

A LITTLE-KNOWN DOCUMENT ON THE LIFE AND FORMATION OF TUDOR VLADIMIRESCU

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Summary. This year, 2021, marks the 200th anniversary of the revolution led by Tudor Vladimirescu. It also commemorates two centuries since his assassination. To evoke the formation of Tudor Vladimirescu, I used a little-known document - the moral testament of the master (*jupan*) Gheorghe Duncea. The act is important because he knew the bailiff Tudor Vladimirescu throughout his life, from childhood to death. This document specified the year of Tudor's birth, the place of birth, the way he learned to read and write, his connection with Horia from Albac, the leader of the Transylvanian peasant uprising of 1784, the reception of the first small boyars ranks, his training as a soldier in the Russian army during the Russo-Turkish war between 1806-1812. Then the Russian generals appreciated him, and the tsar decorated him with the Order of St. Vladimir, gave him a ring and promoted him to the military rank of lieutenant (*parucic*). After the war, between June and December 1814 he went to Vienna to solve the affairs of the late Elenco Glogoveanu. Then he met the atmosphere of the capital of the Habsburg Empire. His main goal was to fight for the removal of the Greeks from the leadership of Wallachia and eventually Moldova. He arrived in Bucharest again in November 1820. Then he contacted the great boyars who ruled the country. The Greek hospodar of Wallachia Alexandru Suțu was old and ill. On January 15/27, 1821, Alexandru Suțu died. Three of the great boyars, members of the Filiki Eteria, Grigore Brâncoveanu, Ghica, Văcărescu, asked him to start the revolution in Oltenia. Tudor Vladimirescu had been trained for a long time. He left for the north of Oltenia and in four days he reached the great Tismana monastery. From there he summoned his paramilitary force, the Pandurs, and called the people to battle. This is where I must end my communication. There remains only one point that Gheorghe Duncea's will clarifies. He recorded what his nephew, his son-in-law, Captain Bosoancă, told him. He said that being disguised, he went to see what was happening to Tudor Vladimirescu. This is how he saw that Tudor Vladimirescu was seized by a group of the Eteria and taken to the outskirts of Târgoviște. There he was tortured and killed, his stomach was split with a javelin, then ripped out with a suction cup. In memory of the great hero of the Romanian people, a beautiful stone monument was erected on the field from Padeș after the project of the architect State Baloșin.

Keywords: 1821, Wallachia, Oltenia, Sublime Porte, Phanariote Regime, Tsarist Empire, Eteria, Holy Alliance, Tudor Vladimirescu leader of the social movement, leader of the revolutionary liberation movement

Rezumat. Anul acesta, 2021, se împlinesc 200 de ani de la revoluția condusă de Tudor Vladimirescu. Tot acum se comemorează două secole de la asasinarea lui. Pentru evocarea formării lui Tudor Vladimirescu, am folosit un document puțin utilizat – testamentul moral al jupanului Gheorghe Duncea. Actul este important deoarece jupanul Gheorghe Duncea l-a

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cunoscut pe Tudor Vladimirescu tot timpul vieții acestuia, din copilărie până la moarte. Acest act a precizat anul nașterii lui Tudor, locul nașterii, modul în care a învățat să scrie și să citească, legătura lui cu Horia din Albac, conducătorul răscoalei țărănilor transilvăneni din anul 1784, primirea celor dintâi mici boierii, formarea ca militar în armata rusă, în timpul războiului ruso-turc dintre anii 1806-1812. Atunci generalii ruși l-au apreciat, iar țarul l-a decorat cu ordinul Vladimir și i-a dat un inel pe care era semnătura lui și l-a înaintat la gradul militar de parucic. După război, între iunie și decembrie 1814 a fost la Viena pentru a rezolva treburile Elencăi Glogoveanu. Atunci a cunoscut atmosfera din capitala Imperiului Habsburgic. Scopul lui principal era lupta pentru îndepărtarea grecilor din fruntea Țării Românești și eventual a Moldovei. A ajuns din nou la București în noiembrie 1820. Atunci a luat legătura cu marii boieri care conduceau țara. Domnul grec Alexandru Suțu era bătrân și bolnav. În ziua de 15/27 ianuarie 1821 domnul Alexandru Suțu a murit. Trei mari boieri eteriști, Grigore Brâncoveanu, Ghica, Văcărescu i-au cerut să declanșeze revoluția în Oltenia. Tudor Vladimirescu era pregătit de mult timp. A plecat spre nordul Olteniei și în patru zile a ajuns la marea mănăstire Tismana. De acolo a convocat forța lui paramilitară, pandurii și a chemat poporul la luptă. Aici trebuie să închei comunicarea mea. Rămâne un singur punct pe care îl lămurește testamentul lui Gheorghe Duncea. El a înregistrat ce i-a povestit nepotul său, ginerele său, căpitanul Bosoancă. Acesta a povestit că deghizat fiind a mers să vadă ce se întâmplă cu Tudor Vladimirescu. Așa a văzut cum Tudor Vladimirescu a fost luat de un grup de eteriști și dus la marginea Târgoviștei. Acolo stomacul i-a fost despicat de un iatagan. Apoi intestinele i-au fost smulse afară cu o sucală. În amintirea marelui erou al poporului român, s-a ridicat un frumos monument din piatră pe câmpul de la Padeș după proiectul arhitectului State Baloșin.

Cuvinte-cheie: 1821, Valahia, Oltenia, Sublima Poartă, regimul fanariot, Imperiul Țarist, Eteria, Sfânta Alianță, Tudor Vladimirescu lider mișcare socială, lider mișcare revoluționară de eliberare

This year, 2021, marks the 200th anniversary of the uprising of the Romanians led by Tudor Vladimirescu, over the entire Romanian territory. I have oftentimes paused, in the past, over the remarkable personality of the Oltenian *moșnean* (freeholder), who could no longer resist the oppression from the Romanian and Levantine boyars.

Relatively much has been written about Tudor Vladimirescu and the revolution that he had initiated and headed. I have adopted the term of “revolution” for his movement, because it determined a profound change of economic, social, political and cultural regime for the Romanian people. So, on this topic I wholeheartedly agree with my former professor Andrei Oțetea, who wrote that in 1821 there was a revolution.¹ Justifiably, he remained the author of a reference work, which was impossible to push aside by those that followed him – attempting to assert themselves by attacking those from the past, invoking elements that have been previously used.²

¹ Acc. Andrei Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și revoluția din 1821*, Ed. Științifică, Bucharest, 1971, passim.

² G. D. Iscriu, *Revoluția din 1821 condusă de Tudor Vladimirescu*, Ed. Albatros, Bucharest, 1982, passim; Mircea T. Radu, *Tudor Vladimirescu și revoluția din Țara Românească*, Editura Scrisul Românesc, 1978, passim.

Tudor Vladimirescu, to best characterise him by an English term which is in fashion today, was a *self-made man*.

A document discovered a long time ago, a moral testament written by Master Gheorghe Duncea,¹ who was a contemporary of the events, clarifies and elucidates the beginnings of the life and the formation of Tudor Vladimirescu.

Professor Mihai Gușiță (1890-1977), who was a native of the Cloșani *Plai*, which was also the birthplace of Tudor, had in his possession this story about Vladimirescu – a manuscript from Gheorghe Duncea, which he had copied. From Mihai Gușiță it passed, in 1963, to the Library of the Iron Gates Museum in Drobeta Turnu-Severin. The copy was subsequently published by Rada Davidescu, the wife of Mișu Davidescu. She was a Romanian Language teacher at the Trajan High School, and her husband was the Director of the Iron Gates Museum. Rada Davidescu managed to publish the document from Professor Mihai Gușiță in the “Drobeta” journal, in 1978. Professor Mihai Gușiță had passed away a year before the publication of the text by Rada Davidescu. In the introduction of her publication, Rada Davidescu mentioned that the text was typewritten after a manuscript by Gheorghe Duncea, a friend and familiar of Tudor Vladimirescu, named “The memoir of Gheorghe Duncea of Prejna regarding Tudor Vladimirescu”. In 1941 Ion Gh. Duncea, a scion of Gheorghe Duncea, a nephew, had handed these notes over to Professor Mihai Gușiță. They were written in purple ink on a school notebook. Ion Gh. Duncea mentioned in 1941 to Professor Mihai Gușiță that the original notes had been written by his “old man” Gheorghe Duncea on separate pages. Most of the sheets were of a sort of thick, green paper, others of yellow paper. The sheets had been sewn by hand along their edge, between two thick cardboard ends. These had been previously preserved under a beam of the house, along with other papers. Unfortunately, they were to be destroyed by mice. Previously however, the text had been copied with Latin script by an elderly teacher who knew the Cyrillic script² and this is probably the text that we have today.

A form of this manuscript, other than the one that reached Rada Davidescu, was published by Professor Emil Vîrtosu.³ He interrupted with suspension points the text that he had published. He justified this decision by showing that in the manuscript he had found gaps and illegible words.

1 Acc. Rada Davidescu, *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea din Prejna-Mehedinți, privitor la Tudor Vladimirescu*, “Drobeta”, 1978, pp. 154-169; *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea din Prejna, Mehedinți, privitor la Tudor Vladimirescu*, in *Izvoare narative privind revoluția română de la 1821*, vol. I, ed. supervised and edited by Ion Pătroi, Vladimir Osiac (coordinators), Dinică Ciobotea, Gabriel Croitoru, Tudor Nedelcea, Stela Rădulescu, Fundația Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2001, pp. 33-51 (in the following I will be using this latter edition, cited as *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*).

2 Acc. Rada Davidescu, *op.cit.*, p. 156.

3 Acc. Emil Vîrtosu, *Mărturii noi din viața lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, Cartea Românească, Bucharest, 1941, *passim*.

I shall use here the text published in 1978 and republished in 2001 since it brings to light elements which are novel or too little discussed and known about the life of Tudor Vladimirescu. They correct or complete other stories and contemporaneous documents. It must be specified and accentuated that in that document, written by a man who had known Tudor for all his life, from his birth until close to his death, there can be found the development of the future leader of the 1821 Revolution.

The father of Tudor Vladimirescu was named Constantin, nicknamed *Ursu* (the Bear).¹ His birthplace was the Cloșani *Plai*, Mehedinți County, possibly the

1 Acc. A. Oțetea, *op. cit.*, p. 115 has shown that there existed a Pandur that was executed, whose body was exposed by the Turks, having a note on his chest. On that note there was written that the “traitor” Tudor Vladimirescu is a “fils de Marischko” meaning the son of Marischko. The same mention “Fils de Marischko” is also found in a document published in *Documente privind istoria României. Răscoala din 1821. Documente interne*, vol. 2, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1959, pp. 573-574; Ileana Cioarec, *Boierii Glogoveni*, Editura Alma, Craiova, 2009, pp. 142-143 shows that Lațcu and Ioan Merișescu were cousins of Tudor Vladimirescu as results from a tribunal document from May 16, 1818. At the end of the paragraph that contains this information the author cites A. Oțetea, *op. cit.*, p. 133, although he does not publish the document mentioned by Mrs Cioarec and does not make reference to the family ties between Lațcu, Ioan Merișescu and Tudor Vladimirescu. In a document from January 10, 1777, it is shown that Milco Băiașul (from the 17th century) would have also been named Merișescu (acc. Gh. Cronț and coll., *Acte judiciare din Țara Românească 1775-1781*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1973, doc. no. 240 from January 10, 1777, pp. 261-262). Dinică Ciobotea and Mrs Aurelia Florescu, on the basis of the document from January 10, 1777 in which there is discussed the Milco Băiașul=Merișescu connection, have written that the cousins of Tudor Vladimirescu, Lațcu and Ioan Merișescu, were the scions of Milco Băiașul=Merișescu (acc. Dinică Ciobotea, Aurelia Florescu, *Repere genealogice privind familia boierească Glogoveanu din Mehedinți*, in “Porțile de Fier”. Revistă de istorie și cultură, year XV, no. 21, 2015, p. 9); Hence, the authors consider that Milco Băiașul, Cornea Brăiloiu and the Glogoveanu family were all related to each other: “*in Baia de Aramă, Mehedinți County, where Glogoveanu had a part of his estate in the year 1699 when Great Ban Cornea Brăiloiu was known as founder of the church in the village along with Milco Băiașul. (...) The quality of founder of the church built on the estate of the Glogoveni attests to them being kindred.*” From the perspective of mediaeval law however the ownership of an estate by two or more people is not a proof of kinship, nor is the foundation of a church by more people together. In many cases it is a simple association of those people due to temporary interests that vary from case to case. It must be mentioned that the church of the Baia de Aramă Monastery was erected on a part of the estate that belonged to Great Ban Cornea Brăiloiu. This situation was also noticed by Holy Ruler and Martyr Constantin Basarab Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), who came to Baia de Aramă on June 11, 1695. On this occasion, the ruler ratified the erection of the Baia de Aramă Monastery. He also gifted 300 thaler for the new building and donated furniture for it, and fortified the part of land given by Cornea Brăiloiu. It is not compulsory, if the estate in Baia de Aramă was divided between the upper boyars Cornea Brăiloiu and Glogoveanu, for the two to have been relatives. Also, there cannot be said, in absence on any other proof, that Milco Băiașul who was Serbian in origin, and arrived in Wallachia in the 17th century, would have necessarily been a relative of the Oltenian upper boyar Cornea Brăiloiu. The founding of the place of worship in Baia de Aramă by the two men is not necessarily an argument for their kinship, lacking corroboration with other evidence. About the Monastery and Church of Baia de Aramă, see R. Șt. Vergatti, *The Church of the Baia de Aramă*

village of Prejna.¹ According to Professor Dinică Ciobotea, “the king of the freeholders”, Tudor Vladimirescu’s father, was among the upper tier of the freeholders, which meant that in Oltenia he was almost of the lower boyar class.²

Constantin married Ioana (or Ana) Bondoc, sister or daughter of priest Grigore Bondoc from the village of Vladimiru, Gorj County.³ Hence Tudor’s name of Vladimirescu, shared also by his brother Pavel or Papa Vladimirescu. The fanciful Greek authors that wrote about the history of the 1821 events stated that Tudor and his brother got the name Vladimirescu from the Order of Saint Vladimir with which Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825) had decorated Tudor. So, the name of Vladimirescu could have been of Tudor, who had the decoration, but not of his brother.

In the 1800 Pentecostarion, gifted by Tudor to the Church in Cloșani on February 27, 1819, he had written in his own hand that fifteen names of his relatives (deceased) were to be mentioned. The last two names were of his parents, Constandin and Ioana. Aricescu shows that among those mentioned. Mitrofan and Roxandra would have been the grandfathers of Tudor (“the old ones”).⁴ From the others, six have certainly been part of the priestly order: Dionisie the Archiereus, Varlaam the Monk, Efrosin the Hieromonk, Iosif the Hieromonk, Mitrofan the Hieromonk.⁵ This situation clearly shows that, if those of the priestly order had originated in the mother’s side of Tudor’s family, it was probably of a better social and material position, at the moment of marriage, than that of Constantin/Ursu (Tudor’s father). This situation also explains and motivates the arrival and establishment of Constantin Ursu in his wife’s village of Vladimiru (Gorj County).

Monastery between the truth and the treasure hunters’ fantasy, in „Caiete ARA”, no. 11/2020, pp. 5-14. However, considering the kindred between Tudor Vladimirescu and Lațco and Ioan Merișescu, cousins, it can be considered that the father of Tudor Vladimirescu was correctly indicated by the Turks as Marischcko, meaning Marișcu / Merișescu, first name Constantin, therefore Constantin nicknamed Ursu, Merișescu. Even if these Merișești were lower boyars, it is not impossible that they were at the time among the *moșneni* (freeholders), as it is considered that Tudor Vladimirescu was; see also Aurelia Florescu, *O identitate necunoscută a lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, art. in mss., offered by Prof. Dinică Ciobotea, whom I also thank on this occasion.

1 Prof. A. Oțetea, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115, has shown with documents that it is not certain that he was from the village of Prejna, although it was a possibility.

2 Acc. Dinică Ciobotea, *Notă privind moșnenii în revoluția din 1821*, in “Analele Universității din Craiova”, Series history, year VIII, no. 8, Craiova, 2003, pp. 109-115; idem, *Moșnenii în revoluția din 1821*, in Dinică Ciobotea, Vladimir Osia, *Tudor Vladimirescu, Studii și documente*, Ed. Sitech, Craiova, 2011, pp. 193-198.

3 Acc. A. Oțetea, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

4 Acc. C. D. Aricescu, *Istoria revoluțiunii române de la 1821*, Editura Tipografiei române G. Chițu și I. Theodorian, Craiova, 1874, p. 14.

5 C. Aricescu, *Acte justificative la istoria revoluțiunii române de la 1821*, Editura Tipografiei române G. Chițu și I. Theodorian, Craiova, 1874, pp. 12-13; D. Bodin, *Tudor Vladimirescu*, in *Figuri revoluționare române*, Bucharest, 1937, p. 79; idem, *Răscoala din 1821*, III, p. 429, n. 1.

For unknown reasons, Constantin/Ursu died when Tudor Vladimirescu was a small child, an infant. Gheorghe Duncea wrote that his brother, monk Gherasim Duncea, who lived in Schitu-Topolnița, came to Ana, Tudor's mother, at some point after she was widowed.¹ He found a very poor woman. We do not know the reasons why she had lost her state of wealth, however being a widow could have been a reason. She had beside her, in the house, three children.

One of the three was the adult brother of Tudor, Papa Vladimirescu, who became a *vistier* (treasurer) before the revolution ignited. Two months before his brother, Tudor, started the battle, Papa got married to Bălașa Gâlcescu, who liked to present herself as the daughter of a boyar. She was the daughter of Vlăduț Gâlcescu from Gorj.² The marriage godfather of Pavel was Ioniță Magheru the *zapciu* (captain), brother of future General Gheorghe Magheru. During the revolution Papa Vladimirescu became the *ispravnic* (representative of the ruler) of Gorj County. Upon the arrival of the Ottoman Turks, he was brought before the *silihtar* (sword bearer) in regards to his function. He was sent to Vidin. There, his trace was lost. After his departure, Dinu Băleanu became the *ispravnic* of Gorj. He ordered for all of his things to be confiscated, his house to be robbed and his cattle to be taken.³ The wife of Papa Vladimirescu, Bălașa, gave birth to a boy, Ion/Ioan, most probably born in 1821, while his father was missing.⁴ She got married for a second time to Dumitru Golumbeanu, as attested by a document from May 6, 1832.⁵

In 1868, the Tribunal of Gorj County released, for Ion Vladimirescu, legalised certificate no. 12870/November 30, 1868 in which there is attested, with five "elderly witnesses from Vladimir", the seniority in service of Ioan Vladimirescu, so that he would receive his pension.⁶ Ion Vladimirescu was a resident of Vladimiru commune, Gilort *Plasa*, Gorj County. He was married from 1843 to Bălașa Negreanu. In 1852, after becoming a widower, he got remarried to Ecaterina (Tinca) Zubgubeanu. With his second wife he had children: a boy,

1 *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*, p. 34.

2 Bălașa the daughter of Vlăduț Gâlcescu from Gorj appears in a document published by Toma G. Bulat, *Noi documente privind bunurile ramase de la Tudor Vladimirescu*, in "Studii. Revista de istorie", t. 24, 1971, no. 1, doc. no. VII from February 12, 1832, p. 38.

3 Acc. N. Iorga, *Studii și documente cu privire la istoria românilor*, vol. VI. Cărți domnești, zapise și răvașe, partea II, Ed. Ministerului de Instrucție, Stabilimentul Grafic I. V. Socecu, Bucharest, 1904, doc. no. 301, petition from 1821 by Bălașa, wife of Papa the *vistier* (treasurer), p. 517; doc. no. 303, 1824, Petition from Balașa, wife of the deceased *Visteriu* Papa, south Gorj, pp. 517-518.

4 Acc. C. D. Aricescu, *Istoria revoluțiunii...*, ed. cit., p. 14 states that he was born in 1821; A. Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și mișcarea eteristă în țările românești 1821-1822*, Institutul de Studii și Cercetări Balcanice, Seria istorică, no. 5, Bucharest, 1945, pp. 84-85; Idem, *Tudor Vladimirescu*, ed. 1971, ed. cit., p. 117, 129, 130.

5 Acc. E. Vîrtosu, *Mărturii noi din viața lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, Cartea Românească, Bucharest, 1941, doc. no. 55 from May 6, 1832, p. 95.

6 D. Aricescu, *Istoria revoluțiunii...*, ed. cit., p. 14, N. 3.

Constantin (1855-1922) and a girl, Alexandrina (January 19, 1857-April 16, 1939). The son of Ion Vladimirescu, Constantin Vladimirescu in his turn had two children – a boy named Tudor and a girl, subsequently married Popescu. This Tudor II Vladimirescu adopted the daughter of his sister, Angela n. Popescu, married Băcanu. He did not also adopt the son of his sister (apparently also named Tudor, but Tudor Popescu). Going back to the scions of Ion Vladimirescu (the nephew by brother of Tudor Vladimirescu), there can be mentioned that his daughter Alexandrina Vladimirescu got married on February 13, 1872 to a “merchant from Petreștii de Sus”, meaning the Târgul Cărbunești *Plasa*, named Ștefan Ion Mihail. Her husband was at the time 28 years old. They had a daughter, born on July 25, 1876 in Târgul Cărbunești, named Eufrosina. She married Ion Dumitrescu in 1890. Eufrosina and Ion Dumitrescu had a son, Ștefan Dumitrescu. He was born on July 6, 1913, lived in Bucharest, 1 Beldiman St. and was alive in December 1970.

Tudor Vladimirescu’s sister, Constandina who was called Dina in endearment and was older than Tudor, gave birth to legends. It seems that she was a beautiful girl. This greatly attracted Iancu Jianu, a friend of Tudor Vladimirescu. All that is known from the legends of the Oltenian bards is that she was said to have been promised to Iancu Jianu. This promise was not fulfilled. At some point after 1812, when Tudor wanted to leave for Russia, both his mother and his sister were alive. This results from the will of Tudor in which he mentions both.¹ Subsequently, a group of Greek brigands, says the popular tradition, came and attempted to kidnap Dina. Tudor jumped in the defence of his sister. During the battle, she allegedly fell, wounded herself and died. Iancu Jianu is said to have come to the aid of Tudor. He swore that he would become a “thief” and would kill the Greeks wherever he found them. Tudor declared that he wanted to leave for Russia, to fight for the liberation of his people. The mother of Tudor and the girl is said to have perished due to the hurt provoked by the assassination of the girl by the Greek.² In any case, the matter remains unsolved. If this legend is about Dina, in 1812 when she is certain to have been alive since Tudor leaves her through his will a part of his inheritance (besides his mother was also alive at the time), and if she was older than Tudor Vladimirescu, she would have been over 40 at the time, so the story about the rapture and death of the young fiancée of Jianu and sister of Vladimirescu called Dina should be taken with a grain of salt. At the same time C. D. Aricescu discovered, from Tudor’s relatives, that Dina had two children, Sanda and Gheorghe. It was not possible to determine who their father was. The two children of Dina are said to have been the forerunners of the Vladimirescu family

1 Acc. C. D. Aricescu, *Acte justificative...*, ed. cit., Nota (doc.). no. VI, “Copy after the will of Tudor when he decided to leave for Russia”, found in the possession of Ion Vladimirescu, pp. 14-15.

2 Acc. G. D. Iscriu, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

members from the villages of Căpreni and Pegeni in Gorj County. It is possible that from this line there also resulted the members from Dolj and Vâlcea.¹

Gherasim the monk, according to his brother Gheorghe Duncea, knowing that Tudor's mother, Ioana, was a widow, poor and with three children, took away with him, from the Vladimiru commune, Gorj County, the smallest child called Teodor and brought him to his relatives in Prejna village, Mehedinți County. He did this because that little boy born in the Vladimiru commune, Gorj² (according to the same testimony of monk Gherasim Duncea narrated by his brother in the memorial) in 1766, blond, lively, although tiny, seemed to be smarter than others. The child stood for around six years around Gherasim the monk and his family. This monk and his family named Duncea were from the village of Prejna, Mehedinți County. On that occasion, the child met Gheorghe Duncea, with whom he maintained a connection for his entire life and who was very faithful to him.

In his years there, Tudor was initiated in the mysteries of the Cyrillic script by the monk Gherasim Duncea. Probably the Duncea brothers were masters of the Cyrillic script, since they taught Tudor to write in the decked and abbreviated form.³

After about six years Gherasim the monk took Teodor/Tudor to one of the estates of upper boyar Ion Glogoveanu. This was near the *bona vacantia* estates of the Baia de Aramă Monastery. There, the teenaged Tudor was remarked by boyar Ion Glogoveanu. He was to the liking of the upper boyar. The latter decided to give course to the request of Gherasim the monk (as told by his brother, Gheorghe Duncea) and to send Tudor, together with his son Nicolae Glogoveanu at Craiova to get "a boyar's education". As another of his contemporaries, Mihai Cioranu, one of the former adjutants of Tudor who however had met him later, wrote, he studied in Craiova with one "*condicar*" (archivist) Lupu, who was related to the Vladimirescu family. There he learned the crafts of the alphabet and how to write in Medieval Greek.

1 Acc. C. D. Aricescu, *Istoria revoluțiunii...*, ed. cit., p. 14, who had information from Tudor's relatives that had remained in the village of Vladimiru, the Golumbeni brothers and Maria Dobromir, aged 75-90, cousins of Tudor Vladimirescu.

2 The house in which Tudor Vladimirescu was born exists in the village of Vladimir, Gorj County. It was remade in the year 1932 by architect Iulius Doppelreiter, after a photograph published at the beginning of the 20th century. The members of Tudor Vladimirescu's family had been for years in a row during the 20th and 21st centuries the mayors of the village and rulers of the peasantry. At the present, the house is a Memorial Home, being subordinated to the "Alexandru Ștefulescu" County Museum of Gorj. The guide of this museum is a grand-daughter of Tudor Vladimirescu, Angela Vladimirescu Băcanu, who lives "fence to fence" with the museum-home (for the site of the museum: <http://www.muzeugorj.ro/muzee-si-case-memoriale/casa-memoriala-tudor-vladimirescu/>, consulted March 31, 2021).

3 See to this end the letters of Tudor, published by Ioan Bianu, such as: Ioan Bianu, *Scrisoarea lui Tudor Vladimirescu c. Nicolae Glogoveanu, 25 Aug. 1915*, in *Academia Română, Desbaterile, seria II, t. XXXIX (1916-1919)*, pp. 9-11.

Upon reaching the age of 18, Tudor was considered by boyar Ion Glogoveanu mature enough to concern himself with the business of estate administration. The upper boyar considered that Tudor could be named *logothete*, therefore administrator of his estates in Baia de Aramă, Glogova, and Filiași.¹

Professor Dinică Ciobotea specifies, on the basis of documents, when Tudor started to have the dignities of a lower boyar. The first such title was that of *postelnic* (chamberlain), attested on December 1, 1801. Thus (at the age of 35, if we are to accept the very possible date of birth mentioned by Duncea, 1766), Theodor (Tudor) was a *postelnic* and had bought 10 fathoms of estate in the Gârbești *hotar* in the village of Vladimir, Gorj, meaning in the village of his birth (and place of origin of his mother), the seller being Matei, son of Pătru Mândruț.²

In the year 1803 Tudor still held his position as *postelnic* (chamberlain). As proof there stands his inscription in this quality, on the occasion of him buying another estate with a surface of 12 and a half fathoms. The purchase was on March 14, 1803, also in the village of his mother, Vladimiru. The sellers were two persons from Gorj established in Gura Poroinii, Mehedinți County. Tudor also became master of another land in the Hubavi *hotar*, “inherited as great-grandson of Gheorghe (brother of Iova, Costea and Pătru)”.³

During the first reign of Phanariote ruler Constantine Ypsilantis (1802-1806) Tudor held for a short while the office of *vtori comis* (Master of the Horse, second in command).⁴

During his second reign, Phanariote ruler Constantine Ypsilantis promoted him to the office of *vătaf de plai* (overseer) of Cloșani. Subsequently Tudor would become *Sluger* (Intendant). In the church in Prejna, dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God, which he founded together with Master Gheorghe Duncea, starting in 1806, finished and painted in 1808,⁵ he is represented as founder. Beside the portrait of Tudor there is the inscription “Biv-vel Sluger Theodor, comandir”.⁶

1 *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*, p. 34.

2 Acc. Elena Udriște, *Documente noi referitoare la Tudor Vladimirescu*, in *Arhivele Olteniei*, s.n., no. 3, 1984, p. 125; D. Ciobotea, *Un portret necunoscut al lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, in *Porțile de Fier. Revistă de istorie și cultură*, year XV, no. 21, 2015, p. 4 and N.1.

3 Elena Udriște, *idem*, p. 127, 129; D. Ciobotea, *Un portret necunoscut*, p. 4, n. 2, 3.

4 Dinică Ciobotea, *Un portret necunoscut*, loc. cit., p. 5.

5 The church in Prejna was founded in 1808 by Tudor and Duncea and made from oak beams, and then sacrificed and remade entirely from masonry in 1859 (acc. Radu Crețeanu, *Biserici de lemn din raionul Baia de Aramă*, in „Mitropolia Olteniei”, 5-6, 1959, pp. 301-302; Ioana Cristache-Panait, *Arhitectura de lemn din Județul Mehedinți. Studiu preliminar. Repertoriu*, in “Revista Monumentelor Istorice”, 1991, no. 2, year LX, pp. 16-47, here pp. 17-18).

6 The painting is on wood, representing Tudor Vladimirescu and Gheorghe Duncea with the latter's wife. The votive painting was made on the door of the Church in Prejna, Mehedinți County, 1808, by painter Gheorghe Siciofi (Ghiță the Painter) from Ploștina. Presently it is found in the National Museum of Art, The Gallery of Old Romanian Art. The same painter also made the

During this period of progress in his social life, being on an ascending path on the scale of official ranking and wealth, Tudor became blood brothers with one of his friends, Covrea. The latter was also a *logothete* (chancellor) on the estates of upper boyar Ion Glogoveanu. The two, benefiting from the trust of the Oltenian boyar, had received from his part two thousand heads of large cattle to take across the Straits of the Jiu River, to be sold in Hațeg to some Austrian merchants. Ion Glogoveanu had told the two of them that in selling the cattle three prices could have been professed: a high one, a medium one and a low one. The money which they obtained was to be brought to him.

The two, Tudor and Covrea, sold the cattle for the highest price, but brought back to boyar Glogoveanu the money for the smallest.

As Gheorghe Duncea wrote, the two, Tudor and Covrea, had an understanding not to leave the boyar's side until they gained a great capital, "*with which to gather arms, to rebel against the sovereignty and rid the country of Greeks.*"¹

"At the estate in Baia de Aramă and Glogova, Teodor had found a logothete with the name of Covrea, who was from Cerneți, the capital of Mehedinți County. With this logothete, Teodor had a very good understanding. Teodor tied a close friendship, becoming blood brother with Covrea; and they both swore not to leave the boyar's side, until they gained great capital, with which to gather arms, to rebel against the sovereignty and rid the country of the Greeks. This idea of Teodor's had sprung from his frequent encounters with Horia Albac in the borough of Hațeg. However, he was not able to start at the same time with Horia since he was still too young, being only 18 years of age and unprepared. All of the boyars of this time gathered on their estates large cattle herds called zahanale (abattoirs), which they were fattening on their lands and sending over the border to Transylvania.

Cucon (Sir) Glogoveanu, having ties with the merchants in Transylvania, received from them a note to send over 2000 heads of large cattle (oxen and cows). Then the boyar gathered all his cattle from the estates and gave them to Teodor and to Covrea, to have them taken over the mountains, to Hațeg. Before they left with the cattle, the boyar had settled three prices, and were they not able to make the sale with any of these prices, they were to have them brought back. They left with the cattle along the valley of the River Jiu and, arriving amidst the Parâng Mountains, they lodged. There Teodor and Covrea strengthened the oath by swearing to death that if they were to sell the cattle for the first price, they were to give the boyar the third, keeping two parts of the money.

iconostasis, which also exists today. The distinction of the painting of the initial church was that it was made on wooden panels. (PHOTO 1).

1 *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*, pp. 34-35.

Upon reaching Hațeg with the cattle, their wish was granted and they sold the cattle for the first price. Returning to the boyar they said that they barely managed to sell them for the third price, stopping two prices lower than the whole money. After which Covrea did not keep his oath with Teodor and asked Teodor to divide the money. Teodor, seeing that he had money following his oath with Covrea, started to accomplish his goal, secretly organising himself. Then he came to me in Prejna on a Sunday, a beautiful day of spring, florar (May) 20, 1805, and revealed all of his plans in my house, where my friends were also present: Zoican from Balta, Petre Bălțeanu and priest Nicolae Macu from Costești, who is the vicar of the church. And before him I took the oath and swore with my hands on the cross that he of us who was to relinquish or betray was to be skinned alive. And then we got to work.”¹

Methodically, Tudor Vladimirescu started to prepare for his goal and to bring it to large amplitude even since 1805, as Gheorghe Duncea wrote:

“Soon we started gathering bands of hajduci around these places and decided together with the Sluger Teodor to also build a small inn in the Balta village, on the road that leads to Cerneți and the road that comes from Baia de Aramă. And we named as innkeeper at this pub Petre al Preutesii nicknamed Bălțeanu, our trustworthy man. This pub was made to supply the hajduk bands with food and clothing and to discover any secret that came from Cerneți or Ada-Kaleh against Teodor or the kajduk bands. Also, at this inn they, the hajduci, gathered information, when the Greek tax collectors came or passed through after they collected taxes, and they kept them in their path and slayed them and took their money, which they left at the inn.

The hajduk bands were formed of Romanian peasants, serfs from the boyar estates in the plains. We took them from the Cerneți borough and brought them here, in the mountains and arranged them into groups of 15 or 20 and placed them in hiding places near the border, from where they could strike in Banat, Transylvania and over to us on the other side. These lurches were: the first in the forest on Camăna Mountain. This was under the care of priest Nicolae Macu. The second was in Țăsna and [the group] lived in the Scărișoara Cave, at the foot of the Inelețu-Mare Mountain. They were 140 in number; they had support in all gorges leading to Banat, Rușava (Orșova), Ada-Kaleh, Baia de Aramă. And they were under my attention. And the third hiding place of the Pandur hajduci was at Vârful lui Stan above the village of Isverna. They were 89 in number, also under my watch. They each had their commander, however I only took care of them with food, clothing and gave them various news and we were bound by the Sluger Teodor to watch over them, so that none fell prisoner, us being responsible. And we were to always be on the lookout, to discover any plot involving them. These bands of Pandurs were robbing left and right, killing Greek, Turkish officials of

¹ Idem, pp. 35-36.

all ranks (and) taking their money. (They were also robbing) the Romanian ciocoi, who were hand in hand with the Greeks, having fear of no-one, since my son-in-law, Captain Bosoancă, was Captain of the reign of the taht (commandment) of the Cloșani Plai. When the order came from the ispravnic (representative) of the taht in Baia de Aramă to form the posses and go after them to catch them, Captain Bosoancă reported to me and I announced the Pandur bands to go into hiding until the posse passed. These Pandurs had incredible faith. They were sworn, that they were to work only for the good and wise Sluger Teodor. All the money that they took from robberies they handed over to me and priest Nicolae Macu and to the inn that Teodor built.”¹

Between the people coordinated by Tudor there were not only Romanians, Oltenians, but also the men of his friend, Serbian revolutionary Karađorđe:

“To these bands there were added the 500 Serbian Pandurs brought by the Sluger Teodor from Serbia, who had made rebellion in 1806 against the Turks, under the command of Karađorđe, who was a good friend of the Sluger Teodor.”²

“All of these bands of Pandurs gathered in the spring and parted in the autumn, each towards their villages. And when spring arrived, each left his village under the reason of searching for work in the mountain villages. From their autumn scattering they left word on where to be reunited. They met in certain boroughs. These meeting townlets were for the Serbian Pandurs those of Carotin, in Verciorova and Rușava (Orșova), and for ours Cerneți, Baia de Aramă, Strehaia. They also met without knowing each other. They recognised each other through signs that they were wearing, for he who was a Pandur wore a flower that blossomed in the spring, a dropwort or something else, at the second button of his epângea (coat, tunic). And after this sign they recognised one another and gathered there in the borough and left for the mountains. From spring until autumn, the mountain was covered with Pandurs, from Verciorova to Tismana. From these people the Sluger Teodor had made his army for the uprising.”³

Here, I reproduced a large part of the document written and left by Gheorghe Duncea as a kind of personal moral testament. According to historian Emil Vîrtosu, who knew and reproduced a form of this text left by Gheorghe Duncea, this would have been the best and most correct rendering of the life and work of Tudor Vladimirescu for the preparation and accomplishment of the 1821 revolution.

A meaningful fact is that Gheorghe Duncea accentuates that Tudor made an alliance with the Serbians who also revolted against the rule of the Sublime Porte. Here there must be shown that Tudor was also influenced by the connections that he had in Hațeg with Horea, who was preparing (when Tudor

1 Idem, pp. 35-36.

2 Idem, p. 36.

3 Idem. p. 37.

was around 18 years of age) the great uprising in the Habsburg Empire. The international context must also be considered. In the year 1789 the French Revolution erupted. It ended in a capsizing of the old feudal values. At the same time, in Europe, there began circulating the masonic motto “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”, adopted by people who did not know much about it.

Tudor walked on a line with two components. The first was an alliance with the members of the Filiki Eteria from Russia, hoping for their help in his fight against the Sublime Porte. The second was the purely Romanian component, which was to result in the removal of the Phanariotes, bringing back the indigenous rule.

Thus, Tudor hoped to remove or alleviate the grave suffering of the middle class (*moșneni*- freeholders), that was hindered from developing and impoverished. Professor Andrei Oțetea rightfully considers that this was the strongest characteristic of the revolution: the national problem. The Oltenians could have never accepted an alliance with the Greeks who they hated, thinking about the Phanariotes.

In the conditions of that time, there was used a pretext to attempt the removal of Tudor who had gained much prestige in the ranks of the middle and lower classes in Oltenia. Therefore, there was an attempt for him to be accused, judged and punished because he had allegedly taken a part of boyar Glogoveanu’s money, following the sale of the cattle in Hațeg. There had been a denunciation to this end, by Covrea.¹ Although the latter was obliged, he did not wish to finance the revolution, but only wanted money for himself. Following the denunciation of this Covrea, Tudor was judged but, in the end, acquitted. Absolutely surprising for the unsuspecting, the acquittal was done with the complicity of the Turkish commander from Ada-Kaleh, who had been bought by Tudor.² In this case, I think it is necessary to reproduce the final part of the event: Tudor was condemned by the Pasha to be stripped and tied to a tree in the forest. If he was eaten by beasts, it would have meant that he was guilty. If he escaped, he would have been innocent. His friends had surrounded the place from a distance and protected Tudor from the beasts, for three days, while he had to remain bound. When the Turks arrived, they found him alive, covered in fleas. The Turkish Bashi-bozouk that headed the Akinji wanted to remove the fleas. Tudor told him not to: those fleas were already satiated. If he removed them, other starving ones would have come, who would have fed on his body. Then he is said to have been brought before boyar Ion Glogoveanu. He was told the story of Tudor and the fleas. The boyar then is said to have put him *logothete* over his estates, since if he would have put another, insatiable one, that one would have truly robbed him.

1 A. Oțetea, *op. cit.*, ed. 1945, p. 74 N. 3 mentions that “Tudor’s companion was named Bășica”.

2 And also, through Gheorghe Duncea, who was supplying the garrison of Ada-Kaleh.

After this episode, in 1806, Tudor, together with Gheorghe Duncea, decided to erect a church in the village of Tudor's father, Constantin Ursu and where Gheorghe Duncea lived and Tudor had spent his childhood. But precisely that year there erupted the uprising of the Serbians against the Sublime Porte:

“Then the Sluger Teodor entered Serbia, under the reason that he was looking for a foreman to build a church. Meanwhile, Teodor participates in the Serbian uprising. After the defeat of Karađorđe by the Turks, the Sluger Teodor takes 500 of the armed Serbian insurgents and puts them under the command of Harambaša Pavel Pavlovich and helped them cross the Danube at night, between Verciorova and Gura-Văii, on 90 boats, and followed Matorășu upstream to reach the village of Prejna. Meanwhile the Turks, observing them, followed them to the village of Costești. There, a battle between the Serbians and the Turks began. The Serbians, having being repelled and the Harambaša wounded, locked themselves down in the village church and the houses nearby, towards the evening. During the night, the Serbians made holes through the roof of the church and the houses to defend themselves against the Turks.

The Turks organised themselves and, the next day, parted to get the Serbians out of the church and the houses, to slaughter them. To this end, the Turks gave orders around the village for all the inhabitants to exit with a wooden board, wide and thick, and to walk with the board ahead of them, and the Turks, hidden behind the people with the boards, to advance towards the church and the houses where the Serbians were hidden. The people of the village had been previously taught, however, by the Sluger Teodor, who was hidden at Macu the priest, so that the Turks would not see him, to advance with their boards ahead, until they reached the church, so that the Serbians could shoot well from the church and the houses. Then to trip and fall down with the board ahead of the Turks, and the Turks behind them, still standing, to be slaughtered by the Serbians.

With such plan, the Turks were rejected and killed one by one. Those that escaped with their life, in their retreat, burned the village down in spite. And it burned completely down from one end to the other. Afterwards, these Serbians were brought to Prejna and divided into bands of Pandurs, throughout these mountains, and were robbing the ciocoi, the Greeks and the Turks. Also, with these Serbians there arrived Karađorđe, the leader of the Serbian uprising, who ran away out of fear of falling into the hands of the Turks. After a week's rest at Prejna, he was secretly brought before the Sluger Teodor accompanied by several Romanian Pandurs. And they handed him over to the Russian general, who is the head of the boyar council in Bucharest at this time, instead of ruler Ypsilantis, who was to ensure his passage to Russia, to rid him of the Turks.”¹

1 Idem, pp. 38-39.

Ending the confrontation with the soldiers with turbans with a victory against them and with the rescue of Karadorđe and a part of his men, evacuated to Russia with his help, Tudor considered that he had a moment of tranquillity and started to build the church in Prejna, together with Gheorghe Duncea. The beginning moment is also in 1806, the completion in 1808. Until then, the village of Prejna had an old and time-weathered church, a new one being necessary.

“This church was raised with materials in my property; the lime and the stone were drawn out by me, the construction beams were cut by the Pandurs from Baia de Aramă, the estate used to belong to Radu Muică, who had inherited it from his father-in-law, Dobru Vornic, estate which the Sluger Teodor had gripped from Radu Muică after the war of the Russians with the Turks in 1814, being vătaf de plai of the Cloșani Plai, and had donated it to the church in the year ... because Radu Muică was the man of the Greeks and the Turks, rulers of the country.

From the first foundation stone, where the Sluger Teodor buried his sword and I the ring on my hand, it was raised until its roof on my personal expense, and the rendering and painting, as well as all the ecclesiastical items from within the church were bought by the Sluger Teodor. Also, the bell was bought by the Sluger from Vienna. And the Holy Gospel he had bought from Brașov. The bell was taken by the Turks in this year, 1822. The church was completed in 1806 and its consecration was done in August, the same year. The church was given its land by the Sluger Teodor, in the year 1819, when he was vătaf de plai in Cloșani.”¹

Next, Gheorghe Duncea wrote how Tudor, together with him, gathered three thousand Pandurs and enrolled in the Tsarist army as a volunteer:

“After consecrating the church, the Sluger Teodor took the 3000 Pandurs that [participated in] the consecration of this place of worship and we all left, under his command, to help the Russians in their war with the Turks. We took part in the battles around Calafat, across the Danube, at Lom-Palanca and in the Balkan Mountains. In Calafat and Lom-Palanca we fought with the greatest bravery. For his merits in this war, the Sluger Teodor, our commander, received the rank of lieutenant in the Russian army and was decorated by the Great Tsar of Russia, who also gave him a regiment of Russian Cossacks, to always have at his disposal. He also received leave from the Great Tsar that all weapons which the Russians had given to the Pandurs to fight with in the war would remain his. And I went with him after the end of the war and deposited them in Cerneți, at the cula in the vineyard of the Sluger, under the defence of the Cossack regiment.”²

Tudor, as results from the words written by Gheorghe Duncea, but also from the documents of the era, was much appreciated by the Russian generals, among which there was also the future marshal Mikhail Illarionovich Kutuzov.

1 Idem, p. 40.

2 Idem, p. 40.

Due to the influence of the Russians he managed to remain overseer of the Cloșani *Plai* also after the end of the war, in 1814.

The Russians' appreciation of Tudor was a reality, confirming those shown by Gheorghe Duncea. The Russians spoke highly of him. For example, Russian Major Radikov wrote in an edifying manner to show the military commander qualities that Tudor had.¹

Tudor and the Pandurs that he commanded affirmed themselves brilliantly during the war between the Russians and the Turks. In 1810-1811 they bore the burden in the battles before Calafat, where they stopped the Turks that arrived from Vidin from entering Oltenia. The volunteer Pandurs were equipped by General Isayev with Cossack uniforms and they were given for equipment Cossack lances (*mazdrac*), pistols and swords. The result was a victory of the 6000 Pandurs. The Turks were stopped from entering Oltenia. The character of these fights and victories determined General M. I. Kutuzov to request, at the conclusion of the peace of Bucharest in May 1812, that Russia would only take Bessarabia. This war, which started from the Tsar's wish to extend the boundaries of his Empire until the Danube, at the least, did not reach its desired result. The Russian army that entered the Danubian Principalities wishing to advance towards Istanbul had to retreat rapidly, since in 1812 it had to begin fighting the army of Emperor Napoleon I. In the Russian-Turkish War of 1806-1812 Tudor Vladimirescu formed himself as a professional soldier. He fought directly under the command of highly valuable Russian generals, such as Isayev, Miloradovich, Zass, Kutuzov, Bagration etc. and advanced to the grade of *poruchik* (Lieutenant). Beside him there also rose other captains of the Pandurs such as Nicolae Gigârțu (Gigurtu), Ion Solomon, *serdar* Vișoreanu, Nicolae Boboc, Constantin Surdul, Ghiță Vârțanu, Dumitru Gârbea, Ioniță Ceganu.² It was during this instruction in the Russian army and the effective fight with the regular army during the Russian-Turkish War of 1806-1812 that there can be found the greatest measure of military forming of the Pandurs that fought during the 1821 revolution. Of course, to this there is added their love for their motherland. There must not be forgotten for a moment that the immense majority of the Pandurs originated from the Oltenian *moșneni* (freeholders).

1 On September 7, 1810, Major Radikov wrote: "*All the time that the now fallen citadel was bombarded, he (Tudor Vladimirescu, our note) stood at the barrier before the citadel and interrupted any communication between the Cladova garrison and Ada-Kaleh. Knowing all the passages through the mountains, he defended the interior of Oltenia from the incursions and plunder of the Turkish Pandurs and wherever thieves appeared he was present and willingly went with his troops for the defeat and also returned with happy victory. All information regarding the Turks in those places, he got from his spies and on his expense*" (quoted by Aurel H. Golimas, *Ascensiunea lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, in "Mileniu", Revistă de cultură, year IX, no. 39-40 (2006) p. 3).

2 Acc. A. Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și mișcarea eteristă în țările românești 1821-1822*, Institutul de Studii și Cercetări Balcanice, Seria istorică, no. 5, Bucharest, 1945, p. 97.

In 1814, Tudor was sent to Vienna¹ by boyar Nicolae Glogoveanu to settle the juridical issues that arose there from the death of Nicolae Glogoveanu's wife, Elenco Glogoveanu, n. Ghica, on May 5/17, most probably from phthisis. For Tudor the journey was very important. He arrived in the capital of the Austrian Empire during the development of the works of the Congress of Vienna that was to establish the situation of Europe after the defeat and the removal of Emperor Napoleon I of France. Of course, Tudor, who knew German, the Austrian dialect, learned during commerce with Transylvania, understood what the people were speaking on the street. Surely, he read the papers that at the time circulated in Vienna. In any case, what he saw in the capital of the Habsburg Empire reinforced his conviction to fight for the removal of the Phanariote Greeks from his country. And upon his return to the country, he had again, for a while, relationships with Nicolae Glogoveanu, together with whom he had grown up and studied. For a while he settled in Cerneți where he fortified his *cula* and continued to gather weapons to prepare the Pandurs. Part of the weapons he had from the Russians. For they had allowed him to keep the weapons that they had used during the war in 1806-1812.²

Tudor, with obstinate perseverance, took further action to maintain the Pandurs as a paramilitary force, taking care of his people, as Duncea writes:

"The Sluger Teodor was a just man. He was a brave defender of the peasants and an irreconcilable enemy of the ciocoi who were united with the Greeks. He could never endure the unjustness directed against us. For as long as he was vătaf de plai here in Cloșani, he always went on foot or on horseback to Bucharest to the cinstita cârmuire (administration) to defend our rights, of the peasants, when any injustice was done.

I here show an event that happened before the riot in 1819 in the month of June, I cannot recall the exact day, while he was vătaf de plai here in Cloșani. The Sluger Teodor, arriving one day from his pub in Natamenia Hill, Balta hotar towards Prejna, and arriving to the Prejna riverside, saw a band where a holder, namely Ilia Chelcea, who is from this village and had people mowing on his estate, had taken some aside, stopping the mowing, to beat a shepherd, who had his goats pasturing downhill in the meadow, because the shepherd's hound clashed with that of the owner, and killed the dog and beat the shepherd. The shepherd, seeing the Sluger Teodor, who was riding on the road, told him how this had happened. The Sluger called all the mowers together with the holder at Prejna, to settle the fault.

1 Acc. Al. Bălinescu, Ion Călin, Ion Popescu, *Documente noi în legătură cu răscoala poporului de sub conducerea lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, Craiova, 1954, Doc. no. 3, the letter from May 18, 1814, doc. no. 4. the letter from June 2, 1814, doc. no. 5 the letter from December 22, 1814 – all from Vladimirescu to Nicolae Glogoveanu; see also A. Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și mișcarea eteristă*, ed.cit., pp. 103-114.

2 Duncea, p. 40, for the weapons.

Observing that the blame was with Ilia Chelcea, he ordered Captain Bosoancă to remove him from here and take him to the taht in Baia de Aramă, to imprison him there. Ilia Chelcea, seeing himself locked, asked the Sluger Teodor for his forgiveness. The Sluger told him that, if he wanted to be forgiven, and didn't wish to be sued at the cinstita cârmuire, he was to pay the shepherd for his dog and reconcile with him over the fight. At the same time, he asked him to sell the estate where the people were mowing directly to him, meaning to the Sluger Teodor, since he needed it to provide the church in Prejna, his foundation, with it.

Ilia Chelcea, perforce, had to settle with the shepherd and sell that estate to the Sluger Teodor, which he immediately donated to the church. Thus, the Sluger Teodor gifted the church with two estates, one from Radu Muică and one from Chelcea, through two donation papers written by his hand.”¹

Tudor Vladimirescu's attitude at that moment reinforced the belief that he was a just man. He did not allow for the common, defenceless people to be ridiculed and robbed by the *ciocoi* that had risen in crooked ways. By solving that incident, Tudor Vladimirescu compelled the *ciocoi* to sell him the estate that, in fact, was fortuitously taken by the previous owner from the peasants. Then, Tudor took the two estates, from Radu Muică and from Ilia Chelcea, but not for himself. He donated them to the church that he had founded in Prejna. Thus, his and Duncea's foundation was gifted with two bodies of land, apart from the other gifts of the founders.

Tudor did not forget to continuously concern himself with the Pandurs. In the summer of 1820, he summoned them to a meeting. The Pandurs were to gather at Tudor's *cula* in the village of Cerneți. He called them there by using a signal, a song hummed all over Oltenia, especially by women. It ended in the lyrics “*Nu la munte hoșilor/ La ciocoi pandurilor*”. The Pandurs arrived in large numbers at Tudor's *cula* in Cerneți. Inside it there were stored weapons left for Tudor by the Russian army upon its retreat in 1812, as well as other weapons that he had bought himself. Tudor divided his men in two groups: the first under his command, the second under the command of the *polcovnic* (commander) that headed a Cossack regiment. He was sent to fight beside Tudor. Tudor formed the third unit from Pandurs and Serbians that came to fight beside him. In total, this third group numbered around 1000 men that Tudor placed under the command of veteran Serbian Captain Pavel Pavlovich. With him there was sent Captain Gheorghe Duncea, who was to help him, since he spoke Serbian and Russian.

There followed a fight with some Turkish units under the command of the Pasha of Ada-Kaleh Island. Tudor and his Pandurs, along with the Cossack regiment, defeated the Turkish troops in the fight on Cireșu Hill, near the

¹ *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*, p. 41.

“Verciorova” Monastery and the Bahna River on August 6, 1820. There, there was the boundary with the Habsburg Empire.¹

So, it can be considered that at least since 1820, with these battles with the Turks and other smaller ones in Oltenia, there practically started the revolution of 1821.

In November 1820, Tudor had to leave for Bucharest, since he had a trial with the Oltenian upper boyar Nicolae Glogoveanu before the Divan. The latter had destroyed one of his mills to build another for himself.²

But the trial was not the only reason for his two-month stay in Bucharest. While he was in the capital of Wallachia, in the home of Greek member of the Filiki Eteria upper boyar Constantin Samurçaş, his old acquaintance, Tudor participated in a series of meetings and discussions with the chiefs of the Russian consulate and of the Wallachian Eteria. From an analysis of the documents and stories of the Filiki Eteria members, as well as those of Naum Râmniceanu (historian of the 1821 revolution, a not at all favourable contemporary of Tudor) and of Ştefan Scarlat Dăscălescu (secretary of Ioan/Gheorghe Tipaldo, *protomedico* and *caimacam* of Craiova, in 1821), contemporaries of the events, it could be inferred that Tudor was not revealed that the true purpose of the Eteria was only the liberation of Greece and had nothing to do with helping the Romanian countries. If Tudor had discovered this, then neither he nor any Oltenian would have accepted an alliance with the Eteria. The three *caimacam* upper boyars, Grigore Brâncoveanu,³ Grigore Ghica and Barbu Văcărescu, together with Alexandru Ypsilantis had decided to designate Tudor as the only fitting man for the triggering and leadership of the revolution in Wallachia, which was to start in Oltenia – where the military force of Tudor was found. He had proven himself to be an excellent military commander during the Russian-Turkish War of 1806-1812, which had determined the Tsar to grant him the title of *poruchik* (lieutenant), to decorate him with the order of St. Vladimir, to give him a ring with his signature, to leave with him the Russian weapons in Oltenia in the Cerneți *cula*, to help him with a regiment of Cossacks in Oltenia. Meanwhile, Tudor had organised the Pandurs for years into a truly drilled army – and they obeyed him only, he obtained with them victories in the armed confrontations with the Turks from as early as 1806 and until 1820. And, above all, he had been

1 The person that had copied the manuscript of Gheorghe Duncea used the term “Austro-Hungarian Empire”. This clearly shows that what we have available is a later copy, since the Austro-Hungarian Empire only appeared in 1867, so long after Tudor. The copyist was dominated by the realities of his time and did not take into account the era in which Tudor Vladimirescu had lived.

2 Acc. A. Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și mișcarea eteristă*, ed. 1945, p. 83; idem, *Tudor Vladimirescu*, ed. 1971, p. 133.

3 Grigore Brâncoveanu, a politically duplicitous man, was at the same time the chief of the pro-Austrian party in Wallachia.

preparing for many years to arise to battle at any time against the *ciocoi*. By *ciocoi*, Tudor, as any trueborn Oltenian, born in Gorj, understood mainly the Greek tenants, but also those that made covenant with them. He was one of the Oltenians who loved their country, did not suffer those who came for exploitation and, furthermore, made a concerted action against this state of the matter.

The King of Wallachia, Alexandru Suțu, old and ill, died on January 15/27, 1821. He was buried in the Church of Sf. Spiridon Nou in Bucharest. Two days later, at the incentive of the three upper boyars Grigore Brâncoveanu, Grigore Ghica and Barbu Văcărescu, Tudor Vladimirescu left for Oltenia to launch the revolution. The three upper boyars were part of the interim leadership of the country, they were *caimacam*. They were managing the country after the death of the Lord, until the naming of another occupant of the throne. Therefore, out of the group of boyars named by the ruler as a provisional government committee¹ they were the most important. Tudor was given a guard of 25-40 Arnavut led by the Filiki Eteria Captain Dimitrie Macedonschi. Tudor left with them for Oltenia by way of Pitești, Ocnele Mari, Tismana. He advanced quickly, having covered the road in four days, although it was winter. There, in Tismana, he decided to read the proclamation to the people, known as the Proclamation of Padeș. The Pandurs started coming to him, as if upon a sign. But also, many people, in help. The revolution had begun.

The choice of Tudor from Vladimir – Gorj as the future leader, or better said commander of the Oltenia revolution, determines me to stop my communication here. I once again mention that the theme I have chosen in this case is Gorj, the people of Gorj and the development of Tudor Vladimirescu. Or, in the previous I have shown that he was born in Gorj, in the village of Vladimir(u), he had spent his childhood with his mother Ioana nee Bondoc in her village of birth, he had many priests and monks in his family, he had learned to write from monks. Thus, he obtained his spirit of boldness, of creative stubbornness, of protector of justice typical for the people of Gorj.

In these conditions, the tall man, with chestnut-blond hair, with blue eyes the colour of the sky, with a blond moustache² can be considered to have been

1 From this temporary leading committee designated by the ruler on January 12/27, 1821 there were part Metropolitan Dionisie Lupu, boyars Grigore Brâncoveanu, C. Crețulescu, Gr. Ghica, Barbu Văcărescu, *vistier* (treasurer) Grigore Filipescu and great *postelnic* (chamberlain) Iacovache Rizu.

2 “*His physiognomy: a man taller than the average, his body well proportioned, his figure blonde, his moustache yellow, his hair brown, his face more round than oval, not too plump, not too thin, with a small chin, a man which was not ugly, he stood upright, swaggered; his words brief, harsh, and after his faculty, quite eloquent, the appearance of a commander*” (described by Ștefan Scarlat Dăscălescu in 1821, acc. D. Bodin, Tudor Vladimirescu, in “Figuri revoluționare române. Cinci conferințe ale Universității libere”, publ. by Așezământul Cultural Ion C. Brătianu, XXVI, Cartea Românească, Bucharest, 1937, p. 60).

fully developed when he was asked to lead the revolution in Oltenia, which was the purpose for which he had prepared for many years.

Here I am also obliged to disclose several details about the death of Tudor. They are not found in any other known source.¹ The other authors that write about Tudor's demise had narrated hypotheses since they did not find notes from the people who had directly witnessed the assassination of Tudor.

Gheorghe Duncea had directly recorded that which his son-in-law had reported, who was Captain Bosoancă "of the reign of this *taht* of the Cloșani *Plai*":

"As told by Captain Bosoancă, my son-in-law, who was witness until the killing of the Sluger, it can be seen that he had suffered a far worse death than that of Horia and Cloșca in Transylvania.

He says that the Sluger was sold by one of the Pandur captains, Iordache, who had broken his vow and during the revolt, while they were camping in Cotroceni, had given themselves to killings and robberies around Bucharest and its surroundings. And the Sluger Teodor, after having received the vow of faith from the boyars of the country, made a council in which to judge all those that had committed such deeds of their own volition, without anybody else knowing.

One of these had sold Teodor and handed him over to Captain Iordache, who was in Ypsilantis' army. Captain Bosoancă, as soon as he noticed that Teodor was missing from amongst them, thought that he had been caught by somebody. They had been told that he went to settle with Ypsilantis in Târgoviște, to unite and advance against the Turks, again towards Bucharest; and the Pandurs were to wait there calmly, for the Sluger was to arrive with Ypsilantis, with his army, and join the Pandurs here. Then Captain Bosoancă took ten Pandurs with him, changed their clothes and put monk's robes on and left the second day for Târgoviște, to see what happened to Teodor. When they arrived there, they found Teodor in the hands of Ypsilantis' Greeks, who had taken him outside of Târgoviște, had bound his hands behind him, had undressed him to his skin and had cut open his belly with a yataghan, pulling his guts out with a winder while he was still alive.

¹ I have published the article *Tudor Vladimirescu și pieirea lui în Târgoviște*, in "Caligraf", year XXI, no. 16-17, 2021, pp. 28-31, which appeared owing to the kindness of Professor Tudor Rățoi. In it I have shown how the contemporaries of Tudor Vladimirescu had recorded what they had heard from the stories of those that had notice of his assassination. It was known that he was cut with swords by the members of the Filiki Eteria commanded by the bloody Greek Captain Vasilis Caravia and his people, Probably Captain Bosoancă and his ten men were not able to intervene because they were too few against the Greeks. Today, on the outskirts of Târgoviște, on the road to Găești, there rises a wayside shrine on the place where the tradition shows that Tudor Vladimirescu was killed. I also wanted to show the last information offered by Captain Bosoancă to his father-in-law Gheorghe Duncea, since perhaps they elucidate better the fate of the national hero of the Romanians, Tudor Vladimirescu.

This was the death of the Sluger Teodor, which I did not see, but I write of here, as narrated by my son-in-law, Captain Bosoancă who also fled to Transylvania, two months ago."¹

It is very possible that this singular information on the barbarous assassination of Tudor Vladimirescu was the last one supplied by Gheorghe Duncea. I write these because in a document dated December 12, 1822, Nicolae Zoican from Balta, also a close collaborator of Tudor's, was complaining to upper boyar Nicolae Glogoveanu, *ispravnic* of Mehedinți County, that he did not receive money which he was owed by Constantin Duncea, the son of Gheorghe Duncea. We discover from the document that Gheorghe Duncea was the endorser of the loan. At the maturity of the bill, he offered in change a part of his estate, requesting at the same time a postponement until the arrival of the borrower from the Habsburg Empire. Nicolae Zoican however discovered that Gheorghe Duncea had been killed by some thieves, and his son was nowhere to be found in the country. In consequence, Zoican asked for the relatives of Gheorghe Duncea that were still in the country, namely a son-in-law who could have been exactly Captain Bosoancă, to be summoned to pay the debt. From this document there clearly results that, as expected, in 1822, the author of this document-testament on Tudor Vladimirescu had disappeared.²

The people of Oltenia have not forgotten Tudor Vladimirescu. The inhabitants of Mehedinți County, which borders Gorj County, where Tudor had lived for many years, where he had his *cula* in the village of Cerneți, have decided to immortalise him in stone. They erected a beautiful stone statue in Padeș. This was the town from which, symbolically, he began his revolution. The statue was raised at the initiative of the Padeș school committee, led by teacher N. I. Spineanu. The project of architect State Baloșin, a son of the village, was adopted.³ The monument was inaugurated in 1934.

1 *Memoriul lui Gheorghe Duncea 2001*, pp. 50-51.

2 The complaint of Nicolae Zoican was published in Al. Bălintescu, Ion Călin, Ion Popescu, *Documente noi în legătură cu răscoala poporului de sub conducerea lui Tudor Vladimirescu*, Craiova, 1954, doc.no. 24, p. 62.

3 State Baloșin (1885-1953), architect, one of the 11 children from the family of a poor peasant, born in Negoești – which from an administrative point of view depended on Padeș, after having attended primary school in Baia de Aramă, left for Craiova. There he studied at the Carol I College. While he was in high school, he was also an educator and gave private lessons to sustain himself. All of his life he did not forget those hard years, when in his bag from home he only had an onion bread for food. After finishing high school, he left for Bucharest and got hired as clerk at the Ministry of Finance, initially as a draftsman. At the same time, he got enrolled in and followed the courses of the Higher School of Architecture. He became an architect in 1915 and advanced in hierarchy in the Ministry of Finance in this quality. He worked there for his entire career, starting from draftsman, then architect, architectural inspector and director, until his retirement in 1945. He made projects for the Ministry of Finance, for other public institutions and for private clients. In Bucharest for example he had designed, among others, the Creditul Minier building, the Ferekide

I cannot finish these rows without thanking Professor Dinică Ciobotea from Craiova and Professor Tudor Rățoi from Drobeta Turnu-Severin for the information offered with Oltenian generosity and friendly largesse. Also, I thank my wife for the continuous and full of abnegation help that she supplied during the writing of the previous rows.



Photo 1: The founders of the first wooden church from Prejna Jud. Mehedinti: Tudor Vladimirescu, master Gheorghe Duncea and his wife. Votive portrait painted on the door of the Church from Prejna, Mehedinți County, 1808, made by the painter Gheorghe Siciofi (Ghiță Zugravul) from Ploștina. Presently it can be found at the National Museum of Art, the Old Romanian Art Gallery. The same painter had made the iconostasis, which still exists today. The characteristic of the initial church is that the painting was made on wooden panels, not directly on the wall, which precedes the easel painting.

building, the Wilson building, the Cișmigiu Palace, but also many private homes. At the same time, he designed houses for the Astra Society in Brașov, for the workers at the paper mill in Bușteni etc. He also designed the houses for his family in Padeș, Craiova, Băile Herculane. He was the author of many headquarters for financial institutions, customs buildings, rest houses for the employees of the Ministry of Finance, he worked on the plans for the Romanian Embassy in Sofia, at the systematisation plan for Severin and Galați. Other of his important achievements were the monument for the Heroes of the First World War - Mateiaș, the monument for the heroes of Cerna from the park of the municipality of Drobeta Turnu-Severin, the mausoleum of the heroes in Giurgiu, the monument for the heroes in Slobozia-Vlașca. He honoured his birthplace through the monument of the Declaration of Padeș dedicated to Tudor Vladimirescu.



Photo 2: Tudor Vladimirescu (Institutul Litografic A. W. Garbrecht, Leipzig în Apostol D. Culea, *Album Istoric. Istoria Românilor în Ilustrații*, Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice Ramuri, Craiova, 1926, p. 84).



Photo 3: Rebels of Ipsilante (Litografie de I. Brodmann în Apostol D. Culea, *Album Istoric. Istoria Românilor în Ilustrații*, Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice Ramuri, Craiova, 1926, p. 83).



Photo 4: The pandurs restrained a thief into a pillory (Apostol D. Culea, *Album Istoric. Istoria Românilor în Ilustrații*, Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice Ramuri, Craiova, 1926, p. 82).



Casa lui Tudor Vladimirescu din satul Vladimiri (jud. Gorj).

Photo 5: Tudor Vladimirescu's semi-fortified house of Vladimiri, Gorj (Apostol D. Culea, *Album Istoric. Istoria Românilor în Ilustrații*, Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice Ramuri, Craiova, 1926, p. 84).