

COLECȚIA INSTITUTULUI DE ISTORIE
„A.D. XENOPOL”



Frânturi din trecut

putere, societate, diplomație



MARIUS CHELCU • DORIN DOBRINCU
(editori)

*Lucrările Conferinței
Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”*

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INSTITUTUL DE ISTORIE „A. D. XENOPOL”

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COLECȚIA INSTITUTULUI DE ISTORIE „A.D. XENOPOL” IAȘI

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2024

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**Administration, Finance and Military Occupation
in Early Modern Moldova**

Adrian MAGINA*

Documentary Contributions to the Epoch of Despot Vodă

(Abstract)

Keywords: Despot, 16th century, Moldova, documents, money.

Despot vodă's personality and his role in the history of the Romanian territories, especially during the short period he occupied the throne of Moldavia, are well known in historiography. Countless works have been written about this character in both Romanian and foreign historiography. The present analysis is limited to a series of financial aspects, aimed at revealing the role of the Habsburgs in financially supporting Despot's effort to occupy the throne of Moldavia. I have started from several documents discovered in the Hungarian National Archive, papers that show the route of the money, more precisely the way in which the creditors tried to obtain from the Habsburg emperor, according to the a previous agreement, the sums offered to Despot in his attempt to occupy the throne. The documents transcribed in the appendices, even if they only loosen the link between the House of Habsburg and Despot to a limited extent, provide important clues to understanding the financial mechanisms underlying this relationship. Without the financial and logistical support of the Habsburgs and of certain nobles and townsmen in northern Hungary, the fate of the 1561 expedition might have been different, and the self-proclaimed Despot of Samos would probably have remained a mere pretender to the throne of Moldavia.

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Mihai Anatolii CIOBANU*

The Funeral Ceremony of Constantin Mavrocordat
(Abstract)

Keywords: Mavrocordat, Moldavia, Russia, war, burial, Ottomans.

In 1769, when the Russian army arrived in Moldavia, Constantin Mavrocordat, the lord of the country, fled to Galați. The Russian vanguard reached Galați in early November, and a battle took place between the Russians and the Ottomans, with the Russians winning. Constantin Mavrocordat was captured and taken to Iași, where he soon died. The Russians buried him with all due honour. In our contribution we publish and analyse the burial ceremony of Constantin Mavrocordat.

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Cristian PLOSCARU*

**The Military Administration in the Romanian Principalities
and the Russian Model of ‘Limited Autonomy’ (1769-1774)**

(Abstract)

Keywords: military administration, political culture, autonomy, institutional reform, Piotr Rumiantsev.

The issue that we intend to highlight in this study in relation to Russian political and administrative practices during the years of military occupation (1769-1774) concerns the solutions that the Petersburg Cabinet envisaged to overcome the obstacles to the expansion of its influence in the Lower Danube, without creating a major crisis in relations with the other Great Powers and, at the same time, without alienating its prestige over the inhabitants of the Romanian Principalities. The conclusion we have reached is centered around the idea that the Russian military occupation between 1769 and 1774 opened a new stage in the history of the Romanian Principalities. Former governor of Little Russia, General Rumiantsev was the promoter of institutional-legal reforms aimed at weakening the traditional model of rule and the political and social authority of the local elite, the boyars, but with caution and moderation, so not to undermine the prestige and influence of Russia.

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**Ethnicity, Nationalism
and Emigration**

Silviu VĂCARU*

**Transylvanian Emigration to Moldavia
(Late 18th and First Decades of the 19th Century)**
(Abstract)

Keywords: emigration, seasonal emigration, demography, Transylvania, Moldavia.

In the late 18th and early 19th century, an intense population movement occurred between Transylvania as a supplier of emigrants and Moldavia as their destination. The departure of the people from Ardeal was favoured by poverty, lack of fertile land, high taxation, the military rigours enforced in the area of frontier guards, and religious discrimination. All were aggravated by external factors that were sometimes difficult to predict and other times impossible to control (i.e., natural disasters, epidemics, and wars). Moldavia had become attractive because its legislation allowed Christian foreigners to settle there without any hindrances. It had a significant shortage of labour and a population tolerant of newcomers. All these factors led to a triple increase in the population within the Principality East of the Carpathians in the period under consideration, despite losing half its territory.

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Philippe Henri BLASEN*

19th Century Romanian Nationalist Perspectives on Ukrainians
(Abstract)

Keywords: Romanian nationalists, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Bukovina.

While ethnographers like Dan Dumitru and Elena Niculiță Voronca attempted to provide a scholarly description of the Ruthenians, the public discourse was dominated by Romanian nationalists whose single aim it was to depict the rival nation as intellectually and morally inferior to the Romanian nation, as the stupid and evil enemy. Iorga was already famous in Romania and beyond, and his travelogue soon could be found in Romanian school libraries, even in Austria-Hungary. His degrading and even dehumanising image of the Ruthenians could thus easily spread among literate Romanians. His and the other Romanian nationalists' works, which provided civilisational arguments against the Ruthenians, along with Bukovinian Romanian Ion Nistor's *Românii și Rutenii în Bucovina* [Romanians and Ruthenians in Bukovina] (1915), which concentrated on chronological and demographic arguments, sowed the seeds for the anti-Ruthenian/anti-Ukrainian climate and policies in interwar Romania.

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Andrei CUȘCO*

**Between Military Occupation, ‘Population Politics’, and Uncertain Loyalties:
War and Ethnicity in Bukovina (1914-1917)**

(Abstract)

Keywords: Bukovina, Russian Empire, World War I, ethnicity, population politics.

The Habsburg province of Bukovina (and the neighboring region of Galicia to the north-west) became one of the major battlefields in the clash between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian forces after the outbreak of war. In fact, the region was occupied by the Russian troops three times: from September to October 1914, from late November 1914 to February 1915, and again from June 1916 to August 1917. The period of Russian military occupations led to a radical revision of the traditional politics of ethnicity in the province, culminating in the application of new and repressive strategies targeting certain ethnic communities, but also resulting in the reversal of previous ethnic hierarchies. This article discusses, first, the policy of the civilian and military Russian occupation authorities towards the Romanian community in Bukovina. The relatively favorable attitude of the Russian occupation regime regarding the local Romanians stemmed, primarily, from foreign policy priorities linked to Romania’s entry into the war on the side of the Entente, but also from the unsubstantiated hopes of attracting the local Orthodox population towards the Russian Empire. Despite this strategy, Bukovina was still claimed by the Russian national project, causing constant tensions with Romania. Second, the article analyzes Bukovina’s role as a testing ground for the new and violent version of wartime Russian ‘population politics’. This radical vision was mostly promoted by the Russian military authorities, but also by certain less well-known Russian officials on the ground. Mostly directed against the Jewish population of Bukovina, viewed as hostile, pernicious, and dangerous, this vision transformed the province into a space of unprecedented repressive measures and violence displayed against purportedly disloyal ethnic groups. Third, this text also tackles the question of how the shifting loyalties of Bukovina’s population were perceived by the Austrian authorities, who watched closely the increasing tendencies of the politicization of ethnicity in the region under the strain of war. Finally, Bukovina’s case is an excellent starting point for a systematic comparison between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian models of ‘population politics’, especially concerning the rival empires’ policies towards *enemy aliens*, interned civilians, and untrustworthy ethnic groups.

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Emanuel BĂLAN*

The Emigration of the Romanian Jews in 1943 with the Ship “The Gull”
(Abstract)

Keywords: emigration, Antonescu regime, Alia, the Seagull ship, Second World War.

From the first days of the Antonescu regime, the Jews chose the path of Palestine. The majority of emigration took place in 1942 and 1944, obviously with the agreement of the Romanian authorities. The emigration to Israel from Romania during the Second World War was also marked by tragic moments. Despite the sinking of the ships *Struma* and *Mefkure* in 1942 and 1944, respectively, the ‘Aliá’ movement continued, even if the road was full of many obstacles and dangers. The present communication aims to address a page of this movement, that of emigration by means of the ship *The Seagull* from the spring of 1943, a vessel that no longer received the notice of departure from the Ministry of the Interior. The study is based on documents from the CNSAS archive.

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**Epidemics, Wills
and Philanthropy**

Andrei-Octavian VITCU*

**The Philanthropic Activity of the Great Logothete and Knight Anastasie Bașotă
(1797-1869)**
(Abstract)

Keywords: philanthropy, education, church, culture, social assistance.

In the history of the Romanian national revival of the 19th century, the name of Anastasie Bașotă (1797-1869) has sporadically retained the attention of specialists, tempted, probably, by the consistent documentary contribution in the field due to Gheorghe Ghibănescu. The specific characteristics of the character have subsequently motivated the interest of historians.

Anastasie Bașotă imposed honesty and punctuality, exemplary in business, as his rules of conduct, but left enough room for other habits, which he could not get rid of, such as avarice and despotic spirit, combined, paradoxically, with numerous acts of benevolence, selfless, performed under the sign of Christian piety.

He sponsored cultural publications with the aim of “enlightening” the people through book knowledge and education in the spirit of love of God and country.

As a true philanthropist, Anastasie Bașotă showed a ‘paternal’ care for his former servants who had reached old age, offering them houses in the village and monthly pensions. Thus he supported more than eighty “agricultural pensioners”, widows and the helpless who had worked for him or his father. Naturally, he also took care of the school and the teacher at Pomârla.

Bașotă’s role as a founder is illustrated by the establishment of the village school (1838) and the Agricultural Institute in Pomârla (1869), the result of his testamentary will, otherwise not a singular gesture, but perfectly in keeping with the logic of the social, political and cultural development of the Romanian Principalities in the 19th century.

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Marius CHELCU*

Trade, Wealth and Testamentary Will in Iași (mid-19th Century)
(Abstract)

This study could easily fall into the category of social history and law history. It relies on several case studies, i.e., the testaments of people who remained loyal to commerce (beyond their wish to access the noble ranks when their material status and primarily social relations allowed them to join nobility). They practised long-distance trade through exchange networks connecting the Balkans to Central Europe, Odesa, and Moscow in a broader economic context where Moldavian towns were stop-offs, outlets, or merchandise sources.

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Lidia TRĂUȘAN-MATU*

**The Activity of dr. Iuliu Barasch in Călărași,
in the Context of the Plague and Cholera Epidemics
on the Danube Border of Wallachia
(1843-1845)
(Abstract)**

Keywords: Iuliu Barasch, plague, cholera, medical policies, stations quarantine.

This paper aims to reconstruct the episode from Călărași in the professional career of doctor Iuliu Barasch (1815-1863). More precisely, the period between 1843 and 1845, when Barasch was ‘quarantine physician’ in Călărași. With the help of several categories of sources (archival documents, legislation, press, travel notes, memoirs, and correspondence), we will make a journey in the life of a surprising personality, who divided his time between medical practice and teaching (dedicated to both of them with devotion), between journalism and militancy for the political and civil rights of Jews in Romania, between science and philanthropy. A life lived with intensity, rich in professional achievements, but also with inner turmoil. Through this, the present study tries to take Iuliu Barasch out of a very specialized field, such as medicine, in order to integrate him in the social history of Romania.

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Ana ALBEȘTEANU*

**The Tuberculosis as a Disability in Romania,
the 19th and 20th Centuries**

(Abstract)

Keywords: tuberculosis, eugenics, sanitation, disability, medicine.

This essay describes the manner in which the patient diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis is required to reshape his identity by integrating his disability. This process is strongly influenced by both the discourse on normality and that on this particular pathologic state. During the 19th and 20th centuries, within the Romanian territory, the patient's image was shaped by two different types of discourse: one linked to sanitation and the other to eugenics. Alongside these two discourses, we can also add the literary discourse, where the individual diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis becomes a character-type, with a series of fixed moral traits.

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**Education
and Intellectual Debates**

Florea IONCIOAIA*

Children of the Insurrection: Subversive Sociability and Greco-Romanian Academic Mobility in Paris, in the third decade of the 19th Century
(Abstract)

Keywords: Greek insurrection, peregrination academica, Paris, students, Greco-Romanians, Haute police.

Among the consequences of the third decade of the 19th century Danubian Principalities' turmoil was its projection on the subversive Europe map. The Greek movement seen from the Holy Alliance's perspective was nothing more than a clear case of political rebellion. Therefore, avid young students coming from the Danubian Principality were subjects to long campaigns of surveillance as discovered in the reports of Parisian police done on foreigners by the so-called *Haute police*. These reports convey us important accounts about the stay of tens of young people that came for studies from the Danubian Principality or relating to them.

The main objective of this approach was to present and analyze these accounts in the context of the academical mobility (peregrination academica) of the 19th century. The reports date from 1819 to 1831, corresponding to the peak moment of the Greek emancipation movement, containing informations about the systematic surveillance of two category of subjects. The first one (more numerous, with 18 references from hundreds of files) was about the young students that came to Paris for studies while the second group was about casual travelers. Almost all of them belong to Romanian or Greek-Phanariot families: Ipsilanti, Suțu, Manu, Sturdza, Băleanu, Filipescu, Moruzi etc.

Spectacular due to their rarity, the police reports depict the existence of networks in the cultural Greek environment, probably older, which is now being activated on the background of the Hellenic insurrection. Through them we can easily notice the existence of a Greeko-Valachian micro-cosmos in Paris in all these years and thus we may make ourselves an idea of the daily lives of these young students, taking in consideration their politicization process given the association to the pro-Hellenic movement of those years.

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Leonidas RADOS*

**The Educational Milieu of Iași:
an Unpublished Pamphlet against August Treboniu Laurian (1857)**
(Abstract)

Keywords: education reform, pamphlet, Iași, August Treboniu Laurian, Moldavians, Transylvanians.

In the middle of the 19th century, the public education system in Moldova went through a turbulent period. Beyond the fact that there was a real concern in the local society for the problems related to the education of the young generation, the teaching staff felt the pressure of the reforms that had to be carried out in that field and that entailed sometimes unpleasant changes. In addition, the excesses of General Inspector of the Schools, Laurian, a Transylvanian of fine intellectual quality, but abusive and often violent, in any case, willing to cross countless limits to achieve his professional goals, generated in the fall of 1857 an unprecedented protest movement of teachers in Iași, ended by Laurian's resignation and replacement. To better defend their cause, the protesting teachers circulated a frothy pamphlet, written in the fall of 1857 by an anonymous (probably Gheorghe Apostoleanu, a former Low student in Berlin). In that text, still in manuscript, the inspector general was mocked in every way. In addition, all the "illegalities" committed in his high position were inventoried and commented. We publish here this interesting pamphlet, preceded by an introduction in which we discuss the context of the writing of the text, its presence in the archives, the structure and content of the text, the presumed author, as well as the circulation that the pamphlet had in that times.

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Marian I. HARIUC*

Zur Frage der (Re-)Integration in „Großrumänien“ von deutschen Lehrern aus dem „Altreich“ zu Beginn der Zwischenkriegszeit
(Zusammenfassung)

Schlüsselwörter: Weimarer Republik, Deutschlehrer, Unterrichtsministerium.

Die Untersuchung handelt über die Anwesenheit, Herkunft und Optionen der Deutschlehrer im alten Königreich Rumänien von ersten Jahren nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Diese Analyse bezieht sich auf die Bildungseinrichtungen mit Deutsch als Unterrichtssprache der Beichtstühle Gemeinschaften. Das Vorgehen umfasst eine allgemeine Analyse der Art und Weise, wie Weimarer Republik hat gesehen die deutsche Erziehung vom Großrumänien, aber insbesondere der Änderungen der rumänischen Gesetzgebung im Auftrag einer Rumänisierung Politik.

Aus Sicht der Organiesierung des Bildungswesens, haben die deutschsprachigen Räume mehr eine Unbekannte für die rumänischen zentralen Einrichtungen dargestellt. Ersatzweise, hat die Anwesenheit der Deutschlehrer im alten Königreich Rumänien das Interesse des Unterrichtsministeriums hervorgerufen, um ihre Herkünfte und Betätigungen aus den Kriegsjahren zu kennen. Im Gegensatz zu Vorkriegszeit, der Deutschlehrer war sowohl vom Inneren der neuen rumänischen Grenzen als auch vom Deutschen Reich oder vom Österreichisch-Ungarischen Reich.

Man verfolgt die Umstände, dass die Deutschlehrer versucht haben, sich in Bildungseinrichtungen im alten Königreich Rumänien anschließen. Offenbar, ihre Bestrebungen auf die Besetzung einer Stellen in der Schulen mit Deutsch als Unterrichtssprache zutrieben, von denen die meisten einen Beichtstuhl Bereich hatten. Aber in diesem Prozess hat die rumänische Staatsgewalt eingegriffen und die sofortigen Wirkungen des Krieges haben sich bemerkbar gemacht.

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**Churches
and the Influence of Modernity**

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Church and Modernity – the Problem of Building Places of Worship in the Metropolitanate of Moldova at the beginning of the 20th Century

(Abstract)

Keywords: Romanian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Partenie Clinceni, wooden churches, modernization, historical monuments.

The beginning of the 20th Century brings a new perspective on the openness of the Metropolitanate of Moldavia and Suceava to the modernization process. The Metropolitan Partenie Clinceni brought new ideas to Moldova, thanks to his studies in Western Europe. One of them is the hierarch's request to stop renovating wooden or thatched churches and to build brick and stone churches. The metropolitan's wish materialised, but there were reactions of resistance to the new from the clergy and parishioners. Tracing the details of this process, imposed by a hierarch who wanted to make way for the penetration of modern practices into the Orthodox Church, is the purpose of this study.

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Andrei PUIU*

**The Immediate Consequences of the Second Vatican Council
over the Diocese of Iași (1965-1968)**

(Abstract)

Keywords: Second Vatican Council, titular bishop, diocese, Ordinary of Iași, Ostpolitik, Aggiornamento, excommunication, canon law, Holy See, cohabitation.

The beginning of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) found the roman catholic church in Romania going through its most dramatic crises. With the exception of the Bishopric of Alba Iulia, where Márton Áron was diocesan bishop, the rest of the eparchies were headed by the substitutes ordinaries – clerics put under control by the romanian political authorities. Given the powerful diplomatic dimension of the Second Vatican Council, the Holy See wanted to reconnect with communist Eastern Europe in an effort led by Agostino Casaroli, the chief-diplomat of pope Paul VI. In this text we try to elaborate the way in which the Vatican came close to communist Romania in general, and to the Diocese of Iași in particular at the middle of the 1960's. Therefore, we analyze the context which led ordinary Petru Pleșca to participate in Rome at the fourth conciliary session ended in December of 1965. At the end of the council, the pope granted Pleșca the title of titular bishop of Voli. The gesture of the pontif surprised both the “beneficiary”, but also the communist authorities back home in Bucharest – which feared that the new ecclesiastical status of Pleșca could generate instability in the region of Moldavia.

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**Public Perception, Diplomatic Institutions
and Economic Resources**

Claudiu-Lucian TOPOR*

**Diplomatic Agencies of Neutral States under Military Occupation.
Complaints, Investigations and Expulsions from Romania
(1916-1918)
(Abstract)**

Keywords: military occupation, diplomacy, Romania, neutral states, World War I.

This study reflects an aspect relevant to the topic of military occupations during the First World War but insufficiently covered in historiography: the relations between the war commanders and the diplomats of the neutral powers in the territory under military occupation. Over time, politics, strategy, administrative decisions with their legal implications, even the war economy and daily life, propaganda and the hostility of the population have come under the magnifying glass of historical observations, but the tensions rooted in the dispute over respect for neutrality and international customs concerning the diplomats have consistently overridden. This sensitive subject was more easily integrated into the debate on the violation of the laws of war (long without a strong echo among contemporaries) than into the complicated history of administrative acts. The difficult interaction in the disputed space of belligerency, coupled with the conflicts between the occupying administration and the representatives of neutral states reveals to the researcher new episodes charged with remarkable historical significance. This study also proposes a reassessment of them. Romania presents itself as a country confronted since 1916 with the interference of the enemy military administration and offers itself the picture of an open confrontation between the prohibitions of the German Command and the vigorous replies of the foreign diplomats.

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Dinu BALAN*

**The Dictator and His Era: The Image of Primo de Rivera in the Romanian Press.
Case Study: “Adevărul” Newspaper (1923-1930)**

(Abstract)

Keywords: “Adevărul” newspaper, Primo de Rivera, dictatorship, Spain, bilateral relations.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Romanian press was attentive to the evolutions on the Spanish political scene, so convulsive. In this article we will refer to the way in which the complicated history of Spain from the years of dictatorship established by General Miguel Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) was reflected in the columns of one of the most important Romanian newspapers of the time, “Adevărul”, a newspaper that he had a leftist orientation, assuming a critical position towards the dictatorship. For the reference period, 1923-1930, we identified more than 100 texts (news, correspondence, short notes, comments, etc.). These are unevenly distributed over the seven years, the trend being, however, numerical growth (most materials are published in the early 1930^s, being occasioned by the end of Primo de Rivera’s regime and his death). Either general information or opinion articles predominated. Despite the limited number of journalistic materials, they are worthy of interest, because they indicate – in addition to the concern to inform the Romanian public about the Spanish realities – and an interest of Romanian society to the realities of the Iberian country, generating, from this point of view, a *sui-generis* imagological perspective, which overlaps with that generated by the ideological orientation of the newspaper, democratic and republican, in an interesting game of parallel plans or mirrors.

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**The Swedish Consulates in Romania
in the First Half of the 20th Century**

(Abstract)

Keywords: Consular Network, Sweden, Romania, Interwar Period, Second World War.

The history of the Swedish consulates and vice-consulates in Romanian Principalities began in 1824, when the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway's representative in the Ottoman Empire became general consul for the entire region, including Moldova and Wallachia, Romanian territories under Ottoman rule. The sultan decided afterward to open a network of consulates and vice-consulates in the empire's port cities to stimulate commerce in the region. As a result, the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway opened its first vice-consulate on Romanian soil in Galați. It followed the opening of other Swedish consular offices in Brăila, Bucharest, Sulina, Constanța, Cluj (later moved to Sibiu), Cernăuți, Timișoara and Brașov. Thus, until the middle of the 20th century, Sweden would be represented in all Romanian provinces. In most cases, the positions of consul and vice-consul went to influential people who owned profitable businesses. They acted in the interest of the state they served, Sweden, but they also worked many times to increase their businesses. With the establishment of the communist regime in Romania after the Second World War, all Swedish consulates were closed.

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**Evacuation of Diplomatic Offices from Poland
in September 1939**

(Abstract)

Keyword: Romania, Poland, The Second World War, Refugees, Diplomatic Office, European Diplomacy.

The outbreak of the German-Polish war on September 1, 1939 and the rapid escalation of the conflict, generated by the declarations of war by France and Great Britain addressed to Berlin two days later, put Romania in a fragile and complicated political-diplomatic situation. The immediate solution adopted by the political leaders from Bucharest was that of adopting neutrality towards the European conflict, considered at the moment the only option that allowed preserving the independence and integrity of the state. In this context, neutral Romania tried to avoid the scenario of an external aggression. The fear of a possible German or German-Hungarian intervention was very real, and the documents confirm it, as were deep concerns about a possible Soviet invasion.

However, if the issue of the treasury or the Polish refugees was at the forefront of the Romanian-Polish bilateral agenda, no less important was the issue of the official regulation of the situation of diplomats and the Polish embassy in Bucharest. Until then, however, the context and evolution of the war required the evacuation of Romanian and foreign diplomatic and consular offices from Poland, and this was done, for the most part, also through Romania and with the support of Romanian diplomacy. These evacuations were often done in a hurry, with great efforts and interventions, Romanian diplomats having to face both pressure from the Axis countries and numerous requests from the foreign diplomatic corps in Warsaw. Whether we are talking about the diplomatic representations of Great Britain or the United States, the missions of Greece, Sweden, Belgium or Switzerland, the only evacuation option was through Romania and with the help of Romania. Most of the time, Romanian diplomats stationed in Poland were the ones who, in wartime conditions, offered support for the evacuation of these diplomatic missions. The present approach attempts to outline this lesser-known episode of the conflict that shook the foundations of Europe and the world on September 1st, 1939.

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**The Petroleum, a Major Stake for Great Britain in Romania
after World War II**
(Abstract)

Keywords: Romania, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, Astra Romana, Shell.

Great Britain was the primary investor in the Romanian oil industry during the interwar period. During the Second World War, companies with British ownership were transferred under the control of German companies. This led the Soviets, after 1944, to claim the right to take over and confiscate a significant portion of the oil installations owned by British companies before 1941. One of the main objectives of the British Military Mission within the Allied Control Commission in Romania was to defend economic interests, particularly in the oil industry. This often put them at odds with the Soviets and Romanian authorities. This study attempts to discuss the efforts of Great Britain to regain control over English capital companies in Romania. The study relies on unique archival sources from both Romania and Great Britain.

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**Visits of American Personalities to Communist Romania.
From Natural or Professional Curiosity to Ideological Naivety (1963)**
(Abstract)

Keywords: Communist Romania, Cold War, Tourism and Ideology, Romanian – American relations.

Towards the end of the Gheorghiu-Dej rule, Romanian-American relations improved significantly. The interactions, which started off rather timidly after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania, intensified at the close of the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). Many Americans came to Eastern Europe, some for altruistic reasons, some as official state representatives, or simply as tourists, and they established relations with representatives of the communist countries. Farmers, industrialists, university professors, journalists, cultural figures, and even US Ministers crossed the ocean, either in order to develop partnerships with institutions from the Soviet bloc, or merely out of curiosity about the new world. Many Romanian-Americans, who had been away from Europe for decades, now came to visit their Romanian relatives, or, seduced by the propagandistic mirage of the Romanian government, were ready to collaborate with the communist regime and promote in the US the image of a new Romanian state. In this context, the Romanian communist regime thought that real benefits could be gained by using these American citizens to promote the Romanian national interests in the USA. Besides, the Romanian government wanted to convince the world that, almost two decades since the Petru Groza cabinet had started its rule, the country really improved, and also demonstrate that the new regime had taken concrete, useful and palpable measures for its people. Romania's accelerated admission of foreigners also meant that they could be used as vectors of change in the new Romania.

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Historians in Dialogue

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**Interwar Romania:
Between Democratic Backsliding and the Growth of Extremism**
(discussion)
(Abstract)

Keywords: interwar Romania, democracy, society, European influence, political parties, extremism, authoritarianism, historiography, archives.

Interwar Romania represents a major field of historiographic inquiry and investigation for researchers coming from various academic centers, primarily in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, but also in Europe and North America. The discussion, held in the framework of the Annual Conference organized by the “A. D. Xenopol” Institute of History in Iași, on June 5, 2021, within the event’s second edition, brought together Maria Bucur, Ovidiu Buruiană, Roland Clark, Sorin Radu and Svetlana Suveică. All of them share a long-term and enduring preoccupation for and interest in this period. The results of their research have been published in a number of monographs, collective volumes, and academic articles. Dorin Dobrinicu formulated the overall concept and served as a moderator of the discussion. The questions debated during the event challenged the participants to tackle and touch upon several major issues, including: the main historiographic currents, schools of thought, directions, and research topics, as well as the available sources; the relevant actors of the political process, the major political parties of the interwar period, their functioning and trajectory; the situation of the peasantry and the peasants’ political integration, but also the extent to which the peasants became “citizens” and their involvement in various democratic or extremist political organizations; the limits and failures of Romanian democracy; the situation of ethnic and religious minorities; the situation of women; the entangled phenomena of national centralism, regionalism, and democracy; the impact of religious organizations upon the political sphere and their positioning with respect to democracy; ultra-nationalism and extremist movements; external influences and their role in the process

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of 'democratic backsliding' in Romania; the "turning point" in the country's evolution toward authoritarianism, etc.

Based on decades of meticulous research, on a wide-ranging expertise and a solid knowledge of the relevant specialized literature, as well as on a variety of sources, the participants' contributions offered fresh and innovative perspectives on the topics discussed during the debate. It is obvious that the professional scholarly investigation of the interwar period in Romania made remarkable progress during the last several decades, both within the country itself and in Republic of Moldova, Europe or North America. Benefitting from a generally open intellectual atmosphere, even if occasionally impregnated and plagued by conformism, particularly in post-communist Romania, ideas could circulate easily and freely. Scholars could thus approach new topics and subjects, enhance their critical distance from the dominant discourses of the periods under study, and adopt a much more critical stance toward their subject matter. Researchers directly challenged and attacked the previously hegemonic and politically expedient interpretations, based on clichés. Finally, the opening of the archives granted scholars unrestricted access to a variety of crucial sources and essential information, which led to the disappearance of many lacunae and 'blank spots,' to the elaboration of new and ambitious research projects, and to a more nuanced understanding of the period.