

**ABSTRACTS**

**THE EVOLUTION OF WALLACHIA’S PRINCELY COUNCIL  
DURING THE RULE OF MICHAEL THE BRAVE**

DOREL ȚUINEA

The present study aims to analyze the evolution of the princely council of Wallachia during the rule of Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul). The analysis is structured around each of the fifteen offices active in this period, and mentions all the 46 dignitaries (*dregători*) in charge. The primary sources used for the article set the chronologic limits for each mandate, the succession and also offer possible explanations for the changes undergone by the organization of the council.

The author emphasizes the provenance of the nobles who became a part of the council. In this regard relevant for the study were the origin of the nobles (if they were locals or foreigners), their formation and career, as well as their relationship with the prince (if they were relatives or not). This structure is useful in understanding the number of foreign noblemen (most of them were Greeks or relatives of the ruler who might have been from other parts of the Ottoman Empire) and their proportion in the princely council of Wallachia, especially at the beginning of Michael the Brave’s rule. Following this analysis of the chronologic succession in offices, one can draw the conclusion that Michael the Brave offered offices to the local nobles in the key moments of his reign (the anti-Ottoman revolt, the conquest of Transylvania, the summer of 1600) in order to ensure their fidelity.

**“IN LITTERIS VESTRIS RESCRIBATIS”: PRIVATE  
CORRESPONDENCE IN THE SOUTHERN PARTS OF THE  
MEDIEVAL HUNGARIAN KINGDOM**

LIVIA MAGINA

Writing, as a form of communication, includes a niche that was less exploited by historians, namely private correspondence. Unlike the administrative documents, this form of communication provides researchers with an idea concerning the spread and evolution of writing and of the mentality towards the written document. In the 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> century Banat, letters were sent through messengers and their subject rarely crossed the limits of pragmatism, consisting mostly of information concerning the domains, human resources, difficulties following the wars with the Turks etc. I have tried to include answers to as many different questions as possible, in order to present

the multiple aspects of the phenomenon of private correspondence: who wrote the document, which were the subjects of the letters, which are the elements that separate the written document of an individual from that of an institution.

## **HOW TO START A REVOLT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: ACTIVISM, PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PROPAGANDA IN THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITIES IN TRANSYLVANIA (1740–1760)**

RADU NEDICI

The decades in the mid-eighteenth century have been a time of violent conflict among the Romanians in Transylvania because of the diverging confessional options that had split them in two opposing camps one generation earlier. The followers of Byzantine orthodoxy took up a struggle in defense of their freedom of religion, as they refused to accept ecclesiastical union with Rome preached by church and state officials. The protest movement, which began with some minor incidents in 1744, grew rapidly over the following decade and a half, despite the efforts made by the Habsburg authorities to suppress all the voices in the opposition. In the years leading up to its climax, in 1761, the religious revolt gained the support of most Romanians in the province, while it refined its leadership and put together more coherent claims. Overwhelmed by the resistance of its subjects, Vienna eventually surrendered to their requests, granting the Orthodox in Transylvania limited toleration and reinstating a distinct bishop for the community.

The history of these disputes has made the object of particular research interest over the last century, but the focus has mainly been on the chronology of the events and on the direct consequences on the religious membership of those involved. Part of a larger project aimed at reassessing the Orthodox protest movement from a socio-political perspective, my article studies the mechanisms behind the spread of dissent. The investigations conducted by the Habsburg administration against those accused of inciting religious opposition provide historians with fundamental data on the militant practices used to encourage resistance. From the conventicles assembled at night fall to the marches that involved hundreds of participants in midday and from the agitators who traveled the villages disseminating rumors to the letters through which more distant addressees were urged to take up direct action, the records touch on the whole range of elements that made an early modern culture of protest, ready to be recovered and analyzed. This culture of protest was no less complex than in other European countries, but was based on the organizational elements specific to a rural, poorly literate population. The key players in these protests were precisely those who enabled the shift from written documents to oral knowledge, who mediated between the text – whether real or fictional – and the crowds participating in the revolt.

## **“WITH OUR STEPMOTHER”: BLENDED FAMILIES IN THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES (18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)**

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU

The present paper explores family relations captured in the judicial archives of the civil and ecclesiastical courts of Wallachia and Moldavia in the eighteenth century. A simple perusal of archival documents reveals a number of ethnic groups and confessions trying to build a future for themselves, utilizing the economic, social and institutional resources of their host countries (Wallachia and Moldavia). New families were recomposed through divorce and remarriage. Judicial and family archives, largely unpublished, are a goldmine for analyzing this topic across ethnic and religious groups. Personal documents, such as last wills, dowry lists, and probate inventories are supplemented by the significant number of trial records (divorces, family courts, bigamy trials, seduction and rape trials). They all represent a crucial basis for investigating the discourses surrounding recomposed families.

## **“CERTIFIED” OR “SKILLED” MIDWIFE? ABOUT MIDWIVES AND MIDWIFERY BETWEEN LEGISLATION AND TRADITION IN THE NĂSĂUD DISTRICT (1861–1876)**

CLAUDIA SEPTIMIA SABĂU

In Transylvania, during the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century, civil authorities implemented special provisions for controlling the activity of midwives by trying to impose medically trained midwives especially in villages, to the disadvantage of the so-called “skilled” women. The latter ones benefited from empirical medical knowledge, and given their status and experience, they were inducing a feeling of safety in the members of their communities. But who was assisting in fact births in the world of the Transylvanian villages in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the medically trained midwives or those lacking medical instruction but possessing life experience? Our attempt to answer this question has led to research that focuses on a well-delimited geographic region – the Năsăud District – an administrative territorial unit consisting of 44 villages (the majority of these are today included in the Bistrița-Năsăud County) that functioned in the north-eastern part of Transylvania in 1861–1876, with the town of Năsăud as its capital.

By analyzing and interpreting mostly unpublished documents of the Năsăud District (judicial and civil ones) kept at the National Archives, the Bistrița-Năsăud County Service (abortion trials, official notifications, meeting protocols, local community decisions, etc.) we have tried to reveal the profile of the “certified” midwife as well as that of the “skilled,” “empirical” one. At the same time, we have attempted to identify the status of the midwife in the community microcosm, the way she was seen and accepted by communities and local authorities. The conclusions confirm the fact that in the studied villages, the birth act was primarily assisted by the “empirical” midwife, lacking medical studies and fulfilling the following requirements clearly defined in the mentality of the people of Năsăud living in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: age (she was never young), domicile (she had to be a

local), status (she always belonged to an honorable family), morality (a convinced family woman with unstained reputation), experience (more important than any other medical qualification) and local prestige.

## **THE REFUGE OF KING CHARLES XII IN THE LANDS INHABITED BY THE ROMANIANS (1709–1713). ROMANIAN- SWEDISH INTERFERENCES**

ROBERT R. DENNDORF

The article retraces Swedish King Charles XII's steps in the regions historically inhabited by the Romanians after the king's defeat in the Battle of Poltava and his subsequent exile in the Ottoman Empire. Special emphasis is given to Tighina/Bender and Varnița (today in the Republic of Moldova), where Charles XII and his entourage had settled. Another aspect discussed in the paper is the Swedish contribution to the building of the Colțea Tower (Turnul Colței), Bucharest (Romania), which was partially destroyed by an earthquake at the beginning of the following century and afterwards demolished completely. Mentions are also made of known or presumed descendents of King Charles XII's soldiers or members of his entourage who lived in Romania.

## **PRIMA DONNA HARICLEA DARCLÉE BETWEEN HER PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE**

ȘTEFAN PETRESCU

Born in Brăila to Greek immigrant parents, the soprano Hariclea Darclée (1860–1939) performed frequently at the Opera Houses in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Lisbon, Barcelona, Madrid, Milan, Buenos Aires, and Bucharest. This study examines the relationship between her professional and personal life. The collection Darclée held by the National Archives of Bucharest contains the letters of the prima donna to her husband Iorgu Hartulari (1892–1906), and her lawyer and friend, Victor Rațiu (1927–1936). The letters bring to light an abundance of information about Hariclea's family, her business life, and her connections within the government and high society in Romania and Europe.

## **SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY AND CAPITALIST PRODUCTION. THE PARADOX OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT**

ECATERINA LUNG

The Arts and Crafts movement, widely perceived in Europe as a mainly artistic phenomenon, seeking a renewal and an elevation of decorative arts to the

perceived level of fine arts, had, nevertheless, an important social protest dimension in the UK. Its main founder, William Morris (1834–1896), was also one of the chief promoters of socialist ideas in the United Kingdom. Owner of a business specialized in decorative art objects, he organized production based on the model of medieval guilds of craftsmen. Morris claimed to fight in this way against the alienation brought on by capitalism and the uniformity promoted by industrialization. The ideal was to offer everyone, but especially workers, objects that are both beautiful and useful. The objects thus created have revolutionized the decorative arts, but being manufactured mainly by hand and using medieval techniques, they were extremely expensive. Therefore, they could only be afforded by the well-off, the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, against whom William Morris was launching his socialist fight. The revolution promoted by his ideas was indeed an artistic one, but never managed to materialize into a social one as well.

## **ROMANIA IN DECEMBER 1989: PLOT OR REVOLUTION?**

SIMION GHEORGHIU

The final stage of the Ceaușescu regime and in particular the events from December 1989 which ended the totalitarian regime in Romania have in the last years retained the attention of many Romanian and foreign researchers, and even resulted in a few ample works being published on the subject despite the fact that the lack of available documents allows only a partial understanding of the events. The lack of documentary material has made the correlation between internal and external factors more likely to be the subject of speculation than of systematic investigations. In fact, when it comes to Romania in December 1989 in the public debate, there are two theses: the one of the revolution, that is, of a spontaneous act generated by the refusal of the Romanian people to tolerate the dictatorial regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu and that of the plot, that is to say, a *coup d'État*, by foreign secret services, especially those in Moscow. This issue will remain open until the archives, especially the former Soviet archives, become accessible to historians. In order to avoid some uncertainties, in our article, we have proposed a “less passionate” historical approach for a better understanding and a more accurate definition of the changes that took place in Romania in December 1989.

In the life of societies, the revolution is a sudden change of regime, a substitution, generally by force, of one governing system through another. This is what happened in the Soviet Union's satellite countries in 1989, where totalitarian-communist regimes were replaced by pluralist regimes. The change, irrespective of the factors that caused it and the manner of its realization, peaceful or violent, through its consequences, had a revolutionary character. There is no doubt that this historic upheaval took place with the help of the USSR, which, provoked by the US to enter a new arms race, was forced to reform its system in order to face the challenger.