



Celebrating the royal liturgy within the national calendrical memory – The politics of festive time in the Romanian Kingdom, 1866–1947

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Abstract

The paper analyzes the calendrical struggles over mastering symbolic time in Romanian modern history by scrutinizing the logic of constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing a temporal order made up of political holidays celebrated within a festive calendar. It looks, first, at how the constitutional monarchic political order established in 1866 with the enthronement of Carol I as Ruling Prince of Romania developed a royal festive calendar pillared on the National Day of the 10th of May. By analyzing the making of the royal temporal order organized within a national festive calendar, three techniques of calendrical construction are identified and detailed: a) calendrical shifting, b) calendrical concentration, and c) celebrative sequencing employed for framing temporal coincidence and staging festive density. After presenting how the festive calendar was articulated using these techniques for the purpose of legitimating the monarchic order, the paper goes on to address how the Socialist republican regime established in the aftermath of the Second World War tried and succeeded not only in abolishing the dynastic monarchy through a political revolution but also in overthrowing the entire royal calendar of political celebrations through a symbolic revolution in the politics of festive time. The paper identifies four techniques of calendrical deconstruction used by the Socialist regime to destructure the royal festive calendar and supplant it with a republican one: a) calendrical decentering, b) calendrical concentration, c) symbolic downgrading, and d) shifting the celebrative weight. In exploring these techniques of calendrical construction and deconstruction, the study underscores the power struggles intrinsic to organizing festive time. The paper ends with highlighting the crucial importance played out by commemorations, ceremonies, and festivities by which social time is politically structured and ritually punctuated in legitimizing political power.

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Keywords

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Coronating the king, crowning the nation: The making of the Romanian Kingdom

Looking retrospectively at the Romanian history during the second half of the long nineteenth century, the scene that emerges in vibrant colors is that of a nation-state, engaged in the process of its self-making. Driven by its dynamic elites, the Romanian people, politically scattered under different sovereignties, were struggling to cast themselves into the standard institutional frames of national statehood. The cornerstone for building the nation-state has been laid in 1859 with the unification of the Danubian principalities (Moldova and Wallachia) under the ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, who soon unleashed a wave of structural reforms meant to modernize Romanian society (Hitchins 1996 offers the best historical vista of Romanian space between 1774 and 1866). For the purposes of this paper, the most consequential of these tidal reforms turned out to be that instituting the mandatory nature and universal scope of free public primary education issued in 1864. Impelled by this legislative shift, a public schooling system started to take shape, expanding the loosely tight and chronically underfinanced network of state school units that were operating since the 1830s. Within this state-sponsored public schooling system, a historical master narrative of the Romanian nation started to be told through the schoolbooks. Seen as didactic devices designed to accomplish more than just basic literacy skills, schoolbooks can be read as political tools of fashioning the past according to the regime's ideological agenda and of socializing youth into accepting the status quo. As such, schoolbooks were the prime ideological vectors of the Romanian national memory into which every child was getting socialized in his or her way of becoming a national subject and acquiring a national self. At the time of the unification of the Danubian principalities, the Romanian historical *grand récit* was already structured around a set of "narrative essentials," responsible for organizing the past into a coherent story that could justify Romanians' political bid for nationhood, provide historical alibis for their inferiority complex, confer them reasons to be proud of who they were, and set them apart from their national neighbors. These narrative essentials interlacing to form the Romanian master story were a) the Latin origin of the Romanian people giving them the nobleness of Roman ancestry, b) the unbroken historical continuity in the Carpathian space conferring them temporal priority over their latecomer ethnic neighbors, c) the organic unity of the Romanian people despite their political separation under various rules, d) the perpetual struggle for independence in their quest for emancipation and national self-assertion, and e) the Eastern Orthodox faith as their defining spirituality (Boia 2001; Rusu 2014). By the end of Cuza's short-lived reign, which was brought down on the 11th of February 1866 by what remained in the Romanian political memory as the "monstrous coalition" made up of otherwise arch rivals – liberals and conservatives –,

these five elements came to be at the core of Romanian national identity and historical memory. The young nation-state's master story was being ritually played out each year on the 24th of January when Moldo-Wallachian Romanians were celebrating the day of their unification of 1859.

In order to put an end to the incessant power struggles and internal strife between Romanian political elites, as each boyar family was claiming the throne for one of its own, an agreement was reached as soon as the Ad hoc Divans of 1857 to bring to the throne a foreign prince belonging to a European dynastic powerhouse. Cuza was seen as no more than a timely contingency, a provisional ruler to step down as soon as he accomplished his mission, that of bridging the two principalities. The ultimate, definitive, unifier was to be a royal figure, who could politically and symbolically crown the nation and bind it forever together under a perpetually dynastic principle. If Cuza was granted a provisional status, the providential figure was to be Karl Eitel Friedrich Zephyrinus Ludwig von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, elected in 1866 as Ruling Prince Carol I. He was to hold the longest reign in Romanian history – 48 years, from 1866 to 1914 – and to be the fountainhead of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty ruling the Kingdom of Romania until the 30th of December 1947.

Carol's reign as well as the royal dynasty he founded came to be indissociable from the symbolic date of 10th of May, celebrated as the National Day as well as the Day of the King. This date would become both the pivotal center of the national calendar and the focal point around which an entire political royal liturgy grew out. As Romanians under Carol's reign were achieving success after success in their struggle for national consolidation, political emancipation and nation-state building, the 10th of May has successively been granted extra layers of meaning. By 1882, the day came to be celebrated for a triple meaning, all of them intrinsically related to Carol. The 10th of May 1866 was the day Karl pledged his allegiance in front of the Parliament to become Carol, the Ruling Prince (*Domnitor*) of the Romanian United Principalities (the name will change to "Romania" only after it will be consecrated as such by the Constitution of 1866). On top of this basic layer of historical meaning, two other celebrative dimensions have been consequently added. According to the official history, 10th of May 1877 was also the day when Carol promulgated Romania's declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire to which until that time the country continued to be a vassal state. The independence solemnly proclaimed in 1877 was conquered on the battlefield a year later, in 1878, and was internationally recognized by the Treaty of Berlin later that year. On the 10th of May 1881, the Royal Highness (*Altețǎ regalǎ* – a title he held after 1878) was crowned as King Carol I on a grandiose Coronation ceremony, after the Parliament had proclaimed the Kingdom earlier on the 14th of March. From a perspective grounded in political symbolism, it was not only Carol's head that got crowned that day in May 1881. As the human personification of the nation, Carol's royal proclamation was tantamount with crowning the nation. Both of the King's two bodies – his natural body and his body politic, i.e., the nation made up of the monarch's subjects – received the crown of kingship (Kantorowicz 1957).

What seemed to be a fortunate triptych of events all falling conveniently on the 10th of May – 1866, 1877, 1881 – the Enthronement, the Independence, the Coronation – led to a series of major consequences for the Romanian national identity and historical memory. Immediately after he became Ruling Prince in 1866, the 10th of May has been established as the National Day, commemorating his arrival in Bucharest to take the pledge before the Parliament. It replaced the 24th of January, commemorating the Unification of the principalities under Cuza (which was the closest something can get to being the national day, without being officially recognized as such, from 1860 to 1866), with the celebration of an entirely royal symbol. Before the adoption of the *Law of Holidays and Sunday Rest* in 1897, there was no specific law stipulating the legal holidays. They were established by proxy, through laws organizing the calendar of the juridical system. It was through these laws regulating the legal year and the judicial vacations that the legal holidays were being determined. For instance, the first of these legislative act, the *Law for the Founding of the Court of Cassation and Justice* of 1861, ironically promulgated on the 24th of January, did not mention any legal or national holidays. Adopted four years later, the *Law for the judicial organization* from the 4th of July 1865 introduced the term “National holidays” (*serbători Naționale*) (art. 158), but left them unspecified (the taken for granted “national holiday” was, of course, the 24th of January). However, despite lacking *de jure* status, the 24th of January was celebrated as the *de facto* National holiday (*sărbătoare Naționale*) of the United Principalities, solemnized with a festive program all across the country (O.M. No. 10/14th of January 1861; O.M. No. 20/26th January 1861). Besides religious holidays, another political holiday celebrated with public festivities during Cuza’s reign was the 30th of August (Saints Alexander, John, and Paul), the double onomastics of the Ruling Prince (O.M. No. 183/19th of August 1861). Both of these were celebrated in an aural climate of jingling bells and rifle bursts, as the end of *Te Deum* was saluted with 101 cannon shots. It was the *Law of Courts and Tribunals’ Vacations* from 1886 that finally set the calendrical record straight by specifying fourteen religious days as legal holidays and the National Holiday celebrated on the 10th of May.

During Carol’s reign, 24th of January stopped being celebrated at all, as it was too inextricably linked with the image of Cuza in Romanian’s collective memory. As such, it was deleted from the festive calendar in order to make room for a thoroughly royal liturgy celebrating the *topos* of dynastic monarchy. Along with this *calendrical decentering* shifting, the celebrative focus from a semantics of national unity towards a semantics of royalty, a major reconfiguration of the entire Romanian identity and historical memory around the royal axis had occurred. This royal remaking can be clearly observed in every dimension of Romanian identity, from history schoolbooks (where Carol’s portraits along with an elaborate royal heraldry started from the 1880s to be intensively promoted) to philatelic emissions, coins, and medals (Tănăsoiu 1991). Besides these metallic and celluloid currency in which the new royal dimension of national identity was being widely diffused in the social body, Carol I also made use of pictorial and sculptural renditions of himself, as personal embodiment of the royal principle, depicted in paintings, portraits, and statues, to display the new monarchic status of the Romanian nationhood.

Soon after Carol I assumed power, a *commemorative grammar* was articulated to celebrate the kingship and its royal figure. However, this semiotic grammar of staging the past was conjugated predominantly in the ritual tense. If Carol I did excel in establishing a celebrative program of commemorative rituals, he was less inclined to materialize his reign in monumental symbols of power. A material order of memory made out of statues, memorials, and other commemorative monuments started to be built during Carol I's reign, aiming at connecting the kingdom with the heroic tradition of glorious past. However, Maria Bucur (2009) has made the point that these efforts of displaying a memory cast in iron and stone "were never part of a concerted, massive memorializing campaign by the king or central government" (p. 26). Only some twenty of about sixty monuments erected during his rule made reference to events associated with Carol I (ibidem). The largest monumental projects in Bucharest were the equestrian statue of the medieval ruler Michael the Brave unveiled in 1874 and that of the intellectual Ion Heliade Rădulescu, completed in 1880. Arguably, Romanian kingdom experienced no "monument mania" during Carol I's reign, whereas the Habsburg territories seemed to have been seized by a monumental frenzy (Bucur 2009: 27).

Staging the past, performing the present: Celebrating the royal liturgy

Scholars specialized in sociology of time have called into question the Kantian theory of time as an a priori category, according to which time, together with space and causation, are *datums* of the human mind (Bergmann 1992; Schmaus 2004, especially chapter 1, "Durkheim and the Social Character of the Categories," pp. 1-26). In Kant's transcendental idealist epistemology, expounded in his monumental *Critique of Pure Reason* (1998) [1781], the three categories of time, space, and causation are conceptual pre-requisite of the human mind, the structural building blocks of understanding essential for the mind to experience and make sense of the world. Starting with É. Durkheim (1995: 441) [1912], M. Mauss (Durkheim and Mauss 2010: 42-32) [1903] and M. Halbwachs (1980, especially chapter 3, "Time and the Collective Memory," pp. 88-127) [1950], sociologists have made it abundantly clear that time is socially constructed, organized, and controlled in order to regulate social life and, thereby, individual behavior. The calendar is a timely tool to structure social time into a predictable and recursive pattern made to synchronize social actions, coordinate behaviors, and govern social life. Constructing a stable temporal order, the calendar provides the structural framework within which time is socially organized. Calendars also lay out the temporal frame of reference into which religious, economic, cultural, and political activities to unfold. Modernity has not only made a bid to tame time by standardizing it in order to increase economic production and to facilitate commercial exchanges but also wrought time into political submission. Before the "nationalization of the masses" could take place through mandatory public schooling, military conscription, and mass participation in public processions and festivals (Mosse 1975), time itself had to be nationalized first. Nation-states have nationalized time by framing time into political calendars, whereby they have sacralized their own past in a

schedule of solemn commemorations similar to how the Church has sacralized its own history of martyrdom in the religious calendar.

National days lay at the core of the political calendar. Given their rhythmic recurrence, national days “give the nation a heartbeat – a calendrical rhythm of self-awareness and pride” (Salmond 2009: xiii). They are powerful “commemorative devices in time and space” meant to shape and define collective identity (McCrane and McPherson 2009: 1, emphasis added). Reviving historical time in specific spatial settings (i.e., topographical frames of memory, as M. Halbwachs [1992a] called them, or *lieux de mémoire*, to use P. Nora’s [1989] much discussed term) over and over again with annual regularity, national days are thus *chronotopic vectors of memory* charged with identity-defining powers. Taking up the organismic analogy one step further, the parallel can be extended by highlighting that just as the cardiogram reveals the heart rhythm, the *commemogram* pulsating with each national day celebration displays the commemorative rhythm structuring a society’s festive life (Zerubavel 2004: 31). The heartbeat metaphor is a timely trope not only for expressing the rhythmicity of annual celebrations, but also for rendering the emotionality intrinsic to such collective ceremonies. Celebrating the nation throws the entire community into a Durkheimian state of “collective effervescence” (Durkheim 1995: 228) [1912]. Despite their ebullient nature, these celebrations are not at all events disrupting social order, since they are ritually programmed in advance and carried out by state authorities precisely in order to bolster the status quo. They are essential parts of mass political liturgies ritually enacted by staging the past for the political purpose of performing the present. What they disrupt, instead, is the everyday normality of profane time, thrusting society into the extraordinariness of sacred time.

In considering the making of the Romanian political nation-state, a modernizing project which became indissociable from the institutionalization of dynastic monarchy, the classic Weberian tripartite scheme of legitimate domination can turn out to be a valuable analytical device (Weber 1978: 212-301). Seen through these conceptual lenses polished by M. Weber’s sociological thinking, the overthrowing of Cuza’s personal authoritarian reign in February 1866 and the casting of Romanian political culture within the institutional frameworks defined by a regime of constitutional monarchy centered on Carol I appears as an organized attempt to ground Romanian politics and society on a rational legal foundation. Enthroning Carol I and adopting the Constitution of 1866 clearly reveals the political elite’s commitment to reshape Romanian society and the country’s political culture according to the Western model of legal-rational authority. E. Binderlijima (1994) was surely right in highlighting that the modernizing program pursued by Romanian political elites in bringing a Prussian Prince to the throne and adopting a Belgian-like Constitution could not be legitimized solely on rational-legal bases. In transforming a traditional society obedient to local customary law into a modern constitutional order, legal-rational justifications were not enough. The modernizing program had to be framed in the traditional symbolics of power. Departing in a fundamental way from Weber’s ideal type, the Romanian constitutional monarchy set the stage for a legal-rational order which was only partially defined by its impersonal formal rules and bureaucratic procedures. Essentially, it was a constitutional regime framed in a

legal rational pattern of authority, but nonetheless paradoxically *personalized* in its monarchic figure. But Carol himself, the human embodiment of the constitutional monarchy, was the perfect definition of the “complete stranger.” Despite being politically prized for his belonging to the Hohenzollern powerhouse, he was not speaking the language of his people, he was not knowing their ways, and, as a consequence, he was not sharing their mindset. On top of that, his uncharismatic Teutonic personality, shaped by the Prussian culture of military rigor, added the final touch to consecrate his unpopular image as a foreign prince alien of the Romanian spirit. It was against these formidable setbacks and his lacking of legitimacy vigorously challenged by a radical anti-dynastic movement that was gaining momentum in the first part of his long reign that the need for symbolic and rituals was made painfully obvious. That implementing the dynastic idea in Romanian society, deprived as it was of any “dynastic sentiment” (Măiorescu 1994: 16), was not a smooth operation became abundantly clear in 1871. Four years after his enthronement, harassed daily in the press by an ever-increasing immodest anti-dynastic movement and facing a strong popular antipathy towards his Germanic roots in the context of the Franco-Prussian War, Carol seriously considered to abdicate the throne.² He eventually resisted the temptation and reconsidered his position, but the abdication attempt of 1871 fully reveals how fragile were the foundations of the regime, which found itself, along with the entire national project to build a monarchic order, on the brink of disaster. As the legal rational underpinnings were insufficient as a legitimacy basis for the new political regime established in 1866, the constitutional monarchy buttressed itself in well-proven means of legitimation. Imperatively urgent was the need of developing “invented traditions” celebrated in festive rites of power as means to legitimize the rational legal ruling through the power of the past (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). This was accomplished, first, through a feat of historical hermeneutics, by portraying Carol I as continuing the long gallery of Romanian medieval rulers who led the fight for emancipation, unification, and independence. Secondly, his legitimacy was bolstered by constructing a political liturgy wrapped around Carol’s figure officiated annually on the 10th of May and on other festive occasions. Together with these historical hermeneutics and royal liturgy came a third means, that of creating a “cult of personality” to be celebrated within the national feasts. Along Weberian lines, a cult of personality can be read sociologically as an attempt pursued most often by an authoritarian regime designed to confer artificial charisma to the regime’s leader so as to strengthen his legitimation and dominance on charismatic grounds. Seen in the light on Weber’s notion of “charismatic authority,” the personality cult could be interpreted as the state-sponsored cultural program mobilizing the entire propaganda apparatus for the purpose of symbolically dressing the leader with the halo of charisma in order to consolidate his political legitimacy. While genuine charisma is an intrinsic quality of a

² A feel of the viciousness of the anti-dynastic press can be get by reading the collection of newspaper articles gathered during the Socialist regime in the anthology *Monarhia de Hohenzollern văzută de contemporani* [The Hohenzollern Monarchy in the Eyes of Contemporaries] edited by the Institute of Historical and Socio-Political Studies attached to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (1968).

person, the cult of personality can be seen as an effort of endowing the leader with charismatic attributes. We are dealing thus with an external type of *artificial charisma*, as opposed to the intrinsic spring of the true charismatic personality, whose sources lie in the means of propaganda and not in the inner qualities of the charismatic subject. To bolster his dominium, Carol I, who had a structurally uncharismatic personality, was the subject of an intense cult of personality diffused on every channel of official communication. Besides the official rites of power display occasioned by the national festivities and ceremonials, the most important means of constructing a royal cult was the institutional medium of public schooling. Starting with the 1880s, history schoolbooks had become the textual building blocks and visual vectors of Carol's personality cult (Tocilescu 1889; Xenopol 1890), while from 1897 onwards, the 10th of May (the day symbolically encapsulating the principle of dynastic monarchy) was decreed as "school festivity" to be celebrated in every school throughout the country.³ In these intricate ways, tradition and charisma – the other two conventional sources of legitimacy – could be put in the service of cementing what was aspiring to become a constitutional monarchy resting on legal rational authority.

Through a series of military and political successes that paved the way to the establishment of the Romanian Kingdom, Carol had finally managed to secure a ground of legitimacy. Victory in the War of Independence (1878) followed by the proclamation of the Kingdom (1881) had empowered Carol to turn the odds in his favor and to dispel the shadow of unpopularity looming over his reign. They also set the ground for the elaboration of a *royal political liturgy* celebrating the cult of royal political sacrality as well as sacralizing the royal power. The rites of power and sacred celebrations of authority enacted within this royal liturgy were conducted according to a commemorative calendar whose temporal pillar was grounded in the 10th of May. At the fin-du-siècle, the festive calendar of the Romanian Kingdom was comprising, besides the conventional religious holidays such as Christmas, Easter, The Epiphany (*Boboteaza*, on the 6th of January), Pentecost (*Rusalii*), and various Saints' days celebrated by the Romanian Orthodox Church, a dozen other commemorative events, all of them directly or indirectly related to Carol I and his royal family. The notion "royal political liturgy" has a conspicuous religious connotation. But the term is more than a simple metaphor employed as an aesthetically pleasing poetic device to render political commemorations in plastic terms. A blending of politics, the military, and religion was a defining feature of the Romanian public ceremonial. All political holidays celebrated in the festive calendar were solemnized through a Te Deum or Divine Service officiated by the Orthodox Church. *The Book of Te Deums* of 1879, approved by Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church to serve at various occasions of social life, includes a "Te Deum for the National Holidays, such as: the Ruler's Name Day *et cetera*" (pp. 56-71) to be officiated after the Divine Liturgy. This royal

³ It was the Minister of Public Instruction Spuru C. Haret (1903, Appendices, pp. 244-247) who issued, in "the circular letter from the 22nd of April 1897 addressed to all secondary and special schools of both sexes and to the Universities," that the 10th of May is to be celebrated with conferences, patriotic songs and hymns, and pilgrimages to sites of national memory. Based on Haret's circular, the 10th of May was later instituted as school festivity by the Royal Decree of the 29th of May 1897.

liturgy was reaching its apex each year on the 10th of May when the political-military-religious complex was performing its impressive rite of power. Conversely, just as priests were sacralizing the politics, the army was militarizing religion. Purely religious feasts such as the Epiphany celebrated on the 6th of January were solemnized through military parades. Religion sacralized politics, just as politics empowered religion, within a ceremonial culture *clerical political militarism*.

Table 1. The festive calendar during the first part of Carol's reign, 1866-1897

The day	The day's meaning	Status ⁴
11 th of February ⁵	The Revolution of 1886 which led to the formation of a dynasty in Romania	National holiday
14 th of March ⁶	The Proclamation of the Kingdom in 1881	National holiday
8 th of April	The King's Birthday (1839) and the Proclamation of the Referendum for his election (1866)	National holiday
24 th of April	Queen Elisabeta's Name Day	National holiday
1 st of May	The Election of Carol as Ruling Prince (1866)	National holiday
8 th of May	The Arrival of Carol in the Principalities (1866)	National holiday
10 th of May	The Enthronement (1866), the Proclamation of Independence (1877), the Coronation (1881)	Legal and national holiday
11 th of June	The Revolution of 1848	National holiday
30 th of June	The Proclamation of the Constitution (1866)	National holiday
17 th of December	Queen Elisabeth's Birthday (1843)	National holiday
11 th of September	The Taking of Grivița (1877)	Historical commemoration
10 th of December	The Taking of Plevna (1877)	Historical commemoration

In calendrical order, the holidays celebrated during Carol's festive calendar are presented in Table 1 above. In lack of a specific law designating by the force of official authority the legal and national holidays, in reconstructing the commemorative calendar for the first part of Carol's reign until 1897, I resorted to a variety of sources, ranging from a) laws for organizing the system of justice, b) calendars and c) newspapers published during this period, to d) Carol's speeches and addresses collected in two volumes

⁴ A distinction is made between a) "legal holidays" (which until the *Law of Sunday Rest* of 1897, with the exception of 10th of May, were all restricted to a number of over two dozen religious holidays on which working was suspended. Since this study is focused upon political holidays and the civil calendar of festive days, these religious/legal holidays were not included in the festive calendar), b) "national holidays" (divided into two categories: *anniversaries of historic events* such as the Enthronement, the Declaration of Independence, and the Coronation celebrated on the 10th of May and *anniversaries of the royal family*, either birthdays or name days), and c) "historical commemorations" (which were not enjoying the prized status of national holiday, but were nonetheless celebrated by the King and the public officialdom, such was the case of the anniversaries of the Taking of Grivița and Plevna in the Romanian War of Independence of 1877. All of these holidays were celebrated with a Te Deum within a religious liturgy, most of them followed by military parades and public speeches).

⁵ By 1894, according to *Calendarul ziarului Universal*, the 11th of February it is not celebrated anymore.

⁶ By 1894, according to the same source, the 14th of March ceased to be celebrated as national holiday.

(Giurescu 1939) and e) Carol's own journal and daily notes (Carol I of Romania 2007; 2014). Combining and corroborating information scattered all across these various sources, I was able to reconstitute the following festive political calendar for the period stretching from 1860 to 1897.

With its triple strata of historical meanings, the 10th of May stood at the very center of this royal political liturgy. The former national day, the 24th of January, ceased to be celebrated as not to impinge upon the royal nature of the festive calendar. During Cuza's short but intense and transformative reign, the 24th of January was annually celebrated, without having the formal status of the "national day." After Carol's enthronement in 1866, the day of the unification of the Danubian Principalities was set aside from the celebrative calendar. Shrouded as it was in a semantics of national unification around the messianic figure of Cuza, the 24th of January stood in the way of constructing a new dynastic monarchy centered on Carol. Worth mentioning as an emphatic expression of this calendrical shifting of symbolic importance from the 24th of January to the 10th of May is an episode occurred in the Assembly of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament. In the meeting held on the 24th of January 1867, the liberal Cezar Bolliac protested against the fact that, for the first time after 1859, the day of the unification was not being officially observed by state authorities, which deliberately failed to organize public festivities. His bitter plea was responded by the President of the Council of Ministers, Ion Ghica, with an argument from the realpolitik of commemoration: "the 24th of January," he argued, "was a day when the national will was only temporarily accomplished, while the day the wish of the nation realized eternally, and will eternally last as long as this nation will last, this day is the 1st of May" – sic! – (when Carol I was elected as Ruling Prince by the Parliament) (Official Monitor No. 22/27th of January 1867: 144, thereafter O.M.). The debates concluded with the proposal to writing a bill stipulating the national holidays, which was soon after all but forgotten and thus allowed the 24th of January to sink into public oblivion. Carol himself was highly reluctant to revive the memory of the 24th of January in the Romanian collective consciousness. Although he was eager to capitalize upon every commemorative occasion in order to strengthen his integration into the Romanian master narrative, Carol systematically avoided giving speeches on the 24th of January. Only once, occasioned by the Jubilee marking 50 years from the Unification of the Principalities, celebrated in 1909, did Carol speak at this event, without mentioning once the name of Cuza (Giurescu 1939, II: 400-402). His daily journal also reveals a complete absence of any consideration for the day in question (Carol I 2007). It was only at the turn of the century, long after Carol's reign overpassed the critical stage facing a lack of legitimacy, that the 24th of January was re-inserted in the festive calendar of national commemorations. The *Law of Sunday Rest* passed on the 6th of March 1897 reclaimed the 24th of January from public oblivion by establishing it as a legal holiday along with the 10th of May and other twelve religious days. The *Law on Sunday Rest* of 14th of April 1910, abrogating the 1897 law on the same topic, confirmed the 24th of January as a legal holiday and national feast. It was during this period that Carol started to make reference to Cuza in his public speeches, first on 10th of October 1911 on the 50 years Jubilee of the University of Jassy founded by Cuza 1860, and then, a

year later, in a public address given on 8th of June on the unveiling of Cuza's statue in Jassy (Giurescu 1939, II: 438-440, 453-454). In addition to the consolidation of the dynastic monarchy, which made Carol secure enough to change his attitude towards the 24th of January – long seen through royal eyes as a kind of anti-dynastic counter-National Day to the 10th of May – another reason for the reintroduction of the 24th of January in the national calendar must have been the growing tide of nationalist feelings hoping for a Greater Romania. For the Romanian nationalistic irredentism, the unification of the Danubian principalities of 1859 was seen as a precedent that could be patterned in the future. By the turn of the century, the 24th of January had become a symbol for all those who imagined a Romanian nation-state comprising all territories populated by Romanian ethnics (especially Transylvania and Bukovina from the Dual Monarchy, without losing hope for the reincorporation of Bessarabia from the Russian Empire as well). Moreover, Cuza was long dead by now, passing away in exile in 1873, therefore posing no institutional threat to the monarchy and personal danger to Carol himself.

Conceived of as symbolic fulcrums for the 10th of May, all the other festive days were either birthdays of the royal couple or were commemorating victorious battles from the War of Independence of 1877-1878 in which Carol led the Romanian army to triumph. Although obviously associated with the monarchic order, the 14th of March was the only problematic date in this royal festive calendar, precisely because it was casting doubt on the natural triple coincidence of the 10th of May. Indeed, on the 14th of March 1881, the Romanian Parliament adopted with unanimity the bill proclaiming “His Royal Highness Prince Carol I as King of Romania” (O.M. no. 60/15th of March 1881; Scurtu 2004: 122). On the same day Carol promulgated the law, giving *de jure* status to the Romanian Kingdom. But since this felicitous event overlapped with the funerals of Tsar Alexander II (who died on the 13th of March), Carol found it convenient to delay the Coronation so as to coincide with the National Day celebrated since 1867 on the 10th of May. No doubt, as shown by the entry he made in his journal on the date in question, Carol was frustrated by the deputies' rush to proclaimed the independence prematurely (it is rather safe to assume that he made plans for scheduling it on the 10th of May, for obvious reasons). This is what Carol noted down in his journal on the 14th of March: “At half past eleven in the morning all ministers came to me to declare that nothing can be made to stop the Parliament Chambers from declaring the Kingdom. Yesterday's session, in which the opposition attacked viciously the government, infuriated the majority in such a way that they are not willing to wait for no extra day. I had only a single reservation, that Emperor Alexander was not yet buried” (Carol I 2007: 57). We can safely presume that he had more than one reservation, one concerning the calendrical (in)opportunity of the proclamation. But he played the card of the Tsar's funerals, managing to stage the Coronation on the Jubilee of the 15th anniversary of his Enthronement on the 10th of May 1866. The 14th of March continued to be celebrated as the day of the Proclamation of the Kingdom, but Carol did his best to downgrade its status within the nation's ceremonial order. For instance, it was not uncommon for Carol to leave the country during the celebrations of the 14th of March. By not being physically present for the festivities, it was possible to minimize its

importance in the festive calendar of the Romanian Kingdom, and so to concentrate all of the celebrative weight on the 10th of May.

Matching the Coronation with the National Day was a brilliant move from Carol's part in the politics of commemorative time. Besides highlighting his calendrical intelligence, it also unraveled the depth of his concern for building a strong symbolic legitimacy for his monarchic order. This symbolic maneuvering in the politics of commemoration was not his sole act of mnemonic entrepreneurship. Four years earlier, in 1877, it was the Romanian Parliament which issued the Declaration of Independence from the Ottoman Empire, on the 9th of May. In an extraordinary session held after the hostilities between the Romanian forces and the Ottoman army commenced in the context of the Russo-Turkish War, the radical wing of the liberals addressed an interpellation to the Government concerning the relationship between Romanians and the Ottomans. Mihail Kogălniceanu, the minister of external affairs, responded by saying "We are independent; we are a freestanding nation." Following a round of debates, a motion was voted by both chambers of the Parliament taking official note of "the absolute independence of Romania" (O.M. no. 118/27th of May 1877; Scurtu 2004: 100-101). Perhaps of little importance in terms of political history, but highly relevant in the light of the politics of history and festive time, is the juridical details that the motions did not require any promulgation from Carol's part. They come into force from the moment they were voted, i.e., the 9th of May 1877. Carol himself, prior to the Coronation of 1881 programmed so as to consecrate the 10th of May as a triple celebration of the monarchic principle, fully acknowledged that it was on the 9th of May that the Independence was declared, and that it was the Parliament which was the sole protagonist of the whole political affair. In an address to the senators on the 15th of June 1877, for instance, Carol praises them for the fact that "on the day of the 9th of May, you have proclaimed the complete independence of Romania" (Giurescu 1939 I: 254). But all this factual calendrical reality linking the Declaration with the Parliament, not with the Ruling Prince, and to the 9th of May, not to the 10th, did not prevent the Romanian power elite – King and politicians – to distort the historical truth by celebrating the Independence on the 10th of May. It is only through a double feat of calendrical displacements that the 10th of May achieved a triple royal significance. Firstly, in chronological order, by deliberately misremembering the Declaration of Independence as being promulgated by the King in the 10th of May. And secondly, by strategically delaying the Coronation and the festivities associated with the Proclamation of the Kingdom which occurred on the 14th of March so as to match the National Day on the 10th of May. These symbolic maneuverings in the calendrical dates and festive time pursuing a political agenda can be called as *chronotropic practices*. By "chronotropy" (*chronos* meaning time, *tropic* referring to something producing a sudden turn, such as in "psychotropic" substances altering the state of consciousness) I refer to any action of changing calendrical dates so as to associate them with other events to which they do not factually correspond.

Merging different and factually unrelated events in a single calendrical date, the monarchic regime was building up a new temporal order of festive time pillared upon the 10th of May, celebrating both the National Day and the King's Day. This was to symbolize

the fusion of the nation and the kingship into an inseparable political entity. It was also meant to highlight a double incorporation: the absorption of the King into the body of the Nation and in the same time the embodiment of the Nation into the Kingship. The political stakes of this symbolic fusion were at their highest, given that the legitimacy of the new monarchic regime was, at some critical point in time, hanging on a hairspring. It was by *staging temporal coincidence* that Carol was able to lay the main pilaster supporting an entire festive order pivoting on the 10th of May. By “staging temporal coincidence” I refer to the strategic placement of events so as to fit in the same day in the festive calendar. It can be made either *prospectively*, by scheduling them to occur on a certain date in the future, as it was the case with the Coronation of 1881, or *retrospectively*, by commemorating historical events in celebrative programs as if they happened on the same date, as it was the case with the Declaration of Independence whose celebration shifted from the 9th to the 10th of May for political purposes and festive reasons. As it turned out, this was a most powerful means of *patterning festive time* with highly consequential political outcomes.

During his late reign, delineated here conventionally by the year of 1897, when the *Law of Sunday Rest* stipulating the legal holidays was adopted, the festive calendar underwent a transformative refurbishment. Some national holidays were dropped off from the political calendar while others made their way into it. Most important in the symbolic economy of these calendrical maneuverings was the re-insertion of 24th of January as a legal and national holiday. Similarly relevant was the elimination of the 14th of March, the day of the Proclamation of the Kingdom in 1881 by the Parliament, by which the entire focus of the idea of dynastic monarchy, previously split between the 14th of March (the Proclamation) and the 10th of May (the Coronation), could be now concentrated on a single day, the 10th of May. Another calendrical dismissal from the festive agenda, just as important, was the 11th of February, the day of Cuza’s abdication, celebrated during Carol’s reign as “the Revolution of 1866 which led to the formation of a dynasty in Romania” (*Calendarul ziarului „Universul”* 1886: 18; *Almanahul „Românului” pe anul 1892*: 19). Commemorating the coup d’état of the 11th of February as a stepping stone in the institution of dynastic monarchy had served its purpose during the first part of Carol’s reign, when the regime was still in its infancy and needed every crutch for fortifying the new political order. When the monarchy acquired sufficient legitimacy, especially after the Proclamation of the Kingdom in 1881, the 11th of February could be disposed of as an annoying reminder of the former regime. This calendrical reformation opens up revelatory insights into the pragmatic utility of ceremonial time in general and of festive days in particular, as national celebrations are added or discarded strictly in terms of their political usefulness to the current interests of the regime. When they become obsolete, such as was the case of the 11th of February after the consolidation of Carol’s monarchic reign, national celebrations are simply removed from the festive agenda. Or, as was the case with the 14th of March, if they stay in the way of concentrating symbolic meaning into a single, supremely powerful, “National Day,” they are discretely edged out to the margins, and then pushed outside of the political calendar.

The 1st of May deserves some special considerations. During Carol's early reign, it was solemnized as part of a grand *celebrative sequence*, starting with the Prince's election on the 1st of May, passing through the Prince's arrival on Romanian soils on the 8th of May and culminating with Carol's Enthronement on the 10th of May 1866. But even after the 1st of May had been already established as the International Worker's Day by the Second International in 1889, during Carol's late reign, it continued to be celebrated as the day Carol was elected Ruling Prince by the Romanian Parliament. This stark reluctance to give up a piece of the royal celebrative sequence was meant to prevent the day taking on Socialist meanings and by this to threaten the entire royal symbolic regime. The introduction of the 24th of January already challenged the royal symbolic monopoly over the festive calendar. Making other concessions, this time to the embryonic socialist movement, would have further undermined the royalist grip on festive time. Until the 1920s, the 1st of May remained a holiday subordinated within the royal political. As a temporal site of power struggles over political meaning, the 1st of May powerfully reveals the logic of *calendrical struggles*, which continued long after Carol's death, gaining a new dynamic especially in the aftermath of the Second World War, when the Communist regime reclaimed the 1st of May as the Socialist, International Day of Labor.

Table 2. The festive calendar during the second part of Carol's reign, 1897-1914

The day	The day's meaning	Status⁷
24 th of January	The Unification of the Danubian Principalities in 1859	Legal and national holiday
8 th of April	The King's Birthday (1839) and the Proclamation of the Referendum for his election (1866)	National holiday
24 th of April	Queen Elisabeta's Name Day	National holiday
1 st of May	The election of Carol as Ruling Prince	National holiday
8 th of May	The arrival of Carol in the Principalities (1866)	National holiday
10 th of May	The Enthronement (1866), the Proclamation of Independence (1877), the Coronation (1881)	Legal and national holiday
17 th of December	Queen Elisabeta's Birthday (1843)	National holiday
11 th of September	The Taking of Grivița (1877)	Historical commemoration
10 th of December	The Taking of Plevna (1877)	Historical commemoration

The old King's death on the 10th of October 1914 came as a political blessing for the Romanian people, seized by the ardent desire to enter the Great War with the Entente in

⁷ The *Law of Sunday Rest* adopted in 1897 declared the 24th of January as "legal holiday," which along with the 10th of May were the only days enjoying the status of simultaneously being legal and national holidays. Nonetheless, the 10th of May – "the King's Day" with its already consecrated triple meaning – remained the "National Day," the most important celebration in the Romanian Kingdom's festive calendar. The *Law of Sunday Rest* (1897) also restricted the religious days enjoying the status of legal holidays from over two dozens to fourteen, to which it added all Sundays as mandatory days of rest. The *Law on Sunday Rest* passed in 1910 kept the two political holidays (10th of May and 24th of January) as "legal holidays," further reducing the religious days enjoying this legal status to nine.

order to free their Transylvanian brothers from under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Carol wished for Romania to join forces with the Central Powers, to which he signed an alliance, but, confronted with his ministers' unwillingness to back him up, and fully aware of the popular support of the Triple Entente, he agreed with Romania's neutrality. His death freed the way for Romania to join the war on the Entente's side, which eventually led to the creation of the Greater Romania at the end of the conflict. The new king, Ferdinand I, Carol's nephew, who proved his loyalty to the Romanian nation instead of to his German family, gained the nickname "the Loyal" and was crowned on the 15th of October 1922 at Alba Iulia as the King of Greater Romania.⁸ The succession of royal rule did affect the makeup of the old commemorative framework established in the late period of Carol's reign. The changes brought about by the new *Law of Sunday Rest and Legal Holidays* adopted on the 18th of June 1925 preserved untouched the royal core of the venerable festive calendar established during Carol's reign embedded in the 10th of May, which remained the National Day all the way through the abolishment of the dynastic monarchy on the 30th of December 1947. As expected, major changes occurred at the level of *festive personalism*, i.e., the days personally associated with Carol I and Queen Elisabeta (birthdays, name days, political deeds) were superseded by similar dates linked to Ferdinand I. Such was the case with the 11th of October celebrating The Proclamation as King of Ferdinand I as national holiday. The 1st of May was now being celebrated as Labor Day, losing its meaning associated with Carol's election as Ruling Prince in 1866. Perhaps the declaration of the 1st of May as Labor Day in 1925 was not unrelated to the fact that a year earlier, in 1924, the Communist Party of Romania was outlawed, making the authorities more certain that they can control the workers celebrating on this day. It was only after a process of *political sanitization* has been carried out that the 1st of May could be celebrated as a public holiday, but for the social value of work and not for the political values conveyed by the workers' socialist movement. Politically sanitized of its revolutionary callings to radically transform Romanian society into a socialist order, the ethos of hard work and diligence could be celebrated publically, without the dangers of jeopardizing the traditional monarchical political status quo.

The First World War, which ended with the miracle of the making of Greater Romania, had also left its mark on the structure of Ferdinand's commemorative calendar. In the post-unification period, a second stratum of meaning has been added to the 24th of January. The making of Greater Romanian, made possible by the succession of proclamations of union adopted by the Romanian provinces at different date (Bessarabia on 9th of April, Bukovina on 15th of November, Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș on 1st of December 1918 – all dates rendered in the New Styles, according to

⁸ The coronation ceremony in which Ferdinand and Marie were crowned as King and Queen of Greater Romania served a purely symbolic purpose designed to extend the legitimacy of the kingship over the newly acquired territory of Transylvania. As Maria Bucur (2009) has pointed out, the magnificent ceremony of coronation lacked any legal justification, as the Treaty of Trianon of 1920 already recognized Transylvania as legal part of Romania (pp. 112, 283, fn. 48). However, the royal pair could not miss such an occasion to assert their sovereignty over a formerly Hungarian territory and to re-enact Michael the Brave's entry in the city of Alba Iulia three centuries earlier.

the Gregorian Calendar adopted on 1919) was now being celebrated together with the already traditional Unification Day on the 24th of January, commemorating the 1859 union of the Danubian Principalities. If the 10th of May reveals *the logic of staging calendrical coincidence* (i.e., different events in the course of time occurring in the same day), the 24th of January sheds light on another symbolic strategy of politically constructing festive time that I propose calling *the logic of thematic condensation* (i.e., multiple events occurred at different calendrical dates, but bearing a similar meaning or theme, such as the unification of the Romanian countries, are festively fused together in order for them to be celebrated politically on a single date – in our case, on the 24th of January).

Moreover, the by-now traditional royal core of the national calendar was enriched with the Heroes Day, observed as a moveable feast on the day of the Ascension, as a tribute to the more than half a million casualties who died in the Great War (O.M. no. 24/4th of May 1920: 1142). To honor their sacrifice, in the immediate aftermath of the war, King Ferdinand I established “The Society for the Graves of the Heroes Fallen in the War” under the patronage of Queen Marie. In 1927 the organization changed its name and became “The Society for the Cult of the Heroes” (*Societatea „Cultul Eroilor”*). It underwent another nominal change in 1940, when its name was modified to honor its royal sponsor, becoming “The National Foundation ‘Queen Marie’ for the Cult of Heroes.” From its inception in 1919, Marie had been highly supportive of the society and of its purpose, as she herself had participated actively in the war effort. Her involvement in the medical assistance of war-injured soldiers brought her the name of “The Mother of the Wounded” (Bucur 2000). Marie is credited for being the first public figure to assert, as soon as 1919, the need of establishing a “Heroes Day.” The date was set for the Ascension Day, a movable feast celebrated each year forty days after the Easter. The first proposal, however, made by representatives of the National Orthodox Society of Romanian Women who took part to the Society’s first meeting in December 1919 to discuss possible dates for the holiday, was to organize the ceremony on the second day of Easter (Bucur 2009: 101). It was not to be observed in the wake of the Day of the Resurrection, but the soteriological meanings referring to renewal, rising from the dead, and redemption were nevertheless highly salient on the Day of Ascension. The same interpretive framework, conceiving of heroism along religious lines as martyrdom for the nation, was used to confer meaning to the mass sacrifice of the war dead. The commemorations of the heroes fallen for the country were being held in churches all across the country with divine services, followed by processions at the heroes’ graves. Throughout the country, a mystical political liturgy for the dead, praying for their collective ascension, was being officiated by the priests in the already consecrated milieu of clerical militarism.⁹ The

⁹ Despite Romanian authorities issued a nation-wide mandatory policy of observing the fallen soldiers during the Heroes Day, there were however communities that did not conform to these official instructions. Especially in Transylvania, recently incorporated into the Romanian statehood, ethnic minorities proved reluctant to honor the heroes fallen for the making of Greater Romania. Archival work done in local branches of the National Archives of Romania by Maria Bucur (2009) has revealed the many complaints lodged by local authorities that ethnic minorities (especially Protestant communities of Hungarians and Germans) do not observe the Heroes Day, defying the order sent by the government throughout the

martial political liturgy was being performed against a decorum of guns and crosses, blending smoldering thuribles and firearms, sticharions and uniforms, miters and visor caps. This was all the more vividly salient in Bucharest, where the commemorative center of the Heroes Day was the Monument of the Unknown Soldier inaugurated in 1923 in Carol Park in the presence of the King and the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church themselves (Bălescu 2005).

Table 3. The festive calendar during Ferdinand's reign, 1914-1927

The day	The day's meaning	Status
24 th of January	The Unification of the Romanian Countries (1859 and 1919)	Legal and national holiday
1 st of May	Labor Day (the celebration of labor)	Legal holiday
10 th of May	The Independence of Romania	Legal and national holiday
Moveable feast, usually in May	Heroes Day, celebrated on the day of the Ascension	Legal and national holiday
11 th of October	The Proclamation as King of Ferdinand I (1914)	National holiday

Closely related to the Heroes Day were the commemorations of other heroic military events from the Great War, such as the battles of Mărăști, Mărășești, and Oituz. These celebrations belong to a new class of commemorative days that took shape in the post-war period during Ferdinand's reign, "Great Days of the Romanian Nation" (detailed in Table 4 below). Dominated by military commemorations from the recent past, these great days of the Romanian nation were also comprising the succession of unifications that made Greater Romania, anniversaries of the War of Independence of 1877, the revolutionary activities of 1848, going as deep as celebrating Michael the Brave's battle of Călugăreni of 1595. Although these "great days" were not endowed with official status either as legal or national holidays, they were nonetheless memorial days completing the commemorative calendar of the Greater Romanian Kingdom.

country stipulating that "Heroes Day has to be celebrated down to the most modest village on the entire territory of Romania, with a distinguished, solemn tone. [...] Our instructions are to be followed exactly and by all civilian, military, ecclesiastic, and educational authorities, for which they will be held responsible." Ethnic minorities were reported to central authorities for not displaying the Romanian flag and failing to toll their church bells on the Heroes Day. Moreover, Hungarian and German religious schools were not giving the day off to their students, preventing them from participating to the official ceremonies. Even more troubling for the petitioners was that ethnic groups of non-Orthodox confession observe their own calendar of celebrations, parallel to the national one endorsed by the Romanian state (Bucur 2009, pp. 61, 107).

Table 4. The Great Days of the Romanian Nation celebrated during Ferdinand's reign

The day	The day's meaning
9 th of April	The Unification of Bessarabia with Romania (1918)
15 th of May	The Proclamation of the Great Revolution of Transylvanian Romanians at Blaj (1848)
11 th of June	The Proclamation of the Great Revolution in the Romanian Countries (1848)
24 th of July	The Tacking of Mărăști (1917)
5 th of August	The Occupation of Budapest (1919)
13 th of August	The Battle of Călugăreni (1595)
19 th of August	The Battle of Mărășești (1917)
25 th of August	The Second Great Battle of Oituz (1917)
27 th of August	The Entrance of Romania in the War for the Unification of the Nation (1916)
30 th of August	The Tacking of Grivița (1877)
15 th of October	The Coronation of Their Majesties King and Queen of all Romanians at Alba-Iulia (1922)
25 th of October	The First Great Battle of Oituz (1916)
28 th of November	The Fall of Plevna (1877)
28 th of November	The Unification of Bukovina with Romania (1918)
1 st of December	The Unification of Transylvania with Romania (1918)

In the same time that the commemorative calendar was expanding in both geographical scope and historical depth, it was also consolidating its core monarchic dimension by developing a very elaborate anniversary system of the royal family. The development of a transnational royal kinship system, connecting the Romanian royal family to other southeastern European monarchic families (Yugoslavia and Greece) is fully revealed in the royal family's anniversary system, the royal equivalent of the liturgical synaxarium (Table 5).

Table 5. Anniversaries of the Royal Family during Ferdinand's reign

The day	The royal family member
5 th of January	Birthday of Her Royal Highness Ileana, Princess of Romania (1910)
9 th of January	Birthday of Her Royal Majesty Queen Maria of Yugoslavia (1899)
11 th of January	The Marriage of Their Royal Majesties King and Queen (1893)
10 th of March	The Marriage of Their Royal Highnesses Inheriting Prince Carol and Princess Elena of Greece (1921)
20 th of April	Birthday of Her Royal Highness Inheriting Princess Elena (1896)
23 rd of April	Name Day of His Majesty King George II of Greece
24 th of April	Name Day of Her Majesty Queen Elisaveta of Greece
21 st of May	Name Day of Their Royal Highnesses Inheriting Princess Elena and Princess Ileana
22 nd of July	Name Day of Their Royal Majesties Queens Maria of Romania and Maria of Yugoslavia
18 th of August	Birthday of His Royal Highness Prince Nicolae (1903)
24 th of August	Birthday of His Majesty King Ferdinand I of all Romanians (1865)
30 th of August	Name Day of His Majesty King Alexandru I of Yugoslavia
13 th of October	Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elisaveta of Greece (1894)

16 th of October	Birthday of His Royal Highness Inheriting Prince Carol (1893)
29 th of October	Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Maria of all Romanians (1875)
8 th of November	Name day of His Royal Highness Prince Mihai
9 th of November	Birthday of His Royal Highness Prince Mihai (1921)
6 th of December	Name day of His Royal Highness Prince Nicolae

If this horizontal, spatial, expansion of the royal system of celebrations reveals its growth in size, the inauguration of another class of “necrologic anniversaries” expressing the royal family’s vertical expansion in time shows its dynastic nature (Table 6). With Ferdinand succeeding Carol in the aftermath of the latter’s death, joined two years later to his grave by Queen Elisabeta, the Romanian royal family has become truly dynastic, completing a full life-and-death cycle. With Carol and Elisabeta’s kingly bodies buried in Romanian soil, the Hohenzollern dynasty had finally taken roots in the nation’s territory. Ferdinand remained a “genetic outsider,” as he was born in Sigmaringen, Germany as Carol’s nephew. Carol II, his son, will be the first King of Romania born in the country, connecting the dynasty, already connected through death, through birth to the Romanian soil. Ironically, he died in Estoril, Portugal, in 1953. It took fifty years for his remains to be returned to Romania in order for them to be reburied at Curtea de Argeş monastery, the royal family burial site, although Carol’s remains were placed outside of the cathedral. Carol II was also the first King to be baptized in the Orthodox faith, fulfilling the constitutional provision stipulating the obligation to rear the inheritors of the throne in the Eastern religion (art. 82 of the Constitution of 1866), and thus completing the spiritual fusion between the kingship and the Romanian collective soul. A stubborn and devout Catholic, but pragmatically complying with the Orthodox state ceremonial and also skillfully maneuvering the politics of marriage (his wife was protestant), Carol I was nevertheless excommunicated by the Holy See for baptizing her daughter, Maria, in the Orthodox faith. The little princess, who would have never reached the throne, as the female side was constitutionally “forever excluded from the dynastic inheritance,” would die at the age of 4. Ferdinand I will suffer the same fate as his uncle after baptizing his son Carol II in the Eastern Orthodox tradition. Nevertheless, these religious excommunications of Romanian Kings from the Catholic Church, together with the dynastic excommunication of Ferdinand I from the House of Hohenzollern after he decided to enter the Great War against Germany, completed the spiritual and political Romanianization of the kingship. Religiously excommunicated and dynastically excluded, but with royal bodies buried in Romanian soil and children baptized in the Orthodox faith, the kingship was finally fully resorbed into the Romanian nation.

Table 6. Necrologic anniversaries of the Royal Family

The day	The royal family member
3 rd of March	The death of Queen Elisabeta of Romania (1916)
26 th of March	The death of Princess Maria, the daughter of King Carol I and Queen Elisabeta (1874)
10 th of October	The death of King Carol I (1914)
2 nd of November	The death of Prince Mircea (1916)

Carol II was to take Romanian politics along with its established political calendar by storm, imposing his will over the country's ruling and making his way into the center of the Kingdom's celebrative regime. A swift change in the festive calendar was brought about in 1938, with the institution of the royal dictatorship by Ferdinand's prodigal son. When Ferdinand I died in 1927, his first born, Carol, already gave up his throne in 1925 and was living abroad, so that Carol's six years son, Mihai, became King under a Regency. In 1930 Carol returned to the country and took over the reign from his son, only to seize up power completely in February 1938 when he dissolved all political parties, passed the new Constitution by national referendum, and set himself up as supreme leader. Influenced by the "sacralization of politics" (Gentile 2000) already underway in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, Carol II secured for himself the position from which to deploy a large-scale celebrative program of epic proportions of which he was the very center of. What has changed was not so much the internal makeup of the political calendar, which retained its hardcore untouched although some other feasts were also added, as the style and pomp of the festivities. Inspired by the popular success of Mussolini and Hitler, Carol II worked out and executed, especially after he seized full power in 1938, a *master celebrative program* involving massive rallies and huge military parades all sustained by the intense use of state propaganda. The royal political liturgy celebrating Carol I's dynastic monarchy reached rampant proportions at extraordinary times, such as was the case with the Coronation of 1881, the 25 years Jubilee of 1891, and especially the Jubilee of 1906, when a grandiose General Exposition was organized in Carol Park to celebrate a triptych of "founding moments": 40 years of Carol's reign, 25 years of Kingdom, and 1,800 years from the conquering of Dacia by Emperor Trajan in 106 A.D. (*Expozițiunea generală română 1906. Călăuza oficială și catalogul expozițiunei 1906*). But these were all *meta-festivities* of exceptional nature that were celebrated on top of the annual rhythm of festive time. It was Carol II who tried to make permanent this extraordinary celebrative mode in his short but fulgurative regime of royal dictatorship by declaring a quasi-perpetual state of festive exceptionalism of national scale.

As already mentioned, the term "royal liturgy" standing at the core of this study has an explicit religious connotation. Nonetheless, the idea of a political royal liturgy centered upon the principle of dynastic monarchy and officiated within a commemorative calendar during the reigns of Carol I and Ferdinand I has sufficient grounding in reality. This is because all the major legal and national holidays, despite their purely political nature, were invariably celebrated with a divine service, followed by military parades and other civil festivities. The *Law for the General Regime of Cults* adopted in 1928, for instance, stipulated that "All cults are obliged to officiate religious services at national solemnities and to those of the Royal Family" (art. 18). The law of the cults only consecrated juridically an empirical reality dating back from Carol's time. It was during Carol's reign that a military-religious marriage was concluded in festive time, the outcome of which was a "martial liturgy," as strictly religious holidays such as the Epiphany were celebrated through military parades, while strictly political festivities such as the Unification day commemorated on the 24th of January were celebrated through divine services as well as military parades and political activities. That the political, temporal

power fused with the spiritual, religious power in liturgical rites of power was revealed even further by the fact that state officials were obliged to take part to the Te Deums and divine services officiated by the Church at national holidays. In the ceremonial structure of national holidays, the sacred (religious, liturgical) dimension became inextricably tied up with a civil (military, political) dimension. The notion of a “royal liturgy” has taken serious steps towards a more literal, denotative, meaning with the regal dictatorship established by Carol II in 1938. Even prior to Carol II’s reign started in 1930, the immense human toll taken by the Great War facilitated a sacralization of death. The Heroes Day was celebrated on the Day of the Ascension, a major Christian feast observed at forty days after Christ’s resurrection. This “religious doubling” of a political commemoration with a religious holiday has to be read in lines with the Christian tradition of martyrdom as a promise of resurrection and ascension to the heavens of the souls of the fallen soldiers who were the heroic martyrs of the nation. Carol II made use of the same means of conferring sacredness to a political holiday by linking “The Day of Romanian Glory,” commemorating the start of the Battle of Mărășești, with the Feast of the Transfiguration, implying, by the same logic of symbolic analogy, the transfiguration of the Romanian nation during the First World War.

Table 7. The festive calendar during the reign of Carol II, 1930-1940

The day	The day’s meaning	Status
24 th of January	The Unification of all Romanians, 1859-1918	Legal and national holiday
27 th of February ¹⁰	The Day of the Constitution “King Carol II” (1938)	Legal and national holiday
1 st of May	The Day of Labor	Legal holiday
10 th of May	The Day of the Nation: the Proclamation of Independence (1877), the Proclamation of Kingdom (1881)	Legal and national holiday
Movable feast (usually during May)	Heroes Day, celebrated on the day of the Ascension	Legal and national holiday
8 th of June	Restoration Day (The Coming on the Throne of Carol II) (1930), Youth’s Day (1935) ¹¹	Legal and national holiday
6 th of August ¹²	The Day of Romanian Glory commemorating the Battle of Mărășești (1917), celebrated on the	National holiday

¹⁰ The 27th of February was celebrated as national holiday twice during Carol II’s royal dictatorship (in 1939 and 1940), marking the promulgation of the Constitution adopted in 1938 by national referendum (Păunoiu 2013: 69).

¹¹ The celebrations of Youth’s Day on the 8th of June, along with the Restoration Day commemorated since 1931, began in 1935 and continued until the abdication of Carol II in 1940.

¹² The 6th of August was commemorated starting with 1919, under the auspices of the National Orthodox Romanian Women’s Society. Every year a *parastas* was officiated for commemorating those who had fallen in the Mărășești battle. But it was during Carol II’s reign that the 6th of August gained a more prominent status in the commemorative calendar, when Mărășești became an annual site of pilgrimages (Bucur 2009: 116). It was also during Carol II’s rule that the Mărășești Mausoleum, housing the bones of 5,073 soldiers who fell in the First World War was unveiled on the 18th of September 1938.

Feast of the Transfiguration		
16 th of October	Birthday of His Majesty King Carol II	Legal and national holiday
8 th of November	Name Day of His Royal Highness Mihai The Grand Voevod of Alba Iulia	Legal and national holiday

Carol II was forced to abdicate on the 6th of September 1940 on the verge of the Second World War after Romania lost Northern Transylvania to Hungary and Bessarabia was ceased to the Soviet Union. His son, Mihai I, was once again the king, but again his young age prevented him from exerting his rulership. Within the monarchic political framework, the National Legionary State was proclaimed on the 14th of September 1940, led by an uneasy coalition between General Antonescu and the Legionary movement. During its short lifespan, from September 1940 to January 1941, the National Legionary State dramatically changed the culture of commemoration, imposing its ceremonial agenda over the public calendar. The Birthday of Carol II, previously celebrated on the 16th of October, was purged off. The Feast of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel on the 8th of November occasioned lavish celebrations, albeit the focal point was redirected from the new ruler Mihai I's name day, to the Legion's Patron. In an explicit Durkheimian fashion, celebrating its patron archangel, the Legion was celebrating itself. Due to the Legion's wild flurry of self-celebrations, the royal core of the political calendar, shrank to a festive minimum, managed to survive although it had to recede in the background. Overshadowed by Legion's self-celebratory storm on the 8th of November, the royal nature of the festive calendar was completely overwhelmed by a *program of funeral commemorations* that cast a mourning mood looming over the whole country. As soon as they seized power, the Legionaries have hastily established a *thanatic culture* consisting of a series of unearthings and reburials, into which the movement was celebrating its dead as national hero-martyrs. The thanatic element, deriving from the Legion's frantic cult of death and martyrdom, was so blatantly present in its culture of commemoration that impious citizens living in those fascist times were sarcastically calling the new regime the "National Funerary State" (Veiga 1993: 287). Instituting an incredibly dense rhythm of funeral ceremonies, public processions, and other rituals of remembrance, the Legionaries have beset Romanian society with a rampant culture of commemoration. Table 8 below reveals the extent and incidence of Legionary commemorations. After the failed Legionary Rebellion of the 21-23 of January 1941 followed by the suppression of the movement by General Antonescu's army, the flurry of funeral commemorations stopped abruptly. Romania's entry into the Second World War transformed the theatrically enacted liturgical ceremonies organized for the Legionary martyrs into thousands of frugal burials on the Eastern front, as the war was claiming its ever increasing death toll.

Table 8. The Legionary commemorative calendar during the National Legionary State

The day	The place	The purpose of commemoration
7 th of September	Bucharest	Parastas for Ion Moța and Vasile Marin and for all the Legionaries fallen during 1938-1939
	Constanța	Burial of the Legionaries fallen on the 3 rd of September 1940
8 th of September	Brașov	Burial of the Legionaries fallen in the 3 rd and 6 th of September at Brașov and Vâlcele
9 th of September	Miercurea Ciuc	Unearthing of the 46 Legionaries killed on the 22 nd of September 1939
11 th of September	Predeal	Reburial of the 46 Legionaries unearthed from Miercurea Ciuc
13 th of September	Bucharest	Commemoration of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu's birthday
22 nd of September	Predeal, Râmnicu Sărat, Bucharest, Vaslui, Râșnov	The Day of the Legionary Martyrs and Heroes
26 th of October	Vaslui	Unearthing of the bodies of the 32 Legionaries killed at Vaslui
27 th of October	Predeal	Reburial of the 32 Legionaries killed at Vaslui
		Reburial of the ashes of the Legionaries burned at Bucharest crematorium
8 th of November	Jassy, Bucharest	Feasts of Archangels Michael and Gabriel Name Day of Mihai I
20 th of November	Orăștie	National funerals for Ion Moța (Ion I. Moța's father)
26 th of November	Jilava	Unearthing of the bodies of Codreanu, the Nicadori, and the Decemviri
30 th of November	Bucharest	Reburial of Codreanu, the Nicadori, and the Decemviri
10 th of December	Bucharest	The Day of the Students

Sources: Almanahul „Cuvântul” (1941); Cuvântul (1940-1941), Buna Vestire (1940-1941)

Deconstructing the royal temporal order: Calendrical re-engineering

Tacking stock of the commemorative practices organized between 1886 and 1947, when Romania was ruled by the Hohenzollern dynasty, a conclusion can be reached concerning the nature of the festive calendar. What emerges from looking at the royal political liturgy being officiated annually in the rhythmic patterns of festive time is that the royal commemorative calendar was an *elastic structure* with an *invariable core*. The elasticity of the festive calendar accounts for its morphing nature when plotted longitudinally and scrutinized in *longue durée*. As symbolic charters of a regime, festive calendars need to be structurally designed so as to provide enough flexibility and adaptability in order for them to reflect the changing flow of the political order. But underneath these adaptations, there lies a *calendrical principle of identity* responsible for reflecting the continuation of the regime. In the case of Romanian Kingdom, this was represented by the 10th of May, which stood unwavering at the very basement of an entire commemorative order meant to celebrate the past and perform the present. When this pillar of the temporal order is shattered, we can talk of a *symbolic revolution in the politics of festive time* taking place. It is not a “calendrical revolution” in so far as the calendar itself, i.e., the calendrical system

with its structural design, remains unchanged. Examples of successful calendrical revolutions were the French Revolutionary calendar (1793-1805), and, centuries later, the Soviet calendar. While the former redesigned the patterning of time around a decimal system (the day was now having ten hours, and the week was having ten days), the latter experimented with the six- and five-day work week between 1929 and 1940 in order to boost production and to destructure the traditional Christian seven-day week (Zerubavel 1981).

Stalin's failure to implement the five- and then the six-day week in the Soviet Union guaranteed that similar radical attempts would not be tried out in the newly proclaimed Romanian Popular Republic (on the 30th of December 1947). Instead of a radical, structural, calendrical revolution aiming at redesigning the whole system of patterning time from scratch, a more conventional strategy was opted for. It was a symbolic revolution in the politics of festive time nonetheless, which kept the traditional calendrical system, but rewired its internal semantics. The new republican festive calendar designed by the Socialist regime grappled with the traditional pillar of the old royal calendar – the 10th of May – in four concerting ways. Instead of embracing an all aggressive stance that would sweep out the 10th of May from the festive calendar altogether, the Socialist regime went for a softer approach. Firstly, they used a means ironically borrowed from Carol I's own repertoire, i.e., the technique of *calendrical decentering*. Rightfully claiming to restore historical accuracy deliberately falsified by Carol for festive purposes, the Socialists decreed that the legal and national holiday would be celebrated on the 9th of May instead of the 10th, on the real date when the Parliament adopted the Declaration of Independence (Decree No. 285 published in the O.M. No. 241/16th of October 1948). For the first years of the “popular democratic” regime on the 9th and 10th of May, *Scânteia*, the official organ of the Romanian Workers' Party, organized in its columns annual rituals of denunciation and historical truth-settling campaigns. By exposing how the dynastic monarchy falsified the historical chronology of the Proclamation of Independence in order to fit in the festive scheme of the 10th of May, the Socialist officials were engaging in a hermeneutic operation of correcting the political interpretation of history that can be conceived of as a *political ortho-semantics of history*. Secondly, again borrowing from Carol I's politics of festive time, the Socialist regime used the technique of *interpolating temporal coincidence* allowing it to celebrate multiple events that occurred in different years on the same day. This way, they were able to consolidate the 9th of May by adding multiple strata of meaning. To the Declaration of the Independence of 1877, the Victory Day, marking the capitulation of Nazi Germany to the Red Army in the Second World War, and celebrated internationally on the 9th of May, was added. To make things even more similar to Carol I's 10th of May, the Socialist regime added a yet another, third, layer of historical significance to the 9th of May, moving on this date the celebration of Heroes Day (*Calendarul ziarului Scânteia* 1949). Thirdly, another technique to which the new regime resorted was that of *symbolically downgrading* the status of the 9th of May in the hierarchy of festive order. This was accomplished by retreating it the prized status of the “National Day,” which was attributed to a strictly Socialist event – “the Day of Armed Anti-fascist Insurrection” which paved the way for

the popular revolution in Romania, celebrated on the 23rd of August. Downgraded from the very center of the commemorative calendar, the 9th of May gradually faded even more into the margins of public festivities, as it was outshined by the 1st of May, another purely Socialist holiday celebrating the Labor Day. This was the fourth technique of *shifting the celebrative weight* to the proximate holiday for the purpose of diminishing the festive importance of the holiday in question. It was through these four means combined that the King's Day of the 10th of May, the calendrical fulcrum of a royal political liturgy officiated during almost a century (1866-1947), was displaced along with any trace of the idea of dynastic monarchy.

Table 9. The festive calendar (legal and national holidays) of the Romanian Popular Republic, 1947-1965

The day	The day's meaning	Status
24 th of January	The Unification of the Principalities (1859)	Legal and national holiday
1 st of May	Labor Day	Legal and international holiday
9 th of May	The Independence Day (1877), the Victory Day (1945) and Heroes Day	Legal and (inter)national holiday ¹³
23 rd of August ¹⁴	The Day of National Liberation (1944)	Legal and national holiday
30 th of December	The Day of the Republic (1947)	Legal and national holiday

Table 10. Other non-legal celebrations and commemorations held during R.P.R., 1947-1965

The day	The day's meaning	Status
21 st of January	Lenin's death (1923)	Soviet commemoration
16 th February	The Strike of Grivița Railways Workshop (1933)	Historical commemoration
23 rd of February	Red Army Day	Soviet celebration ¹⁵
6 th of March	The First Communist Government led by Dr. Petru Groza (1945)	Socialist commemoration
8 th of March	Woman's Day	International holiday
22 nd of April	Lenin's birthday (1870)	Soviet anniversary
7 th of November	The Soviet Revolution (1917)	Soviet celebration
13 th of December	The Fight of typographers from Bucharest (1918)	Socialist commemoration
21 st of December	Stalin's birthday (1878)	Soviet anniversary

¹³ While Independence Day (1877) and Heroes Day were national celebrations, Victory Day was enjoying international status.

¹⁴ The Decree No. 285 published in O.M. No. 241/16th of October 1948 did not include 23rd of August among the list of legal holidays. It was declared the new National Day of the Romanian Popular Republic by the Council of Ministers, Decision No. 908 from 18th of August 1949, published in the O.M. No. 54/20th of August 1949.

¹⁵ The solemnities occasioned by the Red Army Day were being held at the Monument of the Soviet Hero erected in Victory Square in the aftermath of the Second World War, where party officials and military generals were praising the "Glorious Red Army." Later in the evening, cultural events filled with official speeches, conferences, artistic programs involving songs and dances were being organized in various festive locations.

The Socialist regime enacted its own secularized political liturgy officiated on days reflecting its historical foundations. The 23rd of August (commemorating the day when Romanian Army swapped sides in the Second World War, fighting along Red Army against their former allies, the Wehrmacht), the 30th of December (the day when Mihai I abdicated and the Republic was proclaimed), and the 6th of March (when Dr. Petru Groza formed the first Communist cabinet) were the new calendrical buttresses of the Socialist political calendar. A festive relic surviving from the older regime was the 24th of January, celebrating the Unification of the Principalities in 1859. But at least in the first years of the R.P.R., the national feast of the unification was overshadowed by the Socialist mourning of Lenin's death (21st of January 1924). *Scânteia*, for instance, gave larger textual space to the commemoration of Lenin's death than to the celebration of the unification, covering the day of national joy with a week of Socialist sorrow. For a couple of years, from Stalin's death announced on the 5th of March 1953 until Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. in 1956, the same pattern reoccurred. A funeral gloom prolonging itself over the years into an air of mourning loomed over the celebratory mood of the 6th of March marking the first Communist government back in 1945. As in the case of the 24th of January, the Communist *fête* of the 6th of March was being commemorated on the newspaper's pages within a thick black border (*Scânteia*, XXII, No. 2600-1, 6-7th of March 1953). Another class of commemorative events was drawn from the workers' movement's blooded history, such as was the strike from Grivița railways factory and the repression of the typographers' demonstrations on the 13th of December 1918. Out of these turbulent episodes of the workers' struggle a new Socialist pantheon of heroes made up of proletarian martyrs such as Vasile Roaită was forged to supplant the traditional gallery of figures pantheonized on nationalist criteria (Rusu 2015: 291). The Socialist festive calendar during the regime's first two decades was completed by a series of "Soviet celebrations" centered on the achievements of the "Big Brother from the East." The royal liturgy officiated in the last eighty-one years of dynastic monarchy was finally replaced by a Soviet-inspired Socialist political liturgy.

Conclusions: The politics of festive time

The conclusion that begs to be drawn from this extensive historical survey on the changing dynamics of commemorative calendars is the crucial importance of the politics of festive time. To bolster their legitimacy and to ensure political loyalty, political regimes engage their subjects in theatrical rites of power by which they perform their past, celebrate their present identity, but at the same time create emotional communities brought together by their participation in the same political liturgy. For this purposes, political regimes develop festive calendars as temporal frameworks for their rhythmic pattern of commemorative events to unroll. Needless to insist, these festive calendars reflect the political agenda of the respective regime, codifying in their celebrative sequences the value-system cultivated by the power elites which are the architects and main protagonists of these festivities. Taking as a case study the making and unmaking of the royal political liturgy in the Romanian Kingdom, along with its calendrical framework,

the study has shed some light onto the mechanisms of constructing and deconstructing a celebrative system. Three techniques of calendrical construction have been identified in the making of the royal festive order. The technique of *calendrical shifting* was employed by deliberately misremembering the Proclamation of Independence on the 10th of May instead of the 9th in order to coincide with the day of Carol's enthronement. A second technique was that of *calendrical concentration* put to use by adding new layers of historical meaning to the 10th of May in order to heighten its symbolic importance.¹⁶ In this way, the 10th of May had acquired a triptych of festive occasions – the Enthronement, the Independence, the Coronation – all of them associated with the royal *persona* of Carol I. Thirdly, the technique of *celebrative sequencing* was used, by which a series of festive events were celebrated as a continual feast. This was the case with the Election, the Arrival, and the Enthronement of Carol, on the 1st, the 8th, and the 10th of May 1866. While the first two calendrical techniques are part of the strategy of *staging temporal coincidence*, the latter is used for the purpose of *setting up festive density*.

Patterning festive time through staging temporal coincidence and arranging festive density, in order to be successful, cannot blatantly ignore the hard fact of history. A political bid to domesticate time for its festive purposes, such as was the case with the 10th of May explored at length in this study, has to be historically sensitive. Chronology is susceptible to subtle maneuverings and crafty manipulation through the techniques of calendrical construction and reconstruction detailed in this paper, but it will backfire if handled insensitively in relation to the constraints of chronology and collective memory. Otherwise, it runs the risk of failing to gain any credibility and, even worse, to expose to the public eye the manufactured nature of these invented traditions at the great cost of the regime's claim for legitimacy. In the light of these considerations and grounded on the case study examined in this paper, a *three-factor model of patterning festive time* can be advanced to account for the logic of calendrical construction in the Romanian Kingdom. Scrutinizing in depth the making of the 10th of May as a National Day bearing a triple strata of royal connotations, the interplay between three elements has to be fully recognized. First to be acknowledged is the *contingency factor*, responsible for naturally arranging the occurrence of events more or less in the same temporal interval. Calendrical coincidence or close proximity of historical events is a pre-requisite for working out a semantics of history to uphold political celebrations. The second factor is a

¹⁶ The technique of calendrical concentration echoes the feature of rituals David I. Kertzer (1988) has labeled as “condensation.” In his book on *Ritual, Politics and Power*, Kertzer (1988: 11) has mentioned three characteristics of rituals: a) *condensation*, i.e., rituals concentrate meanings into a single ceremonial structure, such as the 10th of May concentrated three different historical meanings all associated with Carol I and the idea of kingship; b) *multivocality*, i.e., rituals convey a wide range of meanings. It is precisely the polysemantics of rituals that makes it possible to redesign the nature of the celebration. It is this plurivocality of meanings associated to a certain calendrical date that facilitates symbolic creative actions that dramatically change the content of the celebration (e.g. the 1st of May); c) *ambiguity*, which is a general feature of rituals that point out that rituals have no intrinsic, essential, or natural meaning. Instead, they are all humanly constructed within particular socio-historical settings and specific conditions of power, in which various actors exercise their *symbolic agency* in devising various rites of power to serve their ends and express their values.

pre-existing *political agenda* comprising various goals to be attained, among which symbolic objectives such as gaining legitimacy through rituals, festivities, and commemorations are of central importance. Thirdly, and most importantly, the contingency factor and the political agenda have to be connected through the use of *mnemonic imagination* (Keightley and Pickering 2012). This is responsible for figuring out a creating way of capitalizing upon the contingency of events so as to bring them in the service of the political regime. Its supreme challenge is none other than to politically tame the randomness of time. The ingenious use of mnemonic imagination promises to facilitate finding a creative means of domesticating historical contingency for the purpose of articulating a festive timescape promoting the regime's political agenda. In the case of the 10th of May, mnemonic imagination took the form of *commemorative entrepreneurship*, as the National Day was a perfect performative occasion to remember the recent past for celebrating the present.

A similar display of mnemonic imagination is required in deconstructing a ceremonial order. This was proved in the way the Socialist regime has grappled with the royal festive order after the regime change occurred in 1947. Four concerted calendrical techniques of deconstructing the royal calendar were used by the constructors of the Socialist order. Through *calendrical decentering*, the focal point in the festive system was moved from the 10th of May to the 9th of May, emphasizing the republican element instead of the royal one. Thus re-centered, the 9th of May has been the focus of *calendrical concentration*, as new strata of historical meaning were added to this date in order to secure its newly acquired pivotal status. *Symbolic downgrading* and *shifting the celebrative weight* were used to further undermine the old political calendar. It is ironic that some of these means are directly inspired from the calendrical techniques of constructing the festive order. This similarity points out emphatically to the essential dialectic at the very core of any calendrical project of setting up a celebratory system. What this study has made abundantly clear, focusing on the Socialist re-working of the political calendar, is that the techniques of calendrical deconstruction are at the same time powerful means of construction.

In his seminal work on *La Topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre sainte*, in which he analyzed how successive generations of Christian crusaders, travelers, and pilgrims continuously reshaped the map with the localization of the sites of memory in the Holy Land so as to match the interests of their present, M. Halbwachs (1992b) [1941] has come to the conclusion that there are two "laws governing the memory of groups" (p. 219). The law of fragmentation works by dividing the memory of an event in multiple elements which are all localized in different spaces. What captures my theoretical interest, however, is the second law of memory, "the law of concentration," which works by bringing together into the same place events that occurred in different locations. The investigations undertaken in this study led me to posit that there may be not only a topographic law of concentration governing the workings of collective memory, as Halbwachs's study has masterfully revealed, but also a *chronographic law*, operating by clustering together events not in terms of space but of time. If the law of spatial concentration paves the way for the creation of *lieux de mémoire*, as P. Nora (1989) has

aptly called them, the law of temporal concentration of memory, as revealed by the construction of the 10th of May, leads to the creation of *memorial days*. If it is a general law of memory, or only a national one restricted to the Romanian particular case, remains to be established by further, comparative, research. What needs to be emphasized is that the creation of these memorial days as temporal frameworks of national memory is always the subject of the politics of commemoration filled with power struggles over imposing a certain celebrative agenda. That is to say, the making of a celebrative order is always accompanied by *calendrical struggles* over mastering symbolic time.

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