

## WE “OURSELVES” VS. “OURSELVES ALONE” – A SINGLE ECONOMIC DOCTRINE FOR ALL ROMANIANS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY?

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**Abstract.** As several generations of politicians successively acted as leaders of the Romanian National Party (PNR) in Transylvania, particularly *the tribunists (1884-1892)* and *the new activists or “steel-hardened young men” (1903-1914)*, the economic, cultural, and political life of Romanians in Transylvania became more similar to that of Romanians in the Kingdom of Romania.

From an economic perspective, both theorists in Transylvania and Romania were fostering the idea of a liberal “Ourselves alone” doctrine after 1900. Economic policies were established based on the resolutions adopted following the proceedings of the Economic Congresses in Iași, between 1882 and 1884. Fundamental assumptions were derived from banking and financial arguments based on the numerous and meaningful business relationships established between the National Bank of Romania and the *Solidaritatea* Banking Union in Sibiu, comprising almost all the Romanian banks in Transylvania.

**Keywords:** “We ourselves”, “Ourselves alone”, single economic doctrine, PNR, PNL.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.56082/annalsarscihist.2021.2.30>

The establishment of modern political parties in Romania, namely the National Liberal Party (PNL) (in 1875) and the Conservative Party (in 1880, stemming from the political movements in the period between 1862 and 1870), the achievement of State Independence in 1877/78, and the proclamation of the Kingdom of Romania (1881) were significant milestones on the road to accelerated modernisation.

The economic agenda of the two parties would take shape as a result of the clash between industry and agriculture, free trade and trade protectionism<sup>3</sup> within the country’s domestic economy.

Thus, while the liberals emphasised the need for modernisation through industrialisation and trade protectionism - the main economic objective of the young bourgeoisie, the conservatives, as representatives of the gentry, were of the opinion that agriculture should have been the foundation of the economy, accompanied by an economic system based on free trade. In the first case,

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