
BOOK REVIEWS

IUSZTIN ZOLTAN

Politică și administrație în Banatul medieval (sec. XIV–XV)

(Politics and administration in medieval Banat, 14th–15th centuries)

Foreword by IOAN-AUREL POP

Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2018

UNDER A chromatic aspect, stemming from the royal privilege issued in favour of John Hunyadi, in 1453, where the Corvinus coat of arms is shown, which is also presented on the book cover, we can observe a number of colours, black being the predominant one. However, black seems to relate to a moment that has a powerful emotional meaning, especially for the author, because he writes in the beginning that this volume is dedicated to his father, in his memory: “To my father. . . whom I could not thank neither present this book” (p. 5).

Chronologically, this is Iusztin Zoltan’s first book as sole author, and the current work is an improved and added version of his doctoral dissertation defended in 2012, at Babeş-Bolyai University, under the coordination of Acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop; all of this and much more related to the motivation in choosing the topic are found in the Introduction (pp. 13–14).

Therefore, from a structural viewpoint, the book is organised into six chapters of various lengths, framed by the introduction and the conclusions; the work counts over 360 pages.

In the first chapter (pp. 19–31), there is a list of works that approach the region of Banat and its political and administrative institutions during the Middle Ages. In the second chapter (pp. 33–37), the author clarifies and exemplifies some terms. In the third chapter (pp. 39–62), he presents the general political framework in this part of Europe, during the 14th and 15th centuries, approaching topics such as the new Angevin dynasty, the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans, the rule of King Matthias Corvinus and the Hunyadi dynasty.

Therefore, the author gradually moves from the general political framework to the more specific one; as such, in chapter IV (pp. 63–217) the administrative structure of the Hungarian Kingdom is discussed, with a presentation of the county and its internal bodies, with a concrete reference to the county of Timiș and its administrative functions: comitia, vice-comitia, judges, tribunals etc. The information is supported by various tables presenting the names of the comitia of Timiș and the vice-comitia, during the 14th–15th centuries, as well as the king’s judges; the lists include not only their names, but the names of their mandataries, too. Also, the tables include some details on the objectives of the missions, and some scientific references indicating the place where the studied documents can be found, which certifies the author’s hard work in doing research on every historical aspect regarding the county of Timiș during the mentioned period of time.

The fifth chapter (pp. 219–290), like the preceding one, is quite extensive; in fact, if we are to compare all chapters, we could say that these two chapters (4th and 5th) are the foundation of Iusztin Zoltan's research. Here, the author approaches from a historical point of view the Romanian districts in medieval Banat, presenting the evolution of their formation. The district of Caransebeș is taken as a case study.

In the last chapter, the sixth one (pp. 291–308), the evolution of Banat of Severin is presented; this was an important administrative subunit of Banat, with a major political role, especially in the Middle Ages.

Iusztin Zoltan's book presents the political administrative institutions of medieval Banat, much like a historical radiography; the age is presented from the moment Charles Robert of Anjou takes the royal throne, at the beginning of the 14th century, and until the end of King Matthias Corvinus' reign, at the end of the 15th century; the main role is to expand the arsenal of historical papers that mainly study the region of Banat during the Middle Ages.



ROBERT-MARIUS MIHALACHE

FRANCESCO GUIDA

România în secolul XX

(Romania in the 20th century)

Translated from the Italian

by DRAGOȘ COJOCARU

Chișinău: Cartier, 2019

AMONG THE historians who published very interesting volumes on Romanian history, Francesco Guida is a familiar name.

With a degree in Literature obtained in 1972 at La Sapienza University, Francesco Guida, professor of Eastern European History at the Faculty of Political Sciences at Roma Tre University, and associate professor at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, is the author of numerous books, articles and studies on various Central and Eastern European countries, published in Italy and abroad.

For his activity in the field of Romanian civilization and history, in 2003 Professor Guida was honored by the President of Romania with the Order of Merit in the rank of Officer. In 2012, the Bucharest Ministry of Foreign Affairs awarded him the Diploma for Special Merit in promoting Romanian and universal values in international relations. Francesco Guida is also the president of the Italian Association of Southeast European Studies, and president of the Romanian-Italian Center for Historical Studies, in which he represents Roma Tre University. In 2011, he edited the volume *Italia e Romania verso l'Unità nazionale*, published by Humanitas publishing house, a book that collects the works presented during an international conference dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy, organized by the Embassy of Italy in Bucharest, the Italian Cultural Institute, the Italian Association of Studies in Southeastern Europe and the Romanian-Italian Center for Historical Studies, in collaboration with the University of Bucharest.

The present book is a wonderful writing on the identity and culture of the Romanian people and the proof that real Romanian history is well known abroad. This volume brings together eight chapters on Romania in the 20th century, covering topics that deal with the First World War