

THE ITINERARY OF A PRINCELY EXILE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: *This study present some key data from the life and work of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1820-1873) - the first ruler and founder of the modern Romania state.*

We can find here biographical guidelines, his physical qualities as well as his merits as a ruler, which attracted a well-deserved, extraordinary and everlasting sympathy of his people but also the implacable animosity of his adversaries.

Affected by the profound and vast reforms of the ruler, and also by his exceptional personality of humane vibration, his political enemies gathered around former revolutionary freemasons C.A. Rosetti and Ion C. Bratianu and organised the conspiracy of February 11th, 1866 which forced the ruler to abdicate and take exile for 7 years, until his death.

The itinerary through the country and abroad ends with underlining the actions of this great ruler in favour of the ordinary people and the progress of the country, to the dimensions that none of his descendents as heads of state could ever reach.

Keywords: *middle of the nineteenth century; the first ruler of the modern Romania; extraordinary sympathy; profound reforms; conspiracy; abdication; exile.*

The period prior to exile

Highlights references in the life and activity of Alexandru Ioan Cuza. The ruler belonged to an old family - Cuza - mentioned by the Moldavian high officials as early as 1638. The documents mention the names of this family as sword bearers: a Dumitresco in 1717 or Ionita, in 1778. The father of the future ruler, John had been both subprefect and court marshal and his mother, Sultana, came from a Romanized Greek-Italian family in Constantinople.

Alexandru Ioan Cuza was born on 20 March 1820 in Barlad. From the age of 7 to 11 he is studying at a French boarding school in Iasi. By chance he had as colleagues Vasile Alecsandri, Mihail Kogalniceanu, Matei Millo and others.

Between 11 and 15 he is in Paris where in 1835 he obtains the baccalaureate in Letters, at the Sorbonne University with a diploma signed by the French minister of education (François Guizot) himself, possibly impressed by the age and the result of the graduate. Curiosity even for the Society of Economists in Paris, he is accepted as a member on December 8, 1835. Here, in 1838, he filled his time mainly with law studies and the sciences of war. Returning to the country, we find him on 2 March 1842 as President of the Covur Court. In 1844 he marries Elena, daughter of the court marshal Iordache Rosetti, but has children with Maria Catargiu, who became Obrenovič and widowed after the respective Serbian prince. He participates in the revolutionary events of 27 March 1848 in Iasi and at the national

assembly on May 3, 1848, on the Freedom Plain of Blaj. Thanks to his involvement in such revolutionary activities he has to leave Moldova and, after his wanderings through Vienna, Chernivtsi and Constantinople, he returns to the country and manages to occupy some public positions, but resigns from the last one - that of a chief of the district - as a protest against the abuses of the caimacan Nicolae Vogoride, which, however, brings him great popularity. As far as provisions of the Paris Convention on the Principalities of Romania (1858), he stands by the "national party" that supported the unity of the principalities. He will be elected on January 5, 1859, the ruler of Moldavia and on January 24, 1859, ruler of Wallachia as well. He will reign for seven years carrying out major reforms that have structurally modernized the new state: the United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia known in 1862 as Romania, recognized as such by the Sultan Abdül Azîz (1861-1876).

The combination with Maria Obrenovič and subsequent radical reforms brought many opponents who created many intrigues and occult alliances with finality in coagulating a "monstrous coalition" that managed to chase him out of the throne and country [1].

Anti-Cuza coup d'etat

It was done by a time-span plot by C.A. Rosetti, a freemason as well as Ion C. Bratianu who wanted to be prime minister with six other initiates, linked by a secret oath, the "Amaradia" password and the signal of the capture of Cuza: a gun shot by major Lecca. Several civilians and some officers, whom Cuza personally helped, in whom he had full confidence, were gradually drawn into action, so they betrayed him on the night of February 11, 1866. Some examples: Colonel Nicolae Haralambie - Commander of the Bucharest Artillery Garrison, Colonel Al. Candiano-Popescu, Major Dimitrie Lecca, head of the palace

guard, Captains Anton Costescu, Constantin Pillat and Gr.Lipoianu, the last 3 entering the ruler's bedroom at 4 o'clock and under gun threat summons to sign the abdication written by the conspirators in the words: We, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, according to the desire of the whole nation and the commitment I made to my congregation on the throne, I file today on February 11/23, 1866, the Government's helm in the hands of a Deputies of the Hospodar and a Ministry elected by the people. "

Cuza signed this act in support of Captain Pillat's bent back. Regarding the profile of one of the officers who betrayed him, we continue to read from the documented article Cuza's Traitors written by Col. (r) eng C.A. Avalanche, published in the journal "Dacoromania" no. 78/2016, pp. 29-30: "In 1866, at only 31 years of age Colonel Nicolae Haralambie was commander of the artillery regiment of the Bucharest garrison. He had been advanced to rank and appointed by the ruler Al. I. Cuza, who has great sympathy for him, as a man from a simple family of people considered to be of character and who had been promoted in his career through personal merit and professional ability.

A week before the fateful night of February 11, Cuza seeing Haralambie sad, asked him what the reason was; he answered that the lack of money was the reason, that he could not even take out his new clothes from the tailor. The ruler tapping his shoulder and laughing gave him the money ... As the involvement of the artillery commander in the overthrow of Cuza was absolutely necessary, it was learned that N. Haralambie had a strong passion for a lady ... belonging to a family of liberal political orientation ("Mrs. C" - we do not insist on completing the word). She had been assigned to determine him to switch to the "monstrous coalitions", calling on the charms and abusing the Colonel's loving passion for her. So, what the politicians could not do, the mysterious C. made it possible, and so the

artillery commander entered the conspiracy ... Thus it is that on that dreadful night Colonel Haralambie's cannons, who was blinded by passions for the woman he loved, with the wheels wrapped in straw, passed silently on the Mogoșoa Bridge (Calea Victoriei) and circled the Prince's Palace, prepared to fire, if necessary ... Without repaying him in any way, after luring him into conspiracy, Mrs C left him, for ever."

On the other hand, he was politically rewarded with the appointment by Carol as war minister (August 6, 1866-8, 1867), and following the independence war (1877-1878), distinguished himself in the attack of Smardan, he was promoted as a brigade general . After that, he retired definitively in his private life, apparently living, for the past 30 years, until the death of April 1908, under the burden of remorse and guilt towards Cuza, which he took with him to the grave in Bellu Cemetery.

References to the exile itinerary

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that Cuza's exile brief information, memos on some memorial plaques or the press of the time, have the particularity of being made either in old style or in new style, sometimes including incorrect data. It is known, however, that under Decree-Law no. 1053/5 March 1919 of the Council Ministers of Romania, April 1st old style becomes April 14th 1919 new style.

Thus, for example, it is impossible for the ruler who went into exile in Bucharest, on an old style on February 13, to have arrived in Deva on February 14, 1866 (without having made any previous stops) - as mentioned in romantic memorialist notes by eyewitness Constanța Dunca-Schiau, in whose emotional train the authorities later mounted a plaque on the street, wrongly February 14th instead of 22 February 1866, the date of the ruler's stop in the locality. Just as in the next night, February 23/ March 7, new style and not March 5th, 1866 (as it is written on

the respective plaque in the locality), he is hosted at Coșava, Timiș county. And from here on, the chronology of exile suffers distortions if we look at it comparatively in old style / new style.

We understand to follow, however, the agenda of the journey by the ruler, based on the abdication dated February 11, 1866, established historically:

- February 13, 1866, in the evening he departs from Bucharest with a diligence carriage towards Ploiesti, Predeal (border and customs) and arrives in Brasov, where he stays for 6 days (14-20 February 1866), staying at "Golden Deer" inn from where he leaves for Făgăraș, where at the Postal House serves lunch at 13:30; then arrives at Avrig, it seems at the house of Gheorghe Lazar (1779-1823) where he is present on the night of 20-21 February and in Sibiu staying at "Hungarian Crown" hotel on the night of 21-22 February. Then on the evening of February 22, passing through Sebeș to Deva, he was housed at the Grand Inn, that is, at Hotel Bauer, in front of which on departure * "the following morning Romanian intellectuals in the locality made him a moving demonstration of sympathy".

- On February 23-24, he spent the night at the Post Office House in Timis County, Coșava, where after the evening meal, he spent his time in an atmosphere of warm sympathy with many locals and in the company of the postmaster Alexandru Levai. During February 24, present in Lugoj, he was welcomed by a delegation of Romanians, among them - Nicolae Corneanu - embraced him strongly and shouted "Long live Voda Cuza", followed by Vicentie Babes (the father of the microbiologist scientist Victor Babes) and Andrei Mocioni.

- On the nights of February 24-25 and February 25-26, the oldest and most elegant hotel of Timisoara is hosted at „Der Trompeter Hotel” („The Trumpet”). At the initiative of the inhabitants of the Fabric neighborhood, people from all district of Timisoara gathered to see the ruler. Among

them was Ioan Slavici, a pupil at the local piarist high school. We report from the newspaper "Temesvarer Zeitung" (in "Timisoara de altădată" by Aurel Cosma, Ed. Facla, 1977, Timișoara): "Timișoara, March 7th. Today, at about three-thirty, Prince Cuza arrived here, accompanied by Princess Elena and the two adopted children Alexandru and Dimitrie, Deputy Colonel Pissotzki, then three chambermaids and two valets in a special post composed of three carriages, and stopped at the Der Trompeter Hotel, ... Alexandru Ioan Cuza was a handsom tall man with a distinguished face that didn't show the hardships of the previous days. Prince Cuza ... the next day will continue his train journey to Vienna, to the destination" (a.n. - fixed by those who deposed him). Indeed on February 27th / March 8th, 1866, he leaves to Arad by carriage and from here by train, which will take him via Szeged and Budapest to Vienna where he will stay at the Erzherzog Carol hotel until March 12th. This was the head of the conspiracy path of the exile's journey enforced by the plotters [2].

An exiled wandering through Europe

It is as though they were under the sign of the sensible words written on the memorial plaque fixed by Professor Ioan Enășescu on March 5, 1999 in front of the Post Office House in Coșava: Banished from his beloved country, wandering through the wide world. By the end of March 1866, he and his family visited all that Milan had to show. In April, under the name of Alexander Adam, he is in Paris where he lives on Avenue de L'Imperatrice, leads a discontinuous, discreet, modest existence, which disconcerted the spy paid by the government in the country to oversee him permanently, including on the occasion of the funeral. For 40 days - by the end of May, Cuza is undergoing medical treatment at Ems in Germany (where he had been before

for the same purpose in the summer of 1855).

In August, he returned to Paris for some time, after which he headed his family to Ostende with thermal baths (from the Belgian region of Flanders) to strengthen the poor health of the children by bathing.

He then deals with the lease of the Ruginoasa estate with 5000 ducats per year. He comes and settles near Vienna where, at Ober-Döbling, he buys a villa where he will live between 1867-1870. Here he will meet the French ambassador in Vienna, who will probe him if he will be willing to resume his throne with the support of France, receiving Cuza's answer in the words: "I do not want to recommence the former mission", but the New Year's joy was the visit from January 1, 1870 of a group of students led by Mihai Eminescu, who gave him their homage. Also in the same month he received news that in the fourth Mehedinti Board, Cuza was elected deputy by the massive vote of the peasantry. Carol's government orders the elections to be repeated; on April 8, 1870, they have the same result. Following the elections for Senate, in the Second Board in Turnu Severin, the former ruler became senator. However, the full success in the elections (to which Cuza did not follow) came 4 years away from the collective petition of 103 Romanian Army officers, led by generals Ioan Emanuel Florescu and Savel Manu, who demanded, shortly after the cout d'etat from February 11, 1866, the return of Cuza to the country. Cuza, acting on private interest on May 9, 1870, sells his home in Ober-Döbling, and with his money he buys a villa near Porta Romana in Florence, where he lives between May 1870 and December 1872.

With the restored financial resources, he finally establishes Heidelberg (December 1872-May 1873) on the banks of the Neckar River in Germany. Here he wanted to find treatment for his asthma with a specialist and the children to benefit from training at the famous local university [3].

The end of life

It starts when, in the desire to enjoy nature, he takes his family on a trip and through the Mont Cenis road tunnel (12.8 km long at 1298 m altitude, built between 1803-1810) catches cold and the asthma worsens but he manages to get to Heidelberg's "Europa" hotel. With all his medical assistance and his wife's devotional vigil, the illness evolves, accumulates pulmonary, cardiac and hepatic sufferings, and an internal hemorrhage brings him to an end on 3 May 1873 at 1:30. At his wake there were some who did not abstain from saying that the premature end of the disappearance was due to its exceptional involvement in a prolonged state-of-the-art modernization work program with a sensitive health plus the excess of tobacco, black coffee and nights lost to card game. All of this did not diminish in any way the extraordinary and unquenchable sympathy of the people (which constantly made Carol fear and continually refused Cuza's return to the country) and did not affect the impetus he devoted to the specifics of his work.

The historical merits of Cuza, as a ruler

We try to synthesize them as being directly related to state modernization and laws [5]:

- Decree-Law on the secularization of monasteries' fortunes (No. 1251/15 September 1863);

- The Law on the Establishment of the Court of Accounts (24 January 1864), the Electoral Law (2 July 1864);
- The Law on Agrarian Reform (August 14, 1864), which in the context represented "the most beautiful day in the life of the lower people" when the agrarian reform was carried out by which the "peasants were removed from the beasts" by the appropriation of 1,766,258 ha 467,840 peasant families;
- Law on the adoption of the metric system of measures and weights (15 September 1864);
- Law on Establishment of the House of Deposits and Consignments - CEC (November 24, 1864);
- The Law of Public Instruction (November 25, 1864), the Law of Armed Forces in Romania, in which the gendarmerie (November 27, 1864) was reorganized;
- The Organic Decree on the Law of the Monk (November 30, 1864).

In addition to these legal bases, a new Constitution was developed - the Development Statute (1864), the Criminal Code (1865), the State Council, the county councils and the communal administration.

At the scientific-cultural level we mention only the historical foundations of the University of Iasi (October 26, 1860) and the University of Bucharest (July 4, 1864).

In our soul and conscience as authors of this incomplete homage, the name of Alexandru Ioan Cuza is organically associated with the epochal event called the Union of the Principalities and the birth of Romania as a modern national state [6].

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