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**PANTELIMON HALIPPA. POLITICAL
ACTIVITY**

Phd Thesis

Abstract

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Pantelimon Halippa is a representative figure not only when it is referred as a vivid militant for the assertion of those who come from Bessarabia, but also when we associate it with the figure of a publicist, writer, a Member of Parliament, who had as a main aim the union of his personal province with Romania. At the very moment of his being in office as the vice-president of the National Assembly, which equaled to the end of March of 1918, the 27th to be more accurate, he stood for the union of Bessarabia with Romania. Hence, at the end of the same year he was elected as the president of the previously mentioned assembly. What is more, Halippa was amongst those elitist politic figures of Great Romania, presenting himself as the leader of the Bessarabian provincial organization which was related to the Rural Party, which later on took, that is after 1926, the name of National Rural Party. He stood most definitely out from the crowd, being a MP in the great majority of political enactments and being in office as the secretary in various governments.

One of the most important incentives for choosing this topic revolves around the multifarious personality we are to find in Hallipa's figure, on the one hand, and around his active involvement in the politics of his time, on the other. Particularly due to this, we have reached the conclusion that such an emblematic figure should deserve separate and painstaking attention. Taking into consideration the present state of affair when it comes to the already elaborated research on the topic, far from us the thought of simply constructing a monograph of Pantelimon Halippa's existence, but

our mission to be accomplished is particularly that of completing the existent studies with further information. In order to achieve that, we have chosen to focus on the politic activity put forth throughout the inter-war years, which is mostly left unexplored. However, this aspect is not of utmost importance for the present thesis, but what proves indeed of interest is particularly to extrapolate and further dwell upon the position occupied by Bessarabia in this exact time-span.

It is common knowledge that Bessarabia was a somehow prohibited topic in terms of exacerbated sensitivity before 1989, particularly what revolved around certain aspects like the union with Romania, the public Bessarabean figures or the key year, 1940. However, after 1989, the current state of affairs changed dramatically especially within the Romanian historiographic field, especially because the mainstream was to fill in the blanks left from the Communist Era. The topics of vested interest for a certain amount of time, were crystallized in the Soviet-Romanian relationship unfolding or the union. This is indeed relevant as well as justified if taking into account the anguish put forth by Romanians towards everything related to Russia, beginning with the Independence War which still continues to trigger off ugly repercussions. Therefore, the Romanian historiography presents itself as receptive alongside the public mainstream, when we are to refer to Russia, Bessarabia being in fact the key in order to reach unanimous consensus. Moreover, if it is to focus on the Bessarabean public figures, we consider indeed important to give some special

attention and more than a shallow glance to some of them. This idea of exploring them is even more viable if what is dwelt upon revolves around their political itinerary after the Great Union. In this category falls also Halippa, who is remembered first of all for his painstaking unionist activity or for his development throughout the Communist Era. And yet, there are some parts left unexplored when we think of him, particularly that of his active immersion in the inter-war public life.

What needs to be further explained revolves around some key terms such as political activity and the boundaries which are to be established in relation to the space-time relationship. First of all, the idea of political enactment or activity, we stress upon Halippa's plunge in the political stage, that is: honorific member of the Rural Party, later on known as the National Rural Party, his Member of Parliament phase, his political public positions, and last but not least, the relentless pursuit for Bessarabean justice and the status of this province in relation to Great Romania. Thus, we consider that a political public figure honors his status only if he/she resorts to active enactment in the political system, in the public life and social order, but this complex status is achieved also through influential abilities whenever mentioning governmental decisions.

From this very perspective, the political activity of the Bessarabean pioneer unfolds within two temporal boundaries, that is from 1917 to 1938. Bluntly put, we begin to analyze the national movements for emancipation in Bessarabia, which were triggered in the context of the Russian uprising, and finish this study with a

close-up and analysis on the dissolution of the political democratic system based on the existence of a parliament and of various parties. Beginning from these very premises, we are adamant in the belief that this new perspective is valid for the exploration of several political problems and solutions which are to be found in Romania throughout the inter-war years. And this constitutes another premise for the current thesis, that of situating Halippa's activity in a wider context, in order to grasp everything in the correct manner.

The fact that a complex bibliography is to be found with respect to the political engagements from the inter-war period, to the Bessarabean state of affairs, prove to be indeed helpful whenever having to grasp the whole picture of that specific time. However, the topic proposed is not that vastly explored, and some pragmatic arguments are specifically the lack of published papers focusing on the exact same matters, and this is why our analysis makes use of materials to be found in archives, of public political speeches, of the press and so on and so forth.

We have to mention that a rich material is to be found in the National Historic Archives which put forth various papers bearing the title of their protagonist, Pantelimon Halippa. Summarized, this bulk consists of more than ten thousand documents, which have belonged to our pioneer, and which have been returned to the Romanians, in 1973. This material was indeed of use for the present thesis in that we have used chronological data, but most importantly relevant information related to Halippa's political engagements. We refer here particularly to those documents concerning the

Bessarabean issue, the National Rural Party from Bessarabia, the activity put forth on an institutionalized background, that is his immersion and his status in several associations or societies , memoirs Halippa received from distinct public or non-public figures and his activity developed in concordance with an association of people from Bessarabia which was active in Bucharest, his collaboration with the press of the time, his extensive correspondence with the men of his time, and so on and so forth.

What can be identified are three distinct components that make up Halippa's political enactment, and these very aspects are essential for the correct grasp and flow of information in the thesis. Thus, the three pillars of our analysis revolve around the party, the mandates and the political positions constantly attributed and honored by the Bessarabean figure. A clear cut delimitation or a boundary imposition is far from possible, because these three sections overlap at certain points or they have the attribute of being complementary, because the position Halippa had in the party is to be found at the core of his political activity. Therefore, what he have considered adequate to do, was particularly to dedicate one chapter for each and every pillar or component making up the axis of this thesis.

Our immersion beings with a first chapter which refers to the unionist activity put forth by Halippa, and this first delimitation takes the form of a subdivision in two more subchapters, the first focuses on some biographic data, related to his family and studies, whereas the second stresses upon the very process intended by

Halippa, that of waking up dormant consciences with respect to the national emancipation and the union with Romania. Of course that we are aware that this chapter is not that innovative, due to the fact that previous studies have provided the sufficient amount of information for us to grasp these biographic aspects. However, its main aim focuses on introducing the topic of vested interest for the present thesis, and also on familiarizing the reader. We have chosen to highlight the direct contribution of the pioneer under discussion related to the national movement that took place between 1917 and 1918.

Throughout the second chapter of the thesis we have dwelt upon, Halippa's dimension as an active member within the political system. What is of interest with respect to his figure is particularly the fact that he has not changed his political views in as much as to consider some of his deeds a landmark with repercussions. However, we have stressed upon the idea of Halippa's evolution throughout his political itinerary. Thus, he remained convinced and loyal to his rural political anchorage as a viewpoint for his whole existence, that is from 1918 up till 1938, a turning point and a key year because it is in direct dependence with the dissolution of the multiple parties concept. This chapter is further divided in three more subchapters each of which focuses on the following: the inauguration of the party in 1918, the fusion with the Rural Party from the Romanian Old Kingdom in 1921, and the further fusion with the National Party in 1926. Accurately speaking, each of these very events marks the beginning of the subchapters. Throughout this

rather extended time-span, Halippa was the president of rural organizations, which from the 1926 have been entitled national-rural, from Bessarabia. What we have considered of great importance was to analyze his trajectory from the perspective of the individual committed to the pursuit of his national province's interests.

The third chapter revolves around Halippa's active enactment on the Parliament's stage, being subdivided in two sections, namely one referring to his deputy mandates from the period 1919-1920, and to his senator's mandate from 1934 up to 1937. For the period in which his party found itself in opposition, the political figure made use of the tribune in order to voice and put forth the injustices made to those from Bessarabia, to give and ask for solutions, but most importantly for his awakening of dormant consciences. Hence, the main aim for this chapter is to highlight and to further analyze the speech's evolution, but also to give a second glance to events concerning the current state of affairs from Halippa's time not only from Romania but also from Bessarabia. Throughout the phase of the two national-rural governing, Halippa has been proposed as deputy and has been interested in solving the problems put forth by the opposition, more than the government's activity.

The period of Halippa's involvement as a deputy constitute the premises for the fourth chapter of the present thesis, which is further fragmented in three other subchapters, out of which, each has a correspondent the portfolios: secretary of the Public Oeuvres and

Communication, secretary of Work, Health and Social Order, state minister for Bessarabia. We have constructed the present chapter from the assumption that within the secretary system, the purists are those responsible for the studies, analyses, law projects and so on and so forth, the active conscience with the most importance is, however, the secretary itself, the one who is expected and entitled to lead the cooperation teams, to establish the priorities, and most importantly, he is the one who pulls the chains in order to reach the objectives. The identification of concrete, pragmatic materializations, whose protagonist is Halippa, represented one of the major targets of the fourth chapters.

Even though our itinerary is concerned with the political activity of the pioneer, we have identified a great majority of situations and deeds that do not bare only a political signification. Quite the opposite is the case, in fact, in that Pantelimon Halippa can be associated with the figure of a man interested in social good, humanity's salience, all of which are gathered as the premises for the present chapter, that is the final one. Taking into consideration the facts related to the political dimension of a pioneer identified in Halippa in terms of political figure engulfing that of leader, deputy, MP membership, and that of secretary, it was rather complicated to dissociate between the political actions put forth by the protagonist of this thesis and those presented in the fifth chapter. This is why we do not resort to the process of establishing boundaries, because we do not infer that such a distinction would prove to be helpful when it comes to the textual structure. Furthermore, we believe that this

chapter comes as an ulterior source of completion in terms of giving more shape to the activity put forth by the Bessarabean leader.

The incentives alongside the deeds and situations presented in the last chapter share something in common, which takes the form of a province - Bessarabia. Thus, we are entitled to state that for Halippa the leading factors and the main aim revolve around his province and inhabitants. Even though, at a first glance we are to say that these are only minor aspects lacking any kind of substance, in fact it is through these very ones, that the whole picture of the Bessarabean leader can and should be grasped.

After the Great Union, Pantelimon Halippa was amongst the leaders who understood that the act from 1927 was in fact a representation for a leading path than an ended one, and making use of these very aspects in his personality, Halippa did not give up his ideal of consolidation in terms of union. The Rural Party's integration inside the Romanian political system stands for the creation of an unitary entity known as the Rural Party, which can be attributed to the normal outcomes of the union on the one hand, and of the complex and painstaking processes of making Romania, the Romanian United Kingdom.

Choosing this was not that simple as one may be inclined to believe, because the short comes of the Romanian administration and the old habits of making politics have caused great bewilderment within the province, shortly after the union took place. This is why Bessarabia do not fall nor does it accept, the so-called centralism of Romania. In this very context, Halippa is to be

awarded the vote of trust, mainly because he had the ability and the visionary spirit to put forth the global priorities instead of the provincial ones. This is one of the reasons, Halippa stood away from the narrow-minded dimension of regionalism. The construction of an unitary rural party meant a huge progress for the political life encountered in Romania, and what is more, the Bessarabean leader stood out from the crowd as a man of his word, a fighter for Bessarabia and as a man committed to his jobs within the party.

Throughout our academic itinerary we could notice the loyalty characteristic to Pantelimon Halippa, because he was the one to stand in front of his very own party up till the end. Due to the formation he had when he was young, he of was the most basic exponent of the left wing mainstream within the organization, being an open supporter of social reforms characterized by profound outcomes, of full rights and liberties and more importantly of the economic and cultural boost within the country's rural fellows. He was indeed an utterly good entrepreneur and coordinator of any sort of activities to be unfolded within a political party, because he had the patience and the capacity of making peace between every single battle of interests that arose within the provincial organization.

Having always in mind as priorities the needs of his fellowmen and of his very own Bessarabia, Halippa was not biased in his political activity, in that he activated with the same morality of conduit not only inside but also outside the party. This is why, it is indeed justified to mention the fact that the Bessarabean leader presented himself as a warranty certificate in that he stood up for the

interests of the inhabitants from the province. Taking into consideration the latter aspect, we are to highlight the fact that not seldomly, Halippa had to face the accusations with which he was over and over again labeled: those related to him being biased and adhering to a political regionalism. We tend to disagree with the bulk of accusations expressed so directly, mainly due to the fact that during Halippa's activity, in the state the centralism was used at various levels, beginning with authorities and ending up with public institutions and their system, but of course that there have to be negative aspects, in that for instance, various organizations have proved to be limited and lack essential aspects.

In what regards the activity unfolded within the Parliament, we had the possibility to draw a mental picture with Halippa as the deputy protagonist. Thus, we are able to infer up to this very moment some, if not the most important viewpoints, ways of perceiving the society's flaws and the manner in which these can be solved. Obviously, the most outstanding components from this equation have been his own province and his fellowmen. Of course, the harshness of his speeches and more importantly, of his conceptions, is to be found at several level and at distinct time. What is more and needs to be brought to further analysis, is particularly the outcome of his proposal which most of the time has not had a materialization, but at least he was not ignored at all.

When we are to refer strictly to the activity unfolded within the Parliament and Halippa's figure, some aspects have to be stated. First of all, the Bessarabean leader has not acted vividly on a regular

basis, and this is justified if compared to other contemporary figures such as N. Lupu or N. Iorga. Second of all, when he had to bide several decrees towards the government, most of the time their main concern revolved around some key leitmotifs, that is injustice, flaws of respecting the rights, or other difficult tasks like the ones previously mentioned. Moreover, what we have also observed is that the issues Bessarabia has and of its inhabitants have been indeed salient. To conclude, it can be stated that Halippa is a harsh, though orator, whose speeches and proposals are far from soft, but even so, his chief characteristics are particularly the calm and perseverance towards the bulk of accusations of injustices he had to come across. The repercussions which have a material dimension are particularly the ones which refer to the prohibition of voicing and presenting his speeches in different contexts, like in the case when he was a senator, namely between 1934-1937.

The Romanian political stage from the 2nd and the 3rd decade of the 20th century is marked by the international concept of *mutatis mutandi*, in that everything revolved in accordance to the events that took place at a more European level, but which had in fact bad repercussions in the form of a never-ending degradation of democratic mechanisms and a sudden fall of the Parliament. We have to bear in mind that the harshness put forth by Halippa on the political stage of these very decades is in full consonance with the global context which was in fact really harmful. Therefore, we have not to label him as a harsh, though figure who surpassed all the

imposed boundaries, because actually the context in which he activated is enlightening.

Halippa left indeed the Secretary of Public Oeuvres visible blueprints of his activity. For instance, everything related to the construction of roads and bridges, or several aspects relating to the legislation have been promoted by him. What is more, once he got the reins of the Communication Department, he has as compulsory tasks the autonomous overheads, that go by CFR and PIT. The process of modernization of these two important branches has been initiated also by him. Therefore, the huge amount of work Halippa invested in the Secretary of Work, Health, and Social Order has produced a good impression, even though he had to do everything he did in less than four years, including the summer holidays when the political activity was even less intense because of the vacations and so on and so forth. The biggest achievement that belongs to Halippa resides in the elaboration of a law project for protecting one's job and the minor industries, but we also have to remember the idea of preparing the census from the fall of the 1930.

Pantelimon Halippa has been in office as state secretary in the both period of governing of the national-rural party, that is from 1928 to 1931, and from 1932 to 1933. Even though his job was not backed up by a portfolio, that is without a regular department, this went hand in hand with a vast scale of attributions and responsibilities related to Bessarabia. Long story short, this meant that you had to militate for your fellowmen and also for your native

province, and in fact this is what the pioneer Halippa was responsible for.

Even though being the secretary of Bessarabia did not come with clear instructions nor with responsibilities, Halippa has proved to be a vivid fighter of the provincial interests, being always posted to and honoring the social attributions. He was in contact with the mayors and with the local authorities inasmuch as he was always on the road, in the form of visits or inspections. Furthermore, he was famous for his interventions when colleagues of him were involved in different dilemmas, being the Jack of all trades in terms of every single problem.

What we have observed throughout our analysis was particularly the fact that in the second phase of the nationalist-rural governing, Halippa seemed to lack tolerance with respect to the slow phase at which every progress in Bessarabia took place. Of course, we can assume that this attitude of his is in direct accordance with his very own personal investments and the huge quantity of effort he spent for his fellowmen and country. Therefore, whenever having to refer to the financial aspects and to Halippa, we are not to become judgmental with any of the respects concerning the very idea of him being biased and investing more for his Bessarabia. And we can even spare him of the biased dimension if we take a closer look at the state of affairs his native province experimented at that particular moment: not enough money in order to develop every single field of activity.

The whole existential itinerary put forth by Pantelimon Halippa was in fact a good incentive for becoming aware of certain specific problems and even flaws that Romania in its entirety presents, but most importantly, are these aspects reflected with regard to Bessarabia. The short amount of time was indeed a deterrent factor, and this is why we are very much aware of the plausible and viable questions one may have to add with respect to the political activity initiated on so many levels and with so many outcomes by Halippa. And yet, we are adamant in the belief that we will provide satisfactory answers in due time.