

Varieties of Romanian Liberalisms, 1859-1881*

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I. Introduction

The partial emancipation of the Romanian Principalities of Moldova and Muntenia in 1859 marked the beginning of modern Romanian political development. An important aspect of this development, naturally, was the appearance of political groupings.¹ The phrase “groupings” is used deliberately here since – as I have long argued² – there were no political parties in the emerging Romanian state until after World War I, only groups, factions, cliques, and what have you, mostly organized around individual leaders and not ideas or ideologies. The work on this subject by Maurice Duverger is conclusive and does not need repeating here.³ On the other hand, though the application of his thesis to the Romanian context was first made almost four decades ago, regrettably it has only very slowly gained traction in the study of modern Romania politics.

What were these groups, coteries, and factions? Romanian political options from 1859 to the establishment of the Romanian kingdom in 1881 can be divided between people who called themselves “conservatives”⁴ and those who

* This study is dedicated to the memory of Apostol Stan (1933-2022), who did more to elaborate the history of Romanian liberalism than anyone. Though we did not always agree, we always could agree to disagree, something not entirely as common as one would hope.

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¹ For the political story, see my *Romanian Politics, 1859-1871: From Prince Cuza to Prince Carol*, Iași, The Center for Romanian Studies, 1998. On the historiography, see also Gheorghe Cliveti, *Anii 1866 și 1881 la români. Note istoriografice*, in Gheorghe Cliveti, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu, and Ionuț Nistor (eds.), *Cultură, politică și societate în timpul domniei lui Carol I. 130 de ani de la proclamarea Regatului României*, Iași, Casa Editorială Demiurg, 2011, p. 9-19.

² For the argument and the developmental issues, see Paul E. Michelson, *Conflict and Crisis: Romanian Political Development, 1861-1871*, New York, Garland Publishing, 1987, p. 19, 37-50.

³ See Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties*, New York, Wiley, 1963, *passim*.

⁴ Consult Anastasie Iordache, *Originile și constituirea Partidului Conservator din România*, revised edition, București, Editura Paideia, 1999; and Ion Bulei, *Conservatori și conservatorism în România*, revised edition, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2000. Both Iordache and Bulei were originally published prior to 1989, which had necessitated modifications in both texts.

referred to themselves as “liberals.”⁵ This reflected a division between people who believed that the system established by the Congress of Paris in 1858 was more or less satisfying, i.e., the so-called conservatives; and those who saw this system as but a stepping stone to a fully unified and independent Romania and who favored – to varying degrees – reforms in the emerging state which would not only bring them to power, but also would help them cement their hold on power, i.e. the so-called liberals.⁶

In trying to come to grips with Romanian liberalism, or rather, liberalisms, this paper is focussed on characteristics and attributes and not on practical politics (which has been extensively dealt with in the last three decades).⁷ It has two principal purposes. The first is to identify the chief Romanian liberal figures who emerged in Muntenia and Moldova between 1859 and 1881. This is important because self-described liberals dominated Romanian political life for much of the modern era. The second is to elaborate on the main distinctives of three of the most prominent liberal groups which manifested themselves in this era.⁸

⁵ See Apostol Stan and Mircea Iosa, *Liberalismul politic în România. De la origini până la 1918*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1996; Gheorghe Cliveti, *Liberalismul românesc. Eșeu istoriografic*, Iași, Editura Fundației Axis, 1996; and the works given below in Section III.

⁶ For a review, see Liviu Brătescu, *Conservatori și liberali la jumătatea secolului XIX. Un nou regim politic*, in Liviu Brătescu (ed.), *Conservatorismul românesc. Origini, evoluții, perspective*, Iași, Editura Universității “Al. I. Cuza”, 2014, p. 31-60.

⁷ See among others, Apostol Stan, *Grupări și curente politice în România între unire și independență (1859-1877)*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979; Anastasie Iordache, *Instituirea monarhiei constituționale și regimului parlamentar în România 1866-1871*, București, Editura Majadahonda, 1997, and Idem, *Sub zodia Strousberg. Viața politică din România între 1871-1878*, București, Editura Globus, 1991; Paraschiva Cîncea, *Viața politică din România în primul deceniu al independenței de stat*, București, Editura Științifică, 1974; Sorin Liviu Damean, *Carol I al României 1866-1881*, București, Editura Paideia, 2000, which provides more detail on the period under consideration than his later biography *Carol I al României. Un monarh devotat*, Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2016; Vasile V. Russu, *Viața politică în România (1866-1871)*, two volumes, Iași, Editura Universității “Al. I. Cuza”, 2001; Edda Binder-Iijima, *Die Institutionalisierung der rumänischen Monarchie unter Carol I. 1866-1881*, München, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2003; Silvia Marton, *La construction politique de la nation. La nation dans les débats du Parlement de la Roumanie (1866-1871)*, Iași, Editura Institutul European, 2009; Liviu Brătescu, *România la răscruce. Anul 1866*, preface by Andi Mihalache, Iași, Editura Institutul European, 2014; Constantin Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities. The Making of Romanian Citizenship, c. 1750-1918*, Leiden, Brill, 2019; and Cosmin-Ștefan Dogaru, *Charles Ier et la construction du régime politique roumain (1866-1881)*, AUB, Seria Științe Politice, vol. 13 (2012), nr. 1, p. 3-15.

⁸ Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice românești (1369-1878)*, München, Jon Dumitru Verlag, 1987, especially p. 180 f., provides interesting perspectives on some of these issues. See also Cristian-Ion Popa (ed.), *O Enciclopedie a gândirii politice românești*, vol. I, 1821-1918, București, Academia Română/Editura Institutului de Științe Politice și Relații Internaționale “Ion C. Brătianu”, 2018, particularly Ion Goian, *Gândirea politică românească în secolul al XIX-lea. Teme în dezbateră contemporană*, p. i-xlii.

II. Prelude⁹

The emergence of modern Romania and modern Romanian political culture began with the abortive revolutions of 1848 in the Romanian lands which had seemed to smother the Romanian national cause, but which reignited with outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853. The Treaty of Paris of 1856, which ended that war, made the European Great Powers the arbiters of the Principalities' future and provided cover for the reorganization of their political and social structures. Though technically still under Ottoman suzerainty, the Danubian Romanians were able through a series of clever and on the whole daring and successful *fait accomplis* to leverage their situation and wind up achieving most of their short-run aims.¹⁰

The Great Powers had ratified a new statute for what they called “the United Romanian Principalities of Moldova and Muntenia” in a convention issued on 7/19 August 1858.¹¹ The Principalities were to have almost complete internal autonomy; were to develop uniform political institutions; and were obligated to pursue agrarian reform, electoral change, and the abolition of the remnants of social privilege in the future.¹²

The two eastern Romanian Principalities were given a number of joint institutions under the auspices of the Great Powers: a unified military command, a common judiciary system and central court of appeals, a common post and telegraph network, a customs union, and a quasi-legislative “Central Commission” to deal with matters of joint concern. Confusingly, at the same time the not-really-united United Principalities were to have two princes (elected for life), separate capitals in Iași and București, separate assemblies, and separate governments. This pseudo-confederation was a clumsy and unworkable compromise hammered out between those European powers that did not want any union at all and those who favored the Romanian national cause for a variety of reasons, such as France's Foreign Minister Alexandre Walewski.¹³ All of this came with a collective guarantee by the European powers.

⁹ For an overview and context, see my *Romania (History)*, in Richard Frucht (ed.), *Encyclopedia of East Europe: From the Congress of Vienna to the Fall of Communism*, New York, Garland Publishing, 2000, p. 673-677. For detail, see Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians, 1774-1866*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1996; and Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1994.

¹⁰ For the diplomatic story, see Barbara Jelavich, *Russia and the Formation of the Romanian National State, 1821-1878*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984; Frederick Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence* West Lafayette IN, Purdue University Press, 1995; and Gheorghe Cliveti's encyclopedic *România modernă și “apogeul Europei” 1815-1914*, București, Editura Academiei RSR, 2018.

¹¹ The text of the Convention is published in Gh. Petrescu, et al. (eds.), *Acte și documente relative la istoria renascerei României*, București, Göbl, Vol. 7, 1892, Document Nr. 2069, p. 306 f.

¹² See Mihai Cojocariu, *Partida națională și constituirea statului român (1856-1859)*, Iași, Editura Universității “Al. I. Cuza”, 1995.

¹³ See Alexandre Walewski to his ambassadors, circular of 8/20 August 1859, published in *Acte și documente*, Vol. 7, 1892, Document Nr. 2071, p. 336-337. Walewski even argued that

The unionists, though dissatisfied, were ready to seize the day. One of them, Vasile Boerescu, put this very plainly in 1859: “Europe has helped us; now it remains for us to help ourselves.”¹⁴ They proceeded to do so in quiet defiance of the guaranteeing Powers. In 1859, the two Romanian Principalities were tacitly unified by simply electing the same man, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, as prince of both principalities. In 1861, following two years of frustration with the Paris solution, Romanian leaders were able to transform the United Principalities into an actual single political unit with a single prince, capital, and government at București.

The United Romanian Principalities in the 1860s were of modest size and population.¹⁵ Moldova had a population of some 2 million in fifteen counties (județe); its capital, Iași, had a population of nearly 70,000. Muntenia was the larger of the two, with a population of 2.6 million in seventeen counties; its capital, București, had a population of 140,000.

The relative underdevelopment of the Principalities can be summarized statistically. With an urban population of less than 18%, Romania was predominantly rural, peasant, and backward. Of 974,000 heads of family, 67% were engaged in agriculture. An incipient middle class (composed of small merchants, artisans, functionaries, and so forth) was 16% of the heads of family, but a quarter of this figure came from governmental and religious functionaries, while the free professions (doctors, lawyers, engineers) comprised a minuscule 838 heads of family. This was distinctly disadvantageous given that the middle classes were the engines of progress and development in 19th century Europe to which the Romanians aspired to belong. The entire infrastructure of economic development – industry, banking, and communications, and education – remained to be built.¹⁶

The ignored elephant in the room in 1859 was that the Convention system had saddled the United Principalities with an extremely restricted franchise.

the Central Commission was tantamount to a de facto establishment of union. Experience was to show otherwise. See also Eugen-Tudor Sclifos, *Franța, Rusia și 'faptul împlinit' (ianuarie-februarie 1859)*, in Petronel Zahariuc and Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu (eds.), *160 de ani de la Unirea Principatelor. Oameni, fapte, și idei*, Iași, Editura Universității “Al. I. Cuza”, 2020, p. 225-248.

¹⁴ Vasile Boerescu, *Convențiunea relativă la organizarea Principatelor*, in “Naționalul”, 29 September/11 October 1858, reprinted in *Acte și documente*, Vol. 7, 1892, Document Nr. 2086, p. 409.

¹⁵ This data, for 1865, is drawn from Nicolae Soutzo, *Quelques observations sur la statistique de la Roumanie 1867*, Focșani, Goldner, 1867, reprinted in Victor Slăvescu (ed.), *Vieța și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, București, Imprimeria Națională, 1941, p. 363 f.

¹⁶ In 1860, the Principalities spent 8.6 million lei on education for its 4.5 million population, the American state of Indiana in the same year spent 68.6 million lei on 1.1 million people. Either Romania was drastically behind in education, the economist D. P. Marțian wrote, or else the Americans needed “to enlighten their populations more than we do...” Cf. D. P. Marțian, *Privire generală asupra situațiunii țării. Bugetul pe anul 1860*, in Victor Slăvescu (ed.), *Vieța și opera economistului Dionisie Pop Marțian 1829-1865*, Vol. II, București, Tipografia Națională, 1944, p. 98-101. In addition, the first two universities, at Iași and București came into being only in 1860 and 1864 respectively.

This guaranteed that the assemblies would be dominated by the wealthy, noble, and mostly conservative elements of Romanian society.¹⁷ Article 46 of the Convention had abolished all privilege, but the electoral law turned right around and restored to the formerly advantaged sector of Romanian society a renewed economic and political monopoly.¹⁸

Astonishingly, the Convention actually provided an even less open system than the previous, Russian-imposed Organic Regulations system of 1831-1832. The new/old elite still held some 80% of the so-called “national representation.” In Moldova, 2,000,000 people were represented by a mere 1,724 voters, while in Muntenia, some 2,500,000 had only 2,072. Some districts had only a handful of voters (more than a dozen had fewer than ten electors). The classic example was a district in Ismail that had only one voter in 1860, who promptly elected himself.¹⁹

The 1866 constitution altered this situation, but not drastically, as the conservatives were able to partially maintain their entrenched position. The adoption of a Prussian-style four college electoral system insisted on by the conservatives was a major disaster for Romanian political development. Embedding the system in the constitution itself was a conservative masterstroke that made it much more difficult to change later on.²⁰ It disenfranchised the majority of the population, which was divided into two groups: a minuscule direct and indirect voters. Direct voters elected 80% of the deputies and all of the senators; indirect voters (those paying less than 80 lei in taxes annually, a group that included the entire peasantry) elected 20%. Senatorial electors had to have incomes in excess of 3,525 lei and candidates had to have incomes of 9,400 lei or belong to a special category (generals, former ministers, and so forth) created to include penurious members of the elite. Oddly enough, there was no financial requirement for election to the lower chamber: hypothetically any citizen 25 or older could be elected.

The success of the conservatives in preserving a narrow franchise owed in the end to the reluctance of the liberals to support universal suffrage on the grounds that this might lead to the swamping of “intelligence” by mere “numbers.”²¹ They thus sacrificed principle to expediency, a practice that became pretty much standard operating procedure for Romanian liberalism.

¹⁷ See the annex to the Convention of 1858. Text in *Acte și documente*, Vol. 7, 1892, Document Nr. 2069, p. 314-316.

¹⁸ On the history of the Romanian constitution, see Eleodor Focșeneanu, *Istoria Constituțională a României (1859-2003)*, fourth edition edited by Anca Focșeneanu, București, Editura Eikon, 2018, p. 24-34 is on the 1853-1866 era.

¹⁹ According to the “Monitorul Oficial al Moldovei”, 16 March 1860.

²⁰ For details on the Constitution of 1866, see Michelson, *Romanian Politics*, 1998, p. 181-187; Ioan Stanomir, *1866: constituționalism, moderație, și viziune politică*, in Liviu Brătescu and Ștefania Ciubotaru (eds.), *Monarhia în România – o evaluare politică, memorie și patrimoniu*, Iași, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2012, p. 285-302; and Eleodor Focșeneanu, *op. cit.*, p. 35 f.

²¹ See the Muntenian liberal press organ, “Românul”, 28/29 May 1866.

This deviation from classical French liberalism was signaled by Ion C. Brătianu even prior to the union of 1859. Writing in “Românul”, Brătianu publicly stated: “There was a time in which I wished for the transformation of Romanian society in the image and model of France. But after an intense study of... our national history... I have moderated my wish to emulate them.”²² This expediency and abandonment of principle surfaced more and more in Brătianu's thought and policies such that by the 1880s (as I have argued elsewhere),²³ liberalism properly speaking was dead in Romania. The result of the new electoral law was to limit real political participation to about 20,000 men out of a population of 5 million. The result was that power remained in the hands of a narrow elite that was not subject to the discipline of effective political participation and genuine elections.²⁴

In such an oligarchical situation, it needs to be emphasized, no real political parties were able to form. There were tendencies, groupings, factions, and personality cliques, but nothing that could seriously be called political parties.²⁵ The formation of a democratic system of political parties and representative government was prevented because elections depended on who governed rather than determining who would govern.

In a genuine parliamentary system, a vote of no confidence usually means the fall of the government, in Romania, for almost all of its pre-1989 history, a vote of no confidence meant the demise of the assembly and produced new elections aimed at engendering a more amenable legislature, one subservient to the oligarchy that ruled Romania throughout the period under consideration.²⁶ This was affirmed by two important Romanian figures, the centrist conservative politician Take Ionescu (one of the few members of the elite with an actual middle class background), and the playwright Ion Luca Caragiale, one of Romania's leading cultural figures, a Junimist conservative and outspoken critic of Romanian liberalism.

Here is what Take Ionescu declared in a speech in 1916 “We have never had in the entire reign of King Carol free elections. Instead of having the nation elect the Chamber and the Senate, which would then form the government, we

²² Ion C. Brătianu, *Reformele*, in “Românul”, 21 December 1857, reprinted in Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte și cuvântări*, Vol. 1, Partea 1 (*Iunie 1848 – Decembrie 1859*), edited by G. Marinescu and C. Grecescu, București, Cartea Românească, 1938, p. 176-179.

²³ Paul E. Michelson, *The Strange Death of Romanian Liberalism*, in Liviu Brătescu (ed.), *Liberalismul românesc și valențele sale europene*, Iași, Editura PIM, 2011, p. 143-157.

²⁴ Not coincidentally, of the ten liberal Prime Ministers between 1866-1900, none had any middle class (bourgeois) origins, all coming from the nobility. Mihai Sorin Rădulescu, *Elita liberală românească (1866-1900)*, București, Editura ALL, 1998, p. 42.

²⁵ For the argument and bibliography, see Michelson, *Conflict and Crisis*, 1987, p. 37-50.

²⁶ Though I rarely find the writings of Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea accurate or convincing, particularly his *Neoiobăgia. Studiu economico-sociologic al problemei noastre agrare*, București, Editura Viața Românească, n.d., there is much food for thought on these matters in his study *Despre oligarhia română*, published between 1914 and 1920, reprinted in Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Opere complete*, edited by Ion Popescu-Puțuri and Ștefan Voite, București, Editura Politică, 1978, p. 136-231.

have had it the other way around, the government forms the chambers...²⁷ The lack of real parties and real elections also allowed the monarch to play a much more active role in modern Romanian political life than was healthy.²⁸

And, not so coincidentally, it resulted in the institutionalization of the political corruption practiced on all sides after 1866. Here is what Caragiale had to say from a disgusted self-imposed exile in Germany following the peasant uprising of 1907: “The two great so-called historical parties which alternate in power are, in reality, nothing but two great factions, each having not adherents, but a clientele... The administration is composed of two great armies. One in power feeding itself; the other waiting starved in opposition...”²⁹ Need more be said?

III. Romanian Liberals³⁰

Following 1859, Romanian liberals were divided into a number of groups. Interestingly, each of these groups tended to be dominated either by Moldovans or Muntenians with very little crossover between the two principalities. This section is devoted to identifying the principal factions and their leaders.³¹

²⁷ Take Ionescu, *Cuvântare rostită la București în sala Dacia la întrunirea dela 3 Iulie 1916 a Federației Unioniste*, in *Pentru România-Mare. Discursuri din războiul, 1915-1917*, București, SOCEC, 1919, p. 134.

²⁸ See my developmental assessments of the reigns of Cuza and Carol I: *Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1859-1866: A Developmental Assessment*, in Petronel Zahariuc and Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 65-88, and *Carol I of Romania, 1866-1914: A Developmental Assessment*, in SAI, Vol. 81 (2014), p. 59-78. On aversions to democracy in Romania: Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, București, Editura Ideea Europeană, 2005, p. 271 ff. For meditations along similar lines, see H.-R. Patapievici, *Politice*, revised 2nd edition, București, Humanitas, 1997, his more hopeful *Discernământul modernizării. 7 conferințe despre situația de fapt*, București, Humanitas, 2004; and Daniel Barbu, *Șapte teme de politică românească*, București, Editura ANTEP, 1997.

²⁹ Ion Luca Caragiale, *1907 din primavară până'n toamnă. Câteva note*, in his *Opere*, Volume V, edited by Șerban Cioculescu, București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1938, p. 171-173.

³⁰ For an overview of Romanian liberalism, see my *Romanian Liberalism, 1800-1947. Definition, Periodization, and a Research Agenda*, 2013, p. 3-19; as well as other contributions to this volume. In addition, see Stan and Iosa, *Liberalismul politic*, 1996; Cliveti, *Liberalismul românesc*, 1996; Victoria Brown, *The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism*, in Steven Fischer-Galati, Radu R. Florescu, and George R. Ursul (eds.), *Romania Between East and West: Historical Essays in Memory of Constantin C. Giurescu*, Boulder CO, East European Quarterly, 1982, p. 269-301; Gheorghe Platon, *Liberalismul românesc în secolul XIX: emergență, etape, forme de expresie*, in Al. Zub (coord.), *Cultură și societate. Studii privitoare la trecutul românesc*, București, Editura Științifică, 1991, p. 73-103; and Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner (ed.), *Istoria Partidului Național Liberal*, București, Editura ALL, 2000. Much of what follows is drawn from these sources in addition to my *Conflict and Crisis*, 1987, and *Romanian Politics*, 1998, and constitutes a further update on this subject.

³¹ Indispensable for the study of Romanian liberal groups and figures are Stan, *Grupări și curente*, 1979; and Rădulescu, *Elita liberală*, 1998, which includes biographical and genealogical sketches for most of the individuals listed below. Also useful is Cosmin-Ștefan Dogaru, *Statesmen from Former Times. Political Leadership and Networks of Power in Modern Romania (1859-1918)*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2020, which discusses social and political networks.

The leading Romanian liberal group in the era preceding Romanian independence was largely Muntenian, led by Ion C. Brătianu and C. A. Rosetti.³² Mostly 1848 activists, this group included Ion's brother, Dumitru, the Golescu brothers – Nicolae, Ștefan, Alexandru C. (Albu), and Radu – their cousin Alexandru G. Golescu (Negru), Constantin Crețulescu, Cezar Bolliac,³³ Anton I. Arion, Grigore Arghiropol, I. G. Valentineanu, Eugeniu Carada, Eugeniu Stătescu, Gheorghe P. Cantilli, Emil Costinescu, as well as two solitary Moldovans, Anastasie Panu and Vasile Mălinescu (a sometime ally of Mihail Kogălniceanu), both of whom were not active after 1866.

The Muntenian liberals – sometimes rather ludicrously referred to as “the Radicals” or “Reds” – were more organized than any other group, even attempting as early as 1861, albeit unsuccessfully) to establish a rudimentary party organization, but they had little support outside of Muntenia and even there, few adherents outside of the cities and towns. Of course, given the restrictive franchise, the latter drawback didn't matter much. On the other hand, their lack of traction and adherents in Moldova was an important factor in the first decade of Prince Carol's rule.

A significant advantage of the Muntenian liberal group was Rosetti's *Românul* (1857-1864, 1865, 1866-1905), Romania's most widely circulated and consistently published newspaper.³⁴ Valentineanu's *Reforma* (1859-1888, which appeared under a variety of name changes and highly irregularly, being often suppressed) was perhaps the most radical journal of the era. Mention should also be made of N. T. Orășanu's *Nichipercea* (1859-1879, appearing under a bewilderingly variety of titles and formats). Orășanu was originally an associate of C. A. Rosetti, but his paper mercilessly satirized everybody.

A second “strength” of the Muntenian liberals was that they had learned in 1848 and thereafter how to play the street mob card and the peasant uprising card if they couldn't make their point within the constitutional system.³⁵ On the other hand, this was also a serious weakness in terms of how they were viewed by the rest of the political elite since they were regarded as willing to break the system if necessary to further their aims.

Rădulescu, p. 11-13, points out the difficulties in dealing with such matters given the absence of party archives and problems of accessing period newspapers. For bibliographical/biographical resources, see Michelson, *Romanian Politics*, 1998, p. 16-23, 319-329.

³² See Michelson, *Romanian Politics*, 1998, p. 195 ff.

³³ In 1863, Bolliac broke with Rosetti and became an equally vehement partisan of Prince Cuza.

³⁴ Details on the Romanian press are drawn from Nerva Hodoș and Al. Sadi Ionescu, *Publicațiunile periodice românești (ziare, gazete, reviste). Descriere bibliografică*, Vol. 1, *Catalog alfabetic 1820-1906*, București, Socec, 1913; George Baiculescu, Georgeta Răduică, and Neonile Onofrei, *Publicațiile periodice românești (ziare, gazete, reviste). Descriere bibliografică*, Vol. 2, *Catalog alfabetic: 1907-1918. Supliment: 1790-1906*, București, Editura Academiei RSR, 1969; and Georgeta Răduică and Nicolin Răduică, *Dicționarul presei românești (1731-1918)*, București, Editura Științifică, 1995.

³⁵ See Stan, *Grupări și curente politice*, p. 188-190 on the rabble-rousing strategy of the Muntenian in the cities and rural areas.

A second, but much less successful, Muntenian liberal group was that led by Ion Ghica, scion of a noble family (no fewer than ten of his ancestors had been princes), sometime Prime Minister and diplomat, erstwhile Ottoman Prince of Samos, scholar, and one of the few Romanians who supported classical English liberalism in economics. Though Ghica was a key participant in most of the significant political developments in Romania from the 1830s to the 1870s, he could never quite shake the suspicion that his overriding interest was in becoming the ruler of the new Romania. As a result, his personal popularity and credibility remained low. One of Ghica's contemporaries noted that other political leaders "fled from him as if by instinct."³⁶

Ghica's closest collaborators were D. A. Sturdza, a descendant of a Moldovan princely family and one of the few liberals who had studied in Germany. Late in the 19th century and early 20th century, Sturdza succeeded Baritone as the leader of what was called the Romanian National Liberal Party; Ion Bălăceanu; Ion C. Cantacuzino; possibly Dimitrie I. Berindei; and sometimes Al. G. Golescu (Negru), a cousin of the Golescus previously mentioned. Sturdza, Bălăceanu, and Cantacuzino were related to Ghica, Sturdza's wife was from a Muntenian princely family, and Ghica was related in one way or another to most of the generation of 1848.³⁷ On the other hand, we should not make too much of this since doubtless members of the liberal elite were more than likely to be in close and continuous social contacts with each other as well. In addition, with such an infinitesimal elite, it would be surprising if they weren't inter-related and in close social contact. *Opiniunea constituțională* (1869-1870) was a short-lived organ of this group. The newspaper, "Pressa" (or "Presa", 1868-1881) was also sometimes an outlet for them. This meant in the end that their views were not widely circulated. Ion Ghica played an important role in 1866-1867, when he was twice prime minister, but was discredited by his performance in 1870-1871 – when he was again prime minister – in the failed attempt to get Prince Carol to abdicate. Thereafter he was not really a factor in liberal politics and his supporters, particularly D. A. Sturdza, gravitated to the Brătianu liberal faction.³⁸ It is not too far a stretch to believe that Ghica's political failure fatally undermined whatever little credibility that English-style classical liberalism had in Romania.

Finally, there are a number of liberal Muntenian political figures who played significant roles in Romanian political life but were never quite part of one grouping or another. Confusingly, they were often referred to both as moderate liberals and as moderate conservatives, which demonstrates the looseness and

³⁶ Quoted in Stan, *Grupări și curente politice*, p. 65-66.

³⁷ Rădulescu, *Elita liberală*, 1998, p. 23, 28-32, 34-37, emphasizes and documents the marriage ties of the Romanian liberal elite.

³⁸ In addition to important non-political cultural roles after 1875, Ghica was Romanian ambassador to the United Kingdom from 1881-1890. For a workmanlike study of Ion Ghica, see Anastasie Iordache, *Ion Ghica: diplomatul și omul politic*, București, Editura Majadahonda, 1996.

imprecision of political labels in 19th century Romania.³⁹ These included Vasile Boerescu, Gheorghe Costa-Foru, Constantin Bosianu, and Christian Tell, all except the latter lawyers. The pragmatic reformist and unionist views of these moderates caused the more hard-line liberals to regard them as “false liberals” and opportunists,⁴⁰ while, for the same reasons, they were usually anathema to Romanian conservatives. These people did not constitute a grouping as such except perhaps for the first three, who were noted lawyers and tended to take together a cautious, legalistic line. Boerescu's short-lived “Naționalul” (1857-1861) was their principal press organ. Their “moderation” may have contributed to persistent belief in Romanian political circles that opportunism was the most plausible political strategy.

The leading Moldovan liberal group (which will be referred to below as the Moldovan mainstream liberals) was led by Mihail Kogălniceanu, one of 19th century Romania's towering figures. Since it had rallied around the Moldovan Alexandru Ioan Cuza when he had been elected Prince of both of the United Principalities, this group was often referred to as the Cuzists. The Moldovan mainstream liberals had been major participants in the events of 1848 and were strong supporters of the Unionist movement. Allied with Kogălniceanu and Prince Cuza's moderate liberalism were three Moldovans: Costache Negri, Vasile Alecsandri, and Ion Strat; and several Muntenians: Nicolae Kretzulescu, Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Cezar Bolliac, and Ludovic Steege (though Steege spent most of his career in Iași). Kogălniceanu and Steege had had serious educations in Germany.

The Moldovan mainstream liberals were never really able to form a coherent political grouping as such, since their association was primarily on an individual and personal basis.⁴¹ Their public outreach was assisted by a number of periodical publications, though these were never really had mass circulation or steady appearance: Kogălniceanu's “Steaua Dunării” (1855-1856, 1858-1860); Bolintineanu's “Dâmbovița” (1858-1860, 1861-1863, 1864-1865), and Bolliac's “Buciumul” (1862-1864, continued in 1865-1877 as “Trompeta Carpaților”). When Prince Cuza was forced to abdicate in 1866, they went into temporary political eclipse, but soon recovered.

A second group of Moldovan liberals was the self-proclaimed Independent and Liberal Fraction of Iași. The Fraction was primarily composed of Moldovan

³⁹ A case could be made for including Ion Heliade-Rădulescu (1802-1872) here, but, frankly, he is *sui generis*.

⁴⁰ Cf. inter alia, Cezar Bolliac's 1859 piece *Moderații*, in “Românul”, 28 March 1859, which was typical in arguing that to be a moderate is to be a political parasite, an intriguer, an opportunist, and inherently mediocre. Such people “do much more harm to progress than even the reactionaries do.” Reprinted in C. Bolliac, *Scrieri*, Vol. 2, edited by Andrei Rusu, București, Editura Minerva, 1983, p. 150-156.

⁴¹ Cuza is alleged to have said in 1859 “I'd like to leave aside all these people of all these parties and create a party purely my own.” Quoted in Ion Ghica, *Fragmente memorialistice*, published in Ion Ghica, *Opere*, Vol. IV, edited by Ion Roman, București, Editura Minerva, 1985, p. 134.

professors influenced by the late Transilvanian radical nationalist Simion Bărnuțiu, including Nicolae Ionescu, Anastasie Fătu, Petru Poni, Andrei Vizanti, Ștefan C. Șendrea, Gheorghe Mârzescu, A. D. Holban, and Pană Buescu (a Muntenian), all members of parliament at one time or another.⁴² Ionescu was the acknowledged political leader of the Fraction, while the animating spirit was publicist Teodor Boldur-Lățescu. Their press organ was “Tribuna Română” (1859-1867, with interruptions, edited by Ionescu), “Dreptatea” (1867-1870), and “Uniunea Liberală” (1871-1873, edited by Holban).

About the only other Moldovan liberal deserving mention was Manolache Costache Epureanu (1824-1880), variously a moderate liberal and a dissident conservative, who served as Prime Minister and had the distinction of being part of the first nation-wide executive committee of the National Liberals in 1875 and serving as the first chief of the Conservatives in 1880. Epureanu was educated in Germany as a child and at the university level; this may explain the moderation and flexibility of his political views.

IV. Muntenian Liberalism: Brătianu and Rosetti

We turn now to a closer look at the political ideology of three liberal groups, beginning with the Brătianu – Rosetti Muntenian liberals. Prior to 1848, Romanian students had predominantly gone to France where they were nurtured on liberal, national, socialist, and revolutionary ideas.⁴³ One of these men was Ion C. Brătianu.⁴⁴ Prior to being sent to Paris in 1841 to study mathematics, he was more or less self-educated. His French education was likely the starting point for developing an engineering mentality, the kind of worldview that disposes one to constructivistic French-style liberalism as opposed to the

⁴² Incredibly, despite their eminent lack of scholarly achievements, Ionescu and Vizanti were elected members of the Romanian Academy, though Vizanti had the distinction of being one of the few people ever expelled from the Academy when he fled Romania and disappeared forever on the heels of an embezzlement scandal. Though Ionescu and Vizanti were mediocre hacks who published nothing of note, Fătu was renowned as creator of pediatric medicine in Romania and founder of the first botanical garden in the country, and Poni was a pioneer of Romanian chemistry and mineralogy. Biographical sources for these men have been sanitized to omit their Fraction participation and in many cases standard reference works omit these peccadillos or give sparse and incomplete information. Presumably this was an attempt to dismiss those who did not fully accept the 1859/1866 settlement by ignoring them.

⁴³ On Romanian students in Paris in the 1840s, see Cornelia Bodea, *Lupta românilor pentru unitatea națională 1834-1849*, București, Editura Academiei RSR, 1967, p. 78-94; Vasile Maciu, *Un centre révolutionnaire roumain dans les années 1845-1848: La Société des étudiants roumains de Paris*, in idem, *Mouvements nationaux et sociaux roumains au XIX^e siècle*, București, Editura Academiei RSR, 1971, p. 41-70; and Angela Jianu, *A Circle of Friends. Romanian Revolutionaries and Political Exile, 1840-1859*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, especially for Michelet.

⁴⁴ For a competent biography, see Apostol Stan, *Ion C. Brătianu. Un promotor al liberalismului în România*, București, Editura Globus, 1995. For the young Brătianu, see E. Garrison Walters, *Ion C. Brătianu: The Making of a Nationalist Politician, 1821-1866*, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1972.

evolutionary British variety.⁴⁵ Brătianu returned home in 1844, but returned to Paris in 1846, where he became something of a professional student of politics and economics, and joined forces with C. A. Rosetti, Nicolae Bălcescu, and other Romanian nationalist students.

C. A. Rosetti⁴⁶ was all his life a Francophile, an “1848er”, one for whom 1848 was almost a religion. This meant that he was a nationalist and a romantic liberal at the same time. His education was even less formal than that of Brătianu: Bucur claims that Rosetti had “an organic repulsion toward learning,”⁴⁷ a disposition not untypical for your average romantic poet. After an early career as military cadet, poet, bon vivant, and pioneer publisher, he began to spend more and more time in Paris in the mid-1840s, where he was active among radical Romanian students and grew close to Brătianu. Rosetti was even more heavily taken with the French variety of liberalism than the less ideological Brătianu, and had absorbed a heavy dose of French socialism to boot. It is no surprise to find that contemporary, Ion Bălăceanu, pointing out that Brătianu and Rosetti “did not conceal their opposition to the ideas of English constitutionalism...”⁴⁸.

Brătianu and Rosetti were heavily influenced by the prophets of national and social reform, Michelet, Quinet, and Mickiewicz, at the Collège de France.⁴⁹ Both men also became admirers and friends of the ultra-radical anarchist P. J. Proudhon⁵⁰ and a leading socialist writer Louis Blanc, and were members of a militant French republican masonic lodge. Returning home in June, 1848, Brătianu and Rosetti paid this tribute to Quinet and French radicalism: “France raised us and taught us. The spark which warms our country we took from the French hearth.”⁵¹ They were chastened by the failure of the Romanian 1848, but not defeated.

⁴⁵ See my *Romanian Liberalism*, 2013, p. 5-6, for the distinction. On the hubris of the engineering mentality and its origins in France, see F. A. Hayek, *The Counter-Revolution of Science. Studies on the Abuse of Reason*, second edition, Indianapolis, Liberty Press, 1979, especially p. 183 ff.

⁴⁶ There are two excellent and complementary treatments of Rosetti, Marin Bucur’s critical *C. A. Rosetti: mesianism și donquijotism revoluționar*, București, Minerva, 1970; and Vasile Netea’s laudatory *C. A. Rosetti*, București, Editura Științifică, 1970.

⁴⁷ Bucur, *Rosetti*, 1970, p. 15-16.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 49.

⁴⁹ Toward the end of his life, Rosetti referred to them as “notre sainte trinité du Collège de France.” C. A. Rosetti to Armand Lévy, 29 April 1884, in C. A. Rosetti, *Correspondență*, edited by Marin Bucur, București, Editura Minerva, 1980, p. 356-357. See also Marin Bucur, *Jules Michelet și revoluționarii români în documente și scrisori de epocă (1846-1874)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1982.

⁵⁰ Rosetti referred to Proudhon as a “genius”, and defended him against the criticisms of Ion Strat, one of Romania’s few genuine classical liberal economists. See Ion Strat and C. A. Rosetti, *Polemica cu C. A. Rosetti, asupra principiului 'Laissez Faire, Laissez Passer,'* in Victor Slăvescu (ed.), *Ion Strat. Economist – Financier – Diplomat, 1836-1879*, vol. II, București, Imprimeria Națională, 1946, p. 36-42, in which Strat defended liberal economic principles and Rosetti derided them.

⁵¹ Ion C. Brătianu and C. A. Rosetti to Edgar Quinet, 26 June 1848, in Ion C. Brătianu, *Din scrierile și cuvântările lui Ion C. Brătianu, 1821-1891*, Part I, 1848-1868, edited by Vintilă Brătianu, C. Banu, and G. D. Creangă, București, Carol Göbl, 1903, p. 12-14.

Once union was achieved in 1859, the Muntenian liberals were ready to swing into action.⁵² They seldom passed up the opportunity to express their nationalist and irredentist views or show their contempt for the conservative empires. Brătianu declared in 1860 that the movement toward individual and national liberty was the constant of European political history.⁵³ As tributaries of the French Revolution, the Brătianu-Rosetti group had little compunction in making “appeals to the streets,” in using quasi-legal, extra-legal, and outright illegal means of achieving their political goals. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Muntenians were regarded as dangerous demagogues both within Romania and without.

Their 1861 platform was couched in quintessentially provocative 19th century nationalistic and Francophile liberal terms, calling for 1) electoral reform to widen the franchise; 2) constitutional guarantees of the separation of powers and civil liberties (especially freedom of press and assembly); 3) concentration on the modernization of Romania through transformation of its institutions of finance, commerce, education, and national defense; and 4) continued pursuit of nationalist aims, including the completion of union and addressing the fate of Romanians outside of the Principalities.⁵⁴ And, though they had temporarily given up the idea of republicanism, the Muntenians favored a weak prince who ruled but did not govern.⁵⁵

The socio-economic program of the Muntenian liberals was conditioned by their nationalism. As a result, their economic ideas tended toward the étatist liberalism which they had learned in France and which provided a convenient rationalization for oligarchical rule. On the agrarian issue, they argued that because of its explosiveness and divisiveness, it should be postponed until national objectives were completely achieved.⁵⁶ It is difficult not to regard this as an equivocation. The contemporary conservative observer Nicolae Suțu justly remarked: “Nowhere else... has such a frequent and abusive use been made of the words nation and patriotism...”⁵⁷

V. Moldovan Mainstream Liberalism: Mihail Kogălniceanu

The Muntenian program aroused considerable opposition from the Cuzist Moldovan mainstream liberals. They were unified as 1848ers, as reformers, and

⁵² It is a pity that Cornelia Bodea's study of the 1850s Romanian exiles was never completed.

⁵³ Ion C. Brătianu, *Bilanțul anului 1859*, January 1860, Brătianu, *Din scrierile Brătianu*, 1903, p. 206-230.

⁵⁴ The 1861 Muntenian liberal program is summarized in *Istoricul Partidului Național-Liberal de la 1848 și până astăzi*, București, Independența, 1923, p. 52-54.

⁵⁵ It was here that Rosetti compromised also publicly compromised his principles, writing in “Românul”, 16 November 1863: “We want the republic. But because to want the republic when all Europe is in constitutional monarchy is to be deranged... we were, we are, and we will be for constitutional government until France, Germany, Austria will be republics.”

⁵⁶ See Brătianu's speech of 11 February 1863, reprinted in Brătianu, *Din scrierile Brătianu*, Part I, 1903, p. 275-314.

⁵⁷ Nicolae Suțu, *Memoires du Prince Nicolas Soutzo*, Wein, Gerold, 1899, p. 374-375.

as leaders of the Romanian unionist activities. But they were temperamentally and pragmatically incompatible.⁵⁸ To put it bluntly, “Nous sommes des agneaux en comparaison, ne disait M. Kogalnitichano, nos confrères de Valachie poussent les allures révolutionnaires jusqu’à nous faire frémir.”⁵⁹ Prince Cuza described them as advocates of “a vague utopia borrowed from a bizarre melange of ideas of the first French Revolution and of modern socialism... [promoting] a considerable reshuffling of the map of Europe.”⁶⁰

The Muntenians' conduct in office between 1859 and 1862 tended to confirm in minds of Cuza and his Moldovan associates's fears of the Brătianu-Rosetti group's political irresponsibility. In return, Cuza's refusal to support the Muntenians when they aroused foreign ire and his casual attitude toward censorship, and Cuza-Kogălniceanu “Coup of 2/14 May 1864”, caused the Muntenians to view the Moldovans as lacking in principle. And of course, the Muntenians played a key role in the 1866 ouster and exile of Prince Cuza.

The Muntenian liberals and the Moldovan mainstream liberals were similar in that they were products of what F. A. Hayek has identified as Continental liberalism. This had emerged from

a philosophical tradition very different from the evolutionary conceptions predominant in Britain, namely of a rationalist or constructivist view which demanded a deliberate reconstruction of the whole of society in accordance with the principles of reason....The core of this movement, unlike the British tradition, was not so much a definite political doctrine as a general mental attitude, a demand for an emancipation from all prejudice and all beliefs which could not be rationally justified...⁶¹

Hayek goes on to note that both traditions shared a commitment to freedom of action, thought, speech, and the press. However, while in the “British tradition the freedom of the individual in the sense of a protection by law against all arbitrary coercion was the chief value, in the Continental tradition the

⁵⁸ The French consul in București, Béclard, made this observation early on, and rightly attributed some of this to differences in style and approach between the Moldovans and the Muntenians. Cf. Louis Béclard, București, to Alexandre Walewski, Paris, 17 February/1 March 1859, in Grigore Chiriță, Valentina Costake, and Emilia Poștăriță (eds.), *Documente privind Unirea Principatelor*, Vol. VI, *Correspondență diplomatică franceză (1856-1859)*, București, Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului/Institutul de Istorie “Nicolae Iorga”, 1980, Document Nr. 177, p. 306-312.

⁵⁹ Suțu, *Mémoires du Prince Soutzo*, 1899, p. 366.

⁶⁰ Prince Cuza, cited in Paul Henry, *L'abdication du Prince Cuza et l'avènement de la dynastie de Hohenzollern au trône de Roumanie. Documents Diplomatiques*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1930, p. 6. On revolutionary versus evolutionary approaches, see Cliveti, *Liberalismul românesc*, 1996, p. 63-67.

⁶¹ F. A. Hayek, *Liberalism*, in idem, *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1978, p. 119-120. For a critique of Hayek's distinction, see Jacob T. Levy, *Rationalism, Pluralism, and Freedom*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. ix, 14. Levy prefers to stress a pluralist tradition. On the development of Western Liberalism, in addition to Hayek, p. 121-132, see Larry Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual. The Origins of Western Liberalism*, Cambridge MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014.

demand for the self-determination of each group concerning its form of government occupied the highest place.”⁶²

Muntenian liberals and Moldovan mainstream liberals also differed because Muntenian liberalism was a product of direct contact with 19th century French liberalism while Moldovan liberalism was more impacted by the 19th century German variety.⁶³ Since German liberalism is less known in Romanian studies, we shall devote more space here to it than the better known French model.

German liberalism, according to Hayek, differed from French and British liberalism owing to the transforming work of Kant, Schiller, and Wilhelm von Humboldt, who stressed “a state wholly confined to the maintenance of law and order” (*Staatsrecht*) and the liberal policies of Hardenberg and Stein in Prussia. It metamorphosed through the association of liberalism, nationalism, and national unification in the 1830s, the mutation of a *Kulturnation* nationalism into a *Staatsnationen* nationalism, the failure of the German 1848, the eventual ascendancy of Bismarck to power in 1864-1871, and the resultant collapse of liberalism in Germany.⁶⁴

Essential clarification of German liberal ideology⁶⁵ is provided by James J. Sheehan’s first rate study of *German Liberalism in the 19th Century*,⁶⁶ which emphasizes the following elements:

⁶² Hayek, *Liberalism*, 1978, p. 120.

⁶³ This was observed long ago by both G. Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească*, 3rd edition, Iași, Viața Românească, n.d., original edition 1909, and E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, Vol. 1, *Forțele revoluționare*, București, Editura Ancora, n.d. [1924]). On Ibrăileanu’s ideas, see Paul E. Michelson, G. Ibrăileanu’s *Spiritul critic în cultura românească* (1909), Revisited, in ArchM, Vol. 7 (2015), p. 395-403.

⁶⁴ Hayek, *Liberalism*, 1978, p. 127-128; Guido de Ruggiero’s chapter on German liberalism in his *The History of European Liberalism*, translated by R. G. Collingwood, Boston, Beacon Press, 1959, originally published in 1927, p. 211 ff.; and F. Gunter Eyck, *English and French Influences in German Liberalism before 1848*, in “Journal of the History of Ideas”, Vol. 18 (1957), p. 313-341. For a slightly broader compass, see John L. Snell, *The Democratic Movement in Germany, 1789-1914*, edited and completed by Hans Schmitt, Chapel Hill NC, University of North Carolina Press, 1976. On Humboldt’s ideas, see his *The Limits of State Action*, edited by J. W. Burrows, Indianapolis IN, Liberty Fund, 1993, with a useful introductory essay by the editor (though written in 1792, unfortunately only portions of this work were published during Humboldt’s lifetime). On Stein, see Guy Stanton Ford, *Stein and the Era of Reform in Prussia, 1807-1815*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1922. For the German 1848, see Veit Valentin, *1848: Chapters of German History*, translated by Ethel Talbot Scheffauer, London, G. Allen and Unwin, 1940, abridged from a larger work; Priscilla Robertson, *Revolutions of 1848. A Social History*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1952; Wolfram Seimann, *The German Revolution of 1848-49*, translated by Christiane Banerji, New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1998; and Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*, second edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005. On Bismarck and German liberalism, see Gordon R. Mork, Bismarck and the ‘Capitulation’ of German Liberalism, in “Journal of Modern History”, Vol. 43 (1971), p. 59-75.

⁶⁵ What follows focuses on particular German emphases and generally does not include elements common to liberalism everywhere.

⁶⁶ See James J. Sheehan, *German Liberalism in the 19th Century*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1978, paperback edition 1983, especially Part I, *The Origins of German Liberalism 1770-1847*, p. 6-48.

1) The linking of education (*Bildung*), progress, spiritual enlightenment, and the state:

...the emphasis was clearly on reform, not opposition. The goal of political education was most often seen as a reconciliation of the citizen with the state, not the mobilization of opinion against the existing order.⁶⁷

2) the rejection of party (*partei*) in favor of movement (*Bewegung*):

Liberals' emphasis on the spiritual character of their movement was often accompanied by a certain distrust for practical implications of political organization and action....The association of politics and *Bildung*, the concept of the party as an ideological community, the identification of liberalism with the inevitable spread of enlightenment... helped sustain them during the long and difficult years before 1848.⁶⁸

3) The general unquestioning German acceptance of a very large role for the state in society:

...state support and state control went together. The self-esteem of educated men was affirmed by their acknowledged importance to the state and society...⁶⁹

And it cemented their place in German society through

the prestige conferred by state employment. Professors shared the prestige of state service... But education and state employment gave men more than just status... it was university education, professional relationships, and above all, the nexus of the state's bureaucratic institutions that were of great practical significance for the development of supralocal personal and political ties.⁷⁰

4) A shared belief in the unique political mission of the *Mittelstand*, roughly the "middle estate" between the aristocracy on the one hand and the workers and peasants on the other:

It was the center of society, the seat of social virtue, the vehicle of harmony and compromise... It depended less on objective criteria than on the existence of

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 14-17.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 20. See also Ralf Dahrendorf's comments on *The Myth of the State*, in his *Society and Democracy in Germany*, Garden City NY, Anchor Books, 1969, p. 188-203.

⁷⁰ Sheehan, *op. cit.*, p. 21. Contrast this with de Ruggiero's convoluted defense of the German statist liberal position and a critique of political individualism, ending in an encomium for Hegel. Ruggiero, *History of European Liberalism*, 1959, p. 218-240. Max Weber noted the importance of the availability of educated elites for political participation (*Abkömmllichkeit*): lawyers, journalists, and academics could practice their professions while serving in parliament and so forth; farmers, businessmen, and laborers could not.

shared moral values. These virtues meant that the *Mittelstand* coincided with what liberals often called ‘the real *Volk*’... the embodiment of the common good.⁷¹

5) The presumptions of the *Mittelstand* theory affected how German liberals viewed suffrage issues, which would obviously have to be restricted:

...the problem was to find a way of protecting the state from the dangers of the mob without excessively narrowing the opportunities for political participation. One way of doing this... was to have an indirect system of voting... In addition, most liberals recognized that some kind of property restrictions might be necessary... Liberals were deeply divided among themselves about who did and did not fit within the social and political boundaries of their movement. Furthermore, they were afraid that unless some boundaries were drawn, the *Mittelstand* would be overwhelmed by the masses of dependent, unenlightened men.⁷²

6) Ambiguity about economic growth and economic development:

On the surface of their thought, almost all [German] liberals seemed to believe in social progress and in the blessings of economic growth and development... [some] pointed to the value of commerce as a source of social and political change... ‘The spirit of the *Volk* in material form strives for the unity of the nation... [However,] Anxiety about the consequences which would follow from the unrestrained growth of factories and cities led a great many liberals to qualify their support for a totally free economy.’⁷³

We can expand Sheehan’s list with three more characteristics of 19th Century German liberalism identified by Hans-Christian Maner:

7) An identity with Enlightenment rationalism and the idea of political emancipation;

8) A devotion to societal equilibrium and non-revolutionary politics; and

9) A belief in the intertwined nature of liberal political thought, economic liberty, and cultural independence, leading to national unity.⁷⁴

19th Century German liberalism had another characteristic that would prove fatal in the long run. This had to do with conflicts between prudence and principle.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 25-27.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 27-28.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 28-30.

⁷⁴ Hans-Christian Maner, *Liberalismul german și cel românesc: o abordare comparativă*, in Liviu Brătescu (ed.), *Liberalismul românesc și valențele sale europene*, 2nd edition, Iași, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2013, p. 138-139, based on a thorough review of the recent German literature. 19th Century German liberalism was attenuated by its concentration on the cultivated strata of society and by its ambivalent attitude toward the state, which led after 1848 to fatal compromises with the Bismarckian regime. Treitschke is a model case study of this slippery slope.

10) In the end, caution and prudence were valued more by German liberals than adherence to liberal doctrine. Sheehan points out that many were liberal

in theory but were willing to see it significantly restricted in practice. In Baden, both the government and the [liberal] opposition agreed that the local economy was simply not mature enough to do without some direction from the state. Theoretical endorsement combined with practical hesitation can also be seen in [German] liberal attitudes towards free trade... The sense that classical economics was valuable in principle but dangerous in practice informs most of [German] liberal economic thought during the first half of the nineteenth century... Most of them were unwilling to abandon totally the reliance on the state which pervaded German economic thought and action... Karl Heinrich Rau... carefully pointed out the educational and protective role of the state. Moreover, Rau had no doubt that the state should interfere if economic freedom seemed to threaten the interests and well-being of society as a whole.⁷⁵

Further, Prussian German liberals by the 1830s and 1840s, according to de Ruggiero,

11) were not at all committed to economic liberalism.

wished to wean it [the middle classes] from the philistine ideals of a barren individualism, [and] indoctrinate it with their own conceptions... While English and French Liberalism tended to shape the nation upon the mould of middle-class economic life, they proposed to mould this economic life to the needs of the nation... This was the motive of their protectionism, formulated for the first time, and with full consciousness of its national end, by Friedrich List... Here economics are clearly subordinated to national organization. But not economics only; all the other energies of the people are to be treated in the same way.⁷⁶

12) Finally, by the 1840s, 19th century German liberals had become preoccupied by the “social question.” The 1840s “increased liberals’ fears of social unrest, their doubts about social progress, and their inclination to look to the state for protection... these attitudes had always been leitmotifs in liberal thought,” including calls “for state initiative in social reform because the state ‘represents society in its unity.’”⁷⁷

We can clearly see how these principles and characteristics of German liberalism played out in an examination of the ideology of Moldovan mainstream liberalism, especially in the thought of Mihail Kogălniceanu, the undisputed intellectual leader of the Moldovan liberals. The work of Kogălniceanu is

⁷⁵ Sheehan, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁷⁶ De Ruggiero, *History of European Liberalism*, 1959, p. 245-246.

⁷⁷ Sheehan, *op. cit.*, p. 30-34. Hayek a century later called into question the loose use of “social” in his essay *What is ‘Social’? – What Does it Mean?* in his *Studies in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967, p. 237-247; and in his *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 2, *The Mirage of Social Justice*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1976.

vexingly difficult to deal with for three reasons. First, is the polymathic nature of his mind and activities: he was recognized as one of Romania's greatest political orators⁷⁸, he was a key pioneer in the development of Romanian historiography⁷⁹, he was an outstanding journalist and cultural figure, and he was a significant political figure between 1859 and the 1880s⁸⁰.

Secondly, he was something of an enigma to both his contemporaries and to his posterity,⁸¹ though Zub argues that his activities had a certain unifying logic driven by his combined historical and militant spirit.⁸² In the words of G. Călinescu, "Kogălniceanu's principal gift was a critical spirit when no one else had one, and to utilize it in a consistent, ardent form, without sterile sarcasm."⁸³

Lastly, many subsequent Romanian political writers tried to co-opt him for their political ideological causes.⁸⁴ As a result, Kogălniceanu's political views

⁷⁸ G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române dela origini până în prezent*, București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă, 1941, p. 176.

⁷⁹ See Alexandru Zub, *Mihail Kogălniceanu istoric*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1974, *passim*.

⁸⁰ The best overall intellectual history of Kogălniceanu's thought is Zub's monumental *Kogălniceanu istoric*, 1974. Also useful is his *Mihail Kogălniceanu un arhitect al României moderne*, 3rd edition, Iași, Editura Institutul European, 2005. For an exhaustive bio-bibliography on Kogălniceanu's life and work, see Alexandru Zub, *Mihail Kogălniceanu 1817-1891. Biobibliografie*, București, Editura Enciclopedică Română/Editura Militară, 1971. Other useful works on Kogălniceanu's ideas, but colored by the time periods in which they were published: N. Iorga, *Mihail Kogălniceanu. Scriitorul, omul politic și românul*, București, Editura I. V. SOCEC, n.d. [1921]); Radu Dragnea, *Mihail Kogălniceanu*, 2nd, expanded edition, București, Tipografiile Române Unite, 1926; Virgil Ionescu, *Mihail Kogălniceanu. Contribuții la cunoașterea vieții, activității și concepțiile sale*, București, Editura Științifică, 1963; and Augustin Z. N. Pop, *Pe urmele lui Mihail Kogălniceanu*, București, Editura Sport-Turism, 1979. On Kogălniceanu's governing activities in the 1860s, see V. Russu, *Viața politică în România (1866-1871)*, Vol. II, *De la liberalismul radical la conservatorismul autoritar*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2001, p. 88-205.

⁸¹ See Anghel Demetrescu, *Mihail Kogălniceanu*, in his *Opere*, edited by Ovidiu Papadima, București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1937, p. 311: "Kogălniceanu este un amestec, straniu dar fatal, de versatilitate bizantină și brutalitate feudală, de vițiile regimului vechiu și de nobilele aspirații ale secolului nostru... un mixtum-compositum de tiran și democrat, un Pisistrat care la nevoie devine Perikles. Toată ființa lui pare o enigmă, o adunătură de calități contradictorii, egoism și blândețe, viclene și francheță, înjosire și eroism."

⁸² Zub, *Kogălniceanu istoric*, 1974, p. 15-16. On Kogălniceanu's militantism, see p. 402-411, and on his critical work, see p. 411-418.

⁸³ G. Călinescu, *Istoria*, p. 172. Călinescu seems to go out of his way to stress that Kogălniceanu always had a positive rather than a negative mission and that his polemics were rarely mean-spirited or based on personal attack. See Călinescu, *Istoria*, p. 167, 173.

⁸⁴ Thus, Nicolae Iorga in his 1922 public lecture on *Doctrina naționalistă*, in D. Gusti, et al., *Doctrinile partidelor politice. 10 prelegeri publice*, București, Institutul Social Român/Cultura Națională, n.d. [1923], p. 31-46, argues that Kogălniceanu was the fonder of democratic nationalism, coincidentally the very doctrine being espoused by Iorga; while in 1939, the Legionary sociologist Traian Herseni claimed that Kogălniceanu was the fountainhead of Romanian nationalism and the first significant nationalist sociologist writer in Romania. See Traian Herseni, *Sociologia românească. Încercare istorică*, București, Institutul de Științe Sociale al României, 1940, p. 61-63.

have remained somewhat precariously defined; would that we had a good up-to-date study of his political thought.

Kogălniceanu was educated abroad in France (Lunéville) and Germany (primarily Berlin), and his political beliefs reflect these experiences.⁸⁵ Thus he absorbed during this period the emphasis of German liberalism on national unity, social reform, and the development of specifically national traits (Herder, Humboldt, and Fichte); its stress on reason and the Enlightenment; and its preference for evolutionary political and social change instead of violence (Eduard Gans, Savigny, A. von Humboldt, Hegel). Kogălniceanu particularly credited Gans, his law professor, with inspiring him in him a devotion to liberty, progress, and a Hegelian view of society.

Fortunately for those seeking insight into Kogălniceanu's political philosophy, his political credo was set forth in a succinct statement issued on a 19 February 1860 as a "Profession of Faith."⁸⁶ The essential points are as follows:

– "I am and will be for all of my life for the Union of the Romanian Principalities."

– "I am for the establishment of representative constitutional government... freedom of conscience, of the press, of assembly, of petitions..."

– "I am for reform of the current [1858] electoral law, which... excludes from the national representation the majority of the nation."

– "I am for public education... so that every Romanian knows how to read and write, and as a result, knows how to defend his rights."

– "I am for the emancipation of the peasantry through their being given the land which they now work..."

– In addition, Kogălniceanu was for tax legislation proportional to income, promoting local government, which would know local needs best, and free industrialization and commerce, but only until after indigenous industry and

⁸⁵ For Kogălniceanu's foreign education, in addition to Zub, *Kogălniceanu istoric*, p. 67-131, see Petre V. Haneș, *Studii de literatură română*, Vol. 1, București, Editura SOCEC, 1910, p. 33-55; D. C. Amzar, *Kogălniceanu la Berlin. Câteva date noi din vremea studiilor*, in CL, Vol. 3 (1939), p. 295-318; N. Cartoian, *M. Kogălniceanu la Berlin*, in AR, Vol. 3 (1939), p. 29-41; and Ioan Lupaș, *Leopold von Ranke și Mihail Kogălniceanu*, in AAR.MSI, Seria III, Vol. 18 (1936-1937), p. 311-326; and Pop, *Pe urmele lui Mihail Kogălniceanu*, p. 28-68. For German university liberalism in the 1815-1848 era, see de Ruggiero, *History of European Liberalism*, 1959, p. 241-242.

⁸⁶ Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Profesie de credință*, initially circulated as a broadsheet on 14 February 1860, and subsequently reprinted in "Steaua Dunării", Vol. 5 (1860), nr. 29, 19 February 1860. Kogălniceanu was Moldovan Prime Minister at the time. The text used here of this little utilized but invaluable statement is from Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Scieri literare, istorice, politice*, edited by Geo Șerban, București, Editura Tineretului, 1967, p. 236-238. Cf. Zub, *Kogălniceanu. Biobibliografie*, p. 68. These views are confirmed in a similar, but much longer and politicized statement: Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Apărarea ministeriului din 30 aprilie 1860 înaintea Adunării electivă din Iași*, in Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, Vol. III, *Oratorie I. 1856-1864, Partea I, 1856-1861*, edited by Vladimir Diculescu, București, Editura Academiei RSR, 1983, p. 349-405. The speech was delivered in the sessions of 15 and 17 February 1861.

trade had been developed. This meant “defending national commerce and industry, which has hardly been born and need particular care from the government.”⁸⁷

How did Kogălniceanu’s “Profession of Faith” stack up against the dozen characteristic tenets of 19th century German liberalism outlined above? Briefly:

On Point 1 above dealing with education (*Bildung*), Kogălniceanu shared the German liberal idea of public education as a mean of promoting reform and development. This was a staple of moderate reformism.

The German distrust of “party,” Point Two on the characteristics list, was reflected in the Moldovan mainstream liberal distrust of ideology and contributed to their apparent lack of interest in party-building. For Kogălniceanu, party was somewhat suspect, while movement seemed less aggressive (this was to change with interwar fascism).

Points 3, 6, 9, 10 & 11 above dealing with German statism, apprehensions about loss of control, and weak commitment to classical liberal economic principles were also shared by Kogălniceanu and the Moldovan mainstream liberals. Though they believed that liberal ideology, economic liberalism, and cultural independence were intertwined, when push came to shove, the state trumped everything else. And this state was the embodiment of national unity. Anything questioning that threatened the very existence of the state itself.

If French *étatisme* wasn’t enough, German statism sealed the deal. This explains why Romanian liberalism was unremittingly nationalist and in general statist. Romanian liberal adherence to protectionism in the economic sphere corresponded exactly with the view of German liberals under the influence of F. List, and in general was a staple of Romanian liberalism with unfortunate consequences for future development and politics.

It also explains why its history confirmed Lord Acton’s fears that the logic of modern theory of nationality would swamp freedom:

By making the State and the nation commensurate with each other in theory, it reduces practically to a subject condition all other nationalities that may be within the boundary. It cannot admit them to an equality with the ruling nation which constitutes the State, because the State would then cease to be national, which would be a contradiction of the principle of its existence.⁸⁸

Point 4 related to the messianic privileging of those who claimed to speak for the “real people” in distinction to reactionary nobles and the masses. The German liberal playbook here was manifest in various parts of Kogălniceanu’s ideology, though perhaps to a lesser extent than in other Romanian liberal ideologies. Representative government and civil liberties were desirable, but for

⁸⁷ There were fourteen points in all to this profession of faith; those cited are the ones that relate to liberal ideology.

⁸⁸ Lord Acton, *Nationality*, in John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, *The History of Freedom and Other Essays*, edited by John Neville Figgis and Reginald Vere Laurence, London, Macmillan, 1907, p. 297.

the greater good of national unification, might have to be sacrificed or postponed. The same might be said for a broadened voting franchise.

The same could be said for the role of the *Mittelstand* in the German setting, its enlightenment identity, the anti-revolutionary/pro-evolutionary attitude to social change, and an inherently cautious, prudent style. Kogălniceanu and the Moldovan mainstream liberals heartily subscribed to every article of this faith, which involved Points 5, 7, 8, 10 above. The line between prudence and expediency, unfortunately, is a very fine one.

Lastly, concern for the social question (Point 12 above) led Kogălniceanu and the Moldovan mainstream liberals to push for agrarian reform both because it was right and because it threatened to lead to social unrest. The state again was the means to such ends. They endorsed more equitable taxation and agricultural contracts as well. Cuza and Kogălniceanu's social reforms were a key reason for Cuza's ouster in 1866. However, if Kogălniceanu as "Man of 2 May" was a major bogeyman after 1866, little was done to reverse what had been done between 1863 and 1866.⁸⁹

Apart from this, most of the rest of Kogălniceanu's profession of faith endorses typical desiderata of 19th century liberalism generally: representative government, freedom of speech, assembly, press, and conscience. Reviewing such matters also reminds us of the large gap between liberal theory and liberal practice in modern Romanian history.

VI. Moldovan Liberalism: The Liberal and Independent Fraction

The Fraction was a very small group with a political ideology of quite limited appeal. Its founder, Simeon Bărnuțiu was a radically nationalist charismatic teacher from Transilvania whose momentary influence (he died prematurely in 1864) was pervasive in Iași from his arrival there in 1854 to 1863, when he returned to Ardeal to die.⁹⁰ The leading light of the group following Bărnuțiu's death was Nicolae Ionescu, who had a French law degree, and was active in 1848 and in the post-1848 Romanian emigration, while the animating spirit was publicist Teodor Boldur-Lățescu (though he was little heard from after participating in a failed separatist uprising in Iași in April 1866).⁹¹ Ionescu was one of the most effective (and verbose) orators of the day, perennial member of parliament, academician, and history professor at the University of Iași.⁹²

⁸⁹ Details in my *Romanian Politics*, 1998. One of the urgent tasks awaiting post-1989 Romanian historiography is a modern synthesis on the peasantry and agrarian reform in Romania from 1859 to the 1920s.

⁹⁰ See G. Panu, *Amintiri dela "Junimea" din Iași*, București, Remus Cioflec, n.d., p. 12 ff. on Bărnuțiu's nearly cultic impact in Iași. On Bărnuțiu's work and ideas, see Radu Pantazi, *Simion Bărnuțiu. Opera și gândirea*, București, Editura Politică, 1967.

⁹¹ See Petre Pandrea, *Filosofia politico-juridică a lui Simion Bărnuțiu*, București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1935, p. 120.

⁹² Effective, if not actually coherent, as Maiorescu argued in a devastating 1902 send-up of Ionescu. Titu Maiorescu, *Oratori, retori și limbuți*, 1901, republished in his *Critice 1866-1907*;

The beliefs of the Fraction were a confusing mishmash of liberalism, nationalism, republicanism, bizarre economic theories, and anti-Semitism. For example, their program for promoting Romanian national development was simply to expel all Jews from Romania.⁹³ In general, the “Jewish Question” overwhelmed all else in their thinking, including most of their liberalism. They were pro-unionist, but ardently opposed to a foreign prince (along with foreigners in general), and were keen on obtaining parliamentary favors for Iași.⁹⁴ In the final analysis it is difficult to comprehend why and how the Fraction was considered “liberal.”⁹⁵ Kogălniceanu was their *bête noir* and was viewed as a principle cause of Romania’s problems: they were particularly violent in parliament when Kogălniceanu was in the government.

The Fraction was able to benefit all out of proportion to their size and qualities because of the marginal drawing power that the Muntenian liberals had in Moldova.⁹⁶ It seems fair to say that the Fraction would not have been heard from were it not for the Muntenian liberals’ weakness in Moldova. The Muntenians knew they needed the Fraction as a possible ally; the Fraction was determined to exact a high political price for it in 1866-1868. The result was to tarnish the Muntenian liberal brand with antisemitism, and, in the end, led to their eviction from power for nearly a decade when Western Europeans had had enough.⁹⁷

ediție completă, 2nd revised edition, vol. III, București, Editura Minerva, 1915, p. 182-232, especially p. 196 ff. For a sketch of Ionescu the orator, see also G. Panu, *N. Ionescu*, in his *Portrete și tipuri parlamentare*, București, Tipografia Lupta, 1892, p. 65-68.

⁹³ For a thorough roasting of the Bărnuțiu school, see Titu Maiorescu, *Contra școalei Bărnuțiu*, 1868, republished in his *Critice 1866-1907*; ediție completă, 2nd revised edition, vol. II, București, Editura Minerva, 1915, p. 187-242. For an amusing and scandalous x-rated contretemps between Maiorescu and N. Ionescu in 1864-1865, see Iacob Negruzzi, *Amintiri din “Junimea”*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1939, p. 21-39; and E. Lovinescu, *T. Maiorescu*, Vol. I, (1840-1876), vol. I, București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1940, p. 133-146.

⁹⁴ A study of the impact on the Moldovan mentality of the 1861 union and the concomitant “fall of Iași” from capital to provincial backwater is long overdue. Doubtless this not only contributed to extremist groups such as the Fraction but impacted all Moldovans as well. From that day to this, feelings that Iași has been neglected, calls for compensating Iași, and so forth have persisted. On 1861 and after, see A. D. Xenopol, *Domnia lui Cuza-Vodă*, vol. I, Iași, Tipografia Editore Dacia P. Iliescu and D. Grossu, 1903, p. 226-235.

⁹⁵ Compare the ravings of the Fractionists with the observation of their conservative Junimist opponent Titu Maiorescu that their ideas were “contrary to the fundamental ideas of humanity”. Maiorescu, *Contra școalei Bărnuțiu*, 1915, p. 240.

⁹⁶ See A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria partidelor politice în România. De la origini până la 1866*, Vol. I, București, Albert Baer, 1910, p. 504-506; and Stan, *Grupări și curente politice*, p. 178-181 for short summaries; and Otilia Hrihorciuc’s more comprehensive *Naționalism și xenofobie în doctrina Frațiunii Libere și Independente din Moldova*, in Cătălin Turliuc and Mihai-Ștefan Ceașu (eds.), *Dilemele conviețuirii în procesul modernizării societății românești în spațiul est-carpatic [secolele XIX-XXI]*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2011, p. 49-90. Additional details may be found in N. A. Bogdan, *Regele Carol I și a doua sa capitală. Relațiile istorico politice*, București, C. Sfetea, 1916, *passim*.

⁹⁷ For 1866-1868, see my *Romania, the Great Powers, and the Jewish Question, 1866-1868*, in Veniamin Ciobanu (ed.), *East-Central Europe and the Great Powers Politics (19th-20th Centuries)*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2004, p. 290-320 for details.

In 1875, when the liberals again tried, futilely, to establish a party, despite their well-earned unsavory reputation abroad, the Faction was co-opted. The Iași organizing committee included Ionescu, Holban, and other Fractionists, and Ionescu was Foreign Minister in a Brătianu liberal government from July 1876 to March 1877 (he was eventually replaced by Mihail Kogălniceanu).

The Fraction's last blaze of glory came in 1878-1879 when it successfully led the opposition to a Great Powers-imposed revision to the constitution to broaden Jewish citizen rights. Though, of course, the Romanians could not completely disregard the wishes of the Powers issuing from the Congress of Berlin, the Faction was able to undermine the opening up of Jewish citizenship by imposing a formidable series of restrictions including a ten year waiting period and a requirement that each grant of citizenship had to be done by legislative action.⁹⁸

Following this coup, the Fraction eventually disappeared from the Romanian political scene as it was incorporated into the larger Romanian national liberal movement in the 1880s. The long conservative government of 1871-1876 had done what nothing else seemed to be able to do: unify Romanian liberals. Of course, this came at a price. As Eugeniu Stătescu observed Romanian liberals became "a collectivity whose highest expression is Mr. [Ion C.] Brătianu."⁹⁹ The liberal movement in effect lost its soul in the 1880s, a story that I have recounted elsewhere.¹⁰⁰

VII. Conclusions

When we think of liberalism in Romania between 1859 and 1881, we think primarily of Ion C. Brătianu and Mihail Kogălniceanu. Indeed, the career of Kogălniceanu between 1848 and the 1880s eerily paralleled that of his rival. They were leading exponents of change in their respective provinces of Romania during the Revolutions of 1848; leaders in the two 1857 Divans ad Hoc and in the 1859 assemblies that pulled off the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza as prince; key figures in the politics of 1859-1866, with Kogălniceanu as Cuza's go-to politician and Brătianu as a driving force behind the anti-Cuza coalition that eventually forced Prince Cuza to abdicate in 1866; rivals for leadership

⁹⁸ See Frederick Kellogg, *op. cit.*, p. 206-210; Hrihorciuc, *Naționalism și xenofobie*, 2011, p. 84-90; Beate Welter, *Die Judenpolitik der rumänischen Regierung 1866-1888*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang Verlag, 1989; and Dinu Balan, *Carol I de Hohenzollern și "chestiunea evreiască" în România (1866-1914)*, in C. Turliuc and D. Ivănescu (eds.), *Confluente identitare și realități democratice*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2011, p. 161-197. On the Congress of Berlin, see Sorin Liviu Damean, *România și Congresul de pace de la Berlin (1878)*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2005.

⁹⁹ Quoted in Frédéric C. Damé, *Histoire de la Roumanie contemporaine. Depuis l'avènement des princes indigènes jusqu'à nous jours (1822-1900)*, Paris, Alcan, 1900, p. 367.

¹⁰⁰ See my *The Strange Death of Romanian Liberalism*, in Liviu Brătescu (ed.), *Liberalismul românesc și valențele sale europene*, 2nd edition, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2013, p. 143-157.

between 1866 and 1871; then drawn together as a result of the long 1871-1876 conservative cabinet of Lascăr Catargiu, playing the leading roles in the politics of the Romanian war for independence in 1877-1878 that led to the establishment of the Romanian kingdom in 1881.¹⁰¹ And in 1891, when Brătianu died, he was followed to the tomb 45 days later by Kogălniceanu.

They were liberals, and yet, Muntenian liberals and Moldovan liberals differed significantly because of the origins of their liberal ideas and because of differences in the political culture of Muntenia and Moldova. The existence of multiple liberalisms in Romania is involved with what Sorin Alexandrescu has called the Romanian Paradox: "... Romanians have had to live and create in a narrow space, free between powerful and sometime oppressive states and culture... From this has resulted a cultural synthesis as well as a flexible and distrustful reserve in regard to the other..."¹⁰² a culture focussed on survival and not on principle.

The paradox also includes the contradictory relationship that Romanians have had with Europe, and issues with continuity and discontinuity. The issues here would include the influences of Western liberalisms, particularly, as we have seen, the French and German varieties as well as the unfortunate virtual absence of English liberalism in the Romanian liberal tradition, a factor of utmost significance that has been generally ignored by Romanian and Western scholars alike.

Considerable attention was given above to the impact of German liberalism on Romanian liberalism, partly because this has typically be neglected and partly because the exaggerated Francophilia of Romanian intellectuals has caused the considerable Germanophile tendency in Romania society to be brushed under the carpet.¹⁰³ Of course, World War I contributed to this tendency. This factor needs to be given more attention in future studies of Romanian liberalism and political development generally.¹⁰⁴

Another aspect would be problems connected with continuities and discontinuities in the relationship of Moldova and Muntenia, something that has traditionally been ignored in historiography because of an almost paranoid fear of deviations from the standard model of a seamlessly unitary nationality and national state. This is complicated by persistent and usually irrational fears of the "other" as a threat to that unity, and a propensity to dealing with such

¹⁰¹ On Kogălniceanu and Romanian diplomacy, see Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Documente diplomatice*, edited by George Macovescu, București, Editura Politică, 1972, especially the introduction, p. 2-50; Dan Berindei, *Mihail Kogălniceanu 1817-1891*, in Mircea Malița, et al., *Diplomați iluștri*, București, Editura Politică, 1969, p. 237-281; and Liviu Brătescu, *I. C. Brătianu și politica externă a României (1866-1888)*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2013.

¹⁰² Sorin Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român*, București, Editura Univers, 1998, p. 31-43.

¹⁰³ For a corrective, see Lucian Boia, "*Germanofilii.*" *Elita intelectuală românească în anii Primului Război Mondial*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2010.

¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, the Germanic culture of many Romanian conservatives, such as Titu Maiorescu, has been recognized.

matters by demonizing the “other” or by ignoring or minimizing such issues and denying obvious differences between Moldova and Muntenia related to their historical development.¹⁰⁵ From the above, it should be clear that Moldova and Muntenia in the 19th century had differing political cultures, societies, and intellectual traditions. That was the argument made by Ibrăileanu and Lovinescu among others.¹⁰⁶

It should be clear that the development of Muntenian and Moldovan identities were perfectly normal differences in style, approach, and background, and not the product of mystical forces, primordial realities, or unchangeable certainties from the Romanian past. It should also be clear that the more we know about such things, the easier it will be for us to deal with historiographical myths and come to a better understanding of the past.¹⁰⁷

Lucian Pye defined political culture as

the set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments that give order and meaning to a political process and that provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system... [It is] the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of that system.¹⁰⁸

We still have a lot to learn about how political culture impacted Romanian political development in the 19th century and the consequences of this for the 20th and 21st centuries.

The development of liberalism in Romania was heavily influenced by the differences in Moldovan and Muntenian political culture. This led to serious problems in the crucial first two decades of Romanian autonomous development. It could be argued that this also led to a significantly flawed liberalism, both in the short run and long run. On the other hand, Pye’s definition of political culture should warn us about the dangers of too much playing the “what if” game. In the end, instead of asking “what if?”, it might be better to try to ask “what now?” and learn from the lessons of past development.

¹⁰⁵ For discussion of some of this, see my *Perceptions on Imperial Legacies in the Balkans: The Romanian Lands*, in RESEE, Vol. 36 (1998), p. 65-77; and Lucian Boia, *Cum s-a românizat România*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2015.

¹⁰⁶ See Michelson, Ibrăileanu’s *Spiritul critic*, 2015, p. 395-403, and Paul E. Michelson, *Romanian Perspectives on Romanian National Development*, in “Balkanistica”, Vol. 7 (1981-1982), p. 102-104.

¹⁰⁷ Paul E. Michelson, *Myth and Reality in Romanian National Development*, in “International Journal of Rumanian Studies”, Vol. 5 (1987), nr. 2, p. 5-33; and Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2001.

¹⁰⁸ Lucian Pye, *Aspects of Political Development*, Boston, Little, Brown, 1966, p. 104-105.

Varieties of Romanian Liberalisms, 1859-1881

(Abstract)

Keywords: Romanian development, Romanian liberalism, German liberalism, Ion C. Brătianu, C. A. Rosetti, Ion Ghica, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Nicolae Ionescu.

This paper focuses on the leaders, characteristics, and attributes of the various strains of Romanian liberalism between 1859 and 1881. This is significant because self-described liberals dominated Romanian political life for much of the modern era. Its second purpose is to elaborate on the main distinctives of three of the most prominent liberal groups which manifested themselves in this era¹⁰⁹. It also strives to give more importance to the influence of German liberalism on Romanian development. Finally, it surveys some of the consequences for Romanian political culture of the peculiar development of Romanian liberalisms during the period under consideration.

¹⁰⁹ Vlad Georgescu, *op. cit.*, especially p. 180 ff., provides interesting perspectives on some of these issues. See also Cristian-Ion Popa (ed.), *op. cit.*, particularly Ion Goian, *op. cit.*, p. i-xlii.