

ARHEOLOGIA MOLDOVEI – A REPORT
HALF A CENTURY AFTER THE FIRST ISSUE

Half a century has passed since the publication of the first issue of *Arheologia Moldovei*. The opportunity can be used for a scrutiny of the itinerary so far covered by the journal, and for a prefiguration of its future evolution, in keeping with today's scientific requirements in Romania and abroad. It has been a sinuous way, with achievements and satisfactions, but also with shortcomings and deceptions. Although we are not fond of emphatic rhetoric, we must admit that *Arheologia Moldovei* stands as a vector and a landmark with regard to accounting and dissemination of notable results of field investigations in Romanian territories east of the Carpathians.

In Iași, interest in vestiges of the remote past dates from the first decades of the 19th century, and it grew during the former half of the next century, without reaching a level of scientific maturity comparable to the one manifest in the academic life of neighboring countries. Scrutiny of archaeological items that were discovered either by systematic investigation or by chance was not doubled by publication of finds in accordance with scientific criteria. Some improvement in that respect began to take shape in 1927, when Professor Orest Tafrali (University of Iași) initiated the journal *Arta și Arheologia*, whose publication was suspended in 1938, that is, one year after the death of the founder. Even if the name of Tafrali's journal suggests a proportional representation of two disciplines, most of the published materials were on questions of art, as favorite domain of the founder, and it was only seldom that archaeological materials were published too. Certainly, one must take into account that – in the old capital of Moldavia, during the period between the two World Wars – there were quite few intellectuals capable of producing specialized archaeological papers.

After World War II, as the Iași system of high education employed specialists such as Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița and Dumitru Tudor – who had both graduated from the University of Bucharest –, the interest in prehistoric and ancient archaeology showed gradual increase, a fact that materialized in archaeology-oriented papers published in journals of composite contents (*Studii și cercetări științifice, Analele științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași*). The reorganization of the Museum of Antiquities in 1952 and the creation of a Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, as part of the Institute of History and Philology (belonging to the Iași Branch of the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic) in 1953, enhanced research mainly in the domain of ancient history. Under such circumstances, specialized publications were felt to be necessary for a credible turning to account of whatever local specialists' investigations produced. That need was so much the more imperative since, before the 70s of last century, among the Romanian centers of high education it was only Bucharest that possessed specialized archaeological journals: *Studii și cercetări de istorie veche*, founded in 1950, *Materiale și cercetări arheologice*, initiated in 1953, and *Dacia*, whose publication was resumed in 1957, after an interruption of almost one decade, imposed by the Communist regime.

It was Professor Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița who most keenly apprehended the necessity of a journal in which results of the archaeological investigations in the area between the East Carpathians and the Prut could be published. After he got his tenured position, in 1956, at the Faculty of History and Philology of the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași – a position doubled, in the same year, by the one of curator of the Museum of Antiquities (renamed as Museum of History of Moldavia in the next year) –, Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița considered it his task to persuade the academic and administrative authorities in the capital of Romania to allow the publication of such a journal in Iași.

The first issue of *Arheologia Moldovei* was published in 1961, by the publishing house of the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic (*Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Române*, which, for all its change of name in 1990 – into *Editura Academiei Române* –, continued to publish our journal). Besides Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița, as editor-in-chief, it was Adrian Florescu who, by his scrupulousness, contributed much to the growth of the journal. At the present moment, without playing *laudator temporis acti*, we can declare that *Arheologia Moldovei* – from its very beginnings, but without any initial stage of amateurish fumbings – showed a mature European stature.

Through the years that followed, the hard work – implied by the collection and selection of materials, and by the editing of texts proper and of adjacent illustrations – was done mainly by the senior editors (Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Virgil Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Dan G. Teodor, Victor Spinei), seconded by several editors and secretaries (Adrian Florescu, Ion Ioniță, Constantin Iconomu, Costel Chiriac, Cornelia-Magda Mantu [-Lazarovici], George Bodi), and assisted, to various degrees, by other members of the editorial committee (Alexandru Andronic, Nicolae Gostar, Silviu Sanie, Vasile Chirica, Dan Monah, Gheorghe Postică, Victor Cojocaru, Adrian Poruciu), sometimes also by various researchers of the Institute of Archaeology. Beginning

with issue XXVII (2004), the journal has also benefited from an editorial advisory board, composed of outstanding Romanian and foreign specialists (John Chapman, Falko Daim, Linda Ellis, Ion Ioniță, Friedrich Lüth, Gheorghe Postică, Silviu Sanie, Wolfram Schier, Dan Gh. Teodor, Gerhard Trnka, Alexandru Vulpe), whose suggestions have often led to significant improvements in the quality of the published texts.

A multitude of specialists have been hosted in the pages of our journal, including not only members of the Institute of Archaeology (Anton Nițu, Eugenia Neamțu, Marilena Florescu, Silvia Teodor, Rodica Popovici, Felicia Monah, Costică Asăvoaie, Alexander Rubel, Dan Aparaschivei, George Bilavski, Lucian Munteanu, etc.), besides the above-mentioned members of the committee) and of the teaching staff of the Faculty of History[-Philosophy] of the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași (Marin Dinu, Attila László, Nicolae Ursulescu, Mihai Vasilescu, Lucrețiu Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Iulian Moga, etc.), but also many prestigious archaeologists, anthropologists, paleozoologists of Romania (the late Constantin Mătase, Olga Necrasov, Dumitru Tudor, Kurt Horedt, Emil Condurache, Mircea Rusu, Bucur Mitrea, Octavian Iliescu, Constantin Preda, Corina Nicolescu, Ion Horațiu Crișan, Maria Cristescu, Vasile Palade, Gavrilă Simion, Sergiu Haimovici, as well as the now active Alexandru Vulpe, Ion Glodariu, Vasile Ursachi, Mircea Babeș, George Trohani, Marin Cârțumaru, Valeriu Sîrbu, Paraschiva-Victorița Batariuc, Viorel M. Butnariu, Florin Curta, Luminița Bejenaru, Ruxandra Alaiba, Alexandru Madgearu, Bogdan Petru Niculică, etc.), of the Republic of Moldova (the late Pavel Bârnea, Vasile Grossu, Victor Sorochin, Ilie Borzic, as well as the now active Gheorghe Postică, Eugen Sava, Vlad Ghimpu, Ion Tentiuc, Igor Corman, Vlad Vornic, Sergiu Musteață, Ludmila Bacumenco, etc.), to whom we may add a number of promising young researchers, as well as a number of prestigious foreign specialists (Jaroslav Kudrnáč, Guy Rachet, Mikulas Dušek, Olaf Höckmann, Kenneth Honea, Gerhard Wirth, E. T. Tsvek, Linda Ellis, Jurgen Untermann, Nikolaus Boroffka, etc.).

In spite of its name, which seemingly suggests spatial limitation, *Arheologia Moldovei* has not focused exclusively on the East Carpathian area, but it has frequently got out of it, by publishing materials regarding other territories. Also, the chronological frame of the journal has been quite broad, going from the Paleolithic to late medieval times. Typologically, the range of published materials goes from synthetic articles to excavation reports, to notes regarding pieces of diverse provenance, and to scientific debates of general interest. Constantly represented have been the reports on results of diggings on sites with either settlements or necropoleis, such as the ones of Iași, Suceava, Băiceni, Lețcani, Bogdănești, Ciolănești din Deal, Mitoc, Cucorăni, Hudum, Barboși-Galați, Epureni, Mălești, Lozna, Izvoare, Poiana, Siret, Scânteia, Pocreaca, Tăcuta, Brădicești, Negoiești, Orheiul Vechi, Brăviceni, Banca, etc. In addition, *Arheologia Moldovei* has also published analytical presentations of historically relevant assemblages and hoards, such as the ones of Voinești, Oțeleni, Cotu Morii, Vovriești, Oboreceni, Traian, etc.

Collaborators of *Arheologiei Moldovei* have also authored remarkable synthetic studies with definitive conclusions regarding demographical, social-economic and religious realities of the East Carpathian space and of the neighboring areas. In that respect, worthy of attention are the papers on the archaeological cultures of Criș, Linear Pottery, Pre-Cucuteni, Cucuteni, Globular Amphorae, Monteoru, Sântana de Mureș-Černjakhov, on the Geto-Dacian, Celtic, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and medieval civilizations, on the migrations of the Indo-Europeans, Cimmerians, Scythians, Slavs, Hungarians and various Turkic populations, on types of contacts between natives and intruders, on Oriental, Geto-Dacian, Roman and Christian religious practices and representations, on particularly relevant pieces (such as fibulae, appliqués, rushlight lamps, glassware, earthenware), on the planimetry of Moldavian hospodars' and boyars' mansions, on salt exploitation, on the history of the archaeological investigations undertaken by Iași specialists, etc.

Beginning with issue VII (1972), the journal added a rubric of reviews and bibliographical notes, which grew richer by every new issue, and which included presentations and evaluations of works published in Romania and abroad, with a special focus on the thematic field of the prehistory and the ancient-medieval history of the Carpathian-Danubian space. Most of the materials that have been published in *Arheologia Moldovei* are in Romanian, with addition of abstracts in languages of wider circulation.

Besides materials meant to turn to account archaeological finds, *Arheologia Moldovei* has also published papers representing collateral fields, such as numismatics, sigilography and epigraphy. Also, the journal has remained open to domains that have thematic ties with archaeology: ancient and medieval history, ethnology, linguistics, all of which can enhance an archaeologist's cognitive capacity. In the same respect, worth mentioning is that, from its very beginnings (when such approaches sounded like pioneer's work), the journal has shown itself ready to publish results of pluridisciplinary research; it first hosted articles on paleofauna and paleoanthropology, and, subsequently, articles on issues such as metallographic tests, pollen analysis, textiles, etc.

Although *Arheologia Moldovei* was originally meant to be an annual journal, for various reasons (and contrary to the will of the editors) its publication was intermittent during the first decades after its foundation, so that, during the period 1961–1988, only ten issues were published, of which one was double (II–III, 1964). It was only beginning with 1989, thanks to the assistance of *Romanian Academy's Editorial House*, that regular publication could be ensured; as a result, between that year and 2010, a number of 21 issues have reached the shelves of libraries, only one of those issues being double (XXIII–XXIV, 2000–2001). During the last years, the leadership of the Institute of Archaeology and the editorial committee of the journal have done their best to mobilize all researchers and close collaborators in order that publication delays should be avoided. At the same time, special attention has been paid to broadening of the thematic range and to improvement of the contents.

In parallel, we have striven to develop dynamic and efficient exchange with publications of the same profile belonging to institutes, universities and museums in Romania and abroad. At present, with the help of the Iași Branch of the Romanian Academy, our Institute of Archaeology can afford to maintain exchange relationships with about 250 foreign partners; besides, 50 more copies of our journal are posted by *Romanian Academy's Library* to prestigious libraries abroad. Thus, in the field of human sciences, *Arheologia Moldovei* is among the Romanian journals with the best circulation abroad. Along that line, we have observed the precept that a book that does not circulate may be said not to exist at all, or to count only on bureaucratic lists of administrative offices, while being ignored in scholarly circles.

Beyond the journal's doubtless achievements and beyond the prestige it has gained, in Romania and abroad, we are aware of the fact that there are many things to be done in order to ensure a qualitative level comparative with the one of internationally acknowledged publications in the field. In that respect, improvements are necessary in both the intrinsic contents of the published materials, and the general graphical aspect of the journal. It is desirable that the issues of *Arheologia Moldovei* should also include theoretical papers on archaeology, on the methodology of field investigation and on the multipurpose interpretation of archaeological sites and finds. Also desirable would be papers that should reflect direct participation of the Romanian archaeological undertakings in the international flow of research of the same field, and in non-conventional debates on historiographical trends that polarize the interests of representatives of major European and American research centers. In the same respect, papers by prestigious foreign specialists would certainly make the pages of our journal look more attractive. Certainly, such a thing is not easy to achieve, taking into account that nowadays – in most European countries, as well as in Romania – there is a boom in publications. We will admit that there is a positive side of that phenomenon, but we must also observe that excess of typographical space often leads to diminution in the quality of printed matter, in keeping with the demand-supply binomial. Such diminution actually was to be expected, since the number of researchers has not grown at the same rate as the amount of publications.

We do favor the idea that more materials should be published in languages of international circulation, but we also expect more rigorous selection in that respect, because sometimes translations of papers with shortcomings of documentation or of interpretation prove to be harmful to the image Romanian historiography, which is placed in an unfavorable light.

It is well known that graphical features of printings are as vital for archaeological publications as for the ones that represent history of art, since illustrative materials sustain the assertions in the text proper, and makes them more credible. Unfortunately, due to financial restrictions, many Romanian publishing houses that undertake to issue scientific books cannot afford to print illustrations of top quality. Such a situation – which is more evident in Romania than it is in neighboring countries – has led to reproaches coming from foreign colleagues in regard the illustrations of *Arheologia Moldovei*. As Romania's economic hardships, which first appeared to be transient, now appear as endemic, and are often amplified by the incompetence of decision makers, we are skeptical in regard to a possible structural betterment in the near future, in the issues under discussion. *Nemo dat quod non habet*, after all.

In a convergent respect, we have the feeling that, in spite of perceptible progress in some aspects, on a general plane there is increasing discrepancy between our publications and analogous foreign ones, whose evolutions have shown more alert dynamics; *mutatis mutandis*, we could apply the same observation to other spheres of the Romanian cultural and scientific life. It would be to nobody's benefit, if – in getting carried away by the euphoria of our anniversary – we overlooked troublesome and disagreeable aspects, since such an attitude would lead to complacency and lethargy.

Arheologia Moldovei is not the only publication by the Institute of Archaeology of Iași, since members of the latter have also been preoccupied with the editing of a series of monographic volumes and collections of papers. Earliest of all was *Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassiensis*, which was initiated in 1987 by Dr. Vasile Chirica, and which, up until the end of 2010, came to include 22 volumes. In the meantime, members of the Institute have undertaken to publish several other collections: *Bibliotheca Archaeologica Moldaviae* (beginning with 2005), *Honoraria* (beginning with 2005), *Florilegium magistrorum historiae archaeologiaeque Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi* (beginning with 2007) and *Scripta archaeologica et historica Dacoromaniae* (beginning with 2009). In that direction, close collaboration has developed with *Editura Academiei Române*, *Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei*, *Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași*, as well as with the publishing houses *Trinitas* and *Golia* of the Orthodox Metropolitan Seat of Moldavia and Bucovina. Up until 2010, in the three series initiated after 2005, there have been published thirteen, nine, and eight volumes, respectively; in the case of the last series mentioned above, only the publication of one volume has been possible. *Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassiensis*, *Bibliotheca Archaeologica Moldaviae* and *Scripta archaeologica et historica Dacoromaniae* aim to publish original monographs by Romanian and Moldovan archaeologists, *Honoraria* includes volumes of homage to important scientific personalities of Romania, primarily of Iași (Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Ion Ioniță, Silviu Sanie, Virgil Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Dan G. Teodor, Alexandru Zub, Dan Monah, Ștefan Ștefănescu, Attila László), and *Florilegium magistrorum historiae archaeologiaeque Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi* includes collections of articles by specialists of worldwide reputation (Charles J. Halperin, Sebastian Brather, Walter Pohl, Sergei G. Klyashtornyj, Michel Kazanski, Florin Curta, Leonid R. Kyzlasov, Heiko Steuer).

By reviewing, with satisfaction, the achievements of *Arheologia Moldovei* during the half-century of its existence, we also mean to praise the essential role played, in the initiation and evolution of our journal, by Academician Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița. At his age of 95, he still finds enough energy to keep in touch with the current problems of *Arheologia Moldovei*. We must also show our respect to the memory of our colleagues who, in the meantime, have passed away, after having lived lives of professional devotion, and after having substantially contributed to our journal's growing prestige.

Beyond present difficulties and uncertain perspectives for the near future, we will express our hope that the hard work of the previous generation may enjoy the respect of today's young researchers, who may feel urged to continue, with self-abnegation and responsibility, everything that proved to be valuable in the work of their predecessors. The young generation in the field is expected to find solutions for the enrichment and improvement of the contents of our journal, for further avoidance of routine, hermetism and stereotypy, for regularity of issues and for adequate distribution, taking into consideration that the journal we hereby praise stands for an emblem of the team that will spare no effort in order to ensure its publication and to maintain its particular profile and its visibility in the academic world.

Translated by Adrian PORUCIUC