

THE IMAGE OF THE RUSSIAN ENLIGHTENED MONARCH IN THE ROMANIAN CULTURE AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Alexandra CHIRIAC

“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

e-mail: alexandra.chiriac@uaic.ro

Ana CATANĂ-SPENCIU

“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

e-mail: ana.catana@uaic.ro

Abstract: *This paper aims to reconstruct the way in which the Romanian written culture from the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth gradually built the image of the Russian Enlightened monarchy with three of its most famous representatives: Peter II, Catherine II and Alexander I. By means of translating from Italian and German historiography, these texts served a double goal: on the one hand they satisfied the reader's need for knowledge and understanding of the contemporary events, and on the other they contributed to a political discourse that viewed Russia and the Russian Orthodox monarchy as potential saviours of the Romanian principalities from the oppression of the Muslim Ottoman Empire. By means of translation analysis, we have attempted to illustrate how the Western image of an Eastern monarch, guided by a blend of Western philosophy and Eastern Orthodox tradition, was transferred in the Romanian culture as a scientific base for political and cultural decisions.*

Keywords: Russian mirror of princes; cultural transfer; translation strategies; translation analysis; eighteenth century historiography.

Introduction

The second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth was a time of profound change in the political, social and cultural constellation of Europe. The Enlightenment as a philosophical and political ideology turned the world upside down and produced deep mutations in all aspects of the European cultural life, by mingling the role of the *polis* and *philosopher* in the state affairs. This blend of philosophy and politics created the cultural and political image of the Enlightened Monarch, seen both as an individual cultural benefactor and promoter of arts as well as fair judge and

fearless military leader who would further the European civilisation within and outside the borders of his/her empire.

The idea of an Enlightened absolutism was not the invention of the eighteenth century but rather a remodelling of the Platonian trope, according to which, in order to achieve the general good, the *polis* needed a philosopher-king or a king-philosopher. The Enlightenment as a whole didn't agree upon a unifying image of this type of leader but it regarded absolutism as the contractual legitimacy of the state and the monarchy as the institution that acted for the welfare and well-being of the people. This representation triggered an entire array of duties that the state, namely the monarch, should fulfil, as well as a comprehensive list of the fundamental rights of the subjects. (Fenske; Mertens [et.al.], 2003: 350-357) Voltaire's depiction of Charles XII of Sweden or of Peter the Great of Russia, the political "anti-Machiavellic" writings of Frederic II of Prussia, the "moral" politics of Maria Theresia and Joseph II that focussed on spreading education throughout the Habsburg empire are only some of the works that illustrate the diverse efforts of the monarch to follow the philosophical and social principles of the Western European Enlightenment. The monarch was to represent now an individual, who lost his God-given legitimacy and gained the right to govern his people on grounds of rationality. He or she was the first servant among fellow citizens with whom one entered a social contract. On the other hand, the monarch was to directly participate to the Enlightenment program of change, either through theoretical and philosophical writings (as Friedrich II), or through legislative work (as Catherine II), or through direct social policies and reforms (as Joseph II). (Birtsch, 1987: 9-46) The eighteenth-century historiography gave thus the individual a central role but "the emphasis on individual characters allowed for more complex or flawed portraits than the general 'types' recommended by neoclassical *artes historicae*." (Gallagher, 2013: 359) The traditional view, perpetuated throughout the Renaissance, focussed on exemplary characters using historical accounts on great personalities in order to teach through example. The Enlightenment philosophy of history on the other hand relied mainly on 'presentism', on the idea that history and biography, the account of great but also controversial deeds of the past, served as a key in understanding the contemporary events and circumstances. (Bourgault; Sparling, 2013: 1-2).

The historical writings from this era that focus on building the image of the absolute monarch cannot be separated from the Enlightenment's guiding principles or from the historical context in which they were written, when the major conflicts and the dramatic changes in allegiances marked the historiographic discourse dramatically. The biographies of contemporary monarchs provided a perfect example of the interference of politics, philosophy and historical science. These works were written either from the

perspective of the traveller who reported his impression and comments on the nation's "state of the art", or from the perspective of the strategist, who highlighted the political manoeuvres of the monarch or through the perspective of the philosopher who analysed the historical fact in larger social-political phenomena, adding his personal reflections and comments. (Chiriac, 2016: 35) Following Peter Gay's definition of the Enlightenment historiography as "science, art and propaganda" (Gay, 1996: 368), we may view these biographies of Enlightened monarchs as scientific, in the sense that they try to use scientific method in order to extrapolate and understand humanity and society as a whole, as artistic and creative, aesthetically and stylistically pleasing and as a means of diversion and instruction with a declared aim to form, educate and even manipulate the public opinion towards favouring a certain policy.

Our study aims to illustrate by virtue of three translations the history of European historiography and the network of knowledge created in order to build the 'image' of the Enlightened monarch. Moving away from Western Europe, we investigate a less known area of cultural contact and attempt to illustrate how the Romanian culture came in direct contact with the Western cultural image of the Russian Enlightened Monarch. This image of the Russian Tsars was propagated through the historical, yet propagandistic discourse of the Western cultures and disseminated in the Romanian cultural space, in many cases through Greek intermediates, with the indirect but visible support and participation of the Russian administration, which had direct economic and geopolitical interests in the region. Our purpose is to highlight how the Romanian intellectuals adopted and adapted the Western image of the Eastern monarch guided by the Eastern view of Western philosophy, so it corresponded to the needs and expectations of the target readership. The Romanian translations of these three texts (Catiforo's "Vita di Pietro"; Schweighofer's "Katharina die II." and Rumpf's "Alexander I") from Italian and German become thus perfect examples of the way in which foreign texts and ideas had penetrated the Romanian culture through a complex network of channels, contributing to a gradual accumulation of knowledge on the contemporary or recent history. This knowledge would have had a direct impact on the readers and their understanding of the social and political manoeuvres that were happening around them, contributing also to a better understanding of the role of the Romanian Principalities in this complicated and ever-mutating network of political and military interests.

Historical overview

In Central and Eastern Europe, the political and ideological conflicts escalated in the second half of the eighteenth-century with the ever-growing power of the Russian influence in the area and the weakening of the Ottoman

rule in the Balkans. The struggle for political balance of the three super-powers: the Habsburgs, the Ottomans and the Russians, with changing allegiances with France and Prussia transcended the battle field and was also transferred in the diplomatic and cultural discourse. Thus, the ruling house of Russia, the Romanovs, became more and more involved in the designation of European influence spheres trying to expand its empire all over the Black Sea. To this end, with more or less of a coherent foreign policy, we may run a continuous lineage of Russia Enlightened absolutism from Peter the Great, through Catherine II and up until Alexander I as apexes in the political, strategic and cultural expansion of the Russian empire and as representatives of a new “European order”, where Russia desired to play an essential role. (Ciobanu, 2007)

The Romanian Principalities, caught right in the middle of these fights tried to profit from the new-comer Russian Empire to obtain the independence from the Sublime Porte, searching for military and financial support in the new diplomatic allegiance. The eighteenth century, the “Phanariot era”, is traditionally seen as a dark era in the Romanian history, governed by corruption and self-interest. However, the Phanariots played a major role in awakening the nationalistic drive in the area, by uniting the native nobility and clergy under one banner: that of regaining their independence from the Sublime Porte.³¹ Consequently, many native aristocratic families (*pămînteni*) and many church representatives looked East (rather than towards the Catholic Habsburgs) for a natural alliance with the Orthodox Russia and for a spiritual and political leader in the Russian tsar. (Niță-Danielescu, 2009: 120-122) The Russian monarchs starting with Peter the Great with strong family connections in the German-speaking world, were generally regarded as civilizing figures ruling over a vast and barbaric territory, who could potentially protect and save Central Europe and the Balkans from the pagan Muslims. This openness encouraged the Russian monarchs to follow and draft ambitious expansionist plans in the second half of the eighteenth century (Ciobanu, 2007: 36-50). But the fall of the French monarchy shattered Catherine’s great vision of a Greek Empire in the Balkans, also forcing the Habsburg Empire to lead a fierce propaganda war on the liberal ideas that penetrated Central Europe after the French and American Revolutions. A couple of decades later, the Habsburg and Russian propagandistic discourses were built around the French threat of Napoleon, as a legitimate representative of the French Revolution and as a potential

³¹ Dan Berindei argues that the Greek presence lead to the coagulation of a resistance of the Romanian nobility and clergy that could act together in order to gain independence. Another fact mentioned is that the Phanariotes ruled in both principalities, developing the same institutions, policies and guidelines in both regions, so after the unification it was much easier to find common ground in the administration (Berindei 1984: 1-14).

liberator from the despotic rule, a discourse that turned to Russia as the saving force of European civilisation. (Camară, 2017: 145-154) The Austrian propagandistic anti-Napoleon booklets and history books narrate the great and tragic battles in Germany and France and try to destroy Napoleon's mythical image, by proclaiming his fateful failure in Russia and praising his adversary, Alexander I, Emperor of Russia as the mighty opponent of the French invasion. (Cernovodeanu, 1974: 82-84)

To this international political context, one should also add another component, namely the cultural awakening in Central Europe. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century the Romanian written culture was dominated by religious texts, either foreign or Romanian, originals or translations mainly from Greek and Slavonic languages. Yet the Greek presence in the administration and cultural life also determined a rapid circulation of Western secular books in the Principalities, Neo-Greek succeeding Slavonic as the language of culture. The Greeks from the Venice and Vienna colonies were in direct contact with the rapid changes and dramatic social and cultural shifts in the Western world and benefited from these by translating into Greek the main secular works of the Enlightenment. These translations circulated rapidly in the entire South-Eastern Europe, being read directly in Greek. In the second half of the eighteenth centuries the Greek translations served also as source texts for Romanian translations meant to enrich the national language and culture with European fundamental works. The study of history in the court academies from Bucharest and Iași, employing foreign educators and secretaries by the nobility in order to learn foreign languages, the spread of progressive press and the echo of the main political events – all contributed decisively to a direct contact of the Romanian nobility, bourgeoisie and clergy with issues of world history, as means of understanding contemporary events (Cernovodeanu, 1971: 295), gaining direct access to the original works of the West and beginning to translate directly from French, Italian and German. (Dima; Dima, 2013: 7-10) The Western European secular books, which were no longer perceived as documents but rather as commodities, were selected to be incorporated by the Romanian culture through translations, according to particular cultural and political interests dictated by the rapid and deep transformations in the power hierarchy in the area. Some of them built an image of the Enlightened monarch in a region where the lack of national leadership and the complicated foreign affairs forced the intellectuals to turn to the East, to Orthodox Russia for guidance and support.

The Russian Mirror of Princes

The “mirror of princes” is an old concept propagated throughout Europe since Renaissance, but in the second half of the eighteenth century it

gained new coordinates and meanings due to the image of the “Enlightened Despot”. If we have stated above the general accepted view on the Western European Enlightened Monarch, the Russian absolutism deserves special consideration due to its regional particularity. Whittaker describes the idea of Russian autocracy in the eighteenth-century historiography as falling into “three distinct patterns of interpretation”, which she calls “dynastic, empirical and non-despotic models”. (Whittaker, 1996: 156) The dynastic historians of the Petrine time presented an autocracy based on the legitimacy of the ruling house, as equal of any ruling dynasty in Europe, thus bringing Russia into the large family of Western European monarchies. Peter the Great was thus the logical culmination of a great dynasty, which brought Russia its deserved grandeur. The empirical model that exploited the teachings of the German philosophy of history concluded that the democracy was appropriate for smaller countries with a population well trained in democratic exercise. States like Russia could only be led by a wilful individual, capable to use his/her unlimited powers to the common good: the monarch was regarded as a parent to his/her nation, who would otherwise be lost. The non-despotic interpretation of autocracy questioned the limits of despotic rule and gained momentum after the reign of Anna Ioannovna and the alleged tyranny of Peter III. Catherine II declared Russia a European state and defined the autocracy as limited in its power by aristocratic counsel and the fundamental laws, which she herself drafted in the so called “Nakaz”.³² The message of the historians from this period was that the monarch had “all the powers to do good and none to do evil” (Whittaker, 1996: 156-170).

What was fundamentally different from the Western European image of Enlightened Monarchy was the relationship of the tsars with the divinity and their divine legitimacy. The sacralization of the Russian monarchy, as a combination of Byzantine and Western European traditions, meant “not only comparing the monarch to God but the monarch’s acquisition of special *charisma*, special gifts of grace due to which he begins to be seen as a supernatural being.” (Uspenskij; Zhivov, 2012: 12). During the eighteenth century, this image of the divine right to rule gained new nuances: The tsar “was seen as partaking in the divine as an individual, which defined his relation both to God and to man.” (21). Even if Russia, through the direct policies of Peter II and his successors, undertook a rapid Europeanization process, the tsar was officially declared the head of church and the hand of

³² This document, written in French and translated by Catherine herself in Russian (1767), is a legislative statement of Catherine the Great that incorporated the principles of the French Enlightenment in a practical guideline for juridical work. In Romanian, the text of the “Nakaz” was translated from a Greek intermediate with the title “Învățătură a însuși stăpînitorei mării Ecaterinii 2” in Iași, 1773 (BVR II-201-202). (Cioran-Camaraiianu 1958: 123-132).

God on earth, a natural prerogative of autocratic power. The Russian tsar functioned also as the Byzantine basileus, with Russia declaring itself the Third Rome. In this view, the tsars were referred to by Russian historiography as “holy”, “Christ”, “Saviour”, “earthly God”, “heavenly tsar”, “earthly deity” (22-30).

Russian historians “transformed the idea of autocracy from a static concept into a vital force that could absorb waves of Enlightenment thinking and project a dynamic and rational Western image,” without losing its regional specificity. (Whittaker, 1996: 170) The special traits of the Russian tsar were disseminated also by Western European historians who wanted to build a favourable image of the remote Russia and its leaders. Peter, Catherine, and Alexander were regarded by their people as God’s chosen to rule and the Western historians viewed them as civilizing forces of the vast barbaric territory in dire need of Enlightenment. This Western image of the Eastern tsars was also perpetuated in the Romanian-speaking territories, where the view of an absolute monarch who acted for the benefit of his people found a fertile ground. The Romanian clergy and aristocracy viewed in the biographies of the Russian tsars an inspirational material for their national aspiration of an independent Orthodox country.

Antonio Catiforo’s Peter the Great

The first portrait of a Russian “Enlightened Monarch” that entered the Romanian cultural space was the life and deeds of Peter the Great of Russia. It was written in Italian by the Greek scholar Antonio Catiforo from Venice and translated into Romanian by three different translators from the three Romanian Principalities.

Antonio Catiforo (1685-1763)³³ wrote the compilation “Vita di Pietro il Grande, imperador della Russia” (Venice, 1736), which represented an attempt to construct a true but shortened synthesis of the seven volumes he used, by eliminating all the passages and comments that he regarded as superfluous and inappropriate³⁴. Catiforo presented in a strict and clear

³³ Catiforo wrote three major works: a Grammar of the Greek language (1734), the compilation “Vita di Pietro” (Venice, 1736) and a translation from French, probably through an Italian intermediate, of “Histoire du Vieux et du Nouveau Testament” (1737). The life of Peter was published in the typography of Francesco Pitteri in 1736 and popularity of this work is attested by the subsequent four Italian editions and the multiple translations in different European languages. We will further refer only to the edition from 1736 since it is the source text if the Romanian translations (Dima; Dima 2013: 11-12).

³⁴ In the author’s preface he mentions that he used three major sources for his work: John Perry’s “The state of Russia, under the present Czar [...]”, “Der veränderte Russland, in welchem die jetzige Verfassung des geist- und weltlichen Regiments ... vorgestellt warden” by Friedrich Christian Weber, Frankfurt 1721 and Jean Rousset de Missy’s work: “Memoires du regne de Pierre le Grand, empereur de Russia, pere de la patrie [...] par B.

structure the history of the land, a short overview on the Russian monarchy until the ascension of Peter on the throne and Peter's reign, a chronological survey until his death. The entire work was divided in six chapters, each introduced by an "Argument" that summarised the content. At the end, the author included an "Index" of the main subjects, containing names, events, and important concepts. Throughout the text the author polemicized with his sources, correcting or criticizing the views of Missy, Perry or Voltaire and adding his own views on the international state of affairs.

The Italian text was then translated in Greek in 1737 by the Athenian Alexandros Kankellarios, who added also a translator "Preface", where he explained the fact that he had to make some corrections to Catiforo's text, especially where he dealt with the policy and facts of the Romanian Principalities. (Dima; Dima, 2013: 50-53) In Romanian, Kankellarios' translation of Catiforo's "Life of Peter" entered through three distinct channels, a sign of increasing interest in the subject matter. Chronologically speaking the first Romanian translation of Catiforo's "Vita di Pietro il Grande" was made in Walachia by the boyar Matei Fărcășanu who translated the first tome (4 books) in 1749. The original translation was lost and we have today three copies of Fărcășanu's translation³⁵ that eliminated all marginal notes and other references to religious texts or ancient writers, Kankellarios' introduction and the Greek ample notes and explanations. The Moldavian translation (1756) contains both tomes of Catiforo's work, from which we have today four manuscript copies,³⁶ that don't include either Catiforo's or Kankellarios' preface and begin with an introduction ("Ponturile cărții, întâi pe scurt", 1^v), where Cartiforo's "Argument" was reproduced, with a short overview of the content of each book. The marginal notes don't reproduce the notes of the Greek text but are rather corrections, explanations, synonyms, glosses. (Dima; Dima, 2013:115) A last translation of Catiforo's work in Romanian is the so called "the anonymous version from Brașov" (1783), from which we have today two copies³⁷, a version that contains only the four books of Catiforo's work and a Book 5 that is a

Iwan Nestesuranoi" Amsterdam, 1724-1725. Catiforo used also other sources of information, citing from Voltaire's "Histoire de Charles XII", the Dutch philosopher Bernhard de Mandeville "Free thoughts on religion, the Church and the national happiness" in the French edition (1722 and 1729), the treaty of the Jerusalem's Patriarch Hrisant Notara "De Officiis Sancta Christi Ecclesia", 1716 and others. (Dima; Dima 2013: 11-12).

³⁵ From ms. 2353 we have today ms. miscel. 204 BAR 1749 (leaves 99-241^v); ms. miscel. 2353 BAR 1755 (leaves 134-304) and ms. misc. 2668 BAR 1767 (leaves 8-175). (Dima; Dima 2013: 56, citing Ștrempele 1983, 1987).

³⁶ ms. 49 BAR 1756 (leaves 2-211), ms. 122 BAR 1765 (leaves 2-212), ms. 2581 BAR 1799 (leaves 2-210) and ms. 1 "Saltikov-Șcedrin" Library from Sankt Petersburg 1755 (leaves 1-266).

³⁷ ms. Miscel. 3161 BAR 1785 (leaves 1-186) and ms. 2476 BAR 1783 (leaves 4-144^v).

compilation from various sources, based on other Romanian chronicles and historical writings.³⁸

The image of the Enlightened Monarch was constructed right from the preface of the translator, where the subject matter was announced: The life of Peter illustrates the great deeds of a monarch born and destined to tame the wild beast that Russia had been for centuries and bring education, civilization and Enlightenment to the people. He was regarded as a “miraculous being”, with great wisdom and goodness, who despite numerous obstacles achieved all the tasks that a monarch should fulfil: “increasing the population, eradicating idleness, fostering prosperity, raising the cultural level, battling superstition, encouraging geographical exploration and expanding the borders.” (Wittacker, 1996: 153) Peter’s social, political, spiritual and economical efforts were all praised and the author concluded that after Peter’s reign, Russia should be included among the great monarchies of Europe. This positive image of the Russian tsar transpires from the entire text, the author highlighting with every occasion the personal merits of Peter and dismissing in just a few sentences the controversial aspects of his rule, especially his conflict with his son.

The “mirror of princes” was translated faithfully into Romanian, but a close textual comparative analysis illustrates small nuances and accents that the Romanian translators made in order to further highlight the positive traits of the monarch. For example, the Romanian translator adds the dimension of the monarch’s need for “wisdom” in order to fulfil his destiny and “make his people happy”:

<p><i>Acesta s-au arătat de la tînără vîrstă că s-au născut ales a face norociți pe supușii lui, care este cu adevărat scopos, ci <u>trebuie să caute toată chibzuirea unui bun împărat</u> (Fărcășanu, ms. 2353, f. 134^v)</i></p>	<p><i>Egli sin dagli anni piu teneri della fanciullezza mostrò d’essere nato unicamente per rendere felici i Popoli a se soggetti, che è il vero scopo, <u>a cui devono tendere tutte le mire d’un buon Regnante.</u> (5)</i></p>
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The Italian text implied that “making the people happy” would be the sole purpose of the monarch. The Romanian and Greek texts reformulated the Italian sentence as “and he must seek [to fulfil this goal] with all the wisdom of a good emperor”. So, the will to do good must be rooted in the monarch’s wisdom, a nuance not to be found in the Italian text but added by the Greek and Romanian translators.

³⁸ Nicolae Costin’s chronicle from 1709 and 1711, with a general interest in the actions of Dimitrie Cantemir, from the history of Axinte Uricariul and Ion Neculce, 1712. (Dima; Dima 2013: 172-221).

After highlighting the fact that Peter managed to civilise his country and to educate his people, in spite of his “pessima educazione” [poor education], the texts praised the great economic and social enterprises of the Russian tsar. Interestingly, the “coraggio” [courage] that Peter needed in order to undertake his grand designs was transposed into Romanian as “mărire de suflet” (Fărcășanu ms., 2353, f. 135^r), that is greatness of his spirit or goodness of the heart. Another example of different accents is the instance in which Catiforo praises the fact that Peter modernized his army introducing “l’ordine e la disciplina delle più regulate milizie” (8), that is order and discipline to his regular armies. In the Romanian text, the accent fell on the fact that through training Peter had obtained an elite and educated army: “a nevoi oștile lui la orînduiala și stadania celor mai aleși și pedepsiți ostași” (Fărcășanu, ms. 2353, f. 135^v). In the same passage the need for new and “precious” legislation was underlined in the Romanian translation

A întări pravile prea scumpe ca Stabilir esattissime Leggi per
să se facă dreptate (Fărcășanu, l’amministrazione della giustizia
ms. 2353, f. 135^v) (8)

The use of the adjective is peculiar since it underlines the noble or precious nature of the law and not the exactness, as stated by Catiforo.

The “mirror” of the Enlightened prince is especially interesting in the passages that narrate the confrontation of the tsar with the Swedish emperor Charles XII. The Northern War is depicted as a clash between “titans”, with almost legendary traits. But even if Catiforo paid great respect to the Swedish monarch, the Russian tsar was the one destined to be victorious, because of his great merits. For example, by the end of Book IV, Catiforo narrated the episode in which Peter conquered Dunemunda, Pernavia, Kexolmia and Poltava. The first orders of the tsar were to “make the Lithuanians know the sweetness and goodness of his government” (ms. 49, leaf. 109^r): he gave back to the owners all the spoils of the war, he fortified the fortresses, he re-established trade and called upon foreigners to settle in that beautiful place that war and disease had emptied. Along with the social, political and economic measures, Peter cared also for the spiritual duties and built a church for the glory of Saint Apostle Peter and Saint Sampson. The 27th of June became officially a religious celebration of the Eastern Church that commemorates the Russian victory over the Swedes.³⁹

The Greek and Romanian translations intervened in the Italian text, especially when rendering the events that took place in Moldavia, correcting the original and giving a more detailed account. For example, when Peter the

³⁹ Our free translation of the Moldavian text (ms. 49, leaf 109^v), transcribed by Dima; Dima 2013: 133-134.

Great came to Moldavia to meet Charles XII of Sweden and tried to settle their disputes, he was attacked by the Turks and had to defend his position on the Prut River

Dar norocul ostenisă de a ajuta marelui Petru, deci să plecă acest mare împărat de ascultă sfaturile lui Basarab, domnul Țării Rumînești, care era așe aici să treaca apa Ieravon, adică Prutul, pentru ca să stăpînească hambarile ce le ghitise acolo turcul și le ave pline de tot felul de hrană. Acest sfat al lui Basarab să făcu atît de păgubitori cu cît fu întocma ce acela al Mazepii ce-l sfătuipe pe craiul Carol de-l îndemnă să închiză cetatea Poltava. (Cozma Vlahul, ms. 49, f. 115^v)⁴⁰

Ma la Fortuna era stanca di favorire le armi di Pietro: onde questo gran Principe s'indusse ad ascoltar il consiglio dell'Ospodaro di Valachia, ch'era d'avanzare dall'altra parte del fiume Prut, per occupare i Magazzini, che vi aveva il Turco ripieni d'ogni provvisione. Questo consiglio des Cantimiro fu cosi fatale al Czar, come era stato al Re di Svezia quello del Mazepa di assediare la Citta di Pultava. (247)

The Romanian text adds another name to the Prut River and corrects Catiforo's error regarding the name of the Romanian advisor, replacing Cantemir with Basarab.

The Moldavian translation (the most complete one of the three versions) ends with the death of Peter the Great, a true translation of Catiforo's Sixth Book. Here, the merits of the Russian tsar were again highlighted in praising terms: his long travels for the benefit of his country, his virtue and modesty, his great knowledge of foreign languages and of the crafts, especially in ship building and the success of his great plans of building maritime channels and cities out of nothing. Catiforo dedicated the last page of his book to defending the devotion and piety of the Russian Tsar, openly disputing Voltaire's claim that he was not religious. The Romanian translation followed this passage faithfully and stressed the religious tolerance, also adding the vigilance of the tsar against heresy, the fact that he was a true Orthodox Christian abiding all rules imposed by the Constantinople Patriarchate. The last sentence offers us an interesting

⁴⁰ "But luck was tired of helping the great Peter, so this great emperor took the advice of Basarab, Vallachia's ruler, to cross the river Ieravan, or Prut in order to gain the storehouses that the Turks had hidden there and were full of food. This advice from Basarab proved itself to be as harmful as the one Mazepii gave king Charles to close the fortress of Poltava." [our translation]. The Romanian text adds another name to the Prut-river and corrects Catiforo's error regarding the name of the Romanian advisor, replacing Cantemir with Basarab.

example on how the Greek and Moldavian translations reiterated the importance of the prince's piety for the trust and good behaviour of his subjects, a trait that was absolutely essential in these Orthodox cultures:

Să aib dar iertăciune ca cuvîntul Princeps (siami lecito colla cel înfrumusețat a acelui mai piu bella sentenza del piu dotto înțelept întru înțelepți să tra i Filosofi chiuder la Storia săvîșască istoria celui mai del piu ammirabile tra i minunat dintre ighemoni: // Principi. Princeps debet esse stăpînitoriu norodului, arătîndu potissimum Dei cultor: nam șă pururea cătră cele minus timent homines a dumnezeiești rîvnitori sau, să Principe, si Dei cultorem illum zicem cînd are frica lui putent (374). Dumnezeu, atunce supușii nu să tem că vor pătîmi vreo pedeapsă afară de pravilă și fără dreptate. Asijderea de vor cunoaște că este el credincios și temători de Dumnezeu, atunce supușii nu vor putea îndrăzni a fi cu vicleșug, asupra lui avînd el și pe Dumnezeu într-ajutori. (Cozma Vlahul, ms. 49, f. 211^r-211^v)⁴¹

Catiforo's compilation from English, German, French and other sources served as *delectare*, as an informational text on a figure of great interest in Italy. The text served the same goal in the target Romanian culture,⁴² with the difference that the events narrated by Catiforo were not of distant and exotic lands but partially unfolded on Romanian soil as well, and the Russian expansion had direct impact on the Romanian politics. Thus, the Greek and Romanian translators felt free to intervene and correct some of the

⁴¹ "Please allow that the most beautiful word of the most wise scholar to end the history of the most wonderful rulers: the master of the people, always faithful to all that is divine. When he is a ruler with fear of God, then his subjects are not afraid that retribution will befall them, except from law and justice. If they will also know him as faithful and fearful of God, the subjects will not dare to be treacherous, because he has God on his side." [our translation]

⁴² The aim is clearly stated in the "Preface": "Much food and not too little sweetness and happiness I truly think that the reading of historical books will bring to the people, since from them many learn the wisdom because they enrich their customs and words and they learn. Reading and understanding from them many events, one may find his own righteous path. And when people have nothing to pass their time, it is very useful to read such books in order to not get accustomed to idleness and laziness, because there is nothing worse for a person than laziness." [Our translation] ms. 2353 BAR, leaf 132^r using Dima; Dima 2013: 70-71).

discrepancies and errors of the Italian author⁴³ and the text served much more directly to building up the necessary knowledge of the political milieu of the region.

J.M. Schweighofer's Catherine the Great

Johann Michael Schweighofer (1755-1812) was a clerk in the Austrian state apparatus, serving in the Hungarian and Transylvanian chancellery. He was a prolific writer, supporter of the Habsburg social Enlightenment, who tried to regenerate the image of the monarchy and of the empire in the public opinion. His main focus, especially after 1787, was to publish informative weekly papers with a detailed analysis of the geostrategic motivations of Austria and of the Habsburg foreign policy.⁴⁴ As the second issue of the periodical "Freund angenehmer und nützlicher Kenntnisse", he published a text that focussed on the life and deeds of Catherine the Great, a portrait aimed at informing the public opinion on the motivations of the Habsburg monarchy to forge an alliance with Sankt Petersburg, by revealing the qualities of this enlightened monarch on the one hand and, on the other, the geostrategic manoeuvres that she did in Crimea, from which Vienna could fully profit. (Chiriac, 2016: 55-66) This text followed an equally clear narrative structure: starting with a short overview of the Russian history, followed by a biography of Catherine II from her arrival in Russia until the present day, where the author included the controversial deeds of the empress (the throne ascension, the death of her husband, the difficult relation with her son) but tried to focus on the strength of her national policy and on the skilled diplomatic and military foreign policy. The third part of the text contains a short description of the geography, the natural and geostrategic resources of the newly conquered Crimea and of its capital Kherson, whereas the fourth chapter was drafted as an argumentative text that provided its reader with explicit reasons for which the Habsburgs should have an alliance with Russia and for which going to war against the Ottomans would benefit the Austrian empire.

The German text was translated into Greek and published in Vienna in the same year. Using this Greek intermediate, the prior Ionechentie from

⁴³ Dima exemplifies with the description of the Russo-Turkish War, where Catiforo names the two rulers of the Romanian principalities "La Moldavia fu data a Demetrio Cantemiro, favorito del Kan de Tartari. Un altro Cantimiro era Ospodaro di Valachia" (Cartiforo, 244). Kankellarios corrects the error and the right names appear also in the Romanian Moldavian translation: In Walachia rules Constantin Basarab Voievod and in Moldavia Dimitrie Cantemir Voievoda (ms. 49, leaf 114') (Dima; Dima 2013: 115).

⁴⁴ Schweighofer contributed and edited three weekly journals: "Freund angenehmer und nützlicher Kenntnisse" [Friend of pleasant and useful knowledge] (1787) – 2 volumes with 4 issues each, "Politischer Zuschauer" [Political Spectator] (1787-1788) – 13 issues and "Wochentliche Beiträge" [Weekly Contributions] (1788) – 12 issues.

Pîngărați Monastery translated the text in Romanian in the year 1788⁴⁵, dedicating his work to the bishop of Roman and future Metropolitan of Moldavia, Leon Gheucă, an active figure in the Moldavia's negotiations with Sankt Petersburg and Vienna. (Ciurea, 1942)

The “mirror of the Russian princess” is carefully constructed throughout the entire text, focussing on Catherine's holiness and greatness. Right from the preface of the Romanian translation, the reader is introduced to the *leit-motif* of Catherine's image: the translator mentioned that he embarked in this translation process because the book tells of the greatness of heart of the grand Catherine, empress of Russia, her wise government, and some account on the wars she wielded against the Sublime Porte.⁴⁶ The chapter dedicated to the biography of the empress stresses her “pronie”, that is a supreme wisdom, with which the monarch ruled the world, her “statornicie” [firmness, consistency, devotion], “mărimie de suflet” [goodness of heart], “înțelepciune” [wisdom], “o înaltă și adîncă cugetare” [a great and profound thinking], “strălucire” [splendour]. After taking the Crimean Peninsula, the text enumerates the great social deeds of the empress: that she brought education to the Russian cities and towns, that she brought Western European scholars to develop science, art and education in Russia, she promoted the crafts, schools and churches, she wrote laws and legislation for the well-being of her people. The text ends with a chapter on the political reasons for which Austria should rejoice the occupation of Crimea by the Russians. Among the purely strategic and geopolitical reasons enumerated by Schweighofer, the image of Catherine II with the power of her supreme divine wisdom and, in short, the sagacity of Catherine II⁴⁷ served as a guarantee of the power and steadfastness of a treaty between the Austrians and the Russians against the Turks, something that also the Romanian nobility and clergy were looking forward to.

The translation of such a highly ideological text with political stakes cannot be reduced to a simple process of a faithful transposition of the original. Through selection and adaptation strategies, the Romanian text deviated from its Viennese model and tried to address to the readership of a completely new cultural area, with a different political constellation and position in the public debate. Whereas the German text represented an issue of a journal addressed to a large readership, trying to involve this readership

⁴⁵ This original translation is lost, we have today only two copies of the original manuscript: written by Antohi Hociung and included in a miscelanous manuscript (ms. 3102 BAR) in 1793 and one written by Vasile Dînga and included also in a miscellaneous manuscript (ms. 3165 BAR) in 1797 (Chiriac 2016: 116-126).

⁴⁶ “povestește înlăuntrul ei mărimie de suflet a înaltei Ecaterinei, imperatrița Rosiei, înțeleptele ei ocîrmuiri, oarecere din războaiele ce au avut cu Poarta” (KII, f. 2^v).

⁴⁷ “putere de pronie și, în scurt, să zic de înțelepciune Ecaterinii a doua” (KII, f. 2^v).

in the political debate, the Romanian text remained a manuscript and seemed to address to a single person. Only years later the text had been copied and included in miscellanea containing other historical texts, supplementing thus the Romanian historiography with new information material. The two communication situations, at a public and at a private level, also mark the difference, at a textual and morphological level of the Romanian translation. (Chiriac, 2016: 126-127)

The image of the enlightened monarch is a faithful transposition of the Austrian one. Yet, for rhetorical purposes, the Romanian text accentuated and exacerbated the traits of the Russian empress as to give her an even glorious image. The main strategies employed are the additions of the Romanian translator, which accentuate the positive traits of the Russian monarch:

<p><i>În armata [...] era lucrare și săvârșire a înțeleptei // Ecaterinii prin mijlocire măsuratelor ei socotele. (KII, f. 30^r-30^v)</i></p> <p><i>Ecaterina au așezat cu căzută și împărătească mărire învățători. (KII, f. 33^v)</i></p>	<p><i>Die [...] Neutralität war Katharinens Wert, durch ihre klugen Maaßregeln.⁴⁸ (38)</i></p> <p><i>Katharina [hat] mit einem königlichen Aufwand Künste [...] unterstützt.⁴⁹ (41)</i></p>
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Another strategy was reformulating the source text and replacing neutral words with phrases that highlighted the grandeur, exceptionalism and extraordinary character of Catherine:

<p><i>Deci acum au strălucit Ecaterina pre scaon (KII, f. 15^r)</i></p> <p><i>Această preaslăvită stăpînă au arătat cu urmare în toată Evropa prin mijlocire înțeleptei sale urmări cît de vrednică era acestui scaon pre carile să căde să-l întărească cu atîta nevoie și mărire de</i></p>	<p><i>Katharina war nun Kaiserin im Russischen Reich. (20)⁵⁰</i></p> <p><i>Diese grosse Beherrscherin zeigte in der Folge ganz Europa durch ihre weise Regierung, wie würdig sie desjenigen Throns war, den sie mit so vieler Beschwerlichkeit und Muth behaupten mußte.</i></p>
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⁴⁸ “The merit of Catherine” is thus supplemented by the Romanian translator with “the work and accomplishment of the wise Catherine” and the “smart provisions” is reformulated in the Romanian text as “her measured calculations” [our translations].

⁴⁹ Catherine supports the arts and sciences through her “royal effort”, says the German text. The Romanian one accentuates the traits of the monarch and translates the passage with “rightful and royal greatness” [our translation].

⁵⁰ The neutral German word “war” [was] is translated with the Romanian “au strălucit” [she shone].

suflet. (KII, f. 15^v)

(20)⁵¹

Such reformulations occurred not only at the lexical level but also at the phrase or textual level

<p><i>Și la urmă au fost cu încremenire și merare tuturor după ce au biruit împărăteasa pe turci la Cisme și la Patrason. Cu flota sa au pogorît biruitoarele streaguri și le-u pus cu mare evlavie // supt chipul marelui Petru (arătînd pe asămănata mărime de suflet și ipervolicească cinste ce avé cătră dînsul (KII, f. 30^v-31^r)</i></p>	<p><i>Es war daher sehr rührend, und zeigte von der Mässigung, Grossmuth, und ausserordentlichen Achtung für Peter der Grossen, daß, nachdem sie die Türken bei Tschesme, bei Petrasso mit ihrer Flotte überwand, die Kaiserin die eroberten Flaggen zu seinem Bild mit Ehrfurcht niederlegte (38)⁵²</i></p>
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As in the case of Peter the Great, Schweighofer's text was also reformulated in the Romanian translation in respect to the religiosity of the monarch and the sacralization of the empress' image:

<p><i>Această singură stăpîitoare metaheresăște la aceasta credinții, blîndeții, vrednicii și cea mai de prisosit ținere de lege a eparhieii pe pravoslavnică credințe a grecilor. Însă și spre legea celorlalte nemuri aduce cinste și // laudă (după cum</i></p>	<p><i>In dem Religionssystem heget diese Monarchin sanfte Grundsätze. Sie ist der herrschenden Religion ihres Staates zugethan, nämlich der Altgriechischen; aber sie zeigt, wie dieser Staatskluge, auch Achtung gegen andere Religionsverwandte.⁵³ (42-43)</i></p>
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⁵¹ The German “grosse Beherrscherin” [great ruler] is transposed in Romanian with “preaslăvită stăpînă” [most glorified ruler]. The German text mentions that Catherine had to preserve her throne with great “Beschwerlichkeit und Muth” [troublesomeness and courage]; in the Romanian translation with “nevoie și mărime de suflet” [difficulty and greatness of heart].

⁵² The sentences are reversed but the message of the passage remains true. The Romanian translations depicts Catherine's attitude towards Peter's memory as “mărime de suflet și ipervolicească cinste” [goodness of heart and great honor], whereas the German original describes it as “Mässigung, Großmuth und ausserordentlichen Achtung” [moderation, generosity and extraordinary respect].

⁵³ The Romanian text says: “This sole ruler practices this faith with tenderness, worthiness and above all by respecting the law of the church of the Greeks. But also for the laws of other peoples she shows respect and praise (in her infinite political wisdom)”. The German text remains neutral in this depiction: “In the religious system this monarch nurtures gentle

*fiștecare politicească
înțelepciuni). (KII, f. 34^v-35^r)*

In this passage the German original stressed that she was tolerant with the state religion of her people and with the religions of the minorities but never implies the fact that she herself would have been pious. In the Romanian translation Catherine appears as a proto-type of piousness and religious virtue, who is also tolerant with other religions.

Catherine was a well-known figure in the Romanian historiography of the time but this particular translation is an interesting example in which the persona of the monarch is carefully and intentionally constructed in order to serve in the political and ideological fight against the Turks.

Rumpf's Alexandrer I

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the social, political and historical events that were taking place in Europe became the main topic promoted by the European intellectuals. The defeat of the great French army, its retreat from the Russian front in fierce weather conditions, the fall of Napoleon, the struggle led by Tsar Alexander I and the allied forces to “reclaim” Europe coagulated the public opinion and aroused the interest of readers everywhere. The Romanian intellectuals did not reject the ideas of the French culture, as proven by the numerous translations from Voltaire, but rather the ideas brought forward by the French Revolution (Tatay, 2011: 208), which threatened the institution of the monarchy. In the absence of relevant newspapers or journals, the reader’s opinion was formed based on short pieces of writing, either originals or translations, dedicated to the events of the time and the actors involved.

In this context, the Printing House of the University of Buda became an important source of information for Romanian readers everywhere with regard to the events and sufferings brought by the war and the actions of the involved parties. Among extensive works on history and philology, there was also published here a group of booklets of small dimensions, the so-called *Buda-texts* that form thematically and formally a unitary depiction of the contemporary events regarding the French emperor and his military maneuvers. *Întâmplările războiului franțozilor și întoarcerea lor de la Moscva* (1814) [The events of the French war and their return from Moscow], *Trista întâmplare a cetății Dresda de la spargerea încoace a podului, până la apărarea cetății* (1814) [The sad events regarding the citadel of Dresden from the fall of its bridge until its defense], *Scurtă arătare despre luare Parisului și alte întâmplări* (1814) [Short overview of the

canons. She cares for the main religion of her state, that is the Old Greek one; but she, in her political wisdom, paid respect to all other kindred religions” (our translations).

conquest of Paris and other events], *Vrednica de pomenire biruință, ce în vremea noastră s-au făcut, sau piramida cea din tunuri înălțată în marea cetate Moscva* (1815) [The worthy mentioning of the victory that happened in our time or the great pyramid of cannons in the city of Moscow], *Napoleon Bonaparte, ce au fost și ce iaste* (1815) [Napoleon Bonaparte, who he was and who he is], *Arătarea stăpânirii și a caracterului lui Alexandru I. Împăratul a toată Rossia* (1815) [An account on the rule and character of Alexander I, Emperor of all Russia] represent translations from different unknown German source texts (with one exception) that centered on the major contemporary events, aiming not at instructing its readership, but rather at highlighting the dangers of the French imperialism and expansionism. They did not depict Napoleon Bonaparte or his military campaigns in a favorable light, since the publications were under the close scrutiny of the Hungarian and Austrian authorities, which fought against France during the war and since the Romanians viewed Russia as their natural alliance.

In this group of texts, one booklet distinguishes itself by focusing not on the enemy but on the savior, namely the Russian emperor Alexander I. It is also the only writing that mentions the German source text of the Romanian translation, namely *Alexander I, Kaiser von Russland. Ein Regierungs- und Charaktergemälde*, published in 1814 in Berlin by G. Hayn, written by Johann Daniel Friedrich Rumpf. He was a counselor at the Prussian Royal Court and focused in his writings on biographies, geographical descriptions, the Prussian administration, the Prussian monarchy, local economy and legislation⁵⁴. This text represents a biography of the Russian Tsar and was dedicated to the nephew of Frederick the Great, Frederick Wilhelm III of Prussia.

The Romanian translation⁵⁵ was published in Buda in 1815 with no mention of the translator's name and, although the issue of paternity has been

⁵⁴ He also published: *Die Disputir und Vortragskunst. Eine praktische Anleitung zum logischen Beweisen und Widerlegen und zum folgerichtigen Gedankenvortrage*, Berlin, 1833; *Berlin und Potsdam, eine vollständige Darstellung der merkwürdigsten Gegenstände*, 1808; *Berlin oder Darstellung der interessantesten Gegenstände dieser Residenz: ein Handbuch für Fremde und Einheimische*, Berlin, 1793, *Der Geschäftsstil in Amts- und Privatvorträgen*, Berlin, 1820 and translations: *Droits et Devoirs des fonctionnaires et employés prussiens depuis leur entrée en place jusqu'à leur sortie, exposés*, translated from German by C. Noël, after *Dienst- und Rechts- Verhältnisse der preussischen Staatsbeamten von ihrem Dienstantritte bis zu ihrem Ausscheiden*.

⁵⁵ Romanian title: Johann Daniel Friedrich Rumpf, *Arătarea stăpânirii și a caracterului lui Alexandru I. Împăratul a toată Rossia. Întocmită prin I.D.F. Rumpf, crăiescul praisesc a Direcției din Berlin secretar-expeditor, și Măririi Sale celui pre dreptate și moștenitoriu craiu al Borusiei Fridrih Vilhelm III închinată. Iară acum întâiu pre românie prefăcută și tipărită cu chipul împăratului. La Buda, în Crăiasca Tipografie a Universității Ungariei, 1815* [An account on the rule and character of Alexander I, Emperor of all Russia, written

repeatedly discussed by scholars, there is insufficient data to identify the Romanian translator⁵⁶. Like the other booklets, this portrait of the Tsar Alexander I has a small format, the verified copy having a number of 108 pages, the list of subscribers included. This list offers us interesting data regarding the dissemination spectrum of the work in different regions: Moldova (460), Wallachia (486), Transylvania and Banat (460), from Buda and Pesta (121), and Vienna (24). The translation's structure is similar to the German original and comprises a history of Russian rulers (Vladimir I, Ivan I, Ivan II, Peter the Great and Catherine II), events from the life of the Tsar to the journey made by Alexander I in Petersburg in 1814, and a number of manifests written by the Russian emperor on different occasions (ascension, coronation, the day of his departure for Vienna etc.). As in the German edition, a portrait of Alexander I, emperor of all Russia, is reproduced on the reverse of the first introductory sheet, and the frontispiece on the original title sheet representing the medal issued in honor of the coronation of Emperor Alexander I, is replaced with another, which symbolizes a Muse with a scepter. (Pavel, 2018: 1338)

The detailed comparison of the Romanian version with the German source-text allowed us to reveal interesting facts regarding the way in which the image of the Russian monarch was carefully constructed in both texts. Unlike the first part of the text, where the translator's interventions consist mainly of explanations and glosses, in the last part, he moves further away from the source, omitting entire pages, apparently through a random selection. Furthermore, the Romanian translator included at the end of the translation a "Manifest"⁵⁷, a proclamation of his governing philosophy and policy, a writing that has probably circulated independently from Rumpf's text and which is considered by the Romanian translator to complete the biography of the Russian tsar.

From the very beginning, the author aims to earn his readers' trust by referring to his sources, pointing out that the events he describes are real

after I.D.F. Rumpf, secretary of Berlin agency of the Prussian emperor and dedicated to His Highness, the rightful heir of Borussia Friedrich Wilhelm III and now for the first time translated into Romanian and published with a portrait of the Emperor at Buda in the Imperial Publishing House of the Hungarian University, 1815].

⁵⁶ The translator might have been Ioan Teodorovici who was appointed priest in 1809 by the Romanian Orthodox Church in Pest and after 1820 also held the position of censor and proof-reader of the printing house in Buda. Ioan Teodorovici is also the author of the other five booklets printed in Buda, but there is not enough information to conclude that he is also the translator of the biography of the Russian emperor. Another hypothesis regarding this issue is that Petru Maior could have been the Romanian translator of the text. (Cernovodeanu 1974: 84 and Camarã 2017: 145-154).

⁵⁷ "Manifestul, care înălțatul împărat a toată Rossia în zioa pornirei sale cătrã Viena s-au lãsat, 1814 octombrie 15-27", p. 90-104.

historical facts. Without giving any bibliographical reference, Rumpf appeals to the authority of others, quoting a mysterious scholar (“Un bărbat, carele mulți ani în curtea cea împărătească din Rossia au petrecut”), without naming him, a man who had supposedly been at the Russian court for many years and observed the imperial family.

The image of Alexander I as an Enlightened Monarch is constructed from the start by placing him in the long dynastic line of Russian emperors. Peter I is seen as the one who drove away all his enemies, foreign and domestic alike, and brought peace to his country and Catherine II is seen as most honored, rightfully praised among the great, a powerful and brave ruler, who kept all the affairs of the nation in good order⁵⁸. Alexander Pavlovich, the son of Mary Feodorovna and Paul I and nephew of Catherine II, was born on December, the 23rd, 1777. The young prince is seen as a promising saviour, able to work for the well-being of his subjects, to care for the nobles and, endowed with all the qualities of a hero, to bravely “lead them to victory” being the “treasure of his people”. His education and training are closely related to the authority of Catherine II, who was very involved in her grandson’s education, selecting the tutors and the disciplines studied by the young prince.

Aiming at emphasizing the strong character of the young prince, the author inserts a short story about the episode when young Alexander decided to contradict his tutor, professor Kraft, in a problem concerning the nature of light. This short episode written as a foot-note was translated by the Romanian author in a slightly shortened form, eliminating the reference to Newton.

*Profesorul Kraft, carele pre tinerii Prinți îi învăța Experimentalnica Fizică *)* *der Professor Kraft, der dem jungen Fürsten die Experimental-Physik lehrte *)*

**) Când odată Profesorul Kraft îi puse înaintea multe ipotesuri despre firea luminii, cum că adecă lumina de-a pururea din soare are a sa curgere, cel de 12 ani Alexandru îi rupse cuvântul, și zise: Eu aceasta nu o cred, căci că de ar fi așa, soarele din zi în zi ar trăbui să fie mai mic.* **) Als Kraft einst die verschiedenen Hypothesen über die Natur des Lichtes vortrug, unterbrach ihn der zwölfjährige Alexander, eben als er von Newtons Meinung sprach, daß das Licht eine beständige Emanation aus der Sonne sei, mit dem Einwürfe: “das glaube ich nicht, denn sonst mußte ja die Sonne täglich kleiner werden.”*

(4)

(4)

⁵⁸ “Împăratul Petru I cel Mare, carele așijderea pre toți, și cei mai de aproape, și cei mai departe vrăjmași de pre la marginile împărăției sale i-au depărtat și înlăuntru țărilor o nespūsă liniște au băgat. Apoi, cea mai prețuită după dînsul, în scaon următoare Ecaterina II, carea, pre dreptate, în numărul celor mari, celor puternici și cu înaltă vitejie fu socotită, toate trebile și lucrurile împărăției întru bună orînduială le-au adus” (p. 2).

Both the German and the Romanian texts compare Alexander I to Telemachus, adding that the prince had inherited the virtues of a hero, the great disposition of Catherine, an unchangeable temperament, a right thinking, penetrating spirit, and a rare modesty, at the same time a knowledge that goes beyond his age. He is described as the most handsome and the most courageous man in his kingdom, loved by everybody and praised for his wisdom and righteousness. By the grace of God, he is thus born and educated to be the great leader the Russia needs and deserves:

*De acest tinăr Prinț pentru a lui firească frumsețe și moralnice bunătăți toți cîți îl vedea se mira. Se află într-însul așa adevărate idei, care pre noi ne îndeamnă a socoti că ar fi ca ale lui Telemah. [...] El are ceale prea iscusite cugete ale Ecaterinei, un duh adevărat al gîndirilor, și o foarte **cu anevoie întru alții de a se afla** înțelepciune, și o fire multe lucruri de odată cu mintea a cuprinde carea la foarte puțini se afla, și altora numai ca o păreare li se vede a fi, neștiind ei cît de strîns au trăbuît acesta să viețuiască. El în latul și lungul împărăției sale este cel mai frumos om, el este întru frumsețe, blîndețe, și întru facerile de bine aseamene maicii sale. [...] Natura l-au împodobit pre dînsul cu toate darurile ceale vreadnice de iubire, și cu moștenirea a cei mari împărății în lume. Cerul de sus i-au orînduit lui, ca patruzeci de milioane de oameni, preste care împărătește, fericîți supuși să-i facă.” (5-6)*

*Dieser junge Prinz flößt durch seine physische Schönheit und moralische Güte eine Art von Bewunderung ein. Man findet in ihm beinah das Ideal verwirklicht, welches uns im Telemach entzückt. [...] Er hat die große Gesinnung Katharinens, eine **unveränderlich gleiche Gemüthsart, einen richtig denkenden, durchdringenden Geist, und eine seltene Bescheidenheit, dabei eine Umsicht, die weit über sein Alter geht, und die man für Verstellung halten könnte, wenn man nicht den Zwang wüßte, in welchem er lebt. Er ist der schönste Mann in seinem großen weiten Reiche, er hat die Schönheit, die Sanftmuth, die Wohlthätigkeit seiner Mutter. [...] Die Natur hat ihn reichlich mit allen liebenswürdigen Eigenschaften begabt, und der Erbe des größten Reichs in der Welt, wird sie gewiß für die Menschheit wichtig machen. Der Himmel hat ihn hoffentlich bestimmt, vierzig Millionen Menschen zu den glücklichsten Unterthanen zu machen.” (5-6)⁵⁹***

⁵⁹ The highlighted words and phrases from the German texts are omitted in the Romanian translation, without effecting the general meaning of the fragment.

Once he took the throne, on March the 24th 1801, Alexander I wrote a “Manifesto” to mark the beginning of his reign, where the ambition, the good intentions and the extraordinary character of the Tsar are emphasized and where Alexander’s main objective to settle peace is emphatically stated. In another “Manifesto” from a couple of months later, which marks his coronation, the tsar states that the first duty of any ruler is to take care of his people, that is to offer his subjects justice and equity, to further trade and to build cities and accommodation for everybody. All his deeds are blessed by God and represent God’s will and the tsar is none other than God’s representative, bound to serve the Almighty for the benefit of his nation. This is why the tsar declares this date (15th September 1801) an official Orthodox commemorative celebration.

<p><i>Cel Atotputearnic și Preaînalt au binecuvîntat voiața noastră și începutul nostru. Atotputearnica mîină în toate lucurile ceale bune au fost cu noi, ca noi pre norodul cel noao încredințat să-l apărăm, și să-l ajutăm. [...] După ce noi pentru cea mare a Lui pentru noi purtare de grije laudă de mulțemită I-am adus, nu putem altă mai bună jertvă a-I aduce decît, ca această zi, pentru darurile mai în jos noao arătate, în inima norodului zi de prăznuire ce o facem. (17-18)</i></p>	<p><i>Der Allerhöchste hat Unsere Wünsche und Unser Beginnen gesegnet. Bei jeder guten Handlung haben Wir seine allmächtige Hand verspürt, die Uns, zum größeren Zeichen seiner auf Uns wirkenden Vorsehung, und zur Bestätigung des geheimnißvollen Siegels, welches Uns mit dem von ihm Uns anvertrauten Volke vereinigt, unterstützt. [...] Nachdem Wir Seiner obwaltenden Vorsehung das Lob der Dankbarkeit gebracht, so können Wir Ihm keine bessere Opfer bringen, als, indem Wir den zum Unterpfande der Bewahrung Unsrer Pflichten vor Ihm heute feierlich bekräftigten Bewegungen Unsers Herzens folgen, diesen Tag in den Herzen des Volks durch die unten angezeigten neuen Gnadenbezeugungen zu heiligen und unvergeßlich zu machen. (19)</i></p>
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Following in the steps of his predecessors, Tsar Alexander I wanted also to assert his foreign policy and fought against Napoleon for the liberation of Europe. The author emphasized the Tsar’s courageous determination to drive the French army out of Moscow, which reveals in fact his higher purpose, namely “soartea cea mare despre Izbăvirea Europei” (77)

[the great destiny to save Europe]. He is determined never to surrender, as long as the enemy is in his country:

*Eu nu pui armele jos, încâtă Ich lege die Waffen nicht nieder,
vreame voi vedea că se mai so lange ein feindlicher Streiter in
află vrun picior de ai meinem Kaiserreiche sich
Potrivnicului ostași întru befindet. (86)
împărăția mea. (77)*

Of particular interest is the battle of the two powers on the Russian front. In Rumpf's text the "dictator" is depicted as an enemy of Europe and after his failed campaign, as a defeated leader looking for escape from Russia. Rumpf and the Romanian translator both highlighted that the reason for his defeat could not have been the harsh "elements" in Russia, the "stihii" [bad weather] as the Romanian translator explains, but the battles led by the Russian army, who deserved all the credit, since Russia received no help from its allies.

*Dictatorul (împăratul) Der französische Dictator gab
franțozesc, cu mâni cu picioare nun plötzlich alle Rettungsmittel
căuta mijlociri de a se întoarce (...) entfloher von Moskau.
înapoi din Rossia și (...) se trase Napoleon wollte die Elemente zu
înapoi din Moscva. Napoleon den Ursachen seiner Niederlagen
voi să pună vina pre stihii machen; aber auch ohne Frost,
(elemente) cum că ele sînt Kälte und Hunger würde die
pricina pierzării lui, însă și französische Armee dem
fără de ger de frig și fără de Rachsword des tiefgekränkten,
foame franțezeștile Armadiei prin hart beleidigten Russen nicht
cei rău vătămăți Ruși fură entgangen sein. (...) So gebührt
bătute. (...) Așadară se cuvine also Rußland der Ruhm, dem
Rossiei aceea laudă, cum că Feinde, dem Verwüster des
potrivnicului pustiitoriului Menschengeschlechts, in einer
neamului omenesc, în locul Lage, wo es auf Unterstützung
acela, unde toate arăta, că fremder Mächte nicht rechnen
Rossia n-au avut întru ajutori konnte. (87-88).
și alte însoțite puteri. (78-79)*

For Alexander I, military success was a sign of renaissance, as he assumed the role of the leader and reformer not only for Russia, but for the entire Western Christian world. After the burning of Moscow, the tsar turned to faith, replacing philosophy as the source of his ideas about ethics with the teachings of the Bible (Wortman 2013: 155), as proven in the analyzed text by the numerous phrases related to his gratitude to God: "să dăm rugăciuni de mulțămită a tot putearnicului Dumnezeu căci au izbăvit țara noastră din mîna

groaznicului și tarelui potrivnic” (91). [“let us pray and thank God almighty for saving our country from the hands of our strong and fierce enemy”.]

Conclusions

The three texts that made the subject of our analysis, although different in intentionality, in structure and in style, provide the Romanian historiography with a coherent vision of Russia as the new-comer in the world politics that could break the despotic reign of the Muslims and bring the Romanian Principalities under the protection of a Christian Enlightened monarchy. Peter, Catherine and Alexander, Eastern Orthodox monarchs praised by the Enlightened scholars of the West are celebrated in the Romanian translations as saviours and divine gifts for Russia but also for the Principalities, figures that can bring together the different strains of culture, from the Byzantine tradition and the Western secular culture, that blend and mix together in this region and give a coherent view and a straight direction towards cultural and political emancipation. The cultural transfer is thus particularly interesting, since it highlights an entangled route of knowledge and ideology circulation. In its way, through multiple subsequent translations, the texts and ideas mutate, transform and blend together with the particular tradition of the target culture in order to create a textual basis relevant and useful to its recipients.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by a grant of the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitization, CNCS/CCCDI – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.1-TE-2019-0721 within PNCDI III”.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, A. Chiriac and A. Catană-Spenchiu; Formal analysis, A. Chiriac and A. Catană-Spenchiu; Methodology, A. Chiriac and A. Catană-Spenchiu; Writing—original draft: A. Chiriac and A. Catană-Spenchiu; Writing—review: A. Chiriac and A. Catană-Spenchiu, Editing: .A. Chiriac.

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- ms. 2353 BAR. *Viața marelui Petru, aftocrator a toată Rosia, părinte patriei, adunată din multe pomeniri în Franța și în Olanda, ce s-au dat în doaua tomuri, iară mai pre urmă s-au tălmăcit den limba italienească în limba grecească cu toată nevoița de chir Alexandru Cantelariu, iară după cea*

- grecească s-au tălmăcit acum la înțelegerea rumânească de dumnealui Matei Fărcășanu, biv vel șatrar, la anii de la Hristos 1749/ *Life of Peter the Great, emperor of all Russia, father of his land, selected from many writings from France and Holland, drafted in two tomes, then translated from Italian into Greek by Alexander Cantelariu and from Greek into Romanian by the merchant Matei Fărcășanu, in the year 1749 a.D.*
- ms. 49 BAR. *Viața Marelui Petru, Samoderjeț a toată Rosia, scrisu-s-au această carte, ce se săvîrșește în 6 cărți, cu toată cheltuiala Preasfințitului și iubitorului de Dumnezeu, episcopal Sfintei și Dumnezeieștii Episcopii Hușului, chir Inochentie, în zilele prealuminatului domn și oblăduitori a toată Țara Moldavii, Io Constantin Mihail Racoviță Voievod. S-au scris la sfînta Episcopia Hușilor, leat 7264, iar de la Mîntuirea lumii 1756 mai 1/ Life of Peter the Great, autocrat of all Russia. This work was drafted in 6 books, at the expense of the Holy and God-loving bishop of the Holy Episcopacy of Huși, Inochentie, in the days of the glorious ruler, protector of all Moldavia, Constantin Mihail Racoviță Vaivode. This was written at the Holy Episcopacy of Huși, in the year 7264 or 1756 a.D., the 1st of May.*
- ms. 3161 BAR. *Istoria rușilor și viața Marelui Petru, monarhul rușilor, și vitejiele lor. Cartea politiei rusești și vitejile rușilor, a monarhului Petru și altor împărați și stăpînitori [...] la ano 1788, aprilie 20 Brașov/ History of the Russians and the life of Peter the Great. The book of the Russian state and of the Russians' braveries, of their monarch Peter and of other emperors and rulers [...] in the year 1788, the 20th of April, Brașov.*
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- ms. 3102. *Ecaterina al doile. Istorie adunată a împărății rusăști, dinceputul ei pîn la anul de acum împreună și scriere împreguru a tavricescului hersonescului ostrov și a orașului Hersonii. Tălmăcită de pre limba nemțască pre limba grecească apla la anul 1787 și de pre aceasta pre limba moldovenească cu cheltuiala ieromonahului chir Inochentie, egumenul sfintei mănăstiri Pîngărațiului și scrisă de logofătul Ioniță Chira la anii 1788/ Catherine II. A compiled history of the Russian empire, from its beginning until this year, together with a description of the Crimean Peninsula and of the city of Kherson. Translated from German into Greek in the year 1787 and from Greek into Moldavian, at the expense of the hieromonarch Inochentie, prior of the holy Monastery of Pîngărați, written by the logothete Ioniță Chira in the year 1788.*
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- Johann D.F.R. (1815) *Arătarea stăpînirii și a caracterului lui Alexandru I. Împăratul a toată Rossia. Întocmită prin I.D.F. Rumpf, crăiescul praisesc a Direcției din*

Berlin secretar-expeditor, și Mărireii Sale celui pre dreptate și moștenitoriu craiu al Borusiei Fridrih Vilhelm III închinată. Iară acum întâiu pre românie prefăcută și tipărită cu chipul împăratului. La Buda, în Crăiasca Tipografie a Universității Ungariei, 1815/ The description of the rule and character of Alexander I, emperor of all Russia. Written by I.D.F. Rumpf, imperial secretary from Berlin Directorate, dedicated to his Holiness, crown prince of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III. For the first time translated into Romanian and published with a portrait of the Emperor, at Buda, in the Publishing House of the Hungarian University.

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