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# **TRANSYLVANIAN REVIEW**

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## **Recent Studies on Past and Present II. Power, Belief and Identity**

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Edited by

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### *Recent Studies on Past and Present*

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# The Cult of Brătianus Between the Two World Wars in Romania

## Actors, characters, means and forms of expression

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OVIDIU BURUIANĂ

„The cult of the great, defunct people  
is an expression of periods  
lacking great personalities” (C. Banu)<sup>1</sup>.

### 1. Death of an all-powerful political leader and the funeral „discourses”<sup>2</sup>

**I**N NOVEMBER 1927, the swift death of Ion I. Brătianu, leader of National Liberal Party and head of government, brought about a new „era” in the Romanian political evolution, as suggested by Nicolae Iorga<sup>3</sup>. This perception was not at all isolated in the period, many other political leaders of the time, detractors, neutral observers or adulators of the great deceased leader noting that the „revolution” that defined that moment, including the raw connotation of the term, the pararellism with a natural, cosmical phenomenon prevailing sometimes over the political or social change of perception<sup>4</sup>. Most of the political actors soon realized that everything was going to change after the demise of the „invincible man”, as Ionel Brătianu appeared to his contemporaries<sup>5</sup>. The sense of breach was emphasized not only by the unexpected death but also because it appeared in a period when the liberal power over the state appeared to be everlasting.

**1.1. The opposition’s discourse and the mythical status bestowed upon Ion I. C. Brătianu.** In the dramatic context of the death of their adversary, the attitudes exhibited by the opposition politicians were constrained within the minimal

politeness, with terms used such as „misfortune for the country”, „terrible blow for Romania”. Absorbed by the new situation and breaking with the recent past, no prominent opposition leader joined the funeral procession<sup>6</sup>. The death of Ionel Brătianu offered a necessary simplification of the political scene, at least in their vision. The disappearance of an indubitable figure of authority<sup>7</sup> cleared the future of the power. One step towards conferring a mythical status to the defunct leader is to be noted in the representations of the opposition, another one is easily visible in the liberal discourse of the time. An avalanche of depreciatory elements followed (“The Vizier”, “Wallachian Sultan”, „The Master”, “Ioan vodă the Terrible”, “the feared uncrowned ruler of the country, obsessed with a pagan will to rule”, „representing a „godly dynasty”<sup>8</sup>), but the heroic character, even in its negative version, exceeded the man. In the contrasting space of interaction between the real character with the political imaginary of the opposition, the way in which the power is configured and the personality of Ion I. C. Brătianu acquired gigantic proportions, explaining both the weakness of the opposition as well as the weakness of those in power.

**1.2. The liberal approach to “canonization”.** Another space of reflection on Ion I. C. Brătianu’s posterity, is underlined by the liberal discourse. „The official country is roaring and break its hands”, observed Gala Galaction<sup>9</sup>. The term „official country” is not only a figure of speech. Despite the worries, despite the homages to a „grandly political work”<sup>10</sup>, a feeling of restraint was unanimous in the society towards the death of a politician unapproachable to the others because of his public actions and whose political gestures often triggered popular discontent (holding Romania’s neutrality for two years during the First World War, the authoritarian style of ruling Romania, the lack of a real dialogue or for charismatic gestures towards the masses). The pain inflicted by his death in different strata of the society was merely rational and not sentimental. Respected, but never loved, seems to be the conclusion drawn by I. G. Duca<sup>11</sup>.

In contrast with the public indifference, the liberal’s solidarity was exemplary. The most coherent discursive form of presenting the personality of the defunct leader, along with the liberal media, was a special („festive”) issue of the circle of liberal studies, *Democrația*, dedicated entirely to the emblematic figure of Ionel Brătianu<sup>12</sup>. The Center’s message was then distributed to a multitude of liberal publications, as a form of diffusion in different social and intellectual strata<sup>13</sup>. For the liberals who were deeply affected by his death, the statuary figure of Ionel Brătianu collected a huge amount of superlatives: „the greatest and the best Romanian”, „the foremost citizen of the reunited state”, „a giant of our public life”, „the most beloved son of the country”, „the brilliant political man and the greatest patriot”, „the personification of Romania’s political genius”, „our

Wise and Great Ruler”, etc. His life began to illustrate a period of grace: “everything that was good and firm on our soil was made during his time”<sup>14</sup>, and his death came to symbolize an essential loss of the whole nation. Despite a multitude of opinions, the symbolical relations around his figure can be detected on two main levels. Firstly, the one that identifies Brătianu with national interests, Romania being „shaken from its foundation”, as a liberal journalist from Iași wrote in the tension of the moment, taking into account that the „hope of the nation relied in his energy, abilities, in his unquestioned authority both in the country as well as abroad”<sup>15</sup>. The second, broader, discursive scale, implied the superposition of the former leader with the image of the party, the conjunction of these two representations being implicit.

From a broader perspective, without any regard to contingency or his contemporaries perception and judged from the historical point of view, Ionel Brătianu’s carefully constructed image by the liberals engulfed numerous symbolical institutions for the Romanians mental colective, especially the monarchy. The „great kings and the great advisers”, a tetrarchy including Carol the First and Ion C. Brătianu, together with Ferdinand and Ionel Brătianu, were a substitute for modern Romania, the analogy representing also an exclusion device of the others from this historical effort. „The Maker of yesterday’s Romania” (Ion C. Brătianu) was approached to the founding hero of „today’s Romania”. Another subtle change was operated regarding the relation of the symbol of power in the Romanian history (*reign*), initially on the defensive of the european civilization, Ion I. C. Brătianu being seen as „a dam of national resistance, the strong point of Europe’s safety”<sup>16</sup>. Subsequently, in the light of later Legion’s texts, Ionel Brătianu was represented as **Ioan** Brătianu (my note, O.B), „the one that can do whatever he wants: the one who could lead you either to death or to victory”<sup>17</sup>. *Ioan* is much more than a simple mutation / linguistical error, respectively the funeral discourse that offers a different vision on the symbolic position held in the Romanian society by the great defunct leader. The *providential man* represents a religious reading of Ion I. C. Brătianu’s personality, as a figure of voivode adapted to the modern times.

The symbolic construct of Ionel Brătianu was an expression of a secular religiosity, with its own system of sacred words and gestures, in which the individual finds its identity and simultaneously, through ritual, was participating to the power. This was an unprecedented measure, experienced in the Romanian public space by the liberals in November 1927, because of its scope and multitude of the forms of expression (periodical publicists and rumors, conferences, ritualic manifestations, commemorative foundations, such as *Așezămintele culturale Ion C. Brătianu*, respectively *Ion I. C. Brătianu*, *Biblioteca Ion I. C. Brătianu*, recording of memorable words of Ionel Brătianu on gramophone discs, filming and

presentations of the funeral in the news), and was the result of a competition of the discourses and images that centers on the great defunct, in which the detractors and apologists took part, the stake being political and cultural in the same time. In the same time, it underlines the sources of power inside the party, as well as the political culture of the Romanian liberals. An „icon of the whole nation”, the former leader underlined the positioning towards the past, viewed as a primordial source of the liberal legitimacy in the present and revelation for the future generations.

## 2. Methodological options. Sources for the present approach

**D**ESCRIBING THE way in which the liberals reacted to their leader’s demise and the political and cultural significance attributed to this event is what I’m interested in as a structure of analyzing the reality from beyond the discourse. The use of words is never innocent and engages, in this case, at least, a long discussion on the dominant policies of the Romanian liberals. Based on the analysis of the official literature of the party (mainly the newspaper *Viitorul* and the theoretical magazine of the liberal studies circles, *Democrația*), and the memoirs of the main public actors of the time, such as Nicolae Iorga, Constantin Argetoianu, Pamfil Șeicaru, Stelian Popescu, Gala Galaction, etc. or on archive documents from Central National Historical Archives, this text proposes an approach on the forms of expression that have as central focus Ion I. C. Brătianu, but also a discussion of the multiple means used or the stakes that the liberal discourse holds in the period connected with the *Brătianus cult*; it is not an anthropological study, in the sense that I will not refer to the rite, rituals and discourses that maintain the „litany” of the evocation; I will signal, from a political sociological point of view, the mechanisms of Brătianus cult, its actors, its major themes and try to understand their positioning within the liberal decisions and convictions<sup>18</sup>.

The assertion that the existence of a personality cult around the liberal leader must be fitted into the general tendency of the time – the leader was a proper answer to the democratical anarchy after 1918. A vocation for adulation is a reality with european characteristics, although the names are not equivalent with the position – the cult surrounding Istvan Bethlen and Miklos Horthy in Hungary, Thomas Masaryk in Czechoslovakia, kings Alexander of Yugoslavia or Boris of Bulgaria. D. Gusti set the stage, under the patronage of Social Romanian Institute, for the fundamental debate, between the two world wars, on the evolution of the political ideas, published afterwards as *The doctrines of political parties*, stating that



there is an unstoppable need of the individual to be ruled, „to fanatically believe in someone”. The comfortableness of human spirit, the fear of responsibility, inertia, the „volunteer servitude, meekly submission” explain, in Gusti’s opinion, the privilege of the leaders to be surrounded by „the atmosphere of an enthusiastic quasiamorous submission”, to become the „object of a lyrical pathos”<sup>19</sup>. The legionar cult of the Captain, the royal one made official during the reign of Carol II or the myth of the *Commander* from the totalitarian regimes, of Ion Antonescu and later Nicolae Ceaușescu, have embodied, in the Romanian space, the theories of providential men, rulers and social saviors.

### **3. Brătianus cult.**

#### **Forms and strategies of legitimacy**

**3.1. Ionel Brătianu’s cult.** Beyond the funeral aspect, connected to the disappearance of the leader that refounded the National Liberal Party, there is a dimension of the discourse that presents a certain continuity caused by the central place already held by Ionel Brătianu’s image in the liberal propaganda. The official actions after 1918, regarding the power aspirations and promoting the inextricable bond between the historical national development and that of the National Liberal Party, were doubled by the obvious role held by Ion I. C. Brătianu in the process of bringing to life the United Romania. Eventually the two dimensions melted into one – the image of the leader, symbol of the party and country. President of the Chamber in 1927-1928, the liberal leader N. N. Săveanu stated that „Brătianu is still an overwhelming personality, his name linked to so many important events lived by our country, that, without waiting the judgement of history, we have to recognize, even from now on, the enormous services brought by him for the country”<sup>20</sup>.

Ion I. C. Brătianu’s cult was also appropriated by the liberals from the new areas of the Reunited Romania as an image to guarantee their legitimacy and social recognition. The image of the providential man, „the greatest man of the state”, „the genius of the nation that was always on the look-out for the new nation, the soul ruler of the country”, obvious from the party press or the brochures or even from the *sonnets* (light poems) dedicated to him<sup>21</sup> took, sometimes, religious and popular aspects. Through a common process to all heroes, the leader stepped down from the dais and became a common, ordinary man, the „brother” of simple people: he would pay his train ticket like any other person, wore a peasant bag woven by his beloved mother; he was a hard-working man at Florica, getting up at 4, making friendly small talk with his servants, attending the cattle he knew by name, feeding the birds..., then, at his working desk preparing

the plans for his country's happiness. Transylvania had always been close to his heart – the small church of Horia from Albac that was moved to Florica playing a central role in this symbolic construct<sup>22</sup>.

Ionel Brătianu's excellency myth was carefully constructed even when he was still alive; the myth was made official from political reasons when he died, because of a turbulent period in which political legitimacy was difficult to obtain since the party was in opposition and also as a result of the awareness towards his role in the structuring of the party as an organization, as a way to exist in the public space.

In the following years two main discourses were structurally promoted when vis-a-vis the image of Ionel Brătianu, to emphasize its symbolic value for the country.

a. a more central one, illustrated by the actions made by the party leaders and his family and in the actions promoted by the *Așezămintele Ion I. C. Brătianu*, the focal role in this evocation opus being played by I. G. Duca. As the liberal or pro-liberal press (especially *Universul*) and the magazine for liberal studies proposed special issues to commemorate his memory with its different facets (his activity during the war, at the Peace Conferences, his visits in Transylvania, etc.) in November every year after his death conferences, studies<sup>23</sup>, brochures<sup>24</sup>, were published along with memorial services; it was a clever orchestrated party program aimed at underlining the role he held in the liberal public imaginary but also in development of liberal identity and solidarity<sup>25</sup>; it is a clear indication that this form of apologetical approach was practiced not only towards the exterior, towards the masses, but also towards the interior, in order to define a liberal self image. A social group is brought together by a common denominator, by a certain number of values and affinities, by a certain social experience, by an *identity criterion*. According to David Kertzer, ritual is invaluable in obtaining political solidarity, even in the absence of a consensus; it is an important medium of influencing ideas that people have about political events, political strategies, political systems and political leaders; through ritual, people have an idea about what they consider an adequate political institution, about what the ideal qualities a political leader should possess, etc.

Understanding the political medium is mediated by symbols and the ritual, as strong form of symbolic representation, it is an important mean in constructing a political reality<sup>26</sup>.

Honouring the memory of the former leader is attached to a logical power play inside the party. The commemorative conference held by I.G. Duca about Ionel Brătianu, in January 1931, at the opening of „Ion I. C. Brătianu” Library, within Brătianu Foundation, reflected the personal experience of one who was a close collaborator of the Brătianus (Ion I. C. Brătianu and Vintilă Brătianu), suggesting a feeling of continuity and legitimacy of the power<sup>27</sup>.

b. there was another way of honouring him, a private cult that was publically shared by the party's members. For the local party members, the memory of Ionel Brătianu represented, among other things, a competition for recognition, which led, in time, to a kind of fetish around his name and made impossible any attempt of objectivity<sup>28</sup>.

A volume paying homage to the memory of Ionel Brătianu never materialized, despite several attempts made after his death; also, no projects for erecting a statue (unlike the case of his father, with monuments in many cities of the Old Kingdom) that could visually share the greatness of the political leader are known<sup>29</sup>. Nonetheless, the broad canvas of publications, articles, manifestations about multiplied the figure of the great leader in different parts of Romania and the diverse political and cultural attitudes suggested a sacred presence. Finally, through secular ritual Ion I. C. Brătianu as a "founder of the country" was omnipresent.

The existence of a cult of Ionel Brătianu can be seen as justified if one takes into account the greatness of the above mentioned leader, the liberal party itself and the context of political life after the First World War and also the personalization of political elements. Through augmentation of the liberal metonymical discourse, after Ionel Brătianu's death, I would like to propose some questions regarding the reality beyond the language, on what the people say „within” the discourse. Some obvious responses offered by the discourses after 1927 point to the conclusion that there was, inside the liberal party, a weak sense of legitimacy towards the use of power. The image of the defunct leader only offered strong cohesion elements along with a sense of political precariousness. After Ion I. C. Brătianu's death, National Liberal Party lost, as Pamfil Șeicaru states, „that interior safety that gave it the courage to not pay attention to the public opinion”<sup>30</sup>.

Ionel Brătianu's unexpected death led to a loss of power inside the party: this is the crucial thing that the liberals understood after November 1927 and made them rally around the legitimacy „giver” that was their leader. This is another element that explains the evolution and growing of the cult – a contorted relation between the memory of the leader and the nostalgia for the lost power. If in the aftermath of the death, the halo effect was present (the great presence of the defunct in everybody's memory), in the following years, opposition years (the thirties), the memory transformed into a different power practice. The liberals were the „memory guardians”, reacting strongly to any kind of lesser appreciation of his role in building the Great Romania and they opposed fiercely to discuss any historical approach towards the leader which was not seen as sacred<sup>31</sup>.

After June 1930 Restoration, the cult of Ionel Brătianu became more a way to reconfigure liberal solidarity and meeting place for the party – it acted as an instrument to measure the unity and the popularity of the liberal party, decreased in the first part of the fourth decade. The situation changed since

the end of 1933, when there was an affluence of new members, called maliciously by general Radu Rosetti, a close friend of the family, „hunters of situation and seats”<sup>32</sup>. Remembering Ionel Brătianu remained, beyond the fascination towards one of the greatest political figures in Romanian era, a way of keeping a clear identity in the context of Carol II monarchy.

**3.2. Brătianu’s family cult. Brătianism as political system.** Ion Petrovici, Minister of Public Affairs, delegate of the Averescu government to the centennial of Ion C. Brătianu’s birthday, celebrated with pomp by the liberals at the twenty first of May 1921, recounts the event in his *Memories* in terms of operette buffe. All local liberal delegations had send delegations made out of 3-4 members, with food packages from home for the luncheon that was to follow in the Florica park. He arrived with the ministerial train and he was greeted by Vintilă Brătianu and by Brătianu’s nephew, the poet Ion Pillat; the dignitary was informed „almost in whisper”, as he remembered that he was to have dinner with Ionel Brătianu. As he was baffled, Ion Pillat explained the „mysterious” phrase. The celebration was to be multicentric, as well as the banquet after the memorial service itself, the three distinct tables suggested the integration everyone attending, holding specific difference. The first table took place, with everyone’s food, on the grass from the mansion’s park, as a popular festivity open for everyone, the second one, consisting of a cold buffet, took place on the terrace of the house from Florica, with leaders of the party attending, the hosts being Vintilă și Dinu Brătianu; finally, in the last cercle, the private dinner (The Holy of the Holliest), presided by Ionel and his wife, where high-ranking guests were greeted (bishops, government representative, delegates from the liberal part), from the liberal leaders only Mihail Pherekide, a close collaborator of Ion C. Brătianu from the small Romania was present<sup>33</sup>. Beyond the author’s irony, the different levels of commemoration and the differentiations presented by Ion Petrovici indicates the ritual around the *big family*, that had in center the tutelary figures of modern Romania - Ion C. Brătianu and his son Ion I. C. Brătianu, the first as a kind of pontiff for the cult. The scene evokes the institutional-organizational character of Brătianu’s family cult in general, and of the sacred place in the liberal symbolical geography - *Florica*; it is an unprecedented situation in the secular political Romanian space and the cult was carefully kept alive by the liberals through a ritualised and symbollic repetition of manifestations (at the liberal studies centers, through the commemorative manifestations, memorial services, manifestations on the occasion of various historical anniversaries, erecting statues as an imagological hallmarks of the new political symbology, etc.), memoirs, press, cultural foundations, etc.<sup>34</sup>

The memory of Brătianu is described differently, the rememberings or *laudatio* for Vintilă or Dinu Brătianu, as well as the feminine figures of the family (reminded

only in relation with the family cult) Pia Brătianu or Eliza Brătianu<sup>35</sup>, being placed, somehow normal, on a lesser position from the power perspective. A mighty personality in the Romanian history, he ushered in a new society and he refounded the liberal party, he was viewed almost as godlike by his collaborators and considered invincible by adversaries, Ion I. C. Brătianu plays a pivotal role in this construct because he organized the cult of his father (see the moment 1921), as a token of devotion towards his father - *educator, stern and fair* - but in the same time he also absorbed the memory of his contemporaries, especially that of his brother, who benefited in a limited proportion from this cult. *Așezămintele Ion I. C. Brătianu* collected and published the speeches and discourses of Vintilă Brătianu, and *Vieața și opera lui Vintilă I. C. Brătianu văzute de prietenii și colaboratorii săi*, at the „Independența” Printery in 1936, under the patronage of the cultural Așezământ Ion C. Brătianu. The historian Gheorghe Brătianu, belonging to the third political generation of the family, „builds himself” through constant report to the paternal and deified figure of Ionel Brătianu, publishing documents and private letters as a form of social recognition<sup>36</sup>. Ionel Brătianu was the one who imposed, through his actions and attitudes, the image of the political aristocracy. „The fear that a mistake from his part could harm or diminish the brightness of his father’s name and glory, or that he could compromise the results of the family opus in founding the modern Romania, followed him constantly, throughout his life”, as a „guide in all his actions” said I.G. Duca<sup>37</sup>. This charismatic model of ruling, considered by Max Weber for instance, to be very unstable as a pattern of legitimacy, functioned well between the two world wars, the president of the party being able to embody the founding father’s legacy<sup>38</sup>. The election, in January 1934, of Constantin I. C. Brătianu as president of the party is hard to explain, if we take into account his indifference towards public life and his political skills – it is easy to explain it as a continuation of a sacred series. Dinu Brătianu was depicted as „the fifth in this family blessed by God” that took over the party<sup>39</sup>. The presence of the members of the family at the head of the party was seen as a major characteristic for the liberals and established the reality of the cult. The intricate role played by the family was fully assumed by the liberal collective mind; Alexandru Lapedatu professed his deep devotion towards this family to N. Iorga, his infinite admiration; therefore, a strong feeling of support towards Dinu Brătianu was felt, despite his obvious lack of political skills – it was just another facet of this symbolical and political anthropology<sup>40</sup>. The Brătianus remained in the core of liberalism, even after 1945, when being a liberal was not a favourable option. In the speech by Gheorghe Tătărescu in front of the General Convention of the National Liberal Party, held in the First of July 1945, before being elected as the leader of the party (known in history as National Liberal Party Gheorghe Tătărescu), he admitted his desire to emulate the continuity: Ion Brătianu the

First, Ion Brătianu the Second<sup>41</sup>. His deep devotion towards the family was obvious even in his physiognomy, as was ironically pointed out by an anti-liberal magazine – the beard – as a facial accessory – being only one element left from the old Ion Brătianu and passed on along with the party to Ionel Brătianu<sup>42</sup>.

Together with the *great* family, being in the same time an integral part of it, the liberal pantheon included other liberal personalities, like D. A. Sturdza or I. G. Duca. Their own image authority in the period between the two world wars was limited; they preferred to place themselves, especially in I.G. Duca's case, within the *family's* intimacy, at least from the point of view of their collaboration with the great men that they met and implicitly from the point of view of the legitimacy in their relation with the party and society. Their memory, although tends to be emancipated from the great shadow, (the case of I.G. Duca's own cult), it is almost impossible to dissociate from the Brătianus. The celebration of the centenary of D. A. Sturdza, held in February 1933, took place in the Ion I. C. Brătianu Library, and with this occasion, the celebrated liberal politician that lived in two centuries, (XIX-XX) was presented by a report to the *family*. „Chosen” by Ion C. Brătianu as his successor at the head of the party, he enjoyed Ionel Brătianu's appreciation, who offered a banquet in his honour in a very tense political context, etc.<sup>43</sup>. A memory cult seen as an object of regaining the legitimacy was also the relation with Spiru Haret<sup>44</sup>, Alexandru (Alec) Constantinescu-Porcu, rather through its legendary facet, of his sayings and memorable actions (more in an anecdotic sense), Eugeniu Carada and, especially, G. G. Mârzescu, the former leader from Iași. The cult of Ionel Brătianu's collaborator from the critical phase of the war and subsequently, from the time of strengthening the Great Romania was perpetuated rather by the local organization of the party; it was also, initially, a form of recognition of George Brătianu, the son who carried, in a symbollic way the impossible task of being his collaborator; eventually, the positive image of Gh. Mârzescu was only a manoeuvre to limit the same son's possibilities of action, because of his close relations with Carol II. The real regret at the great politician's death was succeeded by an avalanche of events (the annual pilgrimage of the central and local leaders at the grave, the statue erected in Iași by the French sculptor Ernest Dubois, which was presented with great pomp on the 27-th of September 1936, etc.) ment to transform G. G. Mârzescu in a symbol of party's capabilities.

The liberals were deeply connected to the messianism of a *family* that acted, as I.G. Duca stated on his relation with Ionel Brătianu, *sub speciae eternitatis*<sup>45</sup>, and eventually they began to regard Brătianus memory as a kind of fetish, an element of power and public conduct. This was rather exceptional, even for a peripheric society, and it was signaled as such by adversaries. The conservative politician Nicolae Filipescu accused them, even in 1894, noting that „they

acted like members of a religious cult: they have the ritual, the discipline, the ceremonial of their religion. They have a cult of the dead, pilgrimages to the ancestors tombs, the adoration of saints<sup>46</sup>. The canonization of the dead ones and the fact that they seemed to act in a sectarian spirit was constantly criticized by the opposition representatives even after the war; their image of liberals was that of a party interested to build an organization similar to a clan and favoring similar political lines and professions. The exaggerated celebration of liberal leaders memory and the glorification of the legitimated past translated, for many observers, the annulment of reason, the limitation of human thinking in the face of the adored object; in the public sphere, the *liberal fetishism* was considered, as a liberal disident pointed out, as a mirror of their uncertainty, a policy of ignoring the changes and challenges; he concluded that the head of the party was „Brătianu name”, inherited from father to son, a fact that brought about a catastrophe, because it obliterated the citizenship ideals; in a party made out of mamelukes, the servants kneel in front of the name *Brătianu*<sup>47</sup>.

**3.3. Romanian liberal's sacred geography. Florica.** At a different level of memory, the cult of the leaders continues in the appreciation of their sacred place, Florica, which became a symbolical space for their pilgrimages. Florica is a multitude of layers of traditions and symbols connected to the Romanian liberals. The place where Ion C. Brătianu reflected, a place of recovering the revolutionary spirit of the liberalism, where in dire periods C. A. Rosetti was to be found, the place of childhood for Brătianu brothers; the metaphor of the united nation, illustrated by the bringing of Horia's church from Albac and also the necropolis of the founders of modern Romania - Ion C. Brătianu, Ionel and Vintilă Brătianu. Evoking Ionel Brătianu's memory at every step from a temporal perspective, Florica was a pilgrimage destination for liberals and not only<sup>48</sup>.

Florica was transformed into a privileged sanctuary of memory, a symbol of power and a space of pilgrimage. The isolation to Florica was first a political tactic of the father, even if it was opposed by its contemporaries. Mihail Kogălniceanu remarked that while „the Moldavian politicians left their homes in Iași to the owls to come to Bucharest, the prime minister goes to Florica to work on his vineyard<sup>49</sup>. Ionel Brătianu's retreats to Florica, before taking any important decisions for the country, were almost a ritual. After his death, liberal leaders went often to the family's crypt as a gesture of continuity.

The crypt from Florica became „sacred” for liberals, as Mircea Djuvara said, here „sleeping their final sleep, in three tombs under the same vault, three figures that will stay forever in the Romanian's nation memory”, that of Ion Brătianu, „the one who laid the foundation”, his son „who, with sacrifice of blood, erected the proud and eternal monument of the State of all Romanians” and that of Pia

Brătianu, „the wife of the first and mother of the second, who offered her support and the warmth of her heroic heart, as a great example of what a woman’s heart should be”<sup>50</sup>. Although he never wanted a national funeral, Vintilă Brătianu had one. More so, even if he would have liked to be buried at Mihăești (out of a brotherly and filial sentiment?) the family took him to Florica<sup>51</sup>. Vintilă Brătianu viewed politics only as personal, purely human involvement, but after death he belonged to the party’s memory and this memory could be used in a symbolical way, through concentrating the symbols in a sacred space.

The image of center for the liberals and for Romania was perpetuated also by the contemporaries - I. G. Duca presents us Tache Protopopescu, before going to have a complicated operation abroad, first stopping at the tomb of Ion C. Brătianu<sup>52</sup>. Grigore Trancu-Iași talking about Ionel Brătianu’s funeral, said that he went „for the first time at the Mecca of the liberals”<sup>53</sup>. Florica was the foundation where Ionel Brătianu could be known in his intimacy, as Stelian Popescu remarked<sup>54</sup>. Even for a skilled politician like Constantin Argetoianu, the journey to the „Mecca of the liberals” (as he names it and it seemed to be known like that in the political imaginary of the time), was a significant moment<sup>55</sup>. The journalist A. P. Samson remembered that the invitation to participate at the commemoration of Ionel Brătianu’s death at Florica must be considered as a supreme favour<sup>56</sup>. A visit to Florica remained an unforgettable memory, as it happened in the fall of 1926, with the former rector of University of Iași, dr. N. Leon. He was there, together with Alexandru Alimănișteanu’s family (Virgil Alimănișteanu was his son-in-law), dr. Leon was fascinated by Ionel Brătianu and he was impressed by Ion C. Brătianu’s bedroom, that reminded him of Goethe’s residence in Weimar; this was the place where the objects belonging to the great defunct man were kept, exactly in the same order they were arranged during his life, untouched by time, like a real epiphany. The conclusion drawn by the professor was that if he had the chance to meet Ionel Brătianu twenty years earlier, he would have become the most ardent liberal and one of his most devoted soldiers<sup>57</sup>; this testimony clearly shows the power of persuasion possessed by the sacred space.

Florica had also a different role – to absolve the „guilts”; after the war Ionel Brătianu was ready to forgive the pro-German attitude of the writer D. D. Pătrășcanu and he wanted to bring him back into the party, as he proved to be a good elector at Bacău, filing petitions to different ministeries (including one to support Aurel Vlaicu). Vintilă Brătianu was against this move on public morality grounds, to which Ionel Brătianu replied that D. D. Pătrășcanu had been a *gust at Florica*<sup>58</sup>.

In the symbolical construction of space, the role played by the poet Ion Pillat was certainly important, as he was the great poet of Florica. Pillat confers it with the privileged space of childhood – the end of the inter-war years: country side, so closely connected to the Brătianu clan, it gathered, symbolically the



typical Romanian features: the landscape woven with the legend and history of the country. As a political and personal conclusion he states that Florica was a „real school for soul and character” for the Romanian nation<sup>59</sup>. In his evocation of the people - Ion and Pia Brătianu, Ionel etc., and the atmosphere, he feels that every aspect of the space was saturated with the cult of history and family. In his volume *Up on Argeş* the poet is not guided by the „embrace of the past, but rather of a family”, as Tudor Vianu pointed out in a volume called *Literary portraits and studies* (1938)<sup>60</sup>.

## Conclusions

**R**EMEMBERING AND respecting the past are normal forms of building an identity. In the case of Romanian liberals, the discussion on the Romanian modernity achievements and the positive underline of the founding figures of the new society represented, firstly, an element of power, and secondly, an aspect of their political culture; the „non-liberal” tendency towards adulation exemplified by the cult of personality, in which Ion C. Brătianu and his son, Ionel Brătianu, were transformed, out of political legitimation reasons, in symbols at the central and local level. Max Weber stated that the charismatic leader and the charismatic domination is a modern form of power and legitimacy, with roots in the past<sup>61</sup>. The difficulties of political ascension in a rural society that only mimed democracy led liberals to hail the figure of their leader as the savior of the nation; to the figure of the elected ruler they opposed the figure of the charismatic and messianic hero, that embodied, through its own genius „the real aspirations of the people”; the myth of the providential political man, who imposes his will to the society is associated, as Jean-Jacques Wunenburger observes, with the triumph of democratic ideals<sup>62</sup>. According to the same author, the ideal democratical government of the people only based on juridical laws is more an ideal for reflection and less a clear model; democracy implies the re-invention of the sacred, embodied by the *People, Country*, but more often by idolizing the leader<sup>63</sup>.

Liberals were prisoners of the unprecedented cult of Ionel Brătianu – it was a mean to legitimate and build solidarity and also a relic of paternalist political culture, a premodern feature on the verge of new social realities.



## Notes

1. C. Banu, *Grădina lui Glaucon sau Manualul bunului politician*, edited and introductory study by Valeriu Râpeanu, București, PRO publishing house, 1998, p. 116.
2. See my article, “Partidul Național Liberal la sfârșitul anului 1927”, in *Istorie și conștiință*. Supplement of the *Analele Științifice ale Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași* (new series), tome XLVI-XLVII, 2000-2001, p. 330-343.
3. N. Iorga, *România contemporană de la 1904 la 1930. Supt trei regi. Istorie a unei lupte pentru un ideal moral și național*, edited, notes and comments by Valeriu Râpeanu and Sanda Râpeanu, Bucharest, Pro publishing house, 1999, p. 358; Grigore Trancu-Iași, member, between the two world wars, of the party led by General Averescu (People’s Party), who was a liberal before the war, noted in his *Memoirs* on the 24-th of November 1927: „He’s dead! Just a few words and yet how many changes will follow for the country. (...) I anticipate great changes (...) A chapter of the contemporary history is closed. A new chapter begins. (Grigore Trancu-Iași, *Memorii politice (1921-1938)*), edited by Fabian Anton, Bucharest, Curtea Veche publishing house, 2001, p. 37-39).
4. “A thunderbolt fell unexpectedly upon our country, drawing blood from people’s heart”, wrote the liberal newspaper from Iași *Mișcarea* in its Friday, the 25-th of November 1927 edition (year XXI, no. 267) under the title “The death of the most celebrated son of Great Romania”; also, Stelian Popescu, minister of Justice at the time, in the liberal government, noted in *Universul*, from the 26-th of November 1927 (year XLV, no. 276) that “the news is terrible. The mind stands still; the mind of a nation is draped in black... The lightning of this death chokes, because Ion Brătianu was the bearer of the torches... And a huge rock fell, stopping the hopes and the thoughts of advance...”
5. „Trei oameni: Generalul Averescu – Take Ionescu – Ion I. C. Brătianu”, in *Ideea Europeană*, year I, no. 22, Sunday, the 16-th of November 1919, p. 1.
6. Anastasie Iordache, *Ion I. C. Brătianu*, Bucharest, Albatros publishing house, 1994, p. 547.
7. Nae Ionescu, who considered Ionel Brătianu a „tyrant”, „the man who never knew how to listen to the events”, wrote that his “unquestionable prestige”, his “faith was unfair: so much love for his country and so much devotion to the national affairs should have been rewarded much more. For he was a great man, even if he inflicted a lot of damage” (*Un erou de tragedie*, in Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor. 1926-1933*, collected by Mircea Eliade, Kishinev, Hyperion publishing house, 1993, p. 248).
8. Nicolae Iorga, with his allegorical and metaphorical manner of speech, was the main agent in this reversed canonization. Many of his phrases had a profound impact on Romanian historiography, obstructing the interpretation. Also V. Madgearu contributed to this image of the all-powerful liberal leader – he transmitted the news about the death on the telephone to M. Manoilescu saying that “the ruler of the country, our ruler is dead” (Mihail Manoilescu, *Memorii*, vol. I, edited, notes and index by Valeriu Dinu, Bucharest, Enciclopedică publishing house, 1993, p. 162) or even Mihail Manoilescu, for whom “nothing could be more staggering for the

- Romanian public opinion than the news of the death of the one who was for 13 years the absolute ruler of Romania...” (Ibidem).
9. Gala Galaction, *Jurnal*, vol. III, second edition, complete text, edited and notes by Teodor Vărgolici, Albatros, publishing house, Bucharest, 1999, p. 207.
  10. I. G. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, vol. III, München, Jon Dumitru-Verlag, 1982, p. 228-229.
  11. *Ibidem*, p. 230.
  12. *Democrația* – festive number, year XV, no. 12, December 1927.
  13. See, for example, the special issue dedicated to the event by *Parlamentul* (year I, nr. 5, Wednesday, 30-th of November 1927) or the party local newspapers.
  14. „Doliul Țării pentru Ion I. C. Brătianu”, in *Viitorul*, an XX, nr. 5933, joi 1 decembrie 1927.
  15. „He was the legitimate figure for our internal advance and consolidation”, concluded the professor E. Diaconescu („I. I. C. Brătianu”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXI, no. 268, Saturday, the 26-th of November 1927).
  16. „Ședința funerară dela clubul liberal”, speech by Prof. N. Șerban, in *Mișcarea*, year XXI, no. 270, Tuesday, the 29-th of November 1927.
  17. Petre I. Ghiață assigns this tendency to a “church prince”, without naming him (Petre I. Ghiață, *Oameni și fapte*, Ideia, Bucharest, f.a., p. 23-27). Most probably is the Bishop of Râmnic Nou Severi, Vartolomeiu (“În fața morții. Cuvinte pentru Marele Răposat. O viață de pildă veșnică”, in *Viitorul*, year XX, no. 5933, Thursday, First of December 1927).
  18. I am more inclined towards studies like the ones of Graeme Gill, on the dimension of personality cult in the Soviet Union, from “The Soviet Leader Cult: Reflections on the Structure of Leadership in the Soviet Union”, in *British Journal of Political Science* 10(2), 1980, 167-186 or Robert C. Tucker, cu *Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia, From Lenin To Gorbachev*, 1988 than I am towards those analyzing the great historical personalities from image and iconographical perspective, or from the point of view of the political ritual, such as Jean Tulard, *Le Mythe de Napoléon*, 1971, or *Napoléon ou le mythe du savor*, 1987, Didier Musiedlak, *Mussolini*, 2005, Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 1987, or Andi Mihalache, cu *Mănuși albe, mănuși negre. Cultul eroilor în vremea dinastiei de Hohenzollern*, 2007 in Romanian space.
  19. Dimitrie Gusti, *Partidul politic. Sociologia unui sistem al partidelor politice*, în *Doctrinile partidelor politice*, Bucharest, Garamond publishing house, [f.a.], p. 28-31.
  20. N. N. Săveanu, *Cuvântări. Rostite ca președinte al Adunării Deputaților. 1927-1928*, Bucharest, „Cartea Românească”, 1928, p. 5).
  21. Here is a folklore sample, from the electoral campaign for the July 1927 elections, “belonging” to the priest Ion Opincă, *Cântecul lui Ion Brătianu* (from  *Glasul Ardealului*, year I, no. 26, Sunday, tenth of July 1927, p. 2), suggesting through versification (?), but also through the pseudonym of the author, the connection between the liberal leader and the rural world:  
*Green leave of marjoram / Long live Ion Brătian !.../ The only Brătian / Who has pity of peasants!....//*

*At the government the load is heavy / Brătianu's my only hope...// If you want to flourish / Our Romanian country / Stick with steady faith / To Ion Brătianu the Great.*

22. "Pentru pomenirea marelui Ion I. C. Brătianu", in *Glasul Ardealului*, year III, no. 48, Sunday, First of December 1929, p. 3; "Doi ani de la moartea lui Ion I. C. Brătianu", in *Glasul Ardealului*, year III, no. 46, Sunday, the 17-th of November 1929, p. 1.
23. V. Negreanu and A. Drăgulescu (anthology), *Ion I. C. Brătianu, Cuvintele unui mare român. Fragmente din discursuri. 1914-1927*, preface by Horia Furtună, Editura Ramuri, Craiova, f.a. [1928-1929]; I. G. Duca *Portrete și amintiri*, Bucharest, 1932; Alexandru I. Teodorescu, *Ion C. Brătianu și fiii săi Ionel și Vintilă. Două conferințe*, Așezământul Cultural Ion C. Brătianu, XV, Bucharest, Imprimeriile Independența, 1938; Petre Gheță, *Ionel Brătianu*, Cluj, 1946 etc.
24. Mircea Djuvara, *Ion I.C. Brătianu*, Bucharest, Imprimeriile Independența, 1928; on the relation with Ionel Brătianu, the great historian Nicolae Bănescu offered a remarkable objectivity, writing a brochure of 196 p., *Ion I. C. Brătianu. 1864-1927*, published at Craiova in 1931 (Ramuri publishing house), without any critical spirit.
25. One year after his death, in the context of a difficult opposition, the image of Ion I. C. Brătianu was projected in Bucovina as the greatest Romanian and head of state of the time; if, at Bucharest, at the memorial service at the Amzei Church only the members of the family and the leaders of the national-liberal organizations were to participate, elsewhere each chief of liberal organization from cities or villages was invited to hold a memorial service at the church, followed by a meeting at the party's houses in *Glasul Bucovinei*, year XI, no. 2816, Wednesday, the twenty first of November 1928, p. 1. Those services were held, at least in the bigger cities in the provinces ("Parastas pentru Ion I. C. Brătianu în Cernăuți", in *Glasul Bucovinei*, year XI, no. 2817, Friday, the 23-rd of November 1928, p. 1; "Comemorarea morții lui Ion I. C. Brătianu în țară", in *Glasul Bucovinei*, year XI, no. 2820, Tuesday, the 27-th of November 1928, p. 1).
26. David Kertzer, *Ritual, politică și putere*, translated by Sultana Avram and Teodor Fleșeriu, foreword by Radu Florescu, Bucharest, Univers publishing house, 2002, p. 91. As Murray Edelman, the myths and metaphors allow people to live in a world where the causes are simple and clear and the solutions are obvious. Instead of an empirical, complicated world, people tend to prefer a few archetypal myths, among which the ones of the redeeming and all-powerful hero have major impact (Murray Edelman, *Politica și utilizarea simbolurilor*, translated by Ruxandra Nichita, Iași, Editura Polirom, 1999, p. 174-176).
27. "Ședința comemorativă dela Biblioteca Ion I. C. Brătianu", in *Viitorul* year XXIII, no. 6878, Friday, the 9-th of January 1931, p. 1.
28. I will present, without a fixed hierarchy, some of these manifestations in order to offer examples. Nicolae Filittis, the owner of the Rădulești estate, organized a cultural celebration at Fierbinți (Ilfov county), to open, in the presence of Constantin I. C. Brătianu, I. G. Duca, dr. C. Angelescu, C. Dimitriu, I. I. Niculescu-Dorobanțu, a cultural foundation „Ion I. C. Brătianu” (in „Viitorul”, year XXII, no.6690, Thursday,

- the 29-th of May 1930). Jean Th. Florescu, who eventually left the liberal party as he thought it was a rigid structure, contributed to the myth, presenting an image of Ionel Brătianu during the war – he was like a *Sphinx, solemn*, but also like a *father of the country* (Ion Th. Florescu, *Gânduri de altădată*, București, „Tiparnița”-Institutul de Arte Grafice, 1940, p. 148). A liberal from Brăila, Berman Margulies uses terms such as “great founder of Romanian nation”, “figure illuminated by a bright halo”, his memory was like a “*sacred monument*”, “a titanic life” (Berman Margulies, *Ionel I. C. Brătianu. Cuvinte de amintire*, Brăila, 1934, p. 9-13).
29. The exception is the statue made by the Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovici in 1937, inaugurated on November 24<sup>th</sup> in Commemoration of Ion I. C. Brătianu death, near his home in Amzei Square in Bucharest (see Biblioteca Națională, Special Collections, Fond Brătianu, ds. 1-2 / 1937-1938).
  30. Pamfil Șeicaru, *Istoria partidelor național, țărănist și național țărănist*, second edition, Bucharest Editura Victor Frunză, 2000, p. 231.
  31. William Martin, director of newspaper „Journal de Genève”, wrote a book called *Les Hommes d’État pendant la guerre*, in which a chapter is dedicated to Ionel Brătianu; the words in which Romania’s presence in the war is asserted are not very flattering to the political man or to the Romanian people (Romanian’s actions have been only a lamentable adventure of an amorphous nation, Bessarabia was a “tip”, etc.); the main protest came from the widow of the former liberal leader Elisa Brătianu, who published in „L’Indépendance Roumanie” a letter of protest (Elise J. Brătianu, *Lettre ouverte à M. William Martin. Publiée dans „L’Indépendance Roumaine” du 22 Septembre 1929 (Les hommes d’État pendant la Guerre)*); see other reactive actions such as Gheorghe I. Brătianu, “Cine a făcut România Mare”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 145, 29-th of June 1929, p. 1; *Cine a făcut România Mare ?*, in „Universul”, year XLVII, no.136 and 141, 17 and 23-rd of June 1929, p. 1-2 and 6 (with presentation of the response of the article published by Asociația „Cultul Patriei” on the tenth anniversary of the Great Unification from the magazine *Cele trei Crișuri*, no. 5-6, May-June a.c., written by Sever Bocu, following the protest of general federation of the veterans from the Cultural League from Craiova, the Union of Reserve Officers from Dolj). Also the liberals from province defended the memory of the great liberal, talking about a *condamnatio memoriae* supposedly practiced by the national-peasant party regime towards the memory of the liberal leader, for example, the renaming of several names of streets that bore his name in some Transylvanian cities, the removal of his portrait from the Câmpulung City Hall, etc. (“Lupta contra portretului lui Ion I. C. Brătianu”, in  *Glasul Bucovinei*, year XIII, nr.3346, Tuesday, the 14-th of October 1930, p. 3).
  32. ANIC, Fond Rosetti, ds. 94 / 1932-1934, *Jurnal (9 mai 1932 – 31 decembrie 1934)*, f. 98.
  33. Ion Petrovici, *De-a lungul unei vieți. Amintiri*, Bucharest, Editura pentru literatură, 1966, p. 302-306.
  34. I. G. Duca, *Ion C. Brătianu. Din ciclul de conferințe „Fondatorii României moderne” – 12 Mai 1932 –*, Bucharest, „Cartea Românească”, 1932. speech at the Free University; Idem, *Amintiri. Conferință ținută la Cercul Analelor Române*, first edition, Bucharest,

„Cultura Națională” publishing house, 1933. See the commemorative volume at the anniversary of 50 years from Ion C. Brătianu’s death, published at the cultural Așezământ that bore his name, *La moartea lui Ion C. Brătianu. Articole din presă, telegrame, scrisori*, Bucharest, „Cartea Românească”, 1941, preface by Gheorghe I. Brătianu. the volume represents the reliving of the hero’s death, the echoes produced in the Romanian and foreign press at the time and is viewed from the ceremonial perspective, from the perspective of the delegates present at the funeral, the telegrams received from around the world, the speeches, the apologetic articles, the foreign comments, the fragments from journals, etc. It is a fascinating work, in my opinion, in the modern Romanian history as a memoirs example; especially the study of Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei I. C. Brătianu*, vol. I-II, collected, edited, introductory study and notes by dr. Elisabeta Simon, Albatros publishing house, Bucharest, 1993 and 1996, and the discussion that generated. See Severa Sihleanu, *Note și desmințiri asupra „Amintirilor” D-nei Sabina Cantacuzino*, Bucharest, Tiparul „Cartea Românească”, 1938.

35. the image of Elizei Brătianu, intelligent woman and admirable wife, was a perfect addenda to Ionel Brătianu’s cult, at least at the level of the liberal or pro-liberal press, which presented her actions to preserve his memory (the gift she made by offering a part of the house situated on Lascăr Catargiu street, no. 5, for building a great library consisting of 5800 volumes, within Așezămintele Ion I. C. Brătianu) (“O însemnată danie a d-nei Eliza Brătianu”, in *Universul*, year XLVII, no. 85, Sunday, the 14-th of April 1929, p. 7); “O mare româncă: Doamna Elisa I. Brătianu”, in *Universul*, year XLVII, no. 88, Thursday, the 18-th of April 1929, p. 1). Especially regarding the memoirs of Sabinei Cantacuzino, Pia Brătianu is evoked by the liberal press from the perspective of her sons education. See “Ion I. C. Brătianu și maica sa”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 266, Tuesday, the 26-th of November 1929, p. 1 (the letter send by Ionel Brătianu to his son George, announcing his mother’s death, Pia Brătianu) etc.
36. “După doi ani”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 265, Sunday, the 24-th of November 1929, p. 1; “În zile grele. Între două revoluții”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 266, Tuesday, the 26-th of November 1929, p. 1 (cu poetul Alexandru Vlahuță povestind despre Ionel Brătianu), etc.
37. I. G. Duca, *Portrete și amintiri*, fifth edition, Bucharest, Humanitas publishing house, 1990, p. 55.
38. Max Weber, *Politica, o vocație și o profesie*, translation from German by Ida Alexandrescu, Bucharest, Anima publishing house, 1992, p. 9.
39. “Noul șef al partidului liberal”, in *Parlamentul românesc*, year V, no. 131, 18-th of January 1934, p. 4-6.
40. N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. VI, *Încercarea guvernării peste partide (1930-1932)*, Bucharest, 1939, p. 397 (note from May 1932).
41. Gheorghe Tătărescu, *Discursuri – Program, Expozeuri, Cuvântări*, Bucharest, f.l., f.a. [1946], p. 15.
42. And held by liberal leaders like Cipăianu, Mrazec, Nistor, Sassu etc. (*Cronica Politică și Parlamentară*, year II, no. 51, Friday, the 9-th of May 1930, p. 8-9).

43. “In memoria lui D. A. Sturdza – cu prilejul centenarului de la nașterea sa – Cuvântări rostite în Biblioteca Ion I. C. Brătianu (25-th of February 1933)”, in *Democrația*, year XXI, no. 2, February 1933, p. 5-31.
44. Spiru Haret was the object of a different cult, that of the liberal politician that was also a scholar, close to the peasants, willing to enlighten them. A whole edition of *Democrația* was dedicated to him (*Democrația*, year XX, no. 12, December 1932).
45. I. G. Duca, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
46. Nicolae Filipescu, *Discursuri politice*, vol. I, 1888-1901, Bucharest, Minerva publishing house, 1912, p. 98, *apud* Vistian Goia, *Destine parlamentare. De la Mihail Kogălniceanu la Nicolae Titulescu*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia publishing house, 2004, p. 172.
47. “Fetişism liberal”, in *Liberalul*, Buzău (director C. Iarca), year XXXVII, no 2, 20-th of January 1929.
48. Sterie Diamandi, *Galeria oamenilor politici*, Bucharest, Gesa publishing house, 1991 (reproduces the edition from 1935), p. 97. even the historians can’t deny these representations, Anastasie Iordache beginning his work on Brătianus with an introductory chapter entitled *Cu umbrele străbunilor pe plaiuri de legendă* (Anastasie Iordache, *Dumitru Brătianu: diplomatul, doctrinarul liberal și omul politic*, Bucharest, 2004).
49. *Apud* Vistian Goia, *op. cit.*, p. 171-172.
50. Mircea Djuvara, “Ion I. C. Brătianu”, in *Democrația*, year XXV, no. 1-2, January-February 1937, p. 5 (the issue was dedicated to Ionel Brătianu’s memory, who died 10 years before).
51. N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. VI, p. 38.
52. I. G. Duca, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
53. Grigore Trancu-Iași, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
54. Stelian Popescu *Amintiri*, edited, preface and notes by Ioan Opreș, Albatros publishing house, Bucharest, 2000, p. 235.
55. Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, vol. VIII, part VII (1926-1930), edition and index by Stelian Neagoe, Bucharest, Machiavelli publishing house, 1997, p. 94-95.
56. A. P. Samson, *Memoriile unui gazetar (1927-1937)*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească publishing house, 1979, p. 255.
57. Prof. dr. N. Leon, *Note și Amintiri*, Bucharest, „Cartea Românească publishing house”, 1933, p. 238-240.
58. Petre Pandrea, *Memoriile mandarinului valah*, bio-bibliographical marks by Andrei Pandrea, Bucharest, Albatros publishing house, 2001, p. 80.
59. Ion Pillat, *Florica. Viea și casa Brătienilor. Două conferințe de Ion Pillat*, Bucharesti, „Informația Zilei”, 1944 (Cultural Așezământ Ion C. Brătianu); Idem, “Mărturisiri”, out of *Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, no. 2, 1942.
60. *Apud* Z. Ornea, *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea*, Eminescu publishing house, Bucharest, 1980, p. 576. Poezia *Odaia bunicului*, written in 1929, considered a lyrical achievement of the local symbolism, describes, in an elegiac tone, the atmosphere of Florica:  
 „Nothing’s moved and I do recognize the room / O’ grandpa’ which alive I never knew. / His bed is kept even today / His clock still beats its tick-tack.//.... A door has

squeaked... a footstep... and I'm waiting confused / For grandpa' to enter, back from his trip only to the vineyard" (*Ibidem*, p. 577). See the poem "Toamna la Florica" (*Ibidem*, p. 580-581).

61. Max Weber, *op. cit.*

62. Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Omul politic între mit și rațiune. O analiză*

### **Abstract**

#### The Cult of Brătianu Between the Two World Wars in Romania Actors, characters, means and forms of expression

Based on the analysis of the official literature of the party and the memoirs of the main public actors of the time or on archive documents from Central National Historical Archives, this text proposes an approach on the forms of expression that have as central focus Ion I. C. Brătianu, but also a discussion of the multiple means used or the stakes that the liberal discourse holds in the period connected with the *Brătianu cult*; it is not an anthropological study, in the sense that I will not refer to the rite, rituals and discourses that maintain the „litany” of the evocation; I will signal, from a political sociological point of view, the mechanisms of Brătianu cult, its actors, its major themes and try to understand their positioning within the liberal decisions and convictions.

### **Keywords**

cult of leader, political ritual, propaganda discourse, cultural representations.



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