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STUDIES

Festivity and Royalty in the Romanian History (1866-1927)

- festivities, celebrations, visits, commemorations of the Romanian

Royal Family life -

-summary-

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Festivity and Royalty in the Romanian History (1866-1927) - festivities, celebrations, visits, commemorations of the Romanian Royal Family life, is the result of a Ph.D. scholarship that is set to be a contribution to the study of the Romanian monarchy and monarchical Festivism between 1866 and 1927. This research is focusing on the field of imagology and the cultural history of collective mentalities, focusing on the Romania's monarchical festive horizon, between the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

In the beginning of this period, the Royal Festivism had greatly influenced the efforts made by the Royal family towards the process of modernization and Europeanization of the country. Due to this fact, the political and public evolution of the Romania's Royal family became the main subject of numerous papers that were generated during diverse political establishments. Because of this, the works of the historians were severely affected by the various ideological perspectives imposed by the totalitarian regime that governed the country in the second half of the 20th century.

Although there are a lot of papers dedicated to the study of Romania's monarchy, according to my knowledge, there are no studies that focused only on the subject of Romanian monarchical Festivism and its signification's for the collective mentality of the era. My research contributes to this field, and it intends to capture the changes in the princely and Royal Festivism. The main point of reference in doing so is the work signed by Theodor Văcărescu, entitled *Ceremonialu Curței Regale a României* (Romania's Royal Court Ceremony).

The reason for choosing this topic was based on my desire to deepen my previous research that I carried on during my BA and Master studies. During this period of time, my area of interest was closely related to aspects regarding the subject of ceremonies, and of the practices and symbols of Festivism. The doctoral studies have allowed me to widen my previous geographical horizon, starting from the small area of the Neamț County and continuing with the research that focused on the Festivism displayed by the Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People. The Ph.D. research was a natural continuity, so I've extended my research interests to include all 3 historical regions (Moldova, Muntenia and Transylvania), following the course of the Royal family over the years in their goal of achieving national unity. In order to do so, I have focused on the reigns of the first two kings, using a comparative approach designed to underline the common features and evolutions during each king's rule in regard to the Royal

Festivism. Also, I have dedicated a subchapter to the visits made by the Royal family outside the country in order to compare Romanian monarchical Festivism with the one encountered in other European kingdoms. The reason for choosing only the reign of the first two kings is due to time restraints, and huge quantities of information, that only allowed me to focus on this interval. The smaller time frame allowed me to browse the aspects concerning the Royal family and Festivism in more detail while the history of the Romanian royalty was unfolding in front of me, more fascinating than before with numerous ups and downs.

The PhD thesis relies mainly on a quantitative method based on a series of original sources like: documents from the Romanian National Archives (the Royal House collection), articles from the press of that time, online articles, interviews and many other printed resources: memoirs, letters, personal and travel journals (written at the time the events took place), and also specialized papers on the topic of monarchy and ceremonies in general and Romanian in particular. After I have done an analysis and interpretation of these sources, I have managed to reconstruct an accurate image of the Romanian monarchic Festivism and to establish its importance for the country's history. In order to obtain a clearer and objective image of the monarchic era in Romania, I have looked at other Royal Courts from Europe so that I can perform a comparative analysis which is essential for creating a wider picture of how the European monarchic model survived, functioned and was adapted to serve the traditions of the 19th century Romania.

One of the main merits of this paper, although not the most important, is the fact that I have managed to sum up a massive amount of novelty information that is startling and not so much known to the general public regarding the monarchic Festivism. Without our initiative, these sources would still be scattered among a large number of sources and papers that are not specialized on the topic of the Romanian monarchy, so that a unified picture on the subject has been unavailable until now.

The ceremonies represent a spectacular way to promote the image of the Royal Family of Romania, an image that was filled with national, traditional and also European symbolism. They are a reflection of the monarchic power in Romania, they manage to show the loyalty and the eulogistic spirit of the Romanians towards the Royal Family. On the other hand, the ceremonies encompass the efforts pushed forward by the royalty into promoting and preserving the Romanian traditions, and also they are a means of promoting dynastic values and serve to legitimate the Royal institution.

Taking into consideration all the above, I can state that this paper represents a complex approach of a topic that isn't that popular in the Romanian historiography. This paper is not the result of an exhaustive research. As proof, we have to mention that we decided not to handle the entire monarchic period, and this is due to the fact that the sources regarding the Royal House of Romania are exceedingly diverse, and the amount of information is colossal. Also, the depictions of the ceremonies where the Royal Family was involved during the 81 years of monarchic reign, are numerous and at the same time dispersed. The selection of sources that were used for this research, intends to highlight, using concrete examples, the form, the frame, and the significations of the Royal Festivism.

The 1866 Constitution defined all the way to the smallest details, not only the establishment but also the ways through which the Romanian hereditary dynasty was to be propagated. Its founder was chosen from inside the House of Hohenzollern, a princely family that had its origins in 11 century Germany. He became the head of the Royal Family, that was included the King, the Queen, the Heir to the throne and his consort, the princes and the princesses of Romania. At the same time, following the orders of Carol I, the rules of protocol of the princely and subsequent of the Royal Court, were established. They were meant to encompass the etiquette needed for organizing the festive events like: receiving official visits, religious ceremonials and other festivities organized by the Royal Court.

This paper is divided into 7 chapters, each of them bringing an important contribution to the subject of ceremonials and monarchic Festivism during the reign of Carol I and Ferdinand I of Romania. Apart the 7 chapters, I have added an introductory study, final remarks and a list of annexes containing some representative images regarding the Royal Festivism during the studied period.

The first chapter called, *The importance of the Romanian royal festivity for the national identity (history, culture, language, religion, traditions)* is an introductory one. I have considered that it is necessary to compile a study that treats the political context surrounding the establishment of monarchy in Romania, and its role that it played during 1866 and 1927.

While trying to capture the importance of Festivism in regards to the national identity, I have referred to some Romanian identity elements like its history, culture, language, religion, homeland and the tradition of the Romanian people. There are two major perspectives regarding the study of the ceremonials and the festive manifestations surrounding the Royal family: the first refers to the efforts made by the members of the Royal

family in order to integrate themselves in the political, cultural, traditional and military Romanian environment. The second perspective refers to the way that the Romanians perceived the Royal family. Kings Carol I, Ferdinand I and the queens Elisabeta and Maria, have enjoyed like not many other rulers, the respect, the love, the gratitude and the appreciation on behalf of the Romanians. This fact is underlined by the many important festive manifestations organized in their honor.

In the second chapter, entitled *The Court Ceremonial*, I have presented a few general aspects regarding the festive ceremonial of the princely Courts in Wallachia and Moldova, during the 17th and 19th centuries, and also the ceremonies held at the princely and afterword's, at the Royal Court of Romania. Some of the aspects that were taken into consideration are the behavior and attire that were mandatory under for certain festive events under the official protocol. Romania's Royal Court's ceremonial contains some instructions that can only be seen inside the monarch's residence during official visits, or with the occasion of different private festivities and receptions. The Court's ceremonial guide derives out of rules that are established by tradition and was supplemented by the King's specials orders.

The first official book of ceremonial was written in the year 1875 by the Court's Marshall, Theodor Văcărescu, a work that was published the following year under the title > *Ceremonialu Curței Domnești a României*. Later, after Carol I was crowned as King in 1881, the book of ceremonial was reviewed and published in 1882 under the name: *Ceremonialul Curței Regale a României*. The second version didn't encompass major changes so that I can say that the rules of protocol remained much the same after the constitutional changes and Romania's transition to a monarchy.

This paper that comprised the Royal ceremonial is revealing the protocol that existed at the Royal Court for situations like official visits, religious ceremonies, and Court festivities. With the notable exception of the ballroom dances, all the other festive events organized by the Court required a religious ceremonial that was meant to amplify the significance of the festive moment. The religious ceremonial was a good way of promoting the continuity and the lasting of traditions. Greatness, grandeur, rules of protocol, attire, behavior and the orthodox cult are just a part of the ceremonial elements that have helped the Royal Court in its endeavor to legitimate its power during the Royal period.

In order to obtain a better knowledge regarding the exact manifestation of royalty in Romania through royal Festivism, I have entitled the third chapter: *Kings Carol I (1839-*

1914) and Ferdinand I (1865-1927) of Romania – festivities, crownings, anniversaries, funerary ceremonials. In this section I followed the private life of the first two kings, Carol I (1839-1914) and Ferdinand I (1865-1927) of Romania, and also I have focused on some important festive events that, through their participation became royal festivities in the collective mentality of the Romanians. The main focus of this chapter was the public display of the Romanian Kings and their official speeches delivered at special occasions like coronations, jubilees and different festive anniversaries. The speeches were animated, and they showed the King's devotion for the events held in their honor, and also they showed the people commitment to their King and his accomplishments. For example, the first anniversary of King Carol's entry in Bucharest, on 10/22 of May 1866, was celebrated in big style by the entire population. With this occasion, we found numerous signs of love and appreciation, and many telegrams from all over the country were sent to pay homage to the King.

Beginning with the year 1881, the day of 10 May became more than a celebration of the arrival of Carol I in Romania and the Independence Day. It became the National holiday of Romania, an anniversary date that was celebrated until the communist took power in 1948.

The celebration of the Romania Kings and Queens coronations is an emotional moment for the main figures of the event, and also shows the popular enthusiasm that surrounds this event. The joyful procession that was the coronation festivity proves in a convincing manner the bond between the people and its leader.

In the fourth chapter, **Queens Elisabeta and Maria of Romania and the cultural Festivism**, I focused my research on analyzing the cultural Festivism that was set up and promoted vigorously by the first two Queens of Romania. Their involvement in the country's cultural life is the main reference point of this chapter. Since the Queens of Romania had no role in politics, this area being the apanage of the Kings, their only option was to get involved in the cultural life, charity work and honoring the country's heroes.

Most of the time, the cultural events organized by the Queens of Romania took place in a small circle. The Peleş Castle was Queen's Elisabeta favorite place for such events. It was a location that many guests favored opposed to Bucharest, „a city that where everything was too official.” In Sinaia, Queen Elisabeta used to surround herself with young girls, so that the small group was very lively. Even the King, who otherwise was known to be an austere figure and very preoccupied with his duties, used to become infected by this joyful environment, together with the minister that accompanied him from Bucharest.

Following the death of the royal couple's only child, Queen Elisabeta started to get more involved in the cultural life, arts in particular. She started to write poems that were stamped with the sensitivity that were an accurate depiction of her changing emotional state. Besides poems, she started to write short tales that soon became novels that brought fame to her under the pseudonym of Carmen Sylva. Also, Queen Elisabeta would surround herself with young remarkable writers, excellent Romanian musicians like George Enescu, all this because aside poetry, music was her other consolation.

Queen Maria's involvement in the country's cultural life can be found in the support she gave to the young painters and sculptors that formed **The Youth Artists Society** (Societatea „Tinerimea artistică”) in the beginning of the 20th century. As a sign of gratitude for her effort towards the country's cultural development, Queen Maria became an honorary member of the Romania Academy on 1st of May 1915.

I have added a subchapter dedicated to the subject of the ballroom dances organized by the Royal Court during the reigns of Carol I and Ferdinand I. the reason is that the ballroom dances used to be a place for socialization and an event that reflected the rules of protocol which emphasized on the displayed elegance. The Queens played a very important role in organizing such events due to their outstanding personalities.

The fifth chapter, entitled **The Kings and the Christian-orthodox and traditional national Festivism**, starts with a general introduction regarding the importance of the religious and traditional celebrations for the collective mentality from the modern period. Also, I took under consideration the ways through which they got mixed with symbols of secularism that involved the presence of the Romanian Royal Family.

Romanian Kings were very popular among the Romanians mostly because they were always informed about the country's situation and all the time they would thoroughly examine all the complaints. King Carol I was particularly involved in the problems of the poor, always making donations, even if they cost more than its budget.

The sixth chapter, **The Royal Family's travels in and outside the country. Official visits at the Romanian Royal Court between 1866 and 1927** is dedicated, as the title clearly suggests, to pointing out the expressions of the Royal Festivism and its encounter with the Romanians from all over the country and from all social categories.

While regularly traveling throughout the country, the members of the Royal Family would frequently visit the churches, schools, hospitals, libraries or museums. This aspect shows that they wanted to take the idea of monarchy deeper. They tried to show that the

monarchic institution had a human face by creating a physical approach. Certainly, these actions are to a certain degree, a public relations effort, but I haven't found any clues that the Royal House's approach towards the people as a dishonest one.

In the same chapter, I chose to present the festive aspects that were present with the occasion of the official visits paid by high-ranking officials in Bucharest, Sinaia or other towns, from all over Europe. These visits helped to strengthen the political, economic and cultural ties between Romania and the other European monarchies. What better example there is other than the visit made by the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph, an event that showed the collective joy expressed by the Romanians for the visit made by an Emperor with a peaceful intention on Romanian soil.

Depending the sources, I found different opinions about the visit made by the Austrian Emperor in 1896. For this, it is not surprisingly that there were some malicious articles regarding Franz Joseph's visit. After all, these are to be found in the newspaper that was printed by the opposition parties. All these aside, the splendor of this visit cannot be questioned. The Romanian Royal House proved with this occasion that it had an excellent capacity to organize such events that showed the high standards of the Romanian monarchical Festivism. The event was lavishly, and the people were very enthusiast and chanting at the sight of the King and his noble guests. This aspect made the event more important.

The Royal House of Romania and Romanian nation's institutions (Church, University, Romanian Academy, and Parliament), is the seventh chapter, and it shows the relation between the royalty and the country's main institutions by emphasizing on the festive events and the speeches gave by the Kings with the occasion of various cultural, political and religious events.

Carol I was very preoccupied with developing the educational system, for example, he founded on the 3rd of May 1892 King Carol I Academic Society (Fundațiunea Universitară Regele Carol I). Since the beginnings of the Academic Society, which would later become The Romanian Academy, Carol I was appointed its honorary chairman and patron. This was to become a tradition that got all the Romania's Kings involved in the activity of the most important cultural forum. King Carol I also supported the construction of a modern headquarters for the Natural History Museum in the capital city, inaugurated in 1906.

Following in the steps of his forerunner, Ferdinand I promoted some important cultural events, by stimulating and financing cultural and academic institutions, The King

allocated important funds for the establishment, alongside the University of Cluj, of an institute designed to study the national history, and also gave money for the worthy students from the University in Cernăuți.

The speeches held at various festive events organized by these important institutions of the modern Romanian nation are a testimony to the commitment of the Romanian Kings towards the proper functioning of these institutions. Also, by participating in these festive events, the Kings helped to boost their importance.

The national and Christian celebrations, either private or public that were attended by the Royal Family, were the main element in forging the national identity. The King and the dynasty have constantly been a powerful warrant of the country's modernization. Because the Royal family had a big role in the civilizing mission and the foundation of the country's modernization, the Romanians always loved and respected the Royal Dynasty, and they showed this by manifesting their enthusiasm at the bare sight of the Royal family.

While observing the differences in the Royal Festivism during the reigns of the first two kings of Romania, I come to the conclusion that Carol I was more prone to be rigorous, while his successor had been less formal. After all, this difference in the Royal Festivism was influenced by the distinct personalities of the two. Carol I was harsher and severe, while Ferdinand was more modest, shy and gentle, so it is only natural that these distinct characters would influence the Royal Festivism and the unfolding the festive events.

Through the means of the celebrations and the festive rituals, the royalty sought to constantly update the importance and the lastingness of the monarchy. The spectacular ceremonies brought in the spotlight the power of the kings, and also produced the public legitimacy that all monarchs sigh for.

Researching and analyzing the ceremonies and the festive activities in which the Royal Family took part had allowed me to observe their image in the collective mentality of the Romanians, that I found to be a collection of qualities and achievements, but also failures. I managed to highlight this image by using the main sources, objective or subjective, that I had access to the press of that time, memoirs writings, archives, but also specialty papers older or newer that dealt the subject of the Romanian monarchy. Taking under consideration the importance of the relevance of the Royal Festivism, I was able to paint the portrait of 61 years of monarchy in Romania and to highlight the existence of a strong bond between the Royal Festivism and the Romania's main political, cultural and economic events of that time.

This unbroken connection is the main cause for the existence of a dynastic nostalgia in today Romania.