

*The Peasant-Question, Political Projects,  
Ethnic and Electoral Facts*

**A Perfect Symbiosis – Ion Ionescu de la Brad and the Peasants**  
(Abstract)

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In this paper we try to present the image of the peasant in Ion Ionescu de la Brad's writings. We are interested especially in the topography of this image, that is the manner this topic is developing in the writings of this Moldavian author.

I have thought for a long time that the historical character with greatest empathy for the peasant is Mihail Kogălniceanu. I could not be more wrong because this seat is taken still by a Moldavian, his contemporary – agronomist Ion Ionescu de la Brad. For all of his life our author writes about peasants and especially about how peasantry can be taken out of the vicious circle of poverty and ignorance. Ion Ionescu de la Brad through the three monographs of agriculture in Putna, Dorohoi and Mehedinți counties, introduces us in the social rural inferno and describes in detail the avatars of 1864 rural law's enforcement. This first stage of his work is in fact an acid critique of the social and economic system that keeps the peasant in an eternal state of inferiority. Now he defines the peasant condition in his epoch as a succession and a superposition of the three 'slaveries': of work and land (till 1864), followed by that of the money, everything being aggravated by the 'non-learning slavery'.

After 1869, when he buys Brad estate, we move to the second stage of his activity, the one when he tries to do the social reform. At a small scale through his model farm and school of agriculture in Brad. But maybe his most important contribution in this field is his model of exploitation of Brad estate where he tries to armonize the interests of the big landlord with those of the peasants at the estate. It is the long dreamed social symbiosis that the conservatory thinking projects upon the relations between landlords and peasants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He tries to put in practice and as he says, it seemed to have succeeded.

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