

## NEW REFERENCE BOOKS ON ROMANIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY. A REVIEW ESSAY\*

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Two things have been greatly lacking since 1989 in regard to the history of history in Romania. The first is a detailed, factual synthesis of their historiographical past by the Romanians themselves<sup>1</sup>. There have been a number of significant works by the leading historiographers of Romania (such as Lucian Boia, Pompiliu Teodor, and Alexandru Zub), but these have not included comprehensive surveys of that historiography. For example, Lucian Boia's interests considerably expanded following 1989, but his useful 1976 student manual *Evoluția istoriografiei Române*<sup>2</sup> unfortunately was never revised or republished. It is true that his work on the mythologies of the Romanian past, which are part and parcel of the history of Romanian history, have been spectacularly controversial, but these were not designed to be comprehensive<sup>3</sup>.

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\* A review of Doru Radosav, ed., *Istoriografia românească* (București: Editura Academiei Române/ Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2019), xi + 404 pp. + illustrations; and Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, eds., *Enciclopedia reprezentanților scrisului istoric românesc*, five volumes (Suceava: Editura Karl A. Romstorfer al Muzeului Național al Bucovinei, 2021), Vol. I (A–C), XL + 699 pp.; Vol. II (D–K), XXVII + 588 pp.; Vol. III (L–N), XXVII + 443 pp.; Vol. IV (O–R), XXVII + 431 pp.; Vol. V (S–Z), XXVII + 553 pp.; and Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, “Addenda la Enciclopedia Reprezentanților Scrisului Istoric Românesc,” *Memoriile Secției de Științe Istorice și Arheologie a Academiei Române*, Seria V, Vol. 41 (2022), pp. 195–250.

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<sup>1</sup> The only synthesis that has appeared to date is the American scholar, Frederick Kellogg's workmanlike *A History of Romanian Historical Writing*, Bakersfield CA: Charles Schlacks, Jr. Publisher, 1990, viii + 132 pp. + illustrations. It is not comprehensive since it is limited to surveying “landmarks in historical learning from the birth of Romanian writing in early modern times down to the present” without offering “a biographical gallery” or trying to situate historical writing “into the whole fabric of Romanian intellectual history.” (pp. vii–viii) The book was effectively completed before the demise of the Communist regime. A Romanian translation appeared as Frederick Kellogg, *O istorie a istoriografiei române*, with a preface by Al. Zub, translated by Laura Cuțitaru (Iași: Institutul European, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Lucian Boia, *Evoluția istoriografiei Române*, București: Universitatea din București, 1976.

The key work here was Boia's *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*, București: Editura Humanitas, 1997, second edition= București: Editura Humanitas, 2000, which was translated into English as *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* Budapest: Central European Press, 2001. See also Lucian Boia, ed., *Mituri istorice românești*, București: Editura Universității București, 1995 and Lucian Boia, ed., *Miturile comunismului românesc*, two volumes București: Editura Universității București, 1995–1997. These were the result of 1994 and 1995 sessions sponsored by the Centrul de Istorie a Imaginarului. A selection from these two volumes was published as *Miturile comunismului românesc* București: Editura Nemira, 1998, which included contributions by the editor, Daniel Barbu,

Pompiliu Teodor posthumously followed his 1970 reader/survey, *Evoluția gândirii istorice românești*<sup>4</sup> – which was more in the way of a preliminary survey for student and general readers – in 2002 with *Introducere în istoria istoriografiei din România*<sup>5</sup>, but this work, also originally designed for students, was, as its title underlines, intended to be an introduction rather than a detailed synthesis. His 2000 study of the Enlightenment giant, Samuil Micu<sup>6</sup>, demonstrated what might have been had he not passed away just as he was reaching the height of his historiographical powers<sup>7</sup>.

Lastly, though Alexandru Zub, the acknowledged master of the history of history in Romania, continued to write, collect, and revise after 1989<sup>8</sup>, a synthesis, either of his amazing works on the 1848 to 1940 period<sup>9</sup> or one dealing with the complete span of Romanian history writing which he was more than capable of doing, were not part of his post-1989 vision<sup>10</sup>.

There have been a number of important studies on Romanian historiography, but none that passed the whole story in review. Examples are Bogdan Murgescu,

Ovidiu Bozgan, Mariana Celec, Adrian Cioroianu, Ovidiu Cristea, Adrian Drăgușanu, Petre Guran, Lucian Nastasă, Eugen Negrici, Zoe Petre, Cristina Petrescu, Dragoș Petrescu, Mihai Sorin Rădulescu, Sorin Șerban, and Alexandru Zub. For Boia, see Lucian Boia, *Istoriile mele. Eugen Stancu în dialog cu Lucian Boia*, București: Editura Humanitas, 2012; and his recent two volume autobiography Lucian Boia, *Cum am trecut prin comunism. Vol I: Primul sfert de veac; Vol. II: Al doilea sfert de veac*, București: Editura Humanitas, 2018-2019. Also edifying is Boia's recent *Un istoric incomod. 32 de interviuri cu Lucian Boia*, București: Editura Humanitas, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Pompiliu Teodor, *Evoluția gândirii istorice românești*, Cluj: Editura Dacia, 1970.

<sup>5</sup> Pompiliu Teodor, *Introducere în istoria istoriografiei din România*, Cluj-Napoca: Editura Accent, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Pompiliu Teodor, *Sub semnul Luminilor: Samuil Micu*, Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000.

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of Teodor's work, see Paul E. Michelson, "Pompiliu Teodor (1930–2001) and Modern Romanian Historiography," *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, Vol. 54 (2015), Nr. 1–4, pp. 69–94.

<sup>8</sup> Including Alexandru Zub, *Orizont închis. Istoriografia românească sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000); *N. Iorga. Studii și note istoriografice*, Brăila: Muzeul Brăilei/Editura Istros, 2012; *Cantemiriana. Studii, eseuri, note*, Brăila: Muzeul Brăilei/Editura Istros, 2014, and *M. Kogălniceanu. Studii și note istoriografice*, București/Brăila: Editura Academiei Române/Muzeul Brăilei Carol I/Editura Istros, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Hypothetically, this work would have synthesized four magisterial volumes: Al. Zub, *A scrie și a face istorie (Istoriografia română postpașoptistă)*, Iași: Junimea, 1981, 2nd ed. Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014; *Junimea. Implicații istoriografice 1864–1885* (Iași: Junimea, 1976, 2nd ed. Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014; *De la istoria critică la criticism. Istoriografia română la finele secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX*, București: Editura Academiei, 1985, 2nd ed. *De la istoria critică la criticism. Istoriografia română sub semnul modernității*, București: Editura Academiei, 2000, 2nd ed. *De la istoria critică la criticism. Istoriografia română sub semnul modernității*, București: Editura Academiei, 2000, 3rd ed. Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2014; *Istorie și istorici în România interbelică* Iași: Junimea, 1989, 2nd ed. Iași: Junimea, 2002, 3rd ed. Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> For the earlier era, consider Zub's *Biruit-au gândul (Note despre istorismul românesc)* Iași: Editura Junimea, 1983. For an overview of Zub's work, see Paul E. Michelson, "Alexandru Zub and Modern Romanian Historiography," *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, Vol. 57 (2018), Nr. 1–4, pp. 111–140.

*Istorie românească – Istorie universală (600–1800)*;<sup>11</sup> and *A fi istoric în anul 2000*);<sup>12</sup> Lucian Nastasă's pathbreaking *Generație și schimbare în istoriografia română. (Sfârșitul secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX)*<sup>13</sup>; and three volumes edited by Ovidiu Pecican: *România interbelică: Istorie și istoriografie*, *România comunistă: Istorie și istoriografie*, and *România postcomunistă: Istorie și istoriografie*<sup>14</sup>. There have been, of course, numerous other contributions to Romanian historiography since 1989, but not of a synthesizing nature<sup>15</sup>.

The second gap in post-1989 Romanian historiography has been the lack of a comprehensive, encyclopedic reference volume encompassing the work of all those who have labored in the complex fields of the Romanian past throughout the incredible vicissitudes of their quondam heritage. General readers and historians alike had to be content with the 1979 *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, edited by Ștefan Ștefănescu<sup>16</sup>, which suffered from national/Marxist tendentiousness, omissions, and distortions, though to be fair, the editor and contributors were inexorably constrained in what they said and had to say<sup>17</sup>. The volume was also largely written by historians from București, which tended to minimize the contributions of historians from the rest of Romania. Undependable as it was, it was virtually the only game in town. Fortunately, there have been some regional attempts to fill gaps, such as the comprehensive *Dicționarul Membrilor Institutului de Istorie din Cluj (1920–2020)*, edited by Mara Mărginean, Mirela Popa-Andrei, and Attila Varga and published as part of the celebrations of the founding of the Cluj Institute<sup>18</sup>, but the only comprehensive volume is now fifty-five years old and an evident relic of Communist era historiography<sup>19</sup>.

It is thus with a considerable amount of anticipation that historians have recently been greeted with the publication of two projects under the aegis of the

<sup>11</sup> Bogdan Murgescu, *Istorie românească—Istorie universală (600–1800)* București; Editura Erasmus, 1994. A second, revised edition was published in București by Editura Universitată/Teora, 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Bogdan Murgescu, *A fi istoric în anul 2000*, București: Editura ALL, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Lucian Nastasă, *Generație și schimbare în istoriografia română. (Sfârșitul secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX)* Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1999.

<sup>14</sup> All published by Editura Limes, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, 2012, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> For a look at recent literature, see my forthcoming “The History of History in Romania, 2019–2022.”

<sup>16</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu, ed. *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978, 470 pp.

<sup>17</sup> It is also worth noting that the 1978 volume contains five concluding sections (pp. 355–470) dealing, respectively, with Institutions, Sources, Reference Works, Periodicals, and Syntheses, that are not included in the 2021 volumes. These are still of considerable usefulness.

<sup>18</sup> Mara Mărginean, Mirela Popa-Andrei, and Attila Varga, eds., *Dicționarul Membrilor Institutului de Istorie din Cluj (1920–2020)*, Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> An amusing example of this is the inclusion of an article on the well-known historian “Ceaușescu, Nicolae,” by Ștefan Ștefănescu, *Enciclopedia istoriografiei*, 1978, pp. 89–92. This is three times longer than the entry for the next longest entry, “Iorga, N.” also by Ștefănescu, on pp. 183–184. Think of it as a kind of insurance for the professional historians in their continuous and increasingly fraught contest with the party toadies and pseudo-historians.

Romanian Academy aimed precisely at addressing the lacunae signaled above. The first of these is the long-needed and awaited synthesis, *Istoriografia românească*, edited by Doru Radosav (Cluj) and published in 2019.<sup>20</sup> Syntheses are of two types: one carried out by a single author, which benefits from a unified vision and method, and one carried out by a team of authors, which provides for the kind of specialized expertise that one author or one reviewer!) would be hard pressed to have. The Radosav volume is a group effort from the principal Romanian history institutes (București, Cluj, Iași, and Chișinău) which calls on individual scholars to deal with each major era of past Romanian history writing coupled with a coordinator to provide some uniformity to the overall treatment.

The volume begins with a useful introduction by the editor that reviews past literature, points out some of the difficulties that such a synthesis presents, and sets forth the goals of the present work. Radosav also points out that a synthesis often involves a balance-taking, though this that might prove untimely, be undermined by chronological snobbery, or find itself impaired by the impact of ideologies and personalities past and present.

A particular obstacle for historiographers of Romanian history is the fact that many of those who wrote about the Romanian past were also very present in the making of that past. This is further complicated by being coupled with the intertwining of history writing and Romanian national consciousness, national identity, and the Romanian state. As Radosav underlines, the Romanian state, nation, and consciousness are in themselves dominating historiographical constructs.

The book is organized into seven chronological chapters. The first, by Ovidiu Cristea (București), a recognized medievalist, deals with the origins of Romanian historical writing that emerged out of a Slavo-Byzantine model. Cristea's broad expertise in both medieval Romanian history and in the larger Western historical context, particularly involving Venice "the Hinge of Europe," comes out clearly in his analysis. He argues that Romanian writers were heavily influenced by medieval ideas of the state, medieval ideals of chivalry, and Christian solidarity in the anti-Ottoman conflicts of the era.

From these beginnings, Cristea moves on in Chapter Two to the Romanian medieval chroniclers. He contends that the work of Ureche, Costin, Neculce, Radu Popescu, Radu Greceanu, and Stolnicul Cantacuzino is impossible to synthesize, and chooses instead to point out the significant aspects of their writings. This strategy seems to work in providing a inclusive account. One might maintain that his treatment of Stolnicul is a bit too brief, but overall, Cristea's two chapters read well and hold one's attention in his presentation of the not-always inspiring work of medieval chroniclers.

Chapter Three by Greta-Monica Miron (Cluj), who studied with Pompiliu Teodor, is an abrupt change of pace. Her subject is Romanian Enlightenment

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<sup>20</sup> Doru Radosav, ed., *Istoriografia românească* București: Editura Academiei Române/Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2019, xi + 404 pp. + illustrations.

history writing in Habsburg Transylvania at precisely the moment that the chroniclers' Romanian Principalities fell under Fanariot domination. The Habsburg attempt to augment their control of the area by creating the Romanian Greco-Catholic Church dramatically backfired when the privileges offered by Vienna led to the schooling of the Uniate elite in Rome and the consequent "re-discovery" of their Latin/Roman heritage. The Greco-Catholic schools at Blaj became a hotbed of historical consciousness which in turn nursed Romanian national consciousness. History, it was claimed, argued for the antiquity of the Romanian people along with the distinctiveness of their language and culture and provided powerful motivations for contemporary politics.

At the same time, the past continued to deeply interest the political and religious elite of the Principalities, including the Greek Fanariots who saw this as a means of differentiating themselves from their Ottoman overlords. The major personality in Romanian historical thought east of the Carpathians was Dimitrie Cantemir, whose classic works – especially *Descrierea Moldovei* (1716) and *Hronicul vechimii romano-moldo-vlahilor* (1719–1722) inspired scholars in both the Principalities and Transylvania, though Cantemir was *sui generis*. Miron's background in European historiography coupled with a clear grasp of the Greco-Catholic milieu provides the requisite cultural framework enables her to weave these disparate strands together.

This is followed by her analysis of the important work of the Școala Ardeleană "sub semnul luminilor," as Pompiliu Teodor would have it. Scholars such as Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai, Petru Maior, and Ion Budai-Deleanu promoted the idea of Latinity which provided not only a distinctive educational program but further developed the history-based ideas of the Roman origins of the Romanians and the concepts of their antiquity and continuity. They elaborated a Latin-based orthography and a patriotic historiography as well as producing a mountain of philological, lexical, and historical writings to back them up. At Blaj, not only were the schools an instrument of national and religious indoctrination, but magnificent libraries were developed as support systems. At the same time, Transylvanian Romanian contacts with Italy, Hungary, and Germany contributed to the opening up of their historiographical horizons.

Miron continues with an useful and concise synthesis of various subjects, themes, and genres that preoccupied Romanian historians in this era: history and politics, origins and continuity, church history, the placing of the Romanian past in its European context, the impact of the Ottomans on Romanian history, and historical method; and ends with a balance sheet of achievements and deficits. Historiography was both innovative yet tributary to tradition. It continued to be heavily accented by political desiderata, which included practical politics as well as aspirational nationalism.

Finally, Transylvania's interaction with the West was much more substantial than that of the Principalities, and this showed in its historiography. On the other

hand, French culture including historiography was beginning to make inroads east of the Carpathians. At the same time, the relationship between Micu and other scholars created a milieu that enabled the Școala Ardeleană to create a true school and to advance more than just incrementally. The case that the work of the Transilvanians was a quantum leap in Romanian historiography is sensibly and convincingly made.

Chapters Four and Five have the advantage that these eras have been intensively explored by the outrageously deep dives into Romanian historiography from 1848 through 1940 by Al. Zub mentioned above. Chapter Four deals with the “Writing and Making History” era, in which historians not only wrote history but were also among the primary makers of history in the Romanian lands. Mihail Kogălniceanu is Exhibit One of this phenomenon. This chapter is easily the longest in the book and is divided into three parts.

Its first section deals with the Romantic era, is written by Alexandru Istrate (Iași), a specialist in early 19<sup>th</sup> century historiography. This transitional era has been neglected in the past, though beyond demonstrating that historiographical interest in the Romanian lands had not yet developed enough critical mass. The early failures of Kogălniceanu, Asachi, and the journals *Arhiva românească* and *Magazinul istoric pentru Dacia* are a testimony to that. Istrate also surfaces the value of such writers as Gheorghe Săulescu and Florian Aaron as precursors of what followed. Their transitional importance is clear, but perhaps some of their obscurity is not undeserved.

The second section of Chapter Four, written by the editor, deals with the passage from Romanticism to a more critical approach. One is beginning to see that “transition” is both a major theme in Romanian historiography and a source of continuity. Radosav's is a fairly standard account, the story of initiatives launched by Al. Odobescu to develop auxiliary sciences of history (epigraphy, iconography, bibliography, and so forth) to Romanians joining the European-wide push to publish documents (Humuzaki, Codrescu, D.A. Sturdza). It came to be dominated in the end by the Junimist era which spearheaded the newly formed nation's movement toward modernity.

The transition began with Al. Papiu Ilarian's immigration from Transylvania following the traumatic but liberating events of 1848-1849. He brought with him Savigny's historical school ideas concerning historical rights and historical law along with an emphasis on history as the source of national consciousness that had been nurtured in Ardeal since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For Papiu Ilarian, history was both the past and something living, which made the historian a student of the past, as well as both a witness and a participant in the present. The historian is *homo faber*, both in the study of the past (he edited a document series) and activism in the present (he was a leading participant in the Romanian 1848 and a minister in a post-1859 Romanian government). The same profile was followed by George Barițiu in Transylvania and Hasdeu in the newly united Romanian principalities. Hasdeu was an odd mixture of historiographical

romanticism and Spencerian/Buckleian positivism; he also was contributor to a Romanian tradition of encyclopedism. Other transitional figures discussed by Radosav include Grigore Tocilescu and Nicolae Densușianu.

The Junimea movement spearheaded by Titu Maiorescu, though primarily a cultural and literary movement, was the carrier of the emphasis on the “critical spirit” which would lead in the end to the institutionalization and then the professionalization of historical studies in Romania. There are few surprises here as this is one of the best explicated chapters in Romanian historiography. Radosav presents a useful summary of this development from Maiorescu to Gh. Panu to A.D. Xenopol, though I am still not entirely certain exactly where and how to situate Xenopol's long career from 1871 to 1920.

The final section, also by the editor, chronicles the emergence of the professional, academic historian in Romania, the generation of Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan, and N. Iorga at what became the flagship university of Romania in București, in the Romanian Academy, and in a plethora of specialized publications. The academic canon for Romanian historians coalesced around striving for objectivity, doing primary archival research, utilizing a wide variety of auxiliary studies, and rigorous criticism. This was, of course, somewhat attenuated by the inherent assumption that undergirding all of these was the national spirit. From this start in the 1880s, emerged the next generation that assimilated the canon and carried it into the Twentieth Century, people such as Constantin Giurescu, Ion Ursu, D. Russo and Al. Lapedatu.

This segment has also been subject to intensive investigation and Radosav's synthesis is sensitive and helpful. The place of N. Iorga in all of this raises some issues since it is difficult to concede that he was a member of a school of any kind, but he certainly was part of the Onciul-Bogdan heritage.

Chapter Five on history of Romanian interwar history is also from the pen of Doru Radosav. His complex tale of what one could call the Golden Age of Romanian historiography in general follows traditional lines, but Radosav's treatment of Ioan Lupaș and the Cluj school is noticeably original. He begins with a review of Aurel Decei's 1939 descriptive inventory of interwar Transilvanian history<sup>21</sup> and Alexandru Boldur's 1947 critique of a Romanian historiography from 1920 to 1945 which he believed to be in crisis.<sup>22</sup>

The chapter is divided into sections on 1) the historiography of Romanian national unity, which was dominated by the Transylvanians; 2) the generational

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<sup>21</sup> Aurel Decei, “Istoriografia română transilvană în cei douăzeci de ani de la Unire. O cercetare bibliografică,” *Gând Românesc*, Vol. 7 (1939), Nr. 7–9, pp. 191–208.

<sup>22</sup> Alexandru Boldur, “Știința istorică în ultimii 25 de ani. Constatări și remedii,” *Studii și Cercetări Istorice*, Vol. 20 (1947), pp. 1–95. Boldur's study is vitiated by being written early in the post-1945 era, just as the Sovietization of Romania (and Romanian historiography) was obviously looming and certainly constituted a crisis, though with consequences that he could not have anticipated.

conflict between N. Iorga on the one hand, and the *Școala Nouă* led by C. C. Giurescu (seconded by Gh. I. Brătianu, P. P. Panaitescu, Victor Papacostea, N. Cartoian, and Al. Rosetti). The *Școala Nouă* – which called for less nationalism and more objectivity in historical work – influenced the majority of younger interwar Romanian historians through its outstanding scholarly journal, *Revista istorice române*; 3) the affirmation of Vasile Pârvan's approach to Romanian archaeology; 4) the rise apart from București of distinct centers of historical study in Cluj (Ioan Lupaș, Al. Lapedatu, Silviu Dragomir, Ioan Moga, Constantin Marinescu with its flagship journal, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională din Cluj*); Iași (Ilie Minea, Gh. I. Brătianu, A. Oțetea, Orest Tafrales, Gh. Zane, publishing *Cercetări Istorice*); Cernăuți (Ioan Nistor, Vasile Grecu, R. Căndea, Teodor Bălan with *Codrul Cosminului*); and Chișinău to a lesser extent (Al. Boldur); and 5) the proliferation of local and regional historiographies, as characterized by the appearance of journals such as *Analele Brăilei*, *Arhivele Olteniei*, *Arhiva Someșană*, *Țara Bârsei*).

As far as his treatment of Lupaș is concerned—in addition to reviewing Lupaș's well-known advocacy of the “historian-militant”, nationalist approach to history that pre-dated 1918, as well as his stress on the importance of church history – Radosav brings out to a greater degree than usual the depth of Lupaș's philosophical, epistemological, and ontological interests along with a commitment to the theory of history, one resting on the idea of historical destiny.

Chapters Six and Seven are by Alex Mihai Stoenescu (București). Stoenescu is not a methodologically trained historian, which gives one some pause. Great harm was done to the modern historical profession by those like Hayden White who invaded history from backgrounds in literary criticism, philosophy, or other humane studies. On the other hand, since he is dealing with contemporary and near-contemporary writings which are by their context and nature somewhat different from the earlier parts of this history, perhaps it might be an advantage not to be handicapped by the empirical hesitancy of the typical historian.

Chapter 6 deals essentially with history writing during the Communist era from 1944 to 1989, though, oddly, the title of the chapter specifies “1944 to 2014.” He points out that, in contrast to much of Western historiography, the principal periodizing framework of Romanian historiography has been political history. This has had a not always salutary effect. After dealing briefly with the fate of some pre-1945 historians, he covers the sovietization of the historical profession in Romania: imposition of the Marxist-Leninist paradigm, the cultural revolution which followed 1948, the “refounding” of the Romanian Academy, the takeover and subordination of all cultural institutions, and the subsequent warping and corruption of historical writing in the country. The brutal role played by the egregious Mihai Roller is sketched out as are the phases of the dogmatizing of



Romanian historiography. The chapter ends with a discussion of other efforts to come to grips with the historiography of 1944–1989<sup>23</sup>.

The section on the 1970s and early 1980s is interesting in that—along with following the flip-flopping of the historical line of the Communist Party—it discusses the occasional and surprising publication of books covering or mentioning previously taboo subjects. Among others, these included Apostol Stan's book on 19<sup>th</sup> century political groups<sup>24</sup>, Anastasie Iordache's books on Dumitru Brătianu and conservatism<sup>25</sup>, Ion Bulei's study of Romanian conservatism<sup>26</sup>, and a series of books by Aurică Simion<sup>27</sup>.

The author concludes this chapter with a look at the crisis of the Communist system in the 1980s. He begins with an extensive discussion of Andrei Pippidi's 1985 article on “Identitate națională și culturală”<sup>28</sup> which Stoenescu sees as an artful rebuttal of professional Romanian historiography as such to the Ceaușescu cult of personality, nationalist mythology, and protocronism. Secondly, he describes Pippidi's frank embrace of the comparative method as an antidote both to national egoism and to what Katherine Verdery<sup>29</sup> has called Romanian Communist national ideology. In the end, Pippidi's article was a subtle and personally courageous defense of an increasingly imperiled Romanian historical profession.

Stoenescu closes this chapter by briefly contrasting Pippidi's wake up call with the politruk work of the party hacks Mircea Mușat and Ion Ardeleanu.<sup>30</sup> Their

<sup>23</sup> Including Stan Stoica, “Evoluția istoriografiei,” in Dinu C. Giurescu, ed., *Istoria românilor. Vol. X: România în anii 1948–1989* București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2013, pp. 1035–1062; Florin Constantiniu, *De la Răutu la Mușat și Ardeleanu* București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2007; Șerban Papacostea, “Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule,” *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 26 (1996), pp. 181–208; Stan Stoica, *Istoriografie românească între imperatiivele ideologice și rigurile profesionale (1953–1965)* București: Editura Meronia, 2012; and Vlad Georgescu, *Politică și istorie. Cazul comuniștilor români, 1944–1977* München: Jon Dumitru Verlag, 1981.

<sup>24</sup> Apostol Stan, *Grupări și curente politice în România între Unire și Independență (1859–1877)* București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979.

<sup>25</sup> Anastasie Iordache, *Pe urmele lui Dumitru Brătianu*, București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1984, and *Originile conservatorismului politic din România și rezistența sa contra procesului de democratizare 1821–1882* București: Editura Politică, 1987.

<sup>26</sup> Ion Bulei, *Sistemul politic al României moderne. Partidul conservator*, București: Editura Politică, 1987. Incidentally, Bulei after 1989 published an unexpurgated version of this work along with a foreword explaining the difficulties he had had in publishing the 1987 edition: *Conservatori și conservatorism în România* București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2000.

<sup>27</sup> Aurică Simion, *Regimul politic din România în perioada septembrie 1940-ianuarie 1941* Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1976, and *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice ale insurecției române din august 1944*, Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1979. He is mistakenly called “Aurel” in the text.

<sup>28</sup> Andrei Pippidi, “Identitate națională și culturală. Câteva probleme de metodă în legătură cu locul românilor în istorie,” *Revista de Istorie*, Vol 38 (1985), Nr. 12, pp. 1167–1186.

<sup>29</sup> Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*, Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1991.

<sup>30</sup> Mircea Mușat and Ion Ardeleanu, *De la statul geto-dac la statul român unitar*, București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983. For a review, see Paul E. Michelson, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90 (1985), pp. 177–178.

work was obviously that of non-professionals whose *modus operandi* was to plagiarize the writings of others, censor or cast into outer darkness those who did not toe the official line, and alter classic sources in the service of Ceaușescuite nationalism. The notorious pair also promoted a number of bizarre theories such as Thracianism (*tracomania*), and deliberately warped history from pre-Roman times down to the present to support Ceaușescu's cult of personality.

The chapter has some serious lapses for a synthesis. The protocronist movement is only mentioned in passing; if the author had made use of Verdery's book this might have been avoided. The same is true for the Horea Revolt debate. More, too, is needed on the sinister influence of Iosif Constantin Drăgan in promoting Thracomania and protocronism. Further, nothing is said about the pre-1989 *Tratat* controversies (particularly the “World War I as an imperialist war” thesis of Leninism); Miron Constantinescu's ASSP maneuver; or the near-death experiences of the Iorga Institute in the 1980s. There are also far too many untidy citations in this and the following chapter. In the end, what is here is more or less illuminating, but rather impressionistic and seriously incomplete<sup>31</sup>.

Many of the same criticisms could be made of Stoenescu's Chapter Seven, but more forgivably so since apart from merely inventorying recent (post-1989) history works, analysis is bound to be more subjective and anecdotal. He concurs with Al. Zub that the December 1989 “Declarație a Comitetului istoricilor liberi din România” seems to have been virtually ignored from the outset. Pride of place following 1989 historiographically in Stoenescu's opinion must go to Cluj where, perhaps benefiting from more favorable material and cultural conditions than elsewhere, publications and research flourished including in ISI rankings.

Post-1989 history early on focussed on the Interwar period, World War II, and Ion Antonescu, both monographically and in terms of documentary publications. Naturally, a good deal of attention was given to 1989–1990, much of it conspiracy-based. Other topics included the Monarchy; Romanian Communism; anti-communist resistance; the Securitate and the Romanian gulag, “Fenomenul Pitești,” and the Danube Canal project<sup>32</sup>; the Legionary Movement; the vicissitudes of Basarabia; and the Romanian secret services. Examples are given of each, but no attempt is made to highlight or synthesize most of the literature.

The re-orientation of Romanian historiography away from the Marxist paradigm also caused a great deal of confusion and intergenerational conflict. This included a pragmatic direction moving toward Western historiography (no

<sup>31</sup> Additional clarification can be found in Apostol Stan, *Istorie și politică în România comunistă*, București: Editura Curtea Veche, 2010; Francesco Zavatti, *Writing History in a Propaganda Institute. Political Power and Network Dynamics in Communist Romania*, Stockholm: Södertörn University, 2016; and Cosmin Popa, *Intelectualii lui Ceaușescu și Academia de Științe Sociale și Politice (1970–1989)* București: Editura Litera, 2018.

<sup>32</sup> A couple of key omissions here are Ioan Opreș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, two volumes București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004–2006, and Liviu Plea's *Istoriografia clujeană sub supravegherea Securității (1945–1965)*, Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2017.

examples are given) and negative, anti-national post-totalitarian work (which he associates with Lucian Boia and Neagu Djuvara and demythologizing<sup>33</sup>, for which he has a low regard). The new treatise is mentioned, but the controversies involved in its publication are not even alluded to at all.

This is followed by a much better treatment of the work being done after 1989 at Iași and Cluj, which identifies institutions, scholars, and writings, and gives them high marks. For Iași, special mention is made of Al. Zub and Victor Spinei. Missing here is the exceptional work of *Archiva Moldaviae* published by the *Societatea de Studii Istorice* din România. For Cluj, Stoenescu is appreciative of the interdisciplinary efforts, the opening toward European, and variety of excellent publications. Particular mention is made of the trilogy edited in 2009–2014 by Ovidiu Pecican (though, peculiarly, the editor's name is omitted)<sup>34</sup>, Adrian Pop, Pompiliu Teodor, the *Istoria Transilvaniei* project of Ioan-Aurel Pop and Ioan Bolovan; Nicolae Bocșan, and Doru Radosav's oral history initiatives. Missing here, among others, are the varied historiographical efforts of Sorin Mitu, Lucian Nastasă-Kovács, Stelian Mândruț, and Veronica Turcuș. Surprisingly there is no mention of Editura Sigma's *Istoria Românilor. Manualul de Istorie pentru clasa a XII-a* edited by Sorin Mitu<sup>35</sup> and the significant Text Book debates at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It will be noticed that there is no corresponding discussion of the contributions of the Academy's institutes in București for reasons that aren't spelled out in the text. Surely the Black Sea history initiative launched at the *Institutul de Istorie N. Iorga* by Șerban Papacostea and Ovidiu Cristea is worth mentioning<sup>36</sup> as well as the excellent historical work being done by Andrei Pippidi and the *Institutul de Studii Sud-Est Europene*, and the striking contribution to economic history by Bogdan Murgescu<sup>37</sup>.

This is followed by a discussion of historiographical works by Gabriel Moisa and the author. Moisa, studying under Pompiliu Teodor, exhaustively studied the data provided by the *Bibliografia istorică a României* to show continuities and discontinuities in post-1989 historiography<sup>38</sup>. Stoenescu's study of general

<sup>33</sup> On Boia's *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2001, see my review in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107 (2002), pp. 968–969.

<sup>34</sup> Pecican is also the author of the relevant *Poarta leilor. Vol. I: Istoriografiei tânără din Transilvania (1990–2005)* Cluj-Napoca: Editura Grinta, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Sorin Mitu (ed.) with Lucia Copoeru, Ovidiu Pecican, Liviu Țirău, and Virgiliu Țirău, *Istoria Românilor. Manualul de Istorie pentru clasa a XII-a*, București: Editura Sigma, 1999.

<sup>36</sup> See, *inter alia*, Șerban Papacostea, *La Mer Noire, carrefour des grandes routes intercontinentales, 1204–1453*, București: Institutul Cultural Român, 2006; Ovidiu Cristea, *Bibliografia istorică românească a Mării Negre. Bibliografia selectivă*, București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997, and *Veneția și Marea Neagră în secolele XIII–XIV. Contribuții la studiul politicii orientale venețiene*, Brăila: Muzeul Brăilei/Editura Istros, 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Bogdan Murgescu, *România și Europa. Acumularea decalajelor economice (1500–2010)* Iași: Editura Polirom, 2010.

<sup>38</sup> Gabriel Moisa, *Direcții și tendințe în istoriografia românească, 1989–2006*, Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea, 2007.

historiography<sup>39</sup> is less relevant here. Based on a minute examination of fifty key classic writings on the subject, he is concerned with what could be called the theory and philosophy of history along the lines of A. D. Xenopol's 1908 *La théorie de l'histoire*<sup>40</sup>. In addition, he gives some positive attention to Răzvan Theodorescu's 2001 Academy reception address which sounds somewhat derivative from protocronism in stressing Romanian uniqueness in contrast to other Southeastern European peoples which praising their “transactional mentality”, which is no more and no less than *realpolitik* run amuck where survival of the state trumps everything else, including morality and other principles<sup>41</sup>. The chapter concludes with a catalogue of historical writings and authors of what Stoenescu calls “pragmatic history,” that is to say, more or less traditional monographs and syntheses of problems.

As already alluded to, Stoenescu's two chapters are more problematic than the rest because of their contemporaneity. We will probably have to wait until the major actors in the pre-1989 era are deceased before we can get more definitive treatments.

The final chapter, Chapter Eight, is a survey of Basarabian historiography between 1944 and 2018 by Valentin Burlacu and Gheorghe Cojocaru, both from Chişinău. This may be the most original contribution since Basarabian historians are the least well-known of all circles of Romanian historiography, though it is also the least synthesizing. The chapter is divided into two time periods: the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (RSSM), 1944–1991 and the Republic of Moldova, 1991–2018. The authors have chosen to identify issues or problematics and then catalogue contribution to them in extensive footnotes,. For the RSSM, history was largely connected to the Soviet fetish for anniversaries, what could be called anniversaromania. These included Russian historical events supposedly significant for all of the hundreds of nationalities of the USSR; matters that promoted the undying friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union dating back to medieval times; arguments that fostered the idea of a “Moldovan nation” and language distinct from those in Romania; discussion of events connected with the Tsarist and Soviet seizures of Basarabia; coverage of “revolutionary events” whether real or imagined; evocations of tendencies that might promote the Sovietization of Moldovan history, language, and culture and suppress bourgeois nationalism; portrayal of events that contradict the Romanian narrative of Moldovan history; and so forth.

<sup>39</sup> Alex Mihai Stoenescu, *Tratat de istoriografie generală. Vol. I: Introducere în studiul istoriei*, Bucureşti: Editura RAO, 2014.

<sup>40</sup> A. D. Xenopol, *La théorie de l'histoire. Des principes fondamentaux de l'histoire*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1908, translated by Olga Zaïcik as A. D. Xenopol, *Teoria istoriei*, with an introductory study by Al. Zub (Bucureşti: Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 1997).

<sup>41</sup> Contrast the stance of Gheorghe I. Brătianu in Paul E. Michelson, “Realism şi compromis versus Idealism şi Intransigenţă: Gheorghe I. Brătianu despre Diplomatie şi Istorie,” *Revista Istorică*, Vol. 29 (2018), Nr. 5–6, pp. 541–576. See also Walter Kolarz's trenchant *Myth and Realities in Eastern Europe*, London: Lindsay Drummond, 1946.

Probably the most notorious book on their list is A. M. Lazarev's 1974 *Moldavskaia sovetskaia gosudarstvennosti I bessarabskii vopros*<sup>42</sup>, which argued for the formation of two related but distinct peoples: Romanians and Moldovans. Though akin, Lazarev contended, they were separate nations with a separate history, language, and so forth. In Lazarev's view, "the Basarabian Problem" appeared only after the "illegal occupation of Basarabia by feudal-bourgeois Romania." Finally, according to the authors, the most flagrantly falsified Soviet historiography concerned interwar Basarabia, where conditions ranged from bad to worse. In contrast, the ginned up so-called Autonomous Moldovan Republic on the left bank of the Nistru was presented in glowing colors.

A new historiographic era began following 1989, and especially in 1991. Romanian-language historians took over the universities and historical institutions and the Romanian-oriented story began to dominate instruction, publications, and periodicals. It would be impossible and invidious to single out important contributions here, especially since the bibliographical footnotes usually take up as much as two-thirds of each page. Suffice it to say that in a wide range of areas, Moldovan historians have made impressive headway in revising their Soviet epoch traditions (such as on Russian-Romanian relations and on Soviet historiography of Moldova) while pursuing new ones such as Soviet era deportations, politically-induced famine, the fate of Moldovans in Soviet gulags, and memories of totalitarianism. These are new and significant emphases that have produced noteworthy results. The publication of substantial and salient documentary collections is another landmark example. Lastly, Moldovan historians have made important contributions to archaeology and medieval studies, such as those related to Cantemir. Given the limited financial resources that one of the poorest countries in Europe commands, the sheer volume and breadth of historical work in the Republic of Moldova is extraordinary and inspiring.

The volume concludes with a strange assortment of portraits, strange because who got included and why is difficult to discern. However, better some than none. The book also includes a competent name index that includes footnotes. This is useful for accessing bibliographical information.

In conclusion, the Radosav synthesis of the history of history in Romania, which is Volume 22 in the Romanian Academy's *Civilizația Românească* series, gets the job done, in places very well-done. It should prove useful to specialists, students, and the interested general reader alike. It is sensibly organized, the contributors provide the necessary context, and the book is heavily footnoted, providing welcome further access to the literature.

The only major caveat is that the volume appears to be as difficult to come by as many other Editura Academiei books. As of the end of 2023, World Cat showed that not a single Western library has a copy which is absurd. It is a pity that Editura

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<sup>42</sup> A. M. Lazarev, *Moldavskaia sovetskaia gosudarstvennosti i bessarabskii vopros* Chișinău: Editura Cartea Moldovenească, 1974.

Academiei productions are so elaborately produced and so wretchedly distributed. What is the point of producing excellent scholarly volumes if they circulate worse than *samizdat*, rumored to exist but rarely seen. It is a disservice both to hard working but hapless contributors and to potential readers. Can we hope that the Academy will publish a much larger second printing of what is an essential work for anyone interested in Romanian historiography and history ranging from the specialist to the most general reader? At least, why couldn't they make a downloadable pdf version available on the internet?

The second work under consideration here is Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, eds., *Enciclopedia reprezentanților scrisul istoric românesc*, five volumes (Suceava: Editura Karl A. Romstorfer al Muzeului Național al Bucovinei, 2021)<sup>43</sup>, the successor to a fifty-five year old volume that has long outlived its usefulness.<sup>44</sup> Paradoxically, despite its imposing bulk (some 3,000+ pages in all), a review of these volumes will be much shorter precisely because of their encyclopedic nature.

This stunning project – which involved the efforts of some 350 Romanian historians deliberately spread across București, Cluj-Napoca, Iași, and Chișinău – was completed in a remarkable two years. To ensure even coverage, a large group of regional coordinators was marshalled, including the following: Corneliu Beldiman, Ioan Bolovan, Mihai Ștefan Ceașu, Sevastian Cercel, Ovidiu Cristea, Vasile Ciobanu, Rudolf Gräf, Gheorghe Iacob, Alexandru Istrate, Cătălin Ion Nicolae, Eugen Nicolae, Petre Otu, Gheorghe Postică, Octavian Roske, Andrei Timotin, Nicolae Ursulescu, and Petronel Zahariuc, with Constantin Emil Ursu as content editor. The final volume concludes with an alphabetical list compiled by Dorina N. Rusu of the contributors to all five volumes, listing in order the entries contributed by each. From this it can be seen that several Stakhanovite contributors wrote half a page or more of entries: Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, Remus Mircea Birtz, Ileana Cioarec, Vasile Ciobanu, Georgeta Ghionea, Gheorghe Postică, Raluca Tomi, Nicolae Ursulescu, and Petronel Zahariuc.

Vol. I begins with an introduction by Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, “Un nou demers cu propensiuni enciclopedice,” (pp. VII–XVIII) which locates the encyclopedia in the general culture of encyclopedias (beginning with Diderot), and in Romanian historiography generally. This is followed by sections providing author abbreviations (pp. XIX–XXII); general abbreviations (p. XXIII); book and periodical abbreviations (pp. XXIV–XXXIX); and the model for each entry

<sup>43</sup> Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, eds., *Enciclopedia reprezentanților scrisul istoric românesc*, five volumes (Suceava: Editura Karl A. Romstorfer al Muzeului Național al Bucovinei, 2021), Vol. I (A–C), XL + 699 pp.; Vol. II (D–K), XXVII + 588 pp.; Vol. III (L–N), XXVII + 443 pp.; Vol. IV (O–R), XXVII + 431 pp.; Vol. V (S–Z), XXVII + 553 pp.; and Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, “Addenda la *Enciclopedia Reprezentanților Scrisului Istoric Românesc*,” *Memoriile Secției de Științe Istorice și Arheologie a Academiei Române*, Seria V, Vol. 41 (2022), pp. 195–250.

<sup>44</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu, ed. *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești* București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978. Though a note indicates a cut-off date of 1976, the vast majority of the information in this volume stops with 1972, which means that most of it is over 60 years old.

(p. XL). The Roman-numeraled pages at the beginning of Vols. II–V are identical to pp. XIX ff. of Vol. I, providing author abbreviations (pp. VII–X); general abbreviations (p. XI); book and periodical abbreviations (pp. XII–XXVII); and the model for each entry (p. XXVIII). Through a proofreading oversight, these page numbers do not correspond to the numbers given in the table of contents, but this appears to be of minor importance in finding ones way through each volume. The inclusion of the abbreviations at the beginning of each volume is a welcome convenience since one does not have refer back to Vol. I for this information.<sup>45</sup> The actual contents of each volume (*i.e.* the entries themselves) are numbered separately, beginning with page 1.

The coverage casts a wide net, understanding “Romanian” broadly to include historians wherever they may have lived: from Romania, to the Republic of Moldova, to those of Romanian descent in countries across the world (the so-called diaspora), whatever their political or ideological bent might be. One omission worth mentioning is the late George R. Ursul of Emerson College in the USA, a church history specialist and former President of the Society for Romanian Studies.

Speaking of omissions, the editors' fifty-five page addendum published in 2022<sup>46</sup> indicates that they went the extra mile to avoid omissions, even though many living subjects failed to respond in a timely fashion to requests for information. On the other hand, the inclusion of some under the rubric of “historian” (Lucia Apolzan, Zamfir Arbore, Gh. Asachi, Ion C. Atanasiu, and P. S. Aurelian to mention just a few from the opening volume) might be disputed. However, having too many is better than leaving any out...and the information on border line cases is still useful to someone. A couple of omissions that might be representative of others are the literary historians N. Cartoian and D. Caracostea.

The resulting encyclopedia is comprised of over 3,500 entries (to which should be added those on the some 50 additional pages of the addendum). Most of these are accompanied by photographs. This compares to just over 950 entries in the 1978 volume, which of course did not include Moldovan historians or historians of Romanian heritage working outside of Romania for obvious reasons and had no illustrations. Printed on heavy glossy paper, the final product weighs over twelve kilos.

The structure of the encyclopedia's entries follows a uniform model, providing for biographical information for each name entry; a summary of the entry's activity and contributions; a selective bibliography of each entry's works, collaborative writings, and articles; and a bibliography of works about the entry and his or her writings. In this, the new encyclopedia follows the format of its predecessor. The authors of the new entries obviously had access to the Ștefănescu volume; it might be amusing to compare the new with the old.

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<sup>45</sup> My copy of Vol. II is missing p. VII, but I just photo-copied that page from Vol. I.

<sup>46</sup> Victor Spinei and Dorina N. Rusu, “Addenda la *Enciclopedia Reprezentanților Scrisului Istorice Românesc*,” *Memoriile Secției de Științe Istorice și Arheologie a Academiei Române*, Seria V, Vol. 41 (2022), pp. 195–250.

The entries themselves appear—from a random check – to be accurate, written in clean, sparse prose, in short, do the job they are supposed to. The lengths are, of course, variable, and it might be felt that some are too long and others too short. This kind of objection in general is largely subjective and seems churlish. If you object too persistently, write your own encyclopedia. The rest of us will find this work reliable and useful.

The criteria for the “selective” bibliography are not really elaborated, apparently being left to the judgement of the authors of each entry, including materials that might have been made available by some of the subject historians. The editors recognize that there is some degree of data inflation: some entries seem to include every conceivable citation and career episode, whereas others are a bit more succinct or present only highlights. This is inevitable in such a massive and unwieldy collaborative project. Occasionally the relationship of one subject to another is mentioned. This might usefully expanded.

Another quirk is the lack of death dates for a number of contemporary entries (i. e. Ion Ardeleanu). They are presumed dead, but the date somehow is not known.

The work rightly includes most of the proletcult, activist, sycophant pretenders of the Communist Not-So-Golden Era. It treats them evenhandedly, perhaps even more than necessary (*i.e.* Petre Constantinescu-Iași, Miron Constantinescu, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Nicolae Copoiu). Though Nicolae Ceaușescu is omitted, even his brother, Ilie Ceaușescu, is included, though how much of the work that carries his name was actually his is in doubt. The noxious allegiances and even murderous activities of these gentry are sometimes passed off too mildly as being “in the spirit of Marxist-Leninist ideology,” or “without noteworthy value,” or even just simply ignored. The entries for others who continued on after 1989 have in some cases been lightly “cleansed”.

One of the principal values of this huge work that might easily be overlooked is not that it provides information on nearly 4,000 Romanian historians. A good deal of information about pre-World War II historians can readily be found elsewhere. What is much more difficult to find is data about groups of historians that have hitherto been ignored. These include, first and foremost, facts about the latest generation of historians and their interests which will be of considerable interest and utility as Romanian historiography evolves. These are people for whom Communism is only an unpleasant childhood memory or less. Secondly, the work of church historians is more fully recognized, not only Orthodox but minority Protestants as well. The inclusion of less recognized specialists in the auxiliary sciences is also a positive.

Understandably, a project of this sort involves a certain amount of blood pressure raising for the editors, who recognize that the task required “un travaliu obstinat” but possibly this was the only way that such an undertaking could be completed in such a brief time. It also involved myriad frustrations for the team of contributors who obviously had to put their own projects on hold, but to the users



of the encyclopedia it will seem effort well spent. Anyone interested in or concerned with the historiography of Romania will find this tool useful for a long time in the foreseeable future, though here, too, access and distribution of this volume is not what it should be. As of the end of 2023, World Cat showed that not a single Western library had a copy. Given the heft of the volume, the least the Romanian Academy could do is to make a pdf available. A pdf would considerably expand the utility of these volumes and facilitate study using search tools and modern means of research. And in the case of both of the works under consideration here, a wider audience would also provide a recompense of sorts to those contributors who doubtless sacrificed a good deal of their own work and personal rewards for the good of Romanian culture and the Romanian historical profession.

All quibbles aside, these long-awaited volumes more than fill important voids in Romanian historiography. They are a credit to their editors and contributors and speak to the reviving of a culture that was nearly wiped out under Communist rule and a historiography that was increasingly losing its professional status and credibility. The editors consider these volumes to be a tribute to Romanian historians and historiography; they are correct in that. In addition, reference works of this sort and quality play a much larger role in the expansion and development of a national historiography than is usually recognized. We have reason to be optimistic about the future of historical work in Romania because of these two important and well-executed works.