
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF ROMANIAN NATIONALISM, IN THE VIEW OF ANTOINE ROGER - A CRITICAL APPRAISAL -

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Abstract: *Before proceeding to the reviewing of Antoine Roger's original account of Romanian nationalism, I find it necessary to outline the field to which Roger's book makes an inspired contribution. In other words, I shall begin by discussing some of the recent works on the birth and shaping of Romanian nationalism, and therefore, of the Romanian nation. But first, our attention is called to the matrix which exerts an undeniable influence on many of these writings - the field of Romanian historiography².*

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One can argue that from a certain stand point, the advent of communism has had a “cryogenic” effect on Romanian historiography: the romantic outlook of XIXth century's nationalist authors had established certain *topoi* (Dacian-Roman origins, cultural Latinity, historical continuity, etc.) that were carried forth and strengthened in the interwar years. The subsequent fall of the iron curtain has had a dual effect on Romanian historiography: on the one hand, it largely (though not completely³) insulated

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³ A noteworthy exception to the isolation of communist-era Romanian scholarship is the Romanian-French colloquium held in Bucharest in October 1969. The colloquium brought together the prominent Romanian historians of the time, and personalities of the *Annales* French school of historiography (G. Duby, A. Dupont, F. Furet, P. Chaunu, etc.). The studies on the history of mentalities having been presented at the colloquium were subsequently published in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, 3/1970. The colloquium spawned a series of academic debates, to be found in articles published in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, 4/1970, in *Synthesis*, 10/1983, and in *Cahiers roumaines d'études littéraires*, 1/1986, respectively; see Simona Nicoară, *Istorie și imaginar: eseuri de antropologie istorică*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2000, p. 119, footnote 272;

the Romanian historian milieu from the fundamental mutations occurring in western social science throughout the 1960s, '70s and '80s (see the advent of the linguistic turn, of post-modern deconstructivism, etc.); on the other hand, history was labeled by the regime a “political” science, which meant that it became subject to Marxist dogmatism - any intake of western “decadent capitalist” scholarship was *a priori* out of the question, as classical Marxism became *the only* “correct” interpretative paradigm. When the aggressive russification and Stalinization of Romania ceases following Stalin’s death – and particularly after Khrushchev came to power –, a shift occurs in Romanian communist society: Nicolae Ceaușescu, the new Secretary General risen to power in 1965, is henceforth free to revive the romantic nationalist historical motifs of the late XIXth century, 1930s and 1940s, warping them into his own brand of national communism – a convenient endorsement of his regime.

Twenty-five years after the fall of Communism in December 1989, Romanian society is still struggling to overcome the ideological paradigms and nationalist clichés of national-communist historical writing. Bluntly put, the crux of the problem resides in an antiquated and ideologically charged manner of understanding and explaining the birth and development of the Romanian nation. This is not just an academic question but also a serious social and political issue, with a direct impact on popular understandings of history and collective identity, as fostered in the media and, most importantly, *in school*¹.

Fortunately many Romanian historians are aware of this complex problem, and are making efforts to bridge the conceptual and methodological gap separating traditional Romanian national history from western, shall we say, “post-national” history. Victor Neumann, for instance, speaks out against epistemic isolationism, maintaining that although Romanian culture and statehood differ somewhat from those of the West, “the present-day historian shall have to strive to render the past using the universal scientific methods”². Furthermore, he points out that the idea of the historian’s reconstituting the past based exclusively on the sources is “an absurd ambition”, since documents are not always credible, that is to say, they “don’t always justify the description of the past”³. Therefore some theoretical-methodological outlook should always be called upon to sanction, inform and verify historical interpretation. In point of fact, Neumann advocates a comprehensive reconsideration of Romanian history from the standpoint of one such theoretical paradigm; namely, Reinhart Koselleck’s conceptual history⁴. In the volume *Istoria României prin concepte*¹ Victor Neumann, his co-

¹ On the issue of school-taught history, see Mirela Murgescu, *Istoria din ghiozdan. Memorie și manuale școlare în România anilor 1990*, București, 2004;

² Victor Neumann, „Este utilă rescrierea istoriei României? Evoluția conceptelor social-politice și alternativele interpretative”, în Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen (eds), *Istoria României prin concepte: perspective alternative asupra limbajelor social-politice*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2010, p. 17;

³ *Ibidem*, p. 22;

⁴ Two key works by Koselleck have been translated into Romanian, whereby Koselleck’s theory is made accessible to the Romanian reader. See Reinhart Koselleck, *Conceptele și istoriile lor. Semantica și pragmatica limbajului social-politic*, traducere din limba germană de Gabriel H. Decuble

editor Armin Heinen, and their collaborators, attempt a concept-by-concept approach to Romanian modern and contemporary history, in the vein of Koselleck's work. The volume features several contributions on concepts directly relevant to the understanding of the nation, such as "patriotism"², "national character"³, or "people"⁴. Another important collective work, this time edited by Sorin Mitu⁵, puts forward an array of approaches stemming from the contemporary theories on nationalism⁶, as part of a plural effort to understand and interpret various facets of Romanian national identity, nationalism and nation-building. In a laudable attempt to account for the lack of consensus in the field of nationalism studies, the volume plays host to several mutually incompatible theoretical outlooks, and even features some positions which are squarely at odds with each other⁷.

The chief editors of the aforementioned two collective tomes have both made extensive contributions to the field of study of Romanian nationalism. Victor Neumann has developed his conceptual approach throughout several books⁸, while Sorin Mitu has written a highly original work on Romanian identity-formation in Transylvania – a study which traces the structuring of the Transylvanian Romanian social imaginary through stereotypical self-representations⁹. And these two authors are by no means alone in their preoccupations. Irina Livezeanu is the author of a history of cultural

și Mari Oruz, București, 2009; *Idem*, *Conceptul de istorie*, traducere de Victor Neumann și Patrick Lavrits, studiu introductiv de Victor Neumann, Iași, 2005 ;

¹ See Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen (eds), *Istoria României prin concepte: perspective alternative asupra limbajelor social-politice*, ed. cit.;

² Klaus Bochmann, „Conceptul de patriotism în cultura română”, in Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen (eds), *Istoria României prin concepte: perspective alternative asupra limbajelor social-politice*, ed. cit., pp. 103-128;

³ Balázs Trencsényi, „Conceptualizarea caracterului național în tradiția intelectuală românească”, in Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 339-378;

⁴ Victor Neumann, „Neam și popor: noțiunile etnocentrismului românesc”, in Victor Neumann, Armin Heinen (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 379-400;

⁵ Sorin Mitu (ed.), *Re-searching the Nation: The Romanian File. Studies and Selected Bibliography on Romanian Nationalism*, International Book Access, Cluj, 2008;

⁶ For good overviews of said theories, see Omut Özkırmı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Second Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2010 [2000]; Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism*, Polity Press, Cambridge UK, Malden MA, 2010 [2001]; Jonathan Hearn, *Rethinking Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2006;

⁷ See the implicit polemics opposing Ioan Aurel Pop's article, "Medieval Antecedents of the Modern Nations", sporting a perennialist approach to nationness, and Ovidiu Pecican's contribution, entitled "Case Study: A Historical Anachronism: the Romanian Medieval Ethnic Nation", which takes a manifestly modernist stance; Sorin Mitu (ed.), *Re-searching the Nation: The Romanian File. Studies and Selected Bibliography on Romanian Nationalism*, ed. cit., pp. 22-49, 50-56;

⁸ See Victor Neumann, *Neam, popor sau națiune? Despre identitățile politice europene*, București, 2005; *Idem*, *Essays on Romanian Intellectual History*, Timișoara, 2008; *Idem*, *Conceptul de națiune la români și unguri : un studiu despre identitățile politice*, Institutul European, Iași, 2013;

⁹ Sorin Mitu, *Geneza identității naționale la românii ardeleni*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1997 ;

politics in interwar Greater Romania¹ – a phenomenon that she analyses by drawing on some of the contemporary theories of nationalism². Dan Dungaciu takes things further - he cultivates a highly systematic, theoretically oriented and comprehensive approach to the phenomenon of Romanian nationalism, as seen in European political and ideological context³. Simona Nicoară, for her part, has taken an oblique, essay-approach to the issues of nation and nationalism, as she interrogates various mythical, ideological and imaginary aspects of collective identity⁴. Liviu Maior has chosen to focus his attention on the paradoxes of Transylvanian Romanian identity. His *In the Empire: Habsburgs and Romanians*⁵ expands upon the Romanians' moments of vacillation between Habsburg dynastic loyalty and (Romanian) national identity. Maior's other major opus, dealing with the 1848 Revolution in Transylvania⁶, constitutes the first account of the "year of nations" in Romania to manifestly abandon the customary romantic paradigm in favor of an outlook focused on the ebb and flow of collective mentalities, and on the development of the social imaginary. For the latter concept Maior is indebted to Lucian Boia, whose writings on the social imaginary have laid the foundations for an entire field of historiography. According to Boia, "the imaginary [...] is always present in all compartments of history", and is continuously being structured by six underlying vectors: the supernatural, death and the afterlife, otherness, the myths of origins, the imaginary of divination, and the refuse and abandonment of history (via the nostalgia of a mythical Golden Age, millennial beliefs, utopias, etc.)⁷. Boia's chief contribution to the field of study of Romanian nationalism remains his *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*⁸ – a deconstruction of Romanian national-communist historical myths.

There are also several noteworthy foreign contributions to the contemporary reconsideration of Romanian national history. For the purposes of the present review, I shall only retain two names. Keith Hitchins⁹, an American historian specialized in

¹ Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: regionalism, nation building and ethnic struggle: 1918-1930*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1995; the book was translated into Romanian as *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare: 1918-1930*, Vlad Russo (trad.), Editura Humanitas, București, 1998;

² I shall be returning to this subject;

³ Dan Dungaciu, *Națiunea și provocările (post)modernității*, Tritonic, București, 2004; see also *Idem, Elemente pentru o teorie a națiunii și naționalismului*, ISPRI, București, 2012;

⁴ Simona Nicoară, *Istorie și imaginar: eseuri de antropologie istorică*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2000; *Idem, Națiunea modernă: mituri, simboluri, ideologii*, Accent, Cluj-Napoca, 2002;

⁵ Liviu Maior, *In the Empire: Habsburgs and Romanians: from dynastic loyalty to national identity*, Bogdan Aldea (trans.), Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca, 2008; for the original edition in Romanian, see L. Maior, *Habsburgi și români: de la loialitatea dinastică la identitate națională*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2006;

⁶ Liviu Maior, *1848-1849. Români și unguri în revoluție*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1998;

⁷ See Lucian Boia, "Vers une histoire de l'imaginaire", in *Analele Universității București*, History, 40/1991, pp. 3-22; see particularly p. 22;

⁸ Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*, Humanitas, București, 2010 [1997];

⁹ See Keith Hitchins, *Romania 1866-1947*, Oxford History of Modern Europe, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994; *Idem, Români (1774-1866)*, Ediția a III-a, George G. Potra și Delia Răzdolescu

Romanian modern history, demonstrates a sharp attention to historical detail, all while endeavoring to ply some contemporary theories of nationalism to the peculiarities of the Romanian case¹. And Daniel Chirot, whose attempt of applying Immanuel Wallerstein's economocentric logics of center – periphery interaction² to medieval, pre-modern, and then modern Wallachia³ has remained singular, up until Antoine Roger's somewhat similar endeavor⁴.

My account of the field of study on Romanian national history and Romanian nationalism makes no claim to being exhaustive. It is intended merely as a bird's eye view, meant to help the reader situate Antoine Roger's tome in a context of related literature. It is worth noting that, as a general trend, Romanian scholarship focuses predominantly on the transition of the Romanian social imaginary towards national forms. A. Roger's study is well-placed to provide a welcome corrective to this outlook, as it interrogates Romanian nationalism from a rather different perspective – as we are about to see.

Although Antoine Roger's treatise, *Les fondements du nationalisme roumain (1791-1921)*, is not a very recent work (it was published in 2003), its insights have been largely ignored by Romanian scholarship. Much like Chirot before him, Roger draws on Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system theory, seeking to adapt it to the study of Romanian nationalism. Briefly put, Wallerstein argues that modernity has ushered in a world-system of economic dependency, where the industrially developed “center” (essentially comprised of colonial England and France) exploits less-developed “peripheries”: it taps the peripheral societies for raw materials to feed its ever-growing industry, and then sells the resulting finished products back to its peripheries. In the attempt of adapting Wallerstein's model to his case study on Wallachia, Daniel Chirot postulated that the modern industrial world-system had been preceded by other, pre-modern world-systems of economic dependency. He further maintained that the Ottoman Empire had been the center of one such system – a “protocolonial” structure which was less effective at exploiting its peripheries than the later, industrial one. Thus according to Chirot, Wallachia had long been subjected to Ottoman protocolonial exploitation, before eventually falling under the sway of the “neocolonial”, Anglo-French world-system. *Contra* Chirot, Antoine Roger contests the existence of an Ottoman “protocolonial” world-system, arguing that the amount of resources extracted by the Ottomans from Wallachia is far too small to be qualified as exploitation. In fact, the very concept of “protocolonialism” seems to Roger forced and abusive. He also criticizes Wallerstein's world-system model, on account of the fact that it uses two

(trad.), Editura Humanitas, București, 2013 [1996]; *Idem*, *The Identity of Romania*, Second, Enlarged Edition, The Encyclopaedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009;

¹ I shall be returning to this topic;

² For Wallerstein's world-system theory, see Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, volumes I, II and III, published by Academic Press in London and New York in 1974 (vol. I), in New York in 1980 (vol. II), and in San Diego in 1989 (vol. III), respectively;

³ Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony*, Academic Press, New York, 1976;

⁴ I shall be returning to this topic;

distinct dynamics to explain the workings of a supposedly integrated system: According to Roger, Wallerstein uses center-periphery (i.e. “horizontal”) dynamics to account for the continuous stable functioning of his system, and internal changes in the social hierarchy of the peripheries (i.e. “vertical” dynamics), to justify changes in the structuring of the world-system (such as, for instance, a periphery’s ascent to semi-periphery or even center status, entailing the corresponding fall of a central power to a subordinate status).

In order to correct this illogical disjunction at the heart of Wallerstein’s system, Roger urges a reconsideration of the two dynamics – that is to say, of the internal-external “horizontal” movement of international center-periphery relations, and of the up-down “vertical” motion of inter-class relations within the peripheral societies. In short, our author proposes that the two dynamics should be seen as working together, in dialectical interaction, rather than apart. He arranges the two processes on a system of crosscutting axes, with center-periphery interactions represented on the horizontal, and the peripheries’ intra-social mobility gauged on the vertical. Roger postulates that this dual-axis system is adequate for describing the development of nationalisms in peripheral societies bound by relations of *direct dependency* to a center – according to our author, such is the case of Moldavia and Wallachia.

The next question that presents itself is that of the variables to be used in the analysis of developments occurring along the two axes. Roger finds that the central “event” of the “international”, horizontal axis is the periphery’s transition from an agrarian system of dependency, to an industrial one. This change can occur via the center’s transitioning from a small-scale manufacturing industry (which requires agricultural input from the peripheries, to feed the center’s craftsmen manufacturers), to a full-blown heavy industry (which taps the peripheries for raw materials, leading the center to develop extractive industries and transportation infrastructures in its peripheries, so as to help feed its own growing industrial machine). Alternatively, the periphery can change hands, passing from the area of influence of a less developed, small-scale industry center, to the sway of a more developed, heavy-industry center. In the case of Wallachia and Moldavia (which would subsequently become the United Principalities, then “old kingdom” Romania), this transition from an agrarian, to an industrial system of dependency occurs little by little, as the two principalities’ grain exports to Austro-Hungary gradually decrease, and their oil exports to industrialized Germany increase correspondingly. Furthermore, Roger notes that the principalities’ transitioning from the Austrian sphere of economic influence to the German one occurs peacefully, on account of the two central powers’ having contracted their secret alliance in 1888.

Having thus fleshed out the dynamics of the horizontal, “international” axis featured in his analytical model, Roger still has to account for changes occurring along the “internal” vertical axis. In order to furnish it with relevant variables, our author draws on Miroslav Hroch’s three-stage scheme for gauging the development of national

movements¹. According to Hroch, all national movements experience an initial, scholarly phase (A), where the basic points of the national discourse are elaborated, followed by a second phase, of national agitation (B), marked by the propagation of the national discourse via nationalist activism and propaganda; finally, a third phase ensues (C), where the national idea finally wins over the popular masses – the general population adheres to the nation enthusiastically, and internalizes it as a felt reality.

Antoine Roger sets this three-stage system of reference against the background of developments occurring on the other, horizontal axis. Thus, he explains that as a system of agrarian dependency (termed ‘stage 1’, on the horizontal axis) is set up, the greater nobility, which owns more land, is able to export grain in the amounts that the center requires. It thus gets increasingly wealthier. The lesser nobility, however, does not own sufficient land to meet the center’s standards of volume. Though it doesn’t lose wealth in absolute terms, its relative poverty vis-à-vis the greater nobility becomes ever more obvious. Eventually, the lesser nobility becomes painfully aware of its inferiority. It therefore elaborates a nationalist discourse, constructing itself as a patriotic elite whose destiny it is to assume leadership of the nation by toppling the greater nobility, which is branded as hostile to the nation, or even alien (phase A on the vertical axis). However the lesser nobility is thwarted in its ambitions, because the greater nobility has a powerful ally: a greater intelligentsia benefits from its patronage, and indorses it. The privileged position of this greater intelligentsia (higher clergy, university academics, etc.) is coveted by a lower intelligentsia (country clergymen, village teachers, etc.), which comes to realize that it can elevate itself by joining the lower nobility’s cause. The lower intelligentsia thus assumes the lower nobility’s nationalist discourse. Its prominent position in the rural environment allows it to effectively propagate the national ideas among the peasant masses (phase B on the vertical axis). The peasants, for their part, are already frustrated with the great economic and social pressures placed upon them by the higher, landowning nobility: the ever-increasing grain demands of the center constrain the landowning aristocrats to bully the peasantry into producing ever-higher yields, and surrendering an ever-greater share of the harvest for export, without being granted adequate compensation. The lower intelligentsia manages to persuade the peasantry that its socio-economic gripes are the expression of a larger, national problem: the oppressive higher nobility is hostile not only to the peasantry, but to the nation as a whole! It must be toppled, and a new elite must be instated – the patriotic lower nobility, once in power, shall put everything right, and improve the peasant’s lot. According to Roger, the lower intelligentsia thus manages to mediate a *physical connection* between the lower aristocracy and the peasantry, ensuring that the nationalist discourse wins over a mass audience (phase C on the vertical axis). At this point, all the strata of the peripheral society are united against the higher aristocracy and its ally, the higher intelligentsia. That, however, is not sufficient for the nationalist movement to succeed. As long as the great, landowning aristocracy has at its disposal the huge resources afforded it by the grain trade with the center,

¹ On Hroch’s theory, see Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe :A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among Smaller European Nations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985 [1968] (the original, 1968 edition is in German);

nothing can topple it. However, once the shift from an agrarian to an industrial system of dependency (stage 2 on the horizontal axis) takes place, the greater aristocrats lose their agricultural cash-cow; the lower nobility, which has by now long been making inroads into industry, is well positioned to supply the center with the industrial raw materials it now requires. This new-found source of wealth finally allows the lower aristocracy to topple the weakened higher nobility, and assume power. The national movement succeeds.

Antoine Roger applies this analytical paradigm to the Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia), outlining a dynamics of social interaction between the greater boyars, who are able to export large amounts of Grain to Austria, the lower boyars, who are excluded from this lucrative trade, the lower (rural) intelligentsia, and the peasantry being subjected to a second serfdom by the great boyars in need of evermore grain. We shall not be going into the details of Roger's analysis. Suffice to say that with the Principalities' gradual shift from the agrarian system of dependency imposed by Austria, to the industrial one presided over by Germany, the greater boyars are removed from power definitively; the Conservative Party – their political umbrella – ceases to exist, and the nationalistic lesser boyars take the lead, as their National Liberal Party comes to dominate the political scene.

Roger's analytical model of crosscutting axes seems to lend itself well to the study of a system of *direct dependency*, such as the one affecting Wallachia and Moldavia. Transylvania, on the other hand, presents the researcher with a much more complex and fastidious socio-political reality. Of this, our author is very aware. He elaborates an all new, and entirely different analytical framework, specifically designed to ply itself to the intricacies of Transylvanian Romanian nationalism.

First, Roger observes that in the case of Transylvania, one is dealing with a less direct system of dependency. Roger terms it a *boxed-in dependency*, to account for the fact that Transylvania is dependent on Hungary, which is itself dependent on Habsburg Austria. Secondly, whereas in the case of Wallachia and Moldavia, the dependency in question is of a socio-economic nature, Transylvania, with its underdeveloped pastoral economy, can hardly be construed as being subjected to any sort of exploitation. In fact, Roger deems that its dependency is *political-institutional in nature*, rather than *economic*. And thirdly, the Romanian population of Transylvania finds itself in a peculiar position: though the Romanians are in demographical majority, their elites are deprived of any political standing and institutional acknowledgement – unlike the three *political nations*¹ of Transylvania, namely the Magyars, the Szeklers and the Saxons. In this context, the Romanian elites – at first comprised exclusively of churchmen – struggle for recognition. They want seats on the Transylvanian Diet, as well as to be granted the tax

¹ Here, the term “nation” is not to be taken in its modern sense – the bulk of the Saxon, Szekler and Magyar population in Transylvania is just as deprived of political rights as the Romanian peasantry. It is just the corresponding *political nations*, that is to say the Saxon, Magyar and Szekler *privileged elites*, who sit on the Transylvanian Diet (a medieval gathering of the *Oratores* and *Bellatores*, rather than a modern parliament), and exert political power;

exemptions, and all the other privileges that go along with being acknowledged as one of the political nations.

According to Roger, the Romanian elite develops a national movement as a way of claiming political recognition and privilege. Due to Transylvania's boxed-in dependency system, the said movement has to react dynamically to changes occurring in the national movement of the Hungarian Elite, itself fighting to conserve its traditional rights and privileges in the face of the Austrian center's constant attempts at neutralizing its institutional and political power. In essence, the Romanian elite's main problem is taken to be its inability to establish a *physical connection* with the Romanian peasant masses. Consequently, the elite is forced to resort to making a purely *symbolic connection*, through discourse. Its first generation (the "Transylvanian School", influent from the 1790s to the 1820s) harps on the Romanian populace's prestigious Latin origins. The second generation of the Romanian elite (that of the 1848 revolutionaries, prominent between the 1830s and the 1850s) develops the theme of the Romanian "aristocratic peasant", supposed to be a descendant of early Medieval nobility, laid low and deprived of its privileges by the Magyar invasion. This discursive development is in line with the Magyar *quarante-buitard* nobility's own nationalist discourse, which is centered on the aristocracy's time-honored, traditional historical rights. The Romanian elite's third generation (1860s – 1880s) has to deal with the consequences of the instauration of the dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy, in 1867: the Hungarian elite establishes its own autonomous state, which it now has to defend from Austrian attempts at political re-assimilation. Furthermore, Transylvania loses its autonomy and is absorbed into the resurrected Hungarian kingdom. As a consequence, any recourse to traditional historic rights now becomes irrelevant: the new Hungary is a modern state, founded on political representation, not aristocratic privilege. The third generation therefore elaborates two new discursive themes: the theme of the Romanian "good-subject peasant" aims to curry favor with the Austrian Emperor, in an attempt to stimulate an intervention by Vienna in Hungarian matters, on the Romanians' behalf. The second theme, that of the Romanian "good-citizen peasant", constructs the peasantry as politically aware and emancipated – a class both desiring, and deserving of, a political voice. This image couldn't be further from the truth, as the illiterate peasantry was oblivious to politics; its gripes were social and economic, not political. On the whole, the third generation hopes for a speedy dissolution of the dualist compromise. When it becomes apparent that this will not be the case, the fourth generation of the Romanian elite (the so-called "tribunists"¹, prominent from the 1890s to the 1920s) conceives of obtaining seats on the Hungarian parliament, and then utilizing its political presence therein as an effective means of resisting Hungarian assimilationist policies. This generation therefore plays the dualist political game, while simultaneously working to dismantle dualism. On a discursive level, the fourth generation carries forward the discursive theme of the "good-citizen peasant", while also adding an organicistic element to it: the peasantry is articulated as the embodiment of a strong and ancient Romanian cultural nation, having developed organically throughout the ages, in the face of all adversity.

¹ A nick-name inspired by their main periodical publication, called "Tribuna";

I shall not be going into further detail in regard to Antoine Roger's analysis. Suffice it to say that the analytical scheme is further complicated by the confessional division of the Romanian nationalist elite into Greek-Catholic (Uniate) and Orthodox camps, as well as by the Habsburg Emperor repeatedly bating the Romanian peasantry into rebelling against the Hungarian nobility – Vienna's long-time rival.

On the whole, Antoine Roger's argumentation is well founded, clear, persuasive, and, I would add, quite seductive. One would be hard-pressed to find a more consistent and coherent theoretical treatment of Romanian nationalism. I have, however, been able to identify two other theoretical approaches that should retain the reader's attention.

Keith Hitchins focuses solely on Transylvanian Romanian nationalism, approaching it from an ethno-symbolist¹ perspective. He argues that the identity roots of the movement are to be found in the XVII-th century, if not earlier² (as opposed to Roger's modernist³ view, which sees the movement in question beginning in the XVIII-th century). Furthermore, Hitchins applies Miroslav Hroch's three developmental stages of national movements to the Transylvanian case⁴. The results are admittedly interesting, though in my view Roger's more elaborate analytical framework is more pertinent to the study of the Transylvanian Romanian movement. Moreover, by using Hroch's three-stage scheme for his study of Wallachia and Moldavia *only*, Roger implies that he deems it inadequate for understanding Transylvanian nationalism. I tend to agree. Which is not to say that Hitchins' account lacks value. On the contrary, it is extremely rich in historical details – to the point where Roger's rendering of events seems schematic by comparison. As a matter of fact, I would recommend reading Roger's and Hitchins' accounts in tandem. They are, in a sense, complementary: Roger's political science approach brings to light the systemic quality of the Transylvanian Romanian national movement, via emphasizing its integration in a wider Central-European politico-economic context. Hitchins, on the other hand, brings to the table the historian's attention to minute events and small-scale cultural dynamics – see,

¹ Ethno-symbolism is a theoretical paradigm of nationalism comprising theories which seek to reconcile a view of national identity as having developed over the *long durée*, with the objective modernity of actual nations. For a comprehensive statement of ethno-symbolist theoretical positions, see first of all Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1986; for a good critical overview of ethno-symbolism, see Jonathan Hearn, *Rethinking Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, particularly pp. 172-182;

² See particularly Keith Hitchins, "Identity and Religion: The Romanian Clergy in Transylvania Before the Union with Rome", in Keith Hitchins, *The Identity of Romania*, ed. cit., pp. 17-37;

³ Modernism is a theoretical paradigm of nationalism comprising theories which see the nation as chronologically and *qualitatively* modern phenomena – that is to say, as a product of economic and political modernization, against the ideological background of popular sovereignty and collective self-determination ushered in by the French Revolution; for a good overview of modernism, see Umut Ozimik, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Second Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010 [2000], Chapter 4, pp. 72-142;

⁴ Keith Hitchins, "Romanian Nation-Formation in Transylvania: The Stages, Seventeenth Century to 1914", in K. Hitchins, *The Identity of Romania*, ed. cit., pp. 87-117; this study was originally published in *Researching the Nation: The Romanian File*, ed. cit., pp. 57-80;

for instance, his persistent preoccupation with the detailed interplay between orthodoxy and unitatism¹.

Irina Livezeanu's treatise on cultural politics in Greater Romania gives an account of Romanian nation-building beyond the early 1920s (which is the cut-off point of Roger's book). Livezeanu mobilizes a modernist theoretical perspective. She sets Liah Greenfeld's emphasis on nations being engendered by politics² against Ernest Gellner's insistence on the key role of industrialization³, and then asks herself which of the two outlooks is better suited to understanding Romanian nation-building during the interwar period. In the end, Livezeanu opts for Greenfeld's perspective, though she is unwilling to give up on Gellner's insights altogether. She is able to recuperate the latter's emphasis on cultural standardization as a nation-building tool, by adapting Alexander Gerschenkron's conception on the *flexibility of prerequisites for industrialization*⁴. Briefly put, Gerschenkron claims that in industrially backward societies, the state can substitute budgetary policies for the organic accumulation of capital necessary for industrialization; Livezeanu reasons that, *mutatis mutandis*, the state can also "presumably substitute cultural policies for the structures of industrial society" which Gellner's model requires⁵.

In final analysis, both Hitchens' and Livezeanu's contributions are to be seen not as challenging Antoine Roger's reading of Romanian nationalism, but rather as complementing it. That said, Roger's book is a valuable work in its own right, more than capable of standing on its own as a competent, self-contained political science account of how the Romanian nation came to be. Furthermore, the book's concern with the economic and institutional mechanisms underlying the growth of Romanian nationalism is, in itself, important; it provides a welcome corrective to the Romanian scholarship's quasi-exclusive focus on the dynamics of the social imaginary.

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¹ Keith Hitchens, *The Identity of Romania, ed. cit.*, pp. 17-132, *passim*;

² For Greenfeld's theory, see Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MASS., 1992;

³ For Gellner's classical theory, see principally Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983;

⁴ Alexander Gerschenkron *apud* Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: regionalism, nation building and ethnic struggle: 1918-1930, ed. cit.*, p. 6;

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 6-7;

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