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Mentor/ expert științific

Prof. univ. dr. Alexandru Florin PLATON

Instituția coordonatoare de tematică: Academia Română – Filiala Iași

Tematica: *Discurs literar-artistic și construcție identitară în secolele XVI-XX*

Numele și prenumele cercetătorului postdoctoral: **Ovidiu Buruiană**

Tema individuală de cercetare: „Construind comunitatea națională”. *Imagina liderului politic în societatea românească (1900-1940). Discurs propagandistic și reprezentări culturale / „Building national community”. The image of political leader in Romanian society (1900-1940). Propaganda discourse and cultural representations*

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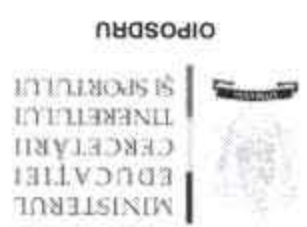




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The Image of Political Leader in Romanian Society

(1900-1940)

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

1. Methodological options. Sources for the present approach

“A nation is an imagined political community”. Benedict Anderson’s well-known postulate from *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 1983, comprised the modernist approach shift towards the genesis of national communities. Deflecting the ethnicist or marxist perspectives on the concept, Benedict Anderson imagined nation as an ideological construct of the Western European political and intellectual elite, who were preoccupied with the re-legitimizing of power. Mixing the invented tradition with the illuminist or rationalist inspired practices, which involved the state as main actor, a vast project of social engineering was imagined, of creating national identities designed for individuals and human groups, of redefining and mobilization (sometimes including the sacrifice) of the social being. This true ideological revolution having as background the development of printing and the economical-industrial transformations and implied the establishment and sharing of a heritage considered to be national, with the help of literature, history, ethnography, linguistics, art, etc. The state institutions, like school and army in particular, as educators of the national spirit but also the different national cultural organization disseminated and imposed the unique reading of the ancestors, history,

¹ C. Banu, *Grădina lui Glaucon sau Manualul bunului politician*, edited and introductory study by Valeriu Răpeanu, București, PRO Publishing House, 1998, p. 116.



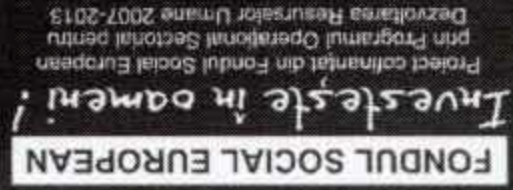
national language, the important sagas of the community but also of the tales, folkloric costume,

viewed as national art; establishing of a symbolic geographical space connected to the historical narrative led to the ritualic tourism in search of monuments and patriotic museums, national illustrations that bore the identity. In spite of the numerous critics (see especially Ernest Gellner and Anthony D. Smith), the approach of the national identity as a shared discourse became a common place (even for some of the marxists, like Eric Hobsbawm) in social sciences that deli

with researching the nationalism.

Building the national identity in Romanian space, in the area of the peripheral

modernization, lies within this structural pattern, with the only difference that, here, nationalism and the nation represented perception ideas. Their taking over and instrumentalization with obvious effects on the Romanian elite, generally educated in France or Germany, was aimed at keeping away the agglutination (in connection with neighbouring identities), ensuring the independence of the state and reduction of the civilizational backwardness through the creation of communities similar to those in Western Europe, capable of performing economically, culturally, meaning to be recognized fast on European level. Nationalism and the creation of national identity had a modernization and legitimization function for the new elite. Applying the Western concepts, the policies and practices, the creation of some institutions as symbol of the unity of the new state collided with a Romanian reality, generally rural and traditional, fragmented, situated in pre-modernity from social, political or imagological point of view. Marked by a patriarchal culture, to quote the terms of Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba from (*The Civic Culture. Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, 1963), majority of population had a passive attitude towards power, which, in turn, led to important institutional disfunctionalities of the Romanian modernization. For most of the individuals in the society, lacking a clear modern representation of community, the ideas and the institutions didn't have an ethical baggage, as in the Western





countries, but were exclusively linked to people, having only the value of their own embodiment into a historical and political experience (Daniel Barbu). If Stein Rokkan proposed in the 60's a genealogical explanation of the modernization, considering the political parties as being essential for the progressive pacification of the conflicts generated in a society, we believe that in the Eastern European space this role is taken by the central political man. Empowered by the weak structure of the Romanian political field in its entirety (in which social activities are taken on by the unions, church, associations), by the absence of certain functioning rules decided by practice, the individuals and the groups identified rather with political leaders, people with a prestige, with a certain status in politics, than with a program. In their majority, Romanians had, in that time frame (1900-1940), an independent political culture, with participative elements, letting themselves to be perceived as clients, in which the informal personal issues still held importance. Social groups and different structures and institutions of the society existed especially through the central leader (parties are an example, but not only them). Loyalty to a leader or to a family was real and more accessible than loyalty to ideas.

*

In European historiography, imagining the national community is rather impersonal: myths made France, many personalities illustrating only a certain discourse or an historiographical theme on the nation. In close rapport to the political culture dominant in Romania of the first half of the XX-th century, the national identities evolve into being heritage. The triumph of the democratic idea in Europe happened simultaneously with the progressive ascension of the messianic leaders. Each socially relevant political leader tended to prescribe the proper way in which the nation should be understood, as a form of legitimating itself or the group around them. As far as the discourse, they refounded periodically the nation, establishing a special relation between their own thinking and the process of social transformation. Placing openly their ideas and political actions in

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a rational medium, they equalled their actions with historic necessity. The cult of the leader's personality is situated at the crossroads of social representations of people around them and their own vision towards society. In the end, the constructed image of the political leader concentrated all human and national virtues (fidelity, security, continuity, etc.) and fulfilled the historical aspirations of Romanian people; he embodied the past and future, being the great protector, the one making history possible. A figure strongly symbolized, enriched with symbols, with literature, art (paintings, sculptures with magalotomantic and fetishized tendencies) portraying him, he is a metonymy for the community in its entirety.

Simplifying and looking general-diachronical the phenomenon, the cult of political leader's personality is an historical presence. I am taking into my scope of research only the XIX-XX-th centuries, in Europe of the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, the historiographical referenciality of the subject is significant, if only we mention the studies of Jean Tulard², Didier Musiedlak³, Ian Kershaw⁴, Nina Tumarkin⁵, Jeffrey Brooks⁶, Graeme Gill⁷, Robert C. Tucker⁸, etc. In Romanian historiography, only the political cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu attracted, through its easily called memory, an unanimous approach, even though the work of Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Cultul lui Ceaușescu*⁹, it is not actually a historical one. As a methodological observation, for contemporary history, there is a discussion regarding the cult of personality leaders in close

² Jean Tulard, *Le Mythe de Napoléon*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1971, Idem, *Napoléon ou le mythe du savior*, Paris, Fayard, 1987.

³ Didier Musiedlak, *Mussolini*, Paris, Presses Fondation Sciences Politiques, 2005.

⁴ Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987.

⁵ Nina Tumarkin, *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Russia*, Harvard University Press, 1983 [1997].

⁶ Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War*, Princeton University Press, 2000.

⁷ Graeme Gill, "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.

⁸ Robert C. Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia, From Lenin To Gorbachev*, University of Missouri Press, 1988.

⁹ Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Cultul lui Ceaușescu*, Iași, Polirom, 2003.

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connection with authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, which gives it strength and cohesion,

legitimizing through something called by Max Weber *charismatic domination*. My supposition is

that there was a personality cult in the first half of XX-th century, with main exponents being Ion I.

C. Brătianu, Alexandru Averescu, Carol al II-lea, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu and Ion Antonescu,

with structural function of the particular identity, being of a group or national. The main goal of

this measure is the establishment of the relation between the cult of leader and national identities in

the interbelic society, analyzing the cultural discourse, the images and the representations of the

political man as they are reflected, of forms of the myth and of ritual which goes back to the

community unity as a whole and build, in the end, the nation. Taking part in the cult's

manifestations, sharing the symbols agitated by propaganda, the individual negotiated its quality as

a member of the group, legitimating institutions, a status or the relations of authority in the society.

He assumes a system of values and behavioural conventions.

The research has more premises with historiographical character: 1. there is no, at least to

my knowledge, autonomous academic approach, of historical, sociological, political character,

of the cult of leader in the first half of the XX-th century; 2. There are a number of publications,

important studies, which deal with public manifestation of a certain political personality, the

relations with the identity of a community; I am referring, especially, to Lucian Boia al the

historiographical perspective from *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*¹⁰, or Andi Mihalache,

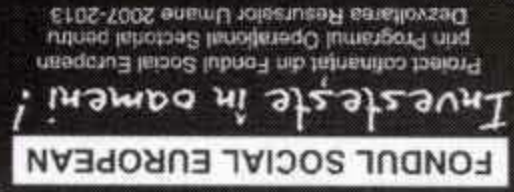
*Mănuși albe, mănuși negre. Cultul eroilor în vremea dinastiei de Hohenzollern*¹¹, from the

historical anthropology point of view; 3. methodologically, the ideological construction around the

interbelic personalities is shown in a formal way, as a structure in itself, without differences,

¹⁰ Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*, București, Humanitas, 1996 (especially the chapter on the *Ideal Prince*, p. 224-275).

¹¹ Andi Mihalache, *Mănuși albe, mănuși negre. Cultul eroilor în vremea dinastiei de Hohenzollern (White gloves, black gloves. The heroes cult during the Hohenzollern dynasty)*, Editura Limes, Cluj-Napoca, 2007.



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monolithically in public space. Historians, but not only them (the few political sociologists,

politologists, etc.), are not interested to discern the diverse levels of cultural significance of the cult of leaders, to understand the political myth beyond the strict medium of politics. The proposed subject is connected, methodologically speaking, to the new political history proposed by Jacques

Le Goff and René Rémond in the 80's (especially *Pour une histoire politique*, 1988), in a context

marked by a phenomenon of hybridization of disciplines, as Mattei Dogan and Robert Pahre said, in

Noile științe sociale. Interpenetrarea disciplinelor, 1992. The analysis of the power relations in the

space of political modernity and the construction of group or national identities is there

placed at the crossroads of many fields of knowledge, history, anthropology, sociology, political

or psychology and represents an attempt to research and question a given past, in our case the

Romanian modernity, new from the knowledge and epistemic point of view. Providing the

information regarding the way in which the political identities take shape within a society, the

vectors of dissemination and re-reading of political and cultural ideas, attitudes which crystallize

from the direct representation or mediated of a political fact, structuring a common imaginary for

the members of that community, capable of mobilization, implied the "culturalization" of the

politics, with new research themes being discovered (symbols, myths, political rites and rituals and

other symbolic forms of expressing the political power, vocabulary and political lingo, public

sphere, political culture, social memory, political socialization), and with shaping a research

pattern which overcomes the concept of *subject*, of the classical political history, build on the

autonomous and rational subjectivity of the historical agents. Centred on the idea of *society*, the

new political history is preoccupied with representations, seen as expressions of social context.

Political power itself, in different shapes, is thought as a representation strategy (see American and

French historiography with Lynn Hunt¹², Frank Ankersmit¹³, or Roger Chartier, preoccupied to

¹² Lynn Hunt (coord.), *The New Cultural History*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989.

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show the power relations in report with cultural productions¹⁴). Methodologically useful from an

assumed historical perspective are the social psychology, political sociology and political works, such as those by Max Kaase and Samuel Barnes (eds.), *Political Action*, 1979; Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man. The Social Bases of Politics*, 1960; F. I. Greenstein, M. Lerner, *A Source Book for the Study of Personality and Politics*, 1971; Stephen Pfohl et al., *Culture, Power and History Studies in Critical Sociology*, 2006. etc.

The historiographical inquiry aims to: 1. describe and discuss the forms of the cult of leaders in Romania between 1900-1940, as a project assumed by a group as an identity landmark; what matters in this stage of the project, the mechanism of political constraint, the maintained myth and the counter-myth, opposed to the spontaneous myth, situated at the

¹³ Frank Ankersmit, *Historical Representation, in History and Tropology. The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994, p. 98-124.

¹⁴ Roger Chartier, *Cultural History. Between Practices and Representations*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1988. See also Annie Duprat, *Le roi décapité. Essais sur les imaginaires politiques*, Paris, Cert, 1992; Philippe Poirrier, *Les enjeux de l'histoire culturelle*, Paris, Seuil, 2004, Michel Vovelle, "Histoire et représentations", in *L'histoire aujourd'hui*, Editions Sciences Humaines, Paris, 1999 etc. In close connection with the new political history, that includes the culturalization of the political facts, historians, anthropologists, sociologists, etc. form a consistent tradition in approaching the phenomenon of power ceremonial; the most important exponents are Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire, 1789-1799*, 1976; Alain Corbin, Noelle Gêrome, Danielle Tartakowsky, *Les usages politiques des fêtes aux XIX^e-XX^e siècles*, 1990, the volume being published in 1994 (Publications de la Sorbonne); . Allan Ellenius (sous la direction de), *Iconographie, propagande et légitimation*, traduit de l' anglais par Laurent Bury, Presses Universitaires de France, 2001; Sean Wilentz (Editura), *Rites of Power. Symbolism, Ritual and Politics since the Middle Ages*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1985; Ralph E. Giesey, *Ceremonial and Ritual, Perspectives and Dimensions*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997; Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *La fête, le jeu et le sacré*, Jean-Pierre Delarge, Editions Universitaires, 1977. For the the cult of leader, the works trace their starting point to Max Weber's authority types, and as object of research the leader from the authoritarian societies; see Jane F. Gardner, *Leadership and Cult of Personality*, Toronto, 1974; Robert C. Tucker, *Politics as Leadership*, Columbia, New York and London, 1981; Balasz Apor, Jan C. Behrends, Polly Jones and E.A. Rees, *The Leader Cult in Communist Dictatorships. Stalin and the Eastern Bloc*, Plagrave MacMillan, 2004, but also Georges Minois, *Le Cult des grands hommes. Des héros homériques au star system*, Paris, Editions Louis Audibert, 2005 or the more recent *Le Cult des grands hommes. 1750-1850*, sous la direction de Thomas W. Gaeggens et Gregor Wedekind, Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, Paris, 2009.



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level of social representations, discursive instances and propaganda institutions. Nicolae

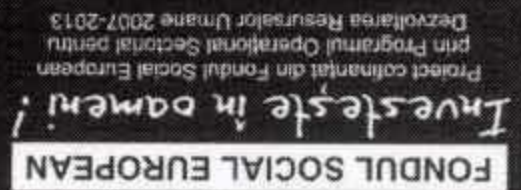
Filipescu, the conservative politician said about liberals that they "have the behaviours of the religious sects: the rite, the discipline, the ritual of their religion. They have the cult of the dead, the pilgrimages to the ancestors' tombs, the adorations of saints". From the works of Roland Barthes, Lucien Sfez or Raoul Girardet (regarding the construction of myth), but also from Max Weber and the concept of charismatic domination, the project aims to follow the interested transformation of the political leader in the "parent of the people", "saviour of the country", in the one who refunded symbolically the society, judging and punishing to eliminate the evil, re-installing justice and peace, re-installing unity and the golden age. These are concurrent myths from the perspective of nation, in the context of an acute permanent conflict within public space, described by many authors as an internal war¹⁵; 2. The approach of political ceremonies that

sustain the cult of political leader. Beyond the text, the discourse, the ceremonies and public rituals are the source of people's unity, the shared symbols and the legitimacy of the leader. Using

the shrines of the country, its statues, processions, crowning, festivities, funerals, emblems and effigies, the leader imposes the sacred character of the community and the idea of harmony¹⁶. Historically speaking, the interbelic period was marked by two great "users" of public ceremonies – as form of creating a feeling of solidarity and social control, even in the absence of consensus – Carol the Second and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu; 3. Comparative analysis of the propaganda

discourse, beyond the "litany" of evocation, text dominated by a pragmatic functionality and represents an instrument through which is aimed at conquering the power by the group that

¹⁵ See P. P. Negulescu, with *Partide politice*, published exactly in this period, Bucuresti, 1926, but also Harry Eckstein, Editura, *Internal War*, Free Press, 1964; P. E. Michelson, *Conflict and Crisis. Romanian political development, 1861-1871*, 1987, Hans-Christian Maner, *Parlamentarismul in Romania (1930-1940)*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2004 etc.
¹⁶ Christopher C. Flood, *Political Myth. A Theoretical Introduction*, 1996; Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 1992; David Kertzer, *Ritual, politica și putere*, București, 2002.





sets it in motion. Being fully aware that the significance of a text is not give, but is constructed, being a text as a discourse, in the sense of power Through the content analysis, I assume to evaluate the emitent, its motives and conceptions, as well as the evaluation of reception (the “reading”, in broad sense); in evaluating the emitent I follow an instrumental pattern than a representational one, considering the intention was not entirely equivalent with the content, because the content depends also by the social context and the message is enclosed in a process of social persuasion. In the same time, the role of political ideas it's not only to disarm specific policies, but also to offer identity to a social body; **4. Structuring the social representation and national identity regarding the cult of personality of each of the above mentioned leaders.** Belonging to a group is often than ever expressed in a discursive manner, the discourse being understood as a rather coherent model through which the individual perceives reality; also text, sacred image and associated symbolic practices, the cult of personality from the first half of XX-th century allows an analysis of the way in which different social groups used to structure their identity and negotiated their social involvement. Using as main concept the political culture, the functions of the cult of political leader in Romanian modern society must be discussed¹⁷.

For reasons of consistency, I will refer to this synthesis of research only political leader cult in cases Ionel Bratianu and Carol II. Beyond that Romanian society in the first half of this century, formally structuring public participation, the two cases indicates a kind of political culture, conformist-dependent. In the following, I present two kinds of cult leader at a time, and later try some general conclusions on the subject of cult leader.

Bibliographical sources of the research. Being at the crossroads of politics, culture and identity, the project implies an important bibliographical mutation between literary-artistic creation. Summarising: **a. archive funds** belonging to central public institutions and local

¹⁷ See methodological approach Joanna Overing, *The Role of Myth: An Anthropological Perspective on: „The Reality of Really Made-up*, Geoffrey Hosking, George Schöpfung (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood*, 1997.



administration in the society (especially the *National Propaganda Minister*, or personal funds of

political leaders *Brătianu, Casa Regala – Carol II*, which contain information about structuring of institutions. The documents can be used as research source of the reports between society and a certain public institution, but also as a case study on the impact towards loyalty to Romanian state

and nation; **b.** *hagiographical writings* about the leaders mentioned; **c.** *press of the time* (the analysis of the official literature of the Liberal Party, mainly the newspaper *Vitorul* and the theoretical magazine of the liberal studies circles, *Democrația* for Brătianu' cult) etc.; **d.** *diaries of*

the time, very important in order to reconstruct the conceptions and attitudes of the elite, but also to establish the way in which people around have positioned towards this elite and how they have internalized the cult of leader. On the reconstructing the political culture of the political elite of the

time level we can add personal letters, parliamentary debates, public discourses, propaganda leaflets, doctrine writings, press debates; **e.** *monuments*, etc. I am aware, as I identified these sources that the research starts from the premise of impossibility of studying the social representations as a relatively coherent ensemble, pointing towards the partial reconstruction of

political culture on different levels of society. I refer to the political culture of the elites, as well as to some urban and rural social categories.

A. The Cult of Brătianus between the Two World Wars in Romania

1. Death of an all-powerful political leader and the funeral „discourses”

In 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

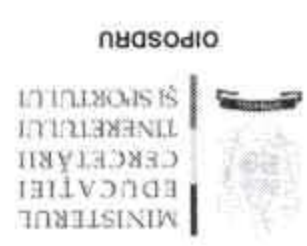


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by Nicolae Iorga¹⁸. This perception was not at all isolated in the period, many other political leaders of the time, detractors, neutral observers or adulators of the great deceased leader noting that the “revolution” that defined that moment, including the raw connotation of the term, the parallelism with a natural, cosmic phenomenon prevailing sometimes over the political or social change of perception¹⁹. 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 contemporaries²⁰. 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 procession²¹. The death of Ionel Brătianu offered a necessary simplification of the political scene, at least in their

¹⁸ 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 Răpeanu and Sanda Răpeanu, 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).

¹⁹ “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...”

²⁰ “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.

²¹ Anastasie Iordache, *Ion I. C. Brătianu*, Bucharest, Albatros publishing house, 1994, p. 547.



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vision. The disappearance of an indubitable figure of authority²² 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 voda the Terrible", "the feared uncrowned ruler of the country, obsessed with a pagan will to rule", "representing a "godly dynasty"²³), but the heroic character, even in its negative version, exceeded the man. In the contrasting space of interaction between the real characters 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 Galaction²⁴. The term "official country" is not only a figure of speech. Despite the worries, despite the homages to a "grandly political work"²⁵, a feeling of restraint was unanimous in the society towards the death of a politician unapproachable to the

²² 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).


²³ 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. Manoiilescu saying that "the ruler of the country, our ruler is dead" (Mihail Manoiilescu, *Memorii*, vol. I, edited, notes and index by Valeriu Dinu, Bucharest, Enciclopedică publishing house, 1993, p. 162) or even Mihail Manoiilescu, 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).

²⁴ Gala Galaction, *Jurnal*, vol. III, second edition, complete text, edited and notes by Teodor Vărgolici, Albatros, publishing house, Bucharest, 1999, p. 207.


²⁵ I. G. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, vol. III, München, Ion Dumitru-Verlag, 1982, p. 228-229.




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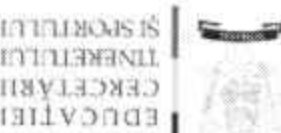
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others because of his public actions and whose political gestures often triggered popular discontent (holding Romania's neutrality for two years during the First World War, the authoritarian style of ruling Romania, the lack of a real dialogue or for 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. Duca²⁶.


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 Brătianu²⁷. The Center's message was then distributed to a multitude of liberal publications, as a form of diffusion in different social and intellectual strata²⁸. 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”²⁹, and his death came to symbolize an essential loss of the whole nation. Despite a multitude of opinions, the symbolic 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

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 230.


²⁷ *Democrația* – festive number, year XV, no. 12, December 1927.

²⁸ 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.


²⁹ „Doliul Țării pentru Ion I. C. Brătianu”, in *Vitorul*, an XX, nr. 5933, joi 1 decembrie 1927. 14




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abroad³⁰. 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 collective, especially the monarchy. The "great kings and the great advisers", a tetarchy 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"³¹. Subsequently, in the light of later Legion's texts, Ionel Brătianu was represented as **Ioan** Brătianu (my note, Ovidiu Buruiană), "the one that can do whatever he wants: the one who could lead you either to death or to victory"³². *Ioan* is much more than a simple mutation / linguistic 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.

³⁰ "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.
³¹ "Sediniua funerară dela clubul liberal", speech by Prof. N. Șerban, in *Mișcarea*, year XXI, no. 270, Tuesday, the 29-th of November 1927.
³² Petre I. Ghițaș assigns this tendency to a "church prince", without naming him (Petre I. Ghițaș, *Oameni și fapte*, Ideia, Bucharest, f.a., p. 23-27). Most probably is the Bishop of Râmnic Nou Severi, Vartolomeiu ("In fața morții. Cuvinte pentru Marele Răposat. O viață de pildă veșnică", in *Vitorul*, year XX, no. 5933, Thursday, First of December 1927).



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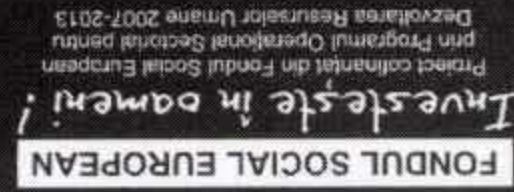
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The symbolic construct of Ionel Brătianu was an expression of a secular religiosity, with its own system of sacred words and gestures, in which the individual finds its identity and simultaneously, through ritual, was participating to the power. This 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 rumours, 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.

Describing 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 „litany” of the evocation). 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.

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 democratically 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”³³. 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 Ceausescu, have embodied, in the Romanian space, the theories of providential men, rulers and social saviours.

2. Brătianu cult. Forms and strategies of legitimacy

2.1. 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

³³ Dimitrie Gusti, *Partidul politic. Sociologia unui sistem al partidelor politice*, in *Doctrinile partidelor politice*, Bucharest, Garamond publishing house, [f.a.], p. 28-31.




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 country³⁴.

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 *songs* (light poems) dedicated to him³⁵ 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 construct³⁶.

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

³⁴ N. N. Săveanu, *Cuvântări. Rostite ca președinte al Adunării Deputaților. 1927-1928*, Bucharest, "Cartea Românească", 1928, p. 5).
³⁵ 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 Brătianu! ... / The only Brătianu / 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 /
³⁶ "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.



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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, studies³⁷, brochures³⁸, 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 solidarity³⁹; 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

³⁷ 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, *Impriimeriile Independența*, 1938; Petre Gheaiță, *Ionel Brătianu*, Cluj, 1946 etc.

³⁸ Mircea Djuvara, *Ion I. C. Brătianu*, Bucharest, *Impriimeriile 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.

³⁹ 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 *Glasiul 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 *Glasiul Bucovinei*, year XI, no. 2817, Friday, the 23-rd of November 1928, p. 1; "Comemorarea morții lui Ion I. C. Brătianu în țară", in *Glasiul Bucovinei*, year XI, no. 2820, Tuesday, the 27-th of November 1928, p. 1).



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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 reality⁴⁰.

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 power⁴¹.

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 objectivity⁴².

⁴⁰ David Kertzer, *Ritual, politica și putere*, translated by Sultana Avram and Teodor Fleșeriu, foreword by Radu

Florescu, Bucharest, Univers publishers 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).

⁴¹ "Sedinta comemorativă dela Biblioteca Ion I. C. Brătianu", in *Vitorul* year XXIII, no. 6878, Friday, the 9-th of

January 1931, p. 1.

⁴² I will present, without a fixed hierarchy, some of these manifestations in order to offer examples. Nicolae Filitti,


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 "Vitorul", year XXII, no.6690, Thursday, the 29-th of May 1930). Jean Th.

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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 known⁴³. 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 "found the memoirs of the main public actors of the time, such as Nicolae Iorga, Constantin Argetoianu, Pamfil Șeicaru, Stelian Popescu, Gala Galaction 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

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).

⁴³ The exception is the statue made by the Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovici in 1937, inaugurated on November 24th 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).



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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"⁴⁴.

Ionel Brătianu's unexpected death led to a loss of power inside the party: this is the crucial

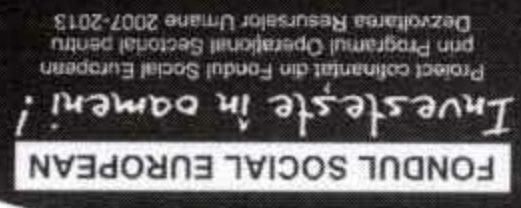
thing that the liberals understood after November 1927 and made them rally around the legitimacy of "giver" that was their leader. This is another element that explains the evolution and growing of the cult – a contorted relation between the memory of the leader and the nostalgia for the lost power. 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 sacred⁴⁵.

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

⁴⁴ Pamfil Șeicaru, *Istoria partidelor naționale, țărănist și național țărănist*, second edition, Bucharest Editura Victor

Frunză, 2000, p. 231.

⁴⁵ William Martin, director of newspaper "Journal de Genève", wrote a book called *Les Hommes d'Etat 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 Roumaine" 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'Etat pendant la Guerre)*; see other reactive actions such as Gheorghe I. Brătianu, "Cine a făcut România Mare", in *Miscarea*, 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 Crisuri*, 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* supposed 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 Campulung 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).



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.”⁴⁶ 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.

2.2. 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 Brătianus 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 Holiest), 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 present⁴⁷. Beyond the author's irony, the different levels of commemoration and the differentiations presented by Ion

⁴⁶ ANIC, Fond Rosetti, ds. 94 / 1932-1934, *Jurnal (9 mai 1932 – 31 decembrie 1934)*, f. 98.
⁴⁷ Ion Petrovici, *De-a lungul unei vieți. Amintiri*, Bucharest, Editura pentru literatura, 1966, p. 302-306.



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 - *Florică*; 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 symbolic 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.⁴⁸

The memory of Brătianu is described differently, the remembrings 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 Brătianu⁴⁹, being placed, somehow normal, on a lesser

⁴⁸ 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. Conferința ținută la Cercul Andelor 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, telegame, 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 desminteiri asupra „Amintirilor” D-nei Sabina Cantacuzino*, Bucharest, Tiparul „Cartea Românească”, 1938.

⁴⁹ 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 Eliza 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 mîca sa”, in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 266, Tuesday, the 26-th of November 1929, p. 1 (the letter send



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 *Vieaja 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 recognition⁵⁰. 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. Duca⁵¹. 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 legacy⁵². 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

by Ionel Brătianu to his son George, announcing his mother's death, Pia Brătianu) etc.

⁵⁰ "După doi ani", in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 265, Sunday, the 24-th of November 1929, p. 1; "In zile grele. Intre două revoluții", in *Mișcarea*, year XXIII, no. 266, Tuesday, the 26-th of November 1929, p. 1 (cu poetul Alexandru

⁵¹ I. G. Duca, *Portrete și amintiri*, fifth edition, Bucharest, Humanitas publishing house, 1990, p. 55.

⁵² Max Weber, *Politica, o vocation și o profesie*, translation from German by Ida Alexandrescu, Bucharest, Anima publishing house, 1992, p. 9.



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 party⁵³. 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 anthropology⁵⁴. 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 Second⁵⁵. 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 Brătianu⁵⁶.

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

⁵³ “Noul șef al partidului liberal”, in *Parlamentul românesc*, year V, no. 131, 18-th of January 1934, p. 4-6.

⁵⁴ N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. VI, *Încercarea guvernării peste partide (1930-1932)*, Bucharest, 1939, p. 397 (note from

May 1932).

⁵⁵ Gheorghe Tătărescu, *Discursuri – Program, Expozuri, Cuvântări*, Bucharest, f.l., f.a. [1946], p. 15.

⁵⁶ 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).



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view of their collaboration with the great men that they met and implicitly from the point of view

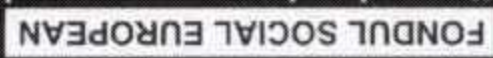
of the legitimacy in their relation with the party and society. Their memory, although tends to be emancipated from the great shadow, (the case of I.G. Duca's own cult), it is almost impossible to dissociate from the Brătianus. The celebration of the centenary of D. A Sturdza, held in February 1933, 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.⁵⁷. A memory cult seen as an object of regaining the legitimacy was also the relation with Spiru Haret⁵⁸, 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. Mărzescu, 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 symbolic way the impossible task of being his collaborator; eventually, the positive image of Gh. Mărzescu 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. Mărzescu in a symbol of party's capabilities.

⁵⁷ "In memoria lui D. A. Sturdza – cu prilejul centenarului de la nașterea sa – Cuvântări roșite în Biblioteca Ion I. C. Brătianu (25-th of February 1933)", in *Democrația*, year XXI, no. 2, February 1933, p. 5-31.

⁵⁸ 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).



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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*⁵⁹, 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 peripheral 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”⁶⁰. 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 favouring 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 dissident 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*⁶¹.

2.3. 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 symbolic space for their pilgrimages. Florica is a multitude of layers of traditions and symbols

⁵⁹ I. G. Duca, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
⁶⁰ Nicolae Filipescu, *Discursuri politice*, vol. I, 1888-1901, Bucharest, Minerva Publishing House, 1912, p. 98, *apud* Visitan Goia, *Destine parlamentare. De la Mihail Kogălniceanu la Nicolae Titulescu*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 2004, p. 172.
⁶¹ „Fetishism liberal”, in *Liberalul*, Buzău (director C. Iarca), year XXXVII, no 2, 20-th of January 1929.



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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 Alba 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 only⁶².

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"⁶³. 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"⁶⁴. Although he never wanted a national funeral, Vintilă Brătianu had one. More so, even if he

⁶² Sterie Diamandi, *Galeria oamnelor politici*, Bucharest, Cesa 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).

⁶³ *Apud* Vistian Goia, *op. cit.*, p. 171-172.

⁶⁴ Mircea Djuvara, "Ion I. C. Brătianu", in *Democrația*, year XXV, no. 1-2, January-February 1937, p. 5 (the issue was 29



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would have liked to be buried at Mihaești (out of a brotherly and filial sentiment?) the family took him to Florica⁶⁵. Vintila 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 concealing 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. Brătianu⁶⁶. Grigore Trancu-Iași talking about Ionel Brătianu's funeral, said that he went „for the first time at the Mecca of the liberals”⁶⁷. Florica was the foundation where Ionel Brătianu could be known in his intimacy, as Stelian Popescu remarked⁶⁸. 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 moment⁶⁹. 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 favour⁷⁰. 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

dedicated to Ionel Brătianu's memory, who died 10 years before).

⁶⁵ N. Iorga, *Memorii*, vol. VI, p. 38.
⁶⁶ I. G. Duca, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
⁶⁷ Grigore Trancu-Iași, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
⁶⁸ Stelian Popescu *Amintiri*, edited, preface and notes by Ioan Opris, Albatros publishing house, Bucharest, 2000, p. 235.
⁶⁹ 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.
⁷⁰ A. P. Samson, *Memoriile unui gazetar (1927-1937)*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească publishing house, 1979, p. 255.



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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 soldiers⁷¹; this testimony clearly shows the power of persuasion possessed by the

sacred space.

Florică had also a different role – to absolve the „guilt”; 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 ministries (including one to support Aurel Vlaicu). Vintilă Brătianu was against this move on public moral grounds, to which Ionel Brătianu replied that D. D. Pătrășcanu had been a guest at

*Florică*⁷².

In the symbolic 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 nation⁷³. 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 Argeș* 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)⁷⁴.

⁷¹ Prof. dr. N. Leon, *Note și Amintiri*, Bucharest, Bucharest, „Cartea Românească publishing house”, 1933, p. 238-240.
⁷² Petre Pandrea, *Memoriile mandarinului valah*, bio-bibliographical marks by Andrei Pandrea, Bucharest, Albatros publishing house, 2001, p. 80.
⁷³ Ion Pillat, *Florica. Via și casa Brătienilor. Două conferințe de Ion Pillat*, Bucharest, „Informația Zilei”, 1944 (Cultural Așezământ Ion C. Brătianu); Idem, „Mărturisiri”, out of *Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, no. 2, 1942.
⁷⁴ Apud Z. Ornea, *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea*, Eminescu publishing house, Bucharest, 1980, p. 31



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Remembering 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 legitimization 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 past⁷⁵. 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 ideals⁷⁶. 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 leader⁷⁷.

*



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).
⁷⁵ Max Weber, *op. cit.*
⁷⁶ Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Omul politic între mit și rațiune. O analiză a imaginarii puterii* (translated by Mihaela Căluț, Cluj, Alfa Press publishing house, 2000, p. 85).
⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 86.





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.

B. Royal Ceremonies during the Reign of Carol II (1930-1940)

Even at a superficial reading of Carol II *Daily notes*⁷⁸, the matter that triggers reader's imagination and is transfixed into its memory, besides the excessive, obsessing concern for Madam's health⁷⁹ and the continuous affirmation of the affection for her, or the diverse fashionable events⁸⁰, or the laments regarding the international and national political situation, is

⁷⁸ The *Diary* of Carol II of Romania met with great editorial interest, and no fewer than three editions appeared after 1989: King Carol II of Romania, *Daily notes. 1937-1951*, edited, notes, glossary, index by Viorica Moisuc, Nicolae Raus, foreword by Ioan Scurtu, București, Editura Scripta, 1995; Carol II, *Between duty and passion. Daily notes*, edited by Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă and Narcis Dorin Ion, București, Editura Șansa, 1996 and the second edition of the latter, revised and completed at Editura Curtea Veche from 2003 on. References from this text are mainly taken from the last edition of Carol's diary, the most comprehensive one.

⁷⁹ *Madam* was the almost official appellation of Elena Lupescu (Carol himself called her so), the heir prince and later king's mistress. She became his wife in 1947 (during his second exile). The love story between the two of them was the talk of Bucharest's fashionable circles and Western tabloids, which labeled Carol as the "play boy" king (see Paul D. Quinlan's work, *Carol the Second of Romania, the Play Boy King*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2001 or Gabriel Perreux, *The loves of Prince Carol of Hohenzollern*, translated by Raul Rastan, București, Editura Omnes, 1991). The affair was, also, a political dispute reason between the unconditional supporters of the king and the objectors of royal practices, namely of Madam's influence within the political decision making mechanism. More openly or covered, almost all public actors accused her of damaging the family image that the king was supposed to embody in the eyes of Romanians.

⁸⁰ The description of royal hunts, motor runs, excursions during each season, nightly poker games, backgammon, rummy, movies watched almost every night, his passion for philately (his particular passion triggered a personality



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the monarch's interest and emotion for ceremonial, for celebrations of any kind. Far beyond the natural prerogative of representation, Carol is passionate by the most diverse ceremonies, from the solemn ones, of the royalty or state, to the more mundane, that implied unveiling local monuments or exhibitions, the opening of "book month", the invariable medals offerings⁸¹, etc. His intellectual and affective involvement in such actions is absolute. On the 12-th of May 1937, postponing all his audiences and envying his own child, who was in London, he listens to the radio the coronation ceremony of George VI, experiencing intensely, according to his own admission, the royal procession that he deprived himself of, out of entirely family personal reasons. The popular enthusiasm of Londoners appears formidable to him and thrills him⁸². He could not sleep awaiting the celebrations occasioned by Restoration on the 8-th of June, "the great day", as he calls it, that anyway required waking up early in the morning; he is upset by the rain that caused the postponing of the celebration from 1938, despite the exemplary discipline of the trained children that performed the guards program and the fact that the patriarch made an interesting connection between the rain and abundance. He perceives the following day sunny weather as a lucky sign⁸³. He was "ready with one hour in advance" for the *Grand automobile prize of Bucharest*⁸⁴. By

cult trough the brands, occupies the most part of first volumes of Carol's memoirs.

⁸¹ Carol wants, as we learn from the *Notes*, to write a Romanian history of medals. Grigore Gafencu, a national-peasants politician, a future close person to the king, wrote, ironically, in his own diary, how he received an aviation medal "Aeronautical Virtue" at Băneasa, when the king touched those decorated with the sword on their shoulders and kissed them on both cheeks; "these are ceremonies that he loves", noted with sarcasm the memoirist; each month he invents a new medal (referring to the special medal "Pour le Mérite", for certain deeds and merits towards the king); he can't help but observe that while in France there was only Honour Legion, Romania had 4 state medals and 2 Royal House medals, plus uncountable military orders (Grigore Gafencu, *Political notes. 1929-1939*, edited by Stelian Neagoe, București, Editura Humanitas, 1991, p. 147). Petre Andrei, with a similar political pattern to Grigore Gafencu, also remarked Carol's pleasure for offering medals, sometimes without real motivation (Petre Andrei *Jurnal. Memori. Corespondența*, edited by Petru P. Andrei, Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, Doru Tompea, Iași, Editura Graphix, 1993, p. 78).

⁸² Carol al II-lea, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 180.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, p. 249.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 365.



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mentioning these particular facts I am not trying to emphasize on a historical trace, as the most part

of Carol's *diary* refers to period after 1937. His natural or cultivated propensity for such events is

consistent with his portrayal of contemporaries, eager to accept his medals, to describe (often on an

ironical note) the restored army uniforms and the new ceremonies⁸⁵. Asides from a certain royal

tradition, and even if neither Carol I, nor Ferdinand didn't experienced the monarch projection in

the public space⁸⁶, Carol II involvement in the religious and secular celebrations is impressive

⁸⁵ The transylvanian politician Valeriu Pop, loyal to the king by the end of 1930's, vividly describes such a ceremonial,

occasioned by monarchy day (10-th of May 1932), that begins at dawn, at the Royal Palace, with the medal offering.

Then, the king, "splendid in his Royal Escort Regiment uniform, full of youth and vigour", went to the Patriarchy after

riding a beautiful horse, accompanied by the Great Voivod riding a poney and a shiny group of generals and atachees

headed by marshal Prezan; in any case, the march seemed impressive to the above mentioned author, and the "poise

of the troops was admirable in their new and splendid uniforms" (Valeriu Pop, *Memorii politice. 1936-1945*, edited by

Sanda Pop, foreword by Florin Constantiniu, Bucuresti, Editura Vestala, 1999, p. 26). Such manifestations are

numerous in the forth decade, the common element being the huge crowds that greeted frantically the king, which had

a "happy expressions on his face" (*Ibidem*, p. 62-66). See other authors, closely to the king, like Nicolae Iorga, in

Memoirs, vol. VI, *The trial of the government over the parties (1930-1932)*, Bucuresti, 1939, p. 100-101 389, which

praises, conjuncturally, the royal celebrations from the 10-th of May 1931 or 1932 (when the march seems to him

"billiant", and "lasts almost 4 hours"); in other passages, when writing about the Restoration Festivities from 1931,

Iorga mentions with dissatisfaction, after the unveiling of the stone from Baneasa on the spot in which "the King

descended" (after a priest consecrated the place), followed by a glorification hymn addressed to Carol by Mihail

Manolescu, "lacking, unfortunately, any proportion" and offering the special medal to valuable aviation officers and

sub-officers that lasted "until the evening" (*Ibidem*, p. 114-115). Carol's passion for medals, decorations, uniforms is

obvious in many pages from Grigore Gafencu's *daily notes*. Summing up the first months of Carol's reign, in

December 1930, he observed that "the new rhythm ment new epaulettes, new decorations, new boots, new helmets"

(Grigore Gafencu, *op. cit.*, p. 18); "A new god, surely not of war, maybe not even of army, but, in any case, of

uniform", concludes the memoirist (*Ibidem*). A 10-th of May celebration in 1931, seen through Carol's passion for

uniforms, remains even after decades a colourful scene, despite the consternation of some Polish officers that had the

impression they witness a "Music Hall show"; "multi-coloured officers, dressed in strange uniforms, unseen

before, arrived from Tamatzuka's parade..." (*Ibidem*, p. 52), soldiers with caps similar with Russian or Japanese ones,

with violet colours, all sorts of uniforms, creating British, Swedish, Germans regiments from the empire period; the

King, watching the parade riding on a white horse, with sceptre in hand, the imperial helmet, laces, embroidery in

gold, decorations, seemed to the author as "Wilhelm the Second riding Napoleon's horse" (*Ibidem*, p.147-148). In

other passage, he exclaims regarding the new uniform imposed by the king for Michael the Brave knights: "And what

assumed with dignity and pleasure. He acted responsibly also in other ceremonial contexts (connected especially to the

the society; 10-th of May remains in the collective memory as the only ritualized political celebration, that Carol I

⁸⁶ A rigid spirit, hailing from the German medium, the first king of Romanians manifested a certain distance towards



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through its assumed ritual and rhythm. A multitude of ceremonies and festivities were staged, common or not, and the king directly attended and, implicitly, influenced from the enthusiasm and pomp point of view. This can suggest, in my opinion, the pronounced structuring of ceremonies as a direct way to legitimate during the 1930-1940.

1. Carol II ceremonies. Short review

The number of royal manifestations increased rapidly towards the end of Carol II reign and enforcing the authoritarian personal regime (1938-1940), marking a powerful contrast with the other Romanian monarchs period. The celebrations functioned at different levels, as they are not entirely commemorative, nor celebratory. Most of them are **inaugural-repetitive** (religious celebrations, such as First of January, Epiphany, Easter ceremonies, Saint Mary, Christmas, or political, opening of the Parliament, etc. and urban-exhibitional, month of Bucharest, book month⁸⁷ etc.) or with **playful-popular** valence, such as *Navy celebrations, the grand automobile prize of Bucharest, the royal equestrian cup, aviation day, etc.*, and were designed to enhance the

unique moments of royalty or founder), but his lack of enthusiasm towards these manifestations was obvious for his contemporaries (Paul Linderberg, *Carol I, King of Romania*, translated by Ion Nastasia, Humanitas, 2004 [1915]; *Memoirs of King Carol I, by an eye witness*, edited by Stelian Neagoe, București, Editura Scripta-Machiavelli, 1992-1994, vol. I-III; see also Carol I of Romania, *Diary*, translated by Vasile Docea, Iași, Polirom, 2007, vol. I). The photographs and images with his successor Ferdinand, as well as the supporter or malicious testimonies, emphasize on the shy figure, affected by illnesses, of the second king of Romanians. Uncomfortable with the ceremonies, he often refused them, having more often a discreet presence (see, beyond the historiographical approaches, Queen Mary's *Daily notes*, translated by Valentina Costache and Sandala Ileana Racoviceanu, edited, notes and introduction by Vasile Arimia, București, Editura Albatros, 1996. Eugen Wolbe, *Ferdinand I. The founder of Great Romania. A biography*, translation from German by Maria Ion Nastasia, preface by Gabriel Badea-Păun, București, Humanitas, 2008 or *Contemporary testimonies. King Ferdinand I. Memories from those close to him*, collected by G.N. Budisțeanu, 1933).

⁸⁷ Held after 1935 in Herăstrău Park, named Carol II from 1936, which offered great advantages to visitors in terms of accommodation and transportation, the ceremonies included visiting the national exhibition (in the center of which the Royal Pavilion was to be found, with the mail coach that took Carol I from Turnu Severin to Bucharest in May 1866, the automobile used by Ferdinand during the First World War, the plane that took Carol to the country in June 1930), the inauguration of monuments and works of art; the Village Exhibition, inaugurated at that time and became, later, the Village Museum, sport events, book days, painting exhibitions, etc.




participation and integration. Others held a **unique** character and were designed to grant Carol the founder role or “culture voided”⁸⁸. The king was never-failingly present at inauguration of institutions or public monuments, frequently participating at Romanian Academy meetings or “Astra” Society, he was also present at the centenary of Mihailean Academy from Iasi in 1934, etc. The enumeration should also include **royal public ceremonies**, with national character, that implied a higher level of participation and symbolism, such as the celebration of Romanian monarchy on the *10-th of May* or even the *First of December*, with the attendance of Michael the Brave Knights, clad in their white uniform, displaying the army cross, the king’s speech, etc., but also those strictly related to the royal family (the wedding of Princess Ileana in July 1931, celebration of 50 years from the building of Peleş castle, symbol of monarchy, etc.), organized with great pomp, with the participation of local and central administration, those were transposed as ceremonies of society as a whole.

To illustrate better the internal dynamic of royal ceremonies I will focus on year 1939, as this was the year when Carol II was at the zenith of its exposure and his regime was at its height, at least when we consider its patterns, and the Second World War was did not influenced so much Romanian society still⁸⁹. The royal participation in that year held a “routinely”⁹⁰ character, with the ceremonies for New Year’s Eve (Te Deum at the Patriarchy) or for Epiphany (6-th of January), followed by Easter, in April – the king spent the Easter, beginning a tradition, (especially

⁸⁸ Carol patronized great cultural projects, such as *Romanian Encyclopedia*, realized through Scientific Association for Romanian Encyclopedia, being the honorary president (the active president was the sociologist Dimitrie Gusti); in May 1938, the first volume appeared. This achievement was hailed by the official propaganda, that presented the *book day as King’s day* and presented him as the “Romanian culture voided” (*Romania*, year 1, nr. 23 and 24, from 24-th and 25-th of June 1938, p. 2, respectively 10). About this ideological construct see the recent work of Lucian Boia, *History’s traps. Romanian intellectual elite between 1930 and 1950*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2011.

⁸⁹ The enumeration of ceremonies attented by Carol was made using his *Daily notes* as well as the official newspaper of the regime, *Romania*, year II, 1939.

⁹⁰ Exceptionally was only his attendance at the enthronement of the new Patriarch, Nicodim, on the 5-th of July 1939, marked by an imposing ceremony, that “went well”, the king regretting only that he stumbled during his own speech, otherwise “quite beautiful” (Carol II, *op. cit.*, p. 371). See also *Romania*, year II, nr. 396, 7-th of July 1939, p. 1-5.



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concerning Christmas) amid the soldiers in Transylvania. The ceremonies followed a different

pattern, including opening exhibitions related to *Book month* (5-th of May), *Bucharest month* (9-th of May-9-th of June), *Work and joy* (20-th of June), and on the 25-th of June, the king kicked off the *Grand automobile prize of Bucharest* and patronized the *Royal equestrian cup* at the racetrack.

The inauguration of mountain corps monument from Tg. Neamț (29-th of June), with the parade of the troops wearing the uniforms from 21 years prior, followed by the participation to the celebration of advancing in rank of the new sub-lieutenants of the Cavalry School from Târgoviște (First of July), the ceremonies occasioned by *aviation day* (20-th of July 1939, Saint Elijah) or the *Navy celebration*, 15-th of August, St. Mary, the visit to the Army Pyrotechnic (18-th of August),

the inauguration of the new edifice of the Superior School of war (7-th of December), were regarded as actions ment to recuperate, from his perspective at least, the heroic moment of the First World War and also as a confidence boost offered to the nation in the troubled and complicated international context. The King and the Army became the central axis of the society, a fact attested

by the 10-th of May and First of December celebrations. Yet another image of the king, „the culture voided”, was structured upon the relation with the academic medium. On the 16-th of June, Carol presided and addressed the Romanian Academy, on the occasion of commemorating 50 years from the death of national poet, Mihai Eminescu, then he participated at the *Astra Society* manifestations, etc.; the year drew to an end with the inauguration, on the 16-th of December, of

the Institute of Universal History, headed by N. Iorga⁹¹.

The calendar of ceremonies included also the more extraordinary royal ceremonies, occasioned by life and death. The manifestations dedicated to his son, Michael – his receiving of sub-lieutenant rank – was transformed into a great celebration, as well as the birthday superposed

Enciclopedica, 2001, p. 262; Carol al II-lea, *Between duty and passion. Daily notes*, vol. II, 1996, p. 73-74.

⁹¹ Ioan Scurtu, *Romanians history during the four kings (1866-1947)*, vol. III, *Carol al II-lea*, București, Editura

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by his coming of age at Alba Iulia (25-th of October), followed by the ceremony of heir to the

throne entrance into the Parliament (25-th of November)⁹².

The religious-commemorative ceremonies represented for Carol a different layer of

meaning – the commemoration of 25 years from the death of Carol I (20-th of April) and the requiem for Queen Mary (18-th of July) – were placed within the sacred-symbolic geography of the Kingdom (Peleş, Cotroceni, then Curtea de Argeş). Included in this category, (funerary

legitimizing) the requiem held for Carol I represents more an invocation of an extraordinary event.

The persistence manifested by his nephew on invoking his uncle effigy, led to the enhancing of *Carol myth*. In May 1939, the celebration of Carol I birthday centenary, the founder of yesterday

Romania, placed Carol II in an advantaged position, as the founder of today's Romania. The

symbolical and theatrical re-enactment of the way traversed by the former king in 1866 (including

the docking of the ship at Turnu Severin, the use of mail coaches, etc.), but also the elaborated

scenario in Bucharest, with the ceremony from the Throne Hall, the majestic and warrior like

figure of the king in the sculpture realized by the Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovic in the Palace

Square (on 9-th of May), or the commemorative session at the academy in June 1939, with the

discourse by Constantin Rădulescu-Motru⁹³, had as main goal to maintain in the public conscience

the memory of memorable deeds of the heroic figure, another shape of the eschatological role

assumed by the new Carol.

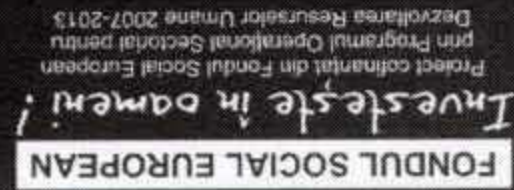
⁹² The entrance of Michael, the heir prince, into the Parliament, as senator de facto (see *Romania*, year II, nr. 539, 27-th of November 1939, p. 1), was described in the press and on radio as an epochal event, leading to the indignation of a leftist adversary of the regime, that presented the event with great irony as „the profound gratitude of the country, from the poorest to the richest, they all anxiously waiting for the entrance of the royal kid in the country Council, so that he could feel his claims fulfilled and his aspirations realized” (N. D. Cocea, *Diary*, foreword, edited and notes by Al. Gh. Savu, Bucureşti, Bucureşti, Editura Politică, 1970, p. 90).

⁹³ There are a number of academic studies from that year, with the main subject the king: Alexandru *Carol I speeches (1866-1914)*, edited by Constantin C. Giurescu, Bucureşti, Editura Fundaţiei pentru Literatură şi Artă Regele Carol, 1939, vol. I-II; Tzigara-Samurcaş, *From the life of king Carol I*, Bucureşti, Imprimeria Naţională, 1939; Radu R. Rosetti, *Carol I. Militarul (King Carol I military)*, Bucureşti, Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Mihail Kogălniceanu, from Arhiva Românească, tom IV, Bucureşti, 1940 etc.



In 1939, the authoritarian regime established by Carol in the previous year, a year dominated by new political developments, instituted a highly symbolic calendar. Proclaiming the will to break off with the past, the regime aim was to legitimate through a plebiscite at the new celebrations, a plebiscite of the people, either substantial or mimed, rather compulsory. The new calendar included *27-th of February*, the date when the new Constitution, defined as “Carol II Constitution” or “national salvation Constitution” was signed into law, *6-th-8-th of June*, the Restoration celebrations, *16-th of October*, the king’s birthday, and also the new addition *First of May 1939*, defined as Work Day. These are specific manifestations, marked by the mobilization of society as a whole and by the symbolic construct of the king as metonymy of the nation, as unifying factor of the society. The celebrations where held across the country, with a similar program, with the inevitable differences between urban and rural, a fact that only demonstrates a major administrative involvement⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ The celebration of the National Salvation Constitution was held with great pomp, the cities were adorned with flags, a divine service was held in all the churches, attended by civilian and military authorities, in the schools conferences were organized about the beneficial activities of the new regime and its subsequent constitution, national programs were organized at the cultural houses, and during the evenings the retreat was illuminated with torches; according to Arhivele Naționale Directia Județeană Iași (from now on ANDJ), *Fond Prefectura Județului Iași*, ds. 55, f. 29 and 129; see also Idem, *Fond Primăria Iași*, ds. 11/1939, f. 37-39 and 48 or *Opinia*, year XXXVI, nr. 9675, 26-th of February 1939. Celebrating the king’s birthday (16-th of October) was transformed in a major ceremony towards 1938, and the schools were closed; in Iași, alongside with the adornment of the city, the Te Deum from the Metropolitan Cathedral or the administrative factors discourses on the significance of the day, the parade of FRN units were organized, also of war veterans and (*Lumea*, year XIX, nr. 5547, third of October 1936, p. 3). In 1939, the king’s birthday was celebrated even in the wake of Armand Călinescu’s assassination (that took place in September that year); the ceremony stood out through its contextual assumed role – that of pacification of a society anguished by public violence and the international discourse of the world war. The king thus, offered the subject of “a patriotic and national celebration” (*Romania*, year II, nr. 499, 18-th of October 1939, p. 1). About the unity of the schedule, compulsory for all the communes from Mureș district, see Cristina Manea, “Aniversary manifestations, expression of personality cult of Carol II”, in *Buletinul cercetător științifice studențești*, Alba Iulia, 2 (1996), p. 269-272; this included a divine service, the priest **had to underline**, during the sermon, the significance of the day; in the afternoon, in school, the opening of the celebration was made with a prayer by the guards choir; an orator from the teaching staff was to praise the King, “to whom our entire devotion is due”, and ended with “long live Carol II”, “long live the great voivod Michael”; there were also declamations and songs (including the royal hymn) performed by the guards choir, the pre-military staff; all members of the Guards were compelled to participate in these celebration, those who were



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Mass celebrations, often combining the sacred level, marked by the spiritual service / Te Deum, in the presence of higher prelates, with the administrative level, emphasized by the authorities discourses, often glorifying the „great leader”, and the street manifestations, rigid and playful in the same time, illustrated by the parade of National Renaissance Front detachment, accompanied by artistic manifestations from the part of the school pupils or high-school pupils that were drafted into Country Guards, dedicated to the „great restoration figure”, „the great reforming figure”, with national folkloric programs, declamations and songs, executed and performed by the members of the National Guards, along with the guards; the manifestation projected the new, spectacular dimension of Carol’s regime. The king’s attendance articulated a more complex discourse, making compulsory the review of the troops, the military parade, the distribution of new flags and decorations, the speech itself. The overall idea of order mirrored the army as an equality, national unity ideal, linked by the relation between the Sovereign and Nation, although the final festive part, the reception and the concert limited the cultural and social elite participation.

2. The Stakes of the approach. Necessary interrogations and short methodological digression

The political ceremonial and its forms lack, generally, as subject from Romanian historiography - in the historical tradition of critical history from the beginning of XX-th century, where the main focus is placed upon the political reconstruction of the historical fact. Most of the historical analyses that were made on Carol II⁹⁵, mainly focused on the political and institutional aspects, with minimal regard to the ceremonial. The characteristics of the cult of leader are only

⁹⁵ Without presenting older works, connected to conceptual and methodological tool box and the ideological interpretation of the period, the short historiographical approach refers to Ioan Scurtu, *op. cit.*, Petre Ţurlea, *Partidul Regelui. Frontul Renaşterii Naţionale (Party of a king. The national Renaissance Front)*, Bucureşti, Editura Enciclopedică, 2006; Idem, *Carol al II-lea şi Camarila regală (Carol II and the royal camarille)*, Bucureşti, Editura Semne, 2010 or Radu Florian Bruja, *Carol al II-lea şi partidul unic. Frontul Renaşterii Naţionale (Carol II and the one party: The national Renaissance Front)*, Iaşi, Editura Junimea, 2006.



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circumstantially discussed, mostly anecdotal, without carving out the symbolic and political effects and thus, cannot represent an autonomous and coherent reference of the historical interpretation. Beyond the enumeration and description of power ceremonials during Carol II reign, a few problems can be identified in connection to the research object, without approaching them directly in the present research: the sources of these ceremonies, therefore a genealogy of ideas, practices, shapes assumed by royal manifestations; the public of these ceremonies; the social stakes of these ceremonies.

Following the manner of François Wacquet, from *Les fêtes royales sous la Restauration ou l'Ancien régime retrouvé*, where he was mostly interested not in the shapes of the ceremonies, the supporting discourse or the artistic representations accompanying the manifestation per se, but in what he presents as *Les services des fêtes*, administering the Celebrations⁹⁶, I am interested, mostly, in the producing mechanism, the institutional machinery able to sustain Carol's rituals, to disseminate a representations system and exercise, for the first time, an effective social control. I am also interested in the celebrations politics, in other words, the instrumentalization of ceremonies, seen as major elements of a cultural project.

3. Sources and actors of royal ceremonials during Carol II reign

In the Romanian historiographical interpretation, royal ceremonies from this period seem to appear suddenly, from nowhere. An imitative effect of the contemporary events in Europe, where the totalitarian regimes represented the political function norm, the manifestations described above have no genealogy for historians and do not subscribe to a scenario, other than the one imagined

⁹⁶ From *Les fêtes royales sous la Restauration ou l'Ancien régime retrouvé*, Droz, Genève, and Arts et métiers graphiques, Paris, 1981; see, for methodology Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1992, with *The Construction of the System*, or Sudhir Hazareesingh, in *La Saint-Napoléon. Quand le 14 Juillet se fait le 15 Août*, traduit de l'anglais par Guillaume Villeneuve, Editions Tallandier, 2007.



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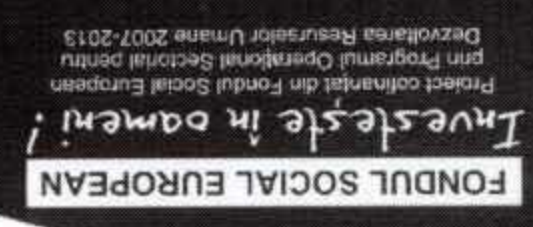


by Carol's megalomania (nurtured by his passions for movies), of a man of spectacle and hungry for power. There is, obviously, an external level in which the royal ceremonies can be decoded, specific for the grandiose stagings with their forms oriented towards physical education. Many testimonies from the period point to such a filiation, from the pattern taken by Ralea in organizing work, with *Work and Joy Establishments*⁹⁷, which circumscribe the manifestations from the totalitarian states of the time, or the construction and public manifestation of *Country Sentry*⁹⁸, to the favourable description in the partisan press and the permanent presence of officers or state representatives of the fascist state in Bucharest. The strongest influence came from the political regimes from the nearby states, Carol being attracted by his brother-in-law, king Alexander of Serbia or Josef Pilsudski's models, (the latter visited Romania in October 1931; he imposed himself as an enlightened leader, pacifying the society, its savior). Also Boris, the king of Bulgaria fits this profile, which justifies the circumscription of Carol's power model and its public recognition into the authoritarian regimes pattern⁹⁹.

⁹⁷ Carol II himself admits that what he had seen at the Work and Joy Establishments, created to occupy the free time of workers, civil servants, craftsmen, or to "improve their moral, spiritual, physical, intellectual aspects of life", reminded him of Italian and German forms, *Dopolavoro* and respectively *Kraft durch Freude* (Power through Joy), in Carol II, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 361-362.

⁹⁸ Teofil Sidorovici, leader of the Guards, was traveling in Italy, occasion for ironical musings for the Carol's supporters adversaries (Ioan Hudita, *Jurnal politic (Political diary)*, introductory study and notes by acad. Dan Berindei, Institutul European, Iasi, 1998, p. 70).

⁹⁹ There are available the systematic research focused on leaders from Central and Eastern Europe from the same period, especially on interbellum Czechoslovakia, seen by most researchers through the Western democracy lens; still the country developed its own leadership pattern based on the Austrian heritage, respectively Franz Joseph (see Alain Soubigou, *Tomas Garrigue Masaryk*, 2004; Peter Bugge, "Czech Democracy. 1918-1938 – Paragon or Parody?", in *Bohemia*, 47 (2006/2007), 1, p. 3-28). For Balkan leaders, see the work coordinated by Bernd J. Fischer (ed), *Balkan Strongmen: Dictators and Authoritarian Rulers of Southeastern Europe* (West Lafayette, IN, 2007) (Central European Studies), with very interesting studies about king Alexander of Yugoslavia (Brigit Farley, "King Aleksandar and the Royal Dictatorship in Yugoslavia", p. 51-86), king Zog of Albania (Bernard J. Fischer, *King Zog, Albania's Interwar Dictator*, p. 19-50; see also Idem, *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*, East European Monographs, Boulder, 1984, or O.S. Pearson, *Albania and King Zog*, I.B. Tauris, 2005 or Jason Toms, *King Zog, Self-Made Monarch of Albania*, 2003), king Boris of Bulgaria (Frederick Chary, *Boris III, Tsar of the Bulgarians*, p. 119-140) or Metaxas, the Greek dictator (Victor S. Papacosma, *Ioannis Metaxas and the "Fourth of August" Dictatorship in*



A second factor that shapes the manifestations and is less spread in historiography and

belongs more to the parochial-dependent politic, with participative elements, of Romanian society and its elites, in which the leader is the cohesive element and confers meaning to reality¹⁰⁰.

Romanian reality was predominantly rural and traditional, situated in pre-modern time from the social, political or representational point of view. For the vast majority of population, ideas or institutions weren't driven by ethical values, as it was the case in Western Europe, but were carried exclusively by individuals, having only the value that their political or historical embodiment offered. If Stein Rokkan proposed in the '60's a genetical explanation of modernity, considering political parties as being essential for pacifying fundamental conflicts within society, in the Eastern European space, this role was due to the political leader. Intensified by the weak structure of

Romanian political field in its entirety (the rest of social activities being taken over by unions, churches, associations), and by the absence of functioning political rules decided through practice, the individuals and human groups have identified with political leaders, with a name, rather than a program. Social groups and the diverse structures or society's institutions existed mainly through a leader. Loyalty to the leader was more real and accessible than the fidelity to ideas. A socially significant political man manifested a tendency, at that time, to prescribe the way in which the nation should be understood, as a form of legitimate himself or the group that he belonged to.

Ritualized and discursive, political leaders regularly re-founded the nation, establishing a privileged relation with the process of social transformation. Explicitly placing their ideas and political actions in the rational realm, they equated their actions with the historical necessity. The cult of leader personality lies at the crossroad of social representations and their own vision of

Greece, p. 165-198; see also Marina Petrakis, *The Metaxas myth: dictatorship and propaganda in Greece*. I.B.Tauris, 2006). See also the study of Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklos Horthy, 1918-1944*, Columbia Univ. Press, 1993, dedicated to Hungary's regent, Miklos Horthy.
¹⁰⁰The terms of the discussion, at this level, are, mainly, those of Gabriel A. Almond, Sidney Verba analysis, from *The Civic Culture. Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, 1963.



society, the constructed image of the political leader (on which literature, art, through paintings, images, sculptures, ritual, etc. greatly contributed), and has a unifying, metonymy role for the society in its entirety. The leader concentrated all human and national virtues (fidelity, security, continuity, etc.) and fulfilled the historical aspirations of Romanian nation; he signified all the past and future, being the one that made history possible. Participating at the cult's manifestations, sharing the symbols used by propaganda, the individual was negotiating his / hers quality as member of the group while legitimated institutions, a certain status or authority relations within the society. He / she assumed a value system and a social behavior. Legionarism and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu were testimonies in this respect for the king. Public expectation towards Carol had been extraordinary in June 1930, when the Restoration took place, and constituted a pressure factor afterwards that influenced the appearance of the personality cult¹⁰¹. Towards the end of the period, public intellectuals launched into a competition of adulation vis-a-vis the king's person as unseen before¹⁰².

¹⁰¹ See my study, *National liberal party and the Restoration act (June 1930). The problem of power under king Carol II (I)*, in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «A. D. Xenopol» from Iași", tom XLII, 2005, p. 271-294; there are many studies from the period that glorified the role of the leader: Petre Ghiță, *Oameni și fapte (People and facts)*, București, "Ideia", Ia. or the Phd. in philosophy C. Antoniadă that translated (series Din publicațiile Casei Școlilor) the work of Thomas Carlyle, *Eroii. Cultul eroilor în istorie (Heroes. The cult of heroes and heroic in history)*, București, Institutul de Arte Grafice "Luceafărul", 1922 (with a first edition in 1910) etc..

¹⁰² The enthusiastic messages addressed to Carol abound in the epoch: from minor poets, such as Volbură Poiană Năstureș, that published lyrics in *Neamul Românesc* headed by Nicolae Iorga during the war, founded a literary prize for poems dedicated to Restoration, and also had the intention of editing a volume under the title *The coronation poems* (as a sample of such a poem: "Long live Carol III Hail! / In him the heir; / The crown encompasses the royal beauty. / And the whole country's crown head" in *Arhiva Națională Istorică Centrală* (from now on ANIC), *Fond Casa Regală, Carol al II-lea*, ds. 157 / 1930, f. 41-42) to famous intellectuals (historian and professor Orest Tafrali, Lucian Blaga etc.) that offered their services (Ibidem, ds. 150 / 1931, f. 5-6, 48). A competition for positioning towards Carol appeared also between institutions, a series of schools began to request approval to bear the name of Carol II (Ibidem, ds. 158 / 1930, f. 78). See also Petre Turlea, *Royal camarille...*, p. 107-109, as well as the aboved mentioned work of Lucian Boia. The unlimited flunkeyism of those surrounding Carol tacitly indignated many, Ion Hudîță referred to men of culture (filosoful Ioan Petrovici) or politicians (Gheorghe Tătărescu, Ilcuș, Defense minister) as disgusting "flunkeys" (in Ion Hudîță, *op. cit.*, p. 70 and 181).



There is also a third level for interpreting the sources of Carol's cult, that of political

legitimation. In the desire to build the nation unity centered around the monarch's figure, to project the king as the only actor of Romanian world, the one who breaks with the multi centuries tradition of petty politics, inefficiency, corruption, etc., in the believe of a moral restoration, the group around Carol structured royal celebrations as a major, imposing factor towards the society. The increase of complexity in the '30's, through the forms of ritual and number of participants, responsible institutions for producing manifestations and discourses, the public summoned to participate, clearly shows the need to replace the other excluded political actors from the public space. From this perspective, Carol mustn't be singled out, ceremonies could be also analyzed through the lens of those surrounding, out of personal interest or not. Armand Călinescu, the former national-peasant politician (and minister), is one of the essential factors in the construction of ceremonies and royal cult; he approaches Carol with the moral text for the new regime's platform, as well as the ideas for organizing able institutions to sustain the new legitimating course, especially that of National Renaissance Front, designed to offer political, symbolic, social support for the regime¹⁰³; other characters are Elena Lupescu, omnipresent, but unnoticed by historians outside the royal boudoir; the object of royal solicitude, she is the real political partner of Carol; she participates in many of the royal ceremonies and expresses, as Carol himself delightedly observes in his *Notes*, her opinion on the manifestations¹⁰⁴; Ernest Urdăreanu, minister

of the Royal House, "the shadow man" of the regime, "the grey eminence" of the king, and Gavtilă


¹⁰³ Armand Călinescu, *Political notes. 1916-1939*, edited by Al. Gh. Savu, București, Editura Humanitas, 1990, p. 402. In his memoirs, Armand Călinescu registers many of his tasks, similar to those of a chief for propaganda. About his role in the spiritual revolution discourse, revision of conscience, see also Pamfil Șeicaru, *The history of national peasant, national-peasant parties*, part I, part a II-a, second edition, notes, afterword by Victor Frunză, Editura Victor Frunză, București, 2000, p. 398.

¹⁰⁴ See note from 10-th of May 1939 of Carol II, *op. cit.*, p. 348. Armand Călinescu recounts in his memoirs Ernest Urdăreanu's outburst towards Madam, that mingled in everything (Armand Călinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 405). Pamfil Șeicaru bantered Elena Lupescu, presenting her as "du Barry edition for valahians", referring to Louis XV mistress (Pamfil Șeicaru, *op. cit.*, p. 402).



Marinescu, chief of Police; they are presented in historiography especially through their vices, that in turn augmented those of Carol – they played a huge role in organizing these celebrations and mobilizing the population. The king rewards them after ceremonies, offering diverse orders and medals, as expression of his contentment¹⁰⁵. Other significant characters in this institutional construction are former liberal or national-peasant politicians, such as Gheorghe Tătărescu¹⁰⁶, Alexandru Vaida Voevod, Constantin C. Giurescu¹⁰⁷, Alexandru Radian, Teofil Sidorovici¹⁰⁸, Dimitrie Gusti¹⁰⁹, Cezar Petrescu, Ion Marin Sadoveanu, Mihai Ralea¹¹⁰ etc. they held important positions inside the regime, leading essential institutions for organizing ceremonies and producing public significant meaning.

¹⁰⁵ Carol al II-lea, *op. cit.*, p. 226-228.
¹⁰⁶ Constantin Argetoianu presented, in 1934, the role played by Tătărescu, then prime-minister, in structuring the Restoration celebrations; he supposedly conferred, starting with that year, the exceptional character for the ceremony, exceeding „his platitude towards the king”, bringing at the Roman Arenas 10.000 mayors „to shout and acclaim the Sovereign” (C. Argetoianu, *Memoirs. For those from tomorrow. Memories from those from yesterday*, vol. X, Partea a VIII-a (1932-1934), edited and index by Stelian Neagoe, Editura Machiavelli, București, 1997, p. 333).
¹⁰⁷ Well known historian in the epoch, former liberal, C.C. Giurescu recounts little about this period in his *Memoirs* (Constantin C. Giurescu, *Memorii* (*Memories*), edited by Dinu C. Giurescu, București, Editura All, 2000, p. 270-287. He writes about many ceremonial initiatives, such as erecting of two statues through public conscription, of Stephen the Great at Chilia, on the left bank of the Danube, subscriptive public, and of Mircea the Old at Tulcea (on the place where such a statue existed before and was destroyed in 1916-1918) See ANDJ Galati, *fond Rezidența Regală a Tintului Dunda de Jos*, ds. 131 / 1940, f. 1-2. Documentary and memoirs from other sources reveal him as a key factors of the new regime. In October 1939, C.C. Giurescu ordered that, in his position as minister of FRN, the king's birthday must be marked by homage manifestations in all district centers, attended by central authorities officials, accompanied by homage telegrams to the king (ANIC, *fond FRN*, ds. 246 / 1939, f. 4).
¹⁰⁸ The Commander of Country SENTRY was a dull figure for his contemporaries. Pamfil Șeicaru presents him as having no stature, without any quality that would recommend him for his role (Pamfil Șeicaru, *op. cit.*, p. 398). He edited many propaganda brochures: *One faith and one impetus. The Country SENTRY. The Guard's notebook. The new coult and Under the foot of the green forest. Manual of the guards camp*, etc.
¹⁰⁹ Together with T. Sidorovici, Carol II appoints Dimitrie Gusti, as director of Prince Carol Foundation, the organizer of royal investigation teams, a collaborator that helps and „understands” him, as a result being rewarded with orders and decorations on many occasions (Carol II, *op. cit.*, p. 187).
¹¹⁰ A subtle form of integrating the leftist movement, Mihai Ralea was the one who inspired, according to his contemporaries, the celebration of First of May, through a congress of the guilds, meetings of the workers and manufacturers in Aro and Tomis Hall from Bucharest, followed by a big parade (almost 5.000 people) in front of the Royal Palace (*Ibidem*, p. 340).



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Following Michel Foucault's footsteps, the discourse transmitters have to be re-evaluated, starting from the assertion that power is rather a relation, a continuous reposition between social actors, and ceremonies stand at the crossroad between the decision of the center to structure a monarchy cult, with integrating role, and the diverse ambitions of secondary, local characters, that raise the stake of these ceremonies and celebrations, through participation and pomp. Even if the message itself becomes repetitive, or at least this is the image obvious from the period press (censored press that is), or the administrative archive documents, from the authorities that were, mostly, self censored, in glorifying the "great steerman", the "great guard", the "great reformer" (according to the context), in glorifying the new rhythm or the new Romania (similar to all regimes) that was about to be build through the continuous labor of the king, there are certain inequalities that need to be pointed out, as signals of a different political culture, especially in Transylvania. Ceremonies were more numerous in the old Kingdom, and the direct attendance of Carol takes place pre-eminently in this space. In the same time, the most initiatives for ceremonies were taken by members from the intermediate level of decision makers, such as the one from 1935, initiated by the mayor of Bucharest, Al. G. Donescu to organize between 9-th of May and 9-th of June, the *Bucharest month*, to mark three essential moments in the monarchy history: the coronation of Carol, proclaiming of the Kingdom and Restoration.

4. Tradition and innovation in royal celebrations from the '30's. Restoration Week

Analyzing the royal manifestations from the epoch needs to maintain a double perspective – what is traditional in these celebrations and what are the innovative elements – even if we consider the contagious impact of the authoritarian regimes dominant in Europe at the time or from the legionaire movement / propaganda. It is important to note that the discourse themes remain unchanged, from the moment of Carol's comeback in 1930: mixing the historical significance and



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the royal persona, Carol remains “the savior”, “the providential man”, the keeper of national ideals, “the angel descended from heaven”, “the man of new rhythm”. Between 1930-1940, monarchy is reshaped as the only institution able to liquidate the internal anarchy and defend the state from external aggressions. The “disorder”, which was specific to the old democratic regime was opposed to the “achievements” of the new regime that “reintroduced order, strengthened the authority and reinstated the kingdom to its rights”¹¹¹. There are few mutations during this period, even when it comes to celebrations. The feeling of aggression experienced by many intellectuals is brought about by the massiveness of this discourse, in turn caused by the unprecedented means used to support the royal cult¹¹². Through people gathered around the king, the regime innovates, at the institutional level, social practices with invasion of the public / private / community space and especially through social control. There are a multitude of discourses and control platforms to be recognized in these ceremonies; many of them took shape before 1938, but are reorganize and attain coherence in the regime context. Carol benefited from a good press even in the period prior to 1930; but it was a desultory, voluntarist propaganda, based on free opinions of the publicists; Romanian Radio Broadcasting named Carol as honorary president in 1931¹¹³. In the middle of ‘30’s, a multiplication of communication forms took place, from the appearance of the officious *Romania*, led by Cezar Petrescu (June 1938)¹¹⁴, to cultural institutions (*Royal Foundations*), social

¹¹¹ ANDJ Iasi, *Fond Frontul Renașterii Naționale*, ds. 28 / 1939, f. 313
¹¹² Recepting the propaganda is traumatic for the regime’s adversaries; N. D. Cocea refers to the king’s birthday from the 16-th of October 1939, intensely prepared by the radio and press (with three days prior), but noted that the king’s worship was made using “flat words from Romanian vocabulary, plus neologisms, in galore, by the armstfuls, with the shovel and the bucket (N. D. Cocea, *op. cit.*, p. 70-71).
¹¹³ Only in 1936, the subordination of Radio to the Internal Affairs Ministry send a clear message that the institution transformed into a propaganda tool (Eugen Deniz, *History of the Romanian Radio Broadcasting (1928-1944)*, vol. I, part I, București, Editura Casa Radio, 1998, p. 176).
¹¹⁴ The first issue appeared in a context marked by festivities connected to the Restoration, on second of June 1938; even though Carol didn’t like it, as it was structured on the leftist newspaper *Dimineața*, where Cezar Petrescu used to work (Carol al II-lea, *op. cit.*, p. 246), the newspaper was the main tribune of the regime, reason for continuous concern for the king and his entourage.



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¹¹⁵ (Country Sentry, Cultural House, Royal Teams, Work and Joy establishment), but also political (National Renaissance Front¹¹⁶, National Guard¹¹⁷). The institutional corollary came into existence with the establishment, in October 1939, of the Ministry of National Propaganda, designed to increase the control over the royal manifestations, with a direct involvement in coordinating the activities and promoting new ideas of the authoritarian monarchial regime.

Restoration Celebrations. Represented an attempt to establish a new symbolic hierarchy of celebrations; during the '30's a shifting occurred regarding the importance of Restoration Celebrations within the symbolic royal construct in the detriment of 10-th of May. Carol's comeback and his crowning as a king, was celebrated even from 1931, as a legitimating form for

¹¹⁵ Country Sentry, a youth organization with scouting character, appeared in May 1935 and played an essential role in promoting the royalty mission. It was reshaped as an autonomous organization through the "establishment decree" from 7-th of October 1937, with the goal of promoting the attachment to King and Country. Their motto was: "Faith and work for king and country"; Carol was the Supreme Commander and "Great Guard", to whom allegiance was sworn. On the 15-th of December 1938, through royal decree, a new reshape was operated, by compulsory inclusion of all girls with ages between 7 and 21 years old and boys with ages between 7 and 18; the organization became state institution, completely autonomous ("Monitorul Oficial", nr. 292, from 15-th December 1938, p. 4-6, C. Hamangiu, Codul General al României, *Legi Uzualle*, vol XXV, part II, 1937, p. 1903-1909; see also *Enciclopedia României*, vol I, p. 486).

¹¹⁶ National Renaissance Front, established through decree on the 16-th of December 1938 as the only political organism in the state, having Carol as supreme chief. Its goal was to "mobilize national conscience for a united and solidary Romanian action, that will lead to the wealth of the country and the consolidation of the state" ("Monitorul Oficial", Year CVI, Nr. 293, from 16-th of December 1938, p. 3). FRN was designed as a mass party, that was supposed to strengthen the connection between the Crown and Nation, thus drawing Romania closer to the political forms of totalitarian state (Petre Andrei, *op. cit.*, p. 76). At the ceremonies and official activities, FRN members wore uniforms (blue during winter, white during summer), with "golden epaulettes and buttons that bore two 'C' placed back to back" (Ion Constantinescu, *From notes of a former parliamentary reporter. The Chamber of Deputies (1919-1939)*, Editura Politică, București, 1973, p. 415). Carol's propensity towards uniforms was, once more, shown as ridiculous. N. D. Cocea noted in his diary on the 24-th of November 1939: "an emotional news; some changes will be made, here and there, to the uniforms of FRN! The news anchor man offered precise details. Instead of a blue stripe, a scarlet one ..." (N. D. Cocea, *op. cit.*, p. 89-90). The salute consisted of raising the right arm and saying "Health", and the motto was "The King and Nation-Work and Faith" (Teodor Vlădescu, *National Renaissance Front. Origin and doctrine*, Editura Imprimeriile Adevărul, București, 1939, p. 106).

¹¹⁷ National Guard was an auxiliary group to the Front, established on the 5-th of January 1939 to be active part of FRN in promoting Carol's ideas.



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that moment in June 1930, which could have been interpreted also as a coup d'état from his part.

The elaborate construct of the celebration occurred after 1935, the moment being an important one in institutionalizing the royal ceremonies in the epoch. The significance attached to the five years passed from the Restoration implied, besides publishing of some praising works dedicated to Carol II (brochures, poems, praising hymns)¹¹⁸, a spectacle on the stadium at which 10,000 people attended, half of them from the province¹¹⁹. In the following years, mass manifestations took on an institutionalized and cultural form – the physical exercises of the young members from Country Sentry, the allegorical staging of different historical moments, etc. being openly assumed in terms of human effort (as mobilizing effort) and material, by the authorities. The stadium began the central place of public manifestation, in the context of a larger attendance and the desire to be integrated grew more and more. The might of power created by the nation's discipline organized around Carol became the norm for celebration. The establishment of *Bucharest month* in that year, preceding the Restoration week, bestowed upon the royal ceremonies dedicated to the enthronement the integration dimension of the whole society. Artistic spectacles, exhibitions, inaugurations of public buildings, the playful aspects (fairs) circumscribe the royal cult to joy and idea of progress. The Restoration Celebrations also absorbed other political or public symbols. The

¹¹⁸ A first work appeared in 1933 by Dionisie Nobilescu, *Restoration*, Cluj, Editura Librăriei Lepage, f.a. [1933]. For 1935, see Gabriel Marinescu, I. Modreanu and C. Buruiană, *Carol II, king of Romanians. Five years of reign. 8-th of June 1930-8-th of June 1935* or *Cezar Petrescu, The three kings*, with a drawing by Lena Constante and with 46 faces and portraits after photographs, *Fundatia Culturală Regală Principale Carol, București*, 1935.

¹¹⁹ Generally, N. Iorga describes with enthusiasm the Restoration Celebrations, with added value through the mobilization of the crowd. The parade on the 8-th of June 1936 seems glorious to him, and, despite the accident that occurred (falling of a tribune, three people died), the view appeal to him as „grandiose” because of the progress made in organizing and training the youth (N. Iorga, *op. cit.*, vol. VII, p. 344-345). A different perspective we encounter when we read Constantin Argetoianu, *Daily notes*, vol. I, 2 February 1935-31 December 1936, edited and index by Stelian Neagoe, București, Editura Machiavelli, 1998, p. 73-74, he sees, beyond the glorifying radio speech of Gavrița Marinescu, the tens of millions spend to bring to Bucharest „guards, girls guards, hawks, girl hawks and other young creatures falling into columns through the care and especially spending of the Government”; in 1936, he stated that „the anniversary of Restoration transformed more and more into a platitude contest. And demagoggy” (*Ibidem*, p. 339). See also Ioan Scurtu, *op. cit.*, p. 187-188.



opening of the Parliament in June 1932 was voluntarily resumed with the carlist parliament in

1939, thus a clear sign was made towards the ending of its inefficient work and beginning of

national political work¹²⁰. In 1938, Armand Călinescu indicated to the king that the administrative

reform should be signed into law in a solemn ceremony, on the 8-th of June¹²¹.

6-th-8-th of June were intrinsically connected to the idea of national, political, religious

renaissance of the nation. A form of memory administration, the repertoire or rather the historical

references network separated in commemorations, celebrations, exaltations, reparations or

anathemas, the ceremonies re-enacted the 1930 moment, a moment that was inaugural and

legitimizing in the same time, and the message that needed to be send was that of the social change

made possible by Carol's return. There are many levels of the celebration, the intimate one, of

Carol and Madam, their closed ones; they too relive the bygone moments, but this is not of interest

here, the public and the official one. The manifestations usually debuted at the Băneasa aerodrome,

on the 6-th of June, the day and the place where Carol came back to his country. In an

accumulation of medieval and modern symbols of courage, technical precision, boldness, the

ceremony shifted into the celebration of the knights of Aeronautical Virtue; then, Carol attended

the religious mass, distributing decorations (under that title) to Romanian and foreign aviators,

joining them at the common meal, etc. The inauguration, on the 7-th of June 1938 of the Royal

Foundation teams exhibition, led by Dimitrie Gusti, showed the integrational, recovering of the

rural tradition, of the peasant as hypostasis of Romanian nation¹²².

¹²⁰ Carol al II-lea, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

¹²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 390.

¹²² In the same day of 1938, Carol opened, at the Roman Arenas, the Cultural Houses Congress as the first social service celebration; the choirs and discourses held by D. Gusti, simple peasants and by the king, the following parade in front of the Palace, accompanied by a peasant fanfare, clearly showed the desire to mime the peasants participation (see *România*, year I, nr. 7-th, 8-th of June 1938, p. 3 and 5 or nr. 8-th, 9th of June 1938, p. 8).



The climactic moment of the Restoration celebrations, the 8-th of June was designated, in a metonymical way for the regime, as being the one of youth, in an attempt to proclaim the values that founded the new public pedagogy, accompanied by the idea of citizens cooperation and new rhythm; the grandiose spectacles held on the ANEF stadium in Bucharest, organized to celebrate the “great guard” or the guards exhibitions, with children works, glorified the dynamic society based on the convergence of energies and social harmony, bestowed the celebration with an utopic dimension, related to the representation of Romania’s future – these characteristics can be viewed as specific for the personality cult.


Designating the integration of society, the Restoration celebrations were multiplied across the country. During the “suspended” duration of the celebration, (the judiciary offices, shops, markets, offices, factories, except for those working for the army, were closed), the events were marked by hoisting the flags, authorities from big or small cities or towns mobilized citizens to sport, artistic and community manifestations¹²³. Royal Romanian aeronautical Federation organized an aviatc race, *The second grand prize of tourism aviation King Carol II*, with planes taking off from the big cities to Bucharest, uniting the provinces with the capital as a form that suggested the convergence around the Throne¹²⁴.

There are differences between those manifestations, some of them impressed through the resources that were used and spectacular elements, such as the launching in 1938 of two hydroplanes on the Herastrau lake or the first television broadcasting in Romania within the

¹²³ At Iasi, the old capital of Moldavia, the Restoration day was celebrated with great pomp; besides the religious mass form the Metropolitan Cathedral, sport events were organized on the Ferdinand I stadium, that included volleyball, boxing, basketball, also a demonstration of passive defense (*Iasiul*, year VI, nr. 60, Saturday, 11-th of June 1938, p. 4). National Theatre organized representations with the main achievements of the regime. The inhabitants were compelled to participate to the whole program (ANDJ Iasi, fond *Primăria Iasi*, ds. 11 / 1939, f. 85; Idem, Fond *Camera de Comerț*, ds. 385 / 1940, f. 35-36).

¹²⁴ ANDJ Iasi, Fond *Prefectura Județului Iasi*, ds. 55 / 1939, f. 366.

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pavilion of the National Exhibition¹²⁵, meant to suggest the technical progress embodied by the new king. In 1940, due to the complicated international context, the usual Restoration celebrations were cancelled, even though the Government prepared before hand and was "rather eager", as Carol pointed out. The ceremonies moved from the street and stadium (even if the FRN members still marched¹²⁶), to the press, *Romania* dedicated a festive number to the king. Absent from the street or square, the process of placing the king in the center of the construct was to be found on the intellectual level, many homage volumes and countless propaganda brochures were published, glorifying the "beautiful king"¹²⁷.

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There is a super-exposure of the king in the public space, even though Carol's presence is not equal, and the celebrations cannot be defined totally as royal. In any case, those are more than simple frivolities because, contained by political forms from other spaces or not, the mentioned manifestations expressed a well defined will and a precise ideology, in an attempt to create a seductive and prestigious image for the king, that was designed to make up for the lack of legitimacy, to realize the social control and transform the monarchy in the axis of national edification project, with structural function for the particular, group or national identity.

¹²⁵ *Romania*, year I, nr. 7-th, 8-th of June 1938, p. 4.

¹²⁶ See Ioan Hudîță, with the description of the ridiculous situation (Ioan Hudîță, *op. cit.*, p. 180).

¹²⁷ At the Cultural Foundation Carol II, three volumes were published, with 1269 pages entitled *Ten years of reign of H.M. Carol II*, with contributions from prestigious public intellectuals, such as the great historian Nicolae Iorga, musician George Enescu, sociologists Dimitrie Gusti, Ion Simionescu, historians Silviu Dragomir, Ioan Lupas and Ștefan Ciobanu, poets Lucian Blaga or Tudor Arghezi, A. C. Cuza, Petre Andrei, writer Camil Petrescu, Nichifor Crainic, Grigore Antipa, Șerban Cioculescu, patriarch Nicodim etc.; Teofil Sidorovici, commander of the Country Sentry, edited the volume *Carol II. From the peak of a glorious reign decade. Another volume 1930-1940. To His Majesty King Carol II. Writers of your Majesty subdue to the King Writer their heart, faith and pen: 8-th of June 1940*, appeared during those days, edited in a single piece, with 97 pages, with olograph texts, written by most of the well-known writers of the time: Tudor Arghezi, Ion Barbu, Otilia Cazimir, Șerban Cioculescu, Ion Minulescu, Liviu Rebreanu, Vasile Voiculescu, Mihail Sadoveanu, Ion Marin Sadoveanu, even Radu Gyr, the legionnaire poet, Felix Aderca, Ion Pillat, Tudor Vianu etc. (ANIC, fond *Casa Regală*, Diverse, ds. 32 / 1940). See also Turla or Boia.



Conclusions. The social stakes of leader ceremonies during the Interwar period

These celebrations assume all the symbols of the society and nation, projecting the leader as the only alternative for nation as a whole. These are complex cultural and spiritual, not mainly social phenomena; they implied organization, structure and functionality, with the assumed goal of interior feeling, to raise the spiritual feeling of Romanians, but mostly participation, integration and consensus. In the theoretical pattern of celebration, these phenomena are circumscribed to the caesaric pattern, as new power celebration that staged the national body made up of the whole citizens, in which the court ritual is combined with the military, the march as ostentatious display of force and discipline. Celebrating the triumph, the manifestations had the function of producing legitimacy, the discourse of the ceremony bringing into mind the foundation or restoration episode, thus, reconstructing the historical past.

As social institution, regulating the behavior of actors and spectators involved with the help of material and symbolic means, the leader celebration took to the streets and became a central element of national organization, with the role of maintaining general harmony and treasure a sense of life, structured around the monarch. It also had an identification function, belonging of the individuals to a symbolic space. The participation to the ceremonial favoured integration, although enthusiasm was often mimed¹²⁸. The identical expressions that the manifestations include, either in Bucharest or in a certain county / district, denotes the attempt of controlling the

¹²⁸ Beyond the official discourse, the interested reproduction, in *Notes*, of the words uttered by some peasants – that prepare their children for sleep in order to be in time for the Guards celebrations or some situations when they listened to the radio for the manifestations in almost profane sacred postures (Carol II, *op. cit.*, p. 251) it is interested the analysis of the impact of these manifestations. The stronger attitudes of denial belonged more to the anti-carlist elite. A viable observer is, in my opinion, Petre Andrei. Fully conscious of the formality of manifestations, of the fact that FRN organization was slow and didn't "warm up" at all and anyone (just like the Sentry of Teofil Sidorovici, that as it was enforced "damaged the school and bores the youth"), unsatisfied that from the 6-th of June on there were only "celebrations and parades", he remarked that the "parade was beautiful, but it is useless as it is only a parade!". Despite all of these, I have to admit that the uniforms and military look appeals to the youth" (Petre Andrei, *op. cit.*, p. 77-78).



significations of the moment. The conformity of population regarding participation and repetition of certain phrases bearing truth were a problem of the transmitters of the message, which were perceived as administrative factors. The authoritarian regimes or great organizations are lazy monopolies, to quote Albert Hirschman, in the sense that, when in decline, they tend to rather increase the control than to strive for efficiency, favoring more social imitation than involvement, formal recognition in contrast with assuming a clear identity¹²⁹.

Addressing to a diverse group, the ceremonial and discursive litany of authorities form 1920-1940 have a precise function, from the perspective of the power regime, to create festive emotion, as a way of formal legitimization of a regime and reconstruct the community around the figure of the great leader.

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¹²⁹ Albert O. Hirschman, *Abandon, contestation, loyalty. Reactions towards the decline of firms, organizations and states*, translation from English by Radu Carp, Laura Cucu and Simona Pop, preface by Daniel Barbu, Comment by Radu Carp, București, Editura Nemira, 1999. There are a lot of reservations towards the forms of the regime, including from Carol's closed ones, not to mention the adversaries. (Ioan Hudiță, *op. cit.*, p. 29). Pamfil Șeicaru stated that the political construction of the regime is "totally unviable"; "a parliament was fabricated, deputies and ministers wearing uniforms" (Pamfil Șeicaru, *op. cit.*, p. 398). The conclusion referred to the lack of popularity of the king towards the end of 1939 (*Ibidem*, p. 405).

