

**„ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI  
FACULTY OF HISTORY**

**THE CITY OF IAȘI THROUGHOUT  
THE TIME OF THE ROMANIAN  
WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1877-1878)  
ATTITUDES AND DISPOSITIONS**

**Summary of the PhD Thesis**

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## Abstract

In the second half of the 19th century, the desires of the Romanian Forty-eighters were for the most part fulfilled (such as uniting the two Principalities and bringing in a foreign prince), the only unattained objective remaining independence and its recognition by the Great Powers. The events that led to the independence of the state have captured the attention of historians, who have reconstructed the path traveled by politicians and statesmen to fulfill this desire of the Forty-eighters generation. The political implications, both national and international of the events that created the right conjuncture for Romania to emerge from the Ottoman Empire have caused much ink to flow in modern historiography.

Romania's independence as an independent state was and still is a topic that is present in the attention of Romanian and foreign researchers. It has been treated both from an internal, national perspective, in regard of the interests that the young Romanian state had and the decisions taken at governmental level; and also from a much broader perspective, which is related to the international relations and the role that Romania played during the period of the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878. If some Western historians (such as Barbara Jelavich<sup>1</sup> and Charles Jelavich<sup>2</sup>), treat the Romanian case in the same context as the South-Eastern European states under Ottoman suzerainty or make tangential references in their works to the international situation in which Romania found itself, other historians, both Romanian and foreign, among whom we cite only Gheorghe Cliveti<sup>3</sup>, Teodor Pavel<sup>4</sup> and Frederick Kellogg<sup>5</sup>, deal with the proclamation of Romania's independence from the perspective of its international status, from its positioning under the guarantee of the guarantor powers and the bilateral relations of the Romanian state with the Guarantor Powers.

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *The Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers, and the Straits Question: 1870-1887*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1973; Idem, *History of the Balkans*, vol. 1: *Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Cambridge, London, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1983; Idem, *Russia's Balkan entanglements: 1806-1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991; Idem, *Istoria Balcanilor*, vol. 1 *Secolele al XVIII-lea și al XIX-lea*, traducere de Mihai-Eugen Avădanei, postfață de I. Ciupercă, Iași, Editura Institutului European, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Jelavich, Barbara Jelavich, *Formarea statelor naționale balcanice: 1804-1920*, traducere de Ioan Crețiu, cuvânt introductiv și control științific de prof. univ. Camil Mureșanu, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Gheorghe Cliveti, *România și crizele internaționale: 1853-1913*, Iași, Editura Fundației Axis, 1997; Idem, *România modernă și „apogeul Europei”: 1815-1914*, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2018; Idem, *România și puterile garante: 1856-1878*, ediția a II-a revizuită și mult adăugită, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2020; Idem, *La Roumanie, la crise orientale et le concert européen: 1875-1878*, Istanbul, Les Éditions Isis, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Pavel Teodor, *Între Berlin și Sankt Petersburg*, vol. 1 *România în relațiile germane-ruse din secolul al XIX-lea*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick Kellogg, *Drumul României spre independență*, traducere de Laura Carmen Cuțitaru, ediție îngrijită și postfață de Victor Spinei, Iași, Editura Institutului European, 2002.

Romania's foreign and internal policy during the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878 is a topic that is still in the attention of researchers, and is the main subject of some doctoral theses already submitted<sup>6</sup> or in the process of documentation and writing<sup>7</sup>.

One aspect relevant to the reconstruction of this episode has gone somewhat unnoticed, namely the impact on civil society and the way it reacted. Despite the fact that volumes of memoirs and diaries by participants in the war began to be published shortly after the end of the war or on the occasion of various anniversary or commemorative events, they generally contain strictly military information about the military operations of the regiment or company to which the combatant belonged, but with little reference to the mood outside the author's own frontline environment<sup>8</sup>. When we refer to the memoirs of the period, however, we must also take into account the degree of subjectivity of the person who wrote the memoirs, the time that elapsed before they were written, and the circumstances in which they were written (whether they were written on the occasion of anniversary events, or whether the authors were at a point in their lives when they wanted to leave their memories for posterity). Also relevant to Revolutionary War memoirs is how the author relates to the events and the manner in which they are written. An eloquent example is the dialog between the war veteran Mihail Dimitrescu and the writer Ioan S. Nenițescu. In his old age, the veteran Mihail Dimitrescu asks his former war comrade, the poet Ioan S. Nenițescu<sup>9</sup> to write the preface to his memoirs, a request he justifies by saying that, although he knows many people with a talent for writing, they did not take part in the 1877 campaign. He appeals to Nenițescu because they took part in the campaign together, because they were both wounded, and he believes that he will look more favorably on his writings than a writer who was not a soldier. Urging him to make the corrections he deems necessary, Mihail Dimitrescu asks the poet to remember that he is not a writer, but that he has only listened to a "voice from within" his soul. In his reply, Ioan Nenițescu states that he refuses to intervene in the

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<sup>6</sup> Gafița Irina, *Nicolae Ionescu și gruparea fracționistă ieșeană: studiu monografic*, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2016, teză de doctorat, coord. prof. univ. dr. Gheorghe Cliveti; Știrbăț Gheorghe-Florin, *Viața politică internă a României în vremea războiului de independență*, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2011, teză de doctorat, coord. prof. univ. dr. Gheorghe Cliveti; Istina Marius-Alexandru, *Franța și Independența României: 1866-1880*, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2006, teză de doctorat, coord. prof. univ. dr. Gheorghe Cliveti.

<sup>7</sup> În stadiul de cercetare se află teza de doctorat a doctorandei Maria Cerniș având titlul *România, Rusia și criza orientală: 1875-1878*, coordonată de prof. univ. dr. Cristian Ploscaru.

<sup>8</sup> Râpeanu Valeriu, *Societatea românească la 1877: memorii ale unor luptători*, București, Editura Militară, 1977; Sorin Alexandrescu, *Privind înapoi modernitatea* Traducere de Mirela Adăscăliței, Șerban Angheliescu, Mara Chirițescu și Ramona Jugureanu, București, Editura Univers, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> He was an officer in the XIIIth Regiment of the Dorobanți.

text because, he says, "those who are skilled in writing take great pleasure" in the "cruel and unpunctuated" writing of those who "are not skilled in penmanship". However, an initial remark the preface wanted to make to the memoirist was that he only remembered the 8th Regiment in which he fought, but reading his text triggered involuntary memory and wanting to recount his wartime experiences, he had the same tendency. The explanation found by the writer was that belonging to a regiment remained in the collective mentality of the combatants, that in those moments a merge between the person and the regiment took place:

Of course, all our lives we will never get away from talking about the regiments in which we fought, that it is something that is embodied in us, or better said, that it is something in which we are embodied. That moral being, that grouping called a regiment, when we have lived with it, when we have gone through everything with it, when we have shared with it the fear of defeat and the joy of victory, we and it are one. And yet we can both be wrong. There are two kinds of truths, one is individual, less far-reaching, and rooted in the chaotic (captive) world of the feelings; the other is general, broader, having its sources in the clear seeing, in the world of the intellect<sup>10</sup>.

In recent times the subject has attracted the attention of scholars and studies have been written on the material and human contribution of some counties<sup>11</sup> to support the war effort. Interest in the moral, humanitarian support, the public resonance that the war had, also exists in Slavic historiographical circles. Recently, studies have been published<sup>12</sup> on charitable societies that were active in Russia or in Bessarabia: *the Community of the Sisters of Mercy, the Russian Society for the Care of Soldiers and Wounded, the Russian Red Cross, the Ladies' Committee of Ackerman, the Ladies' Committee of Chisinau*. Despite all the interest shown in this subject lately, there is still no scientific work in the Romanian historiography dealing with the role played by Iasi during the War of Independence, which is the reason that led us to initiate this doctoral study.

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<sup>10</sup> Mihail Dimitrescu, veterin căpitan, *Amintiri și episoade din Resbelul pentru independență cu o privire retrospectivă asupra dezvoltării amatei române de la 1859*, cu o prefață de I. Nenițescu, București, tipografia Gutenberg Joseph Göbl, 1893, p. III-VIII.

<sup>11</sup> Sălaj, Turda, Botoșani, Dorohoi, Teleorman, Olt, Gorj, Argeș etc.

<sup>12</sup> Olga O. Chernyshova, *The female face of war. The sisters of mercy during the Russo-Otoman war of 1877-1878*, în *Balkanistik forum*, 2006, Nr. 3, pp. 42-51; Andrew J. Ringle, *The Romanov's militant charity: The Red Cross and public mobilization for war in Tsarist Russia, 1853-1914*, Chapel Hill, 2016; Natalia Volkanova, *Charitable Activities of Representatives of the Aristocracy from Bessarabia during the Russian-turkish war of 1877-1878*, în *Analele Universității Dunărea de Jos*, Seria 19, Istorie, tom XIV, 2015, pp. 29-36.

The researched subject can be considered as having a multiple framing. The proposed theme touches on topics of interest related to both Romanian and international history - the following are presented in the paper: reactions of the foreign consuls in the country to the events that took place in the country's second capital (the entry of the Russian army on Romanian territory, the arrival of the imperial family); elements of local history - it facilitates, through access to archival documents and other documents, a better knowledge of the history of Iasi in the second half of the 19th century, but also of social history - by rendering the attitude adopted by Iasi society towards the main events that took place in the period 1877-1878.

The sources that refer to the steps taken in Iasi in order to support the cause of the war, to help those at the front, to the implications that the outbreak of the war had on the citizens are relatively few; for this reason, they need to be supplemented with other relevant and authentic information in order to be able to draw a broad perspective on the image of Iasi and its inhabitants during the period of independence. It was precisely the difficulty of locating information and sources that was a challenge and also both an impetus for the present work. A work that reveals important information about the events that took place in 1877 and the sums allocated by the town's Communal Council is the *Darea de seamă*<sup>13</sup> of the mayor of the town at the time, Scarlat Pastia, but this is more a justification of the mayor in terms of the distribution of the annual budget. Another work which also contains information on the ways in which the citizens and institutions of the city, especially the Church, supported the war effort is that of the priest Stamatina<sup>14</sup>. The text of the book *Devotion, Courage, Faith. The Romanian Orthodox Church during the War of Independence (1877-1878)* is not written by the author for a restricted clerical audience, but for the general public who want to know the contribution the Church made during the war. Thanks to the well-documented information provided, his work has helped us in our endeavor to have an ecclesiastical perspective and to be able to outline the role of the clergy in the Church in the period.

Information-rich documents, such as those available at the National Archives in Iași, reveal a different picture of the city and its citizens at the time of the War of Independence. Inhabitants are forced to receive in their homes strangers, soldiers of the imperial army who did

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<sup>13</sup> Scarlat Pastia, *Darea de seamă despre administrațiunea comunală a Municipiului Iasii 1877*, Tipograf-litograf H. Goldner, Iassy, 1877.

<sup>14</sup> Nicolae Laurențiu Stamatina, *Devotament, curaj, credință. Biserica Ortodoxă Română în anii Războiului de independență (1877-1878)*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2012.

not always behave properly and caused inconveniences to their hosts. For example, in file no. 104, vol. I and II there are letters sent by the inhabitants of Iași to the mayor or prefect. In these letters, the sender complains about the soldiers who were billeted in his house, the damage they caused, demands that the people accommodated pay rent, or describes the damage caused by the Russian soldiers passing near his property, asking for the establishment of commissions to determine the damage and those responsible. Or the archives of one of the charitable societies, the Central Committee for the Aid of Wounded Romanian Soldiers, which was established in Iași since the beginning of the war, archives kept at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest, Manuscripts section. Its three volumes represent an important fresco of the Iasi society during the war, containing the correspondence of its leading members with the local and ecclesiastical authorities of Iasi, with other charitable societies that were established in other counties of the country, with other members or with the doctors in charge of the mobile hospital founded by this Committee.

The press of the time is of particular importance in the range of sources consulted for our scientific endeavor, because it represents a living chronicle of the events that took place. As a prolific source of information, the press helped us to paint a complex picture of the attitudes and moods in the city of Iași and in the country during the war. Local newspapers published in the period under consideration are a true eyewitness, daily eyewitness of the evolution of international, national and local events, of the city, but also of the collective mentality of the society of the city. Going through the content of local periodicals such as "Curierul de Iassi, foaea publicațiunilor oficiale din resortul Curții Apelative din Iași", "Curierul, foaea intereselor generale", "Figaro", "Steaua României" is an important step, because their pages present the news that interested those who stayed at home, the issues that concerned Romanian citizens in the second half of the 19th century. The periodical "Curierul de Iassi, foaea publicațiunilor oficiale din resortul Curții Apelative din Iași" is a significant resource because the information is not only presented from the eyewitness's perspective, but also from the intellectual's, at that time the editor of the publication was the poet Mihai Eminescu; his departure to Bucharest, in the editorial office of the newspaper "Timpul" in October 1877 is also felt in the quality of the content of the Iasi newspaper. It is also the case of the periodical "Curierul, foaea intereselor generale" which, left by its owner, Th. Balassan, left in the care of his sister Sofia, became, we



could say, the newspaper of the Central Committee of Iași, since its pages contain details of the humanitarian activities undertaken by it and by the other committees in the country.

The memoirs, diaries and correspondence received from personalities of the time play an important role in documenting the scientific approach. These include the memoirs of Constantin Bacalbașa<sup>15</sup>, Sabina Catacuzino<sup>16</sup>, Radu Rosetti<sup>17</sup>, as well as those of the people who participated in the War of Independence<sup>18</sup> - these are works in which the image of the war is presented from the perspective of the participant in the conflict, the eyewitness or the politician. The correspondence of Prince Carol with his wife Elisabeta<sup>19</sup>, that of General Iancu Ghica<sup>20</sup> or that of Iancu Bălăceanu<sup>21</sup> helped to reconstruct the existing state of mind in the government, the decision-makers, people aware of their usefulness for posterity<sup>22</sup>.

Extremely useful resources in this endeavor, which allowed us to access various periodical publications, are online platforms: digital libraries (that of the Central University Library "Mihai Eminescu", Digiteca Arcanum, National Digital Library and Digital Library of Bucharest), but also the scientific databases CEEOL, JSTOR. It is certain that an exhaustive exploitation of the existing general and special bibliographies was not possible. But from the consulted sources it was possible to extract and synthesize the relevant information in accordance with the chosen theme.

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<sup>15</sup> Constantin Bacalbașa, *Bucureștii de altădată*, vol. I 1876-1877. Ediție îngrijită și note de Aristița Avramescu și Tiberiu Avramescu. Ediția a II-a revăzută și întregită, București, Humanitas, 2014.

<sup>16</sup> Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei Ion C. Brătianu: 1821-1891*, ediția a III-a, introducere, indice și ediție îngrijită de Elisabeta Simion, București, Editura Humanitas, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri. Ce am auzit de la alții. Din copilărie. Din prima tinerețe*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Constantin Z. Boerescu, *Memorii din campanie: 1877-1878*, ediție îngrijită de Pârvu Boerescu, prefață Petre Otu, București, Editura Corint, 2003; G. Boteanu, *Memoriu din Resboiul de la 1877*, Tipografia F. Göbel Fii, București, 1895; Căplescu, *Amintiri din războiul 1877-1878*, București, Editura Baer, 1908; Constantin Căzănișteanu, *O istorie trăită a războiului de independență 1877-1878. Memorii, amintiri*, București, Editura Albatros, 1979; *Critice retrospective asupra războiului ruso-turc din 1877-1878, după memoriile lui Curopaktin*, prelucrate de Grahmer, traducere de Cont. I. Creangă, Brăila, 1886; Vasiliș V. Vereșcăgin, *Amintiri din războiul dela 1877*, traducere de Nicolae Pandelea, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1924.

<sup>19</sup> „Cu iubire tandră, Elisabeta” – „Mereu al tău credincios, Carol”. *Corespondența perechii regale* (vol. 1) 1869-1888. Ediție critică și comentată, note și traducere din limba germană de Silvia Irina Zimmermann și Romanița Constantinescu. Transcrierea după manuscrisul în limba germană, stabilirea textului, studiu introductiv și indice de Silvia Irina Zimmermann, București, Editura Humanitas, 2020.

<sup>20</sup> *Corespondența generalului Iancu Ghica: 2 aprilie 1877- 8 aprilie 1878*, publicată cu o introducere și note de generalul R. Rosetti, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1930.

<sup>21</sup> Iancu Bălăceanu, *Memoriile unui pașoptist-model. Amintiri politice și diplomatice (1848-1903)*. Traducere din limba franceză, introducere, note și comentarii de Georgeta Filitti, București, Editura Humanitas, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Aware of the documentary value of the exchange of letters, Charles I tells his wife to keep the correspondence between them.

The structural framework of this work is given by the spatio-temporal coordinates to which we refer. The geographic space is represented by the city of Iași, which King Carol himself, during his first visit, considered as a second capital of the country - and his choice was not a coincidental one. The history of the city has attracted the attention of many Romanian historians who have written and continue to write essential works that enrich the local bibliography, depicting different stages of the history of the city, of the evolution of the collective mentality of the city, of the society of Iasi. The works of historians such as N. A. Bogdan, Sorin Iftimi, Dumitru Dan Iacob, Mihai Cojocariu make a significant contribution to the knowledge of the history of the city. Numerous books and articles have been published on the occasion of the Centenary of the Great Union on the role that Iasi played during the First World War. However, a work illustrating the role of the Iasi community in the first great war in which the Romanian army participated has not been written so far. From a temporal point of view, we referred to the period of the Eastern Crisis from 1875-1878, focusing on the second period of the crisis, the war of 1877-1878, after which Romania achieved its independence.

Therefore, the aim of this scientific endeavor is to present the role that the city of Iași and the society of Iași played during the War of Independence, to show the implications that the outbreak of the war had on the population of Iași and the way in which it sympathized with the war cause. Throughout the paper, we have focused our attention on the attitude towards the needs of the war of different social backgrounds in the city: the old boyar families of Iași, the intellectual and press circles, the clergy, but also the common people. In the period of the War for the Non-Binding War, the city regained the old prestige it had before the capital was moved to Bucharest. Proof of this is the lavish welcome given to the Russian Tsar Alexander II, who arrived in Iasi on May 27, 1877 on his way to the Russian headquarters in Ploiești. The people responsible for organizing the Emperor's reception did not compromise on quality, their wish being that his welcome should be a dignified and impressive one, both for those present and for the international community. Another significant example is represented by *the Central Committee of the ladies from Iași*, ladies who did not want the organization led by them to be subordinated to the *Committee in Bucharest*, coordinated by the *Red Cross*. On the contrary, they wanted a zonal Society, under the direction of which there would be sub-committees to be set up in the towns in the Moldavian area. Bearing in mind the time limit, approximately one year, we will not insist on an exhaustive radiography of the society of Iasi; what we have tried to give is a

picture of Iasi, of the Iasi society in a period not of peace, but on the contrary, one marked by war, with an atmosphere full of well-founded fears about its course and the outcome it could have. Our aim is to give as true a picture as possible of the wartime mood.

This paper can be considered a case study, well delimited geographically and chronologically, which aims to provide new information on the history of Iasi, the Iasi society of the period, based on archival documents, which have been corroborated with existing information in published documentary sources, with the existing bibliography and with information provided by the local press of the time. The study is not intended to be a simple reconstruction of the daily and social life of Iasi during the war, but we have tried to highlight attitudes, moods, sensitivities that reconstruct the atmosphere that prevailed in Iasi in the years 1877-1878. The novelty of the approach lies in the use of primary sources, archival documents and the press of the time, bringing Iasi society to the forefront in a period in which, in the collective mind, the period of the former Russian occupations was revived.

From the methodological point of view, we have opted for the rendering of the events from the general to the particular level and, in some cases, we have resorted to the comparative method. Because the history of the charitable societies that were founded in Iasi in 1877 is dense in information and because the main charitable society wanted Iasi to be the center for the Moldavian area, we have not treated their evolution in comparison with that of other cities, but only made some references when their efforts intersected, intertwined.

During our doctoral research, our approach was somewhat hampered by our lack of knowledge of Russian, and our reference to Russian historical sources was therefore rather inconsistent. Another drawback was also the lack in the archives of documentary funds that could have made a solid contribution to rendering the state of mind of Iasi society during the War of Independence, such as the lack of files from the Iasi Prefecture Archives relating to 1877 or the file No. 156/1877 For the works of the Russian army troops in the city of Iasi, from the Iasi City Hall Archives. However, the information presented in this thesis can be supplemented by further research. The information gleaned from the research of the available documents could be supplemented by consulting sources that for various reasons could not be accessed, such as files in the Foreign Ministry Archives (files from files 71, 75, 72, 72, 81, 81, 85, 88 of 1877, relating to Russian construction of houses, huts and stables in vol. 69 of the Archives of the Russo-Turkish War of 1853 and the Russo-Romanian-Turkish War of 1877) or at the State

Archives in Bucharest (package No. 349, file 4896-4897 Offerings made by private individuals to the Romanian army; package No. 350 Offerings made by private individuals to the Romanian army; package No. 351, file 4907-4921 circulars and orders given concerning the damage caused by the Russian army in the counties of Argeș, Bacău, Brăila, Buzău, Cahul, Covurlui, Dolj, Fălciu, Ialomița, Iași, Ilfov, Ismail, Muscel and Olt; packet No. 352, file 4932 Occupation of houses by requisition by Russian troops; packet No. 353, file No. 4944 Tables sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the damage caused to the inhabitants by the Russian army; packet No. 363, file No. 5103 Compensation to the inhabitants who had Russian soldiers in quarters; file No. 5114 Camp sites for camps and quarters for the Russian army upon its withdrawal from the country).

The work is structured in five chapters, which together form a corpus that depicts the state of mind of the citizens of Iasi, first of all, but also of the Romanian society as a whole. The first chapter, entitled The premises of the war for the independence of Romania, which is divided into two sub-chapters, is an introductory chapter. In the first part, we focused on the international context generated by the outbreak of insurgencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the main steps taken by the Great Powers to stop the conflict, their decisions that eventually led to the "final breakdown of the European concert"<sup>23</sup>. The Eastern Troubles of 1875-1878 had different characteristics compared to previous Eastern Crises. Its reopening was not caused by rivalries between the European Great Powers, like that of 1853. The balance of power between the European powers in 1875 was different (defeated France was in the background, Italy was preoccupied with state-building, Germany's interest was state-building and the isolation of France internationally), the only power that showed concern for the fate of the Christian peoples of the Balkans was Russia.

The second part of the chapter focused on Romania's attitude in the first part of the Eastern Crisis, up to the signing of the Convention of April 1877. Romania's international status at the outbreak of the crisis was different from that during the Crimean War. The legal changes took place right from the end of the Crimean War, when, at the Paris Conference, the Romanian Principalities were placed under the collective guarantee of the European Great Powers and the suzerainty. At the same time, the territory of Moldavia had been increased by the retrocession by

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<sup>23</sup> Gheorghe Cliveti, *România și puterile garante: 1856-1878*, Ediția a II-a revizuită și mult adăugită, Iași, Junimea, 2020, pp. 333-334.

the Tsarist Empire of the three counties in southern Bessarabia. Another important change immediately after the Conference was the union of the two principalities - Moldova and Wallachia - through the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, and in 1866 the accession of the foreign ruler Carol I to the throne of the Principalities - changes that were recognized by the Great Powers. The collective guarantee established in 1856 was maintained throughout this period. After 1871, by signing trade conventions and agreements and setting up diplomatic agencies in Berlin (1872), Rome (1873) and St. Petersburg (1874), Romania had already demonstrated a certain degree of sovereignty, as a state to be taken into account in the event of conflict. Since the early stages of the Eastern Crisis, Romania, through the voice of the politicians in Bucharest, for fear of being caught in the middle of an armed conflict between the Russian and Ottoman Empires, adopted a policy of neutrality and tried by various means (circular notes sent by Romanian foreign ministers - Lascăr Catargiu, Nicole Ionescu, Mihail Kogălniceanu) to ask the European powers to recognize the neutrality. The imminence of war between the two powers led, on the one hand, to a dual policy and to the groping of the powers for support, which led to a Romanian-Russian rapprochement (started at Livadia) and finally to the signing of the Romanian-Russian convention of April 4/16, 1877. The signing of the Romanian-Russian agreement on the passage of Russian troops on Romanian territory on April 4/16, 1877 represented for the Romanian state Russia's denial that Romania was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, but also a hope that participation in the Balkan War would bring with it *de jure* recognition of independence.

The second chapter, The City of Iasi in Wartime, has been organized into three sub-chapters, which in turn have been divided into sections for a clearer highlighting of the topics covered in its contents. The first event that had a major impact on the society of Iași and beyond was the entry of Russian troops on the territory of the country. The implications that the presence of the Russian imperial army had on the life of the citizens of Iasi and the city are described in the first subchapter: *The inevitable happened. The Russian army crossing the border*. The way in which the convention signed on April 4/16, 1877 was implemented, and in particular the articles that had a direct effect on the society of the city of Iasi was also highlighted throughout this subchapter. At the same time, in its pages can also be found a city panorama, a picture of the atmosphere in the city as it was seen by the Russian soldiers passing through on their way to the front or stationed here for a period of time. The major event that brought the city

of Iași back into the limelight was the arrival of the Tsarist imperial family, especially the arrival of Emperor Alexander II in May 1877, which is described in the subchapter The Imperial Family in Romania's Second Capital. In order to create a complex picture of the Tsar's presence on Romanian territory, we have depicted the Russian monarch's welcome not only in the old capital of Moldavia, but also in the Romanian capital and in Ploiești, where he lived until he crossed the border into Bulgaria. Relevant information about the proclamation of Romania's independence and about the echo it had in the media of Iasi can be found in the last part of the chapter, the Iasi press and memoirs being of real help in shaping a snapshot of the mood to which the event gave rise.

The third chapter, The Attitude of the people of Iasi during the War of Independence, focuses on Iasi society, the humanitarian actions undertaken by it and the way in which citizens responded to the demands of the belligerency. As the chapter is dense in information, we have opted to divide it into sub-chapters that help to render the mood that prevailed over the city of Iași and the society of Iași. The first sub-chapter, Iasi citizens and the needs of war, focuses on the activities of the humanitarian societies that were established in Romania's second capital: the Central Committee for the Aid of Wounded Romanian Soldiers, the Benevolent Society, the Arms Committee and the Jewish Committee of Iasi, with the emphasis not only on the results that these committees achieved as a result of their humanitarian activities, but also on the way they related to the citizens, to the various local, national and ecclesiastical institutions. The role played by the Church was an important one in the Romanian society; in such moments of crisis for the country, it could not remain impassive, so in the second subchapter - The Clergy of Iasi - the focus is on its mission during the war. The effort made by the intellectual milieu of Iasi and the young students, the way in which they understood to contribute to the war effort was dealt with in the subchapter The intellectual milieu of Iasi. University and school teachers, students and schoolchildren from Iași. Young students followed the example of high society ladies and organized various fundraising events to support the war cause.

As its very title suggests, the fourth chapter, Events south of the Danube and the moods of the Saliars, focuses on the impact that the victories and defeats of the Romanian army had on the population. Small in size, it does not set out to discuss in extenso whether or not there was Russian-Romanian cooperation, and if so, what were the conditions of this cooperation. This theme, along with other aspects of Romanian-Russian relations during the war of the Eastern

Crisis, is the subject of another doctoral thesis, which is currently being documented and elaborated. The chapter brings to the foreground the way in which the society of Iasi reacted to the events that took place on the front, how it received the news of the crossing of the Danube, the active involvement of the Romanian army in the war south of the Danube, the military advances, the victories of the Romanian-Russian army, but also the defeats they suffered.

From the structural point of view, the chapter was organized in two sub-chapters, according to the chronological criteria, the first one covering the period from April to July 1877, and the second one the period between the sending of the famous telegram by Grand Duke Nicholas to Prince Charles I and the fall of Plevna. The importance of the press during the war is significant; it was an eyewitness to all the events of the period. As a bridge between those who went to the front and those who stayed at home, the newspapers presented in their pages, in an objective way, the events that the whole Romanian society went through.

In the last chapter, The End of the Conflagration. States of "confusion and dreadful anxiety" in Iași, I have opted to divide it into three sub-chapters. The first subchapter focuses on the Tsar's visit to Iași at the end of the war. In the second, The Return of the Iasi Soldiers, the focus is on the organization by the Iasi municipality and Iasi society of the return to the city of the soldiers of the 13th Dorobanți Regiment. The last sub-chapter, the Treaty of San Stefano and the Treaty of Berlin, reveals how the two treaties were presented by the press and how they were perceived by the Romanian society.

Each of the five chapters may constitute, in part, a distinct research theme, but together they form a corpus in which, covering a period of one year, the main events are reported, illustrating the attitudes, feelings, mood of the Iasi society and highlighting a lesser known image of Iasi.

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