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## ABSTRACTS

### THE ARABS AND THE MONGOLS EXPANDING: A COMPARISON OF THE PREMISES

VIRGIL CIOCÎLTAN

The route from the nomad’s tent to the imperial palace had the same starting ground, namely the disadvantaged areas, which made their nomadic inhabitants particularly receptive to material gains, and the same finality: expansion and the formation of the two empires.

Beyond the specific means of achieving each course individually, their essence was identical: the politic and social instability, which was endemic to the gentile societies of pre-Islamic Arabia and Mongolia before the rule of Genghis Khan, was removed by the great social and political renewals of the 7<sup>th</sup>, respectively the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which presented the nomadic inhabitants with a new identity, granted them social homogeneity and integrated them into state structures which superseded the traditional tribal entities. As the conscience of being Moslem transgressed the narrow gentile differences and allowed the formation of the great Islamic community (*umma*), composed of equal elements, at least in theory, which were unified precisely by the common faith in Allah, so Genghis Khan’s reform, promulgated at the 1206 *kurultai*, consecrated the victory of the new identity, that of members of the Mongol *ulus*, which was also of divine right and with similar universal imperial traits.

Thereupon, the energies previously consumed in internal conflicts could be harnessed and channeled towards the outer world, where they produced epochal military victories. The analogy between these phenomena and those produced several centuries later by the French Revolution, which made possible, through a similar process of equalization, the “mass uprising” (*levée en masse*) and, as a consequence, Napoleon’s great conquests, is striking.

The effects of the two expansions on such vast spaces had, amongst others, the quality of creating the appropriate framework for the development of the great transcontinental trade – a major step towards globalization.

However, there is a categorical distinction which separates the spiritual legacy of Genghis Khan from that of the Prophet Muhammad: while the Great Khan’s Tengrism vanished without a trace, the religion propagated by Allah’s Messenger manifests itself vigorously until today and reaches even beyond the House of Islam (*dār al-islām*).

## **FUR AND DIPLOMACY DURING THE REIGN OF PETER RAREȘ**

LIVIU PILAT

The study's starting point is an incident that took place in 1546, when a Moldavian mission returning from Moscow was attacked and robbed in Lithuania by servants of princes Feodor and Dymitr Wisnowiecki. The Moldavian envoys brought from Moscow an important quantity of sable pelts, in which the Moldavian voivode and the sultan were highly interested. Along with the tribute paid to the Porte, the Moldavian prince also gifted the sultan and the high Ottoman dignitaries with various things, which in time became a protocol obligation. The gifts offered by the Moldavian voivode to the sultan and to the high dignitaries were interpreted by historians especially as financial obligations, but they also had an important political role, namely of stating the prince's position in relation with the sultan and with the Ottoman hierarchy. The importance of the gifts offered to the sultan and to the Ottoman dignitaries can be better understood by setting aside the perspective of the attraction exercised by the exotic and luxury goods and by replacing it with what some economists call positional goods. These are characterized by welfare, prestige, and power, namely the elements through which power consumption is achieved. During his second reign, Peter Rareș was far more prudent and he sought to regain the prestige and territory annexed by the Ottomans. Following the 1538 campaign, the south-eastern region of Moldavia named Tighina was incorporated in the sanjak of Silistra. Once he was restored on the throne, Peter's purpose was to regain his prestige of rich and powerful prince and to recover Tighina using diplomatic gifts for the sultan and the high Ottoman dignitaries. That explains his need for Russian furs and the diplomatic efforts made to buy them. As we can see, the import of sable fur was not a simple commercial transaction, limited to purchasing the goods and transporting them to the destination, but had a very important political dimension.

## **PARLIAMENTARY REGIME AND MONARCHICAL AUTHORITARIANISM DURING THE REIGN OF AL. I. CUZA (1859–1866). A JURIDICAL-COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

MANUEL GUȚAN

This essay aims to offer a juridical-comparative perspective on a very sensitive problem in the Romanian historical and legal-historical literature: the constitutional regime of Al. I. Cuza's reign (1859–1866). Accepting some of the opinions outlined in the past by both historians and legal scholars, we try to capture them in a new methodological paradigm grounded in the concepts, principles and institutions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European liberal constitutionalism. Thus, we highlight the absence of a parliamentary regime in the Paris Convention (1858) and the presence of a constitutional architecture closer to the democratic caesarism typical of the Second French Empire; the necessity to evaluate the constitutional and political life under Cuza's reign in the light of both monarchical authoritarianism and parliamentarianism; the importance to understand the amendments brought by the Statute

developing the Paris Convention (1864) as a change of degree inside the same authoritarian regime. Last but not least, we emphasize the necessity to balance constantly the Romanian national agenda, especially the fight for the national unitary state, against the failure to limit the monarchical power by means of a functional parliamentary regime.

## **TWO EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ADVENTURERS AND THE MYTH OF SKANDERBEG**

OVIDIU OLAR

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Skanderbeg's posthumous fame reached new heights. An opera by Vivaldi premiered in June 1718; another one by Francœur was played in October 1763. Three British plays were performed between 1733 and 1747. The Italian priest Giammaria Biemmi published a *History* of the Albanian hero in 1742, in Brescia, while Bishop Francesco Tauszy re-edited Barlezio's 16<sup>th</sup> century classic *Historia de vita et gestis Scanderbegi* in 1743, in Zagreb. Skanderbeg also attracted the attention of the adventurers: Stefano Zannowich († 1786), for example, pretended to be "Castriotto, prince of Albania."

One of the most spectacular use of the Skanderbeg myth by an adventurer is that by the Wallachian prince Radu Cantacuzino († 1761). As Grand Master of an Order of St George allegedly founded by Emperor Constantine the Great, Radu commissioned a book containing a presentation of the Order; printed in Hamburg, in 1755, it assigns a major role to "count Georgius Castriotus" of Epirus and of Albania. Several years later, imprisoned in Milan, the prince's secretary translated from Italian into Romanian a biography of Skanderbeg.

The aim of the present paper is to analyse in its context this particular interest in the Albanian warrior, and to compare the "appropriation" methods of Zannowich and Cantacuzino.

## **THE MEMOIRS OF A WALACHIAN BOYAR FROM THE TIMES OF PRINCE IOAN CARAGEA (1814–1817)**

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU

Dumitrache Merișescu, an artisan from Bucharest, travelled from Bucharest to Constantinople in various guises. His memoirs narrated his experiences from day to day. The present article explores firstly this young man's initiation into both amorous and commercial liaisons, and secondly, the manner in which he reinvents himself in the course of his journey, adopting new clothes and learning new languages. These memoirs, unpublished and hitherto unknown to historians, demonstrate how a mobile identity is fashioned across the Balkan region, uniting people of the same religion (Orthodox Christians), who find a common cultural language even if they belong to different ethnic groups.

## **REVOLUTION ON PAPER: THE “REVOLUȚIA SOCIALĂ” GAZETTE (1898–1900) AND DUMITRU RADOVICEANU**

MIRCEA-CRISTIAN GHENGHEA

At the beginning of 1898, within the Socialist circles in Craiova, the periodical entitled “Revoluția socială” (“The Social Revolution”) appeared under the guidance of Dumitru D. Radoviceanu. Despite the presentations and certain appreciations which can be found in Romanian historiography during the Communist regime, the publication represented even from the start a little more than just a platform for the propagation and popularization of the ideas that were specific to the Socialist movement. Within its pages one can identify anti-monarchic accents and even anarchist notes which could be easily seen as representing impulses for social disorders and uprising against the consecrated political order.

The analysis of the above named gazette offers not only the possibility of knowing the points of view promoted by the Socialist circles in Craiova in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also the opportunity to (re)discover one of the names which were considered important for the past of the left movement in Oltenia, namely Dumitru Radoviceanu. Having quite a controversial image at that time, one cannot disavow his journalistic qualities and also a certain propensity towards the guidance of journalistic enterprises.

## **THE JUSTIFICATIONS AND THE BIOGRAPHY OF A POLITICAL PERPETRATOR: THE CASE OF PENITENTIARY COLONEL NICOLAE MAROMET**

DUMITRU LĂCĂTUȘU

Nicolae Maromet was one of the most (in)famous political perpetrators of communist Romania. His name is mentioned in many former political prisoners’ memoirs published after 1989 and also in a renowned melody titled “In Chilia’s Harbor” („La Chilia în port”) sung by Fărămiță Lambu, a well-known Romanian traditional musician. The song described the extreme violence within communist Romania’s concentration penitentiaries, carried out among others by Nicolae Maromet, the commander of Chilia labor camp. However, until now we do not know much about his political biography – especially from the pre-communist period – based on archival documents. In order to fill in this gap, the aim of this article is to shed more light regarding Nicolae Maromet’s career, exploring his cadre file kept at the Archive of the National Administration of Penitentiaries. That is why the study has two main purposes. The first is to discover the unknown biography of Nicolae Maromet and his main interwar experiences which paved his route to torture and the second is to analyze his own testimonies and explanations about violence inflicted by him against political inmates.

## **THE ROMANIANS' BRONZE WREATH AT TRAJAN'S COLUMN**

MIHAI BĂRBULESCU

In October 1899, during the XII International Congress of Orientalists in Rome, chaired by Count Angelo De Gubernatis, the Romanian delegation, headed by the writer and historian V.A. Urechia, organized a national event at Trajan's Column (ills. 2, 4, 5). On this occasion Urechia and Badea Cârțan (ill. 3) – a self-taught Romanian shepherd, known for the fact that he made a journey on foot to Rome – laid a wreath of bronze at Trajan's Column (ill. 6), to express the gratitude of the Romanian people, descendants of the Romans and native speakers of a Romance language. The bronze wreath was the work of the Italian sculptor Ettore Cadorin, temporarily established in Bucharest. The wreath is still preserved in the base of the column.

In photos published for the first time, we see that on the leaves of the wreath are inscribed the names of various Romanian historical figures from the Middle Ages through modern times (ills. 13–18).

The article also depicts the coverage of this event by Romanian and foreign newspapers, especially Italian ones, in the context of the Romanian national movement underway at the time in Transylvania, a province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

## **NIELS BOHR AND HIS ROMANIAN CORRESPONDENTS**

MIHAI SORIN RĂDULESCU

The extensive correspondence of Niels Bohr (1885–1962), held in the archive of the Institute of Theoretical Physics that bears his name, in Copenhagen, includes letters received from two Romanian scientists: Constantin G. Bedreag (1883–1963), professor at the University of Iași, and Alexandru Proca (1897–1955), who studied at the Sorbonne and continued his research work in Paris, which became his permanent home. It seems to me that these documents should be brought to light as a contribution to the history of Romanian physics, which owes much to such international exchanges. C.G. Bedreag, who was himself particularly interested in the history of the discipline, spent six months in 1926 at the Institute in Denmark. Some years later, in 1935, another Romanian physicist – this time one of considerable international standing, namely Alexandru Proca – also enjoyed for a time the atmosphere of what was to go down in the history of world science as the “School of Copenhagen.” Alexandru Proca is considered to be one of the foremost Romanian physicists, whose essential contribution to the discovery of mesons should have won him the Nobel Prize.

Together with the letters of these two Romanian scientists, the archive also holds typed copies of the letters sent in reply by Niels Bohr, who accepted and encouraged these exchanges with great politeness and good will. One is struck by the sociability and openness of this mind operating on the borders between physics and philosophy, who had received the Nobel Prize in 1922, two years, that is, before

receiving his first letter from a Romanian scientist. The letters belong to the period 1924–1956. The correspondence between Niels Bohr and Alexandru Proca ended with the latter's death in 1955.