

### Short History of Romanian territories and Romania

All throughout its history, Romania has been a frontier country. Crossed by the Carpathians, bordered to the South by the Danube and to the East by the Black Sea, Romania is situated at a crossroads of Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Central Europe. Created in 1859 by the union of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, the country grew gradually depending of geopolitical evolutions.

Medieval Moldavia, founded in 1359, spread east of the Carpathians up to the Dniester River. At the time, its Northern neighbours were Poland, the Lithuanian state – followed by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – and, later still, Russia. To the south was Wallachia and, farther still, beyond the Danube, the Ottoman Empire. To the west laid Hungary and later still the principality of Transylvania. To the East, Moldavia welcomed different neighbours: Tatars, Poland, Russia etc. In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Moldavia had to accept the Ottoman domination. Wallachia was founded a few years before Moldavia, in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. It had to accept the Ottoman domination earlier than Moldavia due to its proximity to the Ottoman Empire lying south of the Danube. Romanian principalities' were integrated in the Ottoman system<sup>1</sup>, all the attempts made by Moldavian/Wallachian rulers to escape Ottoman domination failed until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The union of the two principalities in 1859 was symbolically prepared during the revolution of 1848 and accomplished thanks to a subterfuge. Following the Crimean war (1856), the great powers of the time (namely France, United Kingdom, and Russia) agreed to allow a limited union of the Romanian principalities. Each country should have maintained its own ruler and its own government. The treatises did not, however, specify whether the two leaders had to be two different persons. The unionist elites of the day decided to take advantage of the situation by electing the same prince, simultaneously, in both countries. An officer of Moldavian origin, Alexandru Ioan Cuza<sup>2</sup> (1859-1866) was chosen to be the new country's ruler (Romania as it was called). Confronted to the new situation, the great powers of the time eventually accepted it.

In a few years, the personal union achieved by choosing Cuza as ruler of the two countries would become a *de facto* unification of Moldavia and Wallachia. Their administration, their army, their laws, their infrastructure were merged and centralised in Bucharest, which became the capital of the new state.

Alexandru Ioan Cuza applied a series of reforms which modernised the country: he had a new Civil Code adopted, he set in place an agricultural reform and a new educational system. However, several years later, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, who had instated an authoritarian regime by means of a coup (in 1864), would be overthrown in his turn by a coalition of Conservatives and Liberals (in 1866).

It was in this context that the idea of finding a head of state among Europe's ruling families was born. The Liberals, particularly the Brătianu family, took it upon themselves to find a ruler capable of bringing inner balance and international recognition to the new country. After several attempts to find a prince to "fit the bill", Ion C. Brătianu, with the help of Napoleon III, chose Carol

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<sup>1</sup> Both principalities, as well as Transylvania, had never been part of the Ottoman Empire. They were under the protection of the Empire and had to pay for their limited autonomy. They do not belong neither to the *Dâr-al-Islam* (The House of Islam, which included the territories and people belonging to Islam) nor to the *Dâr-al-'ahd* (The House of Peace, territories conquered by the Ottomans), they enjoyed an intermediary position. More on this, Viorel Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers*, East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, New York, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Alexandru Ioan Cuza, born on March 20 1820, in Bârlad, Moldavia, died on May 15 1873, in Heidelberg, Germany. He studied in Paris, like many Romanian young men of the time.

(Charles), prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, from the Catholic branch of the Hohenzollern family, related to the Prussian king. He was declared ruling prince of Romania on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1866, under the name of Carol I.

Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen ruled for almost 50 years (1866-1914). He managed to bring to Romania its internal stability and its international recognition. During his early reign, the country acquired a modern, democratic Constitution, as well as European-style laws and institutions.

As a consequence of choosing the right side (namely the Russian) during the Russo-Turkish war which took place between 1877 and 1878, and following the victory of Russia, in 1877, Romania proclaimed its independence towards the Ottomans. Romania's independence was recognised by the great powers in 1878, at the Berlin Congress. On this occasion, the country received the province of Dobrudja, located to the south-east of its territory at the time, a region which had, in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to Wallachia, later included into the Ottoman Empire. In 1881, the country, independent and enlarged, proclaimed itself a kingdom.

Charles I's reign was a modernisation period for the country. It was an age of adaptation to Western civilisation, albeit done rather in a hurry. Moreover, Romania would affirm itself at an international level, particularly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when, following the Balkan wars (1912-1913), it would become a regional power.

In the beginning of the First World War, between 1914 and 1916, Romania maintained its neutrality, to take the side of France and its Allies on August 27<sup>th</sup> 1916. Defeated on the front by the Germans and Austrians, Romania did, however, stand to gain, simply because Germany and Austria lost the war.

The falling apart of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires allowed the Romanians living on their territory to proclaim their union to Romania. „Greater” Romania was created by the joining of Bessarabia (the eastern part of Moldavia occupied by the Russian Empire in 1812), northern Bukovina (annexed by the Habsburg empire in 1775), and Transylvania (a region populated by a Romanian majority, but which had been part of medieval Hungary and, later of the Habsburg empire).

The peace treaties of 1919-1920 recognised the changes in the configuration of the region and, implicitly, Greater Romania, an enlarged country whose territory had more than doubled, from 138.000 to 296.000 square kilometres. The same can be said of its population, which went from 8 to 18 million, according to the census in 1930.

The political union of Romanian-inhabited regions was followed by a long and complicated process of reorganisation of the country. Changes came one after the other: universal suffrage for males (introduced in 1918), an agricultural reform (beginning with 1920), and a new Constitution (adopted in 1923).

The country witnessed an unprecedented economic growth, a constant and steady industrialisation, and a modernization in all sectors of activities. New health and educational policies came also into force during the interwar period.

However, inequalities reigned supreme in the Romania of the time: a population with a low degree of literacy (about 57%), poor peasants (18, 6% of villagers owned less than one hectare of land, while 33, 6% owned 3 to 5 hectares),<sup>3</sup> and workers with extreme-right leanings.

While a significant proportion of the population hadn't quite managed to catch up to modern times, culturally, Romania was at the same level as Western Europe. Many personalities

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<sup>3</sup> Bogdan Murgescu, *România și Europa (Romania and Europe)*, Iași, Polirom, 2010, p. 229.

of the avant-garde movement such as Benjamin Fondane, Tristan Tzara, Victor Brauner, Constantin Brancusi, Eugène Ionesco, etc. came from Romania.

New intellectual elite asserted itself in the 1920s. Mircea Eliade, the future famous historian of religion, distinguished himself as the spearhead of this new generation, called “the Generation of ’27”, which also included Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica,<sup>4</sup> Mircea Vulcănescu<sup>5</sup> and Mihail Sebastian.<sup>6</sup> Their mentor was Nae Ionescu,<sup>7</sup> a philosophy professor at the University of Bucharest.

The 1920s also saw the appearance of extreme-right political movements, brought about by dissatisfaction with the West, which treated small countries like provinces, and particularly by the fear of the Bolsheviks, who were already installed in Moscow. In March 1923, the “League of Christian National Defence” (LANC) was created in Iași. Founded by a university professor, A. C. Cuza, it openly displayed its anti-Semitic, anti-Communist character. One of the LANC’s active members was Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, the creator of the „legionnaire” movement.

Founded in 1927 under the initial name of „The Legion of the Archangel Michael”,<sup>8</sup> the legionnaire movement enlisted numerous peasants, workers and intellectuals. Outlawed by the authorities, the movement changed its name and function several times. The Legion of the Archangel Michael transformed itself in a political party, “All for Our Country”, and took part in several elections in the ’30s. In 1937, the “Iron Guard” (another of its names) became the third political force in the country.

Worried by the legionnaires’ influence, but also eager to get a better grip on the power, King Charles II<sup>9</sup> instated a royal dictatorship in January 1938. Thus ended the fragile Romanian democracy!

In 1938, Romania entered a dark phase of its history. The country moved from one dictatorship to the next – from King Charles II’s authoritarian regime to the legionnaires’ dictatorship, then to that of Field Marshal Antonescu.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in the beginning of the Second World War, Romania also lost part of its territory.

As a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact,<sup>11</sup> Bessarabia and northern Bukovina were annexed by Soviet Russia (by the ultimatum of June 26 1940), Northern Transylvania was taken over by Hungary, and Southern Dobrudja was ceded to the Bulgarians. The shrinking of its territory, the pressure of Nazi Germany, which had an interest in its natural resources, mostly its oil, and the orientation towards the Fascist right of part of the political class of the period – all these circumstances determined the country to enter the war alongside Hitler and against the Soviet Union.

<sup>4</sup> Constantin Noica (1907-1987), nationalist philosopher and a supporter of the Iron Guard, was imprisoned by the Communists and freed in 1964; he subsequently became a kind of cultural institution in Romania.

<sup>5</sup> Mircea Vulcănescu (1904-1952), „Romanianist” philosopher, dead in Communist prisons.

<sup>6</sup> Mihail Sebastian (1907-1945), writer of Jewish origin, friend of Mircea Eliade.

<sup>7</sup> Nae Ionescu (1890-1940), philosopher, journalist, professor at the University of Bucharest, was a famous public figure in Romania during the interwar period. An extremist nationalist, he was the mentor of the legionnaire movement.

<sup>8</sup> Francisco Veiga, *Istoria gărzii de fier* (History of the Iron Guard), 1919-1941, Humanitas, 1995, pp. 48-49.

<sup>9</sup> Charles II (Carol II), born on October 15, 1893, dead on April 4, 1953 in Portugal, was king of Romania between 1930 and 1940. He was the son of King Ferdinand I and Queen Maria. On January 18 1938, Charles instated a royal dictatorship, an authoritarian regime which granted the king and his Ministers extraordinary prerogatives. In December 1938, the king outlawed all other political parties, creating a single party, The National Renaissance Front, with himself at the head.

<sup>10</sup> Ion Antonescu was born in Pitești on June 15, 1882, and was chief of the Romanian Government and later head of the State, from 1940 to 1944. He was an ally of Nazi Germany during the Second World War. Sentenced to death for war crimes, he was executed on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1946, in the Jilava prison.

<sup>11</sup> The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed on August 23, 1939. Hitler accepted Stalin’s requests regarding Bessarabia. Stalin took advantage of the circumstances to also occupy northern Bukovina. Dennis Deletant, “The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its Consequences for Bessarabia: Some considerations on the human rights implications”, in *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire*, vol. 30, no. 3-4, 1991, pp. 221-223.

The Romanian army fought on the Eastern front starting on June 22, 1941. In the end of July 1941, Bessarabia was conquered back by the Romanian army, which continued its joint offensive with the German army all the way to Stalingrad. The defeat of the *Wehrmacht* on the Eastern front brought about political changes in Romania. On August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1944, Field Marshal Antonescu was arrested and his regime was overthrown. King Michael,<sup>12</sup> with the support of the majority of political parties, declared war against Nazi Germany. The Romanian army changed sides and chased the Nazis out. It continued by allying with the Red Army to liberate the North of the country. It even accompanied the Soviet army in its march towards Western Europe.

However, this late change of camps did not earn Romania any recognition as a winner country among the Allies. It also had to accept the loss of its territories annexed by the Soviet Union. Apart from these losses, another misfortune befell the country: Communism.

### Education System

The first school-type establishments appeared beside the monasteries and aimed at learning the Slavonic writing necessary for the drawing up of official documents and correspondence. About the same period the first elements of a vocational education such as church-related vocational schools are mentioned.

In Moldova, a Latin College was founded in Cotnari in the 16th century. In 1634 it was founded by Vasile Lupu, the Vasilian Academy, teaching in the Slavonic and Latin languages, organized according to the model of the Movila Academy in Kiev (created by the Metropolitan Petru Movilă), from where they were also sent teachers. In 1707, Antioh Cantemir founded the Royal Academy of Iași, teaching in Greek. Constantin Brâncoveanu, Prince of Wallachia, founded the Princely Academy in Bucharest in 1694. Education was available only in Greek. In 1776, Alexandru Ipsilanti, ruler of Wallachia, introduced new courses within the Academy. Since then, French and Italian have begun to be taught as well. Private education was also available. In Transylvania, since the 14th century, the Saxons began to establish primary schools, so that at the beginning of the sixteenth century there was a primary school in almost every Saxon commune. In 1541 the first Saxon Gymnasium was established, and in 1722 the obligatory education for the Saxon nation was introduced. In Transylvania, according to the Austrian rules, most of the education was either in German or Latin. Schools have appeared in large cities (such as Cluj or Timisoara). In Bucovina, the Theological High School, which later became the University of Chernivtsi, was formed on the Austrian rules.

In Moldavia in 1813, Gheorghe Asachi opened the first school of engineers in Iași and in 1818-1822 the successors of the two reigning academies in Bucharest and Iași were abolished and replaced with other educational institutions in the Romanian language, Sava Collegium, respectively Mihailean Academy. Subsequently, these institutions were the foundations of the founding of the first two modern universities in Romania, the University of Iasi (1860) and the University of Bucharest (1864).

In 1864, Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza approved the first Law of Public Instruction, which regulated in a modern manner the organization and functioning of the educational system. According to the law, the public instruction was divided into three major cycles of education: primary, secondary and higher.

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<sup>12</sup> Michael, born on October 25, 1921 and died on 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, was king of Romania from July 20, 1927 to June 8, 1930 (while still a child, with a regency ruling the country), then again from September 6, 1940 to his forced abdication on December 30, 1947.



Transylvania had a network of smaller schools (including larger villages) and secondary schools (gymnasiums). Literacy was higher in this region.

The orthographic reforms of 1862 allowed a unique education system for the entire territory of Romania. The 1880s were marked by other reforms, Education Minister Spiru Haret created an ambitious reform and modernization program in education. His program was a mixture of education and nation building - very successful in the literacy of rural areas. His program involved the opening of innumerable schools in the rural area (sometimes no more than a room with a teacher, a board, a map and a flag), the reorganization lifted and upgraded the education system and practically created the Romanian technical higher education from scratch.

The education system was, however, quite limited. There were very few teachers (the average was 82 students at a professor in 1908-09 in rural areas, and 56 in urban areas), and abandonment rates, even in the first four years of compulsory schooling were very high (up to 30% in 1910/11).

The studies made for the cohort born in 1900 show that out of 160,000 children, only 3-4,000 boys and between 6,000 and 8,000 girls attended gymnasium. Most dropped out after the first primary classes<sup>13</sup>.

The number of women attending secondary and high schools grew considerably during the interwar period. The statistics of 1930 shows that 337 381 women graduated high schools while 92 374 women graduated professional schools. The number of women students also increased, in 1930, there were 26 179 women students in Romania.<sup>14</sup> In 1927, 4744 women students attended Law, Medicine, Literature, Sciences and Pharmacy Faculties in Bucharest.<sup>15</sup>

### Women Status

In Romania, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, women had limited legal capacity as it appears from the texts of the Caragea Law or the Callimachi Code drafted in 1817 in Wallachia and Moldavia, respectively. Women was considered minor from juridical point of view and was under the legal dominance of her father, husband, and brother or under a family council.

Women status remained the same the entire XIX century. Some changes did occur in the second half of the XIX century, after the creation of Romania, due to the adoption of the new Civil Code, inspired by the Code Napoleon. During the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the Civil Code contained a series of provisions designed to define the role of women in report to the man regarded as an authority, who had the quality of a family head, understood as a right over his wife and children. The minimum age at which a marriage could be contracted was set at 18 years for men and 15 years for women and if the parents or grandparents of the future couple were no longer alive, men and women who had not reached 25 years and 21 they needed the consent of the family council. Dispensations of age could only be granted by the ruler.

The 1866 Constitution did not change Romanian women status. It discriminated women even more as it was stated that men could remarry shortly after a divorce while women could do so only after 10 months after the end of the first marriage.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Tord Hoivik, 'The development of Romania. A cohort studies', in *Journal of Peace Research*, 1974, vol. 11, no. 4, p. 281-296.

<sup>14</sup> *Enciclopedia României*, Bucharest, Imprimeria Națională, vol. 1, 1939, p. 146.

<sup>15</sup> Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc. Studiu și antologie de texte (1929-1948)* (On the History of Romanian Feminism. Anthology of Texts), vol. 2, Iasi, Polirom, 2006, p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Alin Ciupală, *Femeia în societatea românească a secolului al XIX-lea* (Woman in the Romanian society of the XIX century), Meridiane, 2003, p. 17-22.

As far as education is concerned, the daughters of the Wallachian and Moldavian boyars from the first half of the 19th century were sent to complete their education either in the private schools called Pension, in the Principalities, or/and abroad. The first public educational institutions for girls appear after 1822 in the form of private schools opened by foreigners. During the 'Regulamentele Organice' regulations, the first public schools were opened in which girls were also accepted. In these private schools the young ladies are taught the drawing, general culture, foreign languages, vocal and instrumental music.

First Romanian universities were created in the second half of the XIX century, in Iasi in 1860 and in Bucharest in 1864. Women were not accepted among students, at the very beginning. The law of public instruction of 1881 by Minister Vasile Contra provided access to girls only to the Faculty of Medicine. Starting with 1895, the presence of women in the university no longer has any restrictions. In 1910, 442 women students were enrolled at the University of Bucharest while the Commercial Academy in the capital was attended by 49 women students in 1913.

Although, from a juridical point of view, women were powerless, the empowerment of women in Romania in the nineteenth century was constant. It was done through three ways: an official one, through state institutions especially related to education and hygiene, another by private institutional way, through the establishment of associations, committees, and women's societies. Another path is that of women's private history, family-related and life experiences. In this last category of emancipation can be integrated the salons more or less literary patronized by the ladies of aristocracy. Ana Manu, Elena Sturdza, Catinca Ghica, Cleopatra Trubetskoi kept literary salons. The Philharmonic Society, the Literary Society, or the Women's Arts and Craft Society have often served as a front for political and conspiratorial meetings. Salons will be transformed during the War of Independence and put into service of the military campaign, either by preparing outfits for the front and/or by organizing places of convalescence for the wounded.

### **Women status during the interwar period**

The First World War helped women gain prestige and proved that they had other abilities than those who confined them to the private sphere. Nurses on the front, workers in the factories, housewives, nannies of the children, they managed without the help of men: "During the world war, the role of the woman idealized, it arrived at the height of heroism, it proves not only the consoling finesse of his heart, the nobility of his soul, the humanitarian sentiment that has diminished the horrors of war and saved the prestige of man, but also the physical power to endure the superhuman fatigues. If it has been argued that woman's submission is due to her physical inferiority, the war has reversed that theory forever."<sup>17</sup>

Although their abilities have been recognized by some actors in the public space, their status has remained the same for another decade. The 1923 Constitution established the civil equality of both sexes, but it was only in 1932 that the Parliament passed a law that put into practice this constitutional right. Beginning with 1929, women gained the right to vote and to be elected to local councils. In 1938, the new Constitution granted women the right to elect and be elected to Parliament. This year has included the first female senator, Maria M. Pop, a longtime feminist.

The inter-war period was a period of emancipation of the Romanian woman, especially of the bourgeois backgrounds. Women were able to transgress their traditional roles to start careers that allowed them to earn social and financial independence. They have struggled to receive the right to engage in professions considered to be male, for example, that of a lawyer. The number of

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<sup>17</sup> *Emanciparea femeii române* (The emancipation of the Romanian woman), Bucharest, Ecumenica, 2001, p. 32.

women who have become writers and artists has also increased from one era to another. Less accepted in the political public sphere, women nevertheless could reign in the private sphere and in the public cultural sphere.

If in 1913 women worked, mostly in agriculture, accounted for 43.4% of the female population, after the First World War, the number of working woman steadily increased. The areas in which women were employed have also diversified. In 1930, 33% of positions in commercial enterprises and more than 20% in administration were occupied by women.<sup>18</sup>

During the interwar period, the number of women who attended university also grew. In the academic year 1926/1927, the faculties of law, medicine, letters, sciences and pharmacy of the Universities of Bucharest numbered 4744 women students<sup>19</sup>. In 1930, there were 26179 women at the country level who were studying at university.<sup>20</sup>

During the interwar period, women were able to transgress their traditional roles to start careers that allowed them to gain social and financial independence. They fought for the right to work in professions considered to be masculine, for example, as lawyers. Ella Negruzzi was the first Romanian woman to be recognized as a lawyer in 1909, but only after a very difficult trial with the Galati Bar Association.<sup>21</sup>

The number of women who have become writers and artists has increased from one era to another. During the inter-war period, Romanian literature included several poets, novelists and playwrights: Florica Mumuianu, Florica Obogeanu, Maria Banuş, Han Reymonde, Igena Floru, Lucreția Petrescu, Lucia Demetrius. George Calinescu describes their literature as 'feminine'.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, although the situation of women has changed constantly, the mentalities of the men of the time remained anchored in a traditional model of women. The misogynists argued that the presence of the latter in the public sphere was not indicated due to the woman's inability to be like a man. They argued that women are not educated enough for politics, that they are unstable and passionate. In addition, they might lose their main characteristic: "women who exercise political rights will lose their femininity." -a femininity understood as grace, kindness, and beauty.<sup>23</sup>

Carmen Sylva<sup>24</sup>, Dora d'Istria or Elena Văcărescu were role models for the modern woman. Their emancipation was due to their special talent. All three were gifted for art and literature. Talent has allowed them to assert themselves in the public sphere, to "become like men". Their model was followed by several women who stood out at the beginning of the 20th century but especially during the interwar period. Nevertheless, for instance, even though women have been accepted as literati, they have been asked to fit into the mainstream masculine model. It is well known the case of the literary critic, Eugen Lovinescu, who asked Hortensia Papadat Bengescu to circumscribe his prose to the masculine model<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc*, vol. 2, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> «Munca femeii și consecințele ei pentru familie și societate» (Woman's work and its consequences for her family and society) lecture delivered in the framework of the feminine studies section of the Social Romanian Institute on 23 February 1929 published in: *Buletinul Muncii*, year X, no. 1-6.

<sup>20</sup> Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc*, vol. 2, p. 22.

<sup>21</sup> Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc. Antologie de texte (1838-1929)* (On the History of Romanian Feminism. Anthology of Texts), vol. 1, Iasi, Polirom, 2002, p. 177.

<sup>22</sup> George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent* (The history of the Romanian literature from its origins to present), Fundația regală pentru literatură și artă, Bucharest, 1941, republished in 2003, pp. 847-851.

<sup>23</sup> Eleonora Stratișescu, «Temeiurile mișcării feministe și scopurile pe care le urmărește» (Les fondements du mouvement féministe et les buts qu'il poursuit), Bucharest, 1919, in Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc*, vol.1, p. 219-221.

<sup>24</sup> Carmen Sylva is the poet name of Elisabeta de Wied, the wife of Carol I of Hohenzollern, first queen of Romania.

<sup>25</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, *Identitate în ruptură* (Identity in Rupture), Bucharest, Univers, 2000, p. 310.

Another type of woman advocated by the public discourse was the androgynous woman. Presented as an androgynous virgin, Ecaterina Teodoroiu<sup>26</sup>, a fighter in the First World War, was an example of such a unique woman. Built in the imagination in relation to Joan of Arc, the comparison with the Virgin of Orleans being made by General Berthelot himself, she was called "the virgin of Jiu"<sup>27</sup>. Even on his gravestone was written 'fecioara eroină' (The virgin heroine)<sup>28</sup>. The cult of Ecaterina was built on values that were considered the prerogative of men: heroism, spirit of sacrifice for the fatherland. Her person was masculinized in the poems and iconographic representations of the time.<sup>29</sup>

Feminists who campaigned for gender equality wrote their speech in the male paradigm. Cultivated women, coming from the upper middle classes, sometimes having brilliant careers, they would try to convince men that women possessed the same qualities as them. They campaigned for high-level education, and they advocated the example of special women.

Leftist feminism more open towards the masses did not have a great impact due to the social and economic situation of the country. Industrialization was rather weak at the time, and the number of women working in factories and large factories was small. Intended for light industry, women continued to incorporate archaic models.

### **Women Associations:**

In 1850 was created in Brasov 'Reuniunea femeilor române pentru creșterea fetițelor orfane române mai sărace' (The reunion of Romanian Women for taking care of Romanian orphan girls) financed by the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Greco-Catholic Church, headed by Maria Nicolau. Later it transformed in Uniunea femeilor române (Union of the Romanian Women) and became national widespread.

In 1861, the same type of associations were created in Sibiu and Blaj in Transylvania.

In 1867 was founded in Iasi, 'Reuniunea femeilor române' (Reunion of Romanian Women) by Cornelia Emilian who came from Brașov.

In 1879 was founded the association 'Concordia română' in Bucharest.

In 1891, 'Societatea doamnelor române din Bucovina' (The Society of Romanian Ladies of Bukovina) was founded in Cernăuți.

In 1913 was founded Societatea ortodoxă națională a femeilor române (National Orthodox Society of Romanian Women).

### **Feminist Associations:**

In 1894 was founded in Iasi, 'Liga femeilor române'.

In 1908 was founded in Iasi 'Asociația educatoarelor române'.

In 1915 was founded in Iasi 'Unirea culturală a femeilor române'.

In 1911, in Bucharest, was created 'Emaniciparea femeii'.

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<sup>26</sup> Ecaterina Teodoroiu (1894-1917), born Catalina Toderiu, was a voluntary soldier on the front during the First World War. She died on the battlefield on August 22, 1917.

<sup>27</sup> Arina Avram, *Femei celebre din România* (Famous women of Romania), Editura ALL, p. 111.

<sup>28</sup> Maria Bucur, «Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu: Romanian Women and the Gender of Heroism during the Great War», in *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 12, no. 2, summer 2000, p. 46.

<sup>29</sup> Maria Bucur, «Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu», p. 45-47.

In 1912 was founded in Bucharest 'Cercul feminin socialist'.

In 1913 was founded in Brasov 'Uniunea femeilor române din Ungaria'.

In 1918, was founded in Iasi, 'Asociația pentru Emanciparea Civilă și Politică a femeilor din România' (AECPR), other sections of the association were founded in 1918-1919 in Bucharest, Brașov, Sibiu, Cernăuți and other towns.

In 1921 was founded 'Consiliul Național al Femeilor', affiliated to the International Council of Women.

In 1929 was founded 'Gruparea Națională a Femeilor române'.

In 1936 was founded 'Frontul feminin' in Bucharest.

### **Feminist journals and magazines:**

*Femeia română* (1878-1881)

*Dochia* (Iasi, 1896-1898)

*Romanca* (Iasi, 1905-1906)

*Viitorul romancelor* (Bucharest, 1912-1914)

*Unirea femeilor române* (Iasi, 1909-1916)

*Revista noastră* created in Iasi in 1905

*Acțiunea feminist* published in Piatra Neamț (1919-1921)

*Buletinul trimestrial* published in Iasi (1919-1921).

*Revista scriitoarei* (1926-1928).

*Graiul femeii* published in Ploiesti between 1935 and 1938.<sup>30</sup>

### **Women translators:**

Catinca Sâmboteanu was the first woman translator. She translated Alain-René Lesage, *Draculu șchiopu* in 1835.

Elisabeta Știrbei translated in 1839, Jeanne-Louise Campan, *Educația copiilor*.

Hermiona Asachi (1821-1900), translator of Egar Quinet (her husband) works from 1845 onwards.

Alexandrina Magheru

Maria Burada

Adelaida Christianofschi

Ecaterina Bilciurescu

Sofia Cocea

Maeia Ioranu

Maria Eliad<sup>31</sup>

Anica Gane (1827-1893)

<sup>30</sup> Stefania Mihailescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc*, vol. 1, p. 22-32, 45-46.

<sup>31</sup> Nicoleta Roman, *Femei, onoare și păcat în Valachia secolului al XIX-lea* (Women, honor and sin in XIX century Wallachia), Bucharest, Humanitas, 2016, p. 43-44.



**Women writers in Romania:**



**Maria Băiulescu** (1860-1941). Feminist activist and writer. Published: *Note si impresiuni* (1896), *Vacantii* (1903), *Extaz* (1908). Translated from Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller etc.



**Martha Bibescu** (1889-1973). Writer. Studied in Paris. Travelled around the world. The depiction of her travels to Persia and Egypt were published in *Les huit paradis* (1908). After 1945 she went into exile in Paris. She published 40 books among them: the novel, *Papagalul verde* (1924), a biography *O dragoste tândră a lui Napoleon: Maria Walewska* (1936), her memories, *La bal cu Marcel Proust* (1928).



**Ana Elisabeta Brâncoveanu, Countess Anna de Noailles** (1876-1933). Poet, writer, activist of human rights and women rights. She organized a literary salon in Paris where she received André Gide, Paul Valéry, Jean Cocteau, Colette, Paul Claudel, Marcel Proust as well as Eduard of Walles, future king Eduard VII. She published poems *Litanies* (1889), *Le coeur innombrable* (1901), *L'ombre des Jours* (1902). She travelled in Italy, Spain and Portugal and published her travel journal *Les vivants et les morts* in 1913. Member of the Royal Academy of Language and Literature of Belgium. Member of the Romanian Academy (1925).



**Stéphanie Alice Călugăru-Stănescu** (1886-1933). Poet. She published a volum of poetry entitled *Vioarele* in 1905. After marrying the journalist L.C. E. Muller, she moved to France. She travelled to USA and Europe and she described her travels in her novel, *La tunique verte* published in 1924.

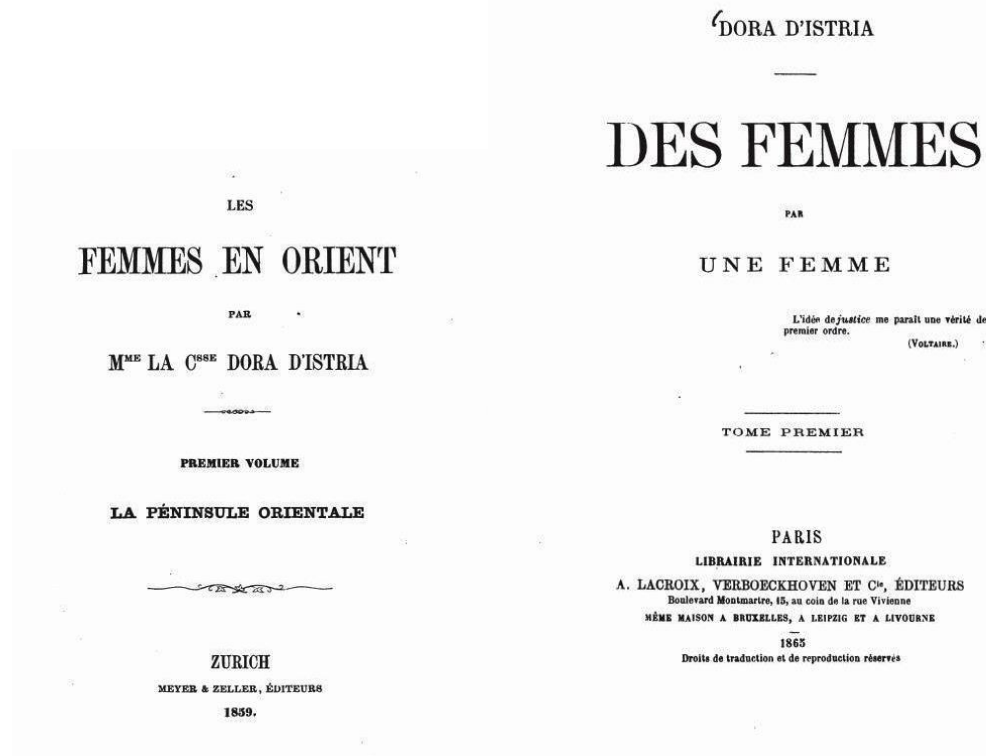


**Matilda Cugler-Poni** (1851-1932). Poet and novelist. She published her first poems in the well-known cultural magazine, *Convorbiri literare*, in 1867. Her debut poetry volum was published in 1874.



**Elena Ghica** alias **Dora d'Istria** (1828-1888). Writer, painter, historian, feminist. She translated from Greek to German at 14 years old *The Illiad* of Homer. She married Russian prince Alexander Kolotov Massalski and lived in Saint Petersburg during the Crimea War. She publicly sympathized with France and UK and was detained and tortured by the Russian authorities. She lef her husband in 1856 and travel to USA and through

Europe. She published extensively on Romanian principalities, but also on the Balkans, on women.



First Romanian woman to study at Sorbonne.

**Iulia Hasdeu** (1869-1888). Poet. Musician.





**Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu** (1876-1955).

One of the most appreciated and well-known woman writer of Romania.







**Izabela Sadoveanu** (1870-1941). Writer, translator, feminist. She studied in Geneva (1912-1915). After returning in Romania she published extensively.



**Cella Serghi** (1907-1992). Writer and translator. She studied law at the University of Bucharest, became a lawyer but dedicated herself to writing.



**Henriette Yvonne Stahl** (1900-1984). Writer, translator. She studied at the Academy of Drama Arts in Bucharest.



**Elena Văcărescu** (1864-1947). Writer, translator. She studied in Paris where she published her first volum of poetry, *Chants d'Aurore*. Exiled for being romantically involved with the crown prince Ferdinand, she lived in Paris. She was member of the Romanian delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919. She published extensively not only poetry but also novels and memories.

### Women Scientists



**Ana Aslan** (1897-1988). Studied Medicine in Bucharest. Got her PhD in Medicine in 1924. Physician in several hospitals of Bucharest. Professor at the University of Medicine in Timișoara. Pioneer of Gerontology and Geriatrics. Invented vitamin H3 used in anti-aging therapies.



**Gabriela Chaborski** (1891-1936). Studied chemistry in Bucharest and got her Ph.D. in chemistry in 1919 in Geneva. She returned to Romania and became associate professor at the University of Bucharest.



**Paulina Cruceanu** (1865-1921). The first women pharmacist in Romania. She studied Medicine in Bucharest.



**Maria Cutzarida-Crătunescu** (1857-1919). First woman physician in Romania. She studied medicine in Zurich. In 1884, she became doctor in medicine, specialized in gynecology. She got involved in feminist activities.



**Eliza Leonida Zamfirescu** (1887-1973). She studied in Berlin at Royal Technical Academy and became the first woman engineer in Romania.



**Ștefania Mărăcineanu** (1882-1944). She studied physics at the University of Bucharest. She attended the classes given by Marie Curie at the Institute of Radium of Paris. She got involved in the research of artificial radioactivity. She returned to Romania and worked at the University of Bucharest. She created the first laboratory of radioactivity. She wrote articles and scientific books on radioactivity, etc.

**Constanța Pompilian-Zossima** (1870-1936). Mathematician. Studied in Bucharest and Sorbonne. She co-founded the journal *Gazeta matematică*. She founded in 1896 the Institute Pompilian, a high school for woman.



**Elena Pușcariu-Densusianu (1875-1966).** Physician.

First woman professor of ophtalmology in a Romanian univeristy. She studied in Iasi and became a practitioner in Paris. She got her Ph.D. in medicine in Iasi in 1899.



**Alice Săvulescu (1905-1970).** Botanist. Studied

in Bucharest and got her Ph.D. in microbiology at Columbia University in 1934. She worked at the Institute of the Agronomic research. Later she became a member of the Romanian Academy (in 1963).



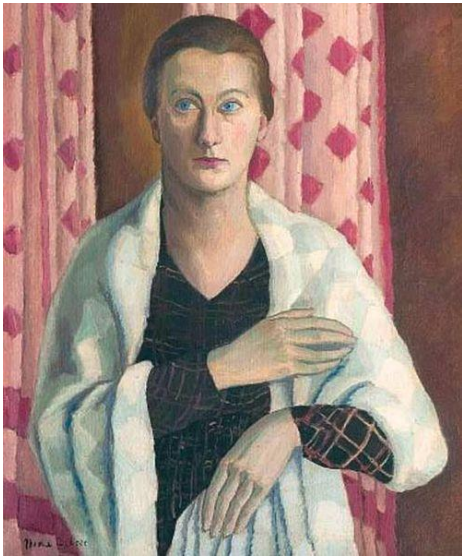


**Maria Teohari** (1885-1975). First Romanian woman astrophysicist. She studied in Bucharest and specialised in Paris and Nice.



**Marta Trancu-Rainer** (1875-1950). First woman surgeon. She studied medicine in Iasi. She performed a medical operation to Queen Maria during the First World War.

**Women artists:**



**Tamara Nina Arbore** (1889-1942). Painter, she studied in Munich and Paris (with Henri Matisse). She was member of the Romanian avant-garde. Exhibitions abroad in New York, Munich, Barcelona, Rome.



**Agatha Bârsescu** (1857-1939). Actress. Studied in Bucharest and Vienna. Debuted at Burgtheatr in Vienna. She returned to Romania in 1925 and taught at the Dramatic Arts Conservatory.



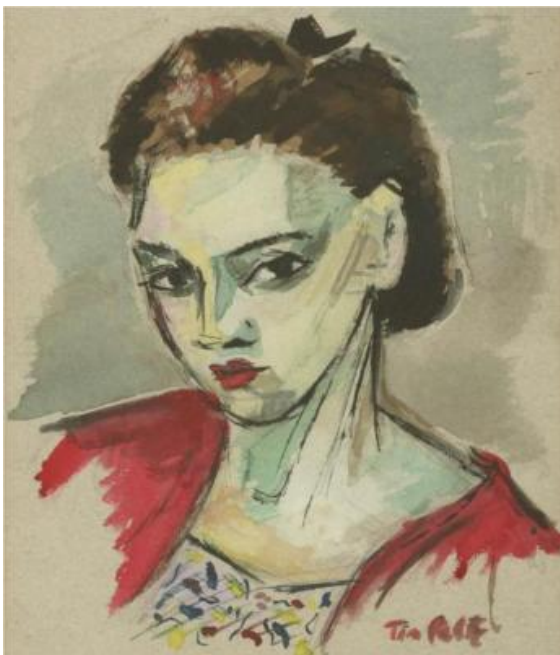
**Elena Bibescu** (1855-1902). Pianist. Studied in Vienna.



**Cecilia Cuțescu-Storck** (1879-1969). Painter, sculptor. She studied in Munich and Paris. She was the first woman to do frescos and university professor.



**Rodica Maniu-Mutzner** (1890-1958). Painter. She studied in Paris at Académie Julian. Exhibitions in Paris in 1910 and 1912 and to Venice Biennale and International Exhibition in Barcelona (1929).



**Tia Peltz** (1923-1999). Painter and graphic designer of Romanian avant-garde.





**Milița Pătrașcu** (1892-1976). Sculptor.

She was born in Chișinău, studied sculpture in Moscow and Literature in Sankt Petersburg, paintings and sculpture in Munich with Kandinsky and in Paris with Matisse and Bourdelle.



**Magdalena Rădulescu** (1902-1983). Painter.

She studied at Belle Arte Academy in Munich and La Grande Chaumière in Paris. She left Romania in 1947 and lived in Lausanne.





**Wanda Sachelarie-Vladimirescu (1916-2008).**

Painter. Studied in Paris at Académie de la Grande Chaumière.



**Margareta Sterian (1897-1992).** Painter, writer.

She studied at Ranson Academy in Paris and Ecole du Louvre. Member of the Avant-garde.

**Women Philanthropist and Activist:**



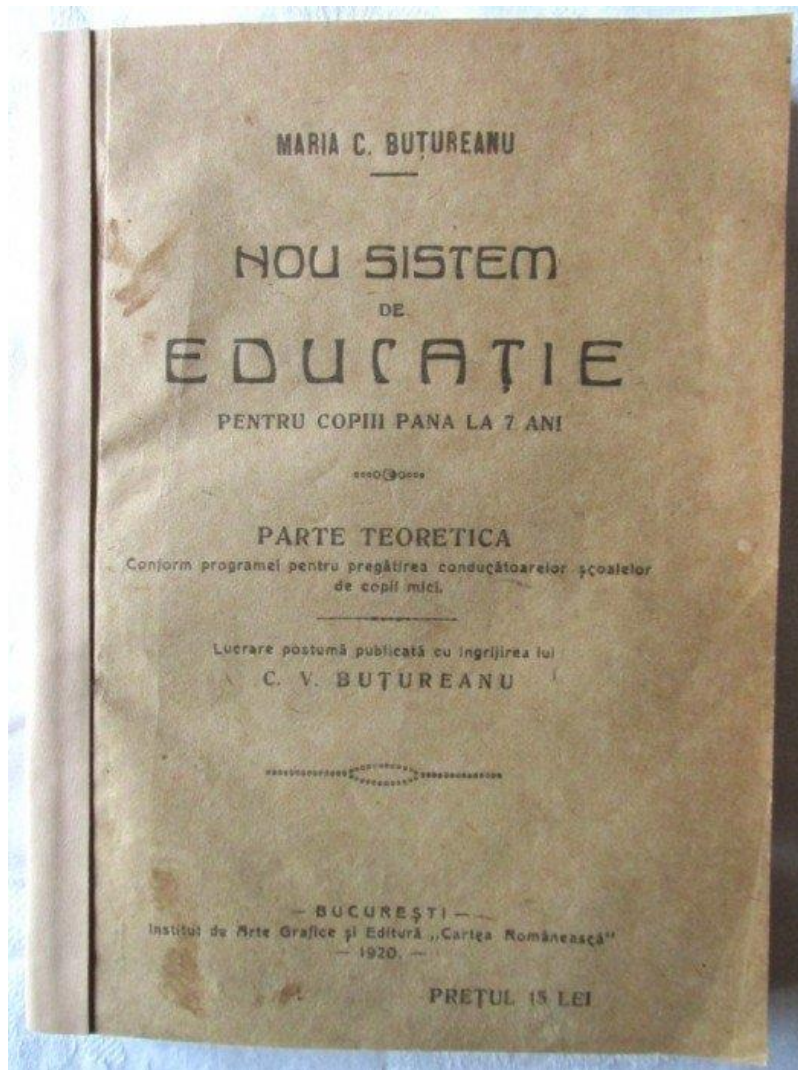
**Ecaterina Arbore** (1873-1937). Socialist militant, studied medicine in Bucharest (graduated in 1896). Member of the Executive Committee of the Romanian Social-Democrat Party. Left Romania for URSS in 1918. Died during the Stalinist purges.



**Olga Bancic** (1912-1944). Communist militant, lived in France and fought in the France resistance during the Second World War.



**Maria Buțureanu** (1870-1919). Activist for women rights, journalist. She graduated from sociology. She also studied in Lausanne, Berlin, Venice, Brussels. She published in several magazines on women issues.



**Elena Buznea-Meissner (1867-1940).**

Women activist. She studied literature at the University of Iasi.



**Alexandrina Cantacuzino** (1876-1944). Women activist. Studied in France. She created 'Societatea ortodoxa nationala a femeilor' (1918-1938), but also some other feminist associations.



**Sofia Cocea-Chrisoscoleu** (1839-1861). Publicist, poet and one of the first feminists of Moldavia. She translated from French.



**Ecaterina (Cocuța) Conachi-Vogoride** (1828-1870). Militant for the union of Wallachia and Moldavia. Her husband Nicolae Vogoride tried to hinder the unification of the two principalities but she discovered his letters and sent them to be published. Eventually she left her husband and traveled to Europe.





**Rallou Caragea** (1799-1870). The daughter of the prince Ioan Gheorghe Caragea (1812-1818), she encouraged theater in Wallachia but also the organization of the Princely Academy of Bucharest. She could speak several foreign languages, French, Greek, German, Turkish and Romanian.

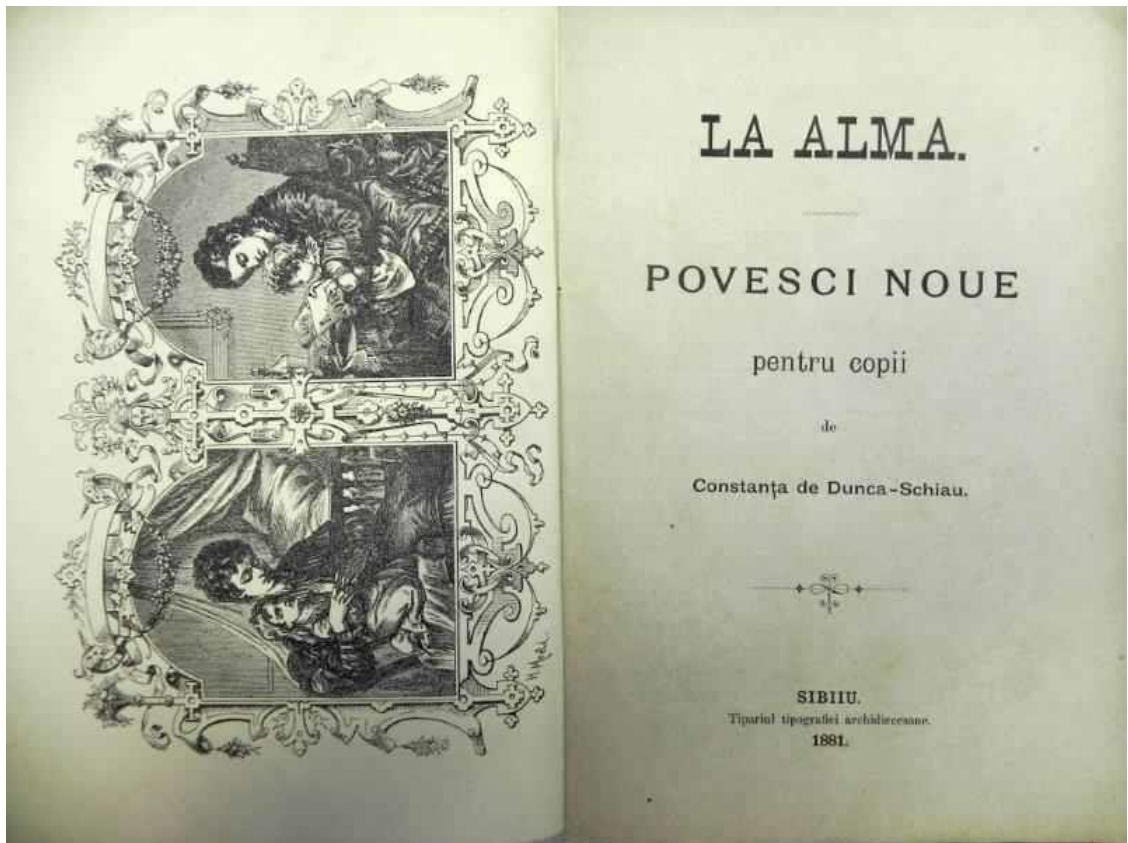


**Elena Cuza** (1825-1909). Wife of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first First Lady of Romania. She got involved in promoting women rights and philanthropist activities.



**Constanța Dunca-Schiau** (1843-1924). Writer and activist for women rights. Studied in Vienna and Paris. She got involved in the organization of the Romanian educational system. She wrote poems, novels, but also literary critique.





**Maria Flechtenmacher** (1838-1888). Feminist, writer, musician, actress. She run the woman magazine, *Femea romana*. She published poems, she translated E. Scribe's comedies.



**Zoe Goleacu** (1792-1879). She was involved in the Revolution of 1848 in Wallachia. She supported her husband and was among the first women to travel abroad in order to meet her sons also involved in the 1848 Revolution.



**Emilia Maiorescu (Humpel)** (1838-1918). She was a translator and feminist. She studied in Bucharest, Brasov and Vienna.



**Ana Ipătescu** (1805-1875). Revolutionary. She took part in the Revolution of 1848 in Wallachia. She even led the crowd and her deeds were depicted in journals of Europe like in *Allegemeine Osterreichische Zeitung* on 20 of June 1848 (*Disperarea ajunsese de acum la un grad înalt, când o eroină se năpăstui din nori, venind pe Podul Mogosoaiei cu doua pistoale in mana. Ea striga din toate puterile Moarte trădătorilor! Tineri, curaj, salvați libertatea!* Desperation had now reached a high degree, when a heroine stumbled out of the clouds, coming on the Mogosoaia road with two pistols in his hand. She cried out loudly: Death to the traitors! Young, have courage, save freedom!)



**Ella Negruzzi** (1876-1948). First woman lawyer in Romania, feminist. She studied at the University of Iasi. She was elected councilor in Iasi's City Council in 1929. She founded the society 'Emanciparea femeii' and in 1936 'Frontul feminin'.

**Elena Otteteleşanu** (?-1888). Patronized charity activities. She kept a salon in Bucharest.



**Emilia Puhallo-Lungu** (1853-1932). Journalist and feminist. She founded in 1872, the first feminist association in Banat, in Timisoara, 'Reuniunea doamnelor'.



**Ana Racoviță-Davila** (1834-1874). Philanthropist. She founded a boarding school for orphans in Bucharest.



**Eugenia Reuss-Ianculescu** (1865/1866-1938). Feminist, writer. She founded 'Liga drepturilor si datorilor femeilor' in Iasi in 1911. Member of the Central committee of the International Women Suffrage Alliance.





**Elena Romanescu-Alistar** (1873-1955).

Physician. As a woman from Bassarabia, she was an activist for the Romanian unity. She studied medicine in Iasi, she founded 'Liga culturala a femeilor din Basarabia' and was elected MP in 'Sfatul Tarii' and voted for the union of Bassarabia with Romania.



**Maria Rosetti** (born Mary Grant)

(1819-1893). She took part with her husband to the Revolution of 1848 in Bucharest. While in exile in Paris, she published *Les principautés danubiennes*. She inspired Rosenthal for his painting *Romania revolutionara* (Revolutionary Romania).



**Pelaghia Roșu** (1800-1870). She took part in the Revolution of 1848 in Transylvania. She studied in Budapest to become a teacher.

**Tereza Strățilescu** (1862-1931). Publicist, feminist. She studied in Iasi and London. In Iasi she worked as a teacher. She founded 'Unirea educatoarelor romane' in Iasi (1909-1916).



**Adela Xenopol** (1861-1939). Feminist. She studied in France at Sorbonne and Collège de France. She founded the feminist journal *Dochia*, and run several other feminist journals as *Romanca* and *Viitorul românelor*.



**Luiza Zavloschi** (1883-1967). First woman mayor in Romania. She was a teacher and become a mayor in 1930.



### Romanian Women Travelers

**Ruxandra Sturdza** (1786-1844). Married Albert Gaetay Edling, the marshal of the Weimar court and travelled extensively in Europe.

**Martha Bibescu** (1889-1973). Writer. Studied in Paris. Travelled around the world. The depiction of her travels to Persia and Egypt were published in *Les huit paradis* (1908).

**Ana Elisabeta Brâncoveanu**, Countess **Anna de Noailles** (1876-1933). Poet, writer, activist of human rights and women rights. She travelled in Italy, Spain and Portugal and published her travel journal, *Les vivants et les morts* (1913).

**Stéphanie Alice Călugăru-Stănescu** (1886-1933). Poet. She travelled to USA and through Europe and described her travels in her novel, *La tunique verte*, published in 1924.

**Elena Ghica** alias **Dora d'Istria** (1828-1888). Writer, painter, historian, feminist. She travelled to USA and through Europe.

**Ecaterina Conachi** (1828-1870), philanthropist, travelled to Vienna and Paris.

**Zoe Golescu** (1792-1879), revolutionary, travelled to Paris and through Europe.<sup>32</sup>

### Foreign Travelers about Romanian Women

*Sir Robert Thomas Wilson (1777-1849) was a General and writer and had visited both Wallachia and Moldavia in 1812 during a diplomatic mission.*

About women in Wallachia: "Aici imbracamintea femeilor este foarte vesela si am remarcat unul sau doua modele foarte dragute; grija lor pentru imbracamintea cu podoabe este o dovada ca sunt obisnuite sa fie admirate. N-am citit niciodata despre frumusetile din Tara Romaneasca, dar ele sunt rivale de temut ale cunoscutei si laudatei institutii a lui Venus." (Here women's clothing is very joyful and I have noticed one or two very nice designs; their care for adornment with jewelry which might be a proof that they are accustomed to being admired. I have never read about the beauties of Wallachia, but they are righteous rivals of the well-known and praised institution of Venus.)<sup>33</sup>

*Auguste de Lagarde (Count Lagarde) had to leave France during Revolution, and after 1806 get refuge in Russia and joined the army. He left a few letters to his English friend describing his travel in Wallachia in 1813.*

"Imbracamintea femeilor seaman intrucatva cu cea a grecoiacelor de la Constantinopol la care adauga o mai mare cantitate de bijuterii, dar acum numai femeile in virsta si cele ale boierilor de rangul 3 o mai folosesc. Celelalte urmeaza moda de la Paris si Viena si se intrec in cee ce priveste gustul si cochetaria cu elegantele din capitalele noastre.

Pe cit de indolente si lenese sunt sotiile boierilor pe atit de vrednice si de muncitoare sunt cele din popor; mereu cu fusul in mina, ele isi poarta marfurile si chiar copiii pe cap ca sa nu fie impiedicate sa toarca mergand." (The clothing of women resembles that of the Greek women in Constantinople, to which they add a larger quantity of jewelry, but now only the elderly women and those of the 3rd grade boyars use it. The others follow the fashion from Paris and Vienna and can compete for the taste and style with the elegant women of our capitals.

<sup>32</sup> Information taken from George Marcu, Rodica Ilinca, *Enciclopedia personalităților feminine din România* (The Encyclopedia of Feminine Personalities of Romania), Bucharest, Meronia, 2012.

<sup>33</sup> *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea* (Foreign Travelers About Romanian Countries in the XIXth century), Serie nouă, vol. 1, Bucharest, Editura Academiei, p. 556.

The wives of boyars are indolent and lazy but women of people are so worthy and laborers; they carry always a spindle in the hand, they carry their goods and even the children on their head so they will not be prevented from spinning while walking.)<sup>34</sup>

*François Recordon born in 1795 in Switerland was an architect. His father was a trader, he owned a few hostels in Bucharest. Therefore, Recordon came to visit his father in 1815 and decided to remain in Bucharest as the assistant secretary of the ruling prince Ion Gheorghe Caragea (1812-1818). After the death of his father (1818/1819), Recordon sold all the inherited properties and left Wallachia for good. He settled in Paris where in 1821 pulished Lettres sur la Valachie ou observations sur cette province et ses habitants écrites de 1815 à 1821 avec la relation des dernières événements qui y ont eu lieux... dedicated to Ioan Gheorghe Caragea. Afterwards, he returned to Switzerland where he died in 1844.*

« Îmbrăcămintea femeilor române (țăărăncilor) este formată, în primul rând, dintr-o cămașă care în partea de sus și la mâneci este încărcată de cusături cu arnici albastru sau roșu; peste cămașă nu poartă nici rochie, nici fustă, ci două fote de stofă destul de groasă, în dungi albastre, roșii și albe sau galbene pe care le leagă una în față și alta dinapoi, lăsând să se vadă frumoasa lor cămașă de care sunt destul de mândre. ... Câte unele poartă la gât salbe de monede de argint, ca femeile țiganilor, sau chiar de aur, ca evreicile, care își împodobesc cu acestea și frumoasa lor tichie înflorită cu mărgăritare fine. ... De altfel nu prin găteală și nici prin farmecul lor exterior strălucesc mai mult aceste femei, ci mai curând prin dragostea față de soți, prin grija duioasă față de copii, prin hărnicia și destoinicia ce desfășoară în gospodăria lor; astfel să le vezi aproape întotdeauna cu fusul sau cu suveica în mână, căci ele singure țes stoffele din care sunt făcute straiile întregii familii. Aceste harnice gospodine îi țin pe toți ai casei atât de curat încât i-ai crede aproape întotdeauna în haine de sărbătoare.” (The clothing of Romanian women (peasants) is formed, first of all, from a shirt that is loaded on the top and on the sleeves with stitches with blue or red jargon; over the shirt they wear neither a dress nor a skirt, but two suits of thick fabric in blue, red and white or yellow stripes on which they tie one to the front and the other back, letting to see their beautiful shirt that they are pretty of pride. ... Some of them wear necklaces of silver coins, like the Gypsies, or even gold, like the Jews who adorn themselves with them, as well as their beautiful beanies adorned with fine pearls. ... Moreover, not by their cooking or by their outer charm, these women shine more, but rather by the love for theirs spouses, by the tender care of their children, by the diligence and the abilities to manage their households; so you can see them almost always with their spindle or the shuttle in their hand, for they alone weave the cloths from which the clothes of the whole family are made. These housekeepers keep all of the house so clean that you would almost always believe they wear holiday attires.)

În orașe ...”femeile, chiar cele din clasele de jos, etalează un lux destul de mare, fiind aproape întotdeauna îmbrăcate în rochii albe și cu capul descoperit; adesea își împodobesc părul cu flori sau cu o băsmăluță de muselină foarte elegantă. Femeile sunt în general mici, asta nu le împiedică să aibă un aer picant.” ( in towns ... women, even those in the lower classes, show a fairly large luxury, being almost always dressed in white dresses and head uncovered; often adorn their hair with flowers or a very elegant muslin beaver. Women are generally small, that does not prevent them from having a spicy air.)

Educația fetelor: ...”Se mulțumesc ca ele să știe să vorbească puțin, să citească și să scrie greaca modernă; cele care trec drept mai bine educate, cântă puțin la pian și vorbesc puțin franțuzește, dar arareori au cea mai mică idee despre istorie sau geografie; fapt care vine, pe de o parte, din indulgența sau mai degrabă din orbirea părinților, dintre care mulți își închipuie că este

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 565.

de ajuns pentru fericirea fiicelor lor să găsească o partidă bună înainte de a fi atins vârsta de 17 sau 18 ani și, pe de altă parte, din lenea sau chiar incapacitatea preceptorilor lor.”<sup>35</sup> (They are pleased to know how to speak a little, to read and write modern Greek; those who are better educated, play a little bit on the piano and speak a little French, but rarely have the slightest idea of history or geography; which comes from indulgence or rather from the blindness of parents, many of whom think that it is enough for the happiness of their daughters to find a good match before they reach the age of 17 or 18 and, on the other hand, to the laziness or even the inability of their preceptors.)

*Feodor Karacsay (1787-1859), count Karacsay of Croat origins, was officer in the Austrian army and writer. He travelled to Moldavia two times in 1814/1815 and 1817.*

”Femeile se disting în general prin frumusețea lor și torc cu mare sârguință. ... Se pune mult preț ca fetele să fie fecioare atunci când sunt încredințate ca mirese mirelui; altfel sunt trimise acasă, spre marea rușine a părinților; dar semnele virginității mai sunt și ticluite, pentru a înșela pe părinții mirelui.” (Women are generally distinguished by their beauty and spin with great diligence. ... It is a great honor for girls to be virgins when they are entrusted as bridegroom bride; otherwise they are sent home, to the great shame of their parents; but signs of virginity are sometimes cooked up to deceive the groom's parents.)

”Îmbrăcămintea femeii este alcătuită vara adesea doar dintr-o cămașă, un ștergar alb pe cap și un brâu ușor. Uneori un șorț, de obicei de lână neagră vărgat, încins peste mijloc ține loc de fustă de dedesupt. Fusta propriu-zisă este ceva cu totul necunoscut. ... Cămașa însăși este partea cea mai remarcabilă a costumului. Este lungă, căci ajunge aproape până la glezne, foarte strânsă, și este făcută dintr-o pânză destul de subțire și foarte bine înălbită, țesută în casă, din tort bine răsucit, adesea împodobită cu dungi din fire de bumbac sau de mătăasă. ... Marama albă de pe cap este și mai subțire decât cămașa. Aceasta este capodopera lucrului lor de mână; este de obicei albă cu înflorituri pe margini. Felul cum știu să își înfășoare această maramă pe cap, fără oglindă, și chiar fără ace, face într-adevăr cinste gustului lor. ... Așa vezi femeile și fetele mergând la biserică și în oraș, și tot așa le vezi lucrând și la câmp. ... Femeile din clasele mai înalte se îmbracă numai după moda franceză.” (Women's clothing is often during summer only a shirt, a white headband and a light gauze. Sometimes an apron, usually of wrinkled black wool, covers the underneath shirt. The skirt is something completely unknown. ... The shirt itself is the most remarkable part of the costume. It is long, it reaches almost to the ankles, very tight, and it is made of a thin and very bright white cloth, woven in the house, from a well-twisted thread, adorned with stripes of cotton or silk. ... The white marbled headdress is even thinner than the shirt. This is the masterpiece of their work; is usually white adorned with flowers at the edges. The way they know how to wrap this scarf on their head, without a mirror, and even without needles, does indeed honor their taste. ... You see women and girls dressed up like this going to the church and to the city, and you see them working in the field as well. ... Women from upper classes dress according to the French fashion.)

”Femeile au, în Moldova, un temperament viu și plin de foc, care este foarte receptiv la semnele iubirii și se leagă cu patima cea mai fierbinte de obiectul iubit; nicio jertfă nu îi pare prea mare pentru a-i obține dragostea. Dar cineva s-ar înșela cumplit dacă ar vedea în această puternică energie a sentimentelor un izvor de rătăcirii a simțurilor și de desfrâu.” (Women have a vivid and hot temperament in Moldova, they are very receptive to the signs of love and they love with hot

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 668-669, 687.

passion their love subject; no sacrifice seems too big to get their love. But someone would be terribly wrong if they would see in this powerful sentiment a source of wandering of the senses and of sins.)

"Limba franceză este vorbită curent și de bărbați și de femei." (French is commonly spoken by both men and women.)<sup>36</sup>

*Sir Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842), painter, born in UK, lived in Russia between 1804-1806 than in Sweden, UK, Venezuela. He died in Sankt Petersburg while visiting his daughter. He visited Wallachia in 1820.*

Wallachia: "Femeile sunt cât se poate de drăguțe, blânde și vioaie; deoarece au renunțat la costumul național și arată ca niște elegante pariziene." (Women are as cute, gentle and lively as possible; they gave up to their national costume and look like elegant Parisian women.)

Moldavia: "Doamnele la fel de frumoase, ca și surorile lor valahe, erau îmbrăcate tot după moda pariziană, dar materialul șalurilor, perlele, diamantele și celelalte pietre prețioase, neprețuite și minunate, nu aveau egal de cealaltă parte a Carpaților." <sup>37</sup> (The ladies as beautiful as their Wallachian sisters were dressed in the Parisian fashion, but the material of the shawls, pearls, diamonds and other precious and wonderful stones did not equal the jewelry wore on the other side of the Carpathians.)

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 754-758.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 807, 811.

### Quotations of women about themselves:

Agatha Bârsescu about her career as an opera singer: "Am avut mult de luptat cu familia. Părinții mei făceau parte din înalta societate a Bucureștiului, un unchi al meu era ministru de război și când am intrat în Conservator toate rudele mi-au considerat gestul, ca cea mai mare ofensă adusă întregii familii. După terminarea Conservatorului la Bucureștii, relevându-mă într'un rol din comedia lui Oldnescu-Ascanio: "Pe malul gârlei", am plecat la Viena pentru completarea studiilor.

Acolo, am cunoscut adevăratele succese ce le poate visa o artistă. În urma debutului în Hero - aveam șaptesprezece ani atunci - am fost angajată la Burgtheater și timp de șapte ani, vienezii mi-au răsplătit munca, cu dragostea și entuziasmul lor. Îmi aduc aminte de splendidele seri, când întreaga elită și însuși împăratul Franz Joseph veneau la Burgtheater să mă vadă în rolurile mele preferate: Sapho, Medeea, Mary-Stuart. Natural, că primirea caldă ce mi se făcea a fost un puternic imbold de a munci și persevera. După cei șapte ani petrecuți la Viena, am început să întreprind turnee în principalele capitale ale Europei, dar cu toate angajamentele ce mi se propuneau, mă întorceam iarăși în orașul meu iubit: Viena! De el mă leagă atâtea amintiri frumoase încât e naturală dragostea ce i-o păstrez." (I had to struggle with my own family. My parents were part of the high society of Bucharest, my uncle was a war minister, and when I entered the Conservatory, all my relatives considered my gesture as the biggest offense to the whole family. After finishing the Conservatory in Bucharest, I played a part in the Oldnescu-Ascanio's comedy: "On the shore of the lair," and afterwards, I went to Vienna to complete my studies. There, I met the real successes an artist could dream about. Following my debut in Hero - I was seventeen by then - I was employed at the Burgtheater and for seven years, the Viennese rewarded my work with their love and enthusiasm. I remember the splendid evenings when the whole elite and Emperor Franz Joseph himself came to the Burgtheater to see me in my favorite roles: Sapho, Medeea, Mary-Stuart. Naturally, the warm welcome I was getting was a powerful impulse to work and persevere. After my seven years in Vienna, I started touring the main capitals of Europe, but although they offered me jobs, I have always returned to my beloved city: Vienna! I have so many beautiful memories about my stay in Vienna that my love for it is understandable.)<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Agatha Bârsescu, "O oră cu Agatha Bârsescu" (One hour with Agatha Bârsescu), done by Maia for *Ilustrațiunea română*, March 12, 1931.



## Artistic Images of Women by Men

### Paintings:

Constantin Lecca (1807-1887).

He painted a lot of women's portraits. Mostly women from his family, but also from the Romanian aristocracy.



Eufrosina Lecca, a sister-in-law



Cleopatra Lecca, the daughter of the painter





Maria Bibescu





Portrait of Anita Greceanu





Portrait of Alexandrina Vlădoianu



**Carol Pop de Szathmary (1812-1887)** was among the first world photographers and the first photographer of war. He had taken pictures during the Ottoman-Russian-Romanian war of 1877-1878. He had also taken a lot of pictures of women in his photo studio of Bucharest.



Peasant of Wallachia



Ecaterina Bibescu



Elena Cuza



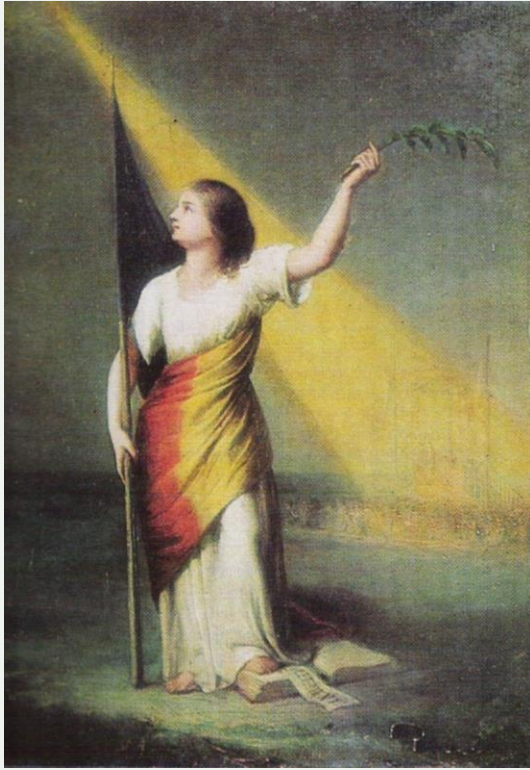


Peasant



**Constantin Daniel Rosenthal (1820-1851)**

Born in Budapest, he settled for work in Bucharest in 1842. He painted women portraits, but also women incarnating the Revolution.



Revolutionary Romania



Portrait of a woman

**Gheorghe Tătărescu (1820-1894)**

Painted several portraits of women and their families. He also depicted Romania as a woman in several paintings.



Sofia Kretzulescu



Modern Romania



Renaissance of Romania



Portrait of a young woman



**Mișu Pop (1827-1887).**

He realized many portraits of women of aristocracy.



the mother of the artist





Anastasia Rudeanu



Ana Enescu



Peasant from Muscel



**Nicolae Grigorescu** (1838-1907).

Known as the national painter of Romania. He painted peasantry as well as countryside landscapes. He also painted a lot of women peasants and Roma women.



Woman Peasant from Muscel

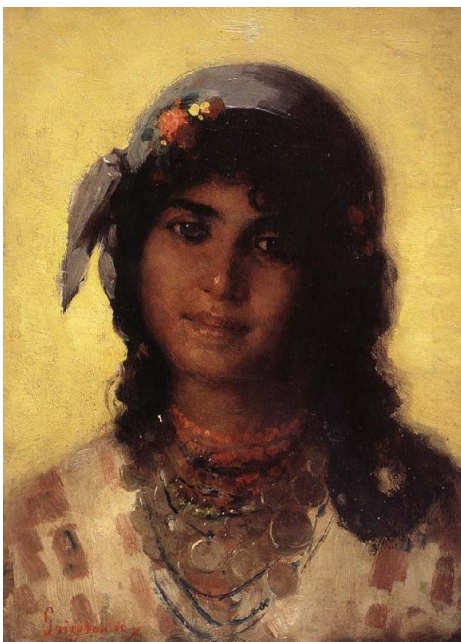


Woman with a water jug





Peasant spinning



Gypsy Girl



Gypsy woman

**Theodor Aman** (1831-1891).

Interested in the Orient and his women. He depicted mostly Roma women and oriental women. But also women as national symbols.



Gypsy girl



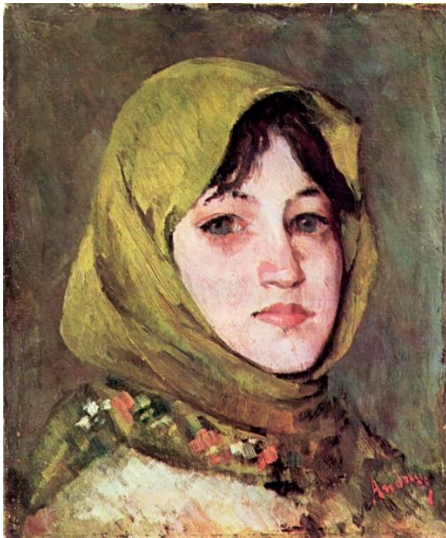


Odalisk

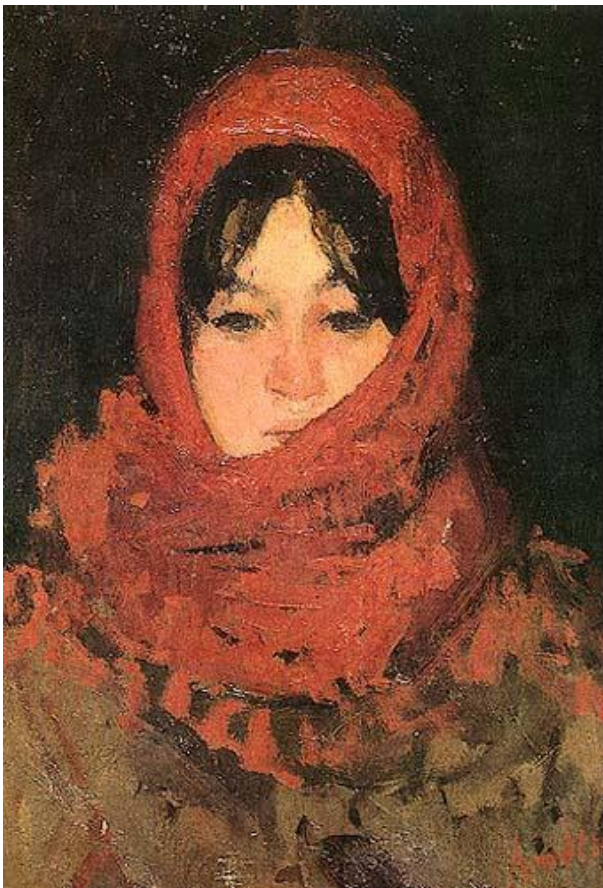


The Union of the two Principalities (1857)

**Ion Andreescu** (1850-1882). He belonged to the Barbizon School, he painted a few peasant women but mostly bourgeois laying down in the nature.



Peasant





**Ștefan Luchian** (1868-1916).

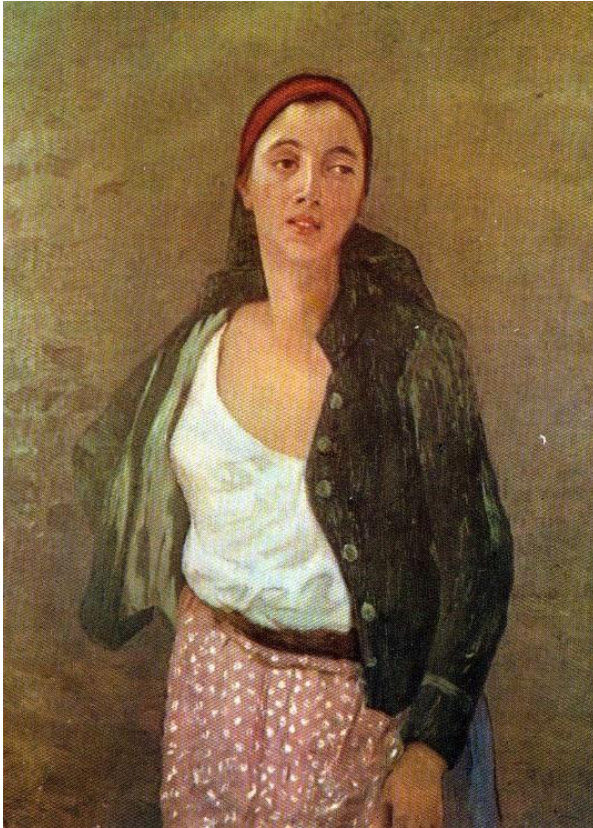
He painted women from his family but also peasants, gypsy and women workers. He mostly painted flowers and landscapes.



Laura Cocea



Women in the house, Laura Cocea



Safta, the flower girl



The working women



**Gheorghe Petrașcu (1872-1949)**

He painted bourgeois women. Most of his paintings depicted house's interior or the sea.



Women in Mangalia



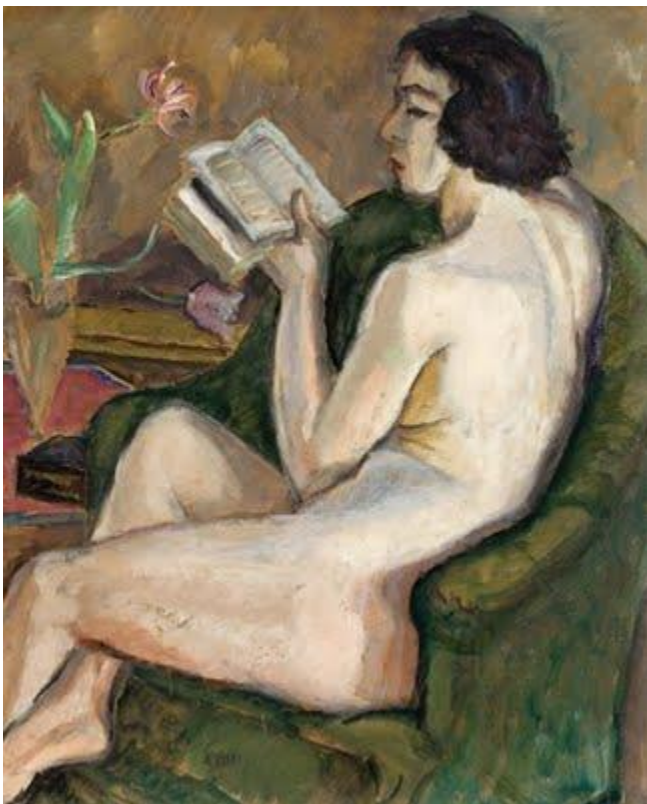
By the sea



**Theodor Pallady** (1871-1956). He painted woman mostly as nudes.



Drawings for nostalgia

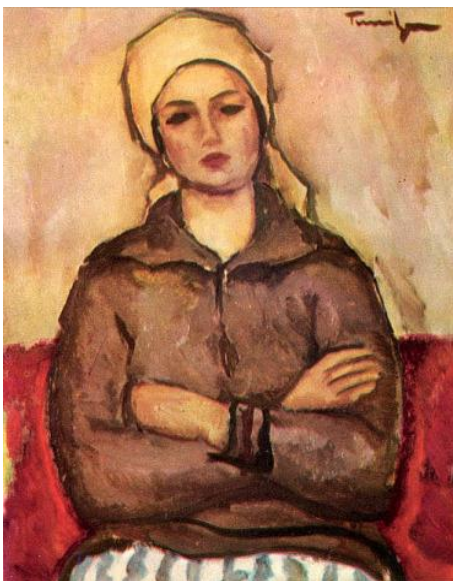


Reading Nude

**Nicolae Tonitza** (1886-1940). He painted a lot of girls, especially portraits, but also some nudes of Oriental woman as well as woman as mothers or workers.

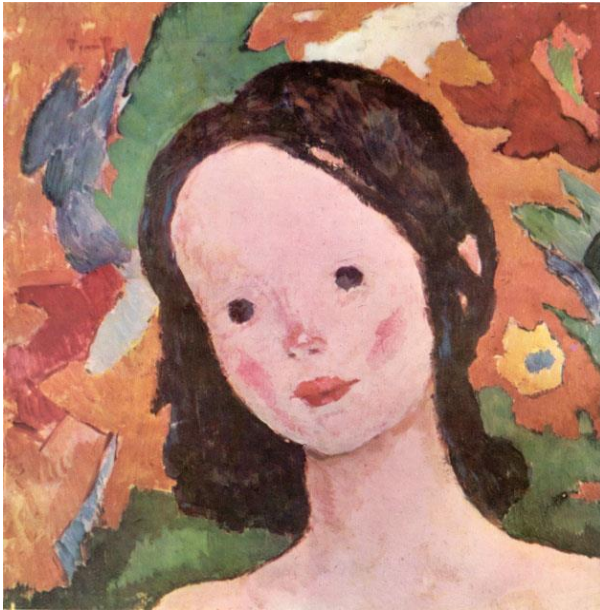


The girl of the forest guard

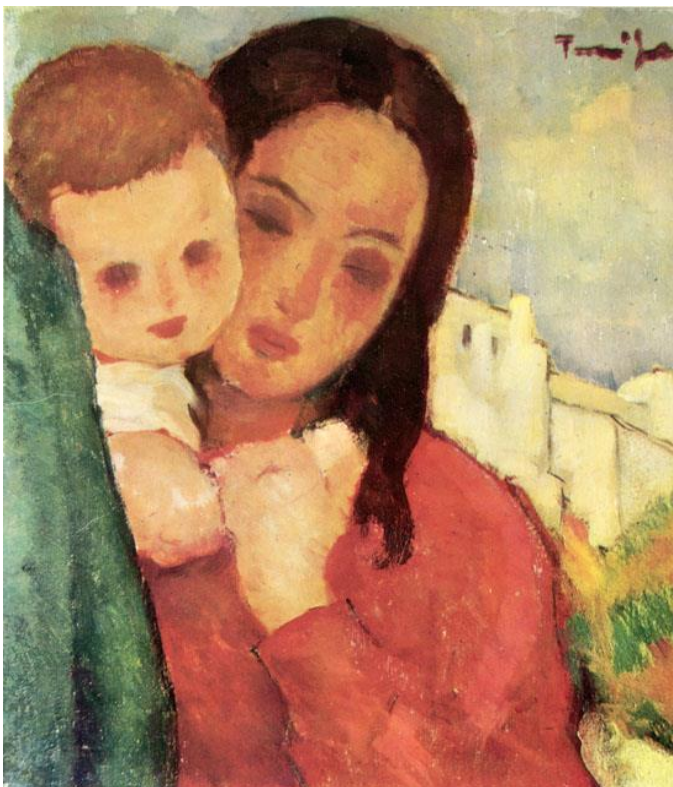


Working woman





The young girl



Mother and Child





Afize



Turkish women in Balcic

**Iosif Iser** (1881-1958). He painted a lot of women portraits and Oriental Women.

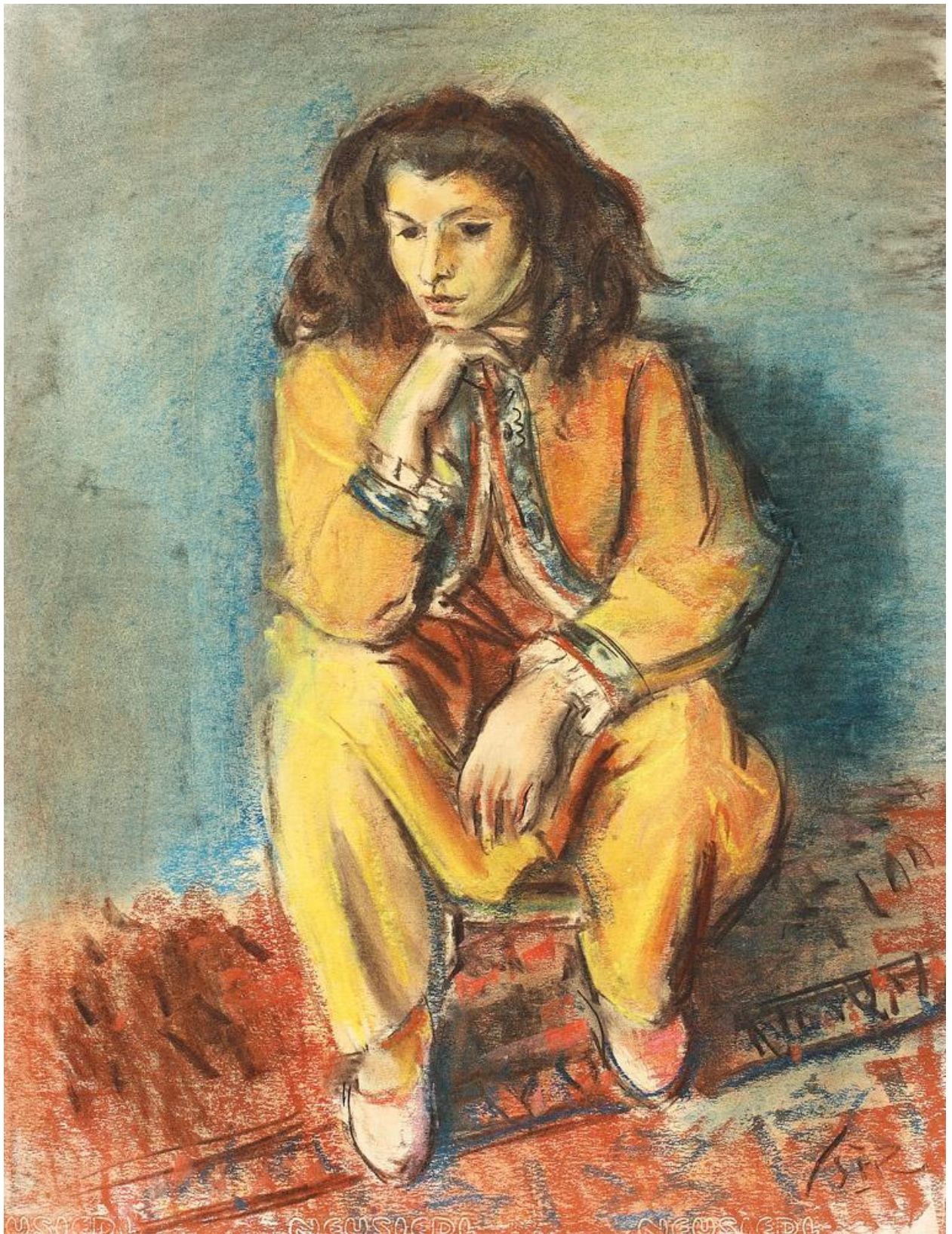


Woman in yellow



Tatar Women





Tatar Woman



**Camil Ressu** (1880-1962). He painted a lot of women peasant.



Maternity





Peasant women in the church



Peasant in the field



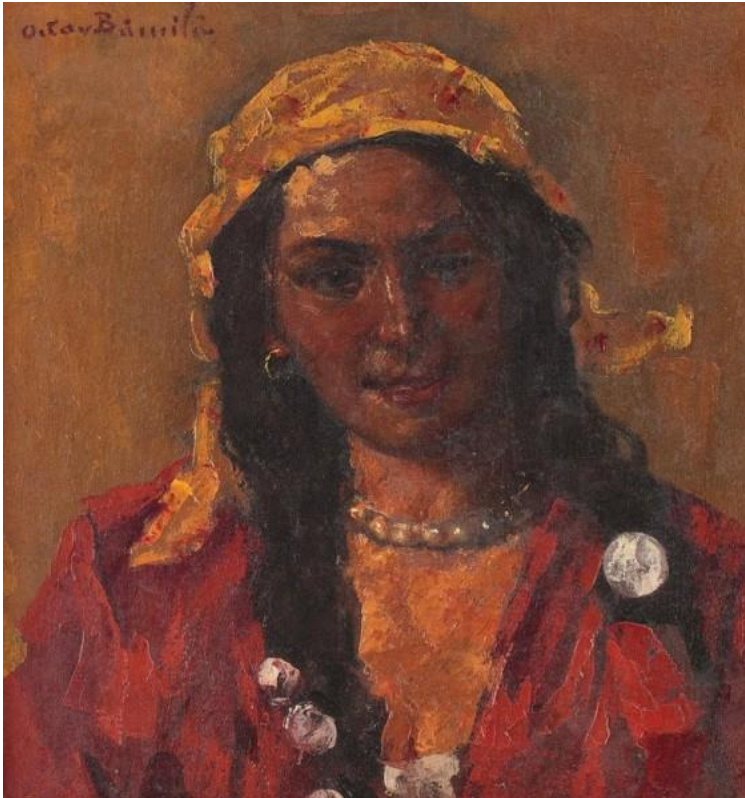
Peasant working



**Octav Băncilă** (1872-1944). He painted a lot of peasant women and Roma women.



Roma Woman



Gypsy girl



Peasant women





Spinning woman



## Women Painters Depicting Other Women:

**Maria Ciurdea Steurer (1878-1967).**



Autoportrait



Girl portrait

**Cecilia Cuțescu-Storck (1879-1969).**



My daughter, Gabriela



Paparudele (The Water Girls)

**Elena Popea** (1879-1941). She painted peasant women.



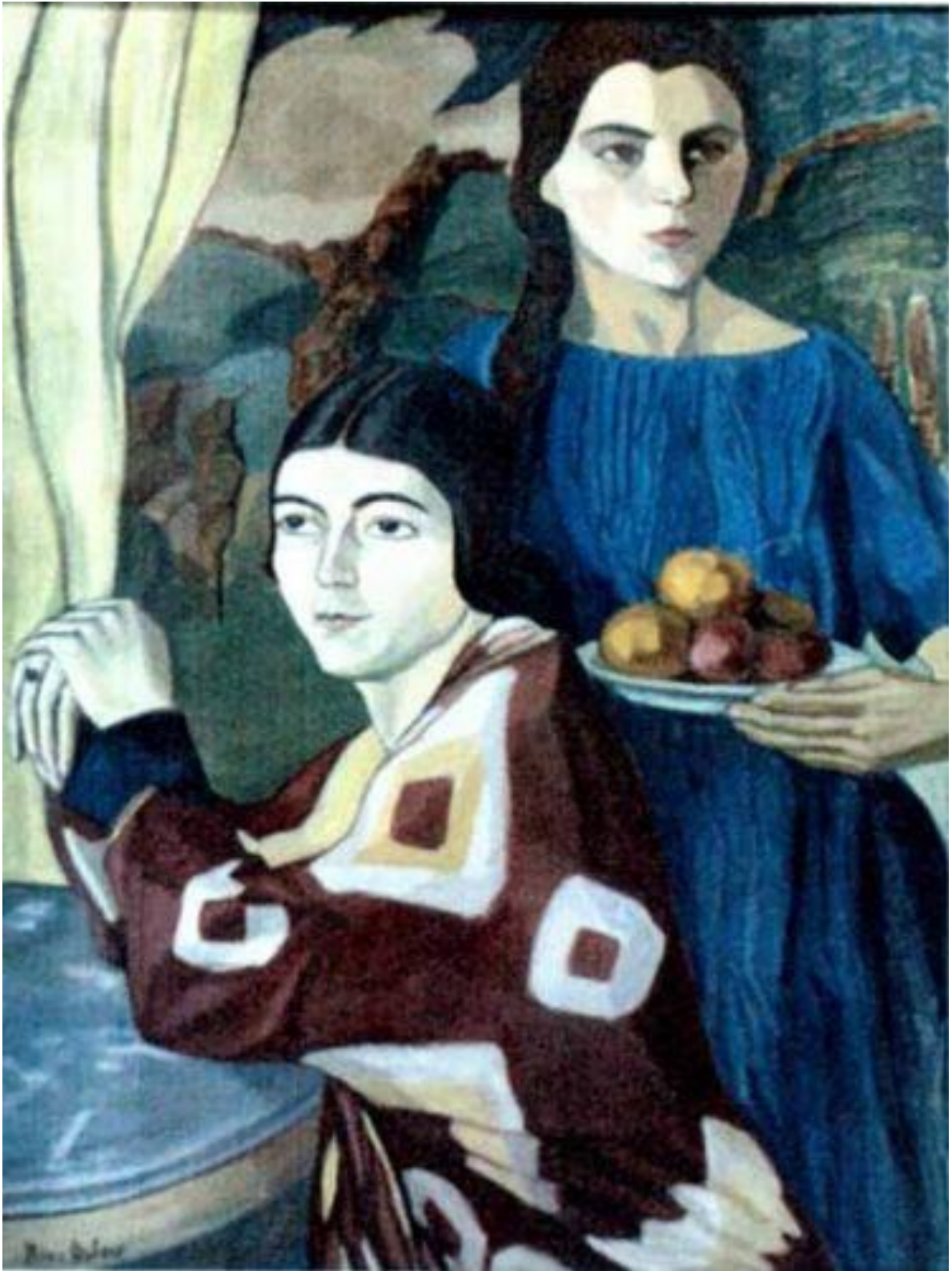
Peasant woman



**Nina Arbore** (1889-1942).



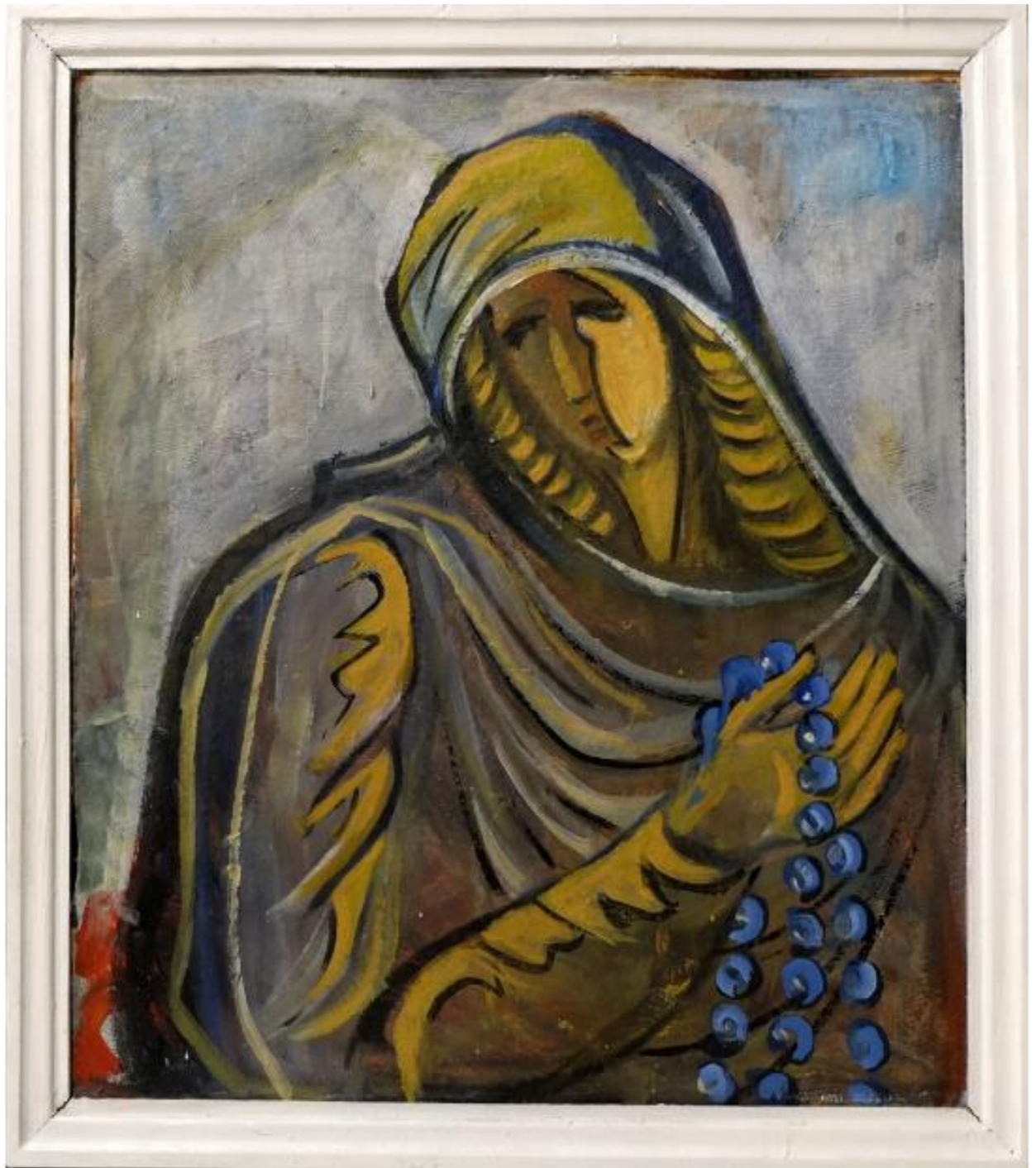
Woman with dog



Two sisters



**Olga Greceanu** (1890-1969). Her paintings were mostly religious. She depicted women praying or women saints.

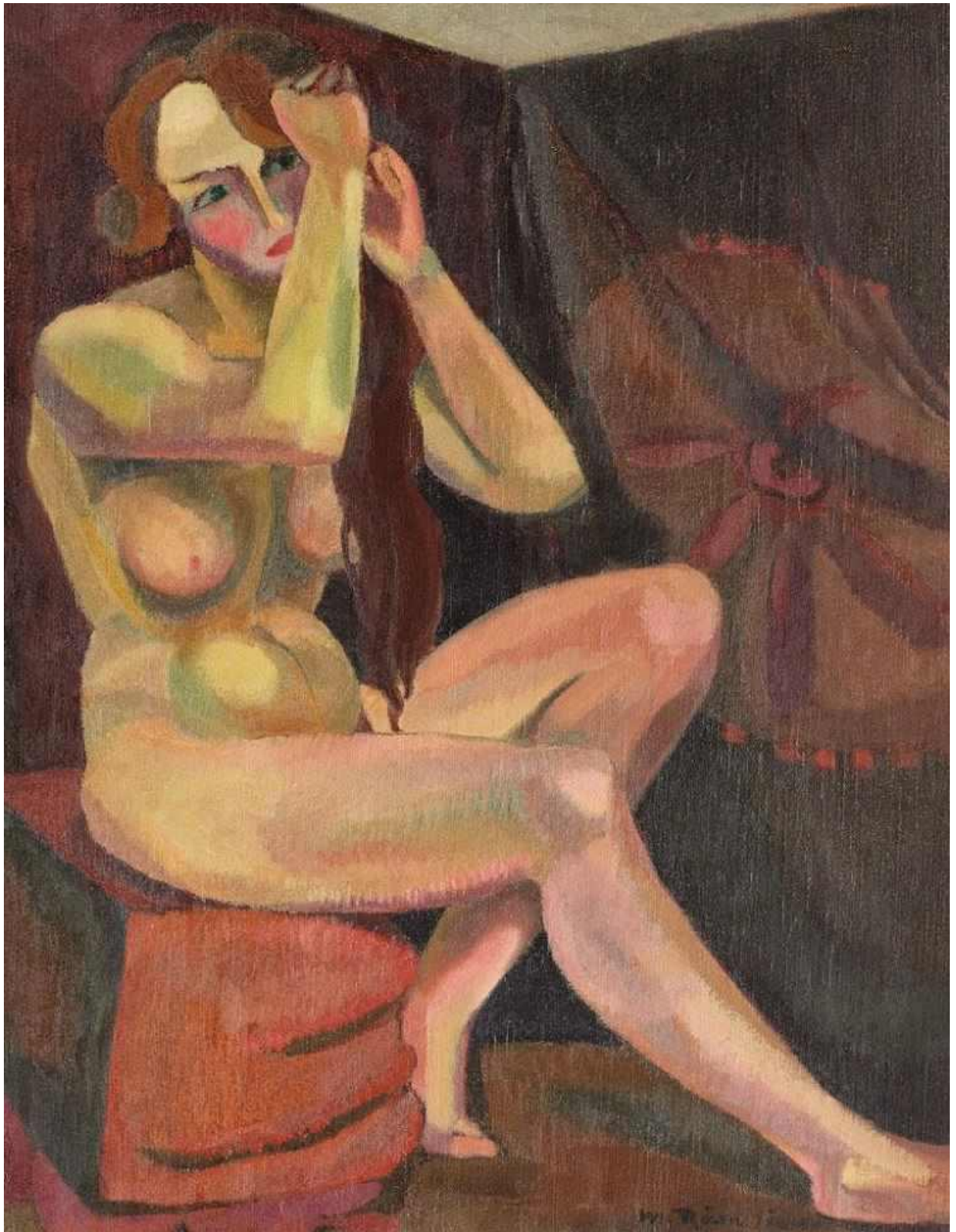




**Rodica Maniu** (1890-1958). She painted women peasants.



**Merica Râmniceanu** (1900-1972). She painted nudes.







Cella Serghi



**Nutzi Acontz** (1894-1957).



Interior in Balcic

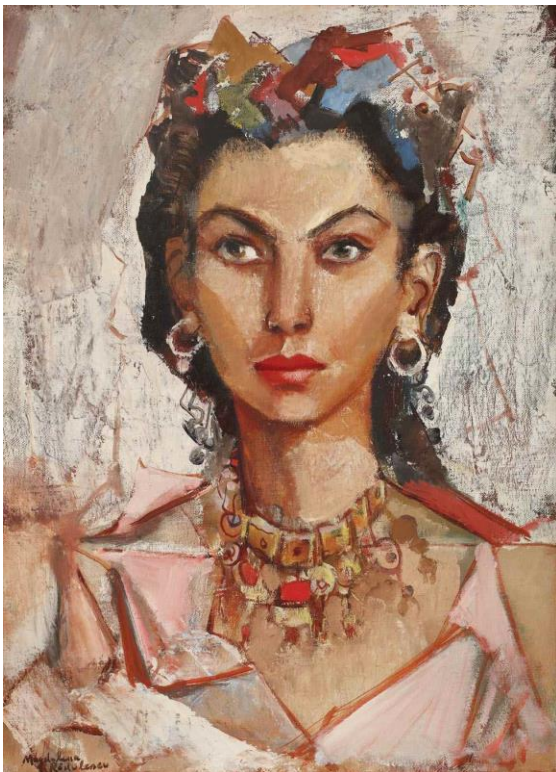
**Nadia Grossman Bulighin** (1891-1930).



**Magdalena Rădulescu (1902-1983).**



Wedding in Nice



Autoportrait





Cella Serghi



**Tia Peltz (1923-1999).**



The elder sister



Girl with Blue Eyes



The Odalisk

**Irina Codreanu** (1896-1985).



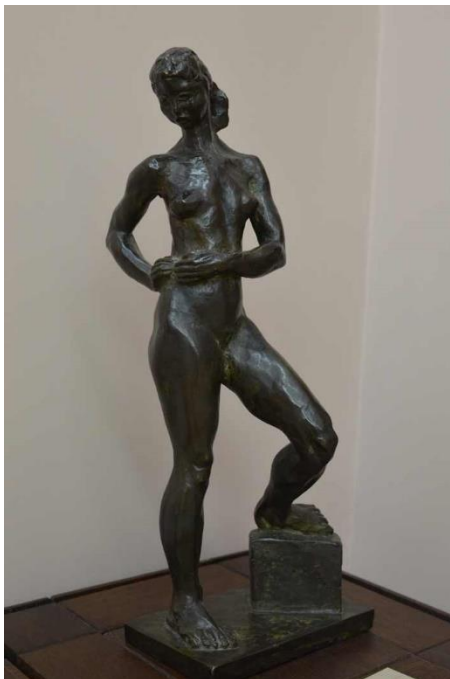
Maternity



**Milița Petrașcu (1892-1976).**



Female twist



Nude



Woman portrait



Queen Maria portrait

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