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THE ROMANIAN IMPACT UPON THE OTTOMAN TANZIMAT

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Turcologists have in recent years correctly emphasized a subject deliberately neglected by the Romantic nationalist historians of south eastern Europe; namely the significance of the Ottoman impact on all facets of Balkan society and institutions. In Romania, this challenge has not really been taken up by contemporary scholars. One is in fact struck by the absence of «Ottomanists», particularly for the 19th century-this in spite of the fact that the archives of İstanbul are now accessible. The only Turkish specialists of stature, Professors Decei, Guboglu and Mehmet, have centered their studies on the early modern heroic period of Dracula and Steven the Great, when Romanian princes were resisting the Turks at the point of the sword, as a specialist on Vlad the Impaler. I should say, at the point of the stake:¹ Whereas a great deal has been written on the impact of France, Russia, even distant Great Britain on the Romanian lands during the 19th century, it seems scarcely believable that links with the Ottoman Empire, technically the suzerain power-have not been the object of serious analysis. The only reputable scholar in that field is a namesake of mine G. G. Florescu, but he likely dismisses the topic as in essence the study of diplomatic relations between two separate states².

1 e.g. Aurel Decei, «Tratatul de pace-Culhame-incheiat între Sultanul Mehmed II și Stefan cel Mare, la 1479» *Revista Istorică Română* I, 4, 1945 pp. 465-494; Mihail Guboglu and Mustafa Mehmet, *Cronici Turcești privind Țările Române*, Bucharest, 1966. The first volume refers to the Turkish presence in the Romanian lands from the 15th to the 17th century.

2 G.G. Florescu «Constantinopol», *Representanțele diplomatice ale României*, Vol I, 1859-1917, Bucharest 1957. Also see G.G. Florescu «L'aspect juridique des khatt-i-cherifs. Contribution à l'étude des relations de l'Empire Ottoman avec les Principautés Roumaines», *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, Bucharest, 1958, pp. 127 - 128; «Some Aspects of the Struggle for the

Much of the difficulty stems from the fact that Romanian historians, in contrast to their Turkish colleagues, start from the premise that the two Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia have (with the possible exception of the 18th century period of Greek rule), always enjoyed *de facto* autonomy, exemplified by the survival of native princes, a native administration, an indigenous Boyar class and an autocephalous church. The provinces had the right to negotiate commercial treaties and to appoint diplomatic representatives at Constantinople³. In accordance with other provision of these nebulous capitulations, allegedly signed in Wallachia's case at the beginning of the 15th century, no Turks had the right of settling on Romanian soil. Even though tribute was exacted and a formal investiture took place at Constantinople, the advent of strong princes reduced the provinces' loyalty to a minimum. My Turkish colleagues have a slightly different interpretation of these facts: according to them, the Sultan chose not to reduce Moldo-Wallachia to the status of Pashaliks, preferring to use these provinces as buffer states between rivaling Empires.

There can be no question that this deliberate *mésentente* and confusion between the term *sovereign* adopted by the Turks, and the casual reference to the Sultan's *suzerainty* insinuated upon by the Romanians, has been no more conducive to the progress of historical research, than the related polemic on whether we are discussing a problem of *internal* Ottoman history or one involving *diplomatic* relations between two separate states.

I am not an expert on Turkish history, but, I believe that I will shock no one by describing the pre-Tanzimat and Tanzimat period, as an earnest attempt of certain Ottoman westernizers to save the Empire from total disintegration by modernizing the state and playing with the idea of constitutional reform. Was this endeavor, in any way relevant to the history of the Romanians in the broadest sense?, or alternatively was the experience of the Romanian provinces in some manner related to the ideological development of the Tanzimatists and to the implementation of their philosophy?

Formation of the Modern South Eastern European States. Romanian-Turkish relations», *Revue des Etudes du Sud-Est Européen*, 2, nr 1-2 Jan-June, 1964 pp. 187-214; «Nicolae Balcescu et la Porte Ottomane. Contribution a L'etude des relations entre les Pays Roumains et l'Empire Ottoman» *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, 4, 1962, pp. 45-67.

3 The actual term for the representatives of the Romanian Principalities at Constantinople is *Capuchehaia* stemming from the word *Capu* meaning Porte (Ottoman Porte) and the Persian word *Chehaia* in term derived from *ched*, meaning house and *huda* meaning master. Via semantic changes the *capuchehaia* came to signify envoy or chargé of the Principalities (one for each province) within the framework of the suzerain-vassal relationship prescribed by the Capitulations. *Reprezentanstele Diplomatice* p. 56, footnote 9.

Some years ago, I gave a paper at St. Antony College, Oxford on Russo-Romanian relations at the time of Peter the Great and I somewhat nonplussed my colleagues in Russian history by stating that although the Russian soldiers may have introduced card games and western dancing in the Moldavian capital of Jassy, a good many of Peter's neglected erstwhile westernizers were in fact Romanians. This included Russia's first Renaissance style Encyclopedist, Prince Dimitrie Cantemir Antioch Cantemir Russia's first modern poet, Maria Cantemir Russia's first feminist and the Spathar Nicolae Milescu, first genuine geographer, mapmaker, Siberian explorer and discoverer of the Chinese threat to Siberia⁴. This led me to the obvious conclusion not only that the Romanian intelligentsia shared a great deal of the outlook of Western Enlightenment in the pre-Petrine period, but that they were also instrumental in exporting westernization to Russia. Substituting the word Turkey for Russia and the 19th century for the 17th, this in essence, is the theme I would like to develop in this essay.

May I begin by making what assuredly will be considered a very obvious point: during the much maligned 18th century period of Greek rule, the Fanariot establishment in both Romanian provinces opened half a window on the West, importing at random the half digested ideas of the Enlightenment. The Soutsos and the Mavrocordatos thought it was fashionable to tutor their sons in the principles of Montesquieu's theory of separation of powers and hammered enough French into them to be labelled «bonjourists». In a more genuine way a few of the Fanariots believed in the liberation of the serf and in judicial reform⁵. A good many more, when convicted of embezzlement simply fled to Paris before they could be impeached, waiting with their cosmopolitan relatives for better days to come. Franco-mania affected not only the Greeks, but also the Romanian boyar class, related with the Fanariots by marriage. Proportionately more people spoke and thought French among the intelligentsia of Bucharest in 1756, than among the Tanzimatists of Constantinople a century later and although no statistics are extant there

⁴ The best older work on Dimitrie Cantemir is I. Minea *Despre Dimitrie Cantemir*, Iasi, 1962 For a more recent work see P. P. Panaitescu, *Dimitrie Cantemir. Viata si Opera*, Bucharest, 1958 For the Spathar Nicolae Milescu see «Despre legaturile lui Nicolae Milescu Spatharul cu Rusia» *Studii*, 3, nr 4, Oct-Dec. 1950, pp 113-120. There is a fascinating though somewhat romanticized biography on Maria Cantemir by Lucia Bors (*Maria Cantemir*, Bucharest, 1940).

⁵ Some historians refer to the «democratic tendencies» of Fanariots like Prince N. Mavrogheni, or see Prince Alexander Ypsilanti as another St. Louis of France because he codified the laws. Alexander Mavrocordat has been called by R. W. Seton-Watson a pioneer peasant liberties R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians*, Cambridge, 1934, p. 143 Also See Radu R. Florescu «The Fanariot Regime in the Danubian Principalities», *Balkan Studies* 1969.

were far more Romanian students enrolled at the Sorbonne and the College de France, than Turks during the 19th century⁶.

The penetration of French ideas in Romania, whether in the more moderate guise of the Enlightenment or the French revolutionary ideals of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité*, and the transformation of such ideals into diverse political programs aiming at national independence, constitutional government and social reform, is a vast topic which cannot be covered here. It will be sufficient for my purposes to arrest attention on a few highlights of that complicated story, relevant to my theme.

Sultan Mahmud II, certainly a reformer if not a Tanzimatist, was faced with the problem of reform in the Romanian lands by the revolutionary crisis of 1821-22. By their involvement in the Hetairist insurrection, which erupted in Moldavia, the Greek princes had clearly forfeited a trust that had been vested in them since 1711. With the failure of the Greek revolution in Romania and nurtured by centuries of experience in «Byzantinism», the Moldo Wallachina Boyar delegations that appeared in Constantinople in 1822, innocently pointed out that the majority of the Romanians were not «in the Greek plot» and that in fact the native counterrevolution was directed exclusively against the abuses of the Fanariots. All that the Principalities desired was the re-establishment of the *status quo ante*, based upon the traditional autonomy of the land and loyalty to the Sultan. What was extraordinary and symptomatic of things to come, was that Sultan Mahmud II, ignoring the representations of the older conservative Boyars, gave in to the demands of the radical middle estate carbonari who wished to establish constitutional government⁷. By sanctioning the constitution of 1822, Sultan Mahmud, very much in the manner of Alexander I (who granted a constitution to the Finns and to the Poles at a time when Russia had none) in fact implicitly declared himself a constitutional Emperor for the Romanian portion of his Empire—the only such instance in European Turkey, since the despotic leanings of Milos Obrenović precluded a similar interpretation of the Serbian constitution.

Such fruitful beginnings were greatly accelerated by the introduction of the *Règlement Organique* in both Romanian provinces in 1831. The extent of Turkish participation in the debates leading to the adoption of that famous document were undoubtedly minimal, since most of the preliminary discussions took place at St. Petersburg in a joint Russo-Romanian commission. As the legitimate suzerain Sul-

6 Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* Princeton 1963 p. 70, p. 173 For Romanian students in Paris during the pre-1848 period see Radu R. Florescu, *The Struggle against Russia in the Roumanian Principalities 1821-1854*, Munich 1962 p. 184.

7 For the «constituationalist» movement of 1822 see D. V. Barnoschi, *Originele democratiei Române: Căruunarii*, Jassy, 1922.

tan Mahmud was informed of the proceedings and in the last analysis had to approve of the constitution. This is not the place to extol the virtues of the Règlement, which was in effect more than just a constitution—it represented an administrative, judicial and educational ensemble which broke more *firsts* than Peter's reforms in Russia. Separation of powers, majority rule, remuneration for civil servants, promotion by merit, habeas corpus, a state educational system, a national militia, a medical organization, administrative reform—we could go on⁸. In essence, most of the articles of the future Tanzimat constitution of 1876 prevailed in the Danubian Principalities since 1831. It was a matter of little relevance that the Russian proconsular authorities subverted the liberties that they themselves had granted under various guises over a period of time, and reduced Turkish suzerainty to nominal status⁹.

A fact which should be stressed, is that the future leaders of the Romanian revolution of 1848—a movement which was taking shape in the thirties and forties, at home as well as abroad—always made a distinction between the benevolent attitude of the Turkish authorities and the heavy-handed and dictatorial policy of the representatives of the Tsar.

The outline of reforms for the future introduced by Sultan Abdul Medjid in the gardens of Gulhané in 1839, which in a sense inaugurated the era of the Tanzimat, further reinforced the view that the Turkish government was on the side of progress and good order. Reschid Pasha, the foreign secretary who had largely inspired it and thought he knew Romania well, may have nurtured the false hope that by a statement of good intentions he could consolidate Turkish power on Danube, as well as elsewhere. However although an «Ottomanist» he was no Turkish «nationalist»¹⁰. Even less could he understand the profound meaning of the transformation of Romanian cultural nationalism into a potent political force. The Romanians were no longer interested in political equality and civic rights. Not understanding nationalism, he could have but little sympathy with the firebrand radical wing of the future forty-eighters led by Ion Bratianu who were progressively unfolding their «greater Romanian program», implying total independence and the reunion of all Romanian speaking lands, including Transylvania.

In addition to the radicals, there were a much larger group of moderates who were eventually to assume the leadership of the revolution of 1848 in Bucharest, led by I Eliade Radulescu, Ion Ghica and the Golescu brothers. In their eyes, the

8 Florescu, *The Struggle against Russia*, p. 138.

9 Radu R. Florescu, «British Reactions to the Russian Regime in the Danubian Principalities» *Journal of Central European Affairs* Vol XXII, 1962.

10 Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 36.

revolution was essentially directed against the abuses committed by Russia, the so-called protecting power with its violation of the *Règlement Organique*. When the pro-Russian administration was toppled by the rebels in May, every endeavor was taken by the leaders of the newly established republic to placate the ruffled sensibilities of the Turks. Ion Ghica always a philo-Turk was sent on a conciliatory mission to Constantinople¹¹. In Bucharest, all efforts were made to associate the Sultan with the idea of progress and good government. The powerful British ambassador at Constantinople Stratford Canning, a good friend of Reschid, advised the Sultan to outbid the Tsar as a dispenser of enlightenment¹². When the Turkish commissioner Suleiman finally reached the Wallachian capital in July and recognized the revolutionary government under a new name he was widely cheered and greeted as a liberator¹³. A Romanian republic under the auspices of the Sultan with a liberal constitution and a program of social reform: Could one think of a more incongruous situation? It certainly far surpassed the marriage with the mild carbonarism of 1822 and the Montesquieu type constitutionalism of the *Règlement Organique*, previously sanctioned.

The great utopia of linking Ottomanism with the twin forces of Romanian nationalism and liberalism was not destined to endure owing to international complications in Central Europe, where the Hungarian revolution of Kossuth, threatened the viability of the Habsburg Empire. Lord Palmerston who had hitherto supported constitutionalism in the West, felt that the stability of central Europe required the survival of Habsburg power¹⁴. He thus gave the Russians *carte blanche* to march their troops into Transylvania to destroy the Hungarian uprising. In spite of the advice of Stratford Canning who, continue to dissuade the Turks from associating themselves with Russian repression, the logistics of the situation gave the Sultan little choice. The Russian troops marched through Wallachia on their way to Transylvania in the process destroying two revolutions. The Sultan was compelled to disown the Romanian revolutionaries. The ironic but tragic footnote to this confusing episode was that the only blood spilt during 1848 on the Danube was

11 C. Cazanisteanu, Dan Berindei, Marin Florescu, Vasile Nicolae *Revoluția Română din 1848*, Bucharest 1969, p. 243.

12 Stratford Canning to Palmerston, July 19th, 1848, F. O. 78)733.

13 Suleiman's mission to Bucharest, on Stratford Canning's own admission was to prove difficult: He must consult the public opinion of Europe and guard the interests of the Ottoman Empire against revolutionary contagion. He must if possible avoid the use of force and nevertheless reduce to subservience a successful insurrection. He must reconcile the Boyars to a sacrifice and the people to a disappointment». Stratford Canning to Palmerston, July 19th, 1848 F. O. 78)733 Also see Radu R Florescu «Stratford Canning, Palmerston and the Wallachian Revolution of 1848», *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. XXV, 1963.

14 R. Florescu, *The Struggle against Russia*, pp. 212-213.

that of Romanian and Turkish soldiers fighting against each other on the outskirts of Bucharest in the dying days of the revolution¹⁵.

Notwithstanding the rift that had been created, it is an extraordinary testimony to the good will which existed between moderates of both nations, even after the failure of a possible Romanian-Turkish compromise, that many forty-eighters now compelled to flee their country, men like Eliade Radulescu, Ion Ghica, even members of my family, The Florescu brothers sought refuge on Turkish soil, at Constantinople or Brussa rather than seek exile in the West. The Romanian exiles were in fact able to maintain a dialogue with the future statesmen of the Tanzimat, either by personal contact or by way of the articles they inserted in the *Le Courier de Constantinople* and the *La Presse d'Orient*. Some years ago, I made a list of the more important articles written by Romanians circulating in the Turkish Empire which dealt not only with domestic reform in the Romanian Principalities, but also with the broader issue of the modernization of the Empire, showing that these leaders were concerned with both themes¹⁶. There can be no question that these writings made an impact on the Reschids, the Fuads and the Alis, Some Romanians notably Ion Ghica, a good friend of Reschid, was in the position of implementing some of his progressive ideas when he became Bey of Samos¹⁷. Another forty-eighter, Ion Ionescu de la Brad who concentrated on modernizing Turkish agriculture won the approval of specialist by his articles in the *Gazette de Constantinople* and applied

15 For a Romanian version of the Turco-Romanian clash of arms sometimes described as «the massacre of the Romanian firemen» on Sept 20th (Oct. 2nd new style) see R. Crutzescu, *Amintirile Colonelului Lacusteanu*, Bucharest, 1935, pp. 167-169.

This incident was described by British Consul Colquhoun «as a fatal blow to the reviving interests of the Porte». Colquhoun to Straford Canning, September 28th, 1848, F. O. 195)321.

16 Interest in Romania and the Eastern Question in *La Presse d'Orient* was spurred by the outbreak of the Crimean War. In an editorial dated 4th January 1855 *La Presse D'orient* states: «Les graves circonstances au milieu desquels se débat l'avenir de l'Empire Ottoman et les interets puissants qui se rattachent à ses destines, necessitaient au jugement des hommes les plus éminents de ce pays la publication d'un organe qui se consacre a l'étude sérieuse de ces grands problèmes. Nous avons accepté non sans hésitation cette mission délicate. *La Presse d'Orient* poursuit avec des elements nouveaux la publication du *Courrier de Constantinople*.» From that point onwards many Romanians contributed all kinds of articles ranging from the political-administrative to the technico-scientific fields. *La Presse d'Orient*, 4th January, 1855.

17 Ion Ghica became Bey of Samos in 1854 der some 5 years, largely at the insistence of Reschid. He did have the opportunity of founding a gymnasium, codifying laws, introducing electoral reform, building roads (a Romanian engineer A. Zane was responsible) etc. These reforms earned him the title of Prince (16th February 1856) and he is fondly remembered in the History of the island. Ion Roman, *Ion Ghica, Opera*, Bucharest, 1967 p. 36.

some theories in Dobrudja as a member of the Agricultural Council of the Ottoman Empire and later in Thessaly as an administrator of the estates of his friend Reschid Pasha¹⁸. Others such as Moise Nicoara to whom my colleague Cornelia Bodea, of the Iorga Institute at Bucharest devoted an article some years ago in the *Revue du Sud Est Europeen*, simply left us some very perceptive impressions on Tanzimat philosophy¹⁹. Even when it came to discuss the future status of their own land, some forty-eighters still persisted in maintaining the Turkish connection. As late as 1854, Dimitrie Bolintineanu a well known figure, still thought in terms of the union of the two Principalities under the aegis of the Sultan, thus opening the possibility of an Ottomanist federal solution²⁰. That seems to have been a formula acceptable to many of the leading figures converging to the lower Danube on the eve of the Crimean War. There was talk of a Romanian legion fighting on the Turkish side and Eliade Radulescu made a brief appearance in Bucharest on the side of the Turkish commander Omer Pasha²¹. Even the harsh realities of the Austrian occupation did not really affect the Turcophily of the Romanians and on their side the Turkish military authorities gave what protection they could to Romanian subversives hounded by the Austrian authorities²².

The end of the Crimean War ushered in the second phase of the Tanzimat periode with the introduction of the *Hatihumaiun* of 1856, largely dictated by the Western allies²³. If opportunity there still was to marry «Ottomanism» with «Romanianism» by espousing the «little Romanian program» (the union of Moldavia and Wallachia under the Sultan's suzerainty) that last opportunity was thrown away by the Tanzimatist' determined opposition to the double election of Prince Alexander Ion Cuza. This opposition is all the more difficult to grasp since unlike 1848 there were no mitigating international circumstances dictating the course of

18 Dan Badarau, «Cu privire la activitatea lui Ion Ionescu de la Brad între anii 1848-1850. Calatoria lui în Dobrogea și dublul ei scop. Studiul sistemului de economie agrară din această regiune». *Studii*, IX, 1956, 6 Nov.-Dec, pp. 107-119. See also Ion Matei «Un Agronome roumain dans L'Empire Ottoman pendant les années 1849)859» 1932 *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, VII, Bucharest, 1968.

19 Cornelia Bodea, «Les réflexions d'un Roumain sur l'époque du Tanzimat en Turquie», *Revue Historique du sud-Est Européen* 4-6, XIV, April-June 1937.

20 *Istoria României*, Bucharest 1964 Vol IV, p. 242.

21 The only exile in Turkish ranks was Eliade who accompanied Omer Pasha to Bucharest. The Austrian authorities however did not allow him to stay in country. *Istoria României*, idem.

22 The fact that Omer was a former Austrian subject may have embittered relations even further. Florescu, *The Struggle against Russia*, p. 284.

23 The statement «the Hatt-i Humayun (of 1856) sprang from foreign dictation» may be somewhat strong. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 54.

events. Indeed from 1859 onwards a widening gulf separated the Tanzimatists still largely inspired by Romanian constitutional innovations, from the nationalist leaders of Romania and the gulf between the two became increasingly difficult to breach. The Ottoman government sheltering behind the empty carcass of sovereignty paid lip service to empty phrases and like an ostrich buried its head in the sand. It fought a rearguard action against the recognition of Cuza's double election, against the recognition of a national flag, coinage passports, decorations and a national bank²⁴. It also now opposed the ancient prerogative of the province to negotiate commercial treaties sanctioned since Elizabethan times and reaffirmed at the time the signature of the commercial convention of Balta Liman in 1838²⁵. With foreign representatives in most Western capitals and the right to erect a Romanian pavilion at the London exhibition of 1862. Cuza's United Principalities were to all intents and purposes independent in all but name.

It is interesting to notice that no matter how hurt in his *amour propre*, Sultan Abdul Medjid received Cuza kindly both in 1860 and in 1861²⁶. Relations between Cuza's representatives at Constantinople Costache Negri and Bordeanu with Ali Pasha, Sefvet Effendi, Mehmed Ruechli and the new Sultan Abdul Aziz cannot only be described as correct, they were in fact intimate. The Romanians because of their experience in constitutional government were often in a position to proffer advice. I could put the case even more strongly. At a time when the Turks were seriously wrestling with the idea of a constitution, Cuza's brand of liberalism and social reform constituted an interesting test case which deserved study. Two aspects of Cuza's reforms interested the Tanzimatists particularly as the same issues were later to be raised in the Ottoman Empire. One was Cuza's attempt to destroy the extraterritorial status of the Greek dedicated monasteries which was in fact successful. The Turks naturally protested, but the monopoly exercised by the Greek hierarchy eventually had to be tackled and resolved as part of the process of modernization²⁷. The other was Cuza's threat to rid his country of the extraterritorial

24 *Representantele Diplomatice*, p. 82-83.

25 The first treaty of commerce with a Romanian land was signed by William Harebone England's representative at Constantinople with Peter the lame of Moldavia in 1588. Although Peter the Lame did in fact pay tribute to Sultan Murad III he evidently had the right to sign such a treaty. Nicolae Iorga, *A History of Anglo-Romanian relations*, Bucharest, 1931, 10.

David Urquhart the English publicist upheld this view at the time of the debate on whether the article of the Anglo-Turkish commercial convention of Balta Liman applied to the Principalities. David Urquhart, *Mystery of the Danube*, London 1851, p. 19.

26 Constantin C. Giurescu, *Viata si opera lui Cuza Voda*, Bucharest, 1966, p. 112. On his return from first visit Cuza qualified to simply as «a visit of courtesy» footnote I p. 12.

27 Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire* p. 126.

abuses of Western consulates—a problem that equally plagued the Ottoman Empire²⁸.

It is an extraordinary tribute to Turkish optimism that even in 1866 when Cuza's government was toppled by a coup, that there were responsible Tanzimatists who felt that Romanian nationalism could still fit within the niche of Ottoman constitutionalism. As late as 1871, there was an Anglo-Turkish plan to engulf Romania in a German type confederacy, not very dissimilar from the Austro-Hungarian *ausgleich* of 1867 leaving Romania autonomous except for army and foreign affairs²⁹. The move to oust Cuza was of course a complicated affair—among other factors the Romanian Prince had stepped on too many toes in the direction of agrarian and social reform—but there can be little doubt that at least one motive in Ion Brătianu's mission to seek another sovereign in the West was to find a prestigious ruling family which might best destroy the last formal vestiges of Turkish dependence. A Hohenzollern would not likely sit for long at the footsteps of the Sultan's throne.

Expectedly when Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was selected as a candidate for the vacated princely throne, there was Turkish opposition, for a time even the threat of military intervention, but in the end when recognition came Sultan Abdul Aziz received the cousin of the Prussian king like an equal and seated him next to him³⁰. I have not studied the reports of A. Golescu, Carol's representative at Constantinople, as carefully as I have studied the reports of Cuza's agents; formal protests and counterprotests continued on much the same issues as during the earlier period. The Turks however showed an interest in the workings of the new Belgian patterned constitution, in the reform of the Romanian army and admired the efficiency and integrity of the Prussian prince who had a passion for constructing railroads³¹. On the eve of the adoption of the constitution of 1876, as in the previous phases of the Tanzimat, Romanians such as Bordeanu, editor of *La Turquie* and Gregory Ganescu a former forty-eightier, were deeply involved in working out a viable constitutional solution for the Empire³². Unlike Bolintineanu these men were now no longer thinking in terms of federal solutions, linking their country to Turkey, they thought of solutions for the Empire *minus Romania*. In terms of Romanian interests their orbit at most extended to those of their co-nationals,

28 For abuses of capitulatory regime in the Principalities see Florescu, *The Struggle against Russia*, pp. 1863 et seq.

29 Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 290.

30 «The Sultan came to the door of his cabinet to welcome him (Charles). Next the sofa on which the Sultan was to sit a chair was placed for the Prince, but he pushed it gently aside, and as Prince of Hohenzollern sat down next to his Suzerain». Sidney Whitman, *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, New York, 1899, p. 43.

31 Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 194.

the Kutzo-Vlachs, the Macedo-Vlachs or the Romanians living in the Tuna Vilayet, who still formed part of the Ottoman Empire³³.

One might say it was unfortunate that the Tanzimat constitution of 1876 was inaugurated in the midst of one of the most severe Balkan crisis of the late 19th century. The fact however that even in these adverse circumstances, the enlightened Turkish statesmen will persisted in describing Romania as «a privileged province which could not be detached from the Ottoman Empire», not only outraged public opinion but represented the last straw, which accelerated the outbreak of hostilities against Turkey and the proclamation of national independence³⁴.

What may we conclude from this brief but complex perusal of Ottoman Romanian relations during the period of the Tanzimat?

The first point I should like to make seems to be fairly obvious from this paper. No matter how much history has been distorted on both sides, there always seems to have survived an immense reservoir of good will between Romanian and Turks which lives on in our day. I am not thinking of princes and Boyars who often used Constantinople as a ploy for personal ambitions. I am thinking of the peasants who since the earliest Ottoman connections looked upon the Sultan as a distant father who would ultimately redress all wrongs. Nicolas Iorga, Romania's most renowned historian used a phrase which has always struck me in spite of its exaggeration, contains a little grain of truth: He refers to the «Ottoman Democracy», in which the poor were ostensibly always right. Given this reservoir of good will, it would seem to me that the Tanzimatists, had a very genuine opportunity to «cash in» by offering the two Danubian provinces a formula of government which indeed could have transformed the Turkish Empire into a kind of U.S. of South Eastern Europe—just as the United States of Greater Austria cannot be dismissed as a totally utopian dream. There are in fact distinctive analogies between the *Kaisertreu* sentiments of the ethnic minorities of the Habsburg Empire and the Ottomanist loyalties of the people of the Balkans. With the unfair advantage of hind sight a question which can be raised—and I have alluded to it already—is up to what point in time was an «Ottomanist» solution of the Romanian problem, still practical politics? My answer would be that had he the 1871 federalist solution been first tendered in 1848, it is conceivable that the Romanian moderates would have

32 On Ganescu see Jules Hansen, *Les coulisses de la diplomatie* Paris 1880, p. 319. *La Turquie* was close to the views of the Tanzimatists. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire* footnote 108 p. 202.

33 *idem* p. 151.

34 *Representantele diplomatice* p. 93-94. It should be emphasized however that Savfet Pasha declared that it had never been the intention of the Sultan to alter the status which Romania enjoyed in accordance with the treaties.

adhered to it. Although I have implied that a similar offer to support Cuza's double election in 1859 might have done the trick-1859 was already very late, the forces tending towards national independence had made many strides. As in the case of the Habsburgs-I am thinking of the last minute concessions of Emperor Charles in the last days of World War I: *trop peu et surtout trop tard*.

Perhaps a more pertinent aspect of this paper, which I hope will justify its title is the extent of Romanian output in shaping Tanzimat ideology. The problem certainly deserves to be studied at greater length. May I suggest that the Romanian experience in Westernization, which preceded that of the Turks by at least a century and even practical experience with the art of modern government and administration which came a few decades earlier, provided an important school for experimentation from Fanariot times down to the application of the Belgian constitution in 1866. Taking a rather un-Romanian and un-Turkish view, I am willing to state that one of the Turkish motives in allowing these provinces to survive as autonomous states, was not so much to create a political vacuum to separate the Turks from Habsburg Imperialism, but on the contrary to paraphrase the famous sentence of Peter the Great, because it was advantageous for the Sultan to maintain «an open window» on the West. By the time the *Règlement Organique* was introduced in 1831, there was no need for the future Tanzimatists to travel to England and to France to study modern government in action-all they had to do was to visit Bucharest and Jassy where social and economic conditions were far more similar than those prevailing in the West Empire. The extent to which the statesmen of the Tanzimat studied the Romanian laboratory experiment is not clear, but most of the Tanzimatists were closely linked to Romanian affairs and Reshid «came to power and lost power because of the Romanian problem»³⁵. It is interesting to notice in passing that when the Turkish judicial council was reformed in 1865 it was given a name identical to the Romanian constitution: *Reglement Organique*³⁶.

Another aspect of this collaboration are the numerous Romanian political personalities and technocrats who in varying degrees studied and enrolled within the ranks of the reforming movement in Turkey itself: Ion Ghica, Ionescu de la Brad, Costache Negri, Bordeanu and Constantin Ganesco, to mention but a few names. An accurate appreciation of their role still awaits a historian but it would not be entirely inaccurate to compare them with the Cantemirs and Milescus, the early apostles of Westernization in Russia. At least, we should not begrudge them the title of TANZIMATISTS:

35 Reshid fell from office on July 31, 1857, over the same Roumanien question which had brought him to power» Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire* p. 82.