

**The Early Development  
of the Serbian and Romanian National Movements, 1800-1866:  
A Comparison**

by  
**Martha Meyer**

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to compare the early development of nationalism of two peoples of the Balkans, the Serbians and the Romanians. The struggle for fulfillment of aspirations to form national states and the awakening of a national consciousness among these peoples were not identical. The paths of development of the two national movements diverged in certain important ways due to specific differences in social structure, economy and relations with the Great Powers. However, they were fundamentally parallel as a result of their common involvement in the historical process occurring in the Balkans during the nineteenth century, the decay of the power of the Porte and resulting need to fill a power vacuum in this strategic area. The national movement of Serbia, from the 1804 rebellion against the Janissaries to the 1866 removal of all Turks from Serbian soil, will be contrasted with Romania's national struggle, starting with the 1821 revolt led by Tudor Vladimirescu and culminating in the union of the Principalities in 1861. In the course of this presentation the fundamental similarities and differences between the paths taken by each of these nationalities in order to achieve its goals will be identified and explained.

Nationalism is a vital force in the Balkans today. It serves to unify the people of some states, such as Romania, and may be relied upon by the political leadership to generate popular support. In multi-national states, such as Yugoslavia, nationalistic sentiments

can be a source of tension, and may threaten to destroy the unified state. Nationalism is a significant determinant of the shape of the contemporary Balkans.

Nationalism first started to emerge as a political force among the peoples of the Balkans in the nineteenth century, transforming that region into a powderkeg in the first decades of the twentieth century. The development of national consciousness and nationalism in the Balkans had tremendous repercussions in the history of Europe, igniting the fuse which touched off World War I. The Balkan peninsula, gateway between the east and west, fragmented as it is into about a dozen national groups, remains today a politically sensitive region. A study of the roots of Balkan nationalism will facilitate the understanding of that area today.

Nationalism continues to play an important role on the world political scene, particularly as it develops in the Third World countries which participate in international affairs to an ever-greater extent. The emergence of national identity and nationalism in these new states is similar in many ways to the development of nationalism in the Balkan countries. If a better understanding of the development of Balkan nationalism could be achieved, then perhaps this process among the peoples of the Third World could also be better understood.

Due to the broad scope of the question posed, the challenge presented by Balkan languages, and problems related to the availability of primary sources, English-language secondary sources have been relied upon in general in the research for this paper. The bibliography lists the major resources tapped, including standard

histories of the Balkans, Serbia and Romania; monographs and articles dealing with particular aspects of the national development of these Balkan peoples; comparative social historical collections and books concentrating on Balkan nationalism. The historical narrative has been only lightly footnoted; the reader interested in amplification of the course of events may refer to the texts named in the bibliography which provided the background material for this work.

The present paper lays the groundwork for a comparison of the emergence of nationalism in Serbia and Romania, but it is by no means exhaustive. Additional studies might be undertaken which would relate current theories of nationalism to the movements discussed here, apply the conclusions of this work to an analysis of the future courses of the two national movements, or interpret present observations in the broad context of nation-building, analyzing their implications for the growth of nationalism today.

## Definitions

It is of particular importance in a study of this nature to define key terms which will be used throughout. The following definitions are based on those offered by Peter Sugar in Nationalism in Eastern Europe.

A nationality is "a group of people of all classes, religious persuasions, professions, and educational levels who are distinguishable from all others by speaking the same language, sharing in some of those cultural values that are tied to the use of a particular language and springing from a certain undefinable yet real feeling of kinship."<sup>1</sup>

A country is the land inhabited by a nationality.

A state is a political-administrative unit, resulting historically not from a natural affinity of the members of a society for each other, but rather from the imposition of order from a prince or other leader. Thus the state is an acquired characteristic of a society. The territory of a state is not necessarily the same as that of a country. A state may include one or more nationalities, and does not necessarily include all the members of any particular nationality.

A nation or nation state is a state which has won the loyalty of its population. It generally is associated with only one nationality, though others may be involved, often creating minority problems.

Nationalism, as Sugar points out, doesn't fit neatly into the scheme of natural versus acquired attributes of a group of people. Nationalism is a revolutionary idea, transmitted not through institutions or by custom, but generated and passed on to new generations by use of propaganda. Highest allegiance is given to the nation, militant enthu-

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1. Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer, Nationalism in Eastern Europe, Seattle, 1969, p. 4

siasm promotes the belief in the superiority or sense of mission of the nation. Nationalism makes sense in the context of the centralized nation state as it developed in western Europe. Nationalism, however, as a result of the influence of western thought, emerged in the Balkans despite the nonexistence of the nation state, and continues to appear in other parts of the world among people who, being of one nationality but having no nation state in which to promote their interests, strive to create their own. This usually involves breaking free of a multinational state or removing the control of a colonial power.

National movement denotes the activity of the members of a nationality to form a nation.

Another term which should be defined is national consciousness. As is implied, this is the sense acquired by the members of a nationality that they do indeed share the same language and cultural values. This can be distinguished from nationalism clearly: national consciousness does not imply that the goal of a nation state is desirable or that the nation deserves the people's highest allegiance. National consciousness is a necessary preliminary to nationalism, yet it need not always lead to nationalism or a national movement.

## THE SERBIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The Serbs were the first of the nationalities of the Ottoman Empire to seek and win autonomy. Yet the initial revolt, starting in 1804, did not begin as an attempt to free the Serbs from the Ottoman suzerain, but rather as an effort to remove from Serbia Janissaries who were terrorizing the population, and to restore a just representative of the sultan to the Pashalik of Belgrade. Only in 1807 did the Serbs begin to strive for national independence as the Porte gave no evidence that it was either strong enough or trustworthy enough to keep promises of a fair administration for the Serbs, and as Russia offered military support to the Serbian rebels.

The Serbian movement, thus, began as a popular revolt against oppression and later turned into a fight for independence. Still, nationalism was not an active force in the early Serbian struggles. The Serbian of the first decades of the nineteenth century was an illiterate peasant, living in a practically self-sufficient extended family or *zadruga*, in a barter economy, who wanted the freedom to go about his life in his village and district without the interference of excessive taxation or exploitation. Although familiar with the legendary glory of the medieval Serbian state through popular epic poetry, he had no real desire to re-establish that state. In this patriarchal society, when in 1816 a form of semi-autonomy was granted by the Porte, it took the clever and persistent actions of Knez Miloš to prevent the breakdown of society into military feudal districts with local leaders amassing the power to rule their own districts. He forceably centralized the government, enhancing his own power and paving the way for a modern state apparatus

in the second half of the century. In the Pashalik of Belgrade at the time of the early nineteenth century rebellions, a general popular nationalism aiming at the creation of a sovereign Serbian state did not exist. Any progress made toward this end was a result of diplomatic and political actions taken by Miloš and the cooperation of Russia, who exerted pressure on the Porte to grant the Serbs greater autonomy.

The aid of the Serbs of Austria, who lived north of the Danube River in the Vojvodina, was instrumental in the military successes of the Pashalik Serbs in their revolts. In addition, the Vojvodina provided educated men who helped at all levels of government as well as in teaching. In a variety of ways, the Serbs of the Austrian Empire who lived in a more dynamic society of trade and letters, helped set the stage for the cultivation of Serbian nationalism.

In the years after the Porte's recognition of Miloš as hereditary prince in 1830, Serbian politics were entangled in domestic power struggles. The prince was challenged by the oligarchy of Constitutionalists in the Council who wanted to limit his power and acquire more themselves, while the Porte continually interfered. As a result, nationalist policies of the state were virtually nonexistent. Now that a semi-autonomous Serbia existed, most energies were directed to the internal organization of state and distribution of power. Not until the 1840's did the state seriously occupy itself with nationalistic policies.

Starting with the 1844 Načertanije (Memorandum) of Ilija Garašanin which established the South Slavic mission of the Serbs, nationalism made real headway in Serbia. Not only did Garašanin envision an in-

dependent and expanded Serbia, but he espoused the creation of a South Slavic union under the leadership of the Serbian dynasty. His ideas were the basis for Prince Michael's policies in the 1860's, which achieved the final removal of all Turks from Serbian lands and organized plans for a Balkan federation.

In 1848 the Serbs of the Ottoman Empire had an opportunity to help their brothers north of the Danube in their fight for national rights against the Magyars. Though the Serbian state did not formally ally itself with the Austrian Serbs due to pressure from Russia, thousands of volunteers crossed the Danube to support the Serbian cause.

Thus by 1862, when Serbia freed itself of direct Turkish interference, it had already launched a nationalistic policy for the creation of an enlarged Serbia, as well as plans for a South Slavic Union with Serbia at the helm.

A combination of factors influenced the Serbian movement for national independence, transforming a popular rebellion against Janissary rapacity into a war for liberation from the Porte. The following factors can be identified which shaped the Serbian national movement in its early years: social organization, cultural heritage, geographical location, Austrian wars with the Turks in the Pashalik, the Serbian community of the Habsburg Empire, the oppression of Janissaries no longer controllable by the weakening Ottoman government, Great Power relations, economic and social changes. These factors will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

## Background

The social organization of the Serbian people in the Pashalik of Belgrade determined that the struggle against Janissary oppression would be a mass movement. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, as part of the legacy of Turkish rule, there was no Serbian nobility, upper class, or middle class in the Pashalik of Belgrade. When the Turks conquered the area in the fourteenth century, the native Serbian aristocracy either fled, perished or was pauperized and lost its identity. The Turkish system of rule provided that a Turkish pasha would govern the territory and that Ottomans would serve as judges and landholders. This system prevented the rise of a native nobility, so the Serbs were peasants, rural dwellers engaged in animal husbandry and subsistence farming. Cities had a non-Serbian air, as they were inhabited by Turks, Jews, Greeks and other foreigners.

The Serbs lived in zadrugas, extended families consisting of up to between forty and sixty members. Each zadruga was part of a village, which was governed by a Council of Elders headed by a knez elected from among the elders. Local self-government was independent of Turkish interference, as the Turkish landholders or sipahis usually lived in towns and came to the village only to receive taxes collected by the knez. The knez and council were peasants of the village, but generally family heads, and often from families of good standing, highly respected in the village. Villages were grouped together into a district, ruled by a Serbian oborknez, selected from among the knezes.

The local churches were headed by Orthodox priests or deacons who often were barely literate. The language of the church, Slavo-Serbian, differed from the spoken idiom of the Serbs. Some young boys whose parents hoped they would be monks learned their letters from the local priests. The most fortunate attended school in the Vojvodina, which had

progressed more rapidly. In cities the church was headed by Greek officials, for the Serbian patriarchate had been abolished in 1766, and Phanariots were appointed to the church hierarchy until 1831 when the Serbian patriarchate was restored. Church positions were often purchased and corruption was common. Corruption and the use of Greek liturgy alienated the Serbs from the church during this period.

The church through the centuries served a vital function in maintaining the Serbian nationality. The Turks did not believe in forceable conversion to the Moslem religion and based their empire on the separate existence of religions. The empire was divided into administrative units called millets according to religion. The Pashalik of Belgrade was part of the Orthodox Christian millet and fell under the jurisdiction of the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople. Despite Grecification of the church, religious identity and separate religious administration kept the Serbs from being assimilated into Moslem culture, and helped maintain a separate group identity. In 1557 the Serbian Patriarchate was recreated, and until 1766 the church served as protector of the Serbian national identity. Under Greek administration after 1766 the local churches were little affected, as most priests could hardly even read Slavo-Serbian, much less Greek. The church launched several young Serbian national leaders on their way, including Dean Matija Nenadović, a leader in the Serbian insurrection and prominent statesman and constitutionalist in later years.

The Serbian insurrection of 1804-1813 has been looked on by some observers as the popular struggle to recreate the great medieval Serbian kingdom of Stephen Dušan and the Nemanja dynasty.<sup>2</sup> It is true that

2. Vaša Čubrilović's views are summarized in Roger Paxton, "Nationalism and Revolution: A Re-examination of the Origins of the First Serbian Insurrection 1804-1807," East European Quarterly, Vol. VI, No. 3, pp. 343-344

the story of medieval Serbia and its tragic fall at the battle of Kosovo in 1389 has been sung for centuries by the bards of the Serbian peasantry. Epic poetry and the oral tradition have played an important part in the preservation of Serbian national consciousness. Recent writers, however, assert that while the oral tradition helped create a Serbian national consciousness, it did not generate a popular fight for the revival of the medieval Serbian kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

Life in the Pashalik of Belgrade was fairly static. The Turkish administrators and Greek, Jewish and other merchants confined their activities to the larger towns and cities, while the Serbian peasants kept to the countryside. In general, trade was minimal - a barter economy predominated and the zadrugas were virtually self-sufficient, having enough hands for the division of labor. The major economic activity of the Serbs was pig-raising. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Serbian peasants were taking large numbers of pigs north to Austria to sell. These pig merchants thus had contact with both the Serbs of Austria and the Austrians themselves and came to play an important role in the struggle against the Turks, Miloš Obrenović being a foremost example of this element of Serbian society.

The life of the Serbian peasant under Turkish rule was not overly oppressive until the central government started to lose control of the Janissaries. Before the nineteenth century in Serbia, the land was in the hands of about 900 Turkish sipahis who were granted the land, called

3. Ibid., pp. 337-362

timars, in return for military service. The sipahi had the use of part of the timar and the peasants held hereditary right to usufruct on the rest of the land in exchange for certain tithes and duties. In general the peasant's obligations to the sipahi consisted of about one tenth of the household's produce, as well as taxes paid to the sultan and local government, a small amount of corvée or unpaid labor for the sipahi and also for public purposes. In exchange, the peasant's claim was hereditary, and he could not be evicted as long as he worked the land. He was free to leave the land, but then would lose the right to usufruct. This system was quite satisfactory for the peasants, and the social organization of Serbian society adjusted to the economic and legal conditions.

Problems however emerged as the central government of the Ottoman Empire started to weaken. The loss of territory in Europe, Africa and Asia meant that soldiers and administrators had to move back toward the center, directing their attention to gaining more power and wealth. To protect the capital the sultan sent the Janissaries, who were viewed as an immediate threat to the central government, to the outlying areas of the empire, and thus to the Pashalik of Belgrade. These Janissaries forced the peasants to give up their hereditary plots and made them tenants on the landholdings which became known as chifliks. The peasants could be evicted and were required to pay high rents, ranging from one fourth to one half of their gross product. This development offended the Serbian peasants who believed that he who tills the land should own it. It created great hardships for the Serbs, many of whom reacted to the formation of chifliks by migrating (about 30,000 fled to

the Habsburg Empire) and by armed resistance and brigandage.

Thousands of Serbs joined the Austrians in their war with Turkey from 1788 to 1791 as a result of Janissary misrule. Although Austria, which had occupied the Pashalik of Belgrade, was forced to return it to the Ottomans, the war was not without important consequences for the future Serbian struggle with the Turks. The Treaty of Sistova of 1791, which concluded the Austro-Turkish war, called for basic reforms in the administration of the Pashalik, including removal of the Janissaries. These reforms were carried out by Selim III and probably the best-loved pasha of Belgrade, Hadji Mustafa, called the "Mother of the Serbs." It was the Serbs' efforts to regain the reforms of Hadji Mustafa which led to the 1804 revolt and began the eventual struggle for independence from the weakening Ottoman government.

The Austro-Turkish war affected the development of Serbian leadership and fighting forces significantly. Those who fought for Austria returned to Serbia with knowledge about the organization and tactics of the Austrian army which could be applied to the Serbian confrontation with the Turks. They made contacts with the peoples north of the Danube, including merchants who could provide weapons and ammunition, and military and political leaders who could be of assistance in fighting and diplomacy. The leader of the first Serbian insurrection, Karadjordje, was among the Serbs of the Pashalik who had joined with Austrian fighting forces. When the opportunity arose, he would have need to call on the Austrians to reciprocate with volunteers, arms and diplomatic intervention.

Thus, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Serbs of the Pashalik of Belgrade were almost exclusively illiterate peasants, with a common sense of an earlier great Serbia, interested only in living their lives without interference from outsiders who demanded high tithes and who expropriated them from family holdings. Though living in a static society in general, some Serbs had experience of fighting in Austrian armies and had made contacts with the culturally more advanced Serbs of the Habsburg Empire. The stage was set for three quarters of a century of struggle for freedom from Turkish rule.

### The Revolts: 1804-1813

The period between 1804 and 1813 saw marked changes in the relations of the Serbs to the Porte and in the cultural activities of the Serbs south of the Danube.

The Treaty of Sistova required that Selim III remove all Janissaries from the Pashalik of Belgrade. Selim authorized Hadji Mustafa to carry out this task, but didn't provide him with the means to carry it through. So in 1798 Hadji Mustafa organized the Serbs into an armed force to push the Janissaries out of the Pashalik. The Janissaries fled to Vidin where Pasvan-Oglu had established his own rebel state. However, armed and organized rayahs in a semi-autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire seemed a greater threat to the Porte than the Janissaries, and the sultan ordered that the Janissaries be allowed to return to the Pashalik of Belgrade. In 1801 the Janissaries killed Hadji Mustafa and instituted a reign of terror under four Janissary leaders - the dahis. The sultan, asked for support by the Serbs, reprimanded the dahis for their lawless behavior. The Janissaries countered by massacring a number of

Serbian knezes. Thus began the 1804 revolt, led by Karadjordje, a knez who, having escaped the Janissaries, pulled together scattered guerilla groups into an effective opposition force.

The main aim of the Serbian rebels at the outset of the first insurrection was to restore the conditions of Ottoman rule that had been instituted as a result of the Treaty of Sistova. The removal of the Janissaries was the prime demand. The assurance of complete carrying out of any settlement by the participation of a third power, either Austria or Russia, in the signing of the settlement was also insisted upon by the Serbs. They had already experienced calamity when Selim reversed himself on the Sistova promise to remove the Janissaries. The Serbs wanted to be certain that if either party should fail to uphold its side of the bargain, a third party would be able to place the blame and perhaps lend at least diplomatic support to the wronged party. It was on this point that all talks failed.

In 1806 the sultan offered the Serbs an arrangement, known as Ičko's agreement, which would have provided that the Serbs share administrative and military responsibilities with the Turkish authorities, a hereditary supreme prince would rule jointly with the pasha, and Serbian troops would join an equal force of Ottoman regulars in defending the borders. Despite the obvious advantages included in this proposal, the Serbs turned it down on the basis that the Porte would allow no third power to witness the signing. In addition, Russia was launching an attack on Turkey and encouraged the Serbs to join her. It was in 1807 that the Serbian movement's goal shifted from the restoration of just Ottoman rule to the achievement of national independence.

Historians do not agree on the extent to which the revolt of 1804 was a popular peasant uprising or a movement spearheaded by knezes who sometimes may have resorted to coercion to get the peasantry to rise in arms. H.W.V. Temperley views the revolt as a spontaneous popular uprising against Janissary misrule while Stephen Fischer-Galati and Lovett F. Edwards indicate that the peasants were instigated and perhaps sometimes coerced to fight by local leaders.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, historians of the Serbian insurrection debate the role that nationalism played in the demands of the Serbian leadership and in the course of the insurrection. Roger Paxton presents an excellent overview of the major theories and data used to support them.<sup>5</sup>

The Serbian leadership until 1807 had not regarded national independence as a viable possibility. The changing realities of the military, diplomatic and political scenes and the flexibility of Karadjordje and other Serbian leaders led to a variety of contrasting and contradictory proposals for a settlement satisfactory to Serbia throughout the early years of the rebellion. The initial demands of the Serbs centered on a guarantee of the removal of Janissaries. But as the conflict progressed and the Serbs tasted military success, the idea of a tributary regime based on the rights of self-rule became much more attractive than Turkish provincial rule. By 1807 the Serbs had demanded full independence.

4. H.W.V. Temperley, History of Serbia, London, 1919, pp.167-168; Stephen Fischer-Galati, "The Peasantry as a Revolutionary Force in the Balkans," Journal of Central European Affairs, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 16; Lovett F. Edwards, The Memoirs of Prota Matija Nenadović, Oxford, 1969, P.xvi

5. Paxton, op. cit., pp. 337-362

At the same time as Serbian ideas of an acceptable settlement were getting bolder, the Serbs were exploring the possibilities of foreign sponsorship of the insurrection. At the outset they turned to Austria, requesting annexation of the pashalik to the Habsburg territory. When Austria asserted its neutrality, the Serbs requested that Russia provide protection to the Belgrade pashalik similar to that given the Danubian Principalities so that Janissary misrule could be ended. Negotiations on this scheme continued until 1807. But meanwhile, in July 1804, Bekir Pasha accepted nine Serbian conditions for pacification of the pashalik. These were similar to the reformist government of Hadji Mustafa with the added provision that a Serbian supreme knez would supervise the assessment, collection and delivery of tribute and taxes to the pasha. The Turks, however, refused to accept the tenth condition, that Austria oversee the carrying out of the settlement. The Serbs, seeking a more certain settlement, petitioned Russia once again for protection of an autonomous Serbia still tributary to the Porte. They simultaneously requested Austria's protection. Later the Serbian leaders renewed talks with the Porte, no longer mentioning the participation of a third power in the peace talks, while requesting that Serbia become an autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire. The Turks rejected this proposal, and in late 1805 planned a massive attack on the pashalik. This spurred the Serbians to expand their military activities. In 1806 the Serbs made pleas to Turkey, Russia and Austria to form an international court of justice to judge the Serbs' cause and attempted to win Russia over as an ally. Russia, preoccupied with Napoleon, neglected the Serbs, so they reopened talks with the Turks.

The Ičko agreement was a result of these talks. But Russia, now ready to fight Turkey over the Danubian Principalities, threw its weight on the side of the Serbs, who therefore rejected the Ičko offer.

Paxton asserts that the variety of solutions which the Serbs deemed acceptable and the lack of any overriding goal of uniting all Serbs in an independent state indicate that the Serbs did not have a highly developed national consciousness. The precedence that provincial or parochial interests took over national concerns resulted from the cultural backwardness and intellectual isolation of Serbia. The Serbs were looking for new, more just masters, not for independence in a modern Serbian nation state. Paxton appraises the situation:

"Widespread social dislocation, political turmoil and the non-existence of educational facilities precluded the nationalist indoctrination of the rayah. Rudimentary in form and substance, Serbian nationalism had not yet emerged from a period of ideological incubation."<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately for the Serbs, Russia found it propitious to sign the Treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon in 1807 which ended its activity against the Ottomans until 1809. During these years Russia unsuccessfully tried to reach a satisfactory settlement for the Serbs with the Turks, and the Serbs in vain looked to Austria and Napoleon's France for aid. Faced with a renewed attack in 1809, Karadjordje successfully linked with Montenegrin forces. But suffering losses on the eastern front, Serbia was saved only by a Russian attack on Turkey that diverted the sultan's troops. Austrian diplomatic aid in 1810 did not lead to an acceptable arrangement with the Turks. Russian troops assisted the Serbs until Russia, withdrawing from the Balkans as an invasion by Napoleon seemed imminent, negotiated the Treaty of Bucharest in May, 1812.

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6. Ibid., p. 362

Article VIII of the Treaty of Bucharest dealt with Serbia and was bitter fruit indeed for the veterans of eight years of fighting. The treaty granted full amnesty to the Serbs, the Turks were to occupy all cities and fortresses previously occupied, Serbian-built fortresses were to be demolished, and in a clause open to various interpretations the Serbs were to enjoy the same rights as the Archipelago within the Ottoman Empire (this involved a degree of self-government to be negotiated). No third party guarantee of the settlement was included.

Neither the Serbs nor the Turks would accept this treaty. The Serbs insisted on an autonomous government with only well-defined and limited Turkish presence. The Turks would settle for nothing less than the restoration of the pre-insurrection regime. At an impasse, in 1813 the Turks launched a massive attack. The Serbian leadership and thousands of Serbian peasants fled to Austria. A new reign of terror began, alleviated temporarily by a plea for mercy and rationality from Dean Matija Nenadović who reminded the Turks that a depopulated and ravaged Serbia would be no asset to the Empire. Miloš Obrenović, a minor leader in the insurrection who refused to leave Serbia, was chosen by the Porte as oborknez of three districts. A clever diplomat, Miloš strove to keep the Serbs complacent in order to minimize reprisals, while hoping for assistance from the Great Powers negotiating in Vienna. He crushed a local rebellion in 1814, but that did not prevent the Turks from punishing the Serbs. Conditions got so bad that Miloš decided to launch a new rebellion, what became known as the Second Serbian Insurrection, nominally against Süleyman Pasha and not against the Porte. Miloš was successful both in the field and in his diplomatic relations

with various Turkish leaders. With some pressure from Russia, the sultan finally agreed to a settlement which allowed the Serbs to collect the taxes without Turkish interference, required that a Serbian knez sit alongside the Turkish müsellim in judgement of any Christian, provided that sipahis could take only those dues prescribed by law, forbade Janissaries, Bosnians or Albanians from entering the pasha's service, established a twelve-man national chancery to judge Serbs for major crimes and to deliver tax and tribute to the pasha, and granted Serbs the right to keep small arms for self-defense. This agreement was the basis of Serbian government until 1830 when Miloš was recognized by the Turks as hereditary prince. The arrangement represented a great step forward for the Serbian state and was instrumental in the later development of Serbian nationalism.

The years of insurrection brought great social and economic disruption to the Pashalik of Belgrade. Yet certain contributions toward the creation of Serbian nationalism were made during this period. An important figure is the Banat-born Dositej Obradović (1739-1814) who came to Belgrade during the first insurrection to help establish the pashalik's first high school and theological seminary and to assist in planning for the founding of about seventy elementary schools. Obradović was a proponent of rationalism and enlightenment and wrote stories of his experiences for the edification of Serbian youth. Most important, he wrote, not in the Slavo-Serbian which the few Serbs who were literate had learned to read, but in the Serbian vernacular. He thus blazed the trail for the development of a Serbian literary language and national literature. The school that he founded, unfortunately, closed in

1813 when the Turks recaptured the city, but it marked an important step forward in the advance of Serbian culture and facilitated the wider dissemination of knowledge and ideas.

Students at the high school included the children of Karadjordje and the young Vuk Karadžić, participant in the insurrections and, in years to come, linguist and romantic nationalist, a figure of outstanding devotion to the cultivation of Serbian culture.

#### The First Reign of Miloš: 1815-1835

Miloš Obrenović, through liberal use of power and crafty diplomatic maneuvers, did much to advance the status of Serbia within the Ottoman Empire. The first reign of Miloš is characterized by tensions and adjustments within society caused by the process of modernization, and the discontent generated by the actions of a prince who would not share his power. The achievement of an autonomous Serbia led to a concentration on internal organization and power distribution, so that the accent was not on nationalism during Miloš's reign.

From 1815 to 1833, Miloš worked toward the winning of autonomy for a Serbia with the extended boundaries that had been occupied by the Serbs in 1813. Of particular importance was the recognition by Turkey of Miloš's status as hereditary grand prince. Not only did this enhance Miloš's personal power, but it considerably strengthened Serbia's bargaining position on the international scene.

As an illiterate peasant livestock merchant, in a still primitive land, Miloš naturally assumed a patriarchal role in his Serbia. Despite the jealousy of local knezes who wanted to rule their districts without interference and the opposition of nationally-prominent figures, Miloš

maximized his control over the government. He appointed officials at all levels of government, bringing an end to traditional democratic self-government. Some have observed that Miloš didn't seem to recognize any difference between himself and the state and would accuse a person who didn't cooperate with him on private transactions of being a traitor to the state. But the control Miloš exerted prevented Serbia from splintering into a number of minor knezdoms, laid the foundations for the formation of a modern state, and provided Miloš with the bargaining power to negotiate successfully with the Porte for Serbian autonomy.

In order to win autonomy from the Turks, Miloš exercised his diplomatic skill. His plan was to prevent Serbia from becoming a problem area for the Porte, to gain the sultan's favor by keeping the Serbs of the Pashalik peaceful. The sultan would then be more likely to give the Serbs autonomy, seeing that they could manage their own affairs to the benefit of the empire. At the same time Miloš made free use of bakshish, or bribes, to keep Turkish officials well-disposed toward the Serbs. These methods alone, however, were not sufficient to gain autonomy. The pressure of Russia, the avowed protector of the Serbs (as indicated in the Treaties of Kuchuk Kainardji, 1774, and Bucharest, 1812), was the key to autonomy.

Specifically, when Turkey was dealing with the Greek uprising which began in 1821, Miloš kept the Serbs from joining the revolt. They also did not participate in the Russo-Turkish war of 1828-29. Under the threat of complete destruction by the Russians, the sultan agreed to honor the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest in the Convention of Akkerman (1826) and the Treaty of Adrianople (1829). Thus, in 1830 a

hatti sherif was issued granting Serbia autonomy, recognizing Miloš as hereditary prince. A Russo-Turkish commission was to establish the borders (expanding Serbia to include six districts lost in 1813) and a fixed annual tribute was specified. Arrangements were made for the transfer of income from the sipahi estates taken over by Serbs. The Turkish government was not to interfere in the Serbian administration or judiciary. No Moslems except certain military personnel could live in Serbia. Serbia was free to establish its own schools, a domestic army, hospitals, printing presses and postal system. The members of the Council were not to be dismissed except for serious crimes, and Serbia was to have a permanent representative in Constantinople.

Not until 1833 was the final border settlement agreed upon, and only after Miloš had contrived to occupy the districts with his army to put down peasant unrest, since the Turks were dragging their feet. In 1831 the Serbian church finally won its autonomy, and the Greek metropolitan and bishops were replaced by Serbs. Since the church was a significant fact of the Serbian national identity, Miloš strove to rid it of corruption and impurities. The Serbian hierarchy undertook to reorganize and upgrade the clergy following the winning of autonomy.

On the domestic scene, Miloš worked to strengthen his own hand as well as to strengthen post-insurrection Serbia. He overawed his council and tried to keep its power trivial. He personally supervised appointments at all levels of government. He put off any discussion of a constitution.

A major problem was the restoration of Serbia's economy. Much

land was left deserted after 1815, so Miloš promulgated a law encouraging settlement and exempting new settlers from taxes for a certain number of years. With order restored in the country, land hunger appeared, and even the vast forest lands of Serbia, which had been the key to the earlier booming pig-raising economy, started to be cleared.

As Miloš appointed local officials, often the peasants would not even know the leaders of their own village, where before they had elected the heads of leading families as knez. Miloš's policy of strengthening the central government destroyed the age-old folk democracy, the peasants' participation in local government that they had enjoyed under the Turks. This generated alienation, especially when Miloš's officials demanded that ever higher taxes be paid to cover the costs of creating a bureaucratic central government and bribing the Turks. In addition, although peasants now were becoming freeholders, Miloš and his cronies required them to participate in corvée work on their own private holdings. In fact, during his reign Miloš amassed great wealth by acquiring extensive landholdings, getting free labor at his people's expense, and participating in lucrative trade arrangements. There was much resentment among the people of Serbia, of Miloš's administrative changes, and of his growing power and wealth. In the decade before the winning of autonomy Miloš had to put down seven revolts, in general local rebellions against abuses of power and high taxes. The most important of these was Djak's Rebellion in 1924-1925. It culminated in a mass meeting with representatives of all twelve districts (according to the rebels) which presented a list of demands to Miloš including the replacement of certain officials

with locally elected knezes, end of the corvée for the private benefit of public officials, reduction or elimination of taxes and imposts, the ending of knez participation in trade, observance of religious fasts and more local autonomy. Miloš responded by massacring the crowd, executing Djak, and calling a public meeting which gave him a vote of confidence. Yet there were to be more peasant revolts against the Serbian ruler, for the peasantry simply wanted to return to the familiar, stable, rural lifestyle and not finance the formation of a national state apparatus. National consciousness among the majority of Serbians had not yet been transformed into nationalism. Provincial loyalties still rated above the interests of a national state.

In the course of Milos's reign the economic life of the Serbian peasantry began to undergo dramatic changes. The shift from a barter economy to a money economy, together with free landownership, undermined the traditional social unit of the Serbs, the zadruga, and threatened to ruin many a peasant unfamiliar with the pitfalls of credit.

Trade was encouraged by Miloš as the Turkish merchants and artisans moved out of the cities and Serbs replaced them. Prečani or Serbs from Austria moved into Miloš's Serbia to fill the ranks of the bureaucracy, to trade and to establish shops. A certain amount of resentment arose among the native Serbs toward these educated foreigners with a superior air, yet they brought with them many novelties from the west which were very attractive to peasants and townspeople. Tastes grew more expensive, a limited degree of economic differentiation began to take place in the villages with the opening of shops and speculation in real estate, and temptation to gamble and behave irresponsibly grew. Usurers took advan-

tage of the naiveté of the peasantry until, after the formal elimination of feudal bondage in 1833, there seemed to be danger that a great landless rural "proletariat" debt-ridden and miserable, would develop. So in 1836 Miloš instituted the Protected Minimum Homestead Act which made it illegal to foreclose on a peasant's home, necessary farm land, two oxen and a cow. Thus Miloš assured that Serbia would be a land of small freeholders. After 1835 all taxes were payable in money, which meant that all peasants had incentive to sell in the market. At the same time that the economy was changing from barter to money, animal husbandry was losing ground to grain production. This occurred as a result of the increase in population, the new security of the farmer in years of peace, and the disappearance of forest lands where pigs had been grazed. Many changes and new forces were permanently altering the fabric of Serbian life. With economic changes came exposure to western ideas and the beginning of class differentiation among the Serbs (notables, bureaucracy, merchant, peasant) and greater opportunities for education (including army training and theological seminary). By 1838 there were 84 elementary schools in Serbia with 2,916 students, and a gymnasium in Belgrade.<sup>7</sup> With each new generation of students, the potential of Serbia's educational system multiplied.

Miloš's reticence to share power led to unrest, temporary adoption of a liberal constitution in 1836, and imposition of a constitution formulated in Turkey in 1838. Miloš could not function in a system where the Council had legislative power and ministers were responsible not to the prince but to the Council. The 1838 constitution represented an

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7. Michael Petrovich, A History of Modern Serbia 1804-1918, New York, 1976, p.222

assertion of Ottoman power in Serbia, and thus a reduction in Serbia's autonomy, because it required the approval of the Porte to remove any of the Council members. Miloš abdicated, as he couldn't rule Serbia under the conditions provided in the constitution.

#### Constitutionalism and Nationalism 1839-1866

After the fall of Miloš, romantic nationalism and the desire to form a Serbian or even South Slavic state grew to be expressed explicitly and more widely among the educated in Serbia. Increased contact of Serbians with the nationalist and liberal thinkers of Poland, France and Germany inspired this development, which had great appeal for the small group of educated Serbian youth which emerged as fruit of modernization in Serbia. The nationalists of this period looked to the value and charm of native Serbian traditions and customs, calling for a synthesis of liberal and traditional forms in the realization of an independent Serbia.

After the Russians put down the Polish revolt of 1830-1831. Polish leader Prince Adam Czartoryski contacted Balkan peoples in order to encourage their struggles for national independence and to decrease Russia's influence in eastern Europe. Czartoryski and his colleagues approached Serbian leaders with the idea of forming a Yugoslav union. Ilija Garašanin, Serbian Minister of the Interior, based the official policy of the Serbian government on the ideas of Czartoryski. The Načertanije (Memorandum) of 1844 called for the eventual creation of a Greater Serbia composed of Serbs in all the lands surrounding the Serbia of his day, later to be expanded to include all the South Slavs, under the Serbian dynasty. Predicated on the idea that the Ottoman Empire must be dis-

solved, it was hoped that the new Balkan state would be strong enough to resist the influence of those two powers most directly concerned with the Balkans, Austria and Russia.

Garašanin's Načertanije became the basis of Serbian policy through the reign of Alexander, and Prince Michael's policies were based on similar ideas. In urging the political union of all South Slavs, Garašanin asserted the principle of religious freedom, vital to attaining the cooperation of the non-Orthodox peoples of the area. Garašanin's plan was marked by a paradox: at the same time he stressed the leading role of Greater Serbia in the winning of independence and the reconstruction of the medieval Serbian kingdom he sponsored the notion of a union of all the various South Slavic peoples. Serbian nationalism and Yugoslavism involve an inherent contradiction which even today is a source of tensions in Yugoslavia.

To put the principles of the Načertanije in action, Garašanin first worked to free Serbia of excessive Austrian control by opening a trade route to the Adriatic through Scutari and Dulcigno, giving Serbian merchants an alternative to Austrian trade routes. Serbian agents were planted in the lands inhabited by Slavs to gain a sense of the mood and living conditions of the neighboring peoples, to appraise their military preparedness, to compile lists of the most influential men, and to learn popular opinion about Serbia and its role in the Balkans.

Starting in 1839, Serbian youths were sent to universities in western Europe on government scholarships. By 1848 about one hundred Serbians had been educated in France or Germany. These Serbs returned to their homeland brimming with the romantic and liberal ideas

of the period. They formed a nucleus of educators and politicians who exalted the heritage of the Serbian nation and who saw the future of the Serbian national state in the national assembly of popularly elected representatives of the people.

These young nationalists, some of whom taught at the Lycée in Belgrade and thus spread their ideals among youngsters of another generation, were Serbia's first native intellectuals. In 1847 they formed the Society of Serbian Youth and expressed their desires for freedom of the press, school reforms, and representation in government. They established secret ties with the Serbs of Austria and sent them money, supplies and volunteers during their struggle of 1848.

The revolutionary year 1848 gave Serbians a chance to demonstrate their solidarity with their brothers in Austria. When the Magyars refused to recognize the national identity of the Serbs of the Vojvodina or any Serbian national rights, a general uprising swept through the Vojvodina. The metropolitan of the Serbian church in the Vojvodina called a Serbian National Assembly in May. About ten thousand Serbs streamed into Karlovci from all directions to what turned out to be a tremendous show of Serbian nationalism. In the next several weeks the assembly "restored" the Vojvodina, the Banat and Bačka with Baranja as a Serbian territory and "restored" the Serbian patriarchate. They made common cause with the Croats and raised the flag of rebellion against the Magyars.

The border between Serbia and Austria was crossed by many Serbian volunteers from Serbia as well as from neighboring lands to aid the cause of the Serbs of Austria. The government of Serbia, under Prince Alexan-

der, was torn by internal dissension. The scene was dominated by domestic political squabbles over the relative power of the prince and the Council and by the feud between the Obrenović and Karadjordjević families. Prince Alexander, aiming to rally popular support against the opposition party headed by Toma Vučić and Miloš, called a national assembly in June. The St. Peter Assembly was a great shock to Alexander. General discontent with his rule and a number of specific complaints about the conduct of officials and public affairs were aired. Alexander promised to improve the situation, but carried through few reforms. One of the complaints of the assembly was that Austrian Serbs occupied government posts. This was one of Vučić's criticisms of Alexander's regime. The opposition also denounced any support Serbia accorded to the co-nationals in Austria. This assembly's demands indicate that many of Serbia's citizens, alienated by the superior attitude of Austrian Serbs who served as officials in Serbia, and tired of political power contests and dynastic disputes, were primarily interested in the improvement of local conditions and unsympathetic to the struggle of the Austrian Serbs with the Magyars. Militant nationalism did not stir the hearts of the delegates to the assembly.

Yet Alexander, intent on enhancing Serbia's claim to be the Piedmont of the South Slavs but reluctant to commit Serbia too deeply to the struggle in Austria, provided arms, ammunition and money for Serbian volunteers to fight the Magyars. A prominent government official, State Councilor Stevan Petrović Knićanin, led an army of Serbian volunteers from Serbia and elsewhere in major battles for the Serbian cause. Garašanin recruited volunteers for the effort. Yet as even this aid

started to put a strain on the budget, the volunteer army was withdrawn in February of 1849. Consequent events in Austria, the put-down of the Magyar rebels by the Russian army and Austrian denial of Serbian demands, made Knićanin's volunteer leadership useless. The Serbian national cause had met defeat in the 1848 fighting, yet the cooperation of Serbia's officials and volunteers enhanced connections with the Croats and other Slavic participants in the struggle, and was the occasion of open discussion of, if not general support for, the union of the South Slavs.

The following years saw the ascendancy of the liberal Garašanin and French influence in Serbia. But by 1853, Russia had masterminded the ouster of Garašanin and Serbia found itself in a difficult situation as Russia and France argued over the protection of the Holy Places and Russia prepared to go to war with Turkey. Serbia managed to maintain its neutrality during the Crimean War and thus benefited by the Treaty of Paris. This ended the Russian protectorate of Serbia and replaced it within a joint protectorate of the Great Powers, thus also throttling the hand of the Porte. It also opened the Danube to international traffic, assuring the Serbs a trade outlet to the west and to the Black Sea.

A constitutional crisis brought about the fall of Prince Alexander. The Turkish constitution of 1838 defined the powers of prince, Council and ministers in such a way that all were constantly at odds with each other. Finally a National Assembly was convoked in 1858 to settle the constitutional question. The St. Andrews assembly was viewed by the young liberal nationalists as a way to promote the power of the Serbian people; by the Obrenović party as a way to regain the throne; and by the people as a way to assure some alleviation of economic problems caused by arbitrary or corrupt administration and a market economy. The

liberals took the opportunity to call for an annual National Assembly with legislative and budgetary powers; a watered-down version was passed by the assembly, though it is likely that many of the delegates did not understand the significance of this liberal~~ly~~ motion. Finally, Alexander was deposed and Miloš, the idealized symbol of the past, was recalled to the throne. Here again is evidence that nationalism was espoused, not by the masses, but primarily by the group of foreign-educated liberals who sought to combine the ideals of liberalism with Serbia's traditional folk democracy at a national level.

The return of the Obrenović family to the throne generated popular enthusiasm for the Serbian government. The name and program of the Obrenović's sparked the national consciousness of the Serbian masses. Michael Petrovich describes the nature of the Serbian peasantry's national spirit:

"Miloš enjoyed the double advantage of being a historic national symbol and an avenger of the people's wrongs. Michael not only benefited from his father's popularity but also created his own through his highly nationalistic program of war against the Turks and the liberation and unification of the South Slavs. The peasant of Serbia still saw the nation as an extension of the patriarchal communal family, and as tradition and experience taught him to value and respect the authority of the head of the household, so he valued and respected the authority of the head of the nation."<sup>8</sup>

Thus the traditional forms of loyalty of a patriarchal society, prevalent in Miloš's first reign, still predominated in a modernizing Serbian society. The state's popularity depended largely on the popularity of the leader. But it can be argued that a form of naive nationalism among the still illiterate masses of Serbia was stirred up by Michael Obrenović whose ambitious and forward-looking policies of a war of liberation from the Turks and of South Slavic federation roused the enthusiasm of the Serbian people.

8. Ibid, p. 305

The brief reign of Miloš was characterized by a general purge of the bureaucracy and government leaders. This not only enhanced his popularity among the dissatisfied populace but it furthered his intentions of instituting an absolute monarchy.

When Miloš died in 1860 his western-educated son Michael took the throne. Unlike his father who was concerned with redressing past wrongs and recreating the old order, Michael shaped a forward-looking policy. His primary goal was to expel the Turks completely from Serbia and indeed from the Balkan peninsula, and to form a South Slavic federation. In order to carry through this project he reorganized the government to make it more efficient and strong enough to spearhead a Balkan war of liberation from the Turks. His domestic policy led to increasing central control of government affairs, reduction of the power of the Council, and restriction of civil liberties and popular participation in government. These policies provoked opposition among the Liberals who, unable to criticize the government in the censored press, turned to foreign newspapers to vent their displeasure. The eventual outcome of centralization and repression was an overload on the prince himself and discontent among the people.

Meanwhile, however, Michael aggressively launched a nationalistic drive to remove the Turks from the Balkans. An important step toward this end was the militarization of Serbia and creation of the largest standing army in the Balkans. This action in itself, building a 90,000-man army, inadequately trained and armed as it might have been, raised spirits and inspired a wave of nationalism throughout the country. Petrovich records:

"Michael's huge army suddenly made every Serb a potential hero and liberator. A great sense of national pride swept over the country. A spate of patriotic songs whose themes dwelt on Serbian past glories raised the emotional temperature of the nation to a fever pitch. To 'cross the Drina' into Bosnia became a national

slogan. Even army maneuvers were a great event. Prince Michael cut quite an inspiring figure in his resplendent uniform of red tunic, white breeches, plume-topped shako, cape, gem-encrusted sword, and diamond-studded spurs. His program gave the Serbian people a sense of historic mission, destiny, and self-esteem, which found its most visible expression in the army. Militarism became a way of life; at least outwardly, educated Serbs even liked to boast of being a modern Sparta, the Piedmont of the South Slavs or, better yet, the Prussia of the Balkans."<sup>9</sup>

In order to implement his plans to form a Balkan military alliance, Michael first had to secure the removal of the Turkish garrisons from Serbian territory. An incident occurred in which the Turkish garrison in the Belgrade fortress opened fire on the city in 1862. The Serbs demanded that all Turkish troops be removed from Serbia - the Turks wanted the Serbian army to be abolished. The Great Powers intervened with a compromise, reducing the number of Turkish garrisons and limiting them to four key fortresses. In 1866, after years of negotiations between Belgrade and Constantinople over the status of the Turkish inhabitants of Serbia, the international situation changed, giving the Serbs a chance to have the Turkish troops peacefully evacuated once and for all. In 1866 Austria, the Porte's supporter in this matter, lost to Prussia, and a Cretan uprising distracted the Turks. Michael requested politely that the Porte remove its troops but leave its flag flying next to the Serbian flag, allowing Serbian troops to take over the defense of the territory. The sultan accepted this face-saving offer and, though still nominally subject of the Porte, Serbia was free of direct Turkish interference in the formulation of domestic and foreign policy.

Meanwhile, Michael started to make contacts and plans for his Bal-

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9. Ibid, pp. 315-316

kan war of liberation. Throughout his reign Michael cultivated relations with Montenegro, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. But his plans came to naught, for the national interests of the various Balkan peoples were a dividing force which was overridden only by the leadership of Michael, who was assassinated in 1868. Though Michael's plans did not come to fruition, he left behind a Serbia known for its leadership in Balkan liberation schemes and a people instilled with the spirit of nationalism and a sense of historic mission.

After Miloš's first reign, the growing group of Serbian intellectuals organized in an effort to promote and cultivate the Serbian language and culture. The Society of Serbian Letters was founded in 1842 and published a journal, "Glasnik," from 1846 to 1862 with articles on grammar, Serbian and Slavic history, geography and natural science. In addition, separate collections of Serbian folk literature and translations of western literature were published. An early project which the society finally abandoned was a basic dictionary of the Serbian language. Linguist Vuk Karadžić opposed the orthography used in this dictionary, for it was more complex (using 35 letters) than the simpler orthography of 30 letters which Karadžić was working to have accepted as official. The dictionary was abandoned, and in 1859 Vuk Karadžić's persistence finally paid off, as his was made the official orthography in Serbia.

The Society of Serbian Letters had 85 members at the most and suffered from the still low scholarly level of many of its members. Yet it played a vital cultural role in Serbia and helped to form a cultural basis for Serbian nationalism. In literature, poetry, theater, music and art, native Serbian culture was preserved and national pride flourished.

During Michael's reign steps were taken to improve education in Serbia. These included the founding of a Great School in 1863, and greatly expanding and regularizing elementary education. A number of gymnasia, secondary and vocational schools were established, including a high school for girls. The literacy rate rose from virtually zero in the early years of the century to 4.2% (50,796 people) in 1866. Literacy in the towns was much greater (26.7%) than that in the country (1.6%).<sup>10</sup>

So by the time Serbia had rid itself of all Turkish garrisons, much progress in culture and state organization had been achieved, though Serbia still lagged behind the Vojvodina as a Serbian cultural center. Modernization, with the transformation to a money economy and the growth of trade, resulted in social dislocation in the earlier static peasant society. The zadruga no longer provided security and was an anachronism in a modernizing Serbia, and it started to dissolve. When this happened, the loyalties of the peasantry could be transferred from the local to the national, especially as local leaders had become simply agents of the central government. Finally, the creation of a great army and a great dream to form an independent Serbian state leading a federation of Balkan nations, inspired in the Serbian people a sense of nationalistic mission previously unknown in Serbia.

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10. Ibid, p. 349

## THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The struggle for the national independence and political union of the Romanian people was spearheaded by the native nobility. It began in the early nineteenth century as a movement for autonomy and the replacement of Phanariot princes nominated by the Porte with native princes elected by the Romanian boyars. Gradually, with increasing exposure to western ideas and Russian domination, the national movement spread, primarily among the lower boyars, and extended its demands to include social reforms, political union of all Romanian people and independence. These demands were voiced during the 1848 revolution in Wallachia, but with the defeat of the revolutionary provisional government, the nationalists' desiderata contracted to include only a basic program of political union of the two Principalities under a foreign prince. The first of these desires was fulfilled in 1861 when, after a successful attempt by the Romanian divans to go beyond the stipulations of the Great Powers made in a series of settlements starting with the Treaty of Paris in 1856, the Porte recognized the union of the Romanian Principalities under native prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza.

The peasantry, which comprised the vast majority of the population, was not concerned with nationalism except as a way to achieve economic relief and agrarian reform. Peasants participated in several revolts, the leaders of which espoused national principles, but only if relief from the feudal exploitation of the existing system was promised.

Nationalism emerged when it did in the Romanian Principalities for several reasons. One was the discovery by members of the Romanian clergy in Transylvania that the Romanian language is derived from Latin

and that Romanians could trace their history back to the Roman conquest of Dacia. The 1791 demand of the Romanians in Transylvania that the Romanian nation be recognized and granted fundamental rights in the Habsburg Empire inspired the first nationalist acts in Wallachia.

Other factors included the exploitive regime of the Phanariot princes appointed by the Porte. Also the influence of western ideas grew as greater contacts with western Europe were developed, and increasingly liberal and national principles were applied to the Principalities by boyars educated in France or Germany. Finally Russia, which in the 1830's had given Wallachia and Moldavia constitutional governments, a more modern and efficient administration, and perhaps most importantly, parallel governmental institutions, by 1848 presented the greatest threat to Romanian independence. These are among the most important determinants of the shape of Romanian nationalism in the nineteenth century.

### Background

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Romanians were split, part being ruled by the Habsburgs and the other part coming under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. The Romanians of Transylvania were mostly serfs and were not recognized as one of the nations of the Austrian empire which enjoyed political rights and privileges. The Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were tributary to the Ottoman Empire, and at the turn of the century were dominated by the Greek Phanariot princes appointed by the Porte. This paper is concerned principally with the growth of nationalism in the Principalities.

But early developments in Transylvania were vital to the growth of nationalism in the Principalities and will be discussed first.

In 1699 and 1701 the clergy of the Orthodox church of the Romanians was invited to recognize the Pope as its head in exchange for increased civic rights. The clergy of the new Uniate church, educated in Rome, in the middle and late eighteenth century learned of their people's early history and of the Latinity of their language and published grammars and history books. In 1791 representatives of the Romanians of Transylvania submitted the Supplex Libellus Valachorum to Leopold II requesting equality of rights with the privileged nations of the Habsburg Empire and representation in the Diet in proportion to the number of Romanian taxpayers. The request was rejected. A few months later a Wallachian petition was submitted to the Russian and Austrian delegations at Sistova requesting autonomy and neutrality for Wallachia, the right to elect native princes from among the boyars, and the limiting of duties to the Porte to a specified tribute. It should be noted that the Wallachian request for national rights was for rights for the political nation, limited to the upper classes of Romanian society.

Transylvania, thus, was the cradle of Romanian nationalism, which rested on the historical basis that the Romanian people date back to the Roman occupation of Dacia in the second and third centuries, and the Latinity of the Romanian language. Major Transylvanian contributors to this line of thought were Samuel (Inocențiu) Micu-Clain, Petru Maior, and Gheorghe Șincai. Their books and views had particular influence in Wallachia after 1818 when Transylvanian Gheorghe Lazăr started teaching

at the School of St. Sava in Bucharest.

The Principalities had fallen under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The conditions of the tributary agreement, which to this day are debated among historians, apparently provided that the Porte would help defend the Principalities in exchange for a yearly tribute. No pashalik was set up and Turks did not settle in the Principalities, leaving matters of internal administration to the native princes. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Porte exerted extraordinary political and economic influence in the Principalities. The princes or hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia were appointed by the Porte from among the Greeks who lived in the section of Constantinople known as Phanar. The Phanariot princes paid healthy bribes to Turkish officials to win their positions, and in order to recoup expenses and make a profit the Phanariots required the peasants to pay ever higher taxes and duties.

The Phanariots first came to rule in the Principalities in 1711 when the Turks felt they could no longer trust that the native princes would be loyal. The social structure of the Principalities was as follows. A small group of boyars, the native nobility, owned most of the land. There were three ranks of boyars. The highest rank, in general held hereditary titles and owned great tracts of land. According to one source, about one half the land was owned by just 15 to 20 families.<sup>11</sup> The lower ranks of the nobility grew during the period of Phanariot rule, as the Phanariot princes granted rank in exchange for large bribes, to supplement their income. About 180 families thus owned another

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<sup>11</sup>. Barbara Jelavich, Russia and the Rumanian National Cause 1858-1859, Bloomington, 1959, p.5

one quarter of the land in the Principalities.<sup>12</sup> Among those who entered the nobility during this period were members of the Phanariot bureaucracy. These became known pejoratively as "ciocoi" and were the objects of peasant frustration and mistrust during the first half of the nineteenth century. The boyars were exempt from taxes, leaving the peasantry to pay the taxes, duties and other payments demanded by the Phanariots for themselves and for the sultan. Descriptions of peasant life under the Phanariots are grim, as the princes often demanded more than the peasants could produce and still provide for themselves.<sup>13</sup> The blame for the abuse of the masses of the Principalities should not fall solely, or perhaps even to the greatest degree, on the Phanariot Greeks. Rather, the whole system of Turkish administration was based on the exploitation of the peasantry for private gain. Later, when native princes once again reigned in Wallachia and Moldavia, they too multiplied their wealth at the expense of the peasantry. Thus exploitation was institutionalized in the Principalities and as a result, the agrarian problem was to become the most fundamental issue during the rest of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.

The Phanariots were responsible for some advances in Romanian society. For instance, it was Constantin Mavrocordat who reduced serfdom in the 1740's. The Phanariots, while painting a gloss of Greek culture on Romanian high society, introduced French literature in the Principalities and established several schools, albeit with instruction in the Greek language.

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12. Ibid. p.5

13. Thad Weed Riker, The Making of Roumania, London, 1931, p. 5

Ottoman economic influence was not limited to the exaction of taxes and tribute. As the Ottoman Empire shrank, losing fertile agricultural lands in north Africa and the Crimea, greater demands were made on the grain production of the Principalities. The Porte required delivery of a certain amount of agricultural produce every year, and paid less than its market value. Thus grain, which was a prime requirement of the Porte, was not so profitable for the Romanians to produce. In general, the livelihood of the Romanian peasants depended on animal husbandry, and the availability of much meadow and grazing land promoted this branch of the economy.

There was no developed Romanian merchant class. Rather, Greeks and other foreigners dominated trade in the Principalities. At the same time, the Orthodox Church in the Principalities fell under the direction of Greek clergy, and about one quarter (Wallachia) to one third (Moldavia) of the land was owned by the Greek Church and all income went directly into the coffers of foreign monasteries.<sup>14</sup> The fact that Greeks in general occupied towns and cities and conducted church services in a language unintelligible to the great majority of Romanians, as well as Greek diversion of a good part of the income produced by Romanian lands away from local coffers, alienated the Romanians from the Greeks. This alienation was to make itself quite evident in 1821.

In the early nineteenth century Russian influence started to make itself felt among the people of the Principalities. During the years from 1806 to 1812 Russian troops occupied the Principalities and supported the Serbian rebels in their struggle with the Turks. In fact,

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14. B. Jelavich, op. cit. , p. 104

it was the possibility of allying with the Russians that helped transform the Serbs' fight for a just administration into a struggle for national independence. Romanian pandours, fighting men from Oltenia, assisted Russian troops in the Pashalik of Belgrade. Thus they were exposed to Russian military tactics as well as inspired by the nationalistic struggle of the Serbs. Thus was initiated the leader-to-be of Romania's 1821 revolt, Tudor Vladimirescu.

So at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Romanian Principalities were ruled by Greek Phanariots, native boyars owned most of the land, and the peasantry was at the mercy of both. Nationalism was not present at all except among very few boyars, who were interested in restoring political power to the native princes and eliminating Phanariot rule.

#### The Revolt of 1821

The revolt of 1821 in Wallachia meant different things to the various groups of participants. Its ultimate achievement, the restoration of the rule of native princes and the expulsion of the Phanariots, fulfilled the limited national demands of the boyars, lending a nationalistic character to the rebellion. Yet the majority of rebels did not consider national aspirations to be important; their concern was the termination of economic servitude and the feudal system. An examination of Tudor Vladimirescu's revolt reveals a good deal about the role of nationalism in Wallachia of that time.

Plans for the 1821 revolt were made by Romanian boyars and merchants associated with the Philike Hetairia, a Greek nationalist organization

founded in Odessa, with the purpose of giving support to a Greek uprising against Turkish rule. It was originally hoped that the uprising would spread to all the Balkan Christian peoples and receive moral and military support from the Russians, especially as the leader of the Greek uprising, Alexander Ypsilanti, had a personal sympathizer in Tsar Nicholas I. But as we have seen, Miloš Obrenović prevented any such anti-Ottoman revolt from seeing the light of day in Serbia in order to capitalize on Ottoman goodwill to enhance his own power and to achieve the autonomy of Serbia. Ypsilanti made the tactical error of announcing Russia's support of the liberation struggle at the outset, rather than raising a revolt which the Russians would generously help the Turks to control. /so the revolt was limited to Romania and Greece, not without important consequences for both peoples. But the outcome of the uprising in Wallachia was not anticipated by Ypsilanti or the Romanian boyars who encouraged it. The key is that while the boyars who initiated the uprising were pursuing national goals in order to reassert their own power, the peasantry who carried through the rebellion wanted only to eliminate all exploiters, including Phanariots, ciocoi and native Romanian boyars. The boyars wanted a national revolution, the peasants a social revolution. And the leader of the revolt, Tudor Vladimirescu, described by current Romanian historians as a member of the rising petite bourgeoisie, was caught in the middle.<sup>15</sup> Tudor Vladimirescu, though of peasant origins, had been educated and had become relatively wealthy. He had served as a lieutenant in the Russian army in Serbia, and was inspired by the national struggle of the Serbs, which by 1816 had re-

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15. Constantin Giurescu, Contribuțiuni la studiul originilor și dezvoltării burgheziei române pînă la 1848, Bucharest, 1972, p. 229

sulted in the semi-autonomy of Serbia. His desires were both social and national: he favored tax reform, the establishment of a national army, a national assembly representative of all classes, and a native hospodar.

Vladimirescu planned the revolt after an agreement with several boyars who had connections with the Philike Hetairia. He would raise the people in rebellion; the boyars would supply the means. Ypsilanti had hoped that the revolt would be pro-Greek and anti-Turk, but he was unaware of the widespread alienation of Romanians toward the Greeks. The revolt was timed with the death of the hospodar of Wallachia to stress the desire of the Romanian boyars for the selection of a native prince. Vladimirescu agreed that action of the rebels would be directed against Phanariots and only those boyars who had taken extreme measures against the peasants. But Vladimirescu's Pades Proclamation generated overwhelming support for the movement among the peasants for the abolition of the feudal order.

His speech incited the peasantry to vitually uncontrollable acts of destruction of boyar residences and feudal records. Vladimirescu asserted that "No laws can prevent you from returning evil for evil. If a serpent crosses your path, hit it and kill it, for if it bites you it will probably endanger your life. But these dragons - our ecclesiastical and political chiefs - who have devoured our rights, how long shall we let them suck our blood, how long shall we remain their slaves?"<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, Vladimirescu addressed an assurance to the commanding Turkish pasha at Vidin, similar to the early pledges of loyalty to the Porte that Karadjordje made in 1804, that the rebellion was di-

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16. Quoted in David Mitraný, The Land and Peasant in Romania, New York, 1968, p. 24

rected against the boyars, not against the Turkish suzerain. Thus, although conceived as an anti-Phanariot rebellion by the Romanian boyars, and an anti-Ottoman rebellion by Ypsilanti, in practice the uprising was directed against all oppressors of the peasantry regardless of nationality.

Vladimirescu occupied Bucharest for several months, cooperating with the boyars who had established a provisional government there. Though regarded by many as Prince Tudor, Vladimirescu eventually lost popular support due to his attempt to prevent peasants from ravaging the estates of friendly boyars and also to his efforts to convince the peasantry to accept the rule of native boyars. He thus compromised the social program of the revolt which had animated the masses. Meanwhile, in the face of Turkish attack, Vladimirescu left Bucharest, was apprehended by Ypsilanti and put to death.

However, the uprising did lead to the restoration of native hospodars in the Principalities. This resulted when the Turks decided to pacify the Romanians and the Serbs so they could devote undivided attention to the Greek uprising which embroiled the southern lands of the Balkan peninsula. The Principalities sent committees of six or seven boyars to the Porte to make claims. The two demands which were approved by the Porte were the reestablishment of native hospodars and the exclusion of Greeks from civil and ecclesiastical positions. Other claims were denied, including the consolidation of boyar privileges and the exclusive right of natives to public employment.

And so the national claims of the Romanian boyars were achieved, while the social reform demanded by the peasantry was denied.

## The Birth of Romanian Nationalism

The pattern seen in the 1821 revolt is characteristic of the growth of nationalism in the nineteenth century in the Principalities.

Nationalism spread among the boyars and among the growing Romanian middle classes, while the primary concern of the peasantry was agrarian reform and an economically balanced organization of society.

When the nationalistic boyars incorporated promises of agrarian reform in their platforms, the peasantry supported them. But there was little support of national ideas for their own sake among the broad masses of the peasantry until much later.

As was mentioned earlier, the first national demand by the inhabitants of one of the Principalities was the 1791 request by Wallachian boyars for autonomy and the selection of native hospodars. The boyar petition of 1822 (after Vladimirescu's revolt) was similar to the earlier one, in that its concern was for the enhancement of native boyar power in a tributary Wallachia.

Nationalism in the Principalities was more and more heavily influenced by France, the ideals of the French Revolution and the cultural attachment many Romanians felt toward France as a result of their common Latin heritage. French influence was felt in the higher circles of society, as French was the international language of diplomacy at that time and Greek schools often provided some exposure to French literature.

In 1821 for the first time Romanian students received stipends to study in France. Through the years many sons of Romanian boyars

were educated in France and Germany, and it is from among these young men that the leadership of Romanian national movement emerged.

An early example of the adoption of French liberal ideas applied to the Romanian milieu was the so-called "Cărvunarii" or Carbonari group of lower rank Moldavian boyars. In 1822 they approached the Romanian prince Ionîța Sturdza with a constitution calling for a diet with representatives of all the boyar ranks, equal rights for boyars, guarantee of individual liberty, freedom of contract, trade and industry, abolition of sales of offices, observation of titles to property, establishment of a state-owned Romanian-language printing press and a Romanian-language school system. The last points promoted national culture, but the liberal ideas of the Cărvunarii were applied only to the elite of Romanian society. French liberalism had lost something in its Romanian translation. Sturdza refused to accept the constitution and exiled some of the leaders.

At the same time as French cultural and ideological influence was increasing in the Principalities, Russian political power there was growing. In 1826, when Turkey was weak due to internal contests for power between the Janissaries and the central government, Russia pressured the Porte to sign the Akkerman Convention, noted earlier with respect to its section requiring Turkish recognition of Serbian national rights, which enhanced Russian power in the Principalities. It gave Russia a say in the selection of princes, and in their deposition.

In 1827, Constantin Goleșcu, together with Ion Heliade Rădulescu (at teacher at the School of St. Sava) and Stanciu Căpățineanu, established a Literary Society at Golești in Wallachia, the purpose of which

was to promote Romanian culture including the development and re-organization of education, the establishment of a national theater and Romanian language journal. Golescu, sometimes called the first modern Romanian, was impressed by the overall well-being in western Europe and wanted to improve the lot of the Romanian peasantry. He sent his sons abroad for their higher education, and they became leaders in the Romanian national movement of the 1840's.

In 1828, Heliade published a grammar of the Romanian language, promoting the idea of using Latin script instead of the Cyrillic used at the time.

The Russian army occupied the Principalities in 1828 as it moved in to battle Turkey after the destruction of the Turkish fleet at Navarino Bay. The Turks were forced to capitulate and in the 1829 Treaty of Adrianople, which re-acknowledged Serbia's national rights, granted Russia great power in the Principalities. The Treaty of Adrianople marks the beginning of a new stage in the history of Romania and the development of Romanian nationalism.

The Treaty of Adrianople restricted Turkey's suzerain rights to the collection of tribute and the confirmation of ruling princes. The Russian army would occupy the Principalities until the 11.5 million ducat war reparations were paid, and a constitution, or Règlement Organique (more acceptable terminology for a tsar with an aversion to liberalism) would be drawn up with the aid of the Russian governor-general. The princes were to be elected for life terms and were to rule with the Divan or assembly of boyars. An important economic provision was the elimination of the Porte's right to pre-empt

Romanian produce. This opened up possibilities for the Principalities to find an export market in the west and helped transform the economy, making grain production the most important branch of the economy and ruining the peasants' mainstay, cattle breeding. At the same time the Black Sea was opened to international trade, giving yet another spur to the Principalities' economic life.

The Règlement Organique for each Principality was prepared by a committee of boyars from the respective principality, checked and altered by Russian Governor-general Pavel Kiselev, and approved by the divan. Kiselev set about to improve the administration of the principalities, increasing efficiency and improving the quality of life for the inhabitants. His goal was to give stability to the Principalities, and he provided them with parallel institutions to facilitate their eventual union. Articles 425 and 426 of the Règlement Organique state:

"The origin, the religion, the usages, and the conformity of language of the inhabitants in the two principalities, as well as their mutual needs, contain not only the principle but the elements of an intimate union, which has been traversed and retarded by fortuitous and secondary circumstances. The salutary consequences resulting from the union of these two peoples cannot be held in doubt. The elements of the fusion of the Moldo-Wallachian people are already postulated in this règlement by the uniformity of the administrative bases of the two states.

"Identity of legislation being one of the most efficacious means for consummating this moral union, a mixed commission will be named by the government of the two principalities (sic) for the purpose of formulating the civil and penal code of the two states in a single and identical body of Moldo-Wallachian laws..."<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps it was Russia's intention to assimilate the Principalities one day; it was certainly suspected by the growing nationalist organizations by the end of the Russian occupation.

Kiselev accomplished a great deal while in the Principalities.

17. Quoted in Riker, op. cit., pp. 19-20

He established a working constitutional system of government, improved sanitation and took measures to prevent famine, created a judiciary system and improved internal security. An educational system was organized with Romanian as the language of instruction and French taught as a foreign language. The *Règlement Organique* was in force from 1831 until the Crimean War, except briefly in 1848, and established an elective principedom, an assembly in which majority rule was respected and which was subject to executive veto. The assembly had control over taxation. A major disappointment for Kiselev was his inability to include agrarian reform in the *Règlement*. Instead, the *Règlement* defined the legal status of the peasant with respect to the landowner, and contributed to the increasing hardship of the peasants' life. For the first time the landholder was described as proprietor of the land rather than just village chief, and peasants were described as tenants, owing rent and labor duties in exchange for the use of their land. The peasant's plot was reduced by half, and his labor dues multiplied thirty times.<sup>18</sup> The landowner could reserve one third of the land for his own use, while the peasants had the right to occupy and work the rest in exchange for labor and rent. The number of livestock was limited, since the landholder usually enclosed former pasture lands to add to the amount of land cultivated in the ever more profitable grain crops. The great boyars ran the government. The Russians catered to their desires (especially in regard to the agrarian question) in order to maintain influence and generate support for Russia. So the lower ranks of the boyars started to become alienated from the great boyars and the Russians, as did

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18. Leften S. Stavrianos, The Balkans Since 1453, New York, 1958

the peasantry, which was becoming even more downtrodden and exploited.

The Russian occupation of the Principalities lasted until 1834. But Russian influence continued through pressures on the great boyars and ruling princes with the additional weight of Cossack troops on the Moldavian border to insure good behavior. In 1833, Russia gained more power in the Balkans at the expense of the Porte when she asserted herself as protector of the Balkan Christians and assumed a virtual protectorate of the Ottoman Empire in the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. The Turks were threatened by the ambitious Mehemet Ali of Egypt, so Russia enjoyed increasing latitude and influence. As Russia, a reactionary power, appeared to pose a threat to the Romanian nationality, the Romanian national movement became anti-Russian.

From 1827 until the revolution of 1848 the Romanian national movement, though its leadership remained in the ranks of the boyars, became very dynamic, attracted the support of a growing Romanian middle class, and experienced growing diversification of views in its ranks. Journals, cultural organizations and secret political groups agitated for the cultivation of Romanian history, art, language and culture and for independence, union and social reform. Among the journals were Curierul românesc, 1829-1848, 1859, edited by Heliade in Bucharest; Albina românească, 1828-1858, edited by Gheorghe Asachi in Iași; Dacia literară, and Arhiva românească, edited by Mihail Kogălniceanu in 1840 in Iași; Propășirea, 1844, edited by Kogălniceanu, Vasile Alecsandri and Ion Ghica in Iași and Magazin istoric pentru Dacia, 1845-1851, edited by August Treboniu and Nicolae Bălcescu in Bucharest. These journals contributed to the Romanian literary advancement, promoted national

consciousness through romantic vision of the history of the Romanian people, and voiced the nationalistic hopes of the young boyars. The publications of the thirties were characterized by admiration of France and their tendency to look westward. In the forties the focus shifted to an appreciation of the Romanian character, exemplified by the folk poetry recorded and published by Vasile Alecsandri and in the romantic historiography of Mihail Kogălniceanu.

Organizations devoted to the promotion of Romanian culture were formed, like the Romanian Philharmonic Society of Ion Cîmpineanu, Costache Aristia and Heliade which was active in Bucharest from 1833 to 1838. Formally its purpose was to encourage literature and the arts, but it also advocated the unification of the Principalities, a constitutional government, freedom of the press, free education and equality before the law. The influence of French liberal thought on the program of the nationalists is evident. The political activities of the Philharmonic Society caused it to be banned, and after its suppression, secret political organizations were formed to carry on its activity. In 1838 Cîmpineanu's National Party, composed of liberal boyars and bourgeoisie, formulated a document known as the Union and Independence Act which called illegal both the Règlement Organique and Russia's appointment of Wallachian prince Alexandru Ghica. It called for union of the Principalities under an elected prince whose title was to be hereditary, and for the adoption of a constitution which provided for universal suffrage and the freeing of bondsmen. Cîmpineanu was arrested and the movement floundered. The inspiration for the Union and Independence Act came from the attempts of Polish Prince

Adam Czartoryski to organize a general Balkan uprising to win national independence for the various nationalities in the late 1830's.

Conservative nationalism continued to exist alongside the more liberal nationalism of the western-educated. In 1839 an attempt was made by a conservative group in Moldavia to overthrow Prince Mihail Sturdza and set up an aristocratic state subordinate to the Porte, ruled by boyars who would be equal in rank, in a confederation of Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia. The so-called Confederative Conspiracy led by Leonte Radu incorporated some of the liberal ideas of the west, but did not apply them to society as a whole but only to the boyars. It demanded equality of rank among boyars and a confederation similar to the German Confederation.

In 1840 in Wallachia a liberal group of young followers of Cmpineanu led by Dimitrie Filipescu planned an armed uprising to achieve their goals of an independent republic of Wallachia, and the abolition of the feudal order and of all boyar ranks and privileges. This movement was nipped in the bud and the leaders arrested.

It is significant that some of the nationalists demanded recognition of the rights of the peasantry and the need for social reform. This was indicative of a greater absorption of liberal ideals by Romanian nationalists, coupled with the circumstances created by a changing economy which the lower boyars and bourgeoisie began to realize made feudal relationships counterproductive.

The educational system was a medium for the spread of nationalism in the Romanian Principalities. The Règlement Organique had already

provided for instruction in Romanian system-wide. In 1835 the Academia Mihaelană was founded in Iași. This school was a springboard for nationalism in Moldavia. In 1843 Mihail Kogălniceanu presented his first lecture on the national history of the Romanians there.

Meanwhile, Romanian students were organizing in Paris. From 1835 to 1838 Alphonse de Lamartine, Edgar Quinet and Jules Michelet supported the Revolutionary Romanian Circle whose participants included Ion Ghica, C.A. Rosetti, Nicolae Crețulescu, Costache Negruzzi, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Alexandru Ioan Cuza and Nicolae Bălcescu - all to figure prominently in the 1848 revolution or the successful bid for union in 1857-1861. In 1839 the Society for the Study of the Romanian People was formed in Paris.

In 1843, back in Wallachia, the underground revolutionary organization Frăția (Brotherhood) was formed, led by Ion Ghica, Nicolae Bălcescu and Christian Tell. Its slogan was 'Justice, Fraternity' and it aimed to install a liberal democracy in Wallachia. In 1845 the Literary Association of Romania was founded; it cooperated with Frăția and favored the union of the Romanians. An organization similar to Frăția, the Patriotic Association, was founded in Moldavia in 1846, but it was short-lived as its members were arrested or exiled.

By 1848 liberalism and nationalism were well-ensconced in the ranks of the lower boyars who sought the chance to bring the benefits of these ideologies to their people in Romania.

## The Revolution of 1848

Several Romanians participated in the February Revolution of 1848 in Paris. The various organizations of Romanian nationalists, inspired by the revolutionary spirit bursting forth in different corners of Europe, attempted to make liberal reforms in the Principalities.

The 1848 revolution in Moldavia was more of an unsuccessful plea for reform than a revolution. A group of boyars and members of the middle class met in April to formulate a reform program calling for improvement of the Règlement Organique, including economic and judicial reform, ministerial responsibility, improvement of the condition of the peasantry, creation of a national guard and an end to corruption. The conservative nature of the demands of the Moldavians resulted from their proximity to Russia, the more conservative German educations of the main leaders, and the fear of extreme social dislocation which arose after the Galician peasant uprising of 1846. The group was loosely organized and easily broken up. Moldavia became a bastion of conservatism and Russian influence while the would-be reformers went into exile, ranging from the mild demands of April to an ultra-radical declaration advocating union with Wallachia, abolition of all privileges, establishment of a government based on liberty, equality and fraternity, and an end to all feudal obligations, distributing land to the peasants without compensation. This declaration was inspired by the May mass meeting of Romanians at the Field of Liberty in Blaj, Transylvania.

Finally, the program of the Moldavians was defined clearly by Mihail Kogălniceanu. The core of their demands was union with Wallachia and rejection of the Règlement Organique and the Russian protectorate. To achieve these goals, the Moldavians decided to cooperate with the

Wallachian revolutionaries in hopes of spreading the revolt to Moldavia.

The Wallachian revolution enjoyed greater immediate success than that in Moldavia, but it too ended in disappointment. The revolutionaries in Wallachia were in general more radical than those of Moldavia, as more had studied in Paris, and they were better organized. There were at least two groups who cooperated in the movement - the moderates led by Ion Heliade Rădulescu and the radicals represented by Nicolae Bălcescu. Heliade's participation ensured the support of the shopkeepers and artisans of Bucharest for the revolution.

The peasants were restive, for they continued to live in poverty and in servitude to the landlords, while the Romanian serfs of Transylvania had been freed of feudal obligations and granted full ownership of the land they worked by Ferdinand I in March, 1848. The Transylvanian held several mass rallies demanding the recognition of the Romanians' status as a nation, which heightened the tension in the Principalities. Bucharest's population was also in a dangerous mood as the corruption of Prince Bibescu's regime fomented widespread discontent, and as laws raising the tuition for an education, aimed at limiting educational opportunities to the wealthy, put several hundred resentful youths into the streets.

Frăția put together a list of demands and in the Islaz Proclamation of June demanded complete independence for Wallachia, emancipation of the peasantry, abolition of boyar privileges, an elected prince, a general assembly representative of all social strata, ministerial responsibility, freedom of the press and education, political rights for all citizens including Jews and gypsies, formation of a national guard

and the summoning of a Constituent Assembly to formulate a Constitution.

Prince Bibescu reluctantly conceded to the demands of the revolutionaries, first appointing a revolutionary government and then abdicating. The provisional government lasted from mid-June to mid-September, changing personnel and reducing demands in an attempt to obtain recognition by the Porte. A committee of boyars and peasants was established to discuss possible agrarian reforms, but no program was suggested, as most of the revolutionary leaders still did not consider agrarian reform to be vital to the revolution. One of the very few who did recognize the significance of the agrarian problem was Ion Ionescu, whose views are summarized by John C. Campbell:

"Ionescu showed that he understood the economic basis of the Roumanian revolution to be the conflict between boyar and peasant, contrasting it with the situation of capitalists against workers in France, but stressing the similarity on one point, namely that in both cases revolution was caused by the fact that labor did not get a fair share of the wealth it produced. He recognized an organic connection between nationality and social reform. Without the latter, he wrote, there can be no future, there can be no nationality. The solution lay in the establishment of harmony, which in France found expression in the organization of labor, in Roumania in the abolition of feudal dues and the creation of a balance between property and labor, with a citizenry of peasant proprietors. 'The boyars swear to the constitution,' he said, 'except for the article on property, that is, they want liberty only for themselves.'"<sup>19</sup>

The provisional government was ousted in September by Turkish troops, sent under pressure of Russia which could not tolerate revolution at its doorstep. Russian troops also occupied the Principalities and the revolutionary leaders were forced to flee the country, many remaining in exile in Paris for ten years. The revolution had failed to achieve its goals, but it did implant and popularize the concept of

<sup>19</sup> John C. Campbell, French Influence and the Rise of Roumanian Nationalism, New York, 1971, pp. 201-202

of the nation and the desirability of uniting all Romanians in one state.

The revolutionaries learned a hard lesson in 1848. Unable to agree among themselves as to the types of social reform that were desirable to institute, then failing at their attempt to bridge a huge gap of social development in a matter of several months, many abandoned their demands for social reform. A new, more narrow and thus achievable program was formulated by the exiled revolutionaries after 1848. They desired the union of Moldavia and Wallachia under the leadership of a foreign prince. They gained support from Napoleon III, who persistently promoted the cause of Romanian unity in deliberations with the Great Powers and so helped the Principalities to achieve union in 1861.

#### From 1848 to Union

Romanian nationalists in Paris continued their efforts to promote the cause of the Romanians in Europe, as well as in the Principalities. A number of newspapers and reviews were published in Paris in the years after 1848, some of which found their way to sympathizers in the Principalities. In addition, literary and historical reviews and books were published in Romania which heightened Romanian national self-consciousness.

Russia occupied the Principalities until 1851, then returned in 1853 at the outset of a new war with Turkey over Russia's right to protect the Christians of the Holy Places, a right which France also claimed. The circumstances which led to this confrontation's transformation into an international war, pitting Britain and France against Russia, need not be discussed here. But the change

in relations between the European powers which occurred as a result of this war was relevant to the ultimate success of the Principalities' bid for union.

Austria threatened to enter the war against Russia unless Russia withdrew from the Principalities. This was done, and Austria's army moved in to replace the Russian occupation forces. This marked the opening of a rift between Austria and Russia which made possible the union of the Principalities. For as long as Russia and Austria had cooperated with regard to the Balkan territories, Russia respected Austria's fear of nationality problems in the multi-national Habsburg Empire which could be sparked by Romanian nationalist victories in the Principalities. Therefore, Russia opposed union. Russia viewed Austria as a traitor now and no longer considered Austrian objections as an impediment to Russian policies. The union of the Principalities was now possible.

Russia lost the Crimean War. The Congress of Paris dictated the end of Russia's protectorate of the Christian peoples of the Ottoman Empire and of the Principalities in particular and substituted it with a joint guarantee of the Great Powers. In addition, the Danube was opened to international trade, the part of Bessarabia fronting on the mouth of the Danube being transferred back from Russia to Moldavia. The matter of the political organization of the Principalities turned out to be too controversial to settle at the Congress. France supported union and a foreign prince. Austria opposed any form of union. Turkey, backed by Britain, supported the status quo. Russia connived to drive a wedge between France and Britain, and posed as representing the interests of the Romanians and supported the consultation of the Romanians

themselves. The British suspected Russia's motives in its apparent support of union and thus toughened its position against union.

It was decided to postpone a final decision on the political re-organization of the Principalities so that the treaty could be finalized. An international commission was appointed to investigate conditions in the Principalities and to relate the desires of the people, as expressed by divans elected by citizens of every social level, to the Powers. This signaled the start of various factions' attempts to control the election, or at least to influence it. Austria, still occupying the Principalities, opposed union and took measures to assure an anti-unionist majority. However, the Powers insisted that Austria evacuate the Principalities (which it had hoped to add to the Habsburg domains) before the election. French representatives worked for a pro-union vote. But the princes, who were in charge of drawing up lists of electors had the most control and the Moldavian Prince Vogorides was faithful to the Porte and Austria, which had given him power. Thus, as many unionists as possible were removed from the electoral lists.

" 'The lists,' wrote one eminent Roumanian author, 'constituted a veritable insult to the prescriptions for the Treaty of Paris, which ruled that the divans ad hoc should be the most faithful expression of the opinion of all classes of society. Of 2,000 great proprietors in Moldavia, they contained the names of only 350; of the 20,000 and more small proprietors, they had inscribed only 2,264. Among the electors of the cities one had found to register in the whole state of Moldavia only 11 persons who exercised the liberal professions. In all the lists were comprised (but) 4,658 electors of the upper classes instead of 40,000 which they should have contained. One made, it is true, a great parade of the 167,922 peasants inscribed; but these latter, seeing the manner in which they had to choose their delegates, signified absolutely nothing.' "20

The Moldavian election was held first, and it was a foregone conclu-

20. Riker, op. cit., pp. 111-112 quoting A. Xenopol

sion that the anti-unionists would win. But the manipulation of the election so alienated the people that a good many pro-unionists abstained from voting.

"Of the 193 priests registered (out of a total of 3,263 ) only 17 voted; of the 465 electors among the 3000 great proprietors, but 207 cast their votes. Even to the end, the officials of the government interfered to influence the results, and a case was cited where a self-appointed committee took possession of the ballots at one of the polling places of Jassy and wrote on them the name of the anti-union candidate. But the absence of the great majority of citizens from the elections was a ridiculous commentary on the means devised for securing the opinions of the province. As a medium for registering the wishes of Moldavia the plebiscite was a farce." <sup>21</sup>

After much debate, in which Napoleon III agreed to stop insisting on complete union under a foreign prince in exchange for annulment of the election, it was decided by the powers that the election should be restaged. This opened the field to renewed agitation efforts. Nationalists actively promoted the cause of union despite governmental interference. Near Iasi in 1856 a society called Unirea (Union) was formed to organize the struggle for union. In 1857 the Central Committee of the Union was established in Bucharest, just as the exiles of 1848 were allowed to return. Nationalists went into the countryside to agitate for union, lending a populist air to the movement. A unionist newspaper, Concordia or Românul, was published by C.A. Rosetti in Bucharest in 1857 which continued to appear until 1915. With these organizations and newspapers, clubs and discussion circles the cause of union was popularized.

In 1857, thus, new electoral lists were drawn up and elections held. In both principalities union was overwhelmingly supported. The primary concerns of the divans were autonomy, union, a foreign prince and

21. Ibid., p. 125

representative government, and the Moldavian divan included a fifth point, neutrality of the Principalities.

The Powers once again met. Their final decision, despite the wide support of union in the Principalities, was to keep the Principalities administratively separate, each with its own elected prince and a parallel set of institutions, with a Central Commission at Focșani, on the border between Wallachia and Moldavia, to deal with matters of common interest. However, when newly-elected divans met to select the princes in 1859, the nationalistic desire to achieve political union outweighed the petty power struggles of the various boyars, and a compromise candidate, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, was elected by both divans. The Principalities had achieved personal union, though it was to be two more years before the Porte would recognize the administrative and political union of the Principalities. This came only after Cuza had carefully avoided offending the Powers, keeping the ardent nationalists from trying to move too fast in declaring union, while coping with the difficult and exhausting domestic task of ruling with two capitals and legislatures.

Thus the first demand of the Romanian nationalists was fulfilled: Moldavia and Wallachia were united. The energy of the young boyars, educated in the west and infected with liberal and national ideas, combined with the support of Napoleon III and a favorable state of international affairs, made this achievement possible. The spread of nationalistic ideas among the boyars and middle classes, and even among the peasants, through revolutionary activity in 1848, made that possibility a reality.

## CONCLUSION: SERBIAN AND ROMANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENTS COMPARED

The rise of nationalism in the Pashalik of Belgrade and the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia during the first six decades of the nineteenth century followed similar lines of development. Despite important differences in the situation of the Serbs and the Romanians, the development of nationalism in general proceeded in similar stages as each people strove to achieve national independence.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century nationalism was limited to the native political leaders, expressed in bids to increase the power of the native upper class or individual power, and was influenced in a superficial way by the intelligentsia of the same nationality living outside the Ottoman Empire. Thus Karadjordje and Miloš Obrenović made claims for national autonomy which were supported by the linguistic and educational work of Dositej Obradović of the Vojvodina. Groups of boyars in the Romanian Principalities who petitioned the Porte for the replacement of foreign leaders with native ones and for increased autonomy were inspired by demands of Transylvanian Romanians for national rights within the Habsburg Empire, which in turn were rooted in the historical and linguistic discoveries of the Transylvanian Latinists Micu-Clain, Maior and Sincai.

The Vojvodina Serbs contributed to the modernization of Serbia and the evolution of Serbian nationalism to a greater extent than the Romanians of Transylvania affected the development of nationalism in the Principalities. Great numbers of teachers and bureaucratic functionaries crossed into Serbia, thus helping to lay the educational and governmental foundations for the spread of nationalism in Serbia.

Financial and material assistance of Serbian merchants in the Vojvodina provided the Serbs with the means to fight the Turks. The Transylvanian influence in the Principalities was more limited. A few teachers, like Gheorghe Lazăr, came to the Principalities and by teaching in the Romanian language and introducing Latinism, started the snowball of Romanian nationalism rolling. In addition, the struggle of the Transylvanian serfs in 1848 inspired the nationalists of the Principalities to dream of the formation of a Greater Romania, composed of all the Romanian people.

Among the Serbian and Romanian peasantry, nationalism had not yet appeared. Most Serbs had a national consciousness, as a legacy of the Serbian oral tradition and epic poetry. But the peasants of both nationalities were concerned with eliminating extreme oppression, not in formation of a national state. In both lands peasant revolts took place, but these were not based on the ideals of forming an independent national state. The peasantry wanted only to restore normality to rural life; peasants desired to be left alone by tax collectors and demanding landholders, to reduce outside interference, be it by foreigners or conationals, from his daily life. In 1804 the Serbs rose up against Janissary misrule, not against the Turkish sipahis who had lived in the Pashalik for centuries. And when Miloš enforced a centralized regime in Serbia, with taxation and corvée, the peasantry again revolted in the mid-1820's. Thus the Serbian revolution was national only in the sense that the boundaries between oppressor and oppressed happened to follow national lines: on one side were the Serbs and on the other side the Janissaries and Turks. The revolt was not nationalistic, except per-

haps among the leaders and intelligentsia, for the masses of Serbs did not envision the recreation of a Serbian state.

The participants in the revolution of 1821 in Wallachia, as has been shown, represented boyars, the nebulous middle class and the peasantry, and each had its own interests. The peasantry, as in Serbia, was concerned only with eliminating the exploiter, be he Phanariot Greek or Romanian. His interests thus were identical with those of the Serbian peasantry. But his revolt could not be construed as national for it aimed at Romanian boyars in addition to foreigners; the lines of social conflict were not neatly drawn between nationalities.

Yet the 1821 resurrection did achieve certain national goals - the goals of the native boyars who wanted to see one of their own number on the throne. It is the existence of a class of large landholders in Romania, and the concomitant absence of Turks in the Principalities, that distinguished Serbia and the Romanian lands so sharply. But even so, by the end of Miloš's reign a group of notables or government leaders had emerged in Serbia which represented a point of view similar to that of the Romanian boyars.

Nationalism is rooted in the language and history of a people. The Romanian and Serbian movements both share an early concern with the development of a national literary language and the exploration and romanticizing of the nation's history. The works of Dositej Obradović and Vuk Karadžić are of extraordinary importance for the cultural foundation of the Serbian national movement. Likewise the Transylvanians Micu-Clain, Șincai and Maior were instrumental to the birth of a Romanian literary language and historical consciousness, while later

contributors included Mihail Kogălniceanu, Nicolae Bălcescu and Vasile Alecsandri. A romantic appreciation of the cultural achievements of the peasantry was inspired by Karadžić and Alecsandri who pioneered the collection of folk poetry.

At the time Serbia was granted autonomy with the aid of Russia, the Romanian Principalities were put under a Russian protectorate. Here the development of nationalism in the two regions diverged. For Serbia, autonomy meant the consolidation of native rule, and infighting between Miloš and the growing liberal group known as the Constitutionalists. Russia was benevolent and distant, Slavic and Orthodox. But for the Principalities, Russian meddling was the rule, and though during the years under Governor-general Kiselev Russian influence was considered to be beneficent and in fact laid the administrative groundwork for union, as time passed Russia seemed to threaten the national development of the Romanians, and a general anti-Russian attitude permeated Romanian society. This sentiment was articulated by the young liberals of the Principalities. This brings up another similarity between the Serbian and Romanian movements.

Since 1821 in the Principalities, and since 1839 in Serbia, a number of young natives received their higher education in the west, most notably in Paris, but also in other French and German universities. The Romanians were sons of lower ranked boyars, the Serbs generally were sons of government officials. These young men imbibed the liberal ideals current in the west and were moved by the romantic nationalism of the period. French influence was of particular importance in the development of both national movements, as the

young liberals returned to their homelands ready to apply these newly-adopted principles to their relatively primitive societies. In each country they formed a nucleus of nationalistic and liberal reformers.

In Serbia the nationalists organized the Society of Serbian Youth in 1848, advocating support of the Serbs of Austria in their fight with the Hungarians, and in the spirit of Serbian folk democracy they supported the convocation of the St. Andrews National Assembly which was to depose Alexander Karadjordjević in 1858.

In the Principalities the liberal nationalists staged several fruitless revolts during the 1840's and formed a short-lived provisional government in Bucharest during the tumultuous year 1848. They continued, stressing social reform less and union of the Principalities more, to agitate in Europe for foreign support and again in the Principalities in the 1857 and 1858 elections which led to the achievement of union. France had a much deeper attraction to Romanians than to the Serbs, for the Romanians looked to their brothers of Latin heritage as cultural models, and as the possible source of Romanian union and independence. A special feeling of solidarity thus linked the Romanians and French, and this solidarity helped the young Romanians to gain the support of Napoleon III for the Romanian cause, support which was vital to the success of the nationalists.

Polish efforts to generate a Balkan uprising influenced the course of events in Serbia and the Principalities. Prince Adam Czartoryski lobbied actively among the Balkan peoples after the Russian smashing of the Polish revolution in 1830. Czartoryski inspired several Romanian revolts in the early 1840's and was the inspiration for the national

policy of Serbia's Minister of the Interior Garašanin, set forth in the Načertanije of 1844. Here a difference can be observed between the two nationalities. For the Serbian government, or at least certain members thereof, was receptive to nationalist ideas and was willing to adopt a nationalist stance in its foreign relations. This resulted in part from the relative autonomy Serbia enjoyed. On the other hand, the governments of the Principalities put down any show of nationalist spirit, due to the degree of influence Russia enjoyed among the government officials there until 1854, and the nationalists formed an active opposition party. Only when Russian influence was replaced by the joint guarantee of the Great Powers was it possible to form a nationalistic government in the Principalities.

The peasantry of both nationalities suffered due to economic changes occurring in their respective countries. In Serbia, the barter economy was being transformed into a money economy, and as a result indebtedness became an immense problem. Government abuses during the reign of Alexander Karadjordjević compounded the misery of the peasantry which was angry enough by 1858 to depose Alexander (who by the way also failed to take a strong national stance in the 1848 revolution). The discontent of the peasantry was cleverly channeled by Michael Obrenović into nationalistic fervor. Although domestically the regime was even more oppressive than before, the reason for restrictiveness was to build up Serbian strength to lead a Balkan war of liberation against the Turks. The process of modernization, which broke down the traditional loyalties to the extended family, expanded educational opportunities and broadened the field of experience

of many peasants, facilitated the redirection of loyalties to the nation. Economic changes in the Principalities occurred as the result of the abolition of Turkish monopolies on trade coupled with rising demands for grain in western Europe. The great landholders increased their cultivated holdings and reduced the peasantry to debt-ridden, overworked tenants. Faced with utter poverty, the Romanian peasantry was restive, and in 1848, when the nationalists promised to give the peasantry land, the rural population supported the revolutionaries. Neither agrarian reform nor national union was achieved, but as long as the peasants associated agrarian reform with union, the nationalists could count on their support. Again, discontent caused by economic changes could be rechanneled into nationalistic causes.

Though the peasants of both countries suffered dislocation and hardship, the roots of their problems, it must be emphasized, were strikingly different, and as time passed and the societies developed the differences would become amplified. The Serbs were a nation of freeholders who were struggling to adapt to a modernizing society in which they were free agents. But the Romanian peasantry was bound by the boyars and suffered increasing exploitation as the boyars took advantage of a changing economy to amass greater wealth at the expense of the peasants. The overriding concern of the Romanian peasant was to end his servitude and to gain the right to own land. Although the peasants had supported national union in 1848 and 1857, it was as a means to improve their position in society as promised by the national liberals. On the other hand, the Serbian freeholders had rallied to the national cause in Michael's drive to form a national liberation

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army as the national mission in itself captured the imagination of the peasantry and rallied the Serbs to action.

The final stage of the Romanian nationalist movement before 1860 has no equivalent in the Serbian movement. The vote to determine the Romanians' feelings about the political organization of their country and the fait accompli of the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza were unique phenomena resulting from the deadlocked discussions of the Powers. Cuza, an avowed nationalist, managed his diplomatic affairs somewhat like Miloš had, ingratiating the sympathetic powers by keeping the lid on nationalistic activity at home. And like Miloš, Cuza's strategies brought him success and Romanian unification.

By the 1860's both the Serbians and Romanians had achieved partial fulfillment of their nationalist goals. But the granting of autonomy for Serbia and union for Romania only whetted the nationalists' appetite. Both had yet to win complete independence and expand their borders to include all the peoples of their nationality. Nationalism had come to stay in these Balkan nations. It had been born, experienced the innocence of childhood and the trials of youth, and was now on the threshold of adulthood. The degree to which the fundamental differences in economic development and social structure in Serbia and Romania were to affect the maturing national movements in future years is left for another study to appraise.

Despite certain important differences in the organization of society, the national movements of Serbia and Romania developed under fundamentally similar conditions: foreign oppression, outside intellectual influence which spurred the development of a national literary

language, an appreciation of national history, and the vibrant romantic liberal idealism among native leaders; the dislocation caused by economic changes and modernization which broadened the outlook of the people; and the benevolence of a foreign advocate who was able to put the young nation on its feet on the international stage though limiting the possibilities for the nationality's self-assertion. Most importantly, the national movements of Serbia and Romania emerged as a result of a single historical process: the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the international struggle to fill the power vacuum left in the Balkans. Thus the national awakening of the Serbian and Romanian peoples and their struggles for independence until the 1860's are variations on a single theme.

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