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Articles about Ottoman rule and the political networks between Constantinople
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WESTERNIZATION AS TOOL OF INTER- IMPERIAL RIVALRY: LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WALLACHIA BETWEEN OTTOMAN CONTROL AND RUSSIAN PROTECTION (1829-1848)

The Treaty of Adrianople, which concluded the Russian-Ottoman war of 1828-1829, was crucial to the Ottoman Empire's position among the European powers and to the European dispute for influence in the Ottoman territories. After a period during which the Habsburg Empire managed to prevent the materialization of Russia's ambitions for the Ottoman European lands, the Treaty of Adrianople exposed the Ottoman Empire to Russian authority and influence for years to come. The settlement also translated Ottoman domestic issues into a vocabulary of sovereignty, suzerainty and rights that clearly interfered with imperial rule. This was particularly visible in the case of Walachia and Moldavia. In 1829 the two Ottoman tributaries on the Danube passed under Russian authority until the Porte paid the war indemnity and became the setting in which Russia proceeded to implement a Western-type institutionalization. How did the Russian-sponsored institutionalization change the type of politics that underlay Ottoman rule in these lands? Unless we retrace the intricate interaction between Russia's deliberate projects of modernization with the Ottoman political system in Walachia, and the resulting complex reorganization of politics, the analysis about these lands in the nineteenth century is confined to two approaches that reiterate local exceptionalism. The first approach would be to reiterate the usual assessment of a "delayed Europeanization" of the Balkans.¹ The other would be to postulate the model of a local type of modernity, by merely reiterating local specificity and without detailing the complex of local and imperial dynamics that triggered it. Answering this question can also provide a case study useful in imperial history,

and particularly about how a non-Western Empire that had undergone repeated reforms for self-modernization used “Westernization” as an instrument of imperial expansion, to undermine a neighboring empire’s control over its provinces.

To address this question I will recreate the way in which Alexandru Samurcaş, an actor in the Ottoman networks of rule in Walachia, engaged with the changes that the Russian reforms and protectorate fostered in the leadership of this province between 1829 and 1848. Alexandru Samurcaş was the nephew and heir of the power holder and official (*boier*) Constantin Samurcaş,² former administrator (*kaymakam*) of Little Walachia and treasurer of Walachia, administrator and judge (*vornic*) and correspondent of the Habsburg knight von Gentz in the aftermath of the Greek Revolt. After the death of Alexandru’s father, Constantin took his nephew under his protection and endeavored to find him a place in the information and political networks that functioned between Habsburg and Ottoman diplomacies and which underlay the imperial rule of Walachia. The promotion of the officials’ descendants in the political networks was not an exceptional practice in Walachia during the rule of the Phanariots, Ottoman Greek Orthodox bureaucrats that the sultan appointed to rule this Christian Orthodox tributary on the Danube until the Greek uprising of 1821, and in the subsequent period. This practice was particularly useful for individuals who had recently arrived from Constantinople and who still lacked the necessary connections in the Ottoman tributary. However, Constantin and Alexandru also faced different historical contexts that elicited particular strategies and aims. Constantin, who fled to Habsburg Transylvania after the Uprising in 1821 and the dismantlement of the Phanariot high bureaucracy, lobbied for his return to Walachia and the re-appointment in his old position while he also identified with the emerging Greek nation. After a brief period spent in Transylvania under the guidance of his uncle, Alexandru built his entire career in Walachia where the Russian Empire was on the way to implement administrative and political reforms aimed at transforming this Ottoman province into a Russian satellite.

Balkan and Romanian historiographies have long regarded Russia’s “civilizing” presence in the Ottoman tributaries of Walachia and Moldavia between 1829 and 1832 as a necessary milestone for their modernization and national emancipation. Reportedly, the Russian administration intervened and regulated all aspects of life in the local society that feared the possibility of being assimilated in the Empire but in so doing, it also

popularized the French ideas of freedom and nationhood.³ Identifying how institutions, norms and culture from Western Europe were transplanted in less prepared, non-European environments, these studies reproduce the meta-narrative of modernity that assumes Europe is the “sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories”, even those of non-European areas. However, despite this problematic epistemological genealogy, Eisenstadt also suggested that “modernity” is salvageable as a concept. In this respect, he argued that instead of assuming the Eurocentric model of modernity based on a particular historical case, scholars should consider the possibility of “multiple modernities”. These are “the multiple institutional and ideological patterns carried forward by social movements pursuing different programs of modernity, holding very different view of what makes societies modern”,⁴ but which all share a basic assumption about the role of human agency in history. Richard Wolin, who noted Eisenstadt’s observation that “modernity” is a concept that stirs debate and political activism, pointed out that “modernity” cannot be expelled from historical study because “modernity” has been an active category of practice.⁵ The application of the European colonial projects and the non-European societies’ response to “modernity” and appropriation of some of its norms transformed “modernity” into an active historical presence.

In this paper I subscribe to Eisenstadt’s and Wolin’s argument that “modernity” is a category of imperialist thought and practice, which has been crucial to imperialist and anti-imperialist agendas, political order and collective identities. Following their critical stance I will not follow the Eurocentric model of interpreting to what extent Walachia and Moldavia fit the European model of modernity, but instead question how “modernity” worked as an imperial instrument in the Russian-Ottoman conflict on the Danube borderland. More specifically, I will study the interplay of what the Russian authorities perceived as “modernity” and “civilizing mission” with Ottoman rule in Walachia, by examining the political participation in the Russian-endorsed government of individuals who took their political roots in Ottoman rule. But before I begin the analysis of how the Russian Empire unfolded “modernization”, i.e. the deliberate projects to bring a society to date with Europe, to counter the Ottoman Empire, I will refer to “modernity” in the history of the Ottoman Empire and as a principle of effective intervention that the Russian military leadership used against the Ottoman Empire.

Revisionist Ottoman historians pointed out that the construction of the Ottoman history as separate from that of Europe relies on the adoption

by historians of the Ottoman Empire of approaches that assume the preeminence of the West or the complete isolation of the Empire from processes that took place in Europe, and its corresponding backwardness.⁶ The revisionist historians did not reject the concept of “modernity” but instead endeavored to construct “Ottoman modernities” by abandoning perspectives that privileged the center for approaches of the peripheries and their relation to the center. They also emphasized the synchronicity in the eighteenth century, the century of modernity, of transformations that occurred in taxation,⁷ economy, political action in the Ottoman Empire and parallel changes that occurred in Europe.

The political history of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, during which the sultans became promoters of reforms that prompted various reactions within the elite and society, also offered the object for new proposals in favor of an Ottoman modernity. Focusing on the rise of autonomous power holders in the Ottoman Balkans at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ali Yaycioglu explained that in 1804 these actors compelled the sultan and his bureaucracy to redefine the Ottoman polity as a common establishment. The result was the creation of a document that specified the nature of the relations between the sultan and the power holders and among the power holders themselves, which certified the participation of different sectors of the Ottoman society in the imperial rule.⁸ Although short lived, this was a civic project that emerged in political circumstances specific to the Ottoman Empire.

A historian of nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, Selim Deringil addressed the way in which “modernity”, an epistemological instrument that Western Europe used to deal with a dwindling, Muslim empire that epitomized “otherness”, became a category of practice that the Ottomans used to counter Europe’s unrelenting pursuit of its territories. Focusing on the changes in provincial administration in regions inhabited by nomadic populations, Deringil noticed that the Ottoman ruling elites adopted their arch-enemies’ colonial mindset and began to treat peripheries as colonies that needed modernization to provide the empire with the manpower necessary to resist the European powers’ intrusions.⁹ Deringil’s analysis is significant to this article not only because it matches the reflections about the theoretical relevance of “modernity” but also because it brings out the issue that “modernity” also served as an instrument of inter-imperial rivalry. The rivalry at stake was that between Western colonial and modern

empires and a non-Western Empire that had begun to adopt Western rules and methods in one of its institutions – the military.

Another rivalry, which unfolded in the Caucasus and the Danube borderland, pitted the Russian and the Ottoman Empires against each other. Although both empires were non-Western and non-colonial, the Russian Empire had been implementing, for the last hundred years, projects of Westernization that endeavored to order imperial politics and society, create a civil society and pave the way to progress,¹⁰ the very ingredients of modernization. The bureaucratic and political reforms implemented by the eighteenth century Russian autocrats are relevant to this analysis to the extent that count Pavel Kiseleff, one of the most important Russian commanders at the beginning of the nineteenth century, found these measures necessary to the success of future Russian offensives against the Ottomans. When the Russian-Ottoman war began in 1828, general Kiseleff, the Chief of Staff of the Second Army, occupied Walachia and Moldavia, attacked the Ottoman fortresses on the Danube and made significant headway into Ottoman territory before the Ottoman Empire declared defeat. Following the Peace Treaty of Adrianople (1829) the Russian military was stationed in Walachia and Moldavia until the Ottomans would have paid war indemnities.

The fact that Russia agreed to a Treaty with the Ottoman Empire, which enhanced the Russian influence in the Ottoman European lands is indicative of the type of foreign policy that Saint Petersburg favored. Instead of deploying an offensive that would have dismantled the Ottoman Empire, the Russian decision makers preferred the policy of the “weak neighbor”. According to this policy, Russia would create on the Ottoman European border a string of Christian principalities under Russian protectorate where the Russian authorities could easily interfere.¹¹ In consequence, in 1829 Russia inaugurated its protectorate over Walachia and Moldavia and a project of administrative re-organization¹² to which the Ottomans had agreed in the Treaty of Akkerman of 1826.¹³ Under the supervision of General Kiseleff, the Russian authorities began to deploy a Westernization project that would have facilitated Russian control in the provinces and potential military campaigns against the Ottoman Empire. Kiseleff combined the task that he received from the Court in Sankt Petersburg with his personal mission of bringing these provinces that featured a Turkish, oriental political culture to the “European family”.¹⁴ This evaluation was indicative of Kiseleff’s manifest “cultural imperialism” towards the local elites and condescendence towards their Ottoman, oriental masters, who

had been unable to reform and preserve their preeminence in Europe. This stance was a matter of personal view but it was widely shared among regional Russian governors who aimed to emulate their modernizing sovereign while serving their imperial task. His “Westernization” pivoted on institutionalization, i.e. the transformation of the existing leadership into a unit to collect and channel the taxes to the upkeep of the Russian military and to manage domestic affairs. The subsequent break-up of networks in Walachia and Moldavia that intricately combined political action and judiciary, fiscal and diplomatic tasks into administrative branches and a legislative and political assembly interfered in the relation with politics of numerous agents in the Ottoman rule.

This paper is organized in three sections. In the first section I study the way in which the removal of the Phanariot rulers (*hospodars*) and the rapports between the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian Empires influenced the networks of Ottoman control in the Danube provinces between 1821 and 1829. A significant milestone of this period was the conclusion of the Treaty of Adrianople that propelled Russia on a hegemonic position in relation to the Ottoman Empire and as a main agent of change for the political networks and leadership in the Ottoman tributaries Walachia and Moldavia. In the second part I will analyze the way in which the Organic Regulations that Russia implemented in the 1830s in Walachia altered the meaning and role of existing political categories to confine local politics to the activity of a legislative assembly that comprised several power holders from the old regime. In the third section, I will explain how the breakdown of the Phanariot political networks did not entirely institutionalize politics but multiplied the contexts where politics was exercised.

1. Between Ottoman reactionary rule and inter-imperial politics - Political networks in Walachia from the Greek Revolution to the Treaty of Adrianople

The sultan’s suspicions against the Ottoman Phanariot bureaucrats, religious leaders and rulers of Walachia and Moldavia, after the organization for Greek emancipation Philiki Hetairia stirred rebellions in Walachia, led to the execution or exile of members of this Greek-speaking, ethnically mixed group of Ottoman political elites. The purges of 1821 targeted the Patriarch, the dragomans, the *hospodars* of Walachia and Moldavia and their associates in Constantinople but did not eradicate all

members of this political caste. Some of them, who were related to the power holders in Walachia and Moldavia through family and political ties, lived in these provinces. But when the sultan dispatched troops in Walachia and Moldavia, to put out the uprisings, scores of local notables, among whom the *vornic* Constantin Samurçaș, took refuge in neighboring Habsburg Transylvania. Remnants of the Phanariot networks survived but the demolition of the Phanariot complex and inter-imperial rivalry altered significantly the old mechanisms of political power in the region.

The flight to Transylvania was a wise choice: while safe from the Ottoman army's punishments, the refugees could not be considered deserters given that the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires developed strong diplomatic and economic ties, which the Habsburg Empire used to stifle any potential expansionist tendencies of Russia. In 1813 the Habsburg chancellor Metternich had the initiative of creating a complex system of information dealing between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, which comprised the Habsburg diplomat Friedrich von Gentz, *boieri*, merchants and *hospodars* of Walachia such as Scarlat Callimachi, the Ottoman chancellor (*reis effendi*) and the vizier. Through its diplomatic activity during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the Viennese Court enlisted the admiration and cooperation of many *boieri* and merchants from Walachia and Moldavia. Several *boieri* in Walachia continued to be supporters of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires at the beginning of the Russian occupation in 1829. Among them were descendants of the Bălăceanu, Ghica and Filipescu families. Their ancestors were powerful *boieri* at the beginning of the century, during the Russian occupation of 1806-1812, and competitors of Constantin Samurçaș for office and power.¹⁵ The merchants active in this network were Ottoman Greek Orthodox subjects from various Ottoman lands, who had brought their businesses in Walachia and Moldavia, became *boieri* in these provinces and also acquired the protection of the Habsburg Empire. They welcomed and helped Constantin Samurçaș during the first years of his exile.

The Ottoman military intervention in Walachia and Moldavia in 1821 contravened to previous agreements with Russia. To avert the risk of a war with Russia and to preserve the support of Habsburg Empire against potential hostilities from Russia, the Ottoman Porte used remnants of the Phanariot system as mediators with Russia. The prince of Moldavia and the imperial dragoman Scarlat Callimachi, who was also a contact of the Habsburg diplomat von Gentz, was called to serve as Ottoman plenipotentiary in the discussions with the Russian ambassador about

the Ottoman occupation of Walachia and Moldavia. Since the prince of Walachia Alexandru Sutzu had died shortly before the beginning of the rebellion and the throne was vacant, the Porte appointed Callimachi as ruler of Walachia. Following the custom¹⁶, he sent delegates from his retinue to prepare his arrival to the province. Among them was Ioan Samurcaş, the father of this article's main character. The Ottomans' appeal to Callimachi in the encounters with Russia after 1821 and the preservation of the diplomatic channels with the Habsburg Empire indicate that the elimination or marginalization of the main Phanariot leaders in Constantinople did not alter the basic mechanisms of information gathering of the Porte, which also overlapped with the political networks in Walachia and Moldavia.

The appointment of new rulers, Grigore IV Ghica in Walachia and Ioan Sturdza in Moldavia, marked only a partial break with the tradition of appointing Phanariots from Constantinople. Grigore Ghica was a descendant in Walachia of a family that had been at the center of the Phanariot circles for decades. Ioan Sturdza also came from a family with strong ties to the Phanariot circles as well as to the Russian nobility.¹⁷ The two princes took over their predecessors' task of supervising the collection of taxes and also benefitted from the customary revenues coming from the sale of offices and the exploitation of public services and sources (mining, customs, etc.). As many of the leading *boieri* and power holders were in exile, Ghica and Sturdza had the pretext and freedom to sell extensively *boieri* positions to individuals from the most humble ranks of the society, who became their main supporters.

The notables in exile protested the *hospodars'* abusive nominations. Their opposition was symptomatic of the less perceivable political transformations that occurred with the elimination of the Phanariot complex. In the last years before 1821 the rule of Walachia and Moldavia circulated among members of the same four families of Moruzi, Ipsilanti, Callimachi and Sutzu, this practice being formalized by the sultan in 1819.¹⁸ Each of the rulers from these families had particular supporters at Constantinople and the province where he ruled: *boieri*, creditors, their relatives and protégés who aspired to an appointment. As the *hospodars* rotated in power depending on politics at Constantinople and the diplomatic game of the Napoleonic Wars, so were the political factions that supported them. When the rulers from the four families were eliminated in 1821, the rotation in power of their political supporters also stopped. After 1821, as the new *hospodars* sold out high and low positions that

the *boieri* were, by virtue of their appointment, entitled to sell, the *boieri* who had already gained a privileged political and social position under the Phanariot rulers were deprived of an important means to exert their political clout. The elimination of the Phanariots from being considered to appointments as *hospodars* also fragmented the old *boieri* factions whose members now hoped they would be nominated for the rule. As per the sultan's order of 1802, the Appointment of the current rulers was made for seven years¹⁹ but certain *boieri*, hoped that with the help of Russia they could depose the appointed princes and impose themselves as eligible "hospodars". For several years after 1821, the political tensions between the "old" *boieri* and the new *hospodars* and the "recent" *boieri* unfolded in letters from the old *boieri* to the neighboring powers that hosted them and to the Ottoman commanders, and in the responding warnings from the *hospodars*.²⁰

In 1821 Alexandru Samurçaş arrived in Kronstadt to live with his uncle, the controversial *vornic* Constantin Samurçaş who was a correspondent of the Habsburg diplomat Friedrich von Gentz. Alexandru Samurçaş was the son of Ioan Samurçaş, the chargé with the foreign correspondence (*postelnic*) of Scarlat Callimachi, and of Catherine Rallet, the descendent of a Phanariot-Walachian family. Ioan Samurçaş had arrived in Walachia in 1821 as delegate of the appointed *hospodar* Callimachi. When the Porte cancelled the appointment of this Phanariot bureaucrat the same year, Ioan Samurçaş and two other delegates of Callimachi and former *boieri* in Moldavia became administrators of the provinces under the Ottoman occupation. In 1821 Ioan Samurçaş was executed by the Ottoman military commander on suspicion of maintaining correspondence with the Phanariot fugitives. Alexandru, aged sixteen, relocated to Kronstadt, home to a large community of Greek Orthodox Ottoman merchants and *boieri* who were involved in the Ottoman-Habsburg diplomatic networks and shelter to his uncle Constantin. During those years Constantin became receptive to Russia's political projects for Greece and the other Ottoman Christian lands but continued his correspondence with von Gentz and strove to re-gain his appointment in Walachia. He also introduced Alexandru to the knight. In 1825, shortly after the death of Constantin Samurçaş, Alexandru attempted to win the knight's support for his endeavors. Gentz reassured the young Alexandru of his sympathy and availability to give him advice but emphasized that he lacked the practical means to offer him service or protection.²¹

At the level of inter-imperial relations, the Ottomans' harsh response to the Greek revolts threatened the European equilibrium, as more powers pondered whether they should intervene. The Russian tsar Alexander I, who was committed to the preservation of the European concert, resisted the temptation of declaring war on account of the Ottomans' violations of previous treaties through their occupation of Walachia and Moldavia. Instead, he accepted the diplomatic discussions with the Porte that Scarlat Callimachi mediated. The Habsburg Empire, whose goal was to prevent any Russian advancement in the Near East, also sought to appease the English, French and Russian leaders. However, in 1825 the tsar Alexander died and was replaced by his brother Nicholas I who adopted a harsher approach towards the Ottoman Empire. In 1826 Russia pressed for a convention with the Ottomans, which strengthened its influence in Walachia and Moldavia. Through the Convention of Ackerman the Ottoman Empire acknowledged that Walachia and Moldavia needed a more stable government, for which purpose the local councils of the *boieri* were entrusted to elect the *hospodars* for seven-year mandates, pending the approval of both courts. In addition, the Ottomans were supposed to withdraw the contingents from the fortresses on the left bank of the Danube, based on the capitulations to which they agreed in the eighteenth century and which requested that no Muslim should settle in Walachia and Moldavia. Finally, the Ottoman troops that intervened to quell the uprisings of 1821 were to withdraw from Walachia and Moldavia.

Despite this agreement, after the naval disaster of Navarino in 1827, when the allied British, French and Russian vessels completely destroyed the Ottoman fleet, the Ottoman-Russian war was unavoidable. In 1828 and 1829 the Russian troops crossed the river Pruth, occupied Walachia and Moldavia and besieged the Ottoman fortresses on the Danube before a rapid march across the Balkans.²² The Ottoman sultan had to acknowledge defeat. The two Empires concluded the Treaty of Adrianople that favored Russia to the extent that the European powers preferred the defeat and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire to Russia's gain of so much influence and concessions.²³

The Treaty sorted an issue of maximum interest in the context of the Eastern Question – the access on the Danube and the Black Sea was completely open to Russia whose ships had immunity against any Ottoman checks. The Ottomans confirmed Russia's possessions in the Caucasus. Russia agreed to return to the Ottoman Empire Dobrudja, lands in Bulgaria and the "principalities" of Walachia and Moldavia, the frontier with the

Ottomans being set on the river Pruth.²⁴ Serbia, Walachia and Moldavia became “autonomous”. The terms that defined the autonomy of Walachia and Moldavia were particularly significant because they imposed an unprecedented translation of their relations with the Ottoman Empire, which drew on Western concepts of sovereignty, suzerainty, autonomy and which significantly curtailed the Ottomans’ imperial rule in these lands.

Article 5 of the Treaty formally stipulated that the “principalities” Walachia and Moldavia were under the “suzerainty” of the Porte. Since Russia was the guarantor of their prosperity, they preserved all the immunities that had been acknowledged to them through past capitulations, sultan’s decrees and treaties. By way of consequence, they were entitled to freedom of worship, freedom of commerce and “independent national government”.²⁵ The provisions in article 5 were further detailed in an additional act. The two empires renewed their commitment to the welfare of the “principalities”, for which reason they provided that the seven-year terms for the rules of the *hospodars* chosen by the local councils, a stipulation in the Treaty of Ackerman, should be replaced by life-terms. The *hospodars* were completely entrusted with the management of the affairs in Walachia and Moldavia, in consultation with the *boieri* councils (*divan*). Drawing on the Porte’s commitment to the welfare and prosperity of the two principalities, and the Porte’s agreement to pay the war indemnity by placing the principalities under Russian occupation, the treaty also specified that the Ottoman Empire would agree to the regulations that Russia planned to implement in Walachia and Moldavia. If the regulations gained the approval of the local councils, they were to become the foundations of the new government.

The Porte committed again to the capitulations that Russia imposed in the eighteenth century, through which it restricted Muslims to settle in Walachia and Moldavia and forbade the Ottoman commanders in charge of the neighboring provinces to mingle in Walachian and Moldavian affairs.²⁶ The aim of this provision was to force the Ottomans to dismantle their fortresses on the left bank of the Danube that had opposed a staunch resistance against the Russian attacks during the Ottoman-Russian wars. To reinforce this stipulation, the territory of the tributaries Walachia and Moldavia needed to be delimited on the Danube from that of the neighboring Ottoman provinces, a task that would be carried out by a mixed Ottoman-Russian commission. Further, the additional act mentioned that the two provinces’ obligations to the Porte were limited to the payment of the yearly tribute and an additional sum equivalent to the

tribute in case of change of the *hospodar*. The replacement of the custom that the sultan should appoint the *hospodar* with the election by the *boieri*, the simplification of the monetary circuit with Constantinople and the ban on the supplies trade between the principalities and the other Ottoman provinces and the capital, ended tax-farming – a major component of the eighteenth century Ottoman rule of Walachia and Moldavia.

The treaty impinged heavily on the Ottoman Empire's authority in its domains. The formal reference to Walachia and Moldavia as "principalities" was not unprecedented in their history. Several *boieri* from the end of the eighteenth century mentioned the concept "principalities",²⁷ but most of the political agents in Walachia and Moldavia referred to them as "countries". In Ottoman imperial parlance, Walachia and Moldavia were counted among the "sultan's well protected domains".²⁸ However, their definition as "principalities" in the Treaty of Adrianople, together with the terms about their administration in relation to the Porte created the fiction that these provinces were distinctive from the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was their "suzerain", a term suggesting that the imperial control in local affairs was devolved to rulers selected from Walachia and Moldavia, with the approval of another Empire, and that the management of local affairs was detached from Ottoman politics and bureaucracy. Delegating the selection of the *hospodar*, i.e. "prince", to the local *boieri* was allegedly a consequence of the privileges of Walachia and Moldavia, which the Porte had admitted through the capitulations of 1774. The Porte accepted these terms under the pretext that they promoted the well-being of the two countries, a reference that echoed the old imperial discourse about the sultan's concern with the welfare of his subjects.²⁹ As the Ottoman central elites and the sultan Mahmud II also became adept of the implementation of Westernization measures, the terms concerning the "independent national government" of Walachia and Moldavia, i.e. the administration by the local *boieri*, did not immediately denote a major concession.

However, the changes introduced in the definition of Walachia and Moldavia and the mechanisms of control by the Porte of their possessions illustrated that the Russian Empire interfered with Ottoman governance and took over a hegemonic position in the Near East that caused the disgruntlement of the European powers. The creation of the "Principalities" as former Ottoman provinces, where Russia could redefine social and political relations and administration, showed that the Court in Saint Petersburg had opted for the diplomatic alternative of turning the Ottoman

Empire into a “weak neighbor” instead of dismantlement. Following the conclusion of the treaty and the installation of the Russian administration under Kiseleff’s observation, the last *boieri* in exile returned to Walachia and Moldavia. Among them was also Alexandru Samurçaș who was hopeful to find an appointment in the administration of Walachia given that he was the son and uncle of two prominent *boieri* such as Ioan and Constantin Samurçaș.

2. Politics and leadership through the Organic Regulations

2.1. Continuities with the *ancien régime* at the beginning of the Russian administration (1829-1835)

The phrase “Organic Regulations” designates the body of rules that *boieri* in the “principalities” and the authorities of the Russian occupation and in Saint Petersburg compiled for the re-organization of Walachia and Moldavia after 1829. The constant Russian intervention in the drafting of the “Regulations” was meant to secure Kiseleff’s project to “Westernize” these provinces and to minimize Ottoman authority and “oriental” influence in Walachia and Moldavia. However, at the beginning of the occupation and of the drafting of the Regulations, the Russian authorities faced the complex political networks and strong power holders that survived from the time of the Phanariot rules. While committed to the creation of an apparatus of power ruled by the principles of division of powers and efficient bureaucracy, the Russian occupation had to co-opt the cronies of the old regime.

The *boieri* who were recruited in the Russian authorities’ administration of Walachia and Moldavia and in drafting the Regulations were power holders from the time of the Ottoman-appointed rulers, whose influence could not be ignored even though they were detractors of Russia. Among them were members of the families Rosetti, Filipescu, Arghiropol, Balș, Bălăceanu, Băleanu, and the Hrisoverghi, who had occupied positions in the proximity of the *hospodar* and at the core of the country’s management, such as treasurers of Walachia or Moldavia or administrators and judges of Little Walachia.³⁰ The research about political rule, infrastructure, and the Ottoman-Russian wars in Walachia and Moldavia, which Kiseleff commissioned in 1819 to reform Russian military thought and strategy in relation to the Ottoman Empire,³¹ emphasized the political power of the

boieri as individuals who could have prevented or assisted the Russia in transforming the provinces into its satellites.

One of the main problems associated with relying on the *boieri* was the fact that they had the social, political and economic capital and good relations with the Ottoman officials and the representatives of other empires to oppose or sabotage the measures that the Russian authorities wanted to implement. Furthermore, following the system of governance inaugurated by the Phanariots, the *boieri* received, for their tenants, important exemptions from the public taxes, and could create taxes at will, for their own remuneration. These prerogatives diverted local taxes to private pockets instead of the maintenance of the Russian troops. To curb this authority and selective tax collection, in May 1829 the Russian administration divided the council into judiciary and executive branches and placed them both under the Russian commander-in-chief.³² The two councils were further remodeled and by 1831, they were divided in three branches: each "principality" had an executive council, a judicial council and a "princely" council, even though the *boieri* had not elected the princes. During this period, selected *boieri* from Walachia and Moldavia studied the texts proposed from Saint Petersburg and brought amendments to the texts. Subsequently, the Russian authorities called representatives from the three councils in each province to participate in a special commission for the revision and approval of the Regulations.³³

Alexandru Samurcaş participated in the works of the *boieri* commission from Walachia as a translator of Greek and French and received a merit certificate for his performance.³⁴ Simultaneously, he held the position of *second postelnic*, an office entrusted with the contact with foreign correspondents.³⁵ The position matched the activity of translator that he had deployed for the commission and it also used to be the appointment of his father Ioan, during the rule of Scarlat Callimachi. On the other hand, given that on the eve of the Russian occupation the princes had multiplied the number of posts in the service of higher offices, Alexandru's nomination as *second postelnic* might have been a sinecure that brought him tax exemptions. After completing his work as an interpreter for the commission, Alexandru served as the secretary to the Commission for the delimitation of the islands and border on the Danube,³⁶ which was composed of a Russian representative, Raigent, the Ottoman delegate Mohammed Arif Efendi and a local official, Mihai Ghica.³⁷

In 1832 the Revision Assemblies of Walachia and Moldavia approved the Organic Regulations that set up the administration and

politics of Walachia and Moldavia on principles of division of power and administrative efficiency. According to the Regulations, the rule of Walachia and Moldavia was assigned to a prince elected by an extraordinary assembly. The princes worked with administrative councils consisting of the minister of internal affairs, the minister of finances and a state secretary (*postelnic*) for the effective rule of the principalities. They could also prepare proposals that were submitted to the vote by the legislative assembly. This assembly was made of grand *boieri* and deputies selected by land owners from the districts and drew the attention of the prince to proposals that it deemed necessary or to the petitions from the countries.³⁸ The third branch of rule was the judiciary, which was organized according to a hierarchy of territorial instances of law and appeal.

2.2. Institutionalization and the break of power networks (1832-1834s)

Power holders from Moldavia and Walachia, who had opposed the massive appointments of the princes Grigore IV Ghica and Ioan Sturdza, participated in the administration of occupation and the drafting of the Organic Regulations between 1829 and 1832. Although Russia needed their political support and administrative cooperation, it also strove to curtail the restoration of the old political networks that controlled the public offices and taxation in the principalities. The Organic Regulations assignment of the *boieri* to specific administrative bodies and tasks redefined the political field in the “principalities”, created new hierarchies and marked the power shift of the Ottoman and Russian Empires in Walachia and Moldavia. A major component of the reforms of 1831-1832 was the construction of new categories of leadership, which separated political authority from administrative appointment, while preserving some of the old power holders in high political and administrative positions. This political reform overlapped with the division of governance into the administration, the judiciary and the military. Thus, the Russian administration replaced the category of *boier* with that of *noble* and the bodies that materialized the interests and relations of the *boieri* with tasks within separate bodies that epitomized the ‘division of powers.’

Before the Russian occupation, being a “boier” did not merely refer to belonging to a group of political and social leaders but participating in the

multi-faceted relations of power that connected individuals to the ruler appointed by the sultan and that underlay the collection and re-distribution of public taxes. Thus, the “*boieri*” was a composite group made of relatives of the *hospodar*, creditors, owners of great land estates and individuals who claimed prestigious ancestry, each of whom developed his own retinue of subordinates and helpers.³⁹ Their power derived from the position they held in relation to the rulers and from the connections they could entertain with other notables or rising political figures in Constantinople or Walachia and Moldavia who could uphold their agendas in the future. Among the instruments to strike political relations were one’s sale of positions that entitled the appointee to a share of the collected taxes and tax-exemptions, and one’s family and personal relations. The complexity of the relations between *boieri* and between the *boieri* and the rulers was well known to the *hospodars* themselves. In 1740 and 1741 Constantin Mavrocordat, who ruled successively Walachia and Moldavia, introduced the first measures to regulate the recruitment of the *boieri* in office and thus, in the imperial governance of the provinces. Mavrocordat drew two intersecting distinctions between those who served in high administrative positions and those who had less important appointments, and between those who were in service and those who did not occupy any position but whose ancestors had been grand *boieri*.⁴⁰ Depending on whether they were *boieri* active in the administration or descendants of grand *boieri* these individuals received tax exemptions for the tenants on their land estates.⁴¹

While it becomes apparent that “*boier*” referred to one’s position in the Phanariot power networks and factions, it is less clear to what extent they were active in the daily functions of administration. The “*boierie*” referred to one’s quality of being involved in the political networks but also to exerting tasks that comprised ceremonial functions at the *hospodars’* court, the collection of taxes and administration of justice at district level, maintaining correspondence with the Ottoman officials and foreign representatives, the preservation of documents and decisions of the council, *hospodar* and sultan, and the recording and surveillance of tax collection. But since the grand *boieri* could sell positions in their subordination to increase their gains and obtain loyal supporters, the functions associated with lower rank positions were nominal. The *boierie* became an eminently political category and the *boieri*, a politically active leadership.

The massive appointments that Ioan Sturdza and Grigore Ghica made during the Ottoman occupation of 1821-1828 were mostly to nominal positions of *boier* of lower rank.⁴² Before 1821 these appointments would have been the prerogative of the high *boieri*, but the new princes used this device to demonstrate to the *boieri* in exile that they were politically replaceable. Nevertheless, Sturdza and Ghica's measures had an unexpected consequence. Since the rotation of political factions came to a halt because of the elimination of the Phanariot rulers, the temporary divisions between *boieri* who supported rival rulers turned into permanent divisions between the "old" and "new" *boieri* and between *boieri* orders. The "old" *boieri*, who had composed the political elite of Walachia and Moldavia and who had strong social and economic capital, denounced the "new" *boieri*, who lacked protectors, experience and resources. The Russian authorities would enlist the "old" *boieri* to set up the administrations of Walachia and Moldavia to supply the Russian troops and to support Kiseleff's project of transforming these provinces into subordinate principalities and potential bases for military operations. Approved and implemented with the help of these *boieri*, the Organic Regulations significantly changed the definition of the political leadership. They completely redesigned the categories of *boieri* and *boierie*, stipulated conditions for the awarding of "ranks", defined the composition of the legislative assembly and controlled the intersection between the legislative assembly and the bureaucracy. The Regulations also redefined the councils of *boieri*, i.e. *divans*, which were no longer consultative bodies for the prince and an institution expressing *boieri* interests but judiciary instances.

The arrangement for the division of powers and for the composition of the legislative assembly laid important political prerogatives in the hands of those who had already been power holders, despite the dismantlement of the *boieri* councils in Moldavia, Walachia and Little Walachia. The majority of the members of the legislative assemblies and the administrative council belonged to the grand *boieri* who were the descendants of power holders during the Phanariot rule, and who now composed the hereditary nobility. The political activity of the members in the legislative assembly consisted of initiating administrative measures and of deciding the award of nobility titles to bureaucrats. More importantly, the nobles in the assembly were eligible for the position of prince. The nobles and landowners (categories that did not overlap) who lived in the districts had the right to vote for district deputies, nobles and/or bureaucrats, in the legislative assembly.

The reforms restricted the political agency of those individuals who had not been grand *boieri* and who could aspire to participate in the assemblies for the election of the prince or the legislative assembly only after starting a career in one of the three fields of government created by the Organic Regulations and obtaining a noble title from the prince. Two sections in the Regulations were dedicated to explaining that the numerous second rank positions, which did not perform effective jobs, had to be replaced by bureaucratic appointments, which entailed specific tasks and job hierarchies. Specifically, the section "About ranks" specified that one's promotion to "noble rank" depended exclusively on one's execution of the task assigned to him. The prince could nominate "Romanians" to positions in the local militias, judiciary and district administration. After several years of service, which varied depending on the branch in which they were active, these bureaucrats were eligible to be selected by the prince for higher positions and even for noble title. Their nomination to title was to be approved by the legislative assembly, with the specification whether the noble title was life-long or for posterity.⁴³ The quality of "Romanian" was an unprecedented distinction that the Regulations introduced in the stipulations about the creation of bureaucrats and potential nobles. I suggest that this category was meant to overcome the distinction "pământeni" – "Greeks" that was frequently used during the Phanariot rule to locate an individual in relation to the existing power networks. The naturalization as Romanian concerned specifically those who aspired to rank and position. It was a requirement that could have been fulfilled rather easily. One who was a new comer to the principalities needed to certify relations to the "local" families through blood relations, marriage or adoption and received naturalization within seven years from the request.

The section about the "appointment to various positions" detailed how each of the three branches of government had specific methods to recruit bureaucrats who could have been ennobled thanks to their professional service. The staff of the military and the judiciary was to be selected by the prince, while the bureaucratic positions in the local administration were to be filled with individuals selected by the "nobles" and land owners from the districts.⁴⁴ In other words, these two sections transformed the second rank *boieri* into bureaucrats and potentially, nobility of service. The prince's assignment of noble title to bureaucrats and the legislative assemblies' prerogative to vote for the proposal are indicative of the

fact that the new regime allowed that family relations and interest could interfere to a significant extent with the assignment of offices and titles.

A measure that affected nobles and bureaucrats alike was the fact that the Russian authorities cancelled the tax exemptions that used to accompany the appointment of *boieri* during the old regime. To compensate for the elimination of tax exemptions, the Russian administration offered pensions to the former incumbents or heirs of incumbents of office. Moreover, the Organic Regulations provided for the increase of labor obligations of the tenants to their landowners and the decrease of their obligations to the treasury.

Telling of the way in which the Regulations transformed old political networks and institutions and the leverage of former *boieri* is the metamorphosis of the *divan* of Craiova into a judiciary body in the justice system. Originally, the *divan* was an assembly of *boieri* entrusted with the local application of justice. At the end of the eighteenth century, its members also began to claim participation in the collection of taxes and administrative authority, and thus, a share from the prerogatives of the *kaymakam*, i.e. the *hospodar's* representative in the region. When the Russian administration stripped the *divan* in Bucharest of its political agency and assigned executive and judicial tasks to it, the *divan* in Craiova was dismantled and its members were directed towards judicial tasks. Only a few local power holders, such as members of the families Băleanu or the Filipescu, who collaborated with the Russian authorities, preserved their titles and became nobles in the legislative assemblies. The others, among whom individuals who at the beginning of the nineteenth century had been staunch opponents of the *kaymakam* Constantin Samurçaș, Alexandru's uncle, became servants of the judiciary in Little Walachia and Walachia.

The justice apparatus was organized along three levels of authority. The primary level was that of the law-court in the local districts, which dealt with cases pertaining to civil, criminal and commercial law.⁴⁵ The staff of the court consisted of a president, two judges named for three years and a prosecutor. The second level judicial court was that of the Law Councils (*Divans*) of Bucharest and Craiova, which took over the judicial functions of the previous *boieri divans*. These two *divans*, which dealt with civil and criminal cases,⁴⁶ and a third, the Commercial Court,⁴⁷ were the courts to appeal litigations already heard in the district courts.⁴⁸ The Council from Bucharest was staffed with seven judges for the civil cases and five for criminal law and a prosecutor, while the Council in Craiova had five judges for civil law, three judges for criminal law and a

prosecutor. The judges were all nobles who exerted official duties,⁴⁹ while the prosecutors, together with the rest of the staff of the court, were officials who could aspire to receive noble title based on their service.⁵⁰ The highest instance of appeal was that of the *High Divan* that comprised six nobles who acted as judges and one prosecutor, and which was presided by a first rank noble, the great *ban*. The judges in all the courts were named by the prince, except for the judges of the Commercial Courts, who were appointed by the most notable tradesmen.⁵¹ After serving as an interpreter and secretary during the drafting of the Regulations, in 1832, Alexandru Samurcaș, the nephew of the *kaymakam* of Craiova Constantin Samurcaș, took the position of prosecutor in the criminal court of the district of Ilfov, nearby Bucharest.

2.3. Crossings between bureaucracy and politics (1834-1840s)

In 1834, the Ottoman and Russian representatives signed at Saint Petersburg the convention through which the Ottoman Empire acknowledged the territorial delimitation of Walachia and Moldavia and the Organic Regulations and Russia committed to the evacuation of its troops from the “principalities”. In the decree for the confirmation of the convention, the sultan also announced that he would nominate again the princes of Walachia and Moldavia but only as an exceptional case.⁵² Alexandru Ghica, the brother of the former *hospodar* Grigore IV Ghica became prince of Walachia and Mihail Sturdza, the son of a Moldavian *boier* and a descendent of the Callimachis, became prince of Moldavia. The family connection between these new rulers and the former *hospodars* marked the continuity of the Ottoman control over the principalities. On the other hand, Russia intervened in 1835 to strengthen the influence it had gained in the principalities by imposing an additional article to the Organic Regulations through which the princes and the assemblies could not change the original stipulations of these programs. For the following years, the running of the principalities was left to the newly created political and bureaucratic hierarchies, with the more or less overt intervention of Russian agents.

The *boier* Alexandru Samurcaș, who lacked important support because of the death of his father and uncle and who only had his skill and a few acquaintances to rely on, could not avoid engaging these transformations. He pursued promotion in the bureaucracy while keeping an eye on the possibilities to receive a noble title and thus to occupy a politically

significant but stable position that would have also secure the future of his offspring. In 1834 Samurçaș was introducing himself as *comis*, an honorary title that had nothing in common with the apparatus of justice⁵³ in which he worked as a prosecutor, but which was a starting point for advancing in the hierarchy of nobility. Although Alexandru Samurçaș was the son of a *boier* who had arrived from Constantinople and of a “local” woman from Moldavia, apparently he did not qualify as a Romanian, which was a condition for promotion in office and nobility. To receive naturalization and renew relations of support, in 1834 Samurçaș married Zoe Ghiul Beyazi, a woman of Walachian-Phanariot origin but who was referred to as Romanian, and whose father, Nicola Ghiul Beiazi, was related to Ioan Ghiulbeiazi, an old acquaintance of Alexandru’s uncle.⁵⁴ The witness at the wedding was the great *ban* Alexandru Filipescu, a first rank noble, who in his turn had been a contact of Constantinos Samurçaș. Within seven years from the wedding, Samurçaș was entitled to the status of “local” too. The Samurçaș family soon grew with the birth of two daughters, Elisabeth and Helen and of a son, Ioan (who was born in the early 1840s).⁵⁵

To speed up his naturalization and also to acquire new support for official promotion and title, Alexandru maintained close connection with his aunt Zoe Samurçaș, a “Romanian” woman. The reason for Alexandru’s haste to obtain naturalization might have been the fact that in 1835 the Walachian legislative assembly was considering the creation of a Table of the noble titles and ranks that corresponded to grades in the bureaucratic hierarchy.⁵⁶ The Table, which was meant to regulate the noble hierarchy and limit the noble titles to which bureaucrats were entitled, resembled the Russian Tables of Ranks that the tsars Peter I and Catherine II imposed in eighteenth century Russia to create a group of trained bureaucrats.

In 1836, shortly before she passed away, Zoe helped Alexandru’s ambitions by formally petitioning through the Great Chancellery of Justice to adopt her adult nephew because she had lost her natural children and was deprived of any other family and support. The prince approved the adoption request and confirmed that Alexandru Samurçaș, a married adult hired in civil employment, could be considered Zoe’s “adopted son”.⁵⁷ The adoption meant that Samurçaș became Zoe’s heir and the administrator of her possessions, the several land estates in the proximity of Bucharest, as well as of her debts.⁵⁸ The land possessions of Zoe Samurçaș were rather small by the time’s standards. However, they were an asset that Alexandru could evoke to testify for his family’s nobility and to support his own claims

to become a “noble”. The documents concerning the adoption also make plain that in 1836 Alexandru was still considered a bureaucrat.

In 1837 the legislative assembly passed the supplement to the article “About Ranks” from the Organic Regulations, which established nine noble ranks, the classes in which they were fitting, the new and old noble titles that corresponded to them and also the military ranks that were eligible for each noble rank.⁵⁹ According to the article, the numerous noble titles, which reprised the nominal functions that used to be bestowed on the *boieri* during the Phanariot rule, were organized in a hierarchy of nine ranks and three classes. The highest, first class and first rank office was that of great *ban* (in the 1830s a nominal title of the administrator of Little Walachia, a function that the Phanariot princes had transferred to the *kaymakam*, while the *ban* became an actor in politics in Bucharest)⁶⁰ while the ninth rank in third class comprised titles from *pitar* (responsible with the bread supply of the court) and below. Alexandru, still a prosecutor, was proposed by the prince Alexandru Ghica for a title of *serdar*, which was a title of the eighth rank and third class. Being a land owner and also holding a noble title made Alexandru Samurçuş eligible for the district elections in 1841 as a delegate to the Legislative Assembly of Walachia.⁶¹ His promotion through the bureaucratic and title hierarchies was slow: it was only in 1842 that he advanced from being a prosecutor to becoming the president of the Commercial Law Court in Craiova and to receive the seventh rank title of *paharnic* (cup bearer). Thanks to his service in the judiciary, he was propelled to a sixth rank title of *clucer* but without promotion in office.⁶²

3. New political fields

The significant attention paid by scholars of Romanian history to the dispute for positions between the princes, the members of their council and the legislative suggests that the competition for positions, and especially that of the prince, was the unique political field active in the principalities. After all, it was the liberal nobles, who comprised nobles of lower rank or young nobles educated in the West and supporters of the new emancipatory ideals, who would make the widening of the political sphere and the political involvement of other social categories an item of their revolutionary agenda in 1848. The historiography accurately noticed the tensions that animated the political establishment, built around certain

institutions created during the Russian occupation, and the adoption of conservative and liberal ideologies by the participants in this establishment. Nevertheless, political conflict in the institutionalized political arena did not exhaust the areas of political activity in the principalities.

In this section I will point at another dimension of politics in Walachia - the local networks of support built around land owners, nobles and bureaucrats at the local level, which became active during elections and promotions in ranks. As I have previously mentioned, the Russian-endorsed institutionalization and division of powers were aimed at reducing the political to a circumscribed arena and controlling the channels between the political assembly and the rank and file of bureaucracy. Even though these individuals were not at the forefront of the political conflict, they acted as political agents that had their own agendas and support from their peers. Further, although the lower rank nobles and bureaucrats developed political relations, their field of action was not separate from that of the "high politics" on which the existing literature has focused. The mechanisms through which a bureaucrat could gain noble title also stimulated him to collaborate with certain nobles or the prince and thus enhance his local prestige and position, political acts that mirrored the relations within the Phanariot networks. Equally reminiscent of the Phanariot politics was the fact that the lower rank nobles and the bureaucrats often upheld the prince and high nobles against their political adversaries, even though these activities did not necessarily repute high rewards. Alexandru Samurcaș was one such individual. He was well positioned in the district bureaucracy and political networks; he also received noble rank according to the Table of ranks in Walachia and fostered good relations with the successive princes of Walachia Alexandru II Ghica and Gheorghe Bibescu who were political rivals. The revolutionary year 1848 threatened his position temporarily. During that particular moment of crisis he and his colleagues acted in a fashion that is indicative of how politics functioned at the intersection of bureaucracy and the legislative, and drawing on practices that the Ottoman rule fostered in Walachia and Moldavia.

Soon after the withdrawal of the Russian troops and the beginning of the "autonomous administration" in Walachia and Moldavia, the relation between the newly appointed princes, the members of their council and the legislative assembly became tense. The princes appointed by the sultan in 1834, Alexandru II Ghica and Mihail Sturdza, found themselves increasingly at odds with the legislative assemblies. Even though they

proceeded to promote individuals from their entourage to higher ranks and bring trustworthy or at least innocuous individuals in the executive, several high nobles proved to be particularly at odds with their rule.⁶³ The princes' fears were accurate as some of the political opponents to their measures indeed aspired to become *hospodars*. The prince of Moldavia Mihai Sturdza skillfully manipulated and sabotaged any manifestation of dissent.⁶⁴ Unlike him, the prince Alexandru II Ghica of Walachia entered conflict with the members of the assembly who suspected the prince of collaboration with Russia. In 1841 the discontent in the assembly and the shifting attitude of the Russian authorities towards Ghica were maneuvered by the noble Gheorghe Bibescu,⁶⁵ the son of a high official from Little Walachia, a bureaucrat and later as a *vornic* during the Russian administration, and the spouse of a descendent of the Mavrocordat family. Bibescu mobilized members of the assembly across political divisions to submit a petition to the two Courts asking for the dismissal of Alexandru Ghica. The prince was deposed, and Bibescu won the elections that were held according to the Organic Regulations.

Alexandru Samurcaș, who had received from the prince Alexandru Ghica the office of president of the Commercial Law Court in Craiova and a promotion in noble rank with the title of cup bearer, did not suffer any drawback when Bibescu was elected to the throne in 1842. I could not find information as to whether Samurcaș participated to the extraordinary assembly entrusted with the election of the prince, or if he became a supporter of the new candidate to the rule.⁶⁶ But given that Alexandru Filipescu, the noble who was a witness at the wedding of Samurcaș and implicitly his protector, was a first class *boier* under Alexandru Ghica, Samurcaș might have been a supporter of Ghica too.⁶⁷ The association with supporters of the former prince might account for the fact that although prince Bibescu awarded the title of *clucer* to Samurcaș in 1845, the prince did not promote him in the judiciary hierarchy to a position in the appeal courts in Craiova or in Bucharest. The rise in the bureaucratic hierarchy was important to Samurcaș who hoped to receive higher salary and to relocate to Bucharest where he owned the land estate bestowed on him by his aunt Zoe. Alexandru began to pay attention to the estate in Ciorogârla (Samurcășești) and to the monastery that his uncle and aunt had built there, without bequeathing revenues for its maintenance. In 1847, Alexandru and Zoe Samurcaș decided that they could not leave the monastery that preserved the name and the memory of the family without endowment

and decided to award to the ecclesiastical settlement the land on which the church was built and the surrounding plots.⁶⁸

Unlike the early 1840s, when Samurçaș slowly acquired titles and positions that gave him a stable position in the context of the high nobles' rivalry for the throne, 1848 endangered his carefully planned career and life. The ideological frictions between the followers of the European liberalism and the other nobles, combined with local conflicts concerning the rule of the princes Bibescu and Sturdza led to radical political actions in 1848. Contemporary observers and Romanian historiography extensively analyzed the national and social program of the events in 1848 and strove to identify the groups that participated in the uprising.⁶⁹ The fact remains, however, that the events in 1848 in Walachia triggered the hostility of the Russian Empire and after a while, the intervention of the Ottoman Empire as well. The two empires stationed troops in Wallachia for the following two years, under the command of general Omar Pasha and general and count Alexander von Lüders. In 1849, the Porte and the Russian Court appointed Barbu Știrbei, the brother of Gheorghe Bibescu, as prince of Walachia.

Whether and to what extent Alexandru Samurçaș participated in the events during the spring of 1848 in Craiova is unknown but, similarly to Constantin Samurçaș who fled the uprising of 1821, he took refuge in Transylvania. At some point in the fall of 1848, when the revolution had been suppressed, the authorities of the military occupation dismissed Samurçaș from the position of president of the Commercial Law Court in Craiova. The measure dealt a heavy blow to Samurçaș who feared imprisonment or permanent exile and who lacked the financial means to live abroad for a long period of time. Even if he was pardoned and could return to Walachia, he could not secure a future for his family solely with the revenues from the rather small properties that he owned. It was under these difficult circumstances that he relied on the political and support networks in Little Walachia, of which he had been a member. His associates wrote a petition to the occupation authorities and pleaded for his return to Little Walachia. Soon after coming back to the province, he also wrote a petition-cum-biography for the commander of the Russian troops, general Lüders, in which he alluded to his relations to the nobles and bureaucrats of Craiova and to his service to request a promotion in the bureaucracy. Both documents illustrate that the endeavor of the Russian occupation from 1829-1834 of creating a bureaucracy in Walachia, intended to serve the Russian administration and create a culture of public

service, popularized the themes of bureaucratic effectiveness and public service. Their submission is also evocative of the fact that political networks and practices survived or mimicked those during the Phanariot rule on matters pertaining to bureaucratic career and local politics.

In October 1848 “inhabitants and owners” of Craiova wrote in French an “endorsement” for Alexandru Samurcaş who had been recently dismissed from the Commercial Court, on allegations of participation in the “revolution”. Even though the letter does not specify the addressee, this document was obviously meant to be read by someone in a decision-making position, most likely the Russian commander in Walachia. Nobles, merchants and a few leading clergymen rejected the denigrations against Samurcaş on account that he had been openly disgruntled with the revolutionary events that forced him to take refuge in Habsburg Transylvania at his own expense.⁷⁰ The signatories emphasized that the “inhabitants and owners” of Craiova, those who benefitted from Samurcaş’s activity, evaluated his service in the most positive terms. Reportedly, Samurcaş fulfilled his official duties impeccably and with great attention while also being a pleasant member of the local “society”.⁷¹ Presenting a positive evaluation of Samurcaş’s bureaucratic service jointly with an assessment of his public persona was meant to show that the president of the Commercial Court corresponded entirely to the model for the officials’ behavior that the Russian authorities aimed to introduce through the Organic Regulations.

On the other hand, the letter also discloses connections that went beyond professional solidarity. The writers included the *clucer* (a sixth rank title in second class) George Coţofeanu,⁷² the *clucer* Grigore Racoviţă, the son of a Walachian-Phanariot family and a judge of the Criminal Court, and the fourth rank chancellor of customs the *logofăt al credinţei* (or chancellor of customs, which was a first class, fourth title) Dimitrie Haralamb.⁷³ With the exception of Racoviţă who had relocated from Moldavia to Walachia, Coţofeanu and Haralamb were natives of Little Walachia and descendants of members of the local council of officials, who, at the beginning of the century, had competed for power in the Western districts with the *kaymakam* Constantin Samurcaş, Alexandru’s uncle. After the Organic Regulations dissolved the political structures of the *boieri* council and the office of *kaymakam* and created instead a local judiciary institution, Coţofeanu served, similarly to Samurcaş as a judge of the Civil Court in Craiova and the two became close acquaintances. The same relation also connected Samurcaş and Grigore Racoviţă.⁷⁴ Constantin

Haralamb, who had exerted judicial functions before 1830, but was active in the Law Courts after this date, had the same noble title like Samurçaș. However, unlike Samurçaș he owned large properties in Little Walachia.⁷⁵ These individuals were brought together by common activity within the same local judiciary institution and noble rank. Their group, underlain by office and title, branched out to merchants and a few clergymen from the town. The signing of the letter by descendants of former political rivals of Alexander's ancestor shows that the transformation of the local divan from a political forum into a judiciary institution alleviated the political tensions that had opposed the notables in Little Walachia to each other and to the notables in Bucharest at the beginning of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it also shows that the members in the judiciary institution, who held noble titles, developed a network of mutual support relevant for politics at the local level and in Bucharest.

The Russian authorities must have heeded the certification of good behavior signed by the jurists and inhabitants of Craiova, as Alexander Samurçaș soon returned to the city and gathered the courage to write to general Lüders asking for a promotion to the office of judge in the court of appeal in Bucharest or in the parallel court in Craiova. His letter in French from December 1848 reviews the "political career" that he had developed since 1830 to show that he followed the itinerary of official service and nomination in rank drawn by the Organic Regulations and that his performance to date recommended him for promotion.

It is only to the Russian protection that I owe my political career. In 1832, under the administration of His Excellency General Kisselef (sic!) I was appointed prosecutor of the Criminal Court in Bucharest.⁷⁶ At the same time he recommended the future administration of the country to offer me a noble rank. In 1837 prince Ghica named me *serdar* but he did not promote me in office. It was in 1841, after my ninth year of service, that I was appointed judge in the Commercial Court in Bucharest. [...] Since 1842 I have constantly served as president (of the Commercial Court in Craiova) without having received any promotion in my office. Only in 1845 prince Bibesco (sic!) gave me the rank of *clucer* although he had repeatedly promised to appoint me to a more important office given my professional performance that he acknowledged and the attention with which I fulfilled the duties of the post assigned to me. [...] I believe I am entitled to aspire to a higher position as there are many individuals who, not having any of the above mentioned titles, are currently appointed judges in both courts of appeal in Craiova.

My wish, which I deliver to you, is none other but to be appointed judge in one of the Appeal Courts in Bucharest because hence I would be in the proximity of my estate, which is only two hours away from the city, and I would be able to oversee my family's affairs that I need to consider more, especially since my eldest daughter is of marriage age. If it is not feasible at present to receive such a job in Bucharest, I would be content with a comparable job here, in Craiova. Such a job would not be difficult to find for me because there is one more vacancy at the Appeal Civil Court. It is disheartening, my General, to have served for so long and without receiving promotion and at the same time to see others who, without having so many years in the job, overtook us.⁷⁷

Particular about the letter is the fact that it does not contain any mentions about the service that the father and uncle of Samurcaş carried for the Phanariot princes or about the protection that his uncle offered him during the exile in Kronstadt between 1821 and 1825. This silence was meant to obscure the connection of Samurcaş with the ancient regime, which in the Russian authorities' opinion was "Asiatic" and "patrimonial".⁷⁸ He also aimed to show that he was entirely a servant and upholder of the modern principles of bureaucracy and government applied by the Russian authorities.

Samurcaş's attempt to distance himself from the ancient regime of the Phanariot rules might also explain why he did not mention his recent naturalization as a "local Romanian" through adoption and marriage. On the other hand it is also possible that the "naturalization" stipulated by the Organic Regulations, jointly with the way in which the Russian authorities redefined leadership and politics facilitated the inclusion in the local political groups of those whose ancestors were considered "Greek" or rallied to the Greek cause. Whereas Constantin Samurcaş, his uncle, was often called "Greek" or "new-comer" by his political rivals in Little Walachia, their heirs, Alexandru and the other bureaucrats and nobles from Little Walachia rallied to each other's help, with no mention about Alexandru's "foreign" ancestry.

Also particular about the document is the fact that although Samurcaş was not one of the major power players in Walachia, and although he was pleading for a rise in office, he referred to his past promotions in the bureaucracy and noble rank as his "political career". In this fashion Samurcaş might have intended to exaggerate the position that he actually held in the government of Walachia. Samurcaş used key-words that would have resonated with the letter's addressee and improved his chances of

receiving a higher position in the judiciary and a corresponding promotion in noble rank. His plight for promotion in office, and implicitly better pay, and for higher noble status was not motivated by the ambition to become a leading political figure in Walachia but by a more modest purpose. Samurcaș was aware that his advancement in the administrative and noble hierarchies was bound to end at some point, as he lacked the leverage of the high nobles. But at the same time he was committed not to miss any opportunity at promotion and secure a stable and well regarded position for his family, which would have later helped his offspring to accede to the first ranks of the nobility and public service.

The direct intervention near an individual who held power and could act as a patron, which was the way in which Samurcaș had received his promotions from the princes and in which he approached the Russian general, the references to family responsibilities together with mentions of his service are evocative of the patronage relations under the Ottoman ancient regime combined with discursive tropes alluring to the Russian authorities. To show his compliance with the mechanisms that the Organic Regulations introduced to rule administration and leadership, Alexandru counted scrupulously his appointments, the years of service in each of them and the individuals, all in positions of leadership, who could have assigned him to office and rank.⁷⁹ In addition, he emphasized that he accomplished each of the assignments with diligence and efficiency, conditions that would have warranted a promotion in office. The fact that Samurcaș believed his Russian addressee was receptive to issues such as “political career”, “service”, “competence” and hierarchy is revealed in the last paragraphs of the letter where he denounced those who did not qualify for the higher positions in the judicial apparatus but received high offices nonetheless. The rise of individuals without experience was, as the Russian authorities endeavored to make known, a menace to both the quality of the public service as well as to the hierarchy and order that allegedly featured the new administration in Walachia.

The letter also hints at the pursuit of a noble title of Samurcaș. This undisclosed purpose complements the open request for a better official appointment. In addition, it can also be detected in the references about the care for his family and land possessions, assets that only increased one’s prestige as a noble. Specifically, Samurcaș made the case that he preferred an appointment as president of the Court in Bucharest to be close to his estate that needed overseeing. Expressing care for his family could potentially add to his portrait as a noble who had to make sure that

the alliances his family would forge through the marriage of his daughters enhanced the family's prestige and status. Further, family was important to claim and bequeath hereditary noble title. Samurcaş hoped to find suitable matches for his daughters and bestow a noble rank to his son in addition to preparing him to launch a bureaucratic career. The two letters that I analyzed are therefore important testimonies for the way in which the discourse about bureaucratic efficiency was appropriated by Alexandru Samurcaş who continued to rely on local political networks and old practices such as interventions near patrons or family relations to enhance his position in the complex institutional-political hierarchy set up during the Organic Regulations.

Either because the Russian general did not heed the letter or because his reply was lost, the result of the plight of Alexandru Samurcaş remains unknown. Within the following decade, new international developments triggered another adjustment of the political leadership in Walachia and Moldavia. In 1857, the local temporary assemblies created by the Congress of Paris for the reorganization of the Principalities abolished the "noble" titles in administration and politics and made political participation dependent on property. We can assume that at this stage Samurcaş, similarly to other bureaucrats who held noble title, preserved the prestige associated with his position in the administration and that based on the ownership of properties, he obtained the right to political participation and representation.

Conclusion

In this article I recreated the biography of Alexandru Samurcaş who was the political heir of an Ottoman-Phanariot official in Walachia and who became an official and noble in the Russian reformed administration, to discuss how the Russian active intervention in this Ottoman tributary affected local politics. With this question, my aim was to place the so-called "modernization" of Walachia in a broader theoretical perspective and to open it to comparative approaches. To achieve this aim, I looked at "modernization" as a method of imperial expansion that involves particular imperial measures and their interaction with the practices and relations in the society where they were applied. In its turn, this approach is also relevant for imperial history and particularly the history of Ottoman-Russian rivalry and Russian penetration in Ottoman territories.

I organized my analysis around two intersecting narratives. On the one hand I followed the unfolding of the Russian occupation, the recruitment of existing power holders in the administration, and the way in which the Russian-endorsed reforms, aimed at replacing the “Ottoman political culture” in Walachia, strove to circumscribe and control the political field by separating politics from bureaucracy and by re-defining leadership. On the other hand, the biography of Alexandru Samurçaș exposed the ways in which members or descendants of the old Walachian-Phanariot elites engaged with the re-conceptualization of their power and recovered the methods from their Ottoman past to create political networks based on patronage, locality and family relations.

This political-administrative organization survived the revolution of 1848 but it did not survive the changes that the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War and the Congress of Paris ending this war brought to the status of the Danube provinces and in local government. In 1857 the European Concert of Powers called for local Walachian and Moldavian assemblies to decide on the organization of the principalities under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. These assemblies, which paved the way to the union of Walachia and Moldavia under the name of the United Principalities, spelled the abolition of “nobility” by cancelling privileges, regulating taxation, making administrative employment public and by imposing mandatory military service.⁸⁰ However, the abolition of “nobility” did not entail the removal of the former “nobles” from political leadership. Although ranks were abolished, property ownership, which was a defining component of the “nobles’” status, became the condition for political participation. On the other hand, the abolition of “nobility” led to reconsiderations of the past and of claims to ancestry among the Phanariot *boieri* and the Organic Regulations’ nobles in the effort of recreating distinctions of social status and prestige.

NOTES

- ¹ About the widely discussed political backwardness of the Balkans, see Maria Todorova, "The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism", *Slavic Review*, 64, no. 1 (2005): 148-149; and Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanir, "Introduction" in *The Ottomans and the Balkans – A Discussion of Historiography*, Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanir (ed.), (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 42.
- ² The names of the characters in this paper had different spellings in Romanian, Greek and the languages of foreign observers and diplomats. For consistency, I used exclusively the Romanian spelling.
- ³ Barbara Jelavich, *Russia and the formation of the Romanian national state 1821-1878*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 32-33; Neagu Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident – Țările Române la începutul epocii moderne*, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2009), 353-354; Nevill Forbes, Arnold J. Toynbee, D. Mitruby and D.G. Hogarth, *The Balkans: A History of Bulgaria-Serbia-Greece-Romania-Turkey*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press New York, 1915), 225-226.
- ⁴ S.N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1(2000):2.
- ⁵ Richard Wolin, "'Modernity:' The Peregrinations of a Contested Historiographical Concept," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 3(2011): 748-749.
- ⁶ Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanir, "Introduction," in *The Ottomans and the Balkans – A Discussion of Historiography* edited by Suraiya Faroqhi and Fikret Adanir, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 21-24.
- ⁷ Ariel Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire, Rival Paths to the Modern State*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 4-5, 11.
- ⁸ Ali Yaycioglu, "The Provincial Challenge: Regionalism, Crisis and Integration in the Late Ottoman Empire (1789-1812)", Ph.D. Thesis (Harvard University, 2008), 292-293, 456-457.
- ⁹ Selim Deringil, "'They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 2(2003):311-312.
- ¹⁰ James Cracraft, *The Petrine Revolution in Russian Culture*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 154-159; John P. LeDonne, *Absolutism and Ruling Class – The Formation of the Russian Political Order 1700-1825*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 74-75, 146-151; Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas in Russian Enlightenment Theatre*, (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004).
- ¹¹ Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 658-660.
- ¹² Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question: Army, Government, and Society 1815-1833*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 442.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 429.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 443.

- 15 Marcel Suveică, "Starea de spirit a boierilor din Principate în ajunul războiului
ruso-turc din 1828-1829. Date din arhivele rusești," *Analele Științifice ale*
16 *Universității Al. I. Cuza din Iași (Serie Nouă)* XLII-XLIII, (1996-1997): 15.
- 16 Dionisie Fotino, *Istoria Generală a Daciei sau a Transilvaniei, Țării Muntenesi*
și a Moldovei, (Bucharest, Valahia, 2008), 651-652.
- 17 Octav-George Lecca, *Familiile boierești române* (Bucharest: Libra, 2001),
301, 549, 550.
- 18 Christine Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age*
of Revolution, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 57.
- 19 Mustafa A. Mehmet, *Documente turcești privind istoria României*, (Bucharest:
Editura Academiei R.S.Romania, 1986), vol. III, 174.
- 20 See the letters and memoirs of Mihail Sturdza, the representative of the exiled
boieri from Moldavia, Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria*
românilor, (Bucharest: Socec, 1882), vol. IV, supl. I, 7, 22-23, 28-29, 35.
- 21 BAR Fondul Alexandru Tzigara- Samurcaș, S43/DCXC, f.2. recto.
- 22 Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question...*, 317.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 362.
- 24 E.S. Creasy, "Appendix A: Treaty of Adrianople," in *History of Ottoman Turks:*
from the beginning of their empire to the present time. Chiefly founded on
Von Hammer, (London R. Bentley, 1854), 516.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 517.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 522-523.
- 27 Memoire of Mihai Cantacuzino from 1772, Memoire of several *boieri* from
Walachia from 1789 in *Mémoires et projets de réforme dans les principautés*
roumaines 1769-1830, edited by Vlad Georgescu, (Bucharest: Association
internationale d'études du Sud-Est européen, 1970), 37, 42.
- 28 Viorel Panaite, "Wallachia and Moldavia from the Ottoman Juridical
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1760-1850. Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation, edited by Antonis
Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos, (Rethymno: Department of History and
Archaeology of the University of Crete, 2007)31-32, 40.
- 29 Florin Constantiniu, "Sărmanele raiale": factorul otoman în geneza politici
de reformă a domnilor fanarioți," *Caietul Laboratorului de Studii Otomane*
1, (1989) 1990, 189-199.
- 30 Specifically, Ștefan Bălăceanu, Grigore Filipescu, M. Băleanu, Constantin and
Lupu Balș, V. Hrisorverghi, see Ioan C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines*
sous l'Occupation Russe (1828-1834), (Bucharest: L'Indépendance
Roumaine, 1904), 59-60, 76, 79.
- 31 Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question...*, 145.
- 32 Ioan C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines ...*, 59-60.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 72.
- 34 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII, No. 3.
- 35 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII, No. 3, 20.
- 36 Ioan C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines ...*, 68.

- 37 He was the brother of a former prince of Walachia, Grigore IV Ghica, whom the Ottomans appointed after the dismantlement of the Phanariots, and of a future prince of Walachia, Alexander II Ghica, Eugène Rizo-Rangabé, *Livre d'or de la noblesse phanariote en Grèce, en Roumanie, en Russie et en Turquie*, (Athens: Imprimerie S.C. Vlastos, 1892), 47-48.
- 38 Ioan C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines ...*, 90.
- 39 Mihai Cantacuzino, *Istoria politică și geografică a Țării Românești de la cea mai veche a sa întemeiere până la anul 1774*, trans. George Sion, (Bucharest: Tipografia Națională a lui Stephan Rassidescu, 1863), 15-16; Marc-Philippe Zallony, *Essai sur les Phanariotes*, (Marseilles: Imprimerie d'Antoine Ricard, 1824), 49-53.
- 40 Paul Cernovodeanu and Irina Gavrilă, *Arhondologiile Țării Românești de la 1837*, (Brăila: Muzeul Brăilei, Editura Istros, 2002), 3-5.
- 41 Paul Cernovodeanu, "Mobility and traditionalism: the evolution of the boyar class in the Romanian principalities in the 18th century," *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 24, no. 3 (1986):250.
- 42 Gheorghe Platon and Alexandru Florin Platon, *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul XIX*, (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1995), 92-93.
- 43 *Regulamentul Organic*, (Bucharest: Eliad, 1832), Chapter VIII, Section 1, art. 350 - art. 351, 187
- 44 *Ibid*, Chapter VIII, Section 1, art. 352-356, 188-189.
- 45 The first level courts for Bucharest and Craiova were those of the corresponding districts of Dolj and Ilfov, *Regulament Judicătoresc: coprinzător de capul al șaptelea din Regulamentul organic...* (Bucharest: Tipografia I. Eliad, 1839), 14.
- 46 Art. 267, *Ibid.*, 38-39.
- 47 Art. 299; Art 300, *Ibid.*, 55.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 4.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 52 Ioan. C. Filitti, *Les Principautés Roumaines...*, 233-234.
- 53 In fact the comis was the name of the official that oversaw the hospodar's stables and who occupied a leading place in the traditional ceremony for the hospodar's arrival in the province.
- 54 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXV/no. 63.
- 55 For lack of documentation, I could not date precisely the birth of the three children of Zoe and Alexandru Samurcaș. Finding letters that the daughters and son wrote in the 1850s and 1860s (BAR, Fondul Alexandru Tzigara Samurcas, S 26, S 27, S 28 (1-4), S 37, S 39 (1-3, 6)/DCXCI) I inferred the approximate years of their birth as the 1830s and 1840s respectively.
- 56 Paul Cernovodeanu and Irina Gavrilă, *Arhondologiile Țării Românești de la 1837*, 5.
- 57 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII/ No. 81-82, 90, 94.

- 58 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII/ No 112, 159, 171.
- 59 Paul Cernovodeanu and Irina Gavrilă, *Arhondologiile Țării Românești de la 1837*, 5.
- 60 Ioan C. Filitti, *Banii și Caimacamii Craiovei*, (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, 1924), 16.
- 61 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXIII/No. 42.
- 62 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII/No. 162.
- 63 Panaioti Rizos, *Mémoires du prince Nicolas Soutzo, Grand Logothète de Moldavie, 1798-1871*, (Vienna: Gerold&Co., 1899), 112-113, 123; A.D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiană*, (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1925), vol. XI, 137-138.
- 64 Panaioti Rizos, *Mémoires du prince Nicolas Soutzo...*, 109-110, 112, 115.
- 65 A.D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiană*, 145.
- 66 The participation in this assembly was limited to 50 first class nobles, 73 second class nobles (nobles in both classes being chosen by their peers), 36 nobles from the districts and 27 deputies of corporations. Alexandru As a paharnic. Samurcaș would have qualified for being elected to the assembly.
- 67 Ion Filipescu, the son of Alexandru Filipescu, even served in the prince's executive council and was in charge of foreign affairs and chancellery. See Octav-George Lecca, *Familiile boierești române*, 280.
- 68 Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaș, *Memorii*, (Bucharest: Editura "Grai și suflet – cultura națională, 1991), vol. I, 25.
- 69 Panaioti Rizos, *Mémoires du prince Nicolas Soutzo...*, 153-155; A.D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiană*, 50-52, 55, 60.
- 70 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXIII/no. 159, f. 1 verso.
- 71 ANIC, Documente istorice, 2270, Pachet MDXIII/no. 159.
- 72 Paul Cernovodeanu and Irina Gavrilă, *Arhondologiile Țării Românești...*, 80.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 104.
- 74 Ilie I. Vulpe, *Divanul Craiovei*, (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, 2002), 250-251.
- 75 Octav-George Lecca, *Familiile boierești române*, 601.
- 76 In fact, Samurcaș exaggerated his position – he did not serve as prosecutor of the Criminal Court of Bucharest but of the district of Ilfov, a court inferior to that of Bucharest, see above.
- 77 ANIC, Documente istorice 2270, Pachet MDXII/No. 162.
- 78 Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question...*, 443.
- 79 The *Regulamentul Organic* stipulated that the Ordinary Assembly had decided the offices that came with a title and the steps for advancement, but the prince was the one to appoint the incumbents of offices in the administration and judicial apparatus, 188.
- 80 Gheorghe Platon and Alexandru Florin Platon, *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul XIX*, 141.

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