

tional du Royaume de Roumanie pendant les années de la neutralité.

La dernière section du volume comprend des articles consacrés à la vie quotidienne pendant la guerre, telles que l'activité des prêtres sur le front transylvain, la vie des enfants, la correspondance. Ce sont des sujets moins abordés jusqu'à présent, qui pourraient générer de nouvelles pistes de recherche sur la complexité de la Première Guerre mondiale.

Les musées, les universités, les institutions de culture d'Europe et non seulement ont tenu à marquer le centième anniversaire du déclenchement de la Première Guerre mondiale par différents événements, telles que des sessions de communications scientifiques, expositions, ateliers, campagnes de collecte de « souvenirs de famille » de la Première Guerre mondiale. Dans ce contexte, on ne pourrait que saluer l'initiative de l'Université Babeş-Bolyai, du Centre d'Études Transylvaines de l'Académie Roumaine et de l'Institut d'Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences de la République de Moldavie d'organiser, en juin 2014, une conférence internationale consacrée à la Première Guerre mondiale. Les travaux présentés à cette occasion ont été réunis dans un volume intitulé *Primul Război Mondial: Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică/The First World War: In Historical and Historiographical Perspective* (coordonné par Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru et Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015). Le volume *World War I – The Other Face of the War* continue la démarche commencée en 2014, dans l'intention de créer un forum international de débats sur les événements de la Première Guerre mondiale qui avaient marqué profondément surtout l'ordre européen. Il contient des articles

sur des thèmes comme les répercussions politiques et démographiques de cet événement majeur, l'idéologie, les sentiments, la vie quotidienne et la médecine pendant la guerre. Ces articles peuvent s'avérer très utiles pour les passionnés d'histoire de la Première Guerre mondiale, enrichissant l'historiographie autochtone de nouvelles directions de recherche.

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ANAMARIA POP

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**ALBERTO BASCIANI**
**L'illusione della modernità: Il Sud-est dell'Europa tra le due guerre mondiali**

(The illusion of modernity: Southeast Europe between the two World Wars)  
Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino Editore, 2016

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**F**OLLOWING THE publication of this book, the historiography of Southeast Europe between the two World Wars is enriched with yet another substantial contribution, of incontestable scientific value. In addition to what the national historiographies of this region produce and publish, there is also a long-established international historiography concerning this part of the continent, all the more so as the region experienced, after 1989, a transition from communism to democracy and European integration. Thus, Western analysts have been confronted with a new type of perception about this part of the Old Continent, which was long seen as the Other in relation to the identity, the cultural and societal model of Western Europe. The leading historiographies of Europe, those of Germany, Britain, or France, and even that produced by US scholars, have generated

an outstanding literature concerning the modern and contemporary history of Southeast Europe, long regarded as the “powder keg” of Europe. Italian historiography is among those that have offered substantial contributions to the history of Central and Eastern Europe. In this respect, we should mention, in passing, a few scholars of reference that have recently published works on this subject: Francesco Guida, Rita Tolomeo, Pasquale Fornaro, Stefano Santoro, and Antonio D’Alessandri.

Alberto Basciani belongs to an institutional and historiographic context which is already a reference point in Italian historiography: the study group for Central and Eastern Europe created by Professor Francesco Guida at the Faculty of Political Sciences of Roma Tre University. Having trained as a researcher under the guidance of Professor Guida, who actually supervised his doctorate, Alberto Basciani, associate professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the Roman University, is already one of the experts in this field of study: the history of Central and Eastern Europe. Among the contributions of Alberto Basciani we find not only numerous studies, but also two books dedicated to Romanian issues: *La contesa fra Bulgaria e Romania in Dobrugia del sud 1918–1940* (Cosenza, 2001), and *La difficile unione: La Bessarabia e la Grande Romania (1919–1940)* (Rome, 2007), the latter forthcoming, in Romanian translation, at Cartier Press in Chişinău.

The book begins with extensive introductory considerations, followed by a section of acknowledgments devoted to the persons and institutions that facilitated the research. The content proper of the volume comes next, consisting of three major

parts, each divided in turn into chapters, dedicated to the interwar evolution of the East European states the author focuses on. The three parts into which the content of the volume is organized are entitled: “Le molte eredità del conflitto: Il primo dopoguerra nel Sud-est dell’Europa (1918–1923)” (The many legacies of the conflict: Southeast Europe in the post-war period, 1918–1923), “Gli anni Venti: l’epoca delle sfide” (The twenties: the era of challenges), “Gli anni Trenta: Il Sud-est dell’Europa tra emergenza economica e crisi democratica” (The thirties: Southeast Europe between economic growth and democratic crisis). At the end we have an “Epilogue,” the “Conclusions” to the work, thus called by the author, and an Index of Names.

After presenting the greatest problems faced by Balkan Europe at the end of World War I, Alberto Basciani provides, in parts two and three of his book, true “miniature monographs” of the evolution of the region’s states throughout the two decades between the World Wars: the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (as of 1929, Yugoslavia), Bulgaria, Greater Romania, Albania, and Greece. For each of these countries, the author has produced synthetic studies, most of them consistent, in which he outlines the major features of their history during the period under consideration. Thus, in these sections or separate chapters from the second and the third parts of the volume, the reader is presented with brief overviews regarding the “outcome” of World War I for each of the five countries that the book approaches, the repositioning of those countries in the new European geopolitical context, enshrined under the Paris Peace Treaties of 1919–1920, the return

to postwar “normalcy” in Balkan Europe, the main features of political life, the most important personalities, the impact of the 1929–1930 economic crisis in the area, the management by these states of the complicated problems of the minorities inside their frontiers during the two interwar decades, the efforts towards building a democratic life, with the major challenges this process was subjected to, particularly during the 1930s, etc. The author states that he did not envisage this undertaking as a textbook, but it must be said that his book is an excellent tool for informing the Italian-speaking public about the most relevant and representative topics and issues pertaining to the evolution of Southeast Europe within the timeframe marked by the two World Wars.

The volume authored by Alberto Basciani is an undeniable historiographic feat, which is why we believe it deserves to be brought to the attention of the Romanian readership. The main beneficiary of this book is, obviously, the Italian historiography or, in general, the Italian scientific and cultural milieu, to whom this study is primarily addressed. There have been other more recent publications of Italian historiographers which tackle the history of Southeast Europe between the two World Wars, and we refer here especially to two titles: the work of Stefano Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale: Diplomazia culturale e propaganda 1918–1943*, published by Franco Angeli Press in Milan, and respectively Francesco Guida's, *L'altra metà dell'Europa: Dalla Grande Guerra ai giorni nostri* (Rome–Bari, 2015). The book that is the subject of this review stands out through a more thorough focus on the period 1918–1940 and, not least, through the privileging of certain issues of politi-

cal history and the history of international relations. The author declares that the documentation effort that preceded the writing of the book meant processing only the bibliography published in English, French and Italian. In this regard we believe that the author has fully achieved his goal of integrating an impressive amount of scholarship published in Italy and abroad into his arguments.

As I also noted on other occasions when I signaled the publication of works authored by Italian scholars who approach topics of Romanian or Southeast European history, there is an international historiography dedicated to this part of the Old Continent (particularly to the modern and contemporary periods in its history), a professional, dynamic and productive historiography, which has evolved alongside the historical writing in the countries situated in this region. A good portion of this historiographic output is, of course, produced in the Italian language. The advantage of this type of approach is the poised, balanced perspective, the external gaze, the fact that those scholars are foreign to the disputes and polemical positions on certain sensitive topics of the historians from the countries concerned. This gives them, most of the time, an additional note of objectivity and, last but not least, of credibility. The existence of research projects of this kind in Italy, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, etc., is facilitated by the many issues that are common to the history of Central and Eastern Europe, such as the relationship with the multinational empires and the Great Powers with interests in the area, the birth of nation-states in the Balkans, interwar evolutions from democracy to authoritarianism, the impact of the two World Wars, commu-

nization, followed by the collapse of the totalitarian regimes here at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, last but not least, the process of European integration. The fact that scholars write about the history of Southeast Europe not only in Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, Tirana, and Athens, but also in Vienna, Berlin, Munich, Paris, London, Rome, and Milan suggests the existence of a climate of competition that is likely to foster a high professional standing for the historiographic approaches devoted to this part of the world.



ION CĂRJA

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IOAN BOLOVAN

**Primul Război Mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania: Familie, moralitate și raporturi de gen**

(The First World War and the demographic realities in Transylvania: Family, morality and gender relations)

Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană, 2015

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**S**TARTING AT the beginning of this century, but especially after 2014, many historians, theologians and philologists turned their attention towards the First World War, in a comprehensive attempt to commemorate this painful event. If, in countries like America or the United Kingdom, they tried to emphasize aspects pertaining to ideology or daily life, or to problematize various aspects of the frontlines or the home fronts, in Romania most historians preferred to bring to attention manuscripts featuring the memories of participants or documentary information.

In this context, the approach of Professor Ioan Bolovan, vice-rector of Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, quite different and interesting, offers an example of both demographic research and historical synthesis. His book is the culmination of a long series of demographic investigations conducted by the author.

The Foreword, signed by Professor Liviu Maior, known in the Romanian historiography for his work on the history of Transylvania in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, surveys the most important investigations dedicated to the conflagration until now, highlighting the contribution of the Romanian historians and showing that, in Ioan Bolovan's book, "the demographic problems, the dislocation of population, village and soldiers' morality, family, matrimonial behavior, Church and society, are approached with professionalism" (p. 10).

Then, in the introductory part (pp. 11–21), the author speaks about the relevance of the First World War for the Romanians in Transylvania, surveys some of the most important titles dedicated to the subject, in the international and the Romanian historiography, presents his sources and his objectives, and expresses his gratitude to those who helped him in his research.

The first chapter (pp. 23–52) is dedicated to general demographic aspects (the number of victims caused by the conflagration, the number of men conscripted between 1 August 1914 and 1 November 1918 in Transylvania, and their ethnic distribution, their percentage in the entire population of the province, the emigration from the villages, deportations, etc.), while the second one (pp. 53–74) is dedicated to the so-called "natural movement" of the population in this area (the number