

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ETHNIC CONTACTS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES
NORTH AND WEST OF THE BLACK SEA
FROM THE GREEK COLONIZATION TO THE PRESENT

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In the period 12-17 June 2005 the Institute of Archaeology of Iași (belonging to the Iași Branch of the Romanian Academy) organized a thematic international symposium entitled *Ethnic Contacts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea from the Greek Colonization to the Present*. The symposium was initiated in collaboration with the "A. D. Xenopol" Institute of History, and with help from the ASTRA Association ("Mihail Kogălniceanu" Department, chaired by Ms Areta Moșu). Significant support also came from the Goethe-Zentrum of Iași, the Museum of Romanian Literature in Iași, the Metropolitan Seat of Moldavia and Bucovina, and the Archiepiscopate of Suceava and Rădăuți.

The academic gathering under discussion reflects a tradition of fruitful collaboration between research institutions of Romania, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and other neighboring states. The symposium went on in very favorable conditions, and it enjoyed the interest of the specialists and students, as well as of the cultural circles and mass media in Iași. The 94 papers delivered on the occasion were distributed as follows: 44 in the session of ancient history and archaeology; 25 in the session of medieval history and archaeology; 25 in the session of modern and contemporary history (in that respect, see the program of the symposium). The authors of the presentations were both prestigious specialists and younger colleagues from the following countries: Bulgaria, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldavia, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine.

The presentations (most of which showed high scientific level) dealt with problems implied by ethnic contacts and cultural exchange in areas north and west of the Black Sea, the sources being archaeological, literary, epigraphic, numismatic, and imagological. The debates that followed practically each presentation proved to be extremely interesting and useful, and they contributed much to the achievement of more profound knowledge of the investigated aspects. This concise note will not allow an enumeration of the titles of all presentations; therefore only some examples for each of the three sessions will be given below, depending on the higher degree of interest raised by the mentioned papers.

For the session of ancient history and archaeology, worth mentioning are the following papers (in the order of their occurrence in the program): *A Chronological View on the Cultural Exchanges in the Northwest Pontic Area in the Middle of the First Millennium BC* (I. Niculiță, A. Zanoci – Chișinău); *Rom und Chersonesus Taurica. Die Beziehungen zwischen beiden Staaten im Lichte der Ehrung von T. Aurelius Calpurnianus Apollonides* (R. Hacnsch – München); *Skolaven und Freigelassene auf bosporanischen Grabreliefs* (C. von Behren – Trier); *Lexical Elements that Reflect Contacts between Old Germanic and Autochthonous Populations of Southeast Europe* (A. Poruciuc – Iași); *Die Beziehungen zwischen Griechen und „Barbaren“ im Norden und Nordwesten des Pontos Euxeinus zwischen dem 7. und dem 1. Jh. v. Chr. Zur Geschichte ihrer Erforschung* (V. Cojocaru - Iași); *Scythians and Thracians in Northeast Bulgaria: Mutual Influence in Metalworks (5th-3rd Centuries BC)* (A. Minchev – Varna); *On the Scythian-Chersonese*

Relationships during the Last Third of the 4th Century and the First Third of the 3rd Century BC (S. Lantsov – Simferopol); *Celtic Presence in Dobruđa: Onomastic Evidence* (A. Falileyev – Aberystwyth).

Among the papers delivered in the session of medieval history and archaeology outstanding were the following ones: *Terminologie politique dans les textes byzantins à l'époque des Paléologues* (S. Nicolae – București); *Ethnic and Cultural Contacts in the Prut-Dniestr Area during 8th-11th Centuries* (S. Mesteaiță – Chișinău); *The Khazarian-Bulgar Church in the Suburbs of Byzantine Chersones* (T. Jashaeva, E. Denisova – Sevastopol); *The 1365-1387 Conflict between Genoa and the Golden Horde as Reflected in the Genoese Fortification of Crimea* (S. Bocharov – Simferopol); *A 15th Century Private Italian Signoria North of the Black Sea* (V. Myts – Simferopol); *Confessional Exchanges between Moldavia, Halicz and Lithuania in the Second Half of the 14th Century and the First Half of the 15th Century* (F. Solomon – Iași); *Contributions concernant les relations ecclésiastiques roumaine-bulgare au XVII^e siècle* (P. Zahariuc – Iași); *The linguistic Expression of Politeness as Manifestation of Cultural Contact in Latin External Correspondence of Moldavian Hospodars (the 14th-18th Centuries)* (M. Paraschiv – Iași).

Outstanding were also the following presentations included in the session of modern and contemporary history: *Entre Est et Ouest: un problème d'histoire culturelle* (A. Zub – Iași); *New Evidence on the Activity of the Corps of Romanian Volunteers in Russia during the Great War* (D. Ivănescu – Iași); *A View on Late 19th-Early 20th Century Letters from Romania Preserved in the Archives of the Institute of Archaeology of the National Ukrainian Academy* (G. Stanitsina, V. Stanitsina – Kiev); *A. Skalkovski – „Karamzin von Bessarabien?”* (I. Șarov, I. Ojog – Chișinău); *The Contrlution of Pavel Kiseleff to the Modernization Process of the Romanian Society* (D. Vitcu – Iași); *The Romanian Historiography in Peripheral Areas: Between the Revelation of a Moment and the Burden of Consequences* (I. Luceac – Cernăuți); *Eine vergessene Minderheit – Die Schweizer in Bessarabien* (K. Lasch – Jena/Cluj-Napoca). Whoever may be interested in a detailed image of the papers and topics of the symposium could resort to the program and the volume of summaries, both published by the Trinitas Publishing House of Iași.

Worth mentioning is that most participants joined the three-day excursion that stood for a final part of the symposium proper. They had the opportunity to visit history-charged places of the Neamț County (the monasteries of Probota, Neamț, Agapia and Varatic, and the Neamț Fortress), of Bucovina (the monasteries of Humor, Voroneț, Moldovița, Sucevița and Putna), as well as of Suceava, the old capital of Moldavia. Several debates and roundtables were organized during the excursion, as prolongations of the sessions.

The academic event of June 2005 actually represented a continuation of another international symposium, entitled *Aspects of Spiritual Life in South East Europe from Prehistory to the Middle Ages*. It took place in Iași too, in the period 17-20 October 2004, and it was organized by the above-mentioned Institute of Archaeology, with support from the ASTRA Association (“Mihail Kogălniceanu” Department). The proceedings of the 2004 symposium, in several languages, have already been published, by the same Trinitas Publishing House of Iași. Immediately after its publication the volume was praised by both Romanian and foreign specialists, as well as by a larger public interested in history.

The materials presented in the 2005 symposium will be included in two volumes, to be published towards the end of this year. The first volume, entitled *Ethnic Contacts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea from the Greek Colonization to the Ottoman Conquest*, is to be published by Trinitas. The same publishing house will publish the second volume, entitled *Ethnic Contacts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea from the Middle Ages to the Present*.

Taking into account the extremely favorable echoes raised by the two above mentioned symposiums, the Institute of Archaeology of Iași, in collaboration with other scientific and cultural institutions, intends to continue benefic research work, discussion and spreading, as widely as possible, of numerous aspects specific to the ancient and medieval history and archaeology of the Romanian space and of neighboring areas. Also, interested specialists in Romania and abroad will be offered the chance to gather, as regularly as possible, in Iași and in other Romanian centers. Such meetings will not only allow high-levelled discussions on present-day historiography, but they will also enhance maintenance and enlargement of contacts with prestigious research centers and individual research workers in the whole of Europe. In that respect, we announce that there is an intention of organizing another international symposium (Iași-Tulcea, 2007), on topics that envisage the whole circum-Pontic space during the ancient and the early Byzantine times. We only hope that we will be able to keep the same courage of mind that once made one of our chroniclers proudly assert that “true men are born in Moldavia too”.