

# ALEXANDRU ZUB AND MODERN ROMANIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

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## Abstract

This paper reviews the outstanding contributions of Alexandru Zub to the study of modern Romanian and world historiography and bibliography. Beginning with a brief treatment of Zub's life and philosophy of history, it continues by surveying his work on Kogălniceanu, Xenopol, Pârvan, Iorga, and others, his erudite analyses of the history of history in Romania in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and an encyclopedic variety of other studies.

**Keywords:** Romanian historiography, philosophy of history, Mihail Kogălniceanu, A. D. Xenopol, Vasile Pârvan.

## I. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In the early 1970s, Alexandru Zub began publishing a series of pacesetting contributions to modern Romanian historiography in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. His work on Mihail Kogălniceanu, A. D. Xenopol, and Vasile Pârvan, a series of

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<sup>1</sup> For biographical and bibliographical resources, see my "History as a Civic Option: Alexandru Zub at 65," *Romanian Civilization* 9 (2000): 3–12; and "Introduction: The Triumph of the Idea," in Alexandru Zub, *Reflections on the Impact of the French Revolution. 1789, de Tocqueville, and Romanian Culture* (Iași: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2000), 7–15; Ștefan Ștefănescu, ed., *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978), 354; Alexandru Zub in dialogue with Sorin Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare. Istorie, memorie, și morală în România. Alexandru Zub în dialog cu Sorin Antohi* (Iași: Polirom, 2002); Liviu Antonesei, "Pe urmele cărturarului, pe urmele cărturarilor," preface to Alexandru Zub, *Pe urmele lui Vasile Pârvan*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (București: Editura Institutului Cultural Român, 2005), v–xvi; and the contributions to four impressive *Festschriften* which provide extensive details on Zub's life and work: Gabriel Bădărău, Leonid Boicu, and Lucian Nastasă, eds., *Istoria ca lectură a lumii: Profesorului Alexandru Zub la împlinirea vârstei de 60 de ani* (Iași: Fundația Academică A. D. Xenopol, 1994); Dumitru Ivănescu and Marius Chelcu, eds., *Istorie și societate în spațiul est-carpatic (secolele XIII–XX). Omagiu profesorului Alexandru Zub* (Iași: Junimea, 2005); Victor Spinei and Gheorghe Cliveti, eds., *Historia sub specie aeternitatis. In honorem magistri Alexandru Zub* (București-Brăila: Editura Academiei Române/Muzeul Brăilei, Istros, 2009); and Gheorghe Cliveti, ed., *Clio în oglindiri de sine: Academicianului Alexandru Zub. Omagiu* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014).

volumes investigating Romanian historiography from its origins through the interwar period, and numerous essays and studies on a wide variety of topics, provided massive resources for the modern study of Romanian culture, skillfully illuminated the development of Romanian historiography, and helped turn a somewhat barren sector of Romanian history into one of its most fertile and professional fields of study. At the same time, his work successfully sought to integrate Romanian historiography into international historiography, even prior to 1989 when such a dialogue was actively discouraged.

The work of Alexandru Zub in Iași, along with that of Pompiliu Teodor in Cluj and Lucian Boia in Bucharest, was of crucial significance in giving birth to a modern, world-class treatment of the history of the Romanian past while demonstrating the critical importance of history for modern Romanian culture and civilization, and for understanding the last two centuries of the Romanian past and present. The purpose of this study is to provide an introduction to and a review of Alexandru Zub's career and contributions to the history of history in Romania, concentrating especially on his elucidation of Romanian historiography prior to World War II.

## II. Life<sup>2</sup>

Alexandru Zub was born on November 12, 1934, in the northeastern Moldovan Romanian village of Maghera, Vârfu Câmpului commune, Botoșani County,<sup>3</sup> just in time to grow up during a horrifying world war and then come to adolescence as Romania was firmly and brutally entrenched on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain amidst traumatic political, economic, and social change. He was from a typical peasant family of the era: large (he had 10 brothers and sisters), poor (farming two or three hectares), and of deep Romanian stock (his ancestors had links to Bucovina and Transylvanian Maramureș). He absorbed the healthy traditional and religious rhythms of his village (“O întreagă filosofie de viață”) and never reacted against his humble heritage or its *philosophia perennis* and rural spirituality.<sup>4</sup>

Benefitting from a surprisingly good primary and secondary school education (a number of teachers were in fact semi-exiles from Romanian urban centers then

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the Zub-Antoși dialogue in Zub and Antoși, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, a good deal more autobiographical information is at hand than is usually the case.

<sup>3</sup> See Alexandru Zub, “Gânduri despre vatră,” in Aristide Zub, *Școala generală nr. 1, Vârfu Câmpului, jud. Botoșani. Privire monografică* (Botoșani: Celestin Exim, 2001), 7–14; and “Ceva despre dimensiunea ergoetică. Note memoriale,” in Aristide Zub, *Vârfu Câmpului. Vatră de lumină* (Iași: PIM, 2017), 6–10. On Vârfu Câmpului, see Aristide Zub, *Vârfu Câmpului. Privire monografică* (Iași: PIM, 2012) and *Vârfu Câmpului în imagini și cuvinte* (Iași: PIM, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Zub and Antoși, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 145–46.

being Stalinized), Zub was especially influenced by his history teacher and by an early understanding that historical study was the best means of grasping and “integrating the human adventure in time and space.”<sup>5</sup> In addition, though growing up in an environment in which there were virtually no books, at secondary school he discovered the library, which became a lifelong preoccupation. In 1953 to 1957, Zub moved on to the University of Iași, where he had an outstanding record. He studied with Dumitru Berlescu and Constantin Cihodaru, and was more or less given free access to the unrestricted and restricted collections of the University Library,<sup>6</sup> while benefiting from life in a provincial city with a less intense level of communization.

In 1956, the young student of history was part of the organizing leadership of a University-approved celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ștefan cel Mare’s accession to the throne of medieval Moldova, planned for 1957.<sup>7</sup> This surprisingly and highly symbolic public event, which had subtle anti-Soviet undertones, was made possible by the fleeting loosening of the Cold War in the so-called “Spirit of Geneva,” created by the July 1956 summit meeting between Dwight Eisenhower, Nikita S. Khrushchev, Anthony Eden, John Foster Dulles, and others.<sup>8</sup> One preliminary leading up to the “Spirit of Geneva” was the closing down of the special prison at Sighet and the release of pre-Communist notables (such as C. C. Giurescu, Ioan Lupaș, and Silviu Dragomir).

Zub and some of his friends and colleagues had made a symbolic pilgrimage in October 1956 to the Monastery of Putna, indissolubly linked to Ștefan cel Mare. This was to celebrate the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the celebrative Romanian student meeting there in August 1871, which had been organized by Mihai Eminescu, Ioan Slavici, A. D. Xenopol, and Ciprian Porumbescu among others.<sup>9</sup> (Xenopol had been the keynote speaker.) They were at Putna, in fact, when the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 broke out.

Even though the Suez Crisis and the Hungarian revolution of 1956 had made Ștefan’s commemoration seem increasingly problematic, the event went off in April 1957 at Putna Monastery, and Zub’s address at the celebration was excerpted

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>6</sup> For illumination, see Dumitru Vitcu, “Lecția de viață a unui eminent contemporan,” in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 91–102.

<sup>7</sup> For details on this and subsequent events, see Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 38 ff.

<sup>8</sup> See Gunter Bischof, *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955* (Baton Rouge LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Alexandru Zub, “Istoriografia română și ‘Spiritul Genevei,’ ” in *Analele Sighet*, vol. 9. *Anii 1961–1972: Țările Europei de Est între speranțele reformei și realitatea stagnării*, ed. Romulus Rusan (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 2001), 32–43; and Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 57.

<sup>9</sup> On 1871, see Teodor Bălan, *Serbarea dela Putna 1871* (Cernăuți: Tipografia Mitropolitul Silvestru, 1932).

in a recently-permitted student journal without any visible repercussions.<sup>10</sup> On graduation in 1957, he became a researcher at the Romanian Academy's Institute of History and Philology in Iași; his first assignment was to work on preparing a major bibliography dealing with A. D. Xenopol.<sup>11</sup>

Romanian Stalinist "justice" was slow in coming, but ineluctable in its workings.<sup>12</sup> Alexandru Zub was melodramatically arrested in March 1958 for his involvement in the Putna events, given a ten-year sentence, and imprisoned in the Romanian gulag. He remained there until April 1964, when the next slight thawing of the system occurred. This formative experience developed moral and mental fortitude and doubtless provided him with the inner strength and personal clarity needed to survive Ceaușescu's Romania with honor. It was in prison that he developed a personal "categorical imperative" that would enable him to follow through on his historian's vocation.<sup>13</sup>

Never one to waste an opportunity, Zub was able to use prison to learn French, German, and English. For this and other reasons, he described his prison experiences as "fortunate," with frequent moves from one prison to another coming at opportune moments when his psychological and spiritual resources were at their limits. He also credited the faith of his mother's prayers and fasting in seeing him through.<sup>14</sup>

After his release, he was briefly employed at an archaeological dig and a museum in Bacău, and then from 1964 to 1968, as a bibliographer at the Library of the University of Iași, joining an honorable fraternity of dozens of Romanian scholars who, for one reason or another, were given refuge in library posts under Communism. He benefitted from the fact that, by 1964, the retrograde Soviet-style Romanian totalitarian regime had been forced by its nationalist agenda to rehabilitate political prisoners with cultural talents. By 1968, the Communist state's intellectual deficiencies required a further "thaw" and rehabilitation of previously suppressed elements.<sup>15</sup> In addition, this provided an opening for expanding contacts with Western scholars in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Alexandru Zub, "Ștefan cel Mare și posteritatea. O scânteie din marea flacără de mândrie și recunoștință," *Viața Studențească* 2, no. 4 (1957): 11. For an account, see Alexandru Zub, "Un program de redresare națională la Iași, în 1957," in *Analele Sighet*, vol. 8. *Anii 1954–1960: Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, ed. Romulus Rusan (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 2000), 748–58.

<sup>11</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 39.

<sup>12</sup> On Romanian student activism in 1956 and post-1956 repressions, see Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România, *Raport final* (București: 2006), 333–43.

<sup>13</sup> For his prison experiences, see Alexandru Zub, "Despre rezistența spirituală anticomunistă," *Memoria. Revista gândirii arestate*, no. 15 (1995): 8–11; and Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 48 ff. On the categorical imperative, see below.

<sup>14</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 50–55.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 67 ff.

Moving to the University library, Zub worked virtually non-stop, 24/7. This not only fed his extraordinary thirst for knowledge, but also gave him an unparalleled, systematic grasp of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Romanian history and culture. In 1968, he returned to the recently re-named A. D. Xenopol Institute of History and Archaeology in Iași as a bibliographer, where he began to publish his remarkable bibliographical and biographical studies of Mihail Kogălniceanu, A. D. Xenopol, and Vasile Pârvan.

Despite the 1958–1964 blot on his escutcheon, and the fact that this painful experience had effectively delayed the start of his scholarly career to age thirty, his merits were recognized at the Institute, and he steadily advanced from bibliographer to researcher to senior researcher, to research section head, and—following 1989—to Director of the Iași Institute and elected member of the Romanian Academy. His scholarship led eventually to over 60 books written or co-written, edited or co-edited, and more than 1,600 other bibliographical entries between 1966 and 2017.<sup>17</sup>

Along the way, Alexandru Zub also acquired a deep acquaintance with and knowledge of Western historiographical thought in particular and Western intellectual work in general. This was a far cry from the norm in pre-1989 Romania, where scholars usually studiously ignored mention of the work of non-Romanian colleagues.<sup>18</sup> In 1977–1978, his work was given international recognition through a Humboldt Fellowship that funded a two-year stay in Germany. This study experience in Western Europe broadened and influenced, but did not alter his research agenda, and resulted in the publication of a quintet of books that revolutionized the study of modern Romanian historiography.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> For a complete listing up to 2013, see Lucian Nastasă, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu, and Mihai Dorin, “Bibliografia lucrărilor lui Alexandru Zub,” in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 11–71. The Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza began in 2012 a commendable collected works of Al. Zub as *Seria Opere Alexandru Zub*, which has already made some of his older and long unavailable books more readily accessible. Antohi estimates that Zub’s books total some 10,000 pages (eliminating republications and new editions), while the total pagination of his other works, interviews, and conferences is simply impossible to calculate. Sorin Antohi, “Alexandru Zub: Fuziunea vieții cu opera,” in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 125.

<sup>18</sup> His writings on the relationship of Romanian to other cultures include, for example, “Despre studiul alterității la români,” in *Identitate/alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc*, ed. Alexandru Zub (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1996), 395–414; essays dealing with the influence of Western ideas and thinkers on Romania such as “Impactul bucklean în cultura română,” in his *Cunoaștere de sine și integrare* (Iași: Junimea, 1986), 152–66; “On the Traces of de Tocqueville in Romanian Culture,” in his *Reflections*, 2000, 133–52; and a collection on Romanian-German issues, *Romanogermanica. Secvențe istoriografice* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Study abroad and other visits to the West were also used to acquire a massive number of books and photocopies that augmented one of the largest personal libraries in Romania. For Zub and Germany, see Zub, *Romanogermanica*. For Zub’s “outlaw library” project and its impact in the 1980s, see Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 69 ff. On expanded contacts with Western scholars, see 67–70.

He also participated in numerous international congresses, such as: the International Congresses on Historical Sciences in 1980 and 1985, the Third World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies in 1985, the International Congresses on Romanian Studies of the Society for Romanian Studies (1986, 1993, and a keynote address in 2001), and the Romanian Studies conferences organized by the Center for Romanian Studies in Iași from 1995–2002.

Paradoxically, much of his work was carried out during the Stalinist and national Communism eras of Romanian culture between 1948 and 1989. Alexandru Zub became a brilliant and widely-known cultural force while maintaining his scholarly integrity in an exigent totalitarian state and highly politicized cultural environment. Some managed to achieve this by choosing “safer” (and, in general, more boring) areas of study than history or by keeping an extremely low profile. Zub did this while becoming an internationally-recognized authority in the history of ideas.<sup>20</sup>

He also did not hesitate, even in the increasingly dark days of the 1980s, to publicly criticize official cultural policies. In a 1983 interview, Zub lamented the “defective functioning” of “institutionalized dialogue with foreign historians,” as well as “the system of documentation in libraries and archives,” and criticized the fact that “too few Romanian historians carry out studies abroad.” He also called into question the over-emphasis on and use of anniversaries in Romanian cultural life.<sup>21</sup>

His personal strategy was based on what he called his “categorical imperative”: do not play the oppressors’ game, do not become involved in the system, and maintain moral freedom through programmatic self-marginalization.<sup>22</sup> As he wrote in 1990, under Communism, “Historiography was subjected to great pressure and not infrequently consented to play the game of power. Silence would have been a solution for moral survival. . . . One needs to make a distinction between historical discourse, intended to establish as much truth as possible, and the discourse of power. . . . Historical discourse, especially in such moments, ought to be a *reminder*, a mode of provoking wisdom. . . . ‘Don’t respond to the fool in his foolishness so that you won’t be just like him,’ we read in the great book . . .”<sup>23</sup>

From honest and inspiring peasants and religious prisoners he encountered in the Romanian Gulag, Zub had learned that “It was essential not to play the game of

<sup>20</sup> See Katherine Verdery’s account of cultural politics in *Communist Romania: National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu’s Romania* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1991), for an analysis. See also Zub’s *Orizont închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000); and the discussion in Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 64–65.

<sup>21</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 149–50.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 53, 56, 82–83. This commitment was so strong that the Communist regime never asked him to be an informer or police collaborator, 57.

<sup>23</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Chemarea istoriei: Un an de răspântie în România postcomunistă* (Iași: Junimea, 1997), 244–45. The allusion is to the Old Testament book of *Proverbs* 26:4.

the oppressor, despairing under subjection or admitting that the future had been foreclosed forever.”<sup>24</sup> One need not be silent in historical discourse under totalitarianism, as Zub’s books and articles demonstrated, but not many attempted it.<sup>25</sup> As a result, after 1989, he did not have to reinvent himself, or lie about his choices, or concoct self-serving apologia for his actions before 1989, as many were forced to do. However, this did not come easily.<sup>26</sup>

Zub’s categorical imperative was remarkably similar to the course of conduct advocated by Solzhenitsyn: “Personal non-participation in lies. Though lies conceal everything, though lies embrace everything, we will be obstinate in this smallest of matters: Let them embrace everything, but not with any help from me. . . . It’s dangerous. But let us refuse to say that which we do not think. . . . Either truth or falsehood: Toward spiritual independence, or toward spiritual servitude.”<sup>27</sup>

The overthrow of the Communist regime in 1989 allowed Alexandru Zub new opportunities and also created new burdens and uncertainties for a man who valued personal work time so much.<sup>28</sup> Immediately following the ouster of Ceaușescu, he was elected in 1990 by his colleagues as the director of the Institute of History in Iași. He was one of the 14 signers of the “Declaration of the Committee of Free Historians in Romania” on Christmas Day 1989, which set forth a reform program for historians in post-Communist Romania.<sup>29</sup> Subsequently, he became a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy in 1991, a full member in 2004, and head of its historical section in 2005.<sup>30</sup> He also taught at the University of Iași from 1990 to 2001.

Following 1989, Alexandru Zub received many honors, including being named Directeur d’Études at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris (1993, 2004), Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in France (1995), Grand Officer of the Order of the Star of Romania (Steaua României, 2000), and Hero of Liberty in Hungary (2006). He was also a founding member of the *Asociația Foștilor Deținuți Politici din România* (the Association of Former Political Prisoners in Romania).

Zub was called upon from many directions to take part in the myriad activities which the reconstruction of Romania implied: academic, publicistic,

<sup>24</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 52–53.

<sup>25</sup> To the best of my knowledge, none of his books included the usual tributes to the Romanian Communist regime or its leaders.

<sup>26</sup> See Alexandru-Florin Platon, “Profesorul Alexandru Zub, membru al Academiei Române,” in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 109. It is noteworthy that Zub refrained from using his experiences to portray himself as a victim, and, in general, shied away from even mentioning it.

<sup>27</sup> Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, “Live Not By Lies” (1974), reprinted in Diane Ravitch and Abigail Thernstrom, eds., *The Democracy Reader* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 208–10. Compare Zub’s comments on Czesław Miłosz’s discussion—in his *The Captive Mind* (1953)—of the intertwined nature of lies, *ketman*, and Communism. Zub, “Spiritul Genevei,” 34–35.

<sup>28</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 77 ff.

<sup>29</sup> The text was published in *Revista de Istorie* 42, no. 12 (1989): 1167–68.

<sup>30</sup> His Academy inaugural speech was published as *Discurs istoric și ego-istorie* (București: Editura Academiei, 2006), 31 pp.

cultural, political, and religious.<sup>31</sup> In this, as in a number of other respects, Vasile Pârvan was a model. Like Pârvan, Zub had a philosophy of history that impelled him to action. Like Pârvan, his strong sense of morality kept him from accepting offers of political power. And, like Pârvan, he had suffered deep disappointments.

Additional pressures existed which dissipated resources, affected Zub's health, and strained relationships, including with younger colleagues. Much of this took time and energy away from his own scholarly endeavors. An example from many was his participation in the thankless investigation of the Communist regime, a necessary but aggravating task that brought both commendation and disapprobrium.<sup>32</sup> Particularly disastrous was the forced evacuation of the Xenopol Institute's headquarters in 2012, which completely disrupted his work and library, and eventually led him to relinquish the reins of the Institute and the Historical Section of the Academy and pull back from most non-scholarly activities.<sup>33</sup> The burdens of "history as a civic option" doubtless had been experienced in a new, but not always positive light. They were, nevertheless, faced with a Pârvanian stoicism.

In 2015, despite all of this, his spirits seemed revived and he appeared to be once more looking beyond circumstances to what might be done next in pursuit of his true *métier* as a historian. In this, he was returning to something he had affirmed earlier: "We need to be optimists, as much as possible, in the spirit of [Pârvan's] *Datoria vieții noastre* . . . a text which should be on the desk of every teacher today and even more of every opinion maker."<sup>34</sup>

### III. Alexandru Zub and Romanian Historiography

This survey of Alexandru Zub's work published in book form is organized as follows:

1. Contributions to Romanian historical bibliography and documentation;
2. Contributions to the biographical study of the Romanian past;
3. Contributions to the Romanian history of history;
4. Other publications.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> On the 1989–1990 period, see his *Chemarea istoriei: Un an de răspântie în România postcomunistă* (Iași: Junimea, 1997), 351 pp.

<sup>32</sup> The results were published as Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România, *Raport final* (București: 2006).

<sup>33</sup> See Vitcu, "Lección," 100–2; and Antohi, "Fuziunea vieții cu opera," 125–26, on the fate of Zub's unparalleled personal library, papers, and research base. The Iași Institute finally moved in 2017 into suitable new quarters.

<sup>34</sup> Cassian Maria Spiridon and Alexandru Zub, "Apărarea identității proprii . . . e o necesitate inexorabilă"—dialog cu academicianul Alexandru Zub," *Convorbiri Literare* 143, no. 10 (2009): 11.

<sup>35</sup> For reasons of space, this survey is restricted to works that appeared in book form, though occasional mention will be made of periodical pieces.



## 1. Contributions to Romanian Historical Bibliography and Documentation

Alexandru Zub's nonpareil academic reputation was established between 1971–1975 with the publication of a trilogy of massive, brilliant bio-bibliographical works dealing with Mihail Kogălniceanu,<sup>36</sup> A. D. Xenopol,<sup>37</sup> and Vasile Pârvan,<sup>38</sup> followed by a series of first-rate works erected on this massive foundation. Painstakingly assembled on note cards in the days before computer databases were available to assist the organization and manipulation of such large quantities of information, these books are truly impressive achievements, a testimony to a rare work ethic combined with an intuitive historical mind and an outstanding memory. These works are, simply put, a bonanza for anyone dealing with Romanian historiography, modern Romanian culture and civilization, and modern Romanian development. All three were anchored in the principle enunciated by Tudor Vianu that a bio-bibliography should not only set forth the bibliographical data of its subject, but should also “permit the researcher to follow systematically the personality in question . . . all the way through the most recent echoes in posterity.”<sup>39</sup> They will be essential works of reference for a long time to come.

The first volume, on Kogălniceanu (1817–1891), published in 1971, begins with a brief introduction (pp. v–xxiv) that reviews previous bibliographical and biographical approaches to the life of one of modern Romania's most complex and prolific writers, a man who was a historian, publicist, editor, political leader, cultural mover and shaker, and literary leader. Kogălniceanu was educated in part outside of the Romanian lands (showing the influence of both France and Germany), and left a truly bewildering, widely-ranging written legacy, attributed and unattributed, in several languages and alphabets, in sometimes extremely obscure periodicals, ranging from plays and poetry to parliamentary speeches, official correspondence,<sup>40</sup> and official documents, all of which present considerable difficulties for the bibliographer. Zub obviously devoted considerable time to thinking this through and his procedures are carefully summarized at the outset.

<sup>36</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Mihail Kogălniceanu. 1817–1891. Biobibliografie* (București: Editura Enciclopedică Română/Editura Militară, 1971), lxxxii + 654 pp. The closing date for entries appears to be 1970.

<sup>37</sup> Alexandru Zub, *A. D. Xenopol. Biobibliografie* (București: Editura Enciclopedică Română/Editura Militară, 1973), 694 pp.

<sup>38</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Vasile Pârvan. 1882–1927. Biobibliografie* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică/Editura Militară, 1975), lxxxiv + 399 pp. No closing date given, but the latest entries are dated 1974.

<sup>39</sup> Zub, *Xenopol Biobibliografie*, 23–24.

<sup>40</sup> A catalogue of Kogălniceanu's correspondence alone, compiled by Augustin Z. N. Pop, runs 466 pages and 2240 entries: *Catalogul corespondenței lui Mihail Kogălniceanu* (București: Editura Academiei, 1959).

The introduction is followed by a comprehensive chronology of Kogălniceanu's life, including his posterity (pp. xxx–lxxxii). The bibliography properly speaking is divided into two major sections: the works of Kogălniceanu, including projects, attributed writings, and possible publications (pp. 1–464); and works about Kogălniceanu's writings and life as such (pp. 465–591), including correspondence, iconography, and archival resources. There are also a few photographs. The volume concludes with extensive indices dealing with subjects and names to facilitate access.

The second bio-bibliography, published two years later in 1973, deals with the life and work of the prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century Iași historian and thinker A. D. Xenopol (1847–1920), the first to publish a complete synthesis of Romanian history and the first to be taken seriously by the European historical world as a philosopher of history. Xenopol was also an encyclopedist (he published works on economics, politics, law, sociology, theory of culture and civilization, and literature, as well as history, philosophy of history, and more).<sup>41</sup> He was a believer in the inherent inter-disciplinary nature of historical work and something of an optimist (in contrast to his early mentors in the Junimea group). Zub's introduction (pp. 5–22), surveys Xenopol's life and work, devoting particular attention to his writings on the theory of history and its European prominence.<sup>42</sup> This is followed by an explanatory note outlining the procedures and organization of the volume and an extensive chronology (pp. 31–61).

As with the volume on Kogălniceanu, organization of the bibliography per se is dictated by the material within the two main sections dealing with Xenopol's publications (pp. 63–329), and reference material about him (books, articles, correspondence, iconography, archives, and so forth, pp. 331–619). And, once more, the book closes with a comprehensive name index and subject index. Included is a selection of photographs.

The third of these superlative bio-bibliographies was published in 1975, and covers the activities of Vasile Pârvan (1882–1927), the founder of modern Romanian archaeology, cultural leader and innovator, theoretician and philosopher of culture, memorialist, university and academic reformer, and a man whose career and untimely death at 45 typified the dilemmas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century historian/erudite scholar and the tragic destiny of a deeply moral reformer who believed that life came with heroic obligations (*datoria vieții noastre*).<sup>43</sup> Pârvan's life and ideas are

<sup>41</sup> Zub, *Xenopol Biobibliografie*, lists no fewer than a dozen such categories.

<sup>42</sup> On Xenopol's efforts to make his people better known in European academic circles, see my "Romanian Culture enters the European Mainstream: Contributions of A. D. Xenopol," in *Cultură politică și politici culturale în România modernă*, eds. Alexandru Zub and Adrian Cioflâncă (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2005), 39–51; and also Alexandru Zub (Al. Constantin), "A. D. Xenopol peste hotare. Note Biobibliografice," in *A. D. Xenopol. Studii privitoare la viața și opera sa*, eds. Leonid Boicu and Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Academiei, 1972), 429–43.

<sup>43</sup> This was the title of his inaugural address at the new Romanian University of Cluj, 2 November 1919. Zub, *Pârvan Biobibliografie*, xli–xlii.

the subject of the introduction (pp. v–xix), followed by an “Explanatory Note” (pp. xx–xxiv), and a detailed chronology of his life (pp. xxx–lxxxiv).

The actual bibliography is in the usual two parts: works, including a somewhat longer list of projected works (pp. 1–135),<sup>44</sup> and references, including archival indications and a comprehensive annotated correspondence listing (pp. 137–375). Also included is a selection of photographs. A helpful addition to this volume is a chronological index of books and brochures published by Pârvan (pp. 277–278). The volume concludes with the usual name index (pp. 379–399), though there is no subject index.

These enormous labors were followed by a number of other major contributions over time to the documentation of Romanian historiography including the following: an edition of Kogălniceanu’s *Opere: Vol. II, Scrieri istorice*;<sup>45</sup> editions of Xenopol’s *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană*,<sup>46</sup> and *Teoria istoriei*,<sup>47</sup> as well as a collection of studies, co-edited with Leonid Boicu, on *A. D. Xenopol. Studii privitoare la viața și opera sa*;<sup>48</sup> editions of Pârvan’s *Correspondență și acte*,<sup>49</sup> *Scrieri*,<sup>50</sup> *Memoriale*,<sup>51</sup> and *Idei și forme istorice*.<sup>52</sup> He also collaborated on editions of several other Pârvan collections.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>44</sup> This list is longer than that for Kogălniceanu and Xenopol because of Pârvan’s early death.

<sup>45</sup> Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. II. *Scrieri istorice*, edited with an introductory study by Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Academiei, 1976), 675 pp. This was part of a collected works project for Kogălniceanu, that began in the 1970s and which is unfortunately still incomplete.

<sup>46</sup> Alexandru Dimitrie Xenopol’s *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985-in progress).

<sup>47</sup> Alexandru Dimitrie Xenopol, *Teoria istoriei*, edited with an introduction by Alexandru Zub, translated from the French by Olga Zaicik (București: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1997), xl + 366 pp. The introductory essay is an impressive discussion of Xenopol’s historiographical ideas.

<sup>48</sup> Leonid Boicu and Alexandru Zub, eds., *A. D. Xenopol. Studii privitoare la viața și opera sa* (București: Editura Academiei, 1972), 443 pp.

<sup>49</sup> Vasile Pârvan, *Correspondență și acte*, edited with an introductory study by Alexandru Zub (București: Minerva, 1973), xxxii + 498 pp. The publication of this book was a good example of the tricky ground that Zub had to traverse under the Communist regime, taking five years to finally get into print. Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 65 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Vasile Pârvan, *Scrieri*, edited with an introductory study by Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1981), 689 pp. Republished as Vasile Pârvan, *Scrieri alese*, edited with an introduction by Alexandru Zub and a preface by Radu Vulpe (București: Editura Academiei, 2006), lvi + 724 pp.

<sup>51</sup> Vasile Pârvan, *Memoriale*, edited with an introduction by Alexandru Zub (București: Cartea Românească, 2001), 195 pp.

<sup>52</sup> Vasile Pârvan, *Idei și forme istorice: Patru lecții inaugurale*, edited with an introduction by Alexandru Zub (București: Cartea Românească, 2003), 192 pp.

<sup>53</sup> Vasile Pârvan, *Studii de istorie medievală și modernă*, ed. Lucian Nastasă, with an introduction by Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1990), 389 pp.; and Vasile Pârvan, *Studii de istorie a culturii antice*, ed. Nelu Zugravu, with a foreword by Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1992), 312 pp., as well as Ștefan Lemny and Alexandru Zub, eds., *Vasile Pârvan: antologie critică*, selected by Ștefan Lemny, with an introduction, chronology, and bibliography by Alexandru Zub (București: Eminescu, 1984), 431 pp., a collection of interpretations of Pârvan and his work.

## 2. Contributions to the Biographical Study of the Romanian Past

Alexandru Zub subsequently produced monographic studies on each of the giants of the Romanian historical profession treated above: “Bio-bibliography created for me both a cultural horizon which began to be nourished by the theoretical and methodological problematic of historiography.”<sup>54</sup> His method was simple: discover, gather, read, and understand all of the sources, published and unpublished, and then synthesize everything into a coherent whole. Simple . . . and impossible for the general run of scholars. Of course, as his bio-bibliographies demonstrated, Zub is gifted with a phenomenally retentive mind. At the same time, his writing is well-served by a subtle philosophical bent. Finally, he has an uncanny ability to combine fact, idea, and theory into a unified, coherent research framework. Leonid Boicu put his finger squarely on this point, characterizing Zub’s work as “a mosaic design with every piece in its place. Such order is, without doubt, the fruit of a well-defined conception and methodology.”<sup>55</sup> And these are gifts that were developed not by accident, but through long and hard hours of work in libraries, archives, and an unbelievable amount of highly disciplined reading and thought.

As a result, Zub’s work was not aimed merely at accumulating and presenting information, but also interpreting it within the matrix of a well-thought out and intuited historical investigation, raising and responding to historical questions, and expanding the horizons of knowledge. As Lord Acton once observed, “the great object, in trying to understand history, political, religious, literary, or scientific, is to get behind men and to grasp ideas.”<sup>56</sup> This characterizes Zub’s work as well. As Liviu Antonesei wrote, he simply “. . . would not come to a verdict on a subject if he did not know it completely.”<sup>57</sup>

Further, Acton argued in his famous 19<sup>th</sup> century inaugural address that “History compels us to fasten on abiding issues, and rescues us from the temporary and transient. Politics and history are interwoven, but are not commensurate. Ours is a domain that reaches farther than affairs of state, and is not subject to the jurisdiction of governments. It is our function to keep in view and to command the movement of ideas, which are not the effect but the cause of public events . . .”<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 63.

<sup>55</sup> Leonid Boicu, “Alexandru Zub—60!,” in Bădărău, Boicu, and Nastasă, *Istoria ca lectură a lumii*, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Lord Acton, Letter to Mary Gladstone, March 15, 1880, reprinted in: Lord Acton, *Selected Writings of Lord Acton*, vol. III. *Essays in Religion, Politics, and Morality*, ed. Jesse Rufus Fears (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985), 643.

<sup>57</sup> Antonesei, “Pe urmele cărturarului,” viii.

<sup>58</sup> Acton’s 1895 Cambridge inaugural, reprinted in: Lord Acton, *Selected Writings of Lord Acton*, vol. II. *Essays in the Study and Writing of History*, ed. Jesse Rufus Fears (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985), 505–6.

Zub's work has been exemplary in both respects, combining the short run and long run into a seamless, integral whole.<sup>59</sup>

A case in point is his 1974 *Mihail Kogălniceanu istoric*,<sup>60</sup> a massive study, far more dense<sup>61</sup> than its mere pagination indicates, that will not be replaced in the foreseeable future. It was based on work done for the doctorate that he completed in 1973.<sup>62</sup> Pompiliu Teodor's conclusion was that Zub's *Kogălniceanu istoric* was "a historiographical event," indeed, "the first [Romanian] historiographical monograph as such in which the conception and methodology utilized were in line with the canons of . . . European historical culture . . ."<sup>63</sup>

Subsequently, possibly realizing that only a minuscule number of specialists would even consider reading a nearly 900-page tome on Kogălniceanu, Zub prepared for international audiences *M. Kogălniceanu, un fondateur de la Roumanie moderne* (with a translation for Romanian audiences).<sup>64</sup> In 2017, his further studies on Kogălniceanu were collected as *M. Kogălniceanu. Studii și note istoriografice*.<sup>65</sup> This volume again displays the catholicity of Zub's mind and the encyclopedic nature of his researches, ranging from studies of previously unknown letters to Kogălniceanu's relationship to other scholars (such as Melchisedec, Xenopol, Erbiceanu, and Iorga) to reflective thought pieces (such as Kogălniceanu and the spirit of regeneration, and on the perennial and always current nature of Kogălniceanu's work and message).

Zub's work on Xenopol was a book also written for non-Romanians, entitled *L'historiographie Roumaine à l'âge de la synthèse: A. D. Xenopol*.<sup>66</sup> It showed that

<sup>59</sup> Compare my "Reshaping Romanian Historiography: Some Actonian Perspectives," *Romanian Civilization* 3, no. 1 (1994): 3–23.

<sup>60</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Mihail Kogălniceanu istoric* (Iași: Junimea, 1974), 852 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2012), 876 pp.

<sup>61</sup> See Boicu, "Alexandru Zub—60!," 1, who argues that Zub's writing is "in another register" than we are used to; and Vițcu, "Lecția," 95–96. This density does not always meet the eye. For example, I did not fully see the point of Zub's *Biruit-au gândul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* (Iași: Junimea, 1983), until the third or fourth reading.

<sup>62</sup> The thesis ran to some 1,400 typed pages. No surprise here.

<sup>63</sup> Pompiliu Teodor, "Personalitatea istoricului," in Bădărău, Boicu, and Nastasă, *Istoria ca lectură a lumii*, 13.

<sup>64</sup> Alexandru Zub, *M. Kogălniceanu, un fondateur de la Roumanie moderne* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978), 106 pp., published in Romanian as *Mihail Kogălniceanu* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984), 107 pp. In 2004, a slightly revised Romanian 2<sup>nd</sup> edition appeared as *Mihail Kogălniceanu, arhitect al României moderne* (Iași: Institutul European, 2004), 108 pp., with an unchanged 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 2005, and a 4<sup>th</sup> edition as *Mihail Kogălniceanu. Un arhitect al României moderne* (Iași: Junimea, 2017), 116 pp.

<sup>65</sup> Alexandru Zub, *M. Kogălniceanu. Studii și note istoriografice* (București-Brăila: Editura Academiei/Muzeul Brăilei Carol I, Istros, 2017), 344 pp.

<sup>66</sup> Alexandru Zub, *L'historiographie Roumaine à l'âge de la synthèse: A. D. Xenopol* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983), 100 pp. A Romanian edition appeared two decades later as *A. D. Xenopol. Istoriografia română la vârsta sintezei* (Iași: Institutul European,

often clumsy Romanian Marxist authorities were astute enough to recognize that works which informed international audiences concerning important 19<sup>th</sup> century cultural personalities, even if written from a non-Marxist point of view, contributed positively to Romania's cultural image abroad.

Turning to Pârvan, Zub produced another stunning biographical work: *Vasile Pârvan: Efigia cărturarului*.<sup>67</sup> His affinities with Pârvan as a historian, thinker, and academic are more than obvious in this outstanding volume, which is not only a definitive study of one of the key figures of modern Romanian historiography, but a sensitive and nuanced treatment of the first three decades of Romanian intellectual history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a book that cannot be grasped in a single reading. As with Kogălniceanu, this was followed by more popularized, but by no means dumbed down, treatments of Pârvan: *Pe urmele lui Vasile Pârvan*,<sup>68</sup> which follows the central figure geographically through life, and, for international circulation, *Les dilemmes d'un historien: Vasile Pârvan (1882–1927)*.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to his work on these three giants of Romanian history, Zub also contributed to the in-depth study of the work of other Romanian historians. One way that he has done this is by publishing collections of his writings dealing with two specific historians: Nicolae Iorga<sup>70</sup> and Dimitrie Cantemir.<sup>71</sup> One cannot go anywhere in Romanian historiography and culture without finding the fingerprints and footprints of N. Iorga (1871–1940). At the same time, Iorga is an obvious source for reflection on a wide variety of subjects. The Iorga volume is similar to his collection of pieces dealing with Kogălniceanu discussed above, travelling far and wide in time and scope. The volume is divided into four sections: biographical; parallels or analogies (Kogălniceanu, Pârvan, Madgearu, etc.); ideas, themes, and connections (which involve such topics as Iorga on historical sources, Iorga as historian of Byzance, and comments on a multitude of Iorga's writings dealing with, *inter alia*, the place of Romanians in world history, his youthful polemical writings, and the militant vocation of the historian); and, fourthly, Iorga's historiographical efforts, both as a synthesizer of the Romanian past and as a

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2004), 115 pp. In 2015, his brief syntheses were gathered into *Efigii istorice. Mihail Kogălniceanu, A. D. Xenopol, Vasile Pârvan* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2015), 303 pp.

<sup>67</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Vasile Pârvan: Efigia cărturarului* (Iași: Junimea, 1974), 492 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2001), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2015), 317 pp.

<sup>68</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Pe urmele lui Vasile Pârvan* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1983), 383 p., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. with a preface by Liviu Antonesei (București: Editura Institutului Cultural Român, 2005), XVI + 346 pp.

<sup>69</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Les dilemmes d'un historien: Vasile Pârvan (1882–1927)* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985), 155 pp., with a later Romanian edition as *Vasile Pârvan. Dilemele unui istoric* (Iași: Institutul European, 2002), 178 pp.

<sup>70</sup> Alexandru Zub, *N. Iorga: studii și note istoriografice* (Brăila: Istros, 2012), 334 pp.

<sup>71</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Cantemiriana. Studii, eseuri, note de lectură* (Brăila: Istros/Muzeul Brăilei, 2014), 183 pp.

philosopher of history. It is worthy of mention that this volume, as is typical of Zub's work, includes an index to facilitate its use.

Zub's preoccupation with Cantemir is, of course, hardly surprising: fellow Moldovan, historian, a man of ideas, encyclopedic savant, and scholar/patriot, Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723) was and is a figure of inspiration. Just as with Kogălniceanu and Iorga, Cantemir's diverse preoccupations need periodic refreshment and drawing to our attention. At the same time, linking Cantemir with his posterity is an ongoing task which Zub has willingly assumed for more than four decades. The book has three thematic sections: Cantemir the historian, Cantemir and national regeneration, and Cantemir today, both nationally and internationally. The volume includes a Cantemir chronology and illustrative materials.

Finally, Zub contributed to the biographical side of Romanian historiography by editing four volumes between 1993–1997, in a series devoted to Romanian historians: *Ion Nistor (1876–1962)*,<sup>72</sup> *Victor Slăvescu (1891–1977)*,<sup>73</sup> *Ilie Minea (1881–1943)*,<sup>74</sup> and *I. D. Ștefănescu (1886–1981)*.<sup>75</sup> These collaborative volumes usually included a chronology, bibliography, and a series of studies and memoirs dealing with the historian in question, and are invaluable for the student of Romanian historiography.

In conclusion, mention might also be made here of the journal *Xenopoliana*, which Zub founded in 1993, as part of the work of Fundația Academică A. D. Xenopol started in 1992.<sup>76</sup> Designed to be a bit quicker off the mark than the usual academic journal, especially due to thematic volumes, it appeared regularly until Vol. 15 (2007–2008), when local conflicts and financial issues derailed a promising initiative.<sup>77</sup> (Its reappearance would be welcome.)

### 3. Contributions to the Romanian History of History

Alexandru Zub simultaneously began in the 1970s to systematically examine the development of modern Romanian historiography from 1848 to World War II, a research program that benefitted significantly from his Humboldt experiences in

<sup>72</sup> Alexandru Zub, ed., *Ion Nistor (1876–1962)*, with a chronology and bibliography by Mihai-Ștefan Ceaușu (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1993), 147 pp.

<sup>73</sup> Alexandru Zub, ed., *Victor Slăvescu (1891–1977)*, with a chronology and bibliography by Lucian Nastasă (București: Editura Academiei, 1993), 111 pp.

<sup>74</sup> Alexandru Zub, ed., *Ilie Minea (1881–1943)*, with a chronology and bibliography by Lucian Nastasă (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1996), 236 pp.

<sup>75</sup> Alexandru Zub and Flavius Solomon, eds., *I. D. Ștefănescu (1886–1981)*, with a chronology and bibliography by Flavius Solomon (Iași: Editura Fundației Academice A. D. Xenopol, 1997), 241 pp.

<sup>76</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 121. The 1989 appeal to Romanian historians had had relatively little practical result. The Xenopol Foundation in Iași and the journal were an attempt to follow up on this at least at a regional level; 89–104.

<sup>77</sup> Pompiliu Teodor was particularly excited by this initiative. Pompiliu Teodor, *Introducere în istoria istoriografiei din România* (Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2002), 269.

Germany. Beginning in 1981 and ending in 1989, he published a quintet of books dealing with (a) Romanian historicism; (b) the post-1848 generation, largely exponents of the Romantic school functioning between 1848 and the 1860s, (c) the Junimea “critical spirit” tradition, which dominated Romanian culture from the 1860s to the 1890s, (d) the emergence of critical, positivist, professionalized historical study in the 1880s, which culminated in the First World War, and (e) finally a volume dealing with interwar historiography, perhaps the most fertile epoch in Romanian history because of the national freedom and unity finally achieved as a consequence of World War I.

Zub’s principal intuition was that the “history of history” was the key not only to understanding the movement of Romanian civilization in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries but also in the emergence and construction of that civilization.<sup>78</sup> Each of these works was in its own way a landmark piece of scholarship; each is essential for any study of modern Romanian development, culture, and historiography. And at the heart of this work was Zub’s mastery and superb management of bibliography.<sup>79</sup>

Taking these works chronologically with regard to the period they deal with and not in the order of publication, we begin with *Biruit-au gândul (note despre istorismul românesc)*,<sup>80</sup> which takes the argument back to its origins. Technically speaking, this book was a collection of essays, not a monograph as such, but (without being fanatical about consistency), it is the first section of this book (“Adevăr și militantism”) that really kicked off Zub’s analysis of modern Romanian historiography by dealing with two perennial issues in Romanian culture: what I call “Costin’s Quandry,” that is how to reconcile societal engagement with intellectual honesty; and, secondly, how to explain the force of Romanian historicism. The section concluded with a series of astute observations on the evolution of Romanian historiography through the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>81</sup>

As already mentioned, Zub had always been interested in the problematic life facing a historian, scholar, and intellectual in Southeastern Europe.<sup>82</sup> Such ideas

<sup>78</sup> A point he articulates in Zub, *A scrie și a face istorie (Istoriografia română postpașoptistă)* (Iași: Junimea, 1981), 261, noting that historiography in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an important instrument in “the fundamental renovation of Romanian society.”

<sup>79</sup> Teodor, “Personalitatea istoricului,” 15, 20.

<sup>80</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Biruit-au gândul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* (Iași: Editura Junimea, 1983).

<sup>81</sup> See my “The Origins of the Romanian Historiographical Tradition and the Development of Romanian Historicism,” in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 161–78. This theme is also present in Zub’s *Cantemiriana*.

<sup>82</sup> See Alexandru Zub, “Themes in South East European Historiography,” in *East European History*, ed. Stanislav J. Kirschbaum (Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1988), 11–26. See also the *locus classicus* of this discussion: Robert William Seton-Watson’s *The Historian as a Political Force in Central Europe* (London: The School of Slavonic Studies, 1922); as well as Henry L. Roberts, “Eastern Europe and the Historian,” in his *Eastern Europe: Politics, Revolution, and Diplomacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 3–15; and my essay “The Historian as a Political Force in



and questions, which involve dealing with “history as a civic option,” were of much more than hypothetical interest, especially since national fervor and exigencies have traditionally tended to overwhelm scholarly consciences particularly in this part of Europe. On the other hand, Romanian intellectuals never really had the option of the ivy-covered tower. Instead, the Romanian “historian was always the child of the fortress, to which his work was linked. His own destiny is paradoxical, while he craves on the one hand quietude, on the other he cannot be freed from the vicissitudes of the moment.”<sup>83</sup> Withdrawal was not usually an option.

*Biruit-au gîndul* was in fact an acute and dense analysis of the “cearta pentru istorie” (“the fight for history”), “Costin’s Quandry,” and the conflict between “civic passion and intellectual scruple” which haunted Miron Costin in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The fight for history had its source “in the confrontation of the need to elaborate the origins of the Romanian people with the pressing and unforgiving duties of the day.” It was the problem, in other words, of how to reconcile the duties of the true scholar, on the one hand, and the call of civic responsibilities (in this case, political) on the other.<sup>84</sup> This was and is a real conundrum. As Zub wrote, “The dilemma appears insoluble because the historian needs to conduct himself as a scholar at the same time that exterior factors can undermine his objectivity.”<sup>85</sup> Costin wound up trying to do both, hoping that patriotism and scholarship could be combined: “biruit-au gîndul.” Unfortunately, given human nature, Costin’s activist impulse often wound up triumphing over his scholarly commitments.<sup>86</sup>

All of the great forerunners of Romanian history writing—Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Constantin Cantacuzino, Dimitrie Cantemir—were “scholars and men of action . . . deeply involved in the social and political life of their time.”<sup>87</sup> They not only participated in history—as the makers of history—but also were students of the past—the writers of history. This owed,

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Central Europe: R. W. Seton-Watson’s 1922 Inaugural Address,” in *Slujind-o pe Clio. In Honorem Dumitru Vitcu*, eds. Mihai Iacobescu, Gheorghe Cliveti, and Dinu Bălan (Iași: Junimea, 2010), 321–34.

<sup>83</sup> Zub, *Biruit-au gîndul*, 1983, 33.

<sup>84</sup> See the overview by Zub in *Biruit-au gîndul*, 1983, 11–14. On Romanian humanism and civic spirit, see Alexandru Dușu, *European Intellectual Movements and Modernization of Romanian Culture*, revised ed. (București: Editura Academiei, 1981), 15, discussing the fact that Romanian “humanists’ keen interest in social and political matters lent a dominant feature to Romanian humanism—its civic spirit . . .”

<sup>85</sup> Zub, *Biruit-au gîndul*, 1983, 26.

<sup>86</sup> The impact of power-holding on people, so trenchantly identified by Lord Acton, cannot be overemphasized: “Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Lord Acton to Mandell Creighton, Cannes, April 5, 1887, “Acton Creighton Correspondence,” in Acton, *Selected Writings*, vol. II, 383.

<sup>87</sup> Alexandru Dușu, *Romanian Humanists and European Culture: A Contribution to Comparative Cultural History* (București: Editura Academiei, 1977), 8.

in part, to the Romanians' geographical position, which as Ureche pointed out, was fatefully located "in the path of all evils."<sup>88</sup>

Zub conceded that "the struggle of Romanian scholars, particularly historians, to recover collective dignity . . . preceded and always accompanied the defensive efforts of our people, projecting it into history and fostering thereby the rise of national militantism," though "it would be a mistake to believe that geopolitically motivated militantism was the only impulse and notable manifestation of Romanian historiography."<sup>89</sup> In the end, Zub was hopeful that "civic duty and the exigencies of the discipline" could be reconciled as long as the ethical dimension is stressed. The "establishment of the truth depends on the historian, and the historian is 'under the times.' It is a difficult, but not impossible task."<sup>90</sup>

The post-1848 generation, largely exponents of the Romantic school functioning between 1848 and the 1860s, was the subject of the second volume in Zub's historiographical quintet.<sup>91</sup> He wrote that "the historiography of the 19<sup>th</sup> century . . . evolved particularly under the stars of the political and had to reflect contemporary struggles, the same 'cares and haggling' which led M. Costin to lament and which seem somehow inherent in historical writing."<sup>92</sup> For historians largely under the influence of Romanticism—Mihail Kogălniceanu, Nicolae Bălcescu, Florian Aaron, B. P. Hasdeu, A. T. Laurian, A. P. Ilarian, among others—such militantism seemed natural and less problematic. Thus, *A scrie și a face istorie* is an accurate summary of the work of the activist, quasi-romantic historians who assayed the Romanian past after the failed Revolutions of 1848 in the Romanian lands: They saw themselves as called both "to write history and to make history" (the phrase is from Kogălniceanu). In either case, they were inspired by history as civic option.

This period of nearly two decades was one in which the partial Romanian national union became a reality, and in which the political was primary, to the point of being an obsession. It also provided a transition from Romanian culture in subjugation to the emergence of classical Romanian culture that succeeded it. Because it was transitional and contradictory, historiography in this era has been vaguely treated: Zub's aim here was to rectify this by "providing a thematic tableau" for Romanian historiography, rather than elaborating a string of

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<sup>88</sup> ". . . Ce fiind în calea răutăților," Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei până la Aron Vodă (1359–1595) întocmit după Gregorie Ureche Vornicul, Istratie Logofătul și alții de Simion Dascălul*, ed. Constantin Giurescu (București: SOCEC, 1916), 8.

<sup>89</sup> Zub, *Biruit-au gândul*, 1983, 12.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 32–34.

<sup>91</sup> Alexandru Zub, *A scrie și a face istorie (istoriografia română postpașoptistă)* (Iași: Junimea, 1981), 368 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014), 284 pp.

<sup>92</sup> Zub, *A scrie*, 1981, 12.

historiographical portraits.<sup>93</sup> He also fluidly combined intellectual history with social, economic, and political history.

Romanian historiography prior to 1866 saw a movement from history as chronicle to a modern, westward looking focus. History increasingly became a profession as modern Romanian culture began to emerge, though grandiose projects far exceeded actual accomplishments. In the end, the basis was laid for the future, both in a positive and negative manner (particularly the problematic nature of the militant approach).<sup>94</sup>

The third book in Zub's series, *Junimea. Implicații istoriografice 1864–1885*,<sup>95</sup> focused on the Junimea “critical spirit” school which dominated Romanian culture from the 1860s to the 1890s. The Junimists, famed as the premier Romanian literary movement of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and led by the philosopher (and politician) Titu Maiorescu, might seem an odd choice for a book on the development of Romanian historiography, but the usually overlooked fact was that as an intellectual movement, Junimea naturally included historians. Secondly, it is undeniable that historical concerns played a major part in the group's catholic interests. Lastly, history and Romanian culture had become so inextricably intertwined by this juncture in time that it would have been strange had Junimea not played a role in its evolution.

Junimea's principal contribution to Romanian culture generally owed to its stress on the need for a critical spirit, which provided an obvious counterpoint to the Romanticism of the post-1848 generation.<sup>96</sup> Zub thoroughly demonstrated the scope and variety of Junimea's “implication” in Romanian historiography, ranging from the sponsorship and encouragement of various individuals (A. D. Xenopol, G. Panu, Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan, and even Nicolae Iorga, among others),<sup>97</sup> to the ways in which history was involved in Junimist preoccupations (including their legendary meetings, their public lecture series, their journal *Convorbiri Literare*, their activities at the Academy, and in education),<sup>98</sup> to furthering the massive influence of German historical scholarship on Romania in this period.<sup>99</sup> In the end, Junimea's “new direction” played a very important role in the regeneration of

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 18–20.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 279–91.

<sup>95</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Junimea. Implicații istoriografice 1864–1885* (Iași: Junimea, 1976), 383 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014), 380 pp.

<sup>96</sup> Zub, *Junimea*, 1976, 7–9, 14, 234–41.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 15–22. Zub reminds us that Maiorescu wanted to write a history of modern Romania; he settled for a *Istoria contemporană a României (1866–1900)* (București: SOCEC, 1925) derived from the introductions to his published parliamentary speeches (Zub, *Junimea*, 1976, 11). This was not the only ambitious historical project left undone by Maiorescu.

<sup>98</sup> Zub, *Junimea*, 1976, 23–201.

<sup>99</sup> See Zub's *Romanogermanica*.

Romanian culture, and in preparing the specialists who would dominate the next era of Romanian historiography through the inauguration of a more scientific, professional, critical approach.

Zub's fourth volume, *De la istoria critică la criticism*,<sup>100</sup> dealt specifically with the emergence of critical, positivist, professionalized historical study, beginning in the 1880s and culminating with World War I. It was followed by the fifth and final volume, *Istorie și istorici în România interbelică*,<sup>101</sup> which completed the cycle by dealing with interwar Romanian historiography up to World War II. Both of these are much more standard monographical treatments, combining encyclopedic range with subtle analytical power.

As before, historians were movers and shakers in the period prior to World War I, both in academia and in politics. The new historians' takeover of Romanian historiography prior to 1914 paralleled similar developments in France, especially after the "moment of 1900." How they did this is the fascinating story of these two volumes. Titu Maiorescu, as Romania's cultural majordomo, was responsible for providing financial and other encouragement to the new generation (the new generation generally received its advanced training in Western centers), for bringing these outsiders to leadership positions at the University of București and the Romanian Academy (Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan, and N. Iorga, joined later by Constantin Giurescu, Vasile Pârvan, D. Russo, and others, even if many of them later diverged from the master), and for allowing *Convorbiri Literare* to transform itself into primarily a historical journal (especially under the editorship of Ioan Bogdan after 1902). A modern network of institutions was established (societies, scholarly journals, specialized institutes, historical monuments commissions, and so forth); and European approaches to history (cultural, economic, and social history) enriched Romanian historical study as the two became more and more synchronized.<sup>102</sup>

Was history a science? Was the critical method an essential item in the historian's tool box? The answers to these questions were ambiguous, but generally positive. The days of the chronicler and the antiquarian trafficker in nostalgic trivia were over. The gains were palpable: Though it had to exist side-by-side with the "old" Romanticism, precision and rigor became more and more the norm. At the same time, Zub discussed the work of those who did not fit neatly into a Romantic/Critical approach polarity. Xenopol and Hasdeu are two examples. So, too, was N. Iorga, who could not really remain tributary to any

<sup>100</sup> Alexandru Zub, *De la istoria critică la criticism. Istoriografia română la finele secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX* (București: Editura Academiei, 1985), 311 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.: *De la istoria critică la criticism. Istoriografia română sub semnul modernității* (București: Editura Academiei, 2000), 382 pp., 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014), 430 pp.

<sup>101</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Istorie și istorici în România interbelică* (Iași: Junimea, 1989), 411 pp.; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2002), 451 pp.; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2015), 369 pp.

<sup>102</sup> Zub, *De la istoria critică la criticism*, 1985, *passim*.

“school” and established himself a leading but unclassifiable figure in Romanian historiography, combining elements of the Romantic approach (particularly stylistic qualities) and Franco-German professionalism. Yet another distinctive movement discussed by Zub was the work of the Transylvanians (such as Ioan Lupaș).

The critical approach became critical approaches, fueled by conflicts between “schools” (Iorga vs. his former students) and personalities (Iorga and C. C. Giurescu), and regional interests and differences (Muntenian, Moldovan, and Transylvanian). In the end, in Zub’s view, the approach of the Școala Nouă sometimes trailed off into “hypercriticism,” while the methodology of the initial critical movement was more nuanced and balanced.<sup>103</sup>

In the interwar era, paradoxically, history and historians continued to maintain (and even extend) their prominence in Romanian culture and politics, while at the same time, because of the torrent of irrationalism unleashed by the war, history and historians came under fire.<sup>104</sup> This final volume was perhaps the most difficult to write because Zub needed to reconstruct from scratch virtually all of the much contested, controverted, and murky history of Romania between the wars, be it cultural, political, or intellectual. At the same time, this was the apogee of Romanian cultural development. He needed to both refashion the context of Romanian culture as well as uncover and sketch the characteristic images of an era heavily distorted by official historiography. The result is a dense volume and study whose meaning and implications require several readings.

The book continued the tale told in the previous volume—development of new tendencies, various schools of history, new programs and journals<sup>105</sup>—but society, politics, and the historical discipline itself had become more unstable and more complex. Costin’s Quandry remained an issue. Zub argued that the experience of the interwar era showed that the historian could be both participant and spectator. Resolving this dilemma continues to be a primary task for Romanian historians.<sup>106</sup>

Eventually, the “World Crisis” of the 1920s and 1930s and the rise of “the Era of Tyrannies” proved fatal for Romanian historiographical development. History and historians were called into question, matters that turned out to remain pressing for Romanian historiography and culture right up to the present. Zub came to see with Iorga, Pârvan, and others, that there was a certain tragic element to history, citing Iorga to the effect that historiography was similar to the chorus in an Athenian tragedy, which “comments and judges. The historian plays the same role and does not have the right or the ability to abandon it.”<sup>107</sup> Zub agreed: “Freedom

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 255–70, 275.

<sup>104</sup> Zub, *Istorie și istorici*, 1989, 316 ff.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 163–86, 231–36.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 271–82, 321–22, 314–15.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

of conscience . . . has its price,”<sup>108</sup> a price that too many Romanian historians had to pay, including Zub himself.

As a consequence of this quintet of works, Zub came to see history (as historiography) as a generator of history (the past seen in the present) and as an important component of Romanian culture and civilization. In this he agreed with Pârvan.<sup>109</sup> He also came to believe that while subjectivity was inevitable in the short run because of the interplay of the historian and his times, our knowledge of the past will expand in the long run: “History is a process in which everything changes, including the relationship of people with the past.”<sup>110</sup> Or, as he quoted Pârvan, “Happy are those who doubt, because they will find the truth.”<sup>111</sup>

Zub further cited Pârvan: “History cannot be understood as a scientific attitude, purely descriptive and registering a fact in and of itself, but is a creative attitude, of a spiritual valuation and construction.” Zub did not completely concur, but agreed that the two modalities need to be combined.<sup>112</sup>

#### 4. Other Publications

This final section is substantially an annotated bibliography of other book publications by or co-edited by Alexandru Zub. This includes collections of essays, studies, and edited works. Many of these volumes contain pieces relevant to the study of the Romanian past, which for reasons of space cannot be feasibly broken down on an individual basis.

Zub excels as a historical essayist. This, as he has stressed, is a principal means by which scholarship can be mediated to the general public. He wrote: “I am one of those who believe that history is written not only for specialists, as a kind of dialogue among insiders, or for diplomats or politicians who wish to manipulate its data for their own purposes, but for a broader public audience. The public has a right to understand the findings of historiography . . .”<sup>113</sup> To this commitment must be added Zub’s abiding interest in broader cultural, historiographical, and philosophical issues,

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Zub, *Vasile Pârvan*, 1974, 325: Historiography “creates a receptive and stimulating environment for future studies . . . the past is an organic component of the present.”

<sup>110</sup> Spiridon and Zub, “Dialog,” 11.

<sup>111</sup> Zub, *Vasile Pârvan*, 1974, 109, citing Pârvan’s correspondence. For further development of Zub’s thinking on the history-historiography-historian triad, see his Academy inaugural *Discurs istoric și ego-istorie* (2006). Ego-history tries to methodologically link the philosophy of history with practice of history and the practitioner of history.

<sup>112</sup> Zub, *Vasile Pârvan*, 1974, 352–53.

<sup>113</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Cunoaștere de sine și integrare* (Iași: Junimea, 1986), 5. This is not an uncommon point of view among Romanian historians. Classic examples are Nicolae Iorga’s *Oameni cari au fost*, 4 vols. (București: Editura Fundației pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1934–1939) and *Sfaturi pe întunerice*, 2 vols. (București: Editura Fundației pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, 1936–1940).

rather than just historical facts as such—despite his obvious skill in producing the meticulous bibliographical and monographic achievements discussed above.

The strength of Zub the essayist is his depth (the product of his incomparable learning) and elegant expression. His undeniable erudition is not used to overwhelm the reader or stifle discussion, but to open the way to a conversation and to further investigation, sharing ideas as he often shared books. There is always much more there than meets the eye, an originality that comes from not trying to be original, and from the use of language to communicate and not to obfuscate.

No fewer than thirteen volumes selecting from Zub's over 1,600 essays have been collected so far: *Biruit-au gîndul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* in 1983;<sup>114</sup> *Cunoaștere de sine și integrare* in 1986;<sup>115</sup> *Istorie și finalitate* in 1991;<sup>116</sup> *În orizontul istoriei*,<sup>117</sup> *Eminescu. Glose istorico-culturale*,<sup>118</sup> and *La sfârșit de ciclu: Despre impactul Revoluției franceze*,<sup>119</sup> all in 1994; *Impasul reîntregirii* in 1995;<sup>120</sup> *Chemarea istoriei: Un an de răspântie în România postcomunistă* in 1997;<sup>121</sup> *Discurs istoric și tranziție: În căutarea unei paradigme* in 1998;<sup>122</sup> *Orizont închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* in 2000;<sup>123</sup> *Clio sub semnul interogației. Idei, sugestii, figuri*,<sup>124</sup> *Romanogermanica. Secvențe istoriografice*, both in 2006,<sup>125</sup> and *Alexandru Zub la Sighet* in 2012.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Biruit-au gîndul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* (Iași: Junimea, 1983), 381 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. as *Biruit-au gîndul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* (2013), 364 pp.

<sup>115</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Cunoaștere de sine și integrare* (Iași: Junimea, 1986), 278 pp.; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., with a new subtitle *Identitate, durată, devenire istorică* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2004), 288 pp.

<sup>116</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Istorie și finalitate* (București: Editura Academiei, 1991), 202 pp.; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., with a new subtitle *În căutarea identității* (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 270 pp.

<sup>117</sup> Alexandru Zub, *În orizontul istoriei* (Iași: Institutul European, 1994), 275 pp.

<sup>118</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Eminescu. Glose istorico-culturale* (Chișinău: Editura Enciclopedică Gheorghe Asachi, 1994), 153 pp.

<sup>119</sup> Alexandru Zub, *La sfârșit de ciclu: Despre impactul Revoluției franceze* (Iași: Institutul European, 1994), 229 pp.; in English as *Reflections on the Impact of the French Revolution: 1789, de Tocqueville, and Romanian Culture*, translated with a preface by Paul E. Michelson (Iași: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2000), 240 pp.

<sup>120</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Impasul reîntregirii* (Iași: Timpul, 1995), 150 pp., with 2<sup>nd</sup> (2004), 3<sup>rd</sup> (2009), 273 pp., and 4<sup>th</sup> (2012) editions by the same publisher. The later editions are considerably expanded over the first.

<sup>121</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Chemarea istoriei: Un an de răspântie în România postcomunistă* (Iași: Junimea, 1997), 351 pp., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2005).

<sup>122</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Discurs istoric și tranziție: În căutarea unei paradigme* (Iași: Institutul European, 1998), 215 pp.

<sup>123</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Orizont închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000), 199 pp.

<sup>124</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Clio sub semnul interogației. Idei, sugestii, figuri* (Iași: Institutul European, 2006), 264 pp.

<sup>125</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Romanogermanica. Secvențe istoriografice* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2006), 222 pp.

<sup>126</sup> Alexandru Zub, *Alexandru Zub la Sighet* (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 2012), 402 pp.

For reasons given there, the first of these collections, *Biruit-au gîndul*, has been treated above as part of Zub's monographic treatment of the history of Romanian historiography. For Zub's second collection of essays, *Cunoaștere de sine și integrare* (1986), the title—*Self-Knowledge and Integration*—provides a quick and accurate summary of its contents. The thrust of these essays is the interplay of historical knowledge and Romanian national development and self-image. Lord Acton once noted that we needed “To be governed not by the Past, but by knowledge of the Past.”<sup>127</sup> The problem with much Romanian thought on such matters is that it tends to be governed by the past itself—recognized by Zub as a national obsession—rather than being subordinated to knowledge of the past.<sup>128</sup> In the end, history is perverted or distorted . . . with lamentable consequences.<sup>129</sup> Students of Romanian nationalism and national consciousness will benefit substantially from these essays.

In 1991, *Istorie și finalitate* was published. Starting with Henri-Irénée Marrou's dictum that history must begin with questions,<sup>130</sup> Zub focusses on the dialogue between history and knowledge, a dialogue that turns out to be a debate about the present and its relationship to duration and time. This leads to many questions: What are the purposes and uses of history and historical study? Can historical findings ever be final? The role of the historian is to be a critical observer and thinker—while closely observing the observer.<sup>131</sup>

The idea of public engagement appears once more in Zub's fourth (1994) essay collection, *În orizontul istoriei*. “As far as I am concerned,” he wrote, “I am one of those historians (still too few) who believe that our mission cannot be reduced to the labors of the study, however honorable this may be. The historian needs to participate in the life of his epoch, to satisfy as much as possible the leadership needs of the times.”<sup>132</sup> This book gathers commentaries and studies related to history and historiography.

It was perhaps inevitable that Romania's national poet, Mihai Eminescu, would eventually constitute the focal point of another volume of essays: *Eminescu. Glose istorico-culturale* (1994). Part of what makes Eminescu stand out in

<sup>127</sup> Lord Acton, Add. Mss. 4993, p. 142, Cambridge University Library, as published in: Acton, *Selected Writings*, vol. III, 620.

<sup>128</sup> Zub, *Cunoaștere*, 1986, p. 5.

<sup>129</sup> For additional discussion, see my “Myth and Reality in Rumanian National Development,” *International Journal of Rumanian Studies* 5, no. 2 (1987): 6–11; and William H. McNeil, “Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History and Historians,” *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): *passim*.

<sup>130</sup> Lord Acton makes the same point in his 1895 Inaugural Lecture: “. . . study problems in preference to periods . . .” Acton, *Selected Writings*, vol. II, 545.

<sup>131</sup> Zub, *Finalitate*, 1991, 7–9. Compare Lord Acton: “. . . the main thing to learn is not the art of accumulating material, but the sublimer art of investigating it, of discerning truth from falsehood. . . . The men who, with the compass of criticism in their hands, sailed the uncharted sea of original research . . .” Acton, *Selected Writings*, vol. II, 528–30.

<sup>132</sup> Zub, *În orizontul*, 5.



Romanian culture is that the traces of the poet are to be found almost everywhere one looks and in every context. This is particularly true if one is drawn, as Zub is, to the perennial problems and issues of Romanian civilization. And, as he stresses, every generation of Romanians seems to feel that it needs to “rediscover” Eminescu; these essays are in part an attempt to do that for post-1989 Romania.<sup>133</sup>

The third volume of Zub essays to appear in 1994 (and sixth in the series) was *Sfirșit de ciclu*, which focuses on the historiography and impact of the French Revolution and on the life and thought of Alexis de Tocqueville. The volume takes an important step toward integrating Romanian history and socio-political development into the broader sweep of European history, past, present, and future. “In essence, the problems which the French Revolution raised are those which confront the world of today: relations between the individual and the community, the individual and the state, state and church, liberty and equality, and so forth.”<sup>134</sup> For Zub, the hope was that the anti-religious, ideological impact of the French Revolution had exhausted itself as the 18<sup>th</sup> century rationalist project, morally and otherwise, was being called into question: a cycle that was coming to a largely unlamented end.<sup>135</sup>

*Impasul reîntregirii*, published in 1995, shifts attention to the frustrating lack of movement in regards to the reunification of Romania and the Republic of Moldova. The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany had broken up Romania as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939;<sup>136</sup> the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 raised the possibility that the legacy of this infamous agreement between Hitler and Stalin might be reversed. Instead, owing to a variety of factors reviewed by the essays in this book, two Romanian states, Moldova and Romania, now exist with little or no reunification in sight. These essays and talks reflect on a variety of issues dealing with what might be called the Bessarabian problem.

The eighth book of essays, *Chemarea istoriei: Un an de răspântie în România postcomunistă* (1997), is a collection of Zub’s publicistic activities in the first year after the downfall of Communism in Romania. The now-familiar theme of post-Communist Romania “re-entering history” as well as the fluctuations between liberation, hope, and optimism, on the one hand, and inertia, defeat, and pessimism on the other are well documented here.<sup>137</sup>

In 1998, Zub collected many of his post-1989 essays dealing with Romanian historiography under the title *Discurs istoric și tranziție*. In keeping with his

<sup>133</sup> Zub, *Eminescu*, 6–7.

<sup>134</sup> Zub, *Sfirșit de ciclu*, 9.

<sup>135</sup> There are echoes here of Alasdair MacIntyre’s *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

<sup>136</sup> Cf. my “The Nazi-Soviet Pact and the Outbreak of World War II,” *Revue Roumaine d’Histoire* 31 (1992): 65, 102; and Dennis Deletant and Paul E. Michelson, “Moscow 1939 – Kishinev 1991: The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact Conference in Moldavia,” *Report on the USSR* 3, no. 34 (1991): 16–18.

<sup>137</sup> Zub, *Chemarea*, 7 ff.

affirmation that historiography is essential for understanding societal development, this collection tries to provide context for current history and for the contemporary Romanian historical profession as well as, perhaps, to provide a stimulus for a more systematic treatment of the subject.

In *Orizont închis* (2000), Zub, inspired by the annual forum at Memorialul Sighet, provides notes and observations toward the history of historiography under the Communist regime. Following a survey of the subject, three essays deal with 1946, 1947, and 1948. Next, he discusses Romanian historiography in the 1980s, the darkest days of Ceaușescu's regime. He concludes with several "perspective" pieces. These comments will prove enlightening for future students of that historiography.

More general reflections on historiography are captured in *Clio sub semnul interogației* (2006). The first section deals with "How are we to view the past?"; the second is a series of pieces dealing with contemporary international historiography (Foucault, Braudel, and others); the third assays modernity in the Romanian past; and the fourth concentrates on the relationship between history and deontology.

Homage to his scholarly experiences in Germany was the general purpose of the essays gathered in *Romanogermanica* (2006), which includes essays on German culture (Herder, Alexander von Humboldt, and Ranke), Romanian-German contact points (Junimea, Eminescu), and so forth.

Lastly, Zub's lectures at Memorialul Sighet have been gathered under the title *Alexandru Zub la Sighet* (2012). Zub was one of the first to support the salutary initiative at Sighet launched by Romulus Rusan and Ana Blandiana to establish a Memorial for the Victims of Communism, a project that he has remained heavily involved with.<sup>138</sup> This volume included lectures given at both the annual Memorialul Sighet conferences and the accompanying summer school for Romanian young people.

Alexandru Zub has also been a prolific editor of collections of studies for a wide variety of occasions and on a wide variety of subjects. Space does not permit more here than a listing of these volumes. First of all, between 1985 and 2005, he edited a series of volumes for meetings of the International Congresses of Historical Studies.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> See Ana Blandiana, "Istoric și subiect al istoriei," in Cliveti, *Clio în oglindiri de sine*, 81–82, who recalls the importance of Zub's presence at the first meeting with the Council of Europe dealing with the plans for Sighet.

<sup>139</sup> Alexandru Zub, ed., *Culture and Society. Structures, Interferences, Analogies in the Modern Romanian History*, prepared for the 16<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences in Stuttgart in 1985 (Iași: Editura Academiei, 1985), 222 pp. This volume was seriously truncated by Romanian censors; a fuller Romanian version was subsequently published as *Cultură și societate. Studii privitoare la trecutul românesc* (București: Editura Științifică, 1991), 527 pp.; Alexandru Zub, ed., *Temps et changement dans l'espace roumain. Fragments d'une histoire des conduites temporelles*, prepared for the 17<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences, in Madrid in 1990

Secondly, other edited collections have included a wide variety of subjects from Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, to the French Revolution, to Sovietization, to a *Festschrift* for Cornelia Bodea.<sup>140</sup> The variety and scope of these endeavors is representative of Zub's catholic interests and range.

#### IV. Conclusions

The point now, of course, is to persevere. Alexandru Zub persevered under Communist rule; he has persevered under the post-Communist regimes. He is now in his sixth decade as a historian. "History as a civic option" has not always been pleasant, but in a country and culture such as that of contemporary Romania, it is an essential, moral responsibility. Zub wrote that in 19<sup>th</sup> century Romania "history was called upon to offer a world in transition moral models."<sup>141</sup> This is an imperative in a country once more in the throes of transition. Unhappily, the *dégringolade* of Western culture has resulted in a failure of the West to provide the kind of assistance in the cultural/intellectual sphere that Romania had benefitted from at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>142</sup>

It is also necessary to seek in history remedies for the problems of the present. One of these was suggested in Zub's essay on "History as spiritual

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(Iași: Editura Academiei, 1991), 262 pp.; Alexandru Zub, ed., *Identitate/alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc*, prepared for the 18<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences in Montréal in 1995 (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1996); Alexandru Zub and Adrian Cioflâncă, eds., *Globalism și dileme identitare. Perspective românești*, prepared for the 19<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences in Oslo in 2000 (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2002), 320 pp.; and Alexandru Zub and Adrian Cioflâncă, eds., *Cultură politică și politici culturale în România modernă*, prepared for the 20<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Historical Sciences, in Sydney in 2005 (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2005), 445 pp.

<sup>140</sup> Leonid Boicu, Gheorghe Platon, and Alexandru Zub, eds., *Cuza Vodă in memoriam* (Iași: Junimea, 1973), 728 pp.; Alexandru Zub, ed., *La Révolution française et les Roumains. Impact, images, interpretations* (Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 1989), 454 pp.; Alexandru Zub and Cătălin Turliuc, eds., *Populism, demagogie, realism politic* (Iași: Fundația Academică A. D. Xenopol/Fundația Konrad Adenauer, 1997), 188 pp.; Alexandru Zub and Flavius Solomon, eds., *Basarabia. Dilemele identității* (Iași: Fundația Academică A. D. Xenopol, 2001), 329 pp.; Alexandru Zub, Flavius Solomon, Oldrich Tuma, and Jiri Jindra, eds., *Sovietization in Romania and Czechoslovakia. History, Analogies, Consequences* (Iași: Polirom, 2003), 232 pp.; Alexandru Zub and Dumitru Ivănescu, eds., *Franța, model cultural și politic* (Iași: Junimea, 2003), 291 pp.; Alexandru Zub, Flavius Solomon, and Alexander Rubel, eds., *Südosteuropa im 20. Jahrhundert: Ethnostrukturen, Identitäten, Konflikte* (Iași/Konstanz: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza/Hartung-Gorre, 2004), 254 pp.; Alexandru Zub and Flavius Solomon, eds., *Ethnic Conflicts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea from the Ottoman Conquest to the Present* (Iași: Trinitas, 2005), 314 pp.; Alexandru Zub, Venera Achim, and Nagy Pienaru, eds., *Națiunea română. Idealuri și realități istorice. Acad. Cornelia Bodea la 90 de ani* (București: Editura Academiei, 2006), 625 pp.

<sup>141</sup> Zub, *A scrie*, 1981, 269.

<sup>142</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 82–83, 87–88.

therapy.”<sup>143</sup> Too many people think, in a kind of vulgar Marxist fashion, that our problems are mostly economic.<sup>144</sup> Others fall victim to the “Political Illusion” identified by Jacques Ellul, that habit of thinking that our problems are mostly political.<sup>145</sup> There is far more to life than the material or political; perhaps we should seek solutions to its problems elsewhere, as Zub has suggested in many ways.

Alexandru Zub’s hallmark in all of this has been a plea for balance and prudence: “Between the view that history can answer all questions and that of denying that it has no practical function, exists a *via media*, which it would behoove us to reflect on with all seriousness, given that the integration to which we aspire is not only an integration in space but also in time.”<sup>146</sup> His preference for irenic solutions as long as ethical imperatives are met was also demonstrated in his advocacy of “history as a civic option.”

At the same time, Zub is ever aware of the dangers: “History, unfortunately, was always in proximity to power, used as a means of legitimation and therefore, more strictly under surveillance.”<sup>147</sup> He also made clear his conviction that in society and historiography there needed to be “an equilibrium between innovation and tradition.”<sup>148</sup> Unfortunately, such a position, instead of being praised as the essence of good sense and good manners, has brought fire down on Zub from radicals on both sides of the fence.<sup>149</sup> But, as one could suspect, he has not been surprised by this.

In 1983, Zub opined that Romanian historiography was little known abroad. This has clearly changed three decades later owing to the work of Alexandru Zub, Pompiliu Teodor, Lucian Boia, and others. There is still much to do and each generation needs to look afresh at the history of its history, but a substantial foundation had been laid and Alexandru Zub is owed much of the credit for that. His work, Pompiliu Teodor wrote, carried out the first “systematic inquiry on Romanian historical writing . . . [and] the principal currents of Romanian historiography,” the application of “daring thought, and a spirit of investigation and innovation . . .”<sup>150</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Alexandru Zub, “Istoria ca terapeutică a spiritului,” in Zub, *Chemarea istoriei*, 1997, 247–52.

<sup>144</sup> “Leaving things . . . to the economists and the accountants is a grave error.” Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 146–47.

<sup>145</sup> Jacques Ellul, *The Political Illusion*, translated by Konrad Kellen (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967).

<sup>146</sup> Alexandru Zub, “A regîndi și asuma critic trecutul,” 1996, reprinted in Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 205.

<sup>147</sup> Zub and Antohi, *Oglinzi retrovizoare*, 96.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>149</sup> Romanian culture would benefit significantly from reading Edward Shils’s essay “Civility and Civil Society. Good Manners Between Persons and Concern for the Common Good in Public Affairs,” in Edward Shils, *The Virtue of Civility. Selected Essays on Liberalism, Tradition, and Civil Society*, ed. Steven Grosby (Indianapolis IN: Liberty Classics, 1997), 63–102.

<sup>150</sup> Teodor, “Personalitatea istoricului,” 13, 21.

Secondly, Teodor, in an essay placing Zub in the context of the history of Romanian historiography, repeatedly stressed the skill and persistence with which Zub fostered the relationship between national historiography and international historiography and pursued the integration of the two domains. He wrote, for instance, that Zub's work "particularly cultivated the investigation of modern Romanian historiography, integrating it into a dynamic grasp of universal historical knowledge," thereby "animating the dialogue of Romanian historiography with international historical writings."<sup>151</sup>

Thirdly, Teodor felt that Zub's contributions to the study of contemporary historiographical phenomena, especially in his recent collections of essays, were and will continue to be important.<sup>152</sup>

All in all, Teodor saw Zub's efforts dealing with 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Romanian historiography as "an oeuvre that has recovered for Romanian historiography its place and legitimacy in the world context." Zub represents "a distinctive note" in contemporary Romanian historical writing, through "a comprehensive spirit, attached to values which he has exemplified with dedication, objectivity, and a professional spirit."<sup>153</sup>

For the future, at least three desiderata remain. First of all, we need Zub to provide a monographic study that extends and expands the introductory stage of Romanian historiography—partially discussed in the first section of *Biruit-au gîndul* and in some of the pieces provided in *Cantemiriana*—to bring the story up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to the days of Kogălniceanu and modern era of "writing and making history."

Secondly, one would wish that Zub would produce a synthesis of the monographs described above: No one knows more about this whole story or could tell it better with nuance and verve. This would provide a fitting conclusion to six decades of historiographical scholarship and provide a solid foundation for students of the Romanian past and its history.

Thirdly, as his Academy inaugural on Ego-History suggests, perhaps he will produce a work summarizing a lifetime of thought on historical discourse and on the philosophical side of history. There has been a lot of somewhat pointless debate over what history actually is, but perhaps we can agree that it is both a scientific discipline—"the history that historians deal with," as Henri-Irénée Marrou puts it—and something that has meaning—something that is "lived by humanity."<sup>154</sup> In other words, history in the first sense is historiography as such, while history in the second sense is the philosophy of history. The former deals with the question of

<sup>151</sup> Pompiliu Teodor, "Alexandru Zub," in Teodor, *Introducere în istoria istoriografiei*, 269–70.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 270–71.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Time and Timeliness*, translated by Violet Nevile (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), 7.

how we write history or the method of history; the latter deals with the question of the meaning of history.<sup>155</sup> Zub is more than well-equipped to deal with questions of meaning as well as fact, has investigated the thoughts of others about meaning (such as Cantemir, Kogălniceanu, Xenopol, Pârvan, and Iorga), and he would have some interesting and useful things to say. In the end, who knows what will come next? Alexandru Zub might have further historiographical surprises in store for us. Let us hope so.

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<sup>155</sup> Karl Raimund Popper, "A Pluralist Approach to the Philosophy of History," 1967, in Erich Streissler, ed., *Roads to Freedom. Essays in Honour of Friedrich A. von Hayek* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), 181 ff., makes a similar distinction.