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## Politics of National Peculiarity in Southeastern Europe

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**KINGA-KORETTA SATA**

**THE PEOPLE INCORPORATED**

*Constructions of the Nation  
in Transylvanian Romanian Liberalism, 1838–1848*

**INTRODUCTION**

The existence of a specific Transylvanian Romanian liberalism, either in the sense of being a fully-fledged movement, or only a more or less clear-cut affective community of individual theorists and politicians, is not taken for granted by the national historiographies of 19th-century Transylvania, either Hungarian or Romanian. The theorists and activists that this paper groups under the heading of Transylvanian Romanian national liberals are most commonly described as members of the national movement in Transylvania, that is, the movement that fought for the emancipation of the Romanian people in Transylvania.

It is the argument of this paper, however, that the identity politics devised by the theorists discussed cannot be understood without taking seriously their allegiance to the liberal project of modernity (and modernization) besides their commitment to the national cause. They themselves thought that the two projects, liberal modernization (and its economic corollary, capitalism) and national emancipation were not only reinforcing each other, but could not be conceived of separately. It is this apparently paradoxical concatenation of a progressive and a conservative idiom of political thought, liberalism and nationalism, that the present paper intends to describe through a reconstruction of the Transylvanian Romanian version of liberal identity-building, both political-institutional and cultural.<sup>1</sup>

The study consists partly of a conceptual history of the central notions em-

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1 That is why these theorists can veritably be identified as "national liberals" or "liberal nationalists", to stress their allegiance to both 19th century liberalism and nationalism. For the latter version of identification see Dénes (2006).

ployed by these theorists in their constructions of the "people", which for them was the sole legitimate basis of politics, and attempts at least a partial reconstruction of the "language"<sup>2</sup> of Transylvanian Romanian national liberalism in which these concepts were employed in its formative period, 1838–1848. The Transylvanian Romanian liberals articulated their nation-building project within the larger framework of the composite Habsburg monarchy, and the closer context of the multiethnic Transylvania, thus their nation-building had to encounter the similar projects of the more powerful national groups within the same province and empire. It was shaped by these encounters; and itself exerted a formative influence on the other projects, especially in Transylvania. This reconstruction outlines some of the external discursive and theoretical influences, from Western Europe and particularly the closer neighbors: the Hungarians (both Transylvanian and from Hungary proper) and the Germans (both Transylvanian Saxons and Austrian Germans). The Romanian national liberal political project had a territorial focus distinct from the similar projects of the Hungarians and Germans: it concentrated exclusively on a Transylvania defined as a genuine self-sufficient *patria*, while the cultural-linguistic nation-building project operated in terms of a unitary Romanism, joining together Romanians from the two Danubian principalities, Transylvania and Hungary. It is this discrepancy in the territorial and ethno-national scope that makes Transylvanian Romanian national liberal identity politics an appealing case for study, it being still capable of merging pre-nationalism patriotism, demanding loyalty to a multi-ethnic entity and fully-fledged cultural nationalism in a coherent political project, a situation that dramatically changes after the 1848 revolution.

The present study intends to assess Transylvanian Romanian liberal identity-building through a comparison with the similar project of its immediate discursive and geographical neighbor, Hungarian national liberalism, owing to the fact that the Transylvanian Romanians saw this idiom as being their immediate challenger. The relationship of the two national liberalisms was an ambiguous one: Hungarian liberals had a program of economic and political modernization that had very much in common with what the Romanian liberals envisaged as necessary, but the Hungarian project of liberal nation-building put forward aims that were perceived by the Romanians as critical threats to their own national project. There is a certain interpenetration of the two national liberal idioms; it is not the case that the transfer of ideas was a one-way process; though the Romanians paid more attention to the Hungarian liberals (as these were the representatives of the dominant nationality and the dominant policy-making actors in the context of Transylvania or Hungary), the Hungarian liberals were also considering Romanian reactions and sometimes demands.

2 In the sense used by Pocock (1987), pp. 19–38.

The reconstruction of the Transylvanian Romanian national liberal project is based on the analysis of the only Romanian language journal edited in pre-1848 Transylvania, the *Gazeta de Transilvania* [Transylvanian Gazette] and its literary supplement, the *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* [Journal for Mind, Soul and Literature],<sup>3</sup> from their first issue in March 1838 until the outbreak of the 1848 revolution. The editor and main contributor of the journal in this period, George Bariț (1812–1893), is widely acknowledged as a prominent figure in the Romanian national emancipation movement throughout his long life. His reputation was augmented precisely by his being the editor of the *Gazeta* and its major contributor way beyond 1849, when he was forced to renounce the editorship.

While it might seem obvious that a study of 19th-century Transylvanian Romanian ideas should focus on the single political journal of the period, it is not obvious why this journal can be considered a depository of national liberalism; being the only one, it might have aimed at collecting all the available versions of Romanian public discourse.<sup>4</sup> My argument for considering this journal to be the organ of national liberalism is that it was written mainly by Bariț and his closest associates<sup>5</sup>, and that the views expressed by these authors in their writings are recognizably in line with the liberal project of modernity on the one hand, and the project of nation-building and national emancipation on the other.<sup>6</sup> Also supporting this claim is the fact that when other Romanian journals started to be published (the first of these was Timotei Cipariu's shortlived *Organul luminării* [Organ of Enlightenment] in 1847, followed by *Telegraful român* [Romanian Telegraph] in 1853), these were ideologically different from the earlier *Gazeta*; one can even argue that it is precisely when compared to these journals that the liberalism of the *Gazeta* becomes unmistakable.

3 As it is these two periodicals that will be extensively quoted, I will only use shorter titles to identify them: *Gazeta* and *Foaie* respectively.

4 This is actually what the journal declared to be its intention. Nevertheless, there was selection among the texts sent to the journal by the editor, and Bariț sometimes openly acknowledged the fact, and the criteria for selecting.

5 It is sometimes hard to identify the exact authors of articles in the journal, as it was not customary to sign them in the beginning. Signing them became more frequent around 1842, especially in the literary supplement. Then we can identify writers on social and political matters (besides Bariț, who still writes by far the most of such articles); among them, most importantly, the poet Andrei Mureșanu, his brother Iacob Mureșanu, and the high-school teacher Ioan Maiorescu (father of the central figure of Romanian conservatism, Titu Maiorescu).

6 It is important to note that to be conservative in the Hungarian case could have only meant being a supporter of the central Viennese government and its ideological corollaries: absolutism; centralization; Germanization. For such an appreciation see Dénes (2006), pp. 155–196; Dénes (1989). In the Transylvanian Romanian case, however, being in favor of modernization (i.e., being liberal) could still be associated with absolute loyalty to the Habsburgs, and implicitly to Viennese central government.

## SOURCES OF ROMANIAN NATIONAL LIBERALISM

Mapping external influences in the case of the articles published in the Romanian journal has to start with the indication of sources present in the journal itself. In the period immediately following its first issue in March 1838 the *Gazeta* only presented news items without commentaries, grouped by location: first the news from Transylvania, then those from Hungary, Austria, the Danubian principalities, ending with the rest of Europe (and, sometimes, the world). In the case of these specific news items there was almost always a precise indication of their source: mainly German language journals, as well as French and British journals quoted through the German journals. If the news concerned Hungary or the Hungarians in Transylvania, usually the journals of Budapest (not only the liberal ones), and the Hungarian liberal journal published in Cluj, the *Erdélyi Híradó* [Transylvanian Newspaper], were customarily referred to. It was only in 1842 that new types of articles began to appear: commentaries on specific events or questions of general interest. For my analysis, this latter type is of real interest, but it is important to note that there are valuable comments within the seemingly simple recordings of news as well.

The most prominent "Western" source for the *Gazeta*, which was the fountain-head of especially the more analytical articles published there, was the Bavarian *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*. This periodical was acknowledged by both contemporaries and later commentators<sup>7</sup> alike as the journal secretly financed by the Austrian government, thus voicing its political agenda. Nevertheless, the *Augsburger* managed to keep at least a semi-independent stance towards its sponsor, this being also the intention of the Viennese government, as in this way it could be a reliable journal for the non-Austrian German and wider Western European public, while still supporting the viewpoint of the Austrian government at the same time.<sup>8</sup> The *Gazeta* took over from the *Augsburger* not only the majority of its news about Germany, France or Britain, but also numerous commentaries concerning Hungary and Transylvania, or Eastern Europe, especially the Ottoman Empire, including Wallachia and Moldavia. These commentaries were also reflecting the viewpoint of the Austrian government. Moreover, the same Austrian viewpoint can be identified as influencing some of the theoretical articles dealing with more abstract matters of interest, seemingly unconnected to the immediate concerns of Austria.<sup>9</sup> Besides the *Augsburger*, Viennese journals such as *Adler* and especially the official paper, the *Österreichische Beobachter*, were often cited for their news. The

7 See, for example, the appreciation given by Chereșteșiu (1917), p. 23.

8 For a comparative consideration of the German press in the period and an assessment of the role of the *Augsburger*, see Green (2001).

9 See, for instance, the article on the proper definition and theoretical understanding of nationality, published, however, in the midst of the bitter dispute over the language question in the Transylvanian diet in 1842 and a similar dispute in Hungary over Széchenyi's criticism of Hungarian nationalism voiced around the same time, and keenly taken over by the Romanian journal: "Pentru naționalitate", [For nationality] *Gazeta*, 1842, 16, pp. 61–63; 17, pp. 65–66.

preference given to these journals by the editor and publisher of the *Gazeta* explains in part why the Romanian liberals were such staunch advocates of imperial nationalism.<sup>10</sup>

### **IN THE MIRROR OF HUNGARIAN NATIONAL LIBERALISM**

Though Transylvania and Hungary before 1848 were administratively distinct within the Austrian monarchy, there were no significant differences culturally or linguistically between the Hungarians in Transylvania and in Hungary. Moreover, Hungarian reformers were already engaged in the building of the unitary Hungarian nation, which manifestly included the Hungarians of Transylvania way before the 1830s. Thus, by the time of the emergence of Romanian liberalism in Transylvania in the 1830s, speaking of a single Hungarian cultural nation was long established in public parlance. As a consequence, the Romanian journal also considered Hungarian liberalism unitary, because the Transylvanian liberal discourse thematized the same issues in roughly the same manner as the one in Hungary in the 1830s and 1840s. Most of its scholars consider that it borrowed almost everything it thematized from the liberal discourse in Hungary.<sup>11</sup>

The communication between the Hungarian and Romanian liberals was somewhat asymmetrical, the Romanians being more attentive to and echoing the views of the Hungarians than vice versa. An important question in the assessment of the Romanian liberals' relations to Hungarian liberalism is whether they were informed of the specific agenda of the Hungarian liberals as compared to the conservatives. From the references in the Romanian journal it is obvious that the Romanian editors were keenly interested and aware of the different trends of opinion in Hungarian politics. They knew and discussed the theoretical works founding Hungarian liberalism (especially István Széchenyi's *oeuvre*), but also the conservative reaction to those. The Romanian journal also readily reflected the liberals' day-to-day political struggles and internal debates through the presentation of the more important articles published in various journals in Hungary or Transylvania.<sup>12</sup>

10 They did not actually have much choice, taking into account censorship and the scarcity of resources. The same sources, however, could have been used in a more critical manner (as was the case with the Hungarian liberal press, for instance).

11 This is, of course, not very surprising given the fact that Miklós Wesselényi, the leader of the Hungarian reformers (liberals) in the 1830s in the Hungarian public space (mainly the diets), also participated in Transylvanian political life as a Transylvanian magnate. But, this is not only true for the liberals: one of the leading conservatives, Samu Jósika, acted in the same manner in both contexts. Bariț himself retrospectively considered this to be the case: he emphasized the role played by Wesselényi in the liberal opposition in both Hungary and Transylvania, and also argued that the Transylvanian Hungarian liberals took their inspiration from Hungary. See Bariț (1889–1891), vol. 1, pp. 574, 577.

12 See the discussion of Széchenyi's *Hitel* [Credit], for example: "Privire asupra industriei și a

If we follow Miklós Szabó's typology of Hungarian liberalism, which differentiates between the aristocratic and the more radical gentry liberalism<sup>13</sup> (the latter trend being epitomized by Miklós Wesselényi and Lajos Kossuth), the Romanian liberals' unambiguous preference was for the views characteristic of Hungarian aristocratic liberalism, especially as advocated by Széchenyi, against both the gentry liberalism prevailing among Hungarian liberals and conservatism. It is important to note, however, that it was only in the early 1840s that these versions of Hungarian liberalism openly and sharply diverged: the differences of opinion on issues relating to the Hungarian nation-building agenda between the two emblematic figures of Hungarian liberalism, Kossuth and Széchenyi, demarcated two increasingly antagonistic camps. Although there were other points of divergence between the two main groups of liberals, the single most important issue of disagreement by the early 1840s was "Magyarization", that is, the extent and modes of assimilation that was desirable and acceptable in order to construct a Hungarian nation-state.<sup>14</sup> It is important to note, however, that all Hungarian liberals were assimilationist, it was only the means, the timing and the extent of necessary Magyarization that was disputed.

It is exactly their being assimilationist that made Hungarian liberals intolerable to the more radical Romanian nationalists, like Simion Bărnuțiu. For him, all the charming proposals advanced by the Hungarians were designed to conceal the actual aim: the denationalization of the Romanians and their consequent turning into Hungarians. Thus, Bărnuțiu rejected the totality of the Hungarian liberal offer and declared that the Romanians were better off without any change in their circumstances, as they could still remain Romanians.<sup>15</sup> Bariț on the other hand was not prepared to discard the whole of Hungarian liberalism; though he himself repeatedly declared that the forced assimilation of the Romanians was unacceptable (and, he argued, impracticable), the emancipation of the (Romanian) serfs and the economic and political modernization proposed by the Hungarian liberals was in the best interests of the Romanian masses. In this context, Bariț's preference among the Hungarian liberals was for the less radically Magyarizing and less democratic aristocratic liberals and their leader, Széchenyi. The unquestionable loyalty

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negotului în Ungaria, Transilvania, Moldova, Țara Românească și Serbia" [Considerations on the industry and commerce in Hungary, Transylvania, Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia] *Gazeta* 1838, II, 22, pp. 85–88. The dispute over Széchenyi's *Kelet népe* [People of the East], very important in clarifying the ideas of Hungarian liberals and conservatives alike concerning the national question, was also keenly followed in the *Gazeta*. See "Când va fi Transilvania tare și fericită?" [When will Transylvania be strong and happy?] *Gazeta* 1841, 37, p. 145; 'Ungaria' [Hungary] *Gazeta* 1841, 48, pp. 190–191; "Ungaria. Jurnalistică", [Hungary. Journalism] *Gazeta* 1843, 1, p. 1. The Pulszky-Thun debate was also discussed: 'Pesta' [Pest] *Gazeta* 1843, 25, p. 98.

13 See Szabó (2006), pp. 197–238; especially 200–211.

14 For a detailed discussion of the different liberal standpoints in Hungary, see Schlett (1999), pp. 81–121, 167–181.

15 See his 1842 writing *O tocmeală de rușine și o lege nedreaptă* [A shameful deal and an unjust law], as well as his emblematic 1848 *Discursul de la Blaj* [Discourse of Blaj]. Both in Chin-dris (1998), pp. 45–54, 78–112.

of the aristocratic liberals towards the imperial house and government also predisposed the Romanian liberals, themselves strong supporters of Vienna, to insist on this specific version of Hungarian liberalism.

### ***PECULIARITIES OF THE TRANSYLVANIAN ROMANIAN ADAPTATION OF NATIONAL LIBERALISM***

This part tries to reconstruct the identity discourse of Romanian national liberalism by contrasting its major thematizations to the stances adopted by Hungarian national liberals, because I believe that Transylvanian Romanian national liberalism is comprehensible only in and through its dialogue with Hungarian liberalism. Of course, a similar comparatist endeavor could also be undertaken in relation to the Wallachian and Moldavian Romanian liberalisms. What sets apart the Transylvanian Romanian theorists from their Wallachian and Moldavian peers is their involvement in a separate political and discursive field, their discourse considering problems relating to the situation in the Habsburg monarchy, different in every possible aspect from those of the Danubian principalities. On the other hand, there is a close connection in this sense between Transylvanian Romanian and Hungarian national liberalism, both being rooted in the same political space of the Austrian empire, within the same discursive field. The Romanian theorists from all the three different states, however, employ a unitary discourse on Romanian culture and language, that is, the building of the Romanian cultural nation, but with no or little reference to political issues. As this study considers the political construction of identity, the "Hungarian connection" seemed more important. It is significant that the Transylvanian Romanians also share with the Hungarians their political and theoretical sources by virtue of having access to roughly the same political literature, which was available as a consequence of Austrian censorship and also due to their similar linguistic competence, this again setting them apart from the Wallachians and Moldavians.

### ***ECONOMIC DEFINITION OF THE PATRIA***

An enthusiasm for economic modernization and a search for the best ways to achieve it characterizes both Hungarian and Romanian national liberal discourses. The motivation for the economic discourse was the construction of an economically sustainable homeland for the political projects. Hungarian and Romanian liberals argued that free trade was in principle all right, though state protection for home industry was needed, if the territory did not want to become the victim of the economic imperialism of the great industrial na-

tions of Europe. The defining reference was the notion of "national economy" advanced by Friedrich List, and the German corresponding institution of the *Zollverein* and its *de facto* functioning.

The difference between the two liberal discourses was in the definition of the "home" territory that needed protection from external economic domination. The Hungarian liberals, especially the more vocal gentry liberals, wanted to protect the Eastern half of the Empire (Hungary and Transylvania) from the Western part (Cisleithania), and would have accepted the need to protect the whole of the Empire from the economic imperialism of the more developed Western European countries (especially England). On the other hand, Romanian liberals sought the protection of Transylvanian trade and emerging industry from Hungary, as they identified Transylvania as the closest meaningful unit in the national economic sense. For this purpose, they were ready to co-operate with the Saxons and the Transylvanian Hungarians as well. It was in this frame of mind that the *Gazeta* enthusiastically reported novel economic ventures in Transylvania, which were seen as founding the economic power of the *patria*,<sup>16</sup> and thus its political significance as well. Control over the trade on land towards Wallachia and, complementarily, the entire Ottoman Empire, was also presented as an argument for the necessary empowerment of Transylvania against Hungary (and Cisleithania), benefited by navigation on the Danube.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, a Transylvanian version of economic nationalism laid the foundation for the self-congratulating articles on the economic capacities of Transylvania, as well as for those numerous appeals to the "patriots" of Transylvania for greater industry and economic activity inside the *patria*. The modernization of the Transylvanian economy, Romanian liberals argued, was solely in the interest of the "people" of Transylvania, while other proposals (the Hungarian one for sure) were driven by external interests. For this *raison d'état* type of economic consideration, Bariț employed the notion of the "Transylvanian people" – a version of a non-ethnic political "nation" molded together by common (economic) interest. This conception of the Transylvanian people was devised against the background of the similar non-ethnic conception of a Hungarian political nation for the would-be Hungarian nation-state (encompassing the Eastern half of the Habsburg Empire), a central theme of the Hungarian liberals' nation-building project.

16 Bariț, provided the reasons in a comment to the news of the establishment of a sugar factory in Sibiu: "Not only the stockholders, but the city and the *patria* [Transylvania] will draw blessed benefits from this enterprise. Several thousand florins will stay in the country." "Transilvania", [Transylvania] *Gazeta* 1840, 3, p. 9.

17 See the account on the establishment of a Transylvanian society for navigation on the Olt, and Bariț's acknowledgement that "navigation on the Danube caused the decrease of commerce through our *patria*, Transylvania", "Transilvania", *Gazeta* 1838, I, 7, p. 25. Later accounts: "Corăbiere pe Olt" *Gazeta* 1839, 7, p. 26; "Transilvania", *Gazeta* 1839, 12, p. 45; "Transilvania", *Gazeta* 1839, 17, p. 65; "Transilvania", *Gazeta* 1840, 5, p.17; "Transilvania", *Gazeta* 1841,45, p. 178.

It is worth mentioning, however, that the *Gazeta* was always keen in emphasizing the mediating role of the monarch in economic matters: he was described as supporting the modernization of the economy of the whole Empire, thus implicitly of Transylvania. The Romanian journal always spoke as if the government of His Majesty was interested in the happiness of all his subjects, being equally in favor of economic advancement anywhere in the country. This was in sharp contrast to the Hungarian liberals' view, which reproached the central government for its one-sided consideration of the economic interests of Cisleithania against the rest of the Empire, but in agreement with the view which the conservatives (and the Széchenyi of the 1840s) propounded in Hungary.<sup>18</sup> This difference in perspective was partly due to the divergent Hungarian and Romanian appreciation of the merits of constitutionalism and absolutism discussed below, and can in part be attributed to the use of such loyal description as a purely rhetorical device. It is, more importantly, in line with the self-conception that the *Gazeta* advanced of the Romanian people being totally devoted to the imperial interests of Austria by means of unconditional commitment towards the closer Transylvanian *patria*, to all its nations constituting it politically a single entity.

#### ***POLITICAL-INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE NATION***

All Hungarian political theorists, liberals and conservatives alike, seemed to speak a constitutionalist idiom in the early 19th century. Historically, ancient constitutionalism proved to be the best way of fighting attempts coming from a royal center of power aiming at extending its own prerogatives. Thus, initially it functioned as an essentially "conservative" (that is, conserving) ideology of the nobility against absolutist drives, especially when royal power passed to Habsburg hands. The difference between the liberal and the conservative understanding of the constitution at the beginning of the 19th century was tainted by their respective interpretations of the contemporary state of affairs: the liberals saw the constitution as a valuable historic heritage, but not appropriate for their present, thus wanted to keep it but also reform it; the conservatives either wanted to dispense with the constitution altogether or keep it as it was.<sup>19</sup> Liberals challenged two of the key elements of the constitution: the rights and roles of the institution of the county, the prominent locus of local (and in the imperial framework implicitly national) self-government according to the liberal view; and the definition of the sovereign nation, i.e., the people who were to participate in politics, either at the county or at the

18 For a contrastive view of the Hungarian liberals' and conservatives' main tenets, see Dénes (2001), pp. 35–106; (2006), pp. 155–196; as well as Varga (1982). My account of Hungarian liberalism and conservatism is greatly indebted to these works.

19 See Schlett (1999); Péter (1998).

national level. These two issues were strongly related: the role of the county depended on a specific understanding of politics and its mechanisms, and also on the definition of those included in politics -that is, the "people", both in their capacity as voters and also as potentially elected politicians.

Though there is some ambiguity in the Hungarian liberals' reflections on the institution of the county,<sup>20</sup> most of them argued for keeping (or even enhancing) the rights of the county as an institution of local (self)-government, which, if reformed correctly, would be capable of providing a substantial instance of popular sovereignty at work and thus check the central government. Accordingly, the county became of primary importance in the reforming of the ancient constitution into a modern one based on the sovereignty of the people. It was at the level of the county that the liberals saw the possibility of immediately democratizing representation: non-noble people were to participate in the running of the affairs of the county.<sup>21</sup> It is exactly this possibility that alarmed the conservatives, who saw the counties as already excessively democratic.

Moreover, Hungarian liberal discourse constructed the county not only as a miniature republic,<sup>22</sup> a model of popular sovereignty in function, but also as a corrective institution of political socialization: it was to educate the people into thoughtful, cultured and politically mature citizens, who would not only be conscious of the implications of their political choices and actions – that is, becoming rational political actors – but would also "learn" through this process to "love" the constitution and the Hungarian *patria*. The Enlightenment stress on rationality and the need for educating the ignorant was coupled with the employment of a quasi-republican language of patriotism in the Hungarian case showing that, for the liberals, the county was an institution of utmost importance in the construction of a modern Hungarian political nation, both rationally and emotionally. In this sense, the county could provide the necessary socialization for the non-Hungarian would-be citizens into the Hungarian constitution and its corollary, Hungarian patriotism as well.<sup>23</sup>

It was a common assumption among 19th-century liberals that the masses were not ready to actively participate in politics, as uneducated and poor people were easy to manipulate; thus popular government would necessarily lead to chaos and ultimately despotism. Most Hungarian and Romanian liber-

20 Among the liberals, the so-called Centralist group was arguing for a greater degree of centralization, i.e., less rights for the county. See Szabó (2006), pp. 211–213.

21 Though it is not always clear whether this would be a first step towards democratizing representation in general, or just the ultimate degree of democratization still acceptable to some of the noble gentlemen.

22 See Szabó's appreciation: "Gentry liberalism regarded the Hungarian county as a miniature model of state sovereignty, the existence of which would automatically restrict the sovereignty of the government, which had inherited absolutist features." (Szabó (2006), p. 205).

23 Some liberals argued exactly on this basis that, as some of the counties had a non-Hungarian majority, a greater degree of centralization was needed in order to keep/reconstruct the Hungarian character of the state. See Schlett (1999), p. 105.

als accordingly stressed that people needed political education, both formal (through the school system) and informal. They devised some intermediary institutions to perform this latter task instead of the political institutions at the state level: for the Hungarian liberals, the counties were to do this; for the Romanians, national corporations. Both these institutions were to constitute affective communities for the individual as well, and this way provide the emotional foundation of patriotism.

In contrast to the Hungarians, the Romanian liberals did not pay too much attention to the role and the possible reforming of the county, although this could have been exploited for their purposes as well. The explanation for this neglect probably lies in the envisioned institutionalization of politics based on national corporations discussed below, which made counties superfluous or meaningless. For them, the mass educational role assigned to the county by the Hungarian liberals was unacceptable as it involved a Hungarian-dominated institution with the objective of establishing a Hungarian nation-state. The Romanians constructed the corporate Romanian nation in Transylvania as their equivalent of an educative and corrective institution that would play the role of an intermediary between individual citizens and country- or empire-wide high politics.

The neglect of the county did not imply a neglect of the issue of constitutionalism: when speaking of constitutions in general,<sup>24</sup> the Romanians advocated the need for them as guarantees of lawful government, bringing up the archetypal example of Great Britain.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, with respect to a Transylvanian or Hungarian constitution the evaluation was far from unambiguously positive. In 1838 the *Gazeta* quoted the closing oration of the then president of the Transylvanian Diet, Ferenc Kemény, who talked about the 900-years-old constitution of the Hungarians as the most precious legacy of the forefathers, in line with the political language of ancient constitutionalism.<sup>26</sup> But the way the oration was quoted makes it clear that the president was talking about a foreign people. In his 1890 *History of Transylvania* written at the end of his career, albeit in a completely changed political atmosphere, Bariț went even further and explicitly spoke about the 1790 constitution of Transylvania<sup>27</sup> as being "old, rotten", a constitution that was not appropriate to the needs of the

24 For instance, "Geografie politică", [Political geography] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 8, p. 28.

25 The reason for the admiration of the British constitution was that it functioned as a veritable mixed government, Bariț's ideal. Bariț, says that an Englishman can love both his king/queen and the constitution as a saint and not be in contradiction. "Britânia mare" [Great Britain] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 7, p. 26. The respect for municipal, that is, local or minority rights was also acknowledged as a positive feature of the British constitution (especially in relation to the Irish). "Britânia Mare" [Great Britain] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 15, p. 58.

26 "Transilvania" [Transylvania] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 5, p. 18. Again, the same Kemény talks the same way at the opening of the 1841 Diet. See "Transilvania. Deschiderea Dietei" [Transylvania. Opening of the Diet] *Gazeta* 1841, 46, p. 181.

27 Which was still seen as the first reformed, that is, modern, constitution in the articles of the *Gazeta*.

times, and which Joseph II rightfully discarded.<sup>28</sup> However, there were also instances when Bariț felt he had to defend the constitutional character of the government and spoke of the Transylvanian aristocratic-monarchic constitution as the common heritage of the *patria*, one that "we" have<sup>29</sup>, "we, Transylvanians, on the support of the law stipulations in our constitution".<sup>30</sup> This positive appreciation of the Transylvanian constitution was in line with the Transylvanian Romanian liberals' attempt at constructing the Transylvanian "people" as a non-ethnic political nation, subject to the Transylvanian mixed constitution, into which the Romanian nation wanted to be incorporated. The wavering between the positive and the negative assessment of Transylvanian constitutionalism reflects the indecision of the Romanian liberals on whether the old constitution could be the foundation for a new institutional setup in which Romanians could play the leading role or not.

Connected to the assigned role of constitutionalism was the appreciation of the monarchic principle, enlightened absolutism in particular. For the Hungarian liberals, enlightened absolutism was still absolutism, despotic and thus unacceptable.<sup>31</sup> Their argument for this was almost republican in tone: the issue was not the benevolence or the personal talents of the individual ruler, but the legal framework that guaranteed individual rights for (all) the people and the ensuing (sovereign) governing power of the representative Diet. In the case of Romanian public discourse, monarchs in general, and enlightened rulers in particular, enjoyed a different attitude. In the texts of the *Gazeta*, Frederick the Great of Prussia,<sup>32</sup> Joseph II, and Austrian emperors in general, were portrayed as positive heroes. This dissimilarity was noted by the contemporaries as well: it is reported that when Bariț met in 1844 the Wallachian liberal leader Ion Câmpineanu, the latter formulated the reproach that the Romanians in Transylvania wanted to be liberated by absolutism.<sup>33</sup> The possible reason for this notable preference for the enlightened ruler against a representative Diet or responsible government might be explained by simple pragmatic reasoning: one man was easier to convince of the rightfulness of Romanian requests than a whole Diet or any kind of representative government. And, if he was convinced, all was accomplished: as he was also the executive, he could have acted upon those requests immediately.<sup>34</sup> Pragmatism

28 See Bariț, (1889–1891), vol. 1, pp. 520, 524.

29 "Ungaria" [Hungary], *Gazeta* 1840, 44, p. 173.

30 "Transilvania", [Transylvania], *Gazeta* 1841, 41, p.161.

31 This is probably due to the origins of the Hungarian liberal movement in the noble (feudal) opposition to Joseph II. See Szabo's discussion on the origins of Hungarian liberalism as being so much different than those of continental liberalism Szabó (2006), pp. 198–200.

32 See, for instance: "Porušia", [Prussia] *Gazeta* 1838, I, 2, p. 8; "Frideric eel Mare" [Frederick the Great] *Foaie* 1838, 6, pp. 45–48; 7, p. 53.

33 See Cheresiesiu (1917), p. 21.

34 The large number of references to the 1791 *Supplex Libellus Walachorum* seems to indicate this direction of argument. But, then, in the 1890 *History of Transylvania* Bariț, detachedly makes the self-defeating claim that the *Supplex* was authorized in advance by the Austrian ministers, thus, implying that the whole Romanian petition-movement was initiated by the imperial government as a diversion targeted towards the Hungarians. See Bariț, (1889–1891), vol. 1, p. 543.

might also be implied in the very description of Austria: such a solution was based on the reality of absolute monarchic government, a fact that Hungarian liberals denied, arguing that there might be absolutism in Cisleithania, but Hungary was a constitutional state with a mixed government including a representative Diet. The theoretical possibility of a (more) democratic Transylvanian constitution, which could have meant the numerical domination of the Romanians, was never discussed; presumably also because Bariț himself was no democrat. In line with the majority opinion of Hungarian liberals, Romanian liberals too wanted to condition political participation on the meeting of certain criteria, especially wealth and education.<sup>35</sup>

Sticking to the monarch also had a justification separate from the Enlightenment ideas of a benevolent master: in Romanian discourse he was portrayed as the personification of the Austrian state (of the larger *patria*), and the logic of patriotism implied that they should be loyal to him, no matter what, because this meant that they were loyal to the state. The pre-nationalist personal understanding of patriotism could easily be related to the Enlightenment idea of man needing a master, and to the pragmatic reasoning behind preferring the monarch to the Diet. This Romanian imperial patriotism was accentuated in the early 1840s by the heightening tension between the Hungarians and the other nationalities (in Transylvania this primarily meant the state-constituting nation of the Saxons), when strategically the Romanians chose to be neutral, as far as possible, in order to lose the least and possibly also gain something. This stance also implied that they authorized the monarch to decide in the disputes between the Hungarians and the Saxons. Thus, it can be argued that this conscious employment of a pre-modern patriotic discourse by the Romanian theorists, at the time when other national liberalisms demanded absolute loyalty to the ethnic nation instead of the state or the ruler, was itself a pragmatic choice. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the preference for premodern mixed constitutions over states constituted on the principle of popular sovereignty displayed by Bariț also betrays his essentially critical attitude towards the foundational idea of popular government, and implicitly nationalism – the idea that would sanction a simple representative parliament as the governing body of a state.

### **POPULAR REPRESENTATION AND ITS INSTITUTIONS**

According to Bariț's typology of states, Transylvania was a state with a mixed constitution in which the Diet constituted the republican element. It was this

35 See the description of popular ignorance as part of the Romanian negative self-image in Mitu (1997), pp. 103–131, the liberals taking a prominent place in it, arguing that increased democracy was therefore not suitable to the Romanians.

republican element that required thorough reform, according to the Romanians. A first indication of the envisioned reforms was the insistence that the Romanians be incorporated into the fourth nation (besides the already existing three corporate nations of the Hungarians, the Szeklers and the Saxons) and thus be represented in the Diet. This traditional Romanian request was coupled with the claim that Romanians could not be satisfied by the granting of individual liberty (i.e., to elect and be elected into an increasingly representative Diet); they also needed national liberty, a concept similar to the republican idea of liberty.<sup>36</sup>

The Romanians invoked the argument of national liberty in their fight against Magyarization; they claimed that the political being of the Romanian nation was put in danger. Magyarization, however, was not precisely defined: it could mean anything from forced assimilation to the milder demands ensuing from the liberal construction of the Hungarian political nation (like, for instance, introducing Hungarian as an official language, or, demanding that public officers speak Hungarian). Bariț made it clear that neither Magyarization, nor the inclusion of Romanians into the constitution on an individual basis had negative effects on the individual well-being of the Romanians, but instead it endangered their political existence as a nation.<sup>37</sup> This argument makes it clear that for Bariț, being a "nation" included a definite political aspect: that the given group was entitled to an autonomous (at least semi-independent) political existence.<sup>38</sup> That is why he always emphasized the need for the acknowledgement of Romanian state-building capacities by legally establishing and guaranteeing the corporative rights of the Romanian nation in the Transylvanian constitution.

It is this implication that nationality, unlike religion for example, required the existence of a community (the nation) that had sovereign-like rights over its members, which was in sharp contrast to the Hungarian liberal offer of a unitary Hungarian political nation coupled with the recognition of "nationalities" – that is, cultural or language communities having no political rights and exercising no authority over their members. This Hungarian liberal offer was instead perceived by the "nationalities", among them the Romanians, as itself a sheer case of "Magyarization", because it reduced nationality to the private realm of the individual. The Hungarian liberal ideal of a unitary political nation to which every citizen could be connected by constitutional patriotism was thus contested by the Romanian liberals on the grounds of a disparate understanding of what nationality implied, defining ethnic commu-

36 What Benjamin Constant called the "liberty of the ancients", or Isaiah Berlin "positive liberty", implying direct government.

37 See his "Românii și maghiarismul" [The Romanians and Magyarism] *Foaie* 1842, 9, pp. 65–69; 10, pp. 73–77; 11, pp. 81–86.

38 See also his "Românii și panslavismul" [The Romanians and Pan-Slavism] *Foaie* 1841, 45, pp. 353–358.

nities as the appropriate repositories of political authority, which was to be effectively distributed among them in a multinational state like Transylvania. This understanding had special implications for the political institutions in Transylvania, due to an existing setup that could be made congruent with it.

This existing political-institutional setup, the formula of political representation of the three corporate "nations" (the Hungarians, the Szeklers and the Saxons) in a unicameral Diet provided a special focus not only for the Romanian liberal discourse but for the Hungarian one as well, though for different reasons. The Hungarian liberals liked the idea of a unicameral representative institution (against the dual chambers of the Hungarian Diet), but wanted to dispense with the corporate bodies in it altogether to guarantee internal democracy, and also extend the medieval concept of the "nation" to include more people besides the nobility,<sup>39</sup> especially members of the urban middle classes and the professions. The Hungarian liberals' project was in sharp contrast, however, with the Romanian insistence on preserving national corporations, only extending the institutional setup to include the Romanians as the fourth corporate "nation". Thus, it is no wonder that to Hungarian liberals, even the liberal Romanian discourse seemed to advocate the institution that was recognized by them as being paradigmatically conservative. This sticking to the idea of being "incorporated" into the Transylvanian constitution as the fourth state-building nation seems to be, nevertheless, an enduring characteristic of modern Romanian political discourse.<sup>40</sup>

The corporate nation, in line with its pre-modern definition, was to be made up of smaller corporations, professional, local, confessional, vocational, etc. Arguably the more traditional Romanian society also predisposed the Romanian liberals to envisage themselves in a corporative setup. It is symptomatic of this attitude that Bariț gave the definition of "individual" in a footnote to one of his first articles on England in 1838: "an individual is a person taken on its own",<sup>41</sup> after using the Romanian for corporation ("*obște*") without any explanation – thus, one can relatively safely make the claim that for Bariț, the idea of the individual seemed more abstract than that of a regulated human community, a corporation. In a sense, the Romanian discourse on corporations is quasi-republican: it is as if the corporate nations would function as non-territorial republics, being the forums for members with (almost) equal political rights, governing themselves with no external interference. On the other hand, keeping the Diet as a forum for exchange among the representatives of the four corporate nations stressed the "aristocratic" character of high

39 For an analysis of the central tenet of Hungarian liberalism, the "extension of rights", see Dénes (2006), pp. 172–182.

40 Going back to the famous grievances of the Romanian "nation" (the so-called *Supplex Libellus Walachorum*) submitted by the two Romanian bishops to Emperor Leopold II in 1791 – the first instance of Transylvanian Romanians voicing political demands.

41 "Britannia Mare" [Great Britain] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 2, p. 7.

politics, the only change being that the new representatives were to be "aristocrats of merit" sanctioned by the Romanian, Hungarian, Saxon and Szekler nations respectively.

Therefore, the Romanian definition of political nationhood brings in democracy only within the strictly delimited corporate nations and without establishing the actual modes of its functioning. In this sense the Romanian modeling of the corporate nation was similar to the Hungarians' construction of the county as the institution of local democracy. Both these institutions were meant to control democracy, to keep popular government within limits, but while the county was a local institution that could be multiethnic at least in theory, membership in the corporate nations was by definition conditioned by ethnic belonging. Another major point of divergence was that while the institutionalization of politics in the counties was based on the recognition and representation of local interests, the national corporatist setup defined interests along exclusively ethnic lines, leaving the rest of the possible matters at the discretion of its chosen representatives in high politics. This view, however, was never spelled out in its fullness, there were only hints that something similar was envisioned.

The Romanian vision of politics was unthinkable to the Hungarian liberals, as it presented no solutions to their dilemmas, it particularly hindered the social emancipation of serfs and, thus, the construction of a modern body politic made of well-to-do and educated citizens, as well as its basis: a modern functional economy. The Romanian claim was in fact closer to what the Hungarian conservatives wanted, or at least would have tolerated, because it could be met in a way that precluded social reforms, any real expanding of the limits of the body politic (which would still only include aristocrats of some sort), that is, of the political nation (in liberal parlance), which was the repository of sovereign political power.

The Romanian vision of the "patriarchal" institutionalization of politics thus ran contrary to the principle of popular sovereignty. A lack of faith in the capacities of the Romanian people as well as the assessment of their own backwardness as compared to the other nations<sup>42</sup> surely contributed to its foundation. It is important to note, however, that while this stance might bring them conceptually closer to the conservatives in the Hungarian setup than to the liberals, the Romanian liberals still proved to be liberals: they did not discard the principle and the ideal of political modernization, but instead set out to find solutions that would help the Romanian masses along their road of social, educational and ultimately national emancipation. The immediate solution would have been the corporatists-representative mediated democracy (in case they were given political rights before the needed

42 For a detailed discussion on these components of the negative self-image of the Romanians in Transylvania see Mitu (1997), pp. 103–127.

emancipation could have happened), but in the long run a more substantial and individualist version could have been acceptable (though this is more of an inference than a situation actually spelled out). Until happier times would come, however, Bariț urged his compatriots to advance on the road of political education and set the task of educating the masses as the paramount objective for the Romanian intelligentsia.

### ***CULTURAL NATION VS. POLITICAL NATION***

The union of Transylvania and Hungary into a single state within the Austrian Empire was one of the main tenets of Hungarian liberal programs starting from the 1830s. The arguments for the union commonly presented were about the creation of a Hungarian political nation for a Hungarian nation-state. In this project Transylvania was defined as essentially and historically part of Hungary (a land of Saint Stephen's crown), in addition it was Hungarian-dominated, so it had to be included in their potential Hungarian nation-state. Thus, while their offer of an all-inclusive Hungarian political nation was extended to the different ethnic groups of Transylvania, their project of cultural nation-building included the Hungarians in Transylvania. It was the concatenation of these two projects that troubled the Romanians and the Saxons in Transylvania: they recognized that the prospective Hungarian cultural nation was territorially congruous with the Hungarian political nation.

A wider context for understanding the dispute among Hungarians on the one hand, and Romanians and Saxons on the other,<sup>43</sup> would be the respective discourses on the international standing and relations of the Austrian Empire, greatly influenced by reason of state arguments. Both the Hungarians and the Romanians agreed that there was a need for a strong Austria in the center of Europe, counter-balancing the power of Russia (and thus keeping oriental despotism at bay), but they had widely disparate views on how to achieve this strength. The Hungarians argued that only a strong Hungary comprising Transylvania in a constitutional Austria could do this, while the Romanians and the Saxons were of the view that Transylvania had to stay separate from Hungary, and guarantee ethnic peace by granting equal standing to its nationalities, this being the only way to ensure Empire-wide peace and tranquility.

Another dilemma of international relations, more significant for Transylvania in general and especially for the Romanians, was the evaluation of the fate of the Ottoman Empire (including the Danubian principalities). When speaking about the Danubian principalities, Bariț made it clear that his pref-

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43 This is the setup for Transylvania, in Hungary a similar dispute went on especially between Hungarians and Slavic nations.

erence (actually, his vision for the future) was for the final independence and union of these two,<sup>44</sup> that is, the creation of a constitutional Romanian nation-state. In arguing for it he used the notions of "national state" and "national constitution". Moreover, an argument that appeared in the discussion over the impossibility and inexpediency of Magyarizing declared that the two Danubian principalities acted as strong magnets for the Romanians in Transylvania, and thus guaranteed their national existence and development (in cultural terms).<sup>45</sup> These two arguments, i.e., the preference for an independent Romanian nation-state, and the connection made between the cultural accomplishments of the Romanians in Transylvania and those in the principalities, however, were never paired in an argument for a great Romanian state encompassing all Romanians, as this would have run contrary to the Transylvanian Romanian liberals' initial stance of guarding the strength and great power standing of the multinational Austrian Empire.<sup>46</sup> The unquestioned imperial patriotism of the Romanian theorists precluded even the theoretical possibility of envisioning an all-inclusive Romanian nation-state outside the borders of Austria.

In the context of Transylvanian public discourse, the Hungarian liberal ideal of union with Hungary was most vehemently contested by the Saxons and the Romanians. They did not acknowledge any historic right or precedent to this unification as invoked by the Hungarians, and they did not see the usefulness of such a move. An indication of a possible Romanian position (also significant in view of the connection to the Romanians over the Carpathians) before the debate on the language and the union gathered momentum can be deduced from a typology of states that Bariț presented in an essay on political geography. In this he plainly described Germany as a country ("țară") divided into 38 independent states ("Staturi"), having themselves disparate forms of government, kept together only by the bond of confederation, and Italy as "a country divided into several states".<sup>47</sup> There is no indication whatsoever that the connection the German *Bund* provided would not be sufficient, or that the several German states should unite into one state. Moreover, in his description of Austria there is no indication whatsoever, that such a conglomerate

44 For a powerful presentation of this argument see the article translated from the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*: "împărtașiri din Moldova" [Relations from Moldavia] *Gazeta* 1841, 34, p. 136; 35, p. 139.

45 See his "Românii și maghiarismul" [The Romanians and Magyarism] *Foaie* 1842, 9, pp. 65–69; 10, pp. 73–77; 11, pp. 81–86.

46 The same point is made by Mitu (2006), p. 94. He emphasizes that prior to 1848 the Transylvanian Romanians adhered to the pre-nationalist version of patriotism: the multiethnic, multicultural Transylvanian *patria* was designated as the single legitimate object of their political loyalty, while their nationalism was purely cultural. This situation changed dramatically after 1848–49 according to Mitu.

47 "Geografie politică (Urmare)" [Political geography. Continuation] *Gazeta*, 1838, 1, 8, pp. 31–32. In 1841 Bariț, reiterated his argument for Germany, but more openly: against unnamed French theorists questioning the statehood of Germany, he declared that Germany was as much a state as Switzerland or the US, because statehood could be equated to political existence, which in turn could be equated to nationhood. See "Britânia mare" [Great Britain] *Gazeta* 1841, 33, p. 132.

(which had parts from the German confederation and also a "state" that was part of Italy, the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom) would be an unnatural or unstable state-formation, an argument that was, by contrast, often invoked in this period against the Ottoman Empire.

It can be inferred from this description that Bariț would not have had any problems with the fact that the Romanian nation was divided into two or three different states (in his typology, the exact analogy to this would be Italy). Though it is also true that this could have meant that these states were at some point in the past, or would be at a point in the future (or both), capable of making themselves up into a "country", a troubling inference for the Hungarians.<sup>48</sup> Sometimes the Romanians described Transylvania as having the same status within the Monarchy as Galicia or Bukowina, but at other times they accentuated the historical development of Transylvania as a separate constitutional state – separate from Hungary, but part of Austria, directly subordinated to the Austrian central government. Both possibilities were formulated against the Hungarian claim that Transylvania was neither an Austrian province, nor a self-sufficient state in itself, but could only be a state together with Hungary, and thus be a part of the Austrian Empire.

It is indicative of Bariț's wavering on this issue that immediately following the outbreak of the 1848 revolution in Hungary Bariț was satisfied with the 12th point of the Hungarian revolutionary program declaring the union of Transylvania and Hungary, but shortly afterwards he subscribed to the opposing claim of Simion Bărnuțiu that no union was acceptable and Transylvania should remain a separate province within the Monarchy. To explain this hesitation, one should probably look into the understanding of "union" that was shifting as well: a union *qua* federation such as that in Switzerland was acceptable (though it was not spelled out if this only applied in relation to Hungary or to the whole Austria), while a union as "fusion" of Transylvania and Hungary into a single "state" was unacceptable to the Romanians.

The issue of union was directly related to the problem of reforming the constitution, as any change in the provincial setup would also pose questions relating to the form of government. Bariț's preference would have probably been for a federative setup of the whole Monarchy, as his positive description of Germany and Switzerland suggests. This possibility, however, was never discussed openly, probably because of the unfavorable political atmosphere. Another indication of what would the proper form of state be for the Romanians was given by the eulogistic way Bariț talked about Daniel O'Connell ("this hero of humanity and liberty, guarding angel of his *patria*, Ireland"<sup>49</sup>)

48 This is actually the direction into which this sort of argument was developed in the late 19th- turn of the 20th- century Romanian political discourse, but it is in no way present with writers like Bariț, except as a logical possibility.

49 "Britânia mare" [Great Britain] *Gazeta* 1838,1, 6, p. 22.

and the Irish in general, especially in their relations to Great Britain. The Irish theme was given a prominent place among the foreign topics of the *Gazeta* throughout the decade prior to 1848; the developments in Irish politics were discussed more often than those of any other European people fighting for national rights, that is, the Italians or the Poles.<sup>50</sup> The Irish could be used as the best analogy for the situation of the Romanians in Transylvania most importantly for tactical reasons: because their situation had no connection to Austria, while in the case of the Italians or the Poles Austria was obviously playing the role of the oppressor, thus speaking on a positive tone about the former would essentially mean being disloyal to the Empire. Nevertheless, the Irish analogy had another motivation as well: Bariț was always keen on emphasizing the legal, anti-revolutionary character of the Irish movement headed by O'Connell, this being the liberal ideal for the Romanian national emancipation movement as well. The projected status of Ireland within Great Britain, extensive political autonomy (the possibility of Repeal of Union seemed unattainable and impractical to Bariț), including the establishment of an Irish parliament in Ireland, offered a solution that would also be acceptable to the Romanians in their relation to Austria. It would have satisfied the triple demands of reason of state, popular sovereignty and nationalism at the same time, ensuring corporative liberty for the Romanian nation, corporative representation for the masses by people of genuine merit, and still keep the great power standing of Austria.

### CONCLUSION

The choice of the Irish model by the Romanian liberals as a possible self-projection indicates their adoption of a separatist nationalism, the kind that is most commonly associated with subject peoples fighting a powerful oppressor.<sup>51</sup> Separatism in the Romanian case was not that much an issue of territorial separation (though the insistence on the statehood of Transylvania could be interpreted as a version of this); instead it was reflected in the claim that people should be organized into separate and delimited corporate nations. The opposite to the Irish model would have been the Scottish,<sup>52</sup> a version of unionist nationalism, which seems to have never echoed with the 19th-century Romanian and Hungarian liberals. Both of these national traditions of liberalism seem closer to the Irish model, but even if both discourses were

50 See the statistics presented in Sorin Mitu's study on the use of the Irish model by the Transylvanian Romanians in Mitu (2006), pp. 387–413.

51 See a possible assessment: "The ideology of the liberal nationalist program, and the lack of the national conservative role implied similar positions, outlooks and values among the German, Italian, Greek, Norwegian, Finnish, Irish, Polish, Hungarian, Czech, Croatian, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian liberals and conservatives." in Dénes (2006), p. 7.

52 For an analysis of the Scottish version, see Finlay (2006), pp. 37–54.

constructed from the standpoint of subjected people, the oppressor was different. For the Hungarians, the oppressor was the absolutist Austrian Empire, while for the Romanians it was the nationalizing Hungarians, while the Empire played the role of a possible ally. The disparate projections of these friends and foes caused Romanian national liberalism to appear at times closer to Hungarian conservatism, another ally of the absolutist Empire, than to Hungarian liberalism.

It is important to note, however, that Bariț did not turn towards the conservatives; instead he preferred to blend the economic and some of the political aspirations of the liberals with Transylvanian and imperial patriotism (both being supra-national), and Romanian cultural nationalism. This is the reason why even absolutism could be acceptable to Bariț, if the absolutist ruler had been a truly enlightened one, who would modernize politics and society, emancipating a people which was only tolerated<sup>53</sup> into one that was the equal of other peoples. Nonetheless, he repeatedly declared that constitutional governments were better than absolutist ones, thus subscribing in theory to the Hungarian liberals' vision of a modern Austrian Empire governed constitutionally. It was also clear to Bariț that the Hungarian nation-building project essentially aimed at the creation of a modern political nation capable of bringing about the reality of popular sovereignty, still he considered it excessively assimilationist, and therefore proposed instead an institutional framework that would safeguard the cultural and linguistic identity of all the nationalities, while still leaving some scope to popular politics.

What lay at the core of the difference between Romanian and Hungarian national-political projects was the issue of popular representation, and, more specifically, the scope of corporative representation. While Hungarians did not see any use for a corporatist framework, Bariț and the Romanians in general endorsed it as an alternative to both strict individual representation and to absolutism. Bariț repeatedly declared that the Romanian people were not ready to act as responsible political actors, due to their lack of means, especially education. Corporative representation could therefore be a corrective solution, and it could also be an educative institution. The Hungarian liberals, as themselves convinced of the dangers of democracy with uneducated masses, also saw the need for educating and keeping them at bay; the political institution meant to do this being the county. What the Hungarian liberals wanted to solve on the level of the county (more democratic politics, education of the would-be political actors), the Romanians sought in the framework of a strictly national corporation. While employing the pre-modern concept of the nation, they intentionally tinged it with implications coming from the modern understanding of the nation as a community of language. In this

53 Bariț, spoke at a certain point about the "handcuffs of toleration" in reference to Jews, but this assessment could also be applied to others: "Ungaria", [Hungary] *Gazeta* 1840, 15, p. 58.

sense, their nationalism was both more "ancient" and more exclusivist. That is why it met with so little understanding from the Hungarian liberals, who argued that their own conception of a non-ethnic Hungarian political nation was more democratic, less authoritarian and better suited to bring about the modernization of society at large and economy in particular. However, it is important to recognize that both national liberal projects envisaged mediating institutions between the individual and the state, the county and the national corporation respectively. These aimed at essentially the same purpose: bringing more people into the nation and into modern politics, but in a way that would not undermine the values and the effectiveness of popular government. What both feared was the uncontrollable turmoil of the masses.

It is not surprising that both Hungarian and Romanian liberalism changed dramatically with the onset of the 1848 revolution and afterwards. Coping with a popular revolution brought about dilemmas unknown before, while the neo-absolutism following 1849 drastically limited the public sphere where any kind of liberalism could exert its influence. Nevertheless, what proved most significant in the mutual relationship of the two national traditions was the antagonism and lack of understanding manifested in the revolutionary years, when the Hungarians and Romanians found themselves fighting on the opposite sides of the barricade, the Romanians allying with the Empire against the Hungarians who fought for independence from the Empire. Perceptible discursive legitimation for either position was present in the period preceding the revolution, and the gap only widened afterwards with both national idioms adopting a more exclusivist stance. After the revolution it became increasingly difficult to construct a supra-national or multi-national *patria* commanding the loyalty of various nations. Thus, neither Transylvanian nor imperial patriotism proved attractive to the increasingly nation-centered political projects; instead co-nationals were constructed as the only legitimate partners in remodeling politics: Hungarians were reluctant to accept anything but a Hungarian nation-state, while Romanians started to look for political alliance with the Romanian nation-state being created across the Carpathians.

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