

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR GHEORGHE PLATON
(FEBRUARY 26, 1926-JANUARY 24, 2006) – ON HIS CENTENARY

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For today's generations of young servants of Clio, the need for human and scientific models must be imposed as a necessity in an increasingly disoriented world. Romanian historiography, at least from the last half Century – to refer only to this dimension of the national culture –, has, fortunately, a number of personalities who can constitute true pillars, landmarks and scientific and ethical models.

Professor Gheorghe Platon (member of the Romanian Academy) from the 'Alexandru Ioan Cuza' University in Iași – is one of them.

Born in the town of Buhuși (in Neamț County), on February 26, 1926 (died on January 24, 2006), he attended primary school there (1933-1937), then the 'Gheorghe Asachi' Teachers' Training School in Piatra Neamț (1937-1944) (taking the exam, in 1946, at the 'Ferdinand I' High School in Bacău. In Iași, he attended the 'Alexandru Ioan Cuza' University (founded in 1860 under the name University of Iași; between 1933 and 1942 it was called Mihăileană University) – it has had this name since 1942), History courses (1946-1950). He completed all the teaching stages – preparator (1950) (in parallel, researcher at the 'A.D. Xenopol' Institute Iași), Lecturer (1960-1970), Associate Professor (1970-1974), university professor and later scientific supervisor of the doctoral thesis in the specialty 'Modern History of Romania' (1974-1996); he was head of the Department of Romanian History (1973-1983, 1989-1991), and from 1996 until his death (2006) – consulting Professor; he also held numerous positions in scientific and research bodies in the field of History, and was a member of the Romanian Academy (since 1990).

He defended his doctorate in Historical Sciences at the 'Babeș-Bolyai' University in Cluj (1969), with the thesis *Situația și lupta maselor populare din Moldova în preajma și în timpul anului revoluționar 1848* [The Situation and Struggle of the Popular Masses in Moldova Around and During the Revolutionary Year 1848] (scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. Ștefan Pascu).

The brilliant representative of Romanian Historiography – which also illustrates the prestige of the 'Iași School' of history –, a true *brand* of research and writing, with new interpretations, of the Modern History of Romanians, is the author of representative volumes, elaborated on the basis of unpublished documents or elaborated as syntheses, of dozens and dozens (about 240) of scientific studies.

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The volumes (16 – eight books by a sole author, four as co-author, four as an editor and co-author) are – *Domeniul feudal din Moldova în preajma revoluției de la 1848* [The Feudal Domain of Moldavia on the Eve of the Revolution of 1848] (1975), *Cuza Vodă. In memoriam. Culegere de studii cu ocazia împlinirii unui secol de la moartea domnitorului* [Cuza Vodă. In memoriam. Collection of Studies on Occasion of a Century Since the Death of the Ruler (1973 – ed. and author)], *Masele în revoluția română de la 1848* [The Masses in the Romanian Revolution of 1848] (1974), *Lupta românilor pentru unitate națională 1855-1859. Ecouri în presa europeană* [The Struggle of the Romanians for National Unity 1855-1859. Echoes in the European Press] (1974), *La voie des Roumains vers l'indépendance* [The Romanians' Path to Independence (1977 – co-ed. and author; editions in English and Russian)], *1859 – L'union des Principautés Roumaines* [1859 – The Union of the Romanian Principalities] (1979), *Geneza Revoluției române de la 1848. Introducere în istorie modernă a României* [The Genesis of the Romanian Revolution of 1848. Introduction to the Modern History of Romania (1980 – 2nd edition, 1999)], *Istoria modernă a României. Compendiu* [Modern History of Romania. Compendium] (1980), *România în relațiile internaționale: 1699-1939* [Romania in International Relations: 1699-1939 (1980 – co-ed. and author)], *Istoria orașului Iași* [History of the City of Iași], I-II (1980 – ed. and author), *Moldova și începuturile revoluției de la 1848* [Moldova and the Beginnings of the Revolution of 1848] (1993 – Chișinău), *Cum s-a înfăptuit România modernă. O perspectivă asupra strategiei dezvoltării* [How Modern Romania Was Made. A Perspective on the Development Strategy] (1993 – co-authors: V. Rusu, Gh. Iacob, V. Cristian, I. Agrigoroaiei), *De la constituirea națiunii la Marea Unire. Studii de istorie modernă* [From the Establishment of the Nation to the Great Union. Modern History Studies], I-VI (1995-2006), *Boierimea din Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea. Context european, evoluție socială și politică (Date statistice și observații istorice)* [The Boyars of Moldavia in the 19th Century. European Context, Social, and Political Evolution (Statistical Data and Historical Observations)] (1995 – co-author Alexandru-Florin Platon), *Istoria românilor. Vol. VII/I-II. De la Independență la Marea Unire (1878-1918)* [History of the Romanians] (2003 – ed. and co-author.), *O istorie a românilor. Studii critice* [A History of the Romanians. Critical Studies] (1998 – co-author), *Romania. A historic perspective* [] (1998 – Boulder-New York – co-author), *Românii în veacul construcției naționale – națiune, frământări, mișcări sociale și politice, program național* [Romanians in the Age of National Construction – Nation, Turmoil, Social, and Political Movements, National Program] (2005).

Marking this year (February 26) the Centenary of his birth, disciples and authorities organized – in Iași and in his hometown of Buhuși – two emotional-memorial events.

Thus, at the Multifunctional Educational Center in Buhuși, “the event *Omagiu la centenar* [Homage at the Centenary] took place, dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Professor Gheorghe Platon. The event was organized by

the Buhuși City Hall, in partnership with several cultural and educational institutions. The event brought together prominent personalities from the academic and cultural environment, along with representatives of the local administration. The anniversary marked a Century since the birth of the historian who contributed decisively to the development of modern Romanian historiography. During the ceremony, moments from the life and scientific activity of this son of Buhuș, were evoked, with an emphasis on research dedicated to the modernization of Romanian society and the Revolution of 1848. The organizers emphasized the importance of preserving the memory of the great personalities who marked the cultural destiny of Romania. The event was also attended by the historian's son, university Professor Alexandru-Florin Platon, along with other guests from the university environment.

The event developed the following topics: Prof. univ. dr. Alexandru-Florin Platon, *Tatăl meu, istoricul Gheorghe Platon: parcurs biobibliografic în vremuri schimbătoare* [My Father, the Historian Gheorghe Platon: Biobibliographic Journey in Changing Times], Prof. dr. Gabriel Leahu, *Rigoare, demnitate și tradiție: moștenirea profesorului și academicianului Gheorghe Platon* [Rigor, dignity, and Tradition: the Legacy of Professor and Academician Gheorghe Platon], Oana Lazăr (writer and publicist), *Finis coronat opus. Istoria interviurilor cu academicianul Gheorghe Platon la TVR Iași (sau ce nu s-a văzut la televizor niciodată)* [Finis Coronat Opus. History of Interviews with Academician Gheorghe Platon on TVR Iași (Or What Was Never Seen on TV)], Prof. dr. Ioan-Romeo Roman, *Normalistul Gheorghe Platon* [Normalist Gheorghe Platon], Assoc. Prof. dr. Ioan Dănilă, *Gheorghe Platon și Maria Platon – comilitoni ai culturii* [Gheorghe Platon and Maria Platon – Fellow Soldiers of Culture].

“The event – *journalist Ioana-Suzana Tăutu wrote* – ended with a special note of gratitude from the son, who first of all thanked them to the students present for having brilliantly completed the lesson of patience, lasting over two hours, continuing with the teachers present, moderators, guests, being grateful for the honorable position of representing the academician as a successor and addressing a very valuable exhortation: we all have dear people who will not be eternal; they will live forever if we remember them.

The legacy of academician Gheorghe Platon remains alive through his works, through the disciples he trained and through the values he consistently promoted. His centenary was not only an anniversary moment, but also a history lesson for those present, a reaffirmation of the importance of culture and education in Romanian society”.

In Iași, the Branch of the Library of the Romanian Academy (of which he was honorary director in the 90s) – and not, as far as I know, within the Section of Historical Sciences and Archaeology of the Academy... – organized, on February 26, the conference *Gheorghe Platon. 100 de ani de la naștere* [Gheorghe Platon. 100 Years Since His Birth], at which Prof. univ. dr. Gheorghe Cliveti, corresponding member of the Romanian Academy, and Prof. univ. dr. Mihai Cojocariu, from the ‘Alexandru Ioan Cuza’ University of Iași, evoked the contributions of academician Platon to the

study of modern Romanian history and his role in the formation of several generations of historians.

Let us also mention, on this Centenary, that, over time, the great historian was honored – while still alive – by offering tributes, within History periodicals, on anniversary dates.

On the 65th Anniversary:

In 1991, a Supplement to the yearbook of the Faculty of History is dedicated to Professor Gh. Platon, respectively through the special *bio-bibliographic material* due to a colleague – Ion Toderașcu, *Profesorul Gheorghe Platon la a 65-a aniversare* [Professor Gheorghe Platon on the 65th Anniversary], in Supplement to the *Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”*. Istorie. New Series, Volume XXXVII, 1991, pp. 1-40 pp.

On the 70th Anniversary:

Acad. Dan Berindei, *Academicianul Gheorghe Platon la 70 ani*, in „Memoriile Secției de Științe Istorice și Arheologie”, 1991, p. 7.

The Yearbook of the Faculty of History (Supplement XLII-XLIII/1996-1997 [published: 1998]) pays tribute to the professor – Ion Agrigoroaiei, Gheorghe Cliveti (coord. [Eds.]), *Național și social în istoria românilor. Profesorului Gheorghe Platon la a 70-a aniversare* [National and Social in the History of the Romanians. To Professor Gheorghe Platon on His 70th Anniversary] (1997 – 468 pp.). The volume debuts with two special articles – Al. Zub, *Pe marginea unui Curriculum academic: Gh. Platon* [On the Edge of an Academic Curriculum: Gh. Platon] (pp. 9-16), and Ion Toderașcu, *Un profil aniversar: profesorul Gheorghe Platon la 70 de ani* [An Anniversary Profile: Professor Gheorghe Platon at 70] (pp. 17-58).

Al. Zub (B. 1934) – “After some vicissitudes without significant consequences, Gh. Platon had completely moved to the chair, where he then trained and guided so many series of students. He enjoyed respect and quickly became a pillar of the Faculty and a major landmark in modernist studies. His scientific record already included very meticulous studies, based mainly on archive materials. He had published, year after year, since 1955, thorough contributions to the knowledge of rural life, all of indisputable interest, about boyar domains, peasant unrest and uprisings, the development of the internal market, the feudal reserve, etc.

It can be said that the first decade of activity is dominated by socio-economic restitutions and some concerns about political history, especially regarding the *Pașoptist* revolution. The second, starting around 1965, indicates insistent demographic studies, related to the population of some fairs (Huși, Bârlad, Iași), of the Moldavian city as a whole or of Dobrogea, in addition to other studies that continue the history of social movements in Moldova in the first part of the 19th Century, the revolutions of the same era (1821, 1848), the manifestations of the national cause until 1859, etc. An important monograph on *Domeniul feudal din Moldova în preajma revoluției de la 1848* [The Feudal Domain in Moldova Around the Revolution of 1848] (Iași, 1973) is also placed in the

same period, along with some studies on the development of industry, mining, the plot of Ioniță Popovici (1839), and so on. The third decade indicates an increased interest in political history, especially the 1848 revolution, which remained a constant preoccupation of the author, for the Union of the Principalities, no less frequent in the respective bibliography, then for the acquisition of independence, with all its consequences on the internal and external level. To this last event he dedicated, together with L. Boicu, a succinct synthesis (also in foreign languages), which remained a referential text for those interested in such a matter. This is also the case of the Union of the Principalities, to which the historian always returned. The fourth decade, if such a relative sectioning of a continuous and unitary activity is admitted, the decade richest in scientific manifestations, seems dominated by the concern for synthesis, be it often didactic, but always attentive to nuances and well-balanced from the angle of writing. Dense pages on the history of education, on the echoes of the French Revolution, on evolution and revolution in the development of modern Romania complete the thematic area of his rich record. Many others can be added, especially those regarding great figures of our history and historiography. They denote a constant, rigorous, methodical reflection on the facts and equally on the reflex produced by them.

The research done in the archives, but also on basis of the studies undertaken by other historians, urged Gh. Platon towards monographic restitutions, with a clear penchant for exhaustiveness. It is not abusive to identify in them a monographic spirit, otherwise dominant in the historiography of Iași.

The insistence with which he studied agrarian history proved productive in explaining issues of eminent interest. The monographic study on the feudal domain in pre-*Pașopist* Moldavia remains an example of meticulous exploration of archival material”.

Ion Toderășcu (1938-2022) – “Professor Gheorghe Platon (I mean here the man at the chair at all stages of his development) personified himself through his knowledge and exactingness. Erudite, orderly and with a beautiful speech, His Excellency ensured, from the beginning of his career, the respect of his students. His presence also helped him a lot an essential condition for a teacher. He was imposing through what he said and through the way he communicated. In the consciousness numerous series of students, Gheorghe Platon remained as a professor of great didactic-scientific authority, master of the tools of his profession, with rigorous logic and perfect clarity, preoccupied, to the point of obsession, with explaining the historical phenomenon. I still hear his leitmotif question in seminar classes or other professional meetings: ‘why ...?’ (and the question that is always present in D. Onciul’s dialogue with the students immediately comes to mind: ‘Do you have the document?’). Nothing without explanation and understanding. He was and remains to this day a devotee of this pair. Professor Gheorghe Platon imposed, in his surroundings, a note of moderate severity, which could not be denied to him. Those of us who were his students and then collaborators in the Department of Romanian History (which he headed between 1973-1985 and 1990-1991) shared it with him and

followed it. We understood that it is a condition for work done well and on time. Gheorghe Platon, the Professor, affected a lot of time and a lot warmth of soul to those who turned to his advice and guidance. Solicitudine is one of his great qualities, through which he ennobled himself with his mission. It is, as I said before, a true privilege to find yourself around a teacher of such generosity, with such scientific understanding and such love for the profession"

On the 75th Anniversary:

Volume XXXVIII/2001 [414 pp.] of the *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”* in Iași is dedicated to *Omagiu Profesorului Gheorghe Platon* [Homage to Professor Gheorghe Platon] [On His 75th Birthday], the first 23 pages, under the heading *In Honorem*, including the articles – Al. Zub, *Acad. Gheorghe Platon* (pp. 7-8), V. Cristian, *Gheorghe Platon, asistent* [Gheorghe Platon, Assistant] (pp. 9-12), Dumitru Ivănescu, *Gheorghe Platon și epoca unirii* [Gheorghe Platon and the Era of Unification] (pp. 13-16), Gheorghe Cliveti, *România modernă în relațiile internaționale: perspectiva faptului național* [Modern Romania in International Relations: The Perspective of the National Fact] (pp. 17-20), M. Cojocariu, *Pașoptismul românesc* [Romanian Pașoptism] (pp. 21-23).

Al. Zub – “The most important contributions of the historian from Iași concern the modern era in the Danube-Carpathian space, an era that he sought to define from multiple angles, from its genesis and limits to its most hidden meanings. A double dimension, social and national, is recognized in almost all his writings as a constant, to which the author understood to add so many others, complementary and relevant. The transition to modernity, the social-political turmoil at the turn of the 19th Century, the revolution of 1848, studied as a pan-Romanian phenomenon, the Union of the Principalities, the reforms, the fight for independence, external ties throughout a century and more, these are just a few lines of a large-scale project, whose convergence seems indisputable to us.

We owe the historian Gheorghe Platon one of the most solid works of a modernist attentive to the integration of modernity into the overall Romanian development, but also an exemplary pedagogical devotion, one that the Romanian world still needs so much.

Let us wish him, on this anniversary break, health and increased work, to the joy of those who still see in history a beneficial source of reflection and encouragement to self-transcendence!"

Vasile Cristian (1936-2006) – “The seminars on Modern History of Romania were the main instrument at the disposal of assistant Gh. Platon for the training of those who had then embraced the more delicate than ever profession of history. However, they were added to the leadership of the circle with the same profile, in a period in which the student scientific circles, of Eastern inspiration, aimed, in fact, to continue the good tradition of the Iași historical school from the interwar period. The circle meetings were a true spiritual delight, and the preparation of the works turned into an exercise of great rigor even if the authors were sometimes a bit

intrigued by the fact that they had to modify them 4-5 times before presenting them to the circle or sessions. The maximum seriousness impressed by the circle's supervisor proved to be particularly useful to all those who attended him and who, accepting it at the time, strove to take it over for their own activity and, at the same time, to transmit it to those whom, later, they guided in turn.

A particularly interesting moment during the period when I worked with the assistant Gh. Platon was the preparation of the Centenary of the Union of the Principalities. The official spirit of that time was, as is known, internationalist. Gradually, however, nationalist notes began to appear, the first of the most striking being linked precisely to the anniversary of January 24, 1959. The fact surprised a good deal, even though the previous year the Romanians had said goodbye, in an atmosphere of spontaneous enthusiasm, to the most striking instrument of internationalism, the Soviet troops (listening to Radio *Hora Unirii*, my father asked me to turn down the volume of 'Voice of America', the then subversive station with ideas and promises in which some still continued to believe).

To mark the event, students from the three History faculties [in Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași] were to prepare a national scientific session and a professional competition on the topic of the Union.

For the latter, a team was formed, from our year (actually, a group), being selected Gh. Buzatu, Vasile Russu, Leon Șimanschi, C. Scorpan, Aurel Grigore, the supervisor being, naturally, the assistant Gh. Platon. Since it was a competition, the preparation went down to the smallest details, with discussions of a more general nature alternating with a kind of training competition between us, with the most diverse questions (including those in which the 'computer' Gh. Platon was a master, such as: 'On which page in Riker is it mentioned about ...?'). There were a few extraordinary weeks, which I, the assistant Platon and us, could only imagine as being crowned with triumph. However, stolen by the generosity of the people of the 1859 Union, we had forgotten that we were in another '59. Assistant Gh. Platon was not considered worthy to lead our delegation to Bucharest, his place being taken by the contemporary history teacher, a Jewish-Illegalist [Janeta Benditer: 1917-1980]. Our assistant only drove us to the train station, to emphasize that, even so, he was with us, wishing us success. To this day, I cannot forget his beautiful sad smile from that time. Of otherwise the measure, with motivations that could not be in any way professional, did not have all the consequences that we could have suspected, since the competition did not take place. In addition, there was a risk that at such a competition, interventions would be made that, being oral, could not be checked in advance, so they could deviate from the typical of the time. For certain regional differences, it is perhaps interesting to remember that at the student scientific session, the only official event left (apart from the inevitable banquet), a colleague from Bucharest reproached his colleague Vasile Russu, author of the paper *Mihail Kogălniceanu și Unirea Principatelor* [Mihail Kogălniceanu and the Union of the Principalities] (prepared under the guidance of Gh. Platon), for talking too much in his paper about ... Mihai Kogălniceanu!

Memories related to the closeness to our assistant are numerous, but also diverse, as the times imposed on them. We went on a long study trip together, most of it through Transylvania, we did the then usual 'voluntary work', digging holes for trees or trenches for pipes (in the last two years before December 1989, we, now teachers, did something similar within six days of 'productive work', just like all the 'unproductive' employees, a measure that is difficult to understand, difficult to comment on. With Professor Platon now at the helm, we, those from History, had the 'work front' at the Botanical Garden, from where one evening we had a revelation-image, that of Ceahlău in the distance, an image that we believe is possible only in the descriptions of the oldest)".

"Since it is not necessary to undertake here a proper assessment of Professor Gheorghe Platon's contributions to the elucidation of many of the aspects related to the foreign relations of modern Romania, we consider it appropriate to invoke those directions where specialized research has and will have much to owe to the openings operated by the master. Because Professor Platon has the undisputed merit of reconsidering the European impact of the affirmation of the Romanian nation in its entirety and not only in the expression of small state entities, like 'pupils thrown by circumstances at the gate of Europe'. The affirmation of the Romanian nation was viewed in close connection, revealing profound interferences, with the profiling of the Europe of nation-states. The decisive impulses were given, in the sense shown, by the revolutions of 1821 and 1848; Union and Independence decisively consecrated the national principle, whose moment of triumph was to be the Great Union.

The rendering of such developments of energies incited, especially in the case of our great historians, the exalting plea, with often thesis titles, as if to inhibit the strictly reconstructive-factological, positivism approach. Great historians, including Professor Platon, were given, from the height of the overall understanding of historical developments, to carry out first-order demonstrations, to formulate exciting working hypotheses, to guide neophytes. to endorse achievements in the field of specialized research. That is, where Professor Platon's contributions have expanded the limits, re-establishing themselves, over time, as milestones".

Also (2006), posthumously:

Obituary signed by Nicolae Edroiu (1939-2018), corresponding member of the Romanian Academy:

"After the relative 'thaw' of the 1960s, the historian can aspire to the valuable recognition of the results of his scientific and didactic activities. Thanks to his performances, Gheorghe Platon climbed the steps of professional consecration in the university and academic center of Iași. His doctoral thesis, defended at the University of Cluj in 1971, with Professor Ștefan Pascu as scientific supervisor, outlined historiographical the feudal domain of Moldova in the first half of the 19th Century, drawing attention to the combination of the agricultural tradition and the conservatism of a part of the country's boyars with new methods and innovative forms of organization in the rural socio-economic landscape of the eastern parts of the Romanian area. In his

later works, the historian would demonstrate the revolutionary developments in the field of Romanian agrarian life, the economy in general, demography and culture, thus outlining the preparation of the 1848 Revolution in the Romanian Countries, to which he would dedicate countless studies of historical reconstruction and interpretation. Other research, resulting in notable results, concerned the moment of the Union of the Romanian Principalities in 1859 and the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, whose reflection in European public opinion and in Western historical documentation he followed during his research and scientific documentation internships carried out in Belgium and France. Associate Professor and then Professor at the 'A.I. Cuza' University in Iași, historian Gheorghe Platon would dedicate impressive scientific and didactic-pedagogical efforts to Romanian history education, contributing to the training of numerous researchers in the field, archivists and museographers, history teachers who filled the schools in Moldovan localities and beyond".

Respectively – Volume XLIII-XLIV/2006-2007 [822 pp.] of the *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”*, in the *In Memoriam* section – Ion Agrigoroaiei, *Gh. Platon, Profesorul nostru* [Gh. Platon, Our Professor] (pp. 805-806), Gheorghe Cliveti, [Modern History of Romanians in the Work of Gh. Platon] (pp. 807-808), Gheorghe Iacob, *Gh. Platon – schiță de portret* [Gh. Platon – Portrait Sketch] (pp. 809-810), Doina Calistru, *Liberalismul românesc în viziunea profesorului Gh. Platon* [Romanian Liberalism in the Vision of Professor Gh. Platon] (pp. 811-815), Dumitru Ivănescu, *Profesorul Gheorghe Platon, așa cum l-am cunoscut* [Professor Gheorghe Platon, as I Met Him] (pp. 816-817), Ion Toderașcu, *Gheorghe Platon – un Profesor emblematic* [Gheorghe Platon – An Emblematic Professor] (p. 818).

Ion Agrigoroaiei (1936-2021) – “He was demanding himself and demanding, in a university manner, of his students and colleagues, considering that we have not only rights, but also duties and obligations, a mission to fulfill in the University and Society. Everyone who knew him was impressed by the way he organized his work, in a daily schedule that was strictly observed for many years. The isolation in the ‘separate room’ behind the glasvand (he also received me there, in January 2000, at 8 am, when I presented my Doctoral thesis to him, in his capacity as a member of the Doctoral Commission; I had not met him personally until then – I called him on the phone –, but he accepted to be one of the members of the Commission after going through the thesis, defended later, in May – our note) was only an appearance, being always happy to have a discussion on professional topics, to offer a consultation, to share his views on the issues facing the Faculty or the University etc.

He was of a generosity rarely seen in the academic world, guiding with competence and dedication generations and generations of students, young graduates, teachers and researchers in the process of their scientific and didactic development. The list of those who defended their doctoral thesis under the scientific guidance of the Professor and Academician is edifying for the remarkable results obtained by some young people, reaching the high steps of performance.

He maintained a permanent connection with the graduates of our Faculty and was welcomed with joy in the numerous meetings he had with History teachers from different counties, as such meetings caused him immense satisfaction. He was interested in the achievements of our graduates, participated in the meetings organized by different promotions, I felt him vibrating at their satisfactions and embittered at the difficulties they faced in practicing the profession.

He constantly insisted on creating a climate conducive to the fulfillment of our personality and played a decisive role in the smooth running of the Department and the Faculty, an authority with a hard word to say, which decision-makers took account or should have taken account. He was involved, at the end of 1989 and the beginning of 1990, in redefining the University's statute, contributing substantially to its new organization and promotion of true values. It is regrettable that a man of such moral and professional integrity was not elected dean of our Faculty, in the first 'free' elections held at the beginning of 1990".

Gheorghe Cliveti (B. 1952, Corresponding member, since 2022, of the Romanian Academy) – "Impressive, downright exemplary, appears, in an overall assessment of the Professor's work, the assiduous journey from special studies to syntheses. A journey that, of course, was marked by circumstances, by changes in times and people, times that were some for the primary school, middle school and high school student, others for the student, others for the assistant, lecturer, associate professor, professor, others for the academician Professor Gheorghe Platon. During the years of his 'scientific apprenticeship', carried out in a 'team' coordinated by Dimitrie Berlescu, he studied aspects of social history, regarding the state of the peasantry and the landowner reserve from the 'era of the Organic Regulation'. He was also concerned with aspects of historical demography, with reference to the fairs and cities of Moldova in the first half of the 19th Century. In almost all his studies from 1955 to 1965, he used 'statistical methods', 'quantitative history', with data built directly from archival sources and not taken 'ready-made' from other publications.

He was thus able to assert his special qualities as a researcher, avoiding major themes, which in the aforementioned years were suffocated by Marxist-Leninist thesism. The first major theme, the 1848 revolution in Moldova, he had the chance to attack within the parameters of the Doctoral program. It was the chance to encounter the scientific research of Ștefan Pascu and especially those of David Prodan, in Cluj, where the modern era of Romanian history was no longer considered so much as the 'era of the formation and consolidation of capitalism', as the era of the formation and affirmation of the nation. The encounter with the 'Cluj school' was happily completed with another, namely, with the works of the French professor Jacques Godechot. An encounter to which he owed the prospect of integrating the phenomenology of Romanian modernity into a Euro-Atlantic horizon. The result was to be the book *Geneza revoluției române de la 1848* [The Genesis of the Romanian Revolution of 1848], one of the prestigious monographs of the 'Iași school of history'. The theme of the revolution implied returns or contents on aspects

of social history, historical demography, but also the temptation of other major themes: the Union of the Principalities, Independence, the preludes to the Great Union. The highest goal of the Professor's scientific activity became the synthesis of modern Romanian history, with notable achievements, from the 1985 university textbook to volume VII of the recent Academy treatise, all following a sustained 'historiographic construction site work', also attested by the five volumes of studies at the 'Al.I. Cuza' University Publishing House.

The temptation of synthesis was aroused by an almost complete fusion of research and teaching activity. At courses and seminars, the Professor also attended lectures, with forays into "routes of details". He never hid his conviction that his great vocation was that of Professor. He became well known, in the country and abroad, as a man of the Chair. I was his student, doctoral student and assistant. I was able to know firsthand the demands to which he subjected his 'apprentices' on the historiographic construction site of the modern era. He wanted, at the 1999 symposium dedicated to the Union of the Principalities and held in the 'A.D. Xenopol' Amphitheater of the University, to announce his successors in the Modern History of Romanians course. And only a few years later, on a day of January 24, the Professor left among those who were his colleagues or disciples, accompanying him, on his last worldly journey, with deep pain, but also with the warm thought that he was given to be forever happy through what he knew and loved himself, through what, above all, he made others know and love, through the rare gift of scrutinizing, from the height of everything he had accomplished, Boundlessness, and of justifying, from the same height, Unforgetting".

It is also worth mentioning, in this series of recollections and portrayals of Professor Gh. Platon, the appreciations of a former student Stefan Lemny (B. 1952, settled in Paris in 1990, being, from the following year, at the National Library responsible for the history collections for Central and Eastern Europe, who attests, remembering, in 2020 – "As a researcher at the 'A.D. Xenopol' Institute of History [in Iași], with the 18th Century as my field of exploration, I met Professor Platon again in another way than through his master class. How could I have attempted to study this interval between the long Romanian Middle Ages and the modern era without his perspective-opening analyses? Apart from rigorous studies on the genesis of Romanian capitalism – such as *Domeniul feudal din Moldova în preajma revoluției de la 1848* [The Feudal Domain of Moldova on the Occasion of the 1848 Revolution], Iași, 1973 – his book on *Geneza revoluției române de la 1848* [the Genesis of the Romanian Revolution of 1848], published by Junimea in 1980, was a true *Introducere în istorie modernă a României* [Introduction to the Modern History of Romania], as stated in the second part of the title. It was not a synthesis, but a way of thinking about the historical process in question, in the spirit of a total history, as proposed by the School of Annals. His vision was influenced no less by another prominent historian,

less incorporated into the Annals, but just as revolutionary in his time: Jacques Godechot, known for his Atlanticist conception of the French Revolution”.

Following in his footsteps, the historian from Iași shed light on the ‘structural’ revolutions – demographic, agrarian, industrial – that preceded and generated the Revolution of 1848. But he took a step further. And what a step! He was at the antithesis of the French historian’s conception for whom, once the Elbe had been crossed, the revolutionary spirit did not advance towards the East. Moreover, Romanian specificities allowed him to shed light on yet another phenomenon that accompanied the structural transformations of the Carpatho-Danubian space: the ideological revolution!

Those who followed Professor Gheorghe Platon’s courses abandoned, under his influence, the concept of the ‘Romanian revolutions of 1848’ that continued to be used in the 1970s, in favor of the ‘Romanian revolution’. Reading this book opened up new horizons. As for me, I found here a source of reflection for understanding the themes that concerned me at the time: the genesis of national consciousness and patriotism. Even more remarkable, his analysis was highlighted by images that are not common in the writing of history, such as when the author metaphorically evokes the spiritual unity of Romanian society, ‘a stage in which, under the watchful eyes of the same director, the scenes and major acts of the same play unfold separately’.

I understood better the ‘human dimension of the historian’ Gheorghe Platon: his gentleness, contrary to the impression produced by the emotion of some exams, his modesty, discretion, generosity, and, above all, his enormous cultural passion, punctuated by his ritual presence at the concerts of the Iași Philharmonic”.

And – at the end of these brief connotations – let us mention that, recently, a well-known cultural magazine from Bacău, *Ateneu*, dedicated a page to Professor Gheorghe Platon, in its February issue, under the signature of Cornel Simion Galben, under the title *Centenar Gheorghe Platon*, from which we reproduce a few sentences from this comprehensive synthesis: “His impressive scientific activity carried out for more than half a century includes, in addition to the textbooks, monographs and collections of documents mentioned, more than 300 titles, to which are added over 250 reviews and articles inserted in the pages of publications that are not only scientific, such as *Academica*, *Analele Bucovinei* (where he also appeared on the editorial team since the first issue, in which he signed the program article entitled *Argument*), *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie ‘A.D. Xenopol’*, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie* (Cluj-Napoca), *Arhiva genealogică*, *Arhivele Olteniei*, *Ateneu*, *Carpica*, *Cercetări istorice*, *Contemporanul*, *Contrapunct*, *Cronica*, *Destin românesc*, *Glasul Bucovinei*, *În linie dreaptă*, *Nouvelles Études d’Histoire*, *Revista de istorie*, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européenes*, *România literară*, *Southeastern Europe*, *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, *Transylvanian Review*, etc. His prodigious academic career continued after 1996, when he retired, working as a consulting professor and completing his work, which over time has seen numerous successes, rewarded with the Second Prize of the Ministry of Education and Training for scientific activity (1968) and the ‘N. Bălcescu’

Prize of the Romanian Academy (1975), with the titles of ‘outstanding Professor’ (1984) and ‘Emeritus Professor’ (1998), of doctor honoris causa of the University of Angers (France, 1998), of the University of Craiova (1999) and of the University of Suceava (2002), of Honorary Citizen of the cities of Bârlad and Buhuși and of the commune of Bălțătești (Neamț). He was also awarded the Order of Labor, 3rd class and the *Ordinul Pentru Merit* [Order ‘For Merit’], in the rank of Knight, and his colleagues elected him, in 1989, a member of the Senate of the ‘Al.I. Cuza’ University.

The culmination of all his work was marked by his acceptance as a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy (1990-1993) and then, as a full member (1993-2006), in the period 1990-2000 also fulfilling the function of secretary of the Iași branch of the Romanian Academy. Within the high academic forum, he was also president of the Romanian part of the Commission of Romanian and Polish Historians, which functioned within the History and Archaeology Section of the Romanian Academy, and since October 2000 he has also been among the members of the Commission for the Attestation of Diplomas and University Titles under the Ministry of Education and of the National Council for Academic Accreditation and Attestation. Member of the National Council of Historians of Romania, of the Society of Historical Sciences and of the Commission for the History of International Relations in Milan, founding member of the ‘Nicolae Titulescu’, ‘Nicolae Iorga’ and ‘A.D. Xenopol’ Foundations, he always responded generously to invitations addressed by the institutional forums of Bacău, acting as a member of the ‘Renașterea’ Cultural Association in Buhuși and supporting, as a teacher, the evolution of hundreds of history teachers from Bacău County. Considered by them the patriarch of the Union, he passed away on the very day that was so dear to him, leaving posterity a work that deserves to be deepened and valued on a national scale”.

Professor Gheorghe Platon ennobled Romanian Historiography and constituted – as collaborators and disciples have revealed and as mentioned in this memorial – an unmistakable landmark of it. His books, the research directions and elaborate syntheses, his exemplary professionalism, his ethical and human conduct stand testimony also at this Centenary.

