

**LIBERALISMUL ROMÂNESC**  
**TENDINȚE, STRUCTURI, PERSONALITĂȚI**

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# *Idei, programe, polemici*

## **ROMANIAN LIBERALISM, 1800-1947. DEFINITION, PERIODIZATION, AND A RESEARCH AGENDA**

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### **I. Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is three-fold:

1. To sketch a working definition of classical liberalism, that is the liberalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth century;
2. To propose a periodization for the study of liberalism in modern Romanian history, that is between 1800 and 1947; and,
3. To outline some suggestions for a research agenda on the study of Romanian liberalism.

### **II. Definition**

One major problem connected with the study of liberalism is that the “term is now used with a variety of meanings which have little in common beyond describing an openness to new ideas, including some which are directly opposed to those which are originally designated by it during the nineteenth and the earlier parts of the twentieth centuries”<sup>1</sup>. And yet classical liberalism is a historical phenomenon and therefore it has a historical meaning. Irene Collins, one of the best analysts of the phenomenon, points out that the “term ‘liberal’, meaning a type of political opinion, was new in the nineteenth century” though the “word itself was not new”<sup>2</sup>.

From a historical point of view, the meaning of the term was fluid in Europe. However, that various liberals “had something in common was realised at least by the opponents of liberalism. Metternich knew a liberal when he met with one, whatever guise the man appeared under... they held at heart a simple faith: a belief that progress, leading to final perfection, could be achieved by means of free institutions”<sup>3</sup>. This was their inspiration and vision. Or, in the words of J. S. Schapiro, “What has characterized liberalism at all times is its unshaken belief in the necessity of freedom to achieve every desirable aim... Every individual is therefore to be treated as an end in himself, not as a

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<sup>1</sup> F. A. Hayek, *Liberalism*, in his *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978, p. 119. Why this is so is explained by Fritz Machlup, *Liberalism and the Choice of Freedoms*, in Erich Streissler (ed.), *Roads to Freedom*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Irene Collins, *Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, London, The Historical Association, 1957, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 4.

means to advance the interests of others.”<sup>4</sup> Beyond this, Hayek argues that we can identify a “broad stream of political ideals which during that period under the name of liberalism operated as one of the most influential intellectual forces guiding developments in western and central Europe”<sup>5</sup>.

What were some of these ideals and ideas?<sup>6</sup> First of all, “Liberalism appears as the recognition of a fact, the fact of liberty”<sup>7</sup>. This fact involves civil liberties, political liberties, and economic liberties. Basic freedoms, such as freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of association, freedom of religion, freedom of movement, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press, were generally agreed on<sup>8</sup>.

Liberals also emphasized individual freedom as well as political and economic rights. A liberal political system was one based on rule of law and a constitution, on an elected legislature, and on balance of power among the branches of government. Independence of the judicial branch from the legislative and the executive branches of government was particularly important. “There can be no doubt that liberalism first stressed freedom from government interference. Liberalism was individualism, emphasizing the removal of coercive restraints by which the state had restricted the individual’s freedom in many activities and had thereby reduced his self-reliance, self-responsibility, self-respect, and self-realization”<sup>9</sup>.

Liberals were also generally united (more so in Britain; less so on the Continent) in the view that the philosophy of the French Revolution – with its emphasis on “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,” and on the General Will – was a danger to the rights of the individual and, in the long run, a major threat to freedom. For classical liberals, “sovereignty of the people was to be recognised as limited by liberty of the individual”<sup>10</sup>. Liberals came to realize that liberty and equality would inevitably come into conflict; in the end, they sought to limit democracy because “it would lead to the

<sup>4</sup> J. Salwyn Schapiro, *Liberalism: Its Meaning and History*, Princeton NJ, D. Van Nostrand, 1958, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Hayek, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>6</sup> The following discussion is largely drawn from Collins, *op. cit.*; Hayek, *op. cit.* 1978; Guido de Ruggiero, *The History of European Liberalism*, translated by R. G. Collingwood, Boston, Beacon Press, 1959, originally published in 1925; idem, *Liberalism, Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 9 (1933); Schapiro, *op. cit.*; Machlup, *op. cit.*; Marvin Perry, *An Intellectual History of Modern Europe*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1993, p. 213; and Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Liberalismul între succese și iluzii*, București, Editura All, 1998, especially Ch. 1-2 on liberal ideas. I also found valuable Victoria F. Brown, *The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism*, in Stephen Fischer-Galați, Radu R. Florescu, and George R. Ursul (eds.), *Romania Between East and West*, Boulder and New York, East European Quarterly, 1982, p. 269-301, the first part of which (p. 272-281) is devoted to a similar task. Our two accounts are complementary: Brown focusses on the material-economic and philosophical and on a somewhat pessimistic liberalism; mine is more focussed on political ideas, particularly Actonian perspectives, and on a somewhat more optimistic liberalism.

<sup>7</sup> De Ruggiero, *op. cit.*, p. 357. The “fact of liberty” is also usually taken to mean that one would reciprocate freedom by not infringing on the equal right to freedom of others.

<sup>8</sup> For a useful *Catalogue of Freedom*, see Machlup, *op. cit.*, p. 136-143.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 119.

<sup>10</sup> Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Cp. Lord Acton, a leading classical liberal: “the finest opportunity ever given to the world was thrown away, because the passion for equality made vain the hope of freedom.” Acton, *The History of Freedom in Christianity*, 1877, in his *The History of Freedom and Other Essays*, edited by J. N. Figgis and R. V. Laurence, London, Macmillan, 1922 [1907], p. 57. For a discussion of Acton’s take on liberalism, see Figgis and Laurence’s *Introduction*, to Acton, *History of Freedom*, 1922, p. XXVII-XXXI; and E. L. Woodward, *The Place of Lord Acton in the Liberal Movement of the Nineteenth Century*, in *Bulletin of the International Committee of the Historical Sciences*, Vol. 10 (1938), p. 366-370. See also my preface to Lord Acton, *Despre libertate*, Iași, Institutul European, 2000, p. 5-43.

tyranny of the mass over the individual and of the majority over the minority” just as it had under the Jacobins<sup>11</sup>.

They also realized, a bit more slowly, that liberty and fraternity (i.e., nationality) were incompatible as well. “The theory of nationality is involved in the democratic theory of the sovereignty of the general will,” Lord Acton pointed out. “To have a collective will, unity is necessary...”<sup>12</sup>. In the end, the “state becomes... inevitably absolute”<sup>13</sup>.

The relationship between liberty, equality, and nationalism was summarized by Acton: “... in Latin Europe... the movement which calls itself liberal is essentially national. If liberty were its object, its means would be the establishment of great independent authorities not derived from the State, and its model would be England. But its object is equality; and it seeks, like France in 1789, to cast out the elements of inequality... This national element in the movement was not understood by the revolutionary leaders” in France, Italy, and Spain<sup>14</sup>.

In the economic sphere, liberalism emphasized what Adam Smith had called “the obvious and simple system of natural liberty”<sup>15</sup>: freedom from governmental and institutional restraints on economic activity, domestic and international. Free trade, free markets, free competition, and freedom of contracts – all coordinated as if by an “invisible hand” – were part of the credo of classical liberalism. Indeed, most liberals believed that without economic freedom, political freedom was impossible. The individual would best served by free markets in ideas as well as material goods<sup>16</sup>.

Our problem of definition is additionally complicated by the existence of two distinct traditions of liberalism, which may be summarized as the British evolutionary tradition and the French rationalistic tradition<sup>17</sup>. The former advocated negative freedom: freedom from the state, which should ideally function as a night-watchman and which needs to be carefully restricted and circumscribed. The latter was for positive freedom: freedom through the state, which should function as a social engineer and take

<sup>11</sup> Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 10-13; cp. Hayek, *op. cit.*, p. 142: “Liberalism is thus incompatible with unlimited democracy, just as it is incompatible with all other forms of unlimited government.” See Alexis de Tocqueville’s classic *Democracy in America* (1835-1840) for a nuanced discussion of the issues, and Lord Acton, “Sir Erskine May’s *Democracy in Europe*,” 1878, in his *History of Freedom*, 1922, p. 61-100.

<sup>12</sup> Lord Acton, *Nationality*, 1862, republished in his *History of Freedom*, 1922, p. 287.

<sup>13</sup> Acton, *Nationality*, 1862, p. 287.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 280-281. One also notes here in Acton’s suggestion that liberty depends on “independent authorities not derived from the State” a foreshadowing of modern argument about civil society.

<sup>15</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, edited by R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner, Indianapolis, Liberty Classics, 1981 [1776], Vol. II, p. 687.

<sup>16</sup> For the economic aspects, see Smith, *op. cit.*, For the market in ideas, see Hayek, *op. cit.*, p. 147-149. For contemporary appraisals of Smith’s work: E. G. West, *Adam Smith and Modern Economics: From Market Behaviour to Public Choice*, Aldershot GB, Edward Elgar, 1990; and Jerry Z. Muller, *Adam Smith in His Time and Ours: Designing the Decent Society*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993. Cf. also Aurelian Crăiutu, *Un dialog cu Adam Smith*, in his *Elogiul libertății. Studii de filosofie politică*, Iași, Polirom, 1998, p. 107-116.

<sup>17</sup> De Ruggiero, *op. cit.*, p. 347; Collins, *op. cit.*, passim; Hayek, *op. cit.*, p. 119; and Machlup, *op. cit.*, p. 119. De Ruggiero is sympathetic to the French tradition; Hayek and Machlup to the British. Also useful is Hayek’s, *Individualism: True and False*, in his *Individualism and Economic Order*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 1-32, contrasting the evolutionary and the constructivist rationalist approaches; and his *The Counter-Revolution of Science: Studies on the Abuse of Reason*, Glencoe IL, The Free Press, 1955. For further detail, see Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*, 1958, in his *Four Essays on Liberty*, London, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 118-172; and John Gray, *On Negative and Positive Liberty*, in his *Liberalisms: Essays in Political Philosophy*, London, Routledge, 1991 [1989], p. 45-68.

an activist role, and whose reach is not to be feared as long as it was in the right hands<sup>18</sup>. The British tradition was historically oriented (emphasizing continuity, especially of rights) and focussed on liberties, rights, and freedom from arbitrary coercion; the French tradition was more present oriented (emphasizing separation from the past), focussed on liberty as an abstract concept, and did not hesitate to coerce for the greater good. The British tradition looked askance at nationalism; the French saw nationalism as a positive force, even after 1848<sup>19</sup>. Finally, the former was an advocate of equal opportunity, while the latter tended toward egalitarianism<sup>20</sup>. These two views “coexisted only in an uneasy partnership and must be clearly distinguished if the development of the liberal movement is to be understood”<sup>21</sup>.

### III. Periodization

The study of liberalism in Romania depends, in part, on periodization, to which we now turn. I identify the following epochs in the history of Romanian liberalism since 1800:

- A. Idealistic Liberalism, 1800-1848;
- B. Pragmatic Liberalism, 1848-1859;
- C. Liberalisms under Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1859-1866;
- D. *Realpolitik* Liberalism under Carol I, 1866-1914;
- E. Nationalist Liberalism under Ferdinand I, 1914-1930;
- F. Opportunistic Liberalism in the Era of Tyrannies, 1930-1940;
- G. Postlude: the Demise of Romanian Liberalism, 1940-1947.

In these periods, the fortunes of Romanian liberals, of course, varied, but it is fair to say that they were the dominant element in Romanian political life for nearly a century between 1848 and 1937. Given this dominance, the importance of careful study and analysis of this particular ideology, of its leaders and ideas, and of its role and place in modern Romanian history is clear<sup>22</sup>.

#### A. *Idealistic Liberalism*, 1800-1848 (under the Turkish and Russian protectorates)

This was the formative period of the Romanian national movement and it is hard to say if there were true liberal groupings as such. The separation of the Romanian lands into three principalities (Moldova, Muntenia, and Transylvania) retarded modern

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<sup>18</sup> De Ruggiero, *op. cit.*, p. 350-357. Machlup points out that this owes a good deal to the idea of “effective power,” which leads to such absurdities as William O. Douglas’s statement that he “ranks freedom to eat with freedom to speak.” Machlup, *op. cit.*, p. 120-121. Cp. Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s confusion between “freedom to” and “freedom from” in his Four Freedoms: “freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear” (p. 122-123).

<sup>19</sup> In his prescient essay on *Nationality*, 1862, p. 288, Acton contrasts the two traditions on democracy and on nationality.

<sup>20</sup> De Ruggiero thinks that the two conceptions can be reconciled or synthesized, since they are “reciprocally complete and safeguard each other.” De Ruggiero, *op. cit.*, p. 347-349. Hayek and Machlup think the two are basically incompatible. And, of course, it should be noted that there were British writers who were more aligned with the French tradition (Mill, T. H. Green, and others), while there were continental writers who were closer to the British tradition (de Tocqueville, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Frederic Bastiat, among others).

<sup>21</sup> Hayek, *Liberalism*, p. 119.

<sup>22</sup> For what follows, I have drawn extensively on 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. 667-690; and *Romanian Politics, 1859-1861: From Prince Cuza to Prince Carol*, Iași, Center for Romanian Studies, 1998, both of which include appropriate bibliographical materials.

development. Of course, under Ottoman/Fanariot/Russian domination, liberal movements would have been given rather short shrift. Much the same was true in the Habsburg lands.

The Fanariots were ousted in 1821 in the context of the Greek national uprising. This led in 1822 to the installation of native princes. However, little real change occurred as far as modernization is concerned.

In 1827-1828, the Russo-Turkish war led to the establishment of a Russian protectorate over the Principalities by the Treaty of Adrianople. This resulted in the Reglement Organique system, which prevailed from 1834 to 1848. Though this was a much more open system (owing to the influence of the Russian Governor P. D. Kisselev), the despotic and corrupt nature of the ruling princes were barriers to reform and change. There were covert insurgent groups, mainly led by French-educated Romanian students, active in the 1830s and 1840s. Many of the future leaders of Romanian liberalism were included: the Brătianu brothers, C. A. Rosetti, Ion Ghica, the Golescus, and others.

#### B. *Pragmatic Liberalism*, 1848-1859

The events of 1848 were significant for Romanian liberalism, both because it was the first practical experience in political life for Romanian liberals and because their defeat in 1848 may have provided significant impetus away from the classical liberal model and toward a more statist position. This was not such a big step, however, since Romanian liberals were intensely Francophile. In the words of Ion C. Brătianu and C.A. Rosetti: "France raised us and taught us. The spark which warms our country we took from the French hearth"<sup>23</sup>. The consequences of 1848 elsewhere, such as in Germany and Italy, was *realpolitik*. Why not in Romania? Certainly Brătianu became more pragmatic after 1848, and even his more ideological collaborator, Rosetti, in effect agreed to mute his more radical positions in the interests of Romanian national unification<sup>24</sup>. The successful policy of *fait accompli*, at which the Romanians became adept after 1848, encouraged pragmatism as well.

#### C. *Liberalisms under Alexandru Ioan Cuza*, 1859-1866

The appearance of the first real political groupings in Romania was one consequence of the events of 1859. Romanian political options were loosely divided between "conservatives" and "liberals." The conservatives were those who believed that the system established by the Congress of Paris in 1858 was more or less satisfying, with the possible exception of not providing either complete union or a foreign prince. The liberals, on the other hand, were those who saw this system as merely a stepping stone to a fully unified and independent Romania and who favored, to varying degrees, social reforms and the introduction of liberal (in the generic sense) constitutional institutions into the emerging state. The division was also between those who looked back on the revolutions of 1848 with distaste and disapproval and those who regarded 1848 as the first step in the emergence of a Romanian national state. The former were the conservatives, the latter the liberals.

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<sup>23</sup> Ion C. Brătianu and C. A. Rosetti to Edgar Quinet, 26 June 1848, published in Vintilă Brătianu, C. Banu, and G. D. Creangă (eds.), *Din scrierile și cuvântările lui Ion C. Brătianu, 1821-1891, Part I: 1848-1868*, București, Göbl, 1903, p. 12-14.

<sup>24</sup> Cp. Rosetti, in „Românul“, 16.XI.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".

Several “liberalisms” emerged. One was a moderate liberalism supportive of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1820-1873). He and his closest associates were mostly from Moldova; their liberalism emphasized equality, social amelioration, and, above all, state unity; rather less important to them was an individualist concern for liberty or civil liberties as such. Their watchword was prudent reform.

The second group of liberals (and the Prince’s principal opponents) was the Muntenian liberal group around Ion C. Brătianu (1821-1891) and C. A. Rosetti (1816-1885). Mostly 1848<sup>ers</sup> as well, this group included Ion’s brother, Dumitru (1818-1892) and the Golescu brothers. The Muntenian liberals were more organized than any other group, even taking steps by 1861 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. Organizationally, a significant advantage of the Muntenian liberal group was Rosetti’s *Românul* (1857-1864, 1865, 1866-1905), Romania’s most widely circulated newspaper. A second strength – which was also a serious weakness in terms of how they were viewed by the rest of the political elite – was that they had learned in 1848 and thereafter how to use street mobs and the threat of peasant risings to bolster their influence. This is why they were often referred to as “The Reds.” The Muntenian Liberal platform was standard classical liberal fare, was couched in typically provocative 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalistic and Francophile liberal terms. The radicalism of the Muntenian group was, in fact, that of the Paris of the 1840s, where most of them had been students, the Paris of Michelet, Quinet, Lamartine, Mickiewicz, and Masonic lodges. Their socio-economic program 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 power-seizing and wielding<sup>25</sup>.

A third liberal grouping was headed by Ion Ghica (1816-1897), scion of a princely family, scholar, and a classical English liberal in economics. Though Ghica was a key participant in most of the significant political developments in Romania from the 1830<sup>s</sup> to the 1870<sup>s</sup>, he could never quite shake the suspicion that he had designs on the Romanian throne and his personal popularity remained low. His usual collaborators were the Moldovan D. A. Sturdza (1833-1914), the Muntenian Ion Balaceanu (1825-1911), and, sometimes, Al. G. Golescu (1819-1881), a cousin of the Golescus previously mentioned.

Another liberal grouping was the so-called Independent and Liberal Fraction of Iași, led by Nicolae Ionescu (1820-1905) and composed of Moldovan professors influenced by the late nationalist ideologue Simion Barnuțiu (1808-1864). Their ideas were a bizarre conglomeration of liberal, nationalist, republican, and anti-semitic beliefs. Their main influence came from the continued failure of the Muntenian liberals to develop any traction in Moldova. This allowed the Fraction to have a lot more power than their actual support merited.

Finally, there are a number of people who played significant roles in Romanian political life that are referred to variously as moderate liberals and as moderate conservatives (this in itself highlights the ambiguity of political terminology at this time). These include Vasile Boerescu (1830-1883), Gheorghe Costa-Foru (1821-1876),

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<sup>25</sup> The contemporary conservative observer Nicolae Sutu justly remarked: “No where else... has such a frequent and abusive use been made of the words *nation* and *patriotism*...” Cf. N. Sutu, *Mémoires du Prince Soutzo*, Wien, Gerold, 1899, p. 374-375.

Constantin Bosianu (1815-1882), Christian Tell (1807-1884), and Manolache Costache Epureanu (1824-1880, the only Moldovan). The pragmatic reformist and unionist views of these moderates caused the more hard-line liberals to regard them as “false liberals” and opportunists, while, for the same reasons, they were usually alienated from the core of Romanian conservatism. 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.

In subsequent eras, these various “liberalisms” would narrow down considerably.

#### D. Realpolitik *Liberalism under Carol I, 1866-1914*

The reign of Carol I (1866-1914) was the longest in the history of the Romanians and his name is closely linked to the political developments of that period. Several developmental crises were confronted during this era: the developmental crisis of legitimacy (namely the establishment and legitimation of a stable political order in Romania), which appears to have been solved, though it had to weather a severe crisis in 1870-1871; the developmental crisis of participation (related to political parties, social groups, and electoral systems), in which very little real advance was made over the preceding period; and, lastly, the developmental crisis related to the bureaucratization of modern society, which featured the expansion of bureaucratized state mechanisms as a primary feature of the period after 1878. Romanian liberals fully participated in all of these controversies.

This epoch can be divided in two major segments. The first of these was 1866-1878 – beginning with a formative period of extreme political complexity and experimentation which led to Carol’s near abdication in 1871, followed by a coalescing of the political system between 1871 and 1877, and culminating in the achievement of national independence in 1877-1878 in the context of a Russo-Romanian-Turkish war.

The second period was one of consolidation and internal development. It saw the entrenchment (inside and outside of politics) of a nationalist-liberal oligarchy between 1878-1888, under the “vizieriate” of Ion C. Brătianu, the proclamation of the Romanian Kingdom in 1881, and, finally, the emergence of a kind of rotational system of governance between 1888 and 1914, in which power was alternated between the so-called national liberals and conservatives. In the late 1890s, while the liberals were led by D. A. Sturdza, a new generation of liberal leaders came onto the scene, including Spiru Haret (1851-1912) and Ion I. C. Brătianu (1864-1927), the son of Ion C. Brătianu.

This period was rudely punctuated by the shocking peasant revolt of 1907. At the waning of the era, Romania was involved (probably unwisely) in the Second Balkan War (1913) which led to the promise of liberal agrarian and constitutional reform, abruptly tabled with the onset of World War I. As for Romanian liberalism in this era, especially after 1870, it can be characterized as a *realpolitik* liberalism, a liberalism for which political success not principle came first.

Under Carol, more or less everyone came to accept the legacy of 1848. The eventual replacement of Cuza’s statute with a new constitution was, of course, one of the aims of the anti-coalition, especially the Muntenian liberals. The constitution of 1866 was a remarkably liberal document; its internal arrangements were – on paper – the equal of any in Europe, particularly in the realm of civil liberties. The principle of the separation of powers was established, including the independence of the judiciary from the executive power, along with the right of a princely veto.

However, the liberals did agree to a conservative demand for a restrictive Prussian-style collegial voting system based on income, which effectively disenfranchised the majority of the population. Elections to the Senate were even more restricted. (The liberals' efforts to widen the franchise was undermined by their own reluctance to endorse universal suffrage which they feared would lead to the swamping of "intelligence" by mere "numbers")<sup>26</sup>.

Actual political participation in post-1866 Romania was limited to about 20,000 out of a population of 5 million. As a consequence, political power remained the preserve of a narrow elite which managed to escape the discipline of effective political participation and genuine elections. This prevented the formation of a real system of political parties and representative government. The results of elections would depend on who governed rather than determining who would govern. And, while in true parliamentary systems, a vote of no confidence usually meant the fall of the government, in Romania such a vote meant the fall of the assembly and new elections aimed at producing a more amenable legislature.

In spite of all this, the new Romanian constitution provided for a relatively more open society than those of its neighbors, Russia, Austria, and Turkey, though, as R. W. Seton-Watson observed, it is "not enough to pass enlightened laws; it remained to enforce them and to imbue public opinion and the governing class with respect for the principles they embodied"<sup>27</sup>.

Particularly critical in this regard was establishment of a centrally-controlled French-style bureaucratic regime of prefects, sub-prefects, and mayors. These jobs were filled, directly and indirectly, from București, and gave the government enormous leverage over virtually all local political matters including elections. The compatibility of strong, honest, and liberal civic traditions with a strong centralized bureaucracy is questionable. "Power tends to corrupt," Lord Acton declared; the bureaucratic mentality seems unable to avoid stifling the kind of initiative and respect for rule of law that are part of building successful and ethical political cultures.

The political centralism of Romanian political culture is explicable even if we now can see its perverse impact. The basic factors were the influence of the French and (later) Prussian centralist models, a somewhat irrational fear that Moldova and Muntenia might separate, the growing 19<sup>th</sup> century popularity among intellectuals of social engineering and holistic theories of society, and, finally, the desire for control that tended to dominate the Romanian political environment<sup>28</sup>. Few people even recognized the dangers. To some extent, the depth and significance of this has still not been understood<sup>29</sup>.

The experiences of 1860<sup>s</sup> led Carol and much of the Romanian leadership elite to regard honest parliamentary government as impossible or even undesirable in Romania. The problem, however, was not that constitutional government had been tried and shown wanting; but rather it was that it had not really been tried: the application of and adherence to liberal principles were faulty or half-hearted. The central agenda for Romanian politicians of all stripes now became discovering how they could rule within

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<sup>26</sup> „Românul“, 28/29 May 1866.

<sup>27</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians*, Hamden CT, Archon Books, 1963, p. 319.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. here what Victoria Brown calls "sectarian liberalism." Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 278, 283, and 287-289.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. H.-R. Patapievici, *Adulatorii statului*, in his *Cerul văzut prin lentilă*, București, Editura Nemira, 1995, p. 180.

the 1866 framework without loosening their hold on the levers of power. On the whole, they were able to do this successfully until World War I.

*E. Nationalist Liberalism under Ferdinand I, 1914-1927*

Ion I. C. Brătianu continued as Prime Minister between 1914 and the outbreak of World War I for Romania in 1916. Despite the disasters that befell Romanian military forces in the war, he persisted in power until January 1918. After a brief conservative interlude designed to palliate the Germans, Brătianu triumphantly returned to power in late 1918. His cabinet was the first to include members from all the Romanian lands, and on December 11/24, King Ferdinand promulgated the Union of Transylvania and the Romanian Kingdom.

Romanian history between 1918 and 1930 is divided into two parts, corresponding to the reign of King Ferdinand (1914-1927), the regency which followed (1927-1930). The creation of Greater Romania opened broad new horizons, but the disorder and destruction of the war coupled with all the changes that needed to be implemented in the significantly expanded state made for difficult material and financial conditions. The presence in the new Romania of substantial national minorities (more than 28% of the population) also presented difficulties. These minorities were a badly-handled source of distress to interwar governments, being viewed at best as a national weakness and at worst as targets for retribution for prewar humiliations and repression and scapegoats for unresolved problems. Romanian liberalism, led by Brătianu up to his death in 1927, dominated the government in the post-war era (holding the reins of power for most of that time: he was prime minister 1918-1919, 1922-1926, 1927) and came to be almost exclusively focussed on nationalism.

Hard times and national insecurities fostered a continuation of the highly centralized administrative methods of the old Romanian kingdom. Promises of local autonomy made to the Transylvanians and Basarabians were soon abandoned. An almost pathological fixation on “national unity” swamped common sense and allowed those who wanted or benefited from the imposition of the București – dominated state bureaucratic mechanism over all of the new Romania to maintain control of the system. This preoccupation with alleged national issues also resulted in an enormous mis-allocation of national income to military and police matters, more on a per capita basis than any of the major powers.

Important reforms were implemented after the war. A system of political parties began to appear, though these were still far too much organized around personalities and quasi-kinship/patronage relationships. The peasantry became for the first time a real factor in the political life of the country with the introduction of universal manhood suffrage and substantial agrarian reform. All of this was formalized in a new constitution that was adopted in 1923 under the aegis of the liberals. The enfranchisement of the peasantry had exactly the result feared by pre-war Romanian conservatives, who virtually disappeared as a political force at that point.

The Constitution of 1923 had many democratizing elements, but these were overshadowed by overcentralization (county administration continued to be appointed directly from București), a subtle shift to a more illiberal collectivist/statist/national worldview as compared to 1866, and continued electoral fraud. In addition, the religious provisions of the 1923 statute clearly discriminated against all but the so-called “national cults.” In 1926, the Liberals implemented a new electoral law that gave half of the seats in parliament to the majority party if it had 40% of the votes.

The National-Liberals were able to implement a very un-liberal political-economic program under the slogan “Prin noi înșine” (“By and Through Ourselves Alone”), and ruthlessly laid to rest any federalist or decentralist fantasies. Much of Romania’s mineral wealth was “nationalized,” though the stock was often held by their supporters (the National-Liberals directly controlled the National Bank, the Romanian Bank, the Mine Credit Bank, and numerous other major companies). Various industries were proclaimed to be of “national interest,” and placed under government control, particularly in metallurgy and petroleum. In addition, a number of other areas were or now became state monopolies, such as the railroads and the post-telegraph-telephones. Numerous industries required that 60% of the capital as well of management be Romanian. These steps to “protect” Romanian industry and to “develop” its economy were misguided at best and simply a means of transferring the wealth of the country into the hands of the political elite. Though the Romanian economy made considerable strides forward economically during the interwar period, this owed nothing to the economically-illiterate policies of the National-Liberals. These policies were a sham and a millstone around the neck of the Romanian people and deserve considerable credit for perpetuating Romania’s backwardness despite its many resources and creative population.

This era began to unravel in 1927 when King Ferdinand and then Ionel Brătianu died. A regency was in effect from 1927 to 1930. Interestingly, leadership of the liberals stayed in the family: Ionel Brătianu was succeeded by his brothers Vintilă Brătianu (1867-1930, party leader, 1927-1930) and Constantin I. C. Brătianu (1866-1950, party leader 1934-1947). The only exception was Ion G. Duca (1879-1933, party leader 1930-1933).

#### F. *Opportunistic Liberalism in the Era of Tyrannies, 1930-1940*

In June of 1930, the exiled Prince Carol illegally returned to Romania. The National Peasant Party premier resigned, but did not protest or take steps to prevent Carol’s “restoration” as Carol II. Between Carol’s conniving and self-aggrandizing activities and the escalation of extremist politics, particularly led by Corneliu Codreanu’s Legion of the Archangel Michael, Romanian political life began to degenerate rapidly. Carol eventually turned in 1933 to the National-Liberal Party, which had been sidelined since 1930 because of their opposition to the return of Carol. This had even led to a split in their ranks, with Ionel Brătianu’s son, the historian Gheorghe Brătianu (1898-1953), creating a dissident pro-Carol party. The new prime minister was Ion G. Duca, energetic head of the party since 1930.

The traditional dissolving of the parliament followed Duca’s installation. So, too, did a massive campaign against the Legionary Movement, whose political party the Iron Guard was dissolved. Following an election in which the National-Liberals took 51% of the vote and 78% of the seats, a Legionary death squad assassinated Duca.

The elimination of Duca was fortuitous for the king and unfortunate for Romanian liberalism: Duca was an adversary of authoritarian politics and a leader of the National-Liberal old guard. Carol now had the opportunity to bring forward opportunistic, young Carlist liberals, such as Victor Franasovici (1883-1964) and Gheorghe Tătărescu (1886-1957); he appointed the latter prime minister without even consulting with National-Liberal Party leaders.

For all its suspect and dubious start, the Tătărescu government lasted nearly four years, benefiting from a partial recovery of the Romanian economy that began in 1933.

Though its interventionist policies hampered fuller and more rapid improvement, and other legislation led to the cartelizing of some industries, industrial output by 1938 was more than double what it had been in 1923. On the other hand, civil liberties continued to erode along with political freedoms. The state of siege imposed following Duca's assassination continued for four years, parliament ceded part of its prerogatives to the government "to deal with urgent problems," and the use of arbitrary decree-laws was considerably expanded. Tătărescu also collaborated with Carol in trying to garner support of the Legionary Movement. The king hoped to use the Legion to establish authoritarian personal rule; it is not clear what Tătărescu had in mind. Whatever had remained of "liberal" in "National-Liberal" was mostly gone by 1937.

In November 1937, Tătărescu dissolved the parliament with the hope of consolidating his position and preparing the way for a royal dictatorship. The National-Liberals were allied in the election with the radically anti-Semitic German Party and Vaida-Voevod's chauvinist Romanian Front. The National-Peasant Party dropped a bombshell by announcing its own electoral pact with the Gh. Brătianu Liberal dissidents and Codreanu's Legionary Movement (campaigning as the All for the Fatherland Party). The purpose of the so-called electoral non-aggression pact was to prevent the National-Liberals from gaining the 40% threshold which would give it an automatic majority in the parliament. In the event, the elections were *sui generis*: the government, for all its electoral fraud and intimidation of the opposition and the voters, got only 36% of the vote. In the face of this humiliation, Tătărescu was forced to resign.

After a brief interlude of rule by the rabidly nationalist and anti-semitic Octavian Goga and A. C. Cuza, in February of 1938, Carol declared a state of siege and a royal dictatorship established. The regime installed in 1866 and modified in 1923 was ended.

Carol II's dictatorship lasted only two years. His scheming led rapidly to a bad end; he soon found himself out of his league in dealing with Hitler and Stalin. The appeasement of the Nazis, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938, and the collapse of the Versailles/League of Nations system in 1939 in the wake of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, left him (and Romania) fewer and fewer options. In 1940, when the USSR demanded cession of Basarabia and Northern Bucovina and Hitler imposed further territorial concessions to Hungary (northern Transylvania) and Bulgaria (the southern Dobrogea), the end of Carol's reign was nigh. On September 6, 1940, Carol was forced to abdicate, his nineteen year old son, Mihai, was installed for the second time as king, and General Ion Antonescu became leader of a state based on the Legionary Movement and ideology.

#### *G. Postlude: the Demise of Romanian Liberalism, 1940-1947*

With the establishment of the military dictatorship in 1940, all pretense of normal political life came to an end in Romania. The story of Romanian liberalism was not yet over, but the developments of 1940-1947 were, in retrospect, the end game for a political option that had been at the forefront of Romanian development since early in the 19th century. The Brătianus continued to be recognized as tacit leaders of a movement that no longer had legal status. After the war, the opportunism of Gheorghe Tătărescu and others was amply demonstrated by their sorry collaboration in the Sovietization of Romania. The story ends with the abdication of King Mihai in December 1947.

#### **IV. A Research Agenda for the Study of Romanian Liberalism**

What are some of the problems, issues, and “blank pages” in the history of modern Romanian liberalism? In this section, I suggest several avenues of research relevant to a better understanding of Romanian liberalism. (I might note that the bibliographical information provided below is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive.)

The first task is to continue development of the basic narrative history of Romanian political liberalism. Apostol Stan and Mircea Iosa’s *Liberalismul politic în România de la origini până la 1918* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1996), was the first systematic survey up to 1918. Though it is a bit traditional, it does provide an adequate starting point. Obviously similar work covering up to 1947 is needed<sup>30</sup>.

In addition, we need a systematic pursuit of new biographical studies of prominent Romanian liberal leaders. An example here is the virtual absence of materials dealing with D. A. Sturdza. And the fact is that many existing biographies are seriously outdated and obsolete<sup>31</sup>. Secondly, we need a thoroughgoing overhaul of what we know about the Romanian liberals “other partner” in rule: the Romanian monarchs. The lives of the Romanian kings have been shrouded in ignorance, misrepresentation, and presupposition. How can we assess the work of Romanian liberals without clear ideas about the royal lynchpins of the system? With a narrative framework established and the provision of up-to-date biographical treatments of important liberal leaders, thinkers, and monarchs, the stage would then be set for more critical, analytical, and interpretive studies of Romanian liberalism.

As for the latter, two excellent examples are provided by the essays of Victoria F. Brown, *The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Liberalism*<sup>32</sup> and Gh. Platon, *Liberalismul românesc în secolul XIX: emergență, etape, forme de expresie*<sup>33</sup>. Brown and Platon – the former from a position informed by Western scholarship, the latter from a position within the Romanian cultural tradition – suggest the kind of questions that ought to be asked, the kinds of issues that need to be raised, and the paths that need to be explored. (Unfortunately, Brown has not been able to continue this effort.) Another study along the same lines is Gheorghe Cliveti’s instructive but brief essay, *Liberalismul românesc: Eseu istoriografic*<sup>34</sup> which provides a pretty thorough review of the literature, analyzes the ideological issues raised, and suggests a number of important problems that need to be considered.

How liberal was Romanian liberalism? This is one of the issues tackled by Victoria Brown’s study. Romanian liberalism of course strayed from 19<sup>th</sup> century liberal “norms.” So, too, did Western European liberals, who “in practice often betrayed their

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<sup>30</sup> Mention might be made here of two other works that make a contribution to the historical approach: Dan A. Lăzărescu’s *Introducere în istoria liberalismului european și în istoria Partidului Național-Liberal din România*, București, Editura Viitorul Românesc, 1996; and Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner (ed.), *Istoria Partidului Național Liberal*, București, Editura AII, 2000. These, like the Stan-Iosa book, are written along traditional lines.

<sup>31</sup> For a comprehensive review of the literature on Romanian liberals and liberalism, see the bibliographical essay in my *Romanian Politics*, 1998, p. 273.

<sup>32</sup> In Stephen Fischer-Galați, Radu R. Florescu, and George R. Ursul (eds.), *Romania Between East and West*, Boulder and New York, East European Quarterly, 1982, p. 269-301.

<sup>33</sup> In Al. Zub (ed.), *Cultură și societate. Studii privitoare la trecutul românesc*, București, Editura Științifică, 1991, p. 73-103.

<sup>34</sup> Iași, Editura Fundația Axis, 1996, 199 p.

ideal and often behaved in a manner unworthy of men pursuing an ideal"<sup>35</sup>. Was this deviant enough to merit the frequently met charge of opportunism? In general, Brown thinks not, though she admits that Romanian liberals were often "sectarian liberals" (a term introduced by Carlton Hayes)<sup>36</sup>. The line between Brown's "sectarian liberalism" and sheer opportunism is not entirely clear; as indicated in my periodization above, I think this varies from epoch to epoch. In any case, working from the definition given in Part II above, we ought to devote additional effort to the question.

How national was Romanian liberalism? In my view, the national element tended to swamp the liberal element in "Romanian National-Liberal Party", indeed exactly in the same fashion as Lord Acton had observed elsewhere (France, Italy, Spain)<sup>37</sup>. Brown recognizes this clearly, though she notes that many Western liberal parties also were ready to sacrifice liberal theory to national interest<sup>38</sup>. This rather serves to confirm Lord Acton's strictures on nationalism and liberalism discussed above. A primary desideratum for the future study of Romanian liberalism will be more sophisticated analyses of Romanian nationalism as well as some of its distinctive forms, e.g. "romanismul"<sup>39</sup>. Because of the continuing explosive nature of the subject and its implication in contemporary Romanian politics, I am not terribly sanguine about the possibility that this will or can be done in the near future<sup>40</sup>.

Another area for further study concerns the alleged socio-economic foundations of Romanian liberalism. In one sense, I hesitate to bring this subject up because at present I am almost convinced that social class is irrelevant to Romanian liberalism. No studies have documented that Romanian liberalism was the purview of (chose one or more of the following) the bourgeoisie, the small boiars (whatever that may mean), young professionals, young intellectuals, or whoever, yet many people freely make the linkages. Part of this stems from Ștefan Zeletin's vivid, but mostly fanciful mythology as set forth in his *Burghezia română*<sup>41</sup>. Despite its myriad errors and virtually complete lack of documentation, it continues to be the reference of choice for practically everyone concerned with the issue<sup>42</sup>. Such "class analysis" fails, generally speaking, because of its anecdotal foundations and because of the numerous "exceptions" to supposed rules, e.g., so-called "big boiars" who are liberals (Ion Ghica, the Goleșcu) and conservative leaders with little or no property or social standing (Titu Maiorescu). And, it should be noted, even if there were a correlation between Romanian social status and political inclination (which has yet to be shown), that would not in itself

<sup>35</sup> Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 278, 293-295. Her admission that Romanian liberals "did not believe in *laissez-faire*, as Western liberals of all sorts mostly did, though... the Romanians argued that this was a violation of the letter rather than the spirit of liberalism" seems a bit lame (p. 287, 293).

<sup>37</sup> Acton, *Nationality*, p. 280-281.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 282-284, in a section entitled *Romanian Liberalism and Nationalism*.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, Cristian Preda, *Modernitatea politică și românismul*, București, Nemira, 1998, especially p. 155, and G. M. Tamas, *Idolus tribus. Esența morală a sentimentului național*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Some promising work has been done by Daniel Barbu, notably his *Șapte teme de politică românească*, București, Antet, 1997; and some of the papers in Andrei Pleșu (ed.), *Nation and National Ideology: Past, Present, and Prospects*, București, New Europe College, 2002.

<sup>41</sup> Ștefan Zeletin, *Burghezia română. Originea și rolul ei istoric*, București, Cultura Națională, 1925.

<sup>42</sup> This is the case with Victoria Brown. Cf. her *Romanian Liberalism*, p. 284-287, which relies heavily on Zeletin. For a critique of Zeletin, see my *Procesul dezvoltării naționale române. Contribuția lui Ștefan Zeletin*, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie «A. D. Xenopol»", Vol. 24 (1987), p. 365-374; and Cristian Preda, *Zeletin a fost socialist, nu liberal*, in his *Modernitatea politică și românismul*, p. 201-235.

demonstrate that there is any causal relationship. Until Romanian historical scholarship can escape from Zeletin's paralyzing and baneful influence, we won't make much substantive progress in this area<sup>43</sup>.

On the separate question of a Romanian bourgeoisie, we still have to be content with works dealing with preliminaries: Constantin C. Giurescu's *Contribuțiuni la studiul originilor și dezvoltării burgheziei române până la 1848*<sup>44</sup>, is a mostly descriptive work that only goes up to 1848. The studies by Gh. and Alexandru-Florin Platon, *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea. Context European, evoluție socială și politică*<sup>45</sup>, and Alexandru-Florin Platon, *Geneza burgheziei în Principatele Române (a doua jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea – prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea): Preliminariile unei istorii*<sup>46</sup> show considerable promise as well as a grasp of contemporary international scholarship on the subject, but they, too, are limited, in the first case to Moldova and for both of them, to the pre-1848 era. We really need to move on to the situation after 1848.

A slightly different (and promising) slant, that of elite analysis, is that taken by Mihai Sorin Radulescu's *Elita liberală românească 1866-1900*<sup>47</sup>. Radulescu's work is a preliminary to further exploration of the intertwining of Romanian liberals with the Romanian business, intellectual, and cultural elites. This is a delicate task, however, and one that cannot rest on anecdotes or correlations.

One would also want to ask in this connection if there is any cultural connection between how liberalism functioned in Romania and the quasi-dynastic hold of the Brătianu on Romanian liberalism. My argument is that significant difficulties were created by the closed nature of Romanian politics and by the lack of a real party system, a subject that needs much additional research. Caragiale, writing before World War I, puts it well: "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..."<sup>48</sup>. Romanian liberals were at least as responsible as anyone else for the oligarchical political system that emerged after 1848. The lack of open participation in the system and the throttling of local initiative and representation prevented the development of true political parties. Romanian "parties" remained merely factions or quasi-kinship groups organized more around personalities and patron-client relationships rather than ideas, ideologies, or programs. Old Romania had been dominated by an agrarian oligarchy. Modern Romania came to be dominated by another oligarchy, a new urban one anchored in a bureaucratic, self-perpetuating political order.

Another area that has been neglected is the political infrastructure. A prime example of this, one almost bereft of substantive work, is the Romanian liberal press (or the Romanian press itself, for that matter). Isn't it surprising (and symptomatic) that *Românul*, a paper which functioned from 1857 to 1905) and which played a formative role in the development of Romanian liberalism has never been the object of systematic

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<sup>43</sup> Even less convincing is D. Drăghicescu's earlier and equally useless *Partide politice și clase sociale*, București, n.p., 1922.

<sup>44</sup> București, Editura Științifică, 1972.

<sup>45</sup> București, Editura Academiei, 1995.

<sup>46</sup> Iași, Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1997.

<sup>47</sup> București, Editura All, 1998.

<sup>48</sup> Ion Luca Caragiale, *1907 din primăvara până'n toamna. Câteva note*, in his *Opere*, Volume V, edited by Șerban Cioculescu [București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1938], p. 171-173.

study? What about the interwar press, which was lively and prolific? What about the structure, reach, and financing of Romanian media? All of these seem relevant to better understanding the place and functioning of liberalism in the Romanian context.

Economic development remained at a very rudimentary level in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; this too was a principal legacy of Romanian liberalism. The role of the state in Romanian society was exaggerated and its noxious influences and effects condoned, ignored, or overlooked. This contributed significantly to the formation of an overwhelmingly statist mindset in Romanian political culture, a sentiment which, sadly, persists to this day despite the disastrous effects of statism and collectivism on the lives of millions of Romanians<sup>49</sup>. Thus protectionism, cartelization, bank monopolies – in short, economic meddling of all sorts, paternalism (especially toward the peasant majority), and an almost obsessive fixation on centralization were characteristics of the dominant trend in Romanian liberalism<sup>50</sup>.

Market liberalism, an important correlative for the expansion of political liberty and the creation of a modern civil society, did not really exist, and it is doubtful that other than a tiny minority of the Romanian elite were in sympathy with it. The only real exceptions to the rule were the economist/politicians Ion Ghica and Ion Strat, who fairly consistently upheld classical liberal principles<sup>51</sup>. Much of what was positive in Romanian economic development occurred in spite of rather than because of governmental policies and actions. The largest sector of the economy, that of agriculture, was impeded by the lack of agrarian reform (for political reasons) and by the failure to provide or allow for the development of necessary infrastructure, especially in banking and credit. The huge peasant majority was a virtual null factor in political life. Other sectors which might have promoted capital formation and entrepreneurial development became state monopolies instead or were subject to heavy state regulation and control. Until we can approach Romanian economic development from other than a Marxist or vulgar Marxist, quasi-economic determinist point of view, we won't make much headway here.

Another failing for which Romanian liberalism bears considerable responsibility is the fact that most entrepreneurial skill in Romania came to be channeled into politics. Governmental posts, however modest or useless, were the career objectives of far too many educated Romanian youth and the educational system itself was too often seen mainly as preparation for service as a state functionary. In many respects, this was a reflection of a common developmental crisis, that related to the phenomenon of bureaucratization in modern society. In Romania, the bureaucratized state escalated to such an extent that by 1900, some 2% of the population was employed as state functionaries. (This compared to 3% employed in Romanian industry, only a quarter of whom were in enterprises with 25 or more workers.)

Were Romanian political culture and what might be called the Romanian worldview inimical to classical liberalism? Was there a pragmatism in Romanian culture that makes idealistic liberalism difficult? Does the Byzantine-Ottoman heritage undermine liberalism in the Romanian context? This opens or reopens the

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. H.-R. Patapievici, *op. cit.*, p. 180-185.

<sup>50</sup> On anti-capitalism in Romania, see Ioan Petru Culianu, *Dușmanii capitalismului*, in his *Mircea Eliade*, revised edition, București, Editura Nemira, 1995, p. 169.

<sup>51</sup> Economic liberalism in Romania is helpfully discussed in two short works by Eugen Demetrescu: *Influența școlii economice liberale în România în veacul al XIX-lea*, București, Bucovina, 1935, and *Liberalismul economic în dezvoltarea României moderne*, București, Cartea Românească, 1940. For a survey of Romanian opinion and political leaders' views on political economy that confirms these impressions, see Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria ideilor politice românești (1369-1878)*, Munchen, Jon Dumitru Verlag, 1987, p. 194-213.

long term debate on Romanian national development and Romanian political culture which I have explored elsewhere<sup>52</sup>. An excellent foundation is the work of Alexandru Duțu<sup>53</sup>. A number of scholars have pursued these issues since the 1990s: Adrian Marino<sup>54</sup>, Daniel Barbu<sup>55</sup>, Sorin Antohi<sup>56</sup>, Cristian Preda<sup>57</sup>, Sorin Alexandrescu<sup>58</sup>, and others<sup>59</sup>. This may be one of the most promising avenues of work currently under way and will have a lot to tell us about the Romanian political culture in which Romanian liberalism functioned<sup>60</sup>.

Classical liberal thought has not been well-served in Romanian culture. How and why this was needs to be explored. Relatively little was published before 1948 in translation of the liberal “classics” as such. For example, though some of Alexis de Tocqueville’s ideas were known in 19th century Romania, his seminal *De la democrație en Amerique* (1835-1840) was not published in Romania until after 1989. Al. Zub’s instructive and pathbreaking *Pe urmele lui Tocqueville în cultura română*, is an excellent example of what needs to be done for other classical liberal thinkers<sup>61</sup>.

Two major exceptions were the translations of Gide and Rist’s history of economic doctrines<sup>62</sup> and a partial publication of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*. The case of Adam Smith makes the point: in the 1930<sup>s</sup>, Al. Hallunga published a translation under the title: *Avuția națiunilor. O cercetare asupra naturii și cauzelor ei*<sup>63</sup>. This translation was incomplete, omitting parts of Book I, IV, and V. In addition, a miniscule print run made this work a bibliographical rarity. In 1946, Hallunga was able to produce a supplemental volume, revising Books IV and V and adding other previously deleted

<sup>52</sup> See my *Romanian Perspectives on Romanian National Development*, in „Balkanistica“, Vol. 7 (1981-1982), p. 92-120; *Myth and Reality in Romanian National Development*, in „International Journal of Rumanian Studies“, Vol. 5 (1987), Nr. 2, p. 5-33, and *Perceptions on Imperial Legacies in the Balkans: The Romanian Lands*, in „Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes“, Vol. 36 (1998), p. 65-77.

<sup>53</sup> Particularly illuminating: *Sinteză și originalitate în cultura română*, București, Editura Enciclopedică Română, 1972.

<sup>54</sup> *Pentru Europa. Integrarea României. Aspecte ideologice și culturale*, Iași, Polirom, 1995; *Politică și cultură. Pentru o nouă cultură română*, Iași, Polirom, 1996; and, in collaboration with Sorin Antohi, *Al treilea discurs: Cultură, ideologie și politică în România*, Iași, Polirom, 2001.

<sup>55</sup> In addition to his *Șapte teme*, 1997, see *Republica absentă*, București, Editura Nemira, 1999; his contribution to Barbu (ed.), *Firea românilor*, București, Editura Nemira, 2000; and *Bizant contra Bizant*, București, Editura Nemira, 2001.

<sup>56</sup> *Civitas imaginis. Istorie și utopie în cultura română*, revised edition, Iași, Polirom, 1999, first published in 1994; and *Exercițiul distanței. Discursuri, societăți, metode*, București, Editura Nemira, 1998.

<sup>57</sup> In addition to his *Modernitatea*, 1996, see *Occidentul nostru*, București, Editura Nemira, 1999; and *Tranziție, liberalism și națiune*, București, Editura Nemira, 2001.

<sup>58</sup> *Paradoxul român*, București, Editura Univers, 1998, and *Privind înapoi, modernitatea*, București, Editura Univers, 1999.

<sup>59</sup> Particularly Adrian-Paul Iliescu (ed.), *Mentalități și instituții. Carențe de mentalitate și înapoiere instituțională în România modernă*, București, Ars Docendi, 2002; Mihaela Czobor-Lupp and J. Stefan Lupp (eds.), *Moral, Legal and Political Values in Romanian Culture*, Washington DC, Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2002.

<sup>60</sup> This discussion includes the “Romania and the West” debate. Cf. my *Romanians and the West*, in Kurt W. Treptow (ed.), *Romania and Western Civilization*, Iași, The Center for Romanian Studies, 1997, p. 11-24.

<sup>61</sup> In his *La sfârșit de ciclu. Despre impactul revoluției franceze*, Iași, Institutul European, 1994, p. 149-170. English edition 2000. Given de Ruggiero’s point that de Tocqueville was the turning point in French and European liberalism, the significance of his absence in the Romanian tradition is obvious. See de Ruggiero, *op. cit.*, p. 187-191.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Gide and Charles Rist, *Istoria doctrinelor economice de la fiziocrați până azi*, București, Editura Casei Școalelor, 1926, translated by George Alexianu based on the 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

<sup>63</sup> București, Editura Bucovina, 1934-1938, four volumes, 466 p., based on the 1904 Edwin Cannan text of the fifth edition.

materials. This appeared in a provisional edition badly offset from a typescript, almost a kind of *samizdat*<sup>64</sup>.

In the 1960<sup>s</sup>, the Romanian Academy published a complete edition based on the Hallunga translation with the same title<sup>65</sup>. It included a postscript by N. N. Constantinescu on *Adam Smith. Clasic al economiei politice bugheze*<sup>66</sup>. Unhappily, his presentation followed predictable and erroneous Marxist-Leninist lines. This edition appeared in fewer than 2000 copies, which didn't exactly make Smith widely accessible to the masses either<sup>67</sup>.

The fate of Adam Smith is representative for classical liberal thought in Romania before 1989 more generally: little or nothing in the way of translations, liberal ideas known principally from limited quotations in other secondary sources, and a relative paucity of references to them in Romanian political and economic writings.

Since 1989, there have been numerous rectifications of this through the publication of translations of the work of de Tocqueville, Lord Acton, F. A. Hayek, and other classical liberal classics, along with a strong interest in such works by Romanian intellectuals. The effect of this renaissance, of course, remains to be seen<sup>68</sup>.

In dealing with Romanian liberalism, we are, thus, confronted by good news and bad news. The good news is that this important segment of modern Romanian history is a wide-open and fertile field for further research and analysis. The bad news is that this important segment of modern Romanian history is still far from being adequately treated, which makes it difficult for us to assess and evaluate Romanian development since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, except perhaps for the toxic issue of nationalism, many blank pages of Romanian history are being written, younger scholars are taking up the challenges, and the stream of relevant studies appears to be gaining not losing momentum. I look forward to seeing more of such work.

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<sup>64</sup> București, n.p., 1946, 616 p.

<sup>65</sup> București, Editura Academiei, 1962-1965, VII + 343 + 474 p.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Vol. II: p. 405-471, with p. 468-471 on Smith in Romania. Recently, Adrian-Paul Iliescu and Mihai-Radu Solcan have published fragments from Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *The Wealth of Nations* in their *Limitele puterii*, București, Editura All, 1994.

<sup>67</sup> Apart from a few passing mentions in text books (a notable exception was the 1870 *Economia politică* of Ion Strat), the only discussions of Smith before 1948 was a series of brief articles by Ioan Lapedatu, *Adam Smith*, in „Luceafărul“, Vol. 1 (1902), p. 97-101, 118-121, 148-150, 163-167, 179-184, and Ion Răducanu's *Adam Smith. O comemorare*, in „Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice“, Seria III, Vol. 22 (1939-1940), p. 453-492. An annex, p. 481-491, provides a compilation of references to Smith in Romanian economic works. Răducanu's conclusion: “În România, numele lui Adam Smith e citat uneori. Opera lui e mai puțin cedită și foarte rar înțeleasă” (p. 454).

<sup>68</sup> It would be impossible to list everyone who is contributing to these efforts, but for the most part they are well-represented in the notes of the present study.