Lanjuinais, I. 67.
- Lazăr, Gheorghe, 49, 52, 57, 67, 69, 72, 89, 90, 108, 172, 179, 182, 206.
- Lăzărescu, Mary, 17.
- Legrand, E., 204.
- Leibniz, Gottfried W., 69, 84.
- Leningrad, 153.
- Leon, VI, emperor, 76.
- Levy-Bruhl, H., 215.
- Ligne, prince of, 205.
- Litzica, Constantin, 200.
- Locke, John, 69, 74, 84.
- London*, 68, 73.
- Lovinescu, Eugen, 9, 202.
- Lupu, Dionisie, 83, 137, 206.
- Lupu, Vasile, 7, 76.

- Mably, Gabriel, 69.
 Macarie, 180, 182, 207.
 Macedo-Romanians, 183.
 Macedonski, Dimitrie, 107.
 Macedonski, Pavel, 107.
 Mahmud I, 157.
 Maior, Petru, 60.
 Malebranche, Nicolas, 69.
 Manolache, M., 204.
 Manu, *spathar*, 71.
 Marlianus, Ambrosius, 62.
 Mănuță, M., 204.
 Marcovici, Simion, 13, 41, 51, 53, 74, 88, 103, 105, 114, 118, 119, 121, 129, 133, 136, 137, 141, 142, 145, 166, 177, 178, 182, 207.
 Marcu, Alexandru, 207, 214.
 Matei, Gheorghe, 216.
 Matei al Mirelor, 61.
 Matl, I., 213.
 Mavrocordat, family, 9, 66, 107, 212.
 Mavrocordat, Constantin, 48, 61, 65, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 126, 132, 165, 205, 212.
 Mavrocordat, Nicolae, 61, 108, 212, 213.
 Mavrocordat Deli-bei, Alexandru, 32, 36.
 Mavrocordat-Firaris, Alexandru, 27, 67, 109, 169.
 Mavrogheni, family, 207.
 Mavrogheni, Nicolae, 27, 28, 32, 37, 53, 60, 78, 201, 207, 210, 216.
 Măzăreanu, Vartolomeu, 48, 83.
 Maziolli, I. P., 67.
 Mesiodax, I., 74.
 Metternich, Clement Wenceslas, 68, 144, 214.
 Michael the Brave, 40, 90, 165, 178.
 Michăileanu, M., 209.
 Micu-Clain, Samuel, 60.
 Mihordea, V., 201, 212, 216, 217.
 Milescu, Nicolae, 59, 194.
 Minciaki, Matei Liovievici, 50, 121, 166, 209.
 Mircea the Old, 40, 154, 165.
 Mohammed, 143.
 Moisescu, Gheorghe, 208.
 Montesquieu, Ch. de Secondat, baron of, 74.
Moldavia, 9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 48, 49, 30, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40, 42, 53, 60, 61, 64, 66, 67, 73, 75, 77, 86, 88, 95, 96, 99, 106, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 121, 122, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 131, 132, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140, 144, 146, 148, 150, 151, 153, 154, 156, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 171, 174, 175, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186, 191, 192, 193, 196.
 Moldavians, 42, 61, 64, 108, 126, 131, 135, 137, 141, 148, 149, 151, 154, 159, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 171, 172, 175, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185.
 Moldo-Wallachians, 39.
 Molnar, Ion Piuaru, 72.
Moreea, 66.
 Moroiu, Constantin, 74.
 Moruzi, Alexandru, 32, 37, 109, 162.
 Moruzi, Constantin, 31, 32.
 Moruzi, Constantin, 31, 32.
 Moschopoulos, L., 215.
Moscow, 73.
 Moslems, 109, 142, 157.
 Movilă, Moise, 61, 212.
 Movilă, Petru, 61, 212.
 Mumuleanu, Barbu Paris, 38, 41, 68, 120, 138, 177, 179, 184, 207.
Mureș, 173.
 Mureșianu, A., 202.
 Murguleț, Vasile, 207.
Muscel, 137.
 Naples, 165.
 Napoleon I, 38, 42, 53, 68, 72, 73, 114, 125, 147, 148, 151, 168, 171, 177, 182, 185, 204, 209, 213.
 Narcisse, 70.
Neamf, monastery, 71, 180, 213.
 Neculce, Ion, 59, 194.
 Negruzzi, family, 57.
 Negulescu, Petre, 200.
 Nesselrode, Charles, 119, 136, 153.
 Nestor, Ion, 199.
 Newton, Isaac, 69, 84.
 Nicola, Iancu, 178, 182, 184, 207.
 Nicolăiasa, G., 200.
 Nicolăescu-Plopșor, C. S., 205.
 Nicolas I, 54, 151.
Nicopole, 53.
 Nistor, Ion, 200, 201, 202, 218.
 Noica, Constantin, 214.
 Nottara, Hrysant, 80.
 Obradovici, Dositei, 79.
 Obrenovici, Miloș, 215.
 Obrescov, A. M., 47, 168, 169.
 Odobescu, Alexandru, 7.
Oltenia, 29, 151, 164.
 Onciul, Dimitrie, 218.
 Onciuleac, M., 203.

- Orlov, Grigore Grigorievici, 154, 163, 168.
 Ortiz, Ramiro, 214.
 Oțetea, Andrei, 10, 23, 199, 201.
 Oteteleșanu, Constantin, 66.
 Oteteleșanu, Iordache, 164.
 Ottoman empire, *passim*.
 Oxenstiern, Axel, 67, 214.
- Paciurea, 57.
 Paladi, family, 56, 57.
 Pall, Francisc, 217.
 Panaitescu, P. P., 11, 94, 106, 185, 186, 204, 206, 212, 218.
 Pandrea, D., 212.
 Panin, Nikita I., 150.
 Panopol, Vasile, 203.
 Panu, I., 205.
 Papacostea, Victor, 170, 205.
 Papadima, O., 200.
 Papadopol, P., 181.
 Papiu-Ilarian, A., 199, 210.
Parma, 70.
Paris, 53, 71, 72, 73, 74. Treaty of, 65.
 Pârșcoveanu, Ștefan, 50, 107.
 Parrant, 23, 27.
 Pascal, Blaise, 69.
 Pascu, G., 203.
 Pascu, Ștefan, 17, 199.
 Pasvant-Oglu, 28.
 Peretz, Ion, 217.
 Peșacov, Gheorghe Hagi, 39, 170, 183, 184, 207.
 Peter I, 59, 60, 62, 68.
Petersburg, 48, 126, 163, 167, 182.
 Petrescu, Gheorghe, 200.
 Petri, N., 209.
 Petriceicu, Ștefan, 106.
Phanar, 193.
 Phanariots, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 53, 54, 55, 58, 61, 64, 65, 76, 77, 83, 88, 90, 91, 96, 97, 102, 104, 106, 107, 108, 112, 114, 126, 129, 132, 137, 141, 142, 152, 155, 159, 166, 169, 170, 174, 175, 181, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196. Epoch, 7, 8, 9, 10, 32, 33, 40, 77, 90, 91, 129, 140, 179, 180, 193, 197. Regime, 42, 43, 83, 91, 105, 108, 110, 112, 120, 126, 132, 134, 146, 158, 178, 191, 193. Phanariotism, 62, 195.
 Philippide, Daniel, 38, 70, 73, 85, 100, 183, 207.
Piatra Neamț, 30.
- Pini, Alexandru, 23.
 Pippidi, Andrei, 209.
 Piru, Alexandru, 210, 212.
 Pîrvulescu, Ghenadie, 108, 170, 207.
Pisa, 207.
 Plato, 75, 76.
 Platon, Gheorghe, 138, 218.
 Pleșoianu, Grigore, 41, 43, 51, 136, 207.
 Plovak, Jean, 70.
 Poenaru, Petrache, 58, 74, 206.
 Pogor, Vasile, 34, 37, 51, 59, 69, 141, 170, 179.
Poland, 21, 22, 51, 147, 173.
 Poles, 72.
Pontus, Euxinus, 173.
 Pop, Vasile, 61.
 Popa-Liseanu, G., 72, 90, 206.
 Popescu, Emanuela, 12, 200.
 Popescu, N., 206.
 Popescu, N. M., 207.
 Popescu-Teiușan, I., 209.
 Popovici, Dumitru, 10, 11, 89, 191, 199, 211.
 Popp, Gheorghe, 206.
 Portescu, S., 207.
Portugal, 41.
 Poteca, Eufrosin, 41, 43, 51, 53, 56, 67, 69, 74, 84, 85, 88, 92, 103, 108, 124, 125, 133, 137, 138, 142, 182, 183, 208.
 Potemkin, G. A., 185.
 Potra, G., 46.
 Prau, abbot, 32.
 Procopie, patriarch, 162.
 Procopowich, E., 202.
Proilava, 161.
Prussia, 47, 149, 154, 168, 185.
Pрут, 173
 Pufendorf, Samuel, 66.
 Pulio, merchants, 57.
 Pușcariu, Sextil, 10.
Putna, monastery, 83, 207.
- Racoviceanu, Apostol, 33.
 Racoviță, family, 107, 193.
 Racoviță, Constantin, 31.
 Racoviță, Ștefan, 140, 175.
 Racoviță, 160.
 Rădulescu, Andrei, 205, 217.
 Rădulescu, Ion Heliade, 42, 186, 206, 207.
 Rădulescu-Motru, Constantin, 9, 10, 41, 88, 103, 125, 208, 218.
 Raicevich, S., 23, 36, 55, 200.
 Râmniceanu, Naum, 14, 34, 37, 41, 42,

- 52, 55, 59, 62, 63, 64, 65, 73, 75, 76, 84, 89, 95, 114, 117, 118, 119, 121, 137, 138, 145, 146, 147, 159, 170, 172, 173, 175, 176, 177, 179, 181, 183, 184, 208.
- Repnin, Nicolas V., 48, 109, 158, 162, 163, 182, 185, 206, 211.
- Rhigas, Velestinlis, 77, 169, 215.
- Rhodes, 53.
- Ribeaupierre, Alexandre, 112.
- Ricardo, David, 73.
- Rîmnic, 63, 83.
- Romania, 8, 9, 91, 109, 151, 165, 169, 182.
- Romanian Principalities, *passim*. See also Moldavia and Wallachia.
- Romanians, 8, 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 32, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 43, 54, 55, 56, 60, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 77, 78, 79, 88, 91, 108, 110, 131, 133, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 162, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 178, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 189, 191, 192, 193, 196, 197.
- Romans, 32, 83, 171, 172, 173, 183.
- Rome, 60, 172.
- Romanovs, 21, 164, 168.
- Romniceanu, Chiriac, 41, 56, 64, 178, 208.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 70, 88, 90.
- Rosetti, family, 209.
- Rosetti, Nicolae, 96.
- Rosetti, Radu, 174.
- Rosetti, Ștefan, 33.
- Rosetti-Rosnovanu, family, 15, 49, 56, 57, 58, 66, 67, 69, 209.
- Rosetti-Rosnovanu, Iordache, 14, 33, 42, 49, 52, 54, 56, 57, 62, 64, 65, 67, 86, 94, 97, 114, 115, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 135, 139, 140, 141, 142, 148, 151, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159, 163, 165, 170, 181, 190, 208.
- Rosetti — Rosnovanu, Nicolae, 14, 15, 50, 52, 57, 60, 62, 64, 65, 67, 70, 73, 74, 90, 94, 96, 99, 101, 102, 114, 115, 126, 130, 134, 135, 139, 151, 153, 154, 190, 209
- Rumiantzev, P. A., 107, 150, 157, 163, 167.
- Russia, 8, 21, 22, 31, 43, 47, 50, 51, 57, 58, 62, 68, 73, 94, 106, 119, 134, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 154, 161, 167, 168, 169, 170, 181, 185, 186.
- Russo, Demostene 9, 215.
- Saint-Aulaire, marquis, of, 68, 185.
- Saint-Helen, island, 72.
- Salaberry, 56.
- Saul, *serdar*, 202.
- Sava, monk, 66.
- Sava, Saint, school of, 69, 73, 211.
- Sbiera, G., 206.
- Selim III, 78.
- Seineanu, L., 215.
- Serban, Constantin, 201.
- Serbia, 79, 170, 202.
- Serbians, 79, 170, 215.
- Seton-Watson, R., 199.
- Severin, Ivan Ivanovici, 150, 158.
- Shishtov, treaty of, 22, 49, 63, 79, 107 164, 168, 203.
- Siberia, 41.
- Sibia, 28, 29, 32, 57, 144, 202.
- Silistra, 166.
- Simonescu, Dan, 200, 212.
- Șincai, Gheorghe, 60.
- Sion, family, 209.
- Sion, Iordache, 209.
- Slavs, 169.
- Smith, Adam, 73.
- Socola, 57.
- Socrate, 75.
- Sorescu, G., 203.
- Spain, 145.
- Sperantia, Th., 217.
- Spielman, 203.
- Stamate, Iacob II, 14, 36, 48, 52, 69, 71, 74, 75, 83, 84, 144, 181, 209.
- Stănculescu, F., 216.
- Stănculescu, I., 209.
- Stănescu, Eugen, 12, 17, 183, 212, 218.
- Ștefănescu, M., 214.
- Ștefănescu-Galați, 206.
- Stephen the Great, 40, 90, 165, 178.
- Ștîncă, 57, 75, 212.
- Stirbei, family, 56, 64.
- Știrbei, Barbu, 15, 36, 37.
- Știrbei, Barbu, D., 32, 41, 50, 52, 64, 97, 100, 125, 126, 127, 128, 131, 134, 140, 196, 209.
- Stoffel, 48, 134, 203.
- Stratford-Canning, 184.
- Stempel, Gabriel, 200, 212.
- Stroganov, G., 49, 33, 131, 156, 159, 204.
- Sturdza, family, 56, 57.
- Sturdza, Alexandru, 179, 209.
- Sturdza, Dumitrache, 49, 52, 64, 65, 73, 86, 122, 123, 128, 138, 140, 141, 151, 175, 177, 208.
- Sturdza, D. A., 200.

- Sturdza, D. C., 200.
 Sturdza-Scheianu, D. C., 101.
 Sturdza, Ioniță Sandu, 50, 94, 113, 136, 148, 166, 183, 209, 217,
 Sturdza, Mihail, 15, 34, 37, 42, 52, 56, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 88, 91, 97, 110, 111, 112, 121, 125, 126, 137, 144, 151, 153, 154, 161, 163, 165, 170, 186, 190, 196, 209.
 Sturdza, Petre, 98.
 Sturdza, Ruxandra, 209.
 Suceava, 216.
 Sulea-Firu, I., 212.
 Sülzer, F., 70, 200.
 Suțu, Alexandru, 23, 33, 132.
 Suțu, Ecaterina, 69.
 Suțu, Mihail, 32, 36, 37, 42, 71, 83, 133, 141, 142, 164.
 Suțu, Mihail, 27, 33, 37, 107.
 Suțu, Niculae, 200, 209.
 Suvorov, A. V., 185.
 Tappe, E. D., 214.
 Tazlău, 49, 203.
 Tartars, 28.
 Tăutu, Ion, 13, 15, 34, 37, 39, 50, 53, 59, 60, 69, 70, 73, 74, 86, 88, 91, 95, 99, 100, 102, 104, 105, 108, 110, 111, 114, 115, 117, 121, 124, 125, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 135, 137, 138, 140, 143, 145, 152, 153, 154, 159, 161, 174, 175, 177, 182, 184, 191, 210.
 Télémaque, 67.
 Teodor, 210.
 Teodorescu, Alexandru, 204.
 Teodorescu, Barbu, 212.
 Teodorescu, E., 204.
 Teodorescu, G. Dem. 41, 75, 84, 92, 133, 208.
 Teohari, Anton Hagi, 36.
 Thierry, G., 57.
 Thornton, T., 56.
Tîrgoviște, 30.
 Tisa, 173.
 Tocilescu, Grigore, 211.
 Tomescu, C., 206.
 Tomescu, Mircea, 59, 212.
 Topffer, 206.
 Topliceanu, Ștefan, 185.
 Toronțiu, I. E., 213.
 Tott, De, 36.
Transylvania, 15, 29, 55, 165, 171, 173, 183, 191, 195, 196.
 Transylvanians, 72, 171.
 Tsourcas, Cléobule, 11.
 Turco, Giovanni del, 213.
 Turcu, Constantin, 204.
 Turnavitu, 215.
Tuscany, 151.
 Țuțiu, Gh., 216.
 Ungureanu, Gheorghe, 203, 204, 205.
Ukraine, 54.
United States of America, 65.
 Ureche, Grigore, 171.
 Ureche, V. A., 8, 59, 78, 84, 88, 110, 133, 137, 138, 140, 141, 160, 165, 181, 185, 199, 207, 210.
 Ursu, N. A., 202, 203, 207, 210, 211.
 Văcărescu, family, 56, 57, 64, 181, 210.
 Văcărescu, Barbu, 31, 64.
 Văcărescu, Barbu, ban, 33, 129, 130, 210
 Văcărescu, Enăchiță, 14, 28, 37, 47, 48, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 68, 76, 78, 85, 110, 124, 146, 148, 152, 154, 168, 175, 176, 178, 181, 182, 190, 196, 210.
 Văcărescu, Iancu, 210.
 Văcărescu, Nicolae, 93, 176, 185, 210.
 Văcărescu, Ștefan, 31.
Văcărești, monastery, 33, 75.
 Vaida, P., 212, 214.
 Vamva, Neofit, 88, 206.
 Vardalah, 70.
 Vasilache, V., 204.
 Velichi, Constantin,
 Velickovski, Paisie, 83, 180.
 Ventura, Gheorghe, 174.
 Veress, Andrei, 202.
 Vianu, Alexandru, 23, 144, 149, 158, 201, 202, 206, 218.
 Vico, G. B., 85, 89.
Vidin, 28.
Vienna, 57, 65, 66, 67, 85, 109, 148, 150, 168, 180, 182, 213. Congress of, 65.
 Villara, Alexandru, 32, 51, 133, 135, 210.
 Vintu, I. G., 216.
 Virnav, Vasile, 69, 70, 182.
 Virtosu, Emil, 32, 42, 59, 73, 74, 88, 92, 100, 104, 105, 108, 114, 115, 117, 119, 121, 125, 131, 133, 137, 148, 151, 171, 176, 177, 179, 183, 184, 185, 201, 204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 215.
 Vitalie of Neamț, 71.
 Vlachs, 57.
 Vlad the Impaler, 165.

- Vladimirescu, Tudor, 10, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 49, 52, 54, 63, 79, 93, 97, 102, 107, 110, 121, 125, 127, 132, 135, 143, 145, 146, 147, 151, 161, 164, 166, 170, 176, 177, 178, 180, 182, 185, 201, 202, 205, 207, 210.
- Vogoridi, Ștefan, 50, 209.
- Voltaire, 38, 57, 70, 71, 181, 213, 218.
- Vulgaris, Evghenie, 70, 74.
- Wallachia (Țara Românească)*, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 36, 41, 47, 48, 49, 51, 54, 60, 63, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 77, 83, 88, 90, 92, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 118, 121, 124, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 134, 138, 140, 148, 149, 151, 155, 156, 160, 163, 164, 166, 168, 171, 178, 180, 186, 191, 192, 196.
- Wallachians, 64, 109, 110, 113, 126, 149, 150, 154, 155, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 166, 167, 171, 172, 175, 182, 183, 184, 185.
- Weber, Eugen, 17.
- Wilkinson, W., 23, 96, 135, 200.
- Wolf, Andreas, 200.
- Wolff, Christian, 67, 69, 84.
- Xenopol, Alexandru D., 7, 8, 9, 165, 185, 199, 203, 206, 210, 213, 216.
- Ypsilanti, family, 64, 110.
- Ypsilanti, Alexandru, 27, 31, 37, 48, 64, 66, 67, 77, 78, 79, 91, 109, 121, 124, 138, 152, 169, 205, 206.
- Ypsilanti, Constantin, 37, 50, 94, 109, 141, 151, 170, 185, 206.
- Zablocky-Desiatovski, 214.
- Zamfirescu, Dan, 212.
- Zane, Gheorghe, 139, 217.
- Zepos, P., 216.
- Zilot Românul (Ștefan Mora), 33, 37, 66, 94, 108, 144, 145, 163, 165, 170, 176, 179, 211.

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