

THE UNIFICATION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE ARMY DURING THE RULE OF ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA (1859-1866)

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Abstract. The double election of Colonel Alexandru Ioan Cuza as ruler of the United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia also opened for the army the process of unification, modernization and progress. New structures were created, new weapons, the army broadened. Military legislation strengthened order and discipline. The training and preparation of the army changed. The military service became compulsory. It was a beneficial stage for the country's army, on the basis of which the army was prepared to cover itself with glory in the War of Independence in 1877-1878.

Keywords: Union, army, Alexandru Ioan Cuza

Although he did not even present his intention to run for the royal seat of Moldova and later of Muntenia, Alexandru Ioan Cuza gathered the votes of the national party from the two countries, first in Iași (January 5, 1859) and later in Bucharest (25 January 1859). He was 39 years old and a colonel.

That the double election and the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza met the wish of the majority of Romanians is testified by the manifestations that followed the two moments, of overflowing enthusiasm and a lot of hope for a new life.

The Paris Convention (August 7/19, 1858), which Mihail Kogălniceanu called the Constitution, was respected; elections were organized according to its provisions for the ruler both in Iași and in Bucharest. The ingenious Romanian political solution of the double election of Colonel Alexandru Ioan Cuza meant a decisive step through which the ruler's personality became the main vector of the *Union*.

But we ask ourselves the question: *What did recommend the colonel Alexandru Ioan Cuza for the high dignity of ruler of the United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia?*, called by the requirements of the times to place the new country on the course of history, modernization and progress.

It is not necessary to insist here on the life of the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza; historians of great prestige did it in detail, such as AD Xenopol¹, N. Iorga² on the

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¹ A. D. Xenopol, *Domnia lui Cuza 1859-1866*, Iași, 1903, VIII, +472 și 528 p.

² N. Iorga, *Unirea Principatelor (1859) povestită românilor cu prilejul împlinirii a cincizeci de ani de la întemeierea statului român*, Vălenii de Munte, 1909, 120 p.