

NOTES AND REVIEWS

CORNELIA BODEA, *1848 la români* (The Year 1848 and the Romanians), Vol. III, *Revoluția în viziunea contemporanilor* (Revolution in the View of the Contemporaries), Edit. Enciclopedică, București, 1998, 738 pp. + XX drawings.

Historian Cornelia Bodea, member of the Romanian Academy, is well-known for her dedicated research work on the modern history of the Romanians, especially the 1848 event. The two volumes of reference for the Romanian 1848 Revolution that came out of press in 1982 are quite eloquent in this respect¹. The event was all the more important as it occurred after over 15 years of delay and struggle with the censorship and propaganda institutions of the dictatorial regime. Despite the attempts by the regime to speculate the aforementioned publishing event and wrest all image benefits, the victory was in fact the author's. Indeed, Bodea had managed to offer the Romanian public an outstanding informational corpus, while making minimal concessions. The two volumes, providing examples of the struggle of a generation for the making of modern Romania and for democratic rights and liberties for all citizens were in fact an accusation against a system whose direct line of conduct was the constant infringement upon the fundamental human liberties.

Bodea's commendable tenacity in her research effort was especially rewarded after the Revolution of December 1989. Under the new and propitious circumstances created after 1989, the two aforementioned volumes were printed in a new edition, considerably improved in terms of graphic space. The present volume, added subsequently, was meant to include "Memories, published and unpublished memoirs, various writings aiming to highlight personal merits, even when nonexistent, and other writings, overtly polemic," (*Cuvânt înainte* (Foreword), p. V).

The 117 pieces making the substance of the present volume are, on the one hand, the result of an excellent effort of selection. On the other hand, while covering the entire space inhabited by the Romanians in the Modern Times, they give Bodea's view on the 1848 revolutionary process, seen as a global and unitary process, despite the fact that the three revolutionary movements actually showed differences in program, development, and propelling force.

Since a full analysis of the volume would be rather difficult to undertake here, I shall only focus on a number of aspects which I deem of particular interest. As indicated in *Cuvânt înainte*, Bodea included in the volume a series of writings unpublished before, which add to the documentary value of the book. I shall mention here Ioan Voinescu I, who, owing to his conservative views, was rarely favored or employed by historians. With no such bias, Bodea included excerpts from Mss. rom 4828, which contains Voinescu I's notes, thus providing the reader with the opportunity to *audiat et altera pars*, almost like in attending a historical trial (pp. 9-10; 227-239). No less commendable is the inclusion of fragments from N. Pleșoianu's memoirs that throw better light into the two crises of 19

¹ *1848 la români. O istorie în date și mărturii* (The Year 1848 and the Romanians. A History in Dates and Testimonies), București, 1982, 2 vols.

and 29 June, occurred during the first month of the revolution in Wallachia. A character of novelty is also exhibited by doc. no 112 (V. Alecsandri, *Prietenii românilor* (Friends of the Romanians)) (pp. 687-689). The great poet and diplomat provides here a genuine “list of gratitude” which the Romanian nation must show to prominent Western politicians and scholars, who understood that the “Romanian Cause” was just and legitimate, and offered their support, within the limits of the power and influence they were enjoying (St. Marc Girardin, Jules Michelet, E. Quinet, etc.).

I would like to add that the present book should be seen as integrated in the rich historiographical literature dedicated to the 1848 Revolution of the Romanians published in the last decade of the twentieth century and treating the related issues with shades of difference, while rejecting canons and dogmas. One should note in this respect the commendable contribution of Apostol Stan², a highly productive and competent historian, the more synthetic and very modern approach in the two books written by the modernist historian Dan Berindei³, member of the Romanian Academy, and, last but not least, the collection of external documents published by Ion Varta⁴, the active and energetic researcher of Chişinău. All these writings, and many others, have now opened a new and broader perspective on the related historical event, and made possible a better absorption and a more concrete integration into the European revolutionary process contemporary with the 1948 Romanian Revolution.

I would also like to point out to the high scientific standards of the volume at hand: an index of names and places, accurately drawn up, rich and varied illustrations in perfect harmony with the content of the book, and, eventually, excellent translations into Romanian of documents originally written in other languages of world circulation. A well-aware reader cannot fail to realize that the graphic presentation of the volume is made at the same high standards of quality.

While commending the coming out of press of volume III of *1848 la români* as a remarkable editorial event, I would like to wish the author many new achievements in her relentless research efforts focused on the history of Romanian society at its time of embarking upon the road to progress and modernity.

Marian Stroia

CORNELIA BODEA, *The Treasure of Jewish Art: The 1673 Illuminated Scroll of Esther Offered to a Romanian Hierarch*, 2003, Iaşi, 72 pp. + appendage.

In the mid 1990s, Cornelia Bodea, one of Romania’s most distinguished historians, became aware of an unusual piece of art in the collections of the Romanian Academy library in Bucureşti. This was an illuminated scroll (or *megillah*) of the Biblical Book of Esther, dated 1673. Scrolls of Esther are interesting artistically because they are the only Biblical texts which can be illustrated

² *Revoluţia română de la 1848* (The Romanian Revolution of 1848), Bucureşti, 1992.

³ *Revoluţia română din 1848-1849. Consideraţii şi reflecţii* (The Romanian Revolution of 1848-1849. Considerations and Reflections), Cluj-Napoca, 1997; *Revoluţia română din 1848-49. Însemnătatea şi programele sale* (The Romanian Revolution of 1848-1849. Its Importance and Programs), Bucureşti, 1998.

⁴ *Revoluţia de la 1848 în Țările Române. Documente inedite din arhivele ruseşti* (The Revolution of 1848 in the Romanian Principalities. Unpublished Documents from the Russian Archives), Chişinău, 1998.

owing to the fact that there is not mention of God's name in the narrative. However, this one is different. In addition to the artwork, the scroll has two distinctive features: the placement of the coat of arms of the medieval Romanian Principality of Moldova in the ornamental section at the beginning of the scroll, and the inclusion of the date in Cyrillic characters. Bodea spent the next several years doing historical detective work on the *Megillath Esther Iași 1673* attempting to determine who had commissioned the scroll and who it had been dedicated to. This involved considerable research effort in France, Israel, and the United States, as well as Romania.

The book is divided into four chapters; the first is a brief discussion of the contents of the Book of Esther; the second investigates the history and techniques of this type of engraved and illuminated *megilloth*; the third presents an overview of the cultural-religious history of seventeenth-century Moldova, the Golden Century of medieval Romanian civilization, which was led by Dosoftei (1624-1693), and included Miron Costin (1633-1693) and Nicolae Milescu (1636-1708); and the fourth is a full color reproduction of the *Megillath Esther Iași 1673*.

The rules for these *megilloth* are highly codified. A *megillah* is composed of a highly stylized hand written text, an engraved framework and illuminations. Bodea describes these rules and a number of existing *megilloth*, and compares them to the Iași scroll. Interestingly, the largest number of surviving *megilloth* are from Italy, particularly Venice. It is her conclusion, from the comparative evidence, that most of the Iași *megillah* was in fact done in Venice.

The main questions left to be resolved were, "Who might have commissioned this *megillah*? And for whom?" (p. 42) Bodea's conclusion is that the Iași *megillath* was commissioned by the scholar Nathan Nata Hanover, who was chief rabbi in the capital of Moldova from 1657 to 1673. Hanover, it turns out, spent several years in Venice, where he published an account of the persecution of Jews in Ukraine during the 1648-1649 Chmielnicki uprising. This work, the *Yeven Mezulah* (1652), shows the deep interest that Hanover had in the Psalms. Bodea believes that Hanover brought the Iași *megillath* with him from Venice.

Secondly, Bodea argues that the recipient of the scroll was the Metropolitan of Moldova, Dosoftei, the celebrated scholar, who held office between 1671-1674 and 1675-1686. It also turns out that the two distinctive elements of Iași *megillah*, the coat of arms and the Cyrillic date, can be traced to virtually identical elements in the Psalter of the Prophet David, translated and put into verse by Dosoftei in 1673. Though there is no definitive evidence, Bodea conclude that, given their mutual scholarly interests, it is not unlikely that Dosoftei and Hanover should have been at the very least familiar with each other's work on the Psalms.

In conclusion, the author finds it significant that the Romanian hierarch and the Jewish rabbi shared an interest in Biblical texts "common to both the Jewish and Christian faiths alike", a commonality to which the *Megillath Iași 1673* stands as a "eulogy of a spiritual understanding" (p. 58).

This little book not only presents the results of a king of historical detective story, but also includes in an annex a gorgeous reproduction of the Iași scroll as well. It should be of interest to those concerned with Jewish art, Jewish studies, and medieval Romania.

Paul E. Michelson

GRIGORE CHIRIȚĂ, *Societatea din Principatele Unite Române în perioada constituirii statului național (1856 – 1866)* (Society in the United Romanian Principalities at the Time of the Creation of the National State, 1856 – 1866), Edit. Academiei Române, București, 2004, 358 pp.

Grigore Chiriță, a historian who has devoted to the “Time of the Union” years of research effort in the archives of Bucharest and of other towns in Romania, has dedicated to the aforementioned period two outstanding books printed by the Editing House of the Romanian Academy: *Organizarea instituțiilor moderne ale statului român (1856 – 1866)* (Organization of the Modern Institutions of the Romanian State, 1856 – 1866), issued in 1999, and the present book, a natural sequel to the aforementioned.

The book has three sections: *Populație și habitat. Starea și structura socio-economică* (Population and Habitat. Social and Economic Situation and Structure); *Modernizarea vieții publice. Doctrină și grupări politice* (Modernization of Public Life. Political Doctrines and Groups); and, *Respect pentru proprietate. Respect pentru persoane. Despre drepturile și îndatoririle românilor* (Respect of Property. Respect to the Individual. On the Rights and Obligations of the Romanians).

The first chapter makes an analysis of issues pertaining to geopolitics and the environment – the author highlights the importance of the geographic position of the Romanian space on the backdrop of European history, and arouses the interest of the reader with information from various memoirs related to particularities of the climate, floods, and regions exposed to such phenomena – which strikingly bears semblance to the present situation in Romania; historical demography – one should note here the statistical data of the censuses of the time, which may offer, partially, given the lack of accuracy of the census forms, information on the structure of the population of the Principalities by ethnical groups, sex, profession, etc. The subchapter devoted to the economic situation and structure addresses the question of the economic underdevelopment of the Romanian Principalities as compared to other European states. Starting out from historical processes already analyzed in the specialized literature – the Romanian space as a barrier against Ottoman expansion, the continual wars, the state of uncertainty – the author presents, based on documents, the agricultural surfaces, the management of large estates, the land laws, the rudimentary implements, etc. He concludes that the agriculture in the Principalities – both field husbandry and animal breeding – was far behind agriculture in other European countries. The industry was in no better position. The light, home industry was predominant. As to transports, there were no other roads beside the so called “coach roads”, which had considerable influence on prices. It was assessed that, at the time, transportation of commodities from the inner regions of Moldavia to Galați was more expensive than transportation from Galați to England (p. 84). The traditional means of transport was still the “mail coach” - recurrent in the notes of foreign travelers, who never failed to show their amazement at its rudimentary form and, nevertheless, rapidity. Despite chaos in monetary circulation – 15 types of coins were employed in the absence of a national currency – and the lack of modern credit institutions – apart from the National Bank of Moldavia and the Galați subsidiary of the Ottoman Bank – the number of tradesmen was rather considerable (p. 104). Looking at the towns in the Romanian Principalities, the author concludes that Moldavia was better developed than Wallachia in terms of number of urban settlements and town population (p. 115).

“Romanian by blood and Greek by rite, Romania remained eastern in her feelings and western in her aspirations,” noted Cezar Bolliac, when speaking of the mental and psychological structure of the Romanian at that time of transition. The aforementioned quote enables the author to

make a captivating review of the political ideas of the time in relation to the transition toward a new society. Ion Ghica would note with extreme lucidity and perceptiveness the uncertainty of the times. The quote from *Reflecțiuni politice* (Political Thoughts), a paper printed in January 1863, is quite suggestively employed by Chiriță, as subtle reference to contemporary history: “behind, a past shattered for ever hovers over its ruins, with all the vices acquired in the times of disgrace and slavery that weighed upon us; lying ahead, the dawn of future, with a large and bright horizon; and between these two different worlds, something pounding like the waves of the sea after the storm, something that separates the past from the future, and on which we float and struggle” (p. 125). The birth of the modern public spirit is analyzed based on school statistics, opinions of personalities on the importance of education, book editing, and press. Chiriță’s conclusion reinforces the conclusion of Vlad Georgescu, according to whom, despite the existence in Transylvania of numerous and well-cultivated scholars, the new political ideas were born predominantly in the Principalities, owing to the existing political class. The author also discusses the term of “elite”, and questions the appropriateness of applying this term to the political and cultural figures in the Principalities: “the creation of an elite requires a well-structured modern political and cultural space, developed under all aspects, a highly intellectual atmosphere involving competition directly linked to the selection of minds and promotion of values” (p. 153). The new generation of modernists is thus challenged to redefine the terms. The way in which the transition was perceived by contemporaries is a preamble to the analysis of liberalism and conservatism in the Principalities.

In relation to the structuring of liberal groups into radical and moderate, and the analysis of their position towards the pace of development in the Principalities, the author adopts the well-known stands of the researchers of the period. However, he makes some critical considerations as well: he notes the absence of writings on political doctrines in the Romanian space in the second half of the twentieth century, the pragmatism of the Liberal leaders, who abandoned the ideals of their young years in order to create a stable and modern state edifice – see for instance C. A. Rosetti, who in his old age would declare that, “in this region of Europe there are no revolutionaries, but rather fighters for national independence,” (p. 163). The author also notes a contradiction of the time: the idea of the foreign prince was supported especially by the moderate Liberals – apart from the Ion Ghica group – but was put into practice by the Radicals and the Conservatives (p. 194). An element of novelty is the attempt to analyze the doctrine positions of Prince Al. I. Cuza based on messages addressed to the Parliament (pp. 205 – 206).

In the author’s view, the conservative doctrine was at the time an embodiment of stability and continuity. Thus, it should not be looked upon as reactionary. The author quotes the opinion of Grigore Balș, which synthesizes the conservative ideas: the reforms “we want must be in conformity with the genius, the customs, the true needs of the Romanians ... gradually rather than hastily made for the life of the peoples follows the laws of nature,”(p. 245). The conservatory groups are analyzed from the viewpoint of the activity of their leaders. The author dwells at length on the outstanding figure of Barbu Catargiu, equally admired by political friends and enemies. The author disagrees with I. C. Filitti’s characterization of Catargiu as a “classical Liberal”, and points out to his conservative position (p. 255).

Quite suggestively, the final section of the book bears as a title a paragraph of the Proclamation of Izlaz - *Respect pentru proprietate. Respect pentru persoane* (Respect for Property, Respect to the Individual) and Title II in the Constitution of 1866 – *Despre drepturile și îndatoririle românilor* (On the Rights and Obligations of the Romanians). The chapter makes an analysis of the fundamental citizens’ rights, such as stipulated in the legislation of the Principalities, and examines the way in which these rights were observed and could be traced in the everyday life of the

Romanians. The first subchapter is devoted to the granting of Romanian citizenship, and includes numerous paragraphs related to the origin of the Jewish Question (pp. 278 – 289). The author concludes that in spite of the unjust legislation, the Jews continued to live in Romania – see in this respect the opinion expressed by Ion Ghica on page 289. The law initiatives concerning the abolishment of privileges, the right of ownership, the electoral system, etc. are also addressed.

Chiriță's book is the result of research work carried out for several decades in a spirit of profound respect and admiration for the "generation of the Union". The rigorous documentation, critical spirit, clarity of style, accuracy of argumentation, and careful selection of quotes that render the dilemmas facing a society in transition, just like the Romanian society nowadays, are as many merits of the book.

Raluca Tomi

CRISTINA FENEȘAN, *Cultura otomană a vilayetului Timișoara (1552-1716)* (Ottoman Culture in the Vilayet of Timișoara, 1552-1716), Edit. de Vest, Timișoara, 2004, 264 pp.

For five centuries, the Ottoman Empire ruled directly over several Romanian territories and had considerable influence over the history of the Romanian people. Therefore, research work on Romanian-Ottoman relations is extremely important. One of the most interesting topics in this extremely complex and difficult field of research is the history of the Romanian territories under direct Ottoman occupation at certain times (Dobrogea, Bugeac, Hotin, Brăila, Giurgiu, Turnu Măgurele, Banat, and Crișana). Despite the efforts of many Romanian and foreign researchers, there are still aspects wanting to be addressed. The monograph of Dr. Cristina Feneșan on the Ottoman culture in the Banat in 1552-1716 (when this Romanian province was under direct rule of the Ottoman Porte) is a notable contribution in this respect.

Dr. Feneșan, a Turcologue, wrote her book after undertaking extensive research work in Romanian and foreign archives and libraries. The summary (pp. 5-6), is followed by a *Foreword* (pp. 7-23) written by the author, and highlighting the importance of the topic and the fact that it has been insufficiently addressed until now, the structure of the book, the main sources employed (Ottoman, Western, and Romanian), and the most important contributions of the present book. The notion of *culture* is employed here in its larger sense (the entire material and spiritual production, as well as the everyday life, with all its facets). *Transliterația termenilor turco-otomani* (Transliteration of the Turkish-Ottoman terms) (p. 24), a transliteration from the Arab alphabet (employed in the Turkish-Osman language until 1928) into the Latin alphabet, is extremely useful.

Chapter 1, entitled *Instaurarea administrației otomane la Timișoara* (Establishment of the Ottoman Administration in Timișoara) (pp. 25-55) makes an analysis of the conquest and annexation by the Porte, in 1552, of the fortress of Timișoara and of most of the Banat province (which until then had belonged to the Principality of Transylvania), as well as of the causes and consequences of this event. The Banat thus became an Ottoman province (the *eyalet* or *vilayet* of Timișoara). The domination of the Porte only ended in 1716, when the Banat was conquered and annexed by the

Habsburg Empire. The establishment of the Ottoman rule in the Banat provided a framework for the turning of Timișoara from a Central-European town into an Islamic Ottoman town, in which the culture and the specific style of life of the conquering Muslim community were introduced.

Chapter 2, entitled *Timișoara ca oraș otoman: o evoluție* (Timișoara as an Ottoman Town: An Evolution) (pp. 56-177), includes the following subchapters: *Transformarea orașului* (Transformation of the Town) (pp. 56-73); *Structura urbană: citadela, orașul fortificat* (Urban Structure: The Citadel, a Fortified Town) (pp. 73-83); *Refacerea și fortificarea* (Reconstruction and Fortifying) (pp. 83-91); *Porțile orașului fortificat* (The Gates of the Fortified Town) (pp. 91-98); *Bazarul, cartierele și casele* (The Bazaar, the Districts, and the Houses) (pp. 98-120); *Hanuri și cafenele* (Inns and Coffee Shops) (pp. 120-135); *Lăcașuri de cult, băi, cimitire, mausolee* (Mosques, Baths, Graveyards, and Mausoleums) (pp. 135-166); *Suburbiile: Palanca Mare, Palanca Mică* (The Suburbs: Palanca Mare, Palanca Mică) (pp. 166-177).

The last chapter is *Cultura otomană la Timișoara: între tradiție și tendințe înnoitoare* (The Ottoman Culture in Timișoara: Between Tradition and Novelty) (pp. 178-225). It has the following structure: *Limba turco-otomană, limba oficială: particularități* (Turkish-Ottoman as an Official Language) (pp. 178-186); *Introducerea și răspândirea Islamului* (Introduction and Spread of Islam) (pp. 186-190); *Identitatea otomană-alteritate creștină* (Ottoman Identity - Christian Alterity) (pp. 191-197); *Război sfânt (dijihad) și martiraj (șahada) în concepția autorilor otomani din Timișoara* (Holy War, Djihad, and Martyrdom, Șahada, in the Conception of the Ottoman Writers of Timișoara) (pp. 197-206); *Căi de înnoire a culturii otomane din Timișoara* (Means of Renewing Ottoman Culture in Timișoara) (pp. 206-220); *Particularitățile culturii otomane din Timișoara* (Particularities of the Ottoman Culture in Timișoara) (pp. 220-225).

A Glossary (pp. 226-235), an Abstract in Turkish (pp. 236-241), an Abstract in English (pp. 242-247), several Illustrations (pp. 248-250), and an Index (pp. 251-263) complete the book.

The book has clear merits. It is based on excellent documentary work, involving other scientific writings on the same topic (or on related topics), and numerous Ottoman, Western and Romanian historical sources, published or unpublished. It is a pioneering book, approaching a less studied field and laying firm bases for further research work. The author's tenacity and punctiliousness in the writing and publishing of the book are also to be noted.

The author herself admits that the book opens a new direction in research and, unfortunately, has its inherent flaws deriving from the difficulties of every beginning and the large number of unpublished Ottoman and Western sources which could not yet be studied.

To conclude, the present book, written by Dr. Cristina Feneșan, is extremely valuable, important and useful to all the specialists focusing on the history of Romanian-Ottoman relations in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries. We can only hope that the author will pursue her research work in the field, and that she will be joined in her efforts by other Romanian and foreign historians as well. The present book should serve as a model and encourage research work on Ottoman culture in other Romanian territories under direct authority of the Porte at various times.

Adrian Tertecel

CONSTANȚA GHIȚULESCU, *În șalvari și cu ișlic. Biserică, sexualitate, căsătorie și divorț în Țara Românească a secolului al XVIII-lea* (In Shalvars and with the Vest. Church, Sexuality, Marriage and Divorce in Eighteenth-Century Wallachia), Edit. Humanitas, București, 2004, 424 pp.

Social history has always represented a topic of interest for specialists. If in communist Romania the themes focused almost exclusively around the idea of class fight and became a strong ideologized field, in post-Decembrist historiography one may notice a thematic movement, unfortunately still very hesitant, towards the history of private life, gender relations, and women's history as well. The tendency which still prevails in Romanian Academia is the superficial treatment of the subjects connected to this field, the conservative, unofficial division into "serious" subjects – especially those concerning political sphere – and "trivial" subjects - history of the couple, gender or family history. In this context the book of the young historian Constanța Ghițulescu, *În șalvari și cu ișlic. Biserică, sexualitate, căsătorie și divorț în Țara Românească a secolului al XVIII-lea* is a much-awaited event and comes along the recent works of more experienced historians. Constanța Ghițulescu, graduate of the University of Bucharest and researcher at the "Nicolae Iorga" History Institute, belongs to the young generation of historians who had the opportunity to study after 1990 and, moreover, to widen their knowledge in foreign universities. This opportunity determined not only the access to recent bibliography, but also the enlargement of the interest spheres. The author defended her PhD at the prestigious Ecole des Hautes Etudes des Sciences Sociales (EHESS) of Paris, and the book published by Humanitas Printing House is a part of her thesis, *La Construction et la Désunion du Couple. Les Jeux de Mariage dans Valachie du XVIII-e siècle*.

In the introduction, Constanța Ghițulescu announces very clearly the aim of her book, constructed as "a journey inside the universe of the Romanian family, an analysis which is based on inter-disciplinarily and unpublished sources," (p. 8). What impresses most in the work is the vast bibliography used. As to unpublished sources, the author focused on the study of ecclesiastical records of the eighteenth century, issued by what she calls "the ecclesiastical tribunal" of the Metropolitan Church of Bucharest, and written by the metropolitan chancellors. I totally agree when it is mentioned that the "juridical archives are an extraordinary chance for the nowadays historian," (p. 9) because the offer information about the eighteenth-century couple life, difficult to find through other sources. The use of these sources offers an alternative to the fashion of the elites' study and focuses the attention towards the anonyms of history, ordinary people who remain in history "just because of a request addressed to the power," (p. 9). It is admirable that the author does not limit her study to these sources, even if they offer plenty of information and are very attractive from the point of view of the novelty of the information. She uses a series of memoirs from the epoch, travelogues as well as collections of laws, dowry leafs, etc. for a comparative analysis perspective. The sources are sustained by a rich secondary bibliography, which includes recent and important works in the field. One may note yet a preference for French historiography, which can be explained by the years of study in Paris, and in consequence the Anglo-Saxon bibliography is less represented.

The structure of the book is coherent, starting from the general aspects and particularizing them slowly. In consequence the work is divided in four big chapters: "The Perspective of the Orthodox Church on the Family", "The Adventure of the Couple", "Life in a Couple", and "About Divorce". It is worth mentioning that the author does not hesitate to also approach topics that are usually covered by an unjustified "scientific modesty" or are considered too intimate to be researched:

incestuous liaisons, adultery, bigamy, body secrets, etc. Consequently, we have in the work of Constanța Ghițulescu a complex approach of the couple history in eighteenth-century Wallachia.

In the following paragraphs, I shall emphasize several aspects from the second part of the book, "The adventure of the couple", which rose my interest because of the novelty of information. Quite interesting is the analysis of the way in which marriages were constructed in the eighteenth century or the idea "who chose whom" (p. 109), especially because the analysis includes both rural and urban areas, and the dynamics of these different areas are emphasized. Moreover, the analysis is made on social levels, the cases of the peasants, small townsmen or boyars of various ranks being discussed separately. Several conclusions drawn by the author should be quoted here. Firstly, both in the urban and rural areas the endogamous marriages were dominant, and the wish to know the candidate as well as possible, to have as much as possible information about him/her along with the financial interests influenced the marriage dynamics in Wallachia too. This conclusion is the result of a serious research, 420 divorce requests, 160 reclamations of seduction and a series of dowry leafs. Exogamy is still present and the author follows the approach applied by historian A. Burguičre to the French case, considering that the exogamous marriages follow three options: neighboring villages, closed regions, and distant villages (p. 112), options determined by different factors such as temporary work or the desire to leave the familiar environment. An interesting conclusion concerns the separation of matrimonial policy according to social classes, so the peasants are attracted firstly by estates and neighborhood, whereas for the boyars the essential condition was to belong to a good family. This type of analysis can help to construct a much more coherent image of the Wallachian society in the eighteenth century; and, when supported by solid arguments, like in this case, it can determine a change in the tendency to look at the issues from a simplistic perspective or to create an idyllic image of the period. Actually Constanța Ghițulescu very clearly notes the social separation even in the case of trials, claiming that "the social elite and ordinary people slowly created distance one from another (...) The boyars took very well the dominant and privileged position (n. b. in the last decades of the eighteenth century); they are judged only by the metropolitan priest or the prince, the trial is not a public show anymore, they ask and receive discretion, and even the keeping of the secret," (p. 401).

No less important is the information concerning the legal age for marriage, because it is a clear indicator that parents and relatives, in most cases, were the decision makers. The author claims that "the whole matrimonial policy was in the hands of the head of the family, who used to impose his authority both in the case of his daughters and of his sons," (p. 112). According to the law, girls could marry at twelve and boys at fourteen. In a footnote related to this observation (n. 3, p. 116), the author makes a comparison with the situation in England and France, where marriage contracted at such young ages were legal only provided a special agreement was made. The comparison should have been deeper and broader for the next pages as well, because, in addition to Moldavia and Transylvania, data concerning other Eastern regions ranging from Orthodox Russia to the Ottoman Empire would have been very relevant, in order to asses to what extent some existing models were adopted in Wallachia. In fact, the permanent comparison with Western Europe is a problem present throughout the book. I believe that a comparison between the East and the West may lead to the false perception that the region was an isolated case, whereas it is well known that there were permanent contacts with the Orthodox space and the Muslim Ottoman, contacts that should have been better emphasized in the book. Even the title "In *shalvars* and with *ishlic*" speaks of an Ottoman influence, hence the expectations of a much deeper comparison with the Balkan area.

The conclusions concerning the women's status in eighteenth-century Wallachia are both important and interesting, as a topic little addressed in Romanian historiography. There is a whole

chapter in the second part of the book, "The Woman and Her Dowry", which is essential for a better understanding of the woman's status within the family. The dowry had to reflect the future role assumed in the family: as a wife and a mother, she had to feed the others, "clothes and jewelry are given for the prestige and honor of her new family and the lingerie reminds her of her contraceptive duties." (p. 147). The author concludes that, "one may see that human relationships are more complex. They involve confrontation, negotiation, violence, and a woman is not excluded from all this, but rather participates very actively in the construction of her own image. Even if the system is not favorable to her, the clever woman goes through a juridical labyrinth, and tries to make the best of her few advantages which has, including the possibility to stand for herself in the court of law," (p. 400). One should note that the book is not viewed as a women's history, gender reports being permanently emphasized. There are mentioned both "masculine tyranny" and "feminine tyranny", the conclusion being that in most cases women were the victims of physical violence, and men of verbal violence.

The way in which the author deals with her sources can be considered a success. She confesses from the very beginning that she was faced the dilemma of a quantitative approach to the sources (it should be noted that a whole century was being examined) or a qualitative approach (p. 108), to eventually combine both approaches quite successfully. Actually, in my view, *analysis* is the key word of the book, the author going beyond the descriptive model of the history work writing, model that is unfortunately still so popular among the young generation of historians, making a serious and deep interpretation of the sources, drawing conclusions, and identifying behavioral models.

The conclusion of the book is that people lived their lives outside the household as well, which included the neighborhood or the village as active elements. The Church had a well-determined role, and the world of the eighteenth-century Wallachia can be seen in Constanta Ghitulescu's book in all its complexity of situations and issues. Written in an accessible style and offering solid information, the book *În șalvari și cu ișlic. Biserică, sexualitate, căsătorie și divorț în Țara Românească a secolului al XVIII-lea* can be successfully added to the mandatory bibliography for people interested in the every-day life of the eighteenth-century Wallachians, and the relation between Church and society.

Silvana Rachieru

CONSTANTIN IORDAN, *Venizelos și Români* (Venizelos and the Romanians), Edit. Omonia, București, 2004, 358 pp.

The publishing at Omonia Publishing House of a book devoted to the figure of Eleftherios Venizelos and of his relations with the Romanians is undoubtedly an important event, both to historians and the general public. The event is all the more important as the author, Constantin Iordan, has devoted most of his research effort to the history of the South-East European space, and has published a number of remarkable books in Romania and abroad.

A first section of the book gives the main landmarks in the life of Eleftherios Venizelos, to begin with his childhood, studies, début in political life, and continuing with his political consecration, his successes and failures (including the disaster of Anatolia). A significant section is

also devoted to the Romanian-Greek relations during the Balkan crisis, World War One, the Romanian-Greek cooperation at the peace negotiations of Paris, the Romanian-Greek Pact of 1928, as well as other issues of the Romanian-Greek relations during the last office held by Elefterios Venizelos (1928-1932).

In addition to information from the Romanian archives, the author has also employed a number of unpublished documents from the archives of Belgrade and Sofia, which, by corroboration, give a far more complete image of the personality of the “great Cretan” and of the role held by him in the history of Greece and of the Romanian-Greek relations in the first decades of the twentieth century.

I believe that the book should have also included a subchapter devoted to the position of Elefterios Venizelos in relation to the signing by Greece of the Pact of the Balkan Entente (the issue is addressed only briefly, in a subchapter devoted to the last years of his life). The signing of the Pact of the Balkan Entente is known to have generated strong opposition in Greece, led by no other than Venizelos himself. The fears of Venizelos were linked to article 3 in the annexed Protocol. The campaign led by the Greek opposition forced the power to draw up an “interpretative declaration” which tempered the criticism of Venizelos’ followers and enabled the draft for ratification of the Pact to pass. A new press declaration made by Maximos, according to whom the “interpretative declaration” did not change the sense of article 3 of the annexed protocol, raised again the discontent of Venizelos, who, during a visit to the Romanian Legation of Athens on 18 April 1934, voiced to the representative of Romania, Langa Rășcanu, his displeasure and even irritation in relation to the commitments assumed by the leadership in Athens through the signing of the Pact of the Balkan Entente: “In negotiating the Balkan Pact, they [the representatives of the other signatory countries, n. by R.T.] acted exclusively in the interest of their countries, and betrayed Tsaldaris and Maximos, two foolish persons, devoid of any political sense and completely unable to defend the rights of Greece”.

Owing to the rich information, the variety of sources, and, especially, the scientific accuracy characteristic of the author, the book is a valuable contribution to a better knowledge of the life and works of the celebrated Greek politician, as well as of the Romanian-Greek relations in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Radu Tudorancea

ANTAL LUKÁCS (ed.), *Documente făgărășene* (Documents From Făgăraș), vol. I, (1486-1630), Edit. Scriptorium, București, 2004, LIV + 314 pp.

The first volume of documents from Făgăraș was published under the aegis of the Center for the History of Transylvania, owing to the efforts of Professor Antal Lukács, well-known for his prominent contribution to the study of the Făgăraș society in the medieval and pre-modern times.

The documents are edited according to the latest norm in the field, thus meeting all scientific criteria. The volume gathers 221 Latin and Magyar documents dating from 1486 to 1630, 33 among which were previously published by the author. The 32 documents written in Magyar are accompanied by full translation into Romanian. The documents were found by Antal Lukács in the collections of the Departments of the National Archives of Brașov, Cluj, Sibiu and București, and of the Magyar State Archives of Budapest.

The documents included in the volume put into light various aspects of the society of the Făgăraș County: the patrimonial relations of the boyars and nobles (sales, inheritance, the pledging of estates, villages, and parts of villages), their participation in the administration of justice, under the direction of the lord of the castle, their relations with the central power (kings, princes) and its representatives (voivodes, lords of the castle, provisory), the privileges of town inhabitants, the condition of the serfs and libertines. No less interesting is the historical toponymy and onomastics that can be traced in these documents.

The editing of medieval sources is an imperative in Romanian historiography. The publishing of this volume of documents can only be commendable, and I hope a second volume will soon follow.

Alexandru Ciocîltan

IOAN-AUREL POP, THOMAS NÄGLER (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei* (The History of Transylvania), vol. I, (*până la 1541*) (Until 1541), Cluj-Napoca, 2003, 374 pp. + XII maps

The first volume of *Istoria Transilvaniei* (The History of Transylvania) was published under the aegis of the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Center for Transylvanian Studies.

The book, written by a group of researchers, investigates the past of the Transylvanian space from the Stone Age to the establishment of the autonomous Principality of Transylvania under Ottoman suzerainty (1541).

In his introduction, Ioan-Aurel Pop puts forward the reasons and the general outlay of this new history of Transylvania. Transylvania is seen in a large sense, including the Banat, Crișana and Maramureș. A first chapter signed by Grigor P. Pop gives the physical-geographical features of the related provinces. Mihai Rotea studies the prehistory of the region: the stages of the Paleolithic and Bronze Age; whereas Valentin Vasiliev gives the division into periods, the economic and social evolution, and the spiritual life of the first epoch of the Iron Age.

An important chapter signed by Ioan Glodariu deals with the history and civilization of the fourth century BC – 106 A.D. The period from the Romans to the end of the first millennium is treated by Mihai Bărbulescu: a discussion is made of the Roman rule with all its consequences, the free Dacians (second – fourth centuries), the Daco-Roman Christianity, the Barbarian migrations, and the ethno-linguistic evolution in the second half of the first millennium. Thomas Nägler pictures the evolution of Transylvania in 900 – 1300. The author points out to the fundamental processes of the time: the ethnogeny of the Romanians, the penetration of the Hungarians in the region east of the Theis, the social, economic and political organization of the autochthonous population, the stages in the conquest of Transylvania by the Hungarians, the settling down of the Saxons and of the Teutonic Knights, the Mongol invasion, and the evolution of the territory in the second half of the thirteenth century.

The period 1300–1456 is analyzed by Ioan-Aurel Pop who highlights the international background, the crisis of the Hungarian Kingdom at the end of the Arpadian dynasty, the

administrative and territorial structure (the comitats, the Saxon and Szekler Counties, and the Romanian districts), the development of towns, the ethnical aspects, the institution of the voivode, the states and the states' assemblies, justice, Church and culture, the army and the anti-Ottoman struggle, as well as the figure of John Hunyad.

Anton E. Dörner makes a discussion of the evolution of Transylvania between stability and crisis (1457 – 1541). A presentation is made of the centralizing policy of King Matthias Corvinus (administrative and territorial organization, the law system, the anti-Ottoman struggle, the economic life, and the social structure) and the crisis which followed his death (1490 – 1541), whose climax was the peasant war led by Gheorghe Doja, and the beginnings of Reformation in Transylvania. The profound crisis led to the fall of the Hungarian Kingdom.

The book also includes a bibliography, an index, and 12 maps. The recently published history of Transylvania is a most commendable book, meant to bring about a better understanding of the history of this space.

Alexandru Ciocîltan

