

OBSERVATIONS ON SEVERAL PRINTS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF OLTENIA*

DUMITRESCU Radu Gabriel

Abstract. *This study presents a number of seven engravings which are chronologically ranging between 1848 and 1879. From the seven engravings presented, three stand out, and one of them is represented by the opera of Carol Popp of Szathmari, an artist who has been extremely active in the second half of the 19th century, another by the Theodor Aman's engraving which portrays Tudor Vladimirescu. The scene of killing Michael the Brave at Turda, work (fragmentary) drawn on the lithographic stone by Szathmari in 1858, is an interpretation of the engraving published in Le Grand Théâtre Historique, Leyda, 1703. It could be reconstructed on the basis of disparate information and by linking with a range of data found in the inventory register of the Museum of Oltenia.*

To conclude, the article seeks to highlight the existence of large amounts of the national cultural heritage, preserved at the Museum of Oltenia, and also to bring some corrections to the interpretation and dating.

Keywords: *Museum of Oltenia, lithography, comparative study.*

The Museum of Oltenia has in its possession a valuable collection of engravings which mainly includes figures of Romanian rulers and foreign sovereigns. A great part of stamps presented have belonged to the "Alexander and Aristia Aman" Foundation from Craiova¹, and they appeared exposed in the first public museum of Craiova city, which functioned between 1908 - 1950².

The order of presentation of the prints is made, as possible as it can be, depending on the date of their creation.

The first stamp that we would talk about is the one representing Gheorghe Magheru, in Petre Mateescu's vision, artist whose life and activity, less known, are recomposing mostly from his correspondence with Eforia Schools in Bucharest and with the great people of that time.

In 1848, the artist joined the young revolutionaries group. From this year dates the lithography representing *General Gheorghe Magheru*³, lithographed in colors⁴, edited and broadcasted in Craiova city by Ralian and Ignat Samitca⁵. The black and white version of this portrait, which officially represents a military authority, is printed in Viena, in the lithographical workshop of Johann Hofelich⁶.

Just like Joseph Kriehuber, who Petre Mateescu admired, the Romanian artist has signed his lithographs autographed, with the pencil on lithographical stone, detaching his signature with a fine and imaginative ellipsoidal feature⁷.

The lithography representing *Barbu Dimitrie Stirbei*⁸ in an uniform, representing the General Of The Romanian Country, 1843 model⁹, is realized at the Lemerrier printing shop from Paris, and has as a model the drawing "d'après nature" made by Carol Popp of Szathmari in 1851 year, as it is explained by the note below the picture.

As a painter and portraitist, Szathmari perpetuated the official vision of the austriac and german portrait, many of his drawings being printed in Paris, at Joseph Lemerrier's workshop (1803-1887).

Beside the portrait printed at Lemerrier's workshop (which is being found in the collection of stamps, property of Oltenia Museum), the lithography which portrays *Barbu Dimitrie Stirbei* has been resumed in a new edition by Szathmari in 1852¹⁰ year in Andreas Bielz's and Karl Danielis's workshops from Bucharest¹¹.

The lithography in colors, named *Stefan the Great and Ms. Voichita*¹² is Alexandru Asachi's (1820-1876) opera, the son of Gheorghe Asachi (1788-1869). This paper appears in *Moldova's historic and picturesque album* made between the years 1854-1855¹³. The prince, with a beard, is caught in the same hieratical picture, reserved for rulers,

*This work was partially supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/88/1.5/S/49516, Project ID 49516 (2009), co-financed by the European Social Fund – Investing in People, within the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013.

¹ Details about Foundation see at BRAUN *et al.* 2003; RĂDULESCU & DUMITRESCU 2008, 326-352.

² RĂDULESCU 2002, 89.

³ PENTELEICIUC & KISS-GRIGORESCU 1974, catalogue no. 1192.

⁴ PUNGĂ 2009, 107.

⁵ Editing and dissemination of the lithographs will be probably after 1886 when Ralian Samitca will join his brother laying the foundations of the Industrial Grafic Arts Establishment "Ralian and Ignat Samitca", see ANDREI *et al.* 1998, 29; PĂRNUȚĂ & ANDREI 1994, 226.

⁶ PUNGĂ 2009, 107.

⁷ PUNGĂ 2009, 108.

⁸ PENTELEICIUC *et al.* 1975, catalogue no. 2031.

⁹ VLĂDESCU 1977, 21.

¹⁰ Nicolae Iorga states the fact that this lithography appears in 1853, see IORGA 1927, 31 and illustration no. 13.

¹¹ PUNGĂ 2009, 117 and catalogue no. 318.

¹² PENTELEICIUC & KISS-GRIGORESCU 1974, catalogue no. 242.

¹³ PUNGĂ 2009, 82.

holding in one hand the scepter and in the other hand the sword handle. The madam is represented in a less rigid position, sketching a motion outlined by the game of the cape folds whose edge is holding in her hand¹⁴.

For identifying different circulations reporting of details is useful on the layout of the inscriptions. Placed under the frame and written in French and Romanian, the titles are separated by a two-way arrow in 1854, or a vertical bar in 1855. Partly varnished, lithographs have been numbered, but there are copies without a number (as the copy we have presented)¹⁵.

The next lithograph presents fragmentary, causing some difficulties in its identifying and classifying. Based on disparate information¹⁶ we could deduce and ultimately determine¹⁷ its membership to Carol Popp de Szathmari's opera. The work was drawn on lithographic stone by Szathmari in 1858¹⁸ and edited by Dimitrie Pappasoglu¹⁹ with librarians Rusou and Petri from Bucharest in the Lithographic Establishment of Gustav Wonneberg. The lithograph represents an interpretation after the engraving appeared in *Le Grande Théâtre Historique*, Leyda, 1703²⁰.

*Stefan the Great at 1504 year*²¹ is a lithography realized in the lithographic Establishment named Sander&Comp²² from Bucharest, Dimitrie Pappasoglu starring as editor. The drawing on the lithographic stone can be attributed to Carol Popp de Szathmari²³, the printing produced before the year 1867, when the lithographic Establishment Sander&Comp has been taken over by the graphic Establishment of Ioan V. Sococ²⁴. Also, we can advance the idea that Szathmari inspired in realizing this portrait from the Joseph Muller's lithograph realized in the Tipolitografic Workshop of the Bee from Iași county in 1834 year²⁵.

The author of the lithography entitled *Michael the Brave and the executioner*²⁶ is Hipolit Henryk Napoleon Dembitzky, Polish artist refugee in Romania.

More than a decade, between 1870-1881 years, Dembitzky has illustrated some of the most known Bucharest publications, *The calendar for all*, *The calendar for all Romanians*, *The calendar of the Romanian people*, *The calendar for the Romanians*, with stamps, which were printed in lithographic workshops from Bucharest which belong to A. Böhme, Gustav Wonneberg and H. C. Wharta, in Wien, at the L. C. Zamarski's workshop, or at Dresda, at Adolf Wolf²⁷.

The copy presented by us, is being found as hors-texts in *The calendar for all* in the 1872 year²⁸, which is revealed, moreover, by the inscription from the downside of the lithography. The paper reprints in a romantic vision, a cohesive popular legend regarding the moment when, in spring of 1593, Mihai, the great ruler of Craiova city, had been convicted to death by Alexander the Mean, who was the ruler of the Romanian Country, for his royal background and for the fact that he openly manifests against abuses through his actions. According to the legend, the executioner dropped the axe and did not execute the command, fact which determined the people which were there to ask, according to country tradition his forgiveness, and the ruler was forced to submit to the popular will. The lithography was meant to encourage contemporaries in the struggle for independence and national unity, through the power given by the courage and dignity of a legendary character²⁹.

Appreciated in painting, because "it puts the history in action, it preserves for the country, the portraits of great men who have devoted themselves to the country, it gives to the writings body and colour, and decorates them with the inspiration of the fantasy", the historical scene being present also in Theodor Aman's engraving³⁰. Having the same educational role as painting, amplified by the possibility of spreading the image in a large number of copies, the engraving with a historical subject of Theodor Aman, confirms the belief of the artist, included in the statement addressed to the Chamber of Deputies in 1861: "... all the reformed societies, have understood that one of the main fundamentals of moral forwarding are the beautiful arts, and that they are not only necessary but essential to contribute to the development of moral faculties and at heightening feelings of glory, and patriotism"³¹.

¹⁴ IONESCU 1990, 236.

¹⁵ PUNGĂ 2009, 82.

¹⁶ RĂDULESCU 2002, 91; PUNGĂ 2009, 132, footnote 129; PENTELEICIUC *et al.* 1975, catalogue. no. 2039.

¹⁷ We finally found the missing fragment of the lithography which had previously been wrongly associated with the portrait of Michael the Brave, done by Dominicus Custos. This snippet is found in the print collection of the Museum of Oltenia with the inventory number I 30998/2.

¹⁸ PUNGĂ 2009, 117.

¹⁹ About the engravings editor activity of Dimitri Pappasoglu see STRUJAN & CĂZĂNIȘTEANU 1972, 107-115.

²⁰ ȘTEFĂNESCU & MUREȘANU 2001, 638.

²¹ PENTELEICIUC & KISS-GRIGORESCU 1974, catalogue no. 15.

²² For the activity of this Establishment see PUNGĂ 2009, 125.

²³ STRUJAN & CĂZĂNIȘTEANU 1972, 110.

²⁴ PUNGĂ 2009, 300.

²⁵ NICULESCU 1955, 88-90.

²⁶ PUNGĂ 2009, catalogue no. 125, illustration no. 358.

²⁷ PUNGĂ 2009, 120.

²⁸ RĂDUICĂ & RĂDUICĂ 1981, 463, no. 1254.

²⁹ RĂDULESCU 2002, 89.

³⁰ About the work of Theodor Aman see BOGDAN 1955, 69-78.

³¹ PUNGĂ 2009, 147.

Theodor Aman has practiced the interpretation engraving, especially for transposing his paintings. In the series of engravings which multiplies Aman's painted opera, we can observe the last engraving presented, *The Bust of Tudor Vladimirescu*³². This is an engraving with a watermark and pin made in 1879 on striped paper, with A. Porcabeuf filigree³³, which can be classified in the final stage of work of the graphic artist from Craiova³⁴.

To conclude, the synthetic presentation of the seven engravings is meant to emphasize the existence of large amounts of national cultural heritage, which are preserved at the Museum of Oltenia from Craiova city and also to clarify and establish problems about dating and interpretation.

CATALOGUE

1. *General Gheorghe Magheru*, Craiova, 1848.

Artist: Petre Mateescu.

Inscription: **GHEORGHE MAGHIERU/ Membru al Guvernului provisoriu/ General al Armii neregulate și Inspector al Gardiilor Nationale din Romania./ 1848.**

In framework, on the bottom, in the left side: **CRAIOVA, RALIAN ȘI IGNAT SAMITCA.**

In framework, on the bottom, in the right side, author's signature and date of completion of portrait: **P. Mateescu 848.**

The band arranged diagonally from shoulder to hip is posted: **LIBE / DREP/ FRĂȚ.**

D = 49 x 37 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 50230.

2. *Barbu Dimitrie Stirbei*, Paris, 1851.

Artist: Carol Popp de Szathmari.

Lithographic workshop: Printing „Joseph Lemercier”.

Inscription: **Barbu Demetrie Stirbei/ Domn stăpânitor al țerii Românești.**

Between portrait and the inscription, in the left side: **Dessine d'apres nature par CH. P. SZATHMARI. 185[1].**

In the right side: **Imp. Lemercier [r.] de Seine, 57. À Pari[s].**

D = 54,5 x 41,5 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 419/1.

3. *Stefan the Great and Ms. Voichita*, Iași, 1854.

Lithographer: Alexandru Asachi.

The Tipolitographic Workshop of the Bee.

Inscription: **STEFAN CEL MARE // ETIENNE LE GRAND ↑ DÓMNA VOICHITA ↓ PRINCESSE VOICHITZA./ După originalu din Monastiroa Putna 1458. D'après l'original du Monastère Putna.**

Between the portrait and the inscription, in the left side: **[A] ASAKI.**

D = 32 x 24 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 451.

4. *Fragment The scene of Michael the Brave's murder from Turda*, Bucharest, 1858.

Artist: Carol Popp de Szathmari.

The Lithographic Establishment of Gustav Wonneberg.

Publishers: Dimitrie Pappasoglu, Rusou and Petri.

D = 22 x 30 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 12017.

5. *Fragment The scene of Michael the Brave's murder from Turda*, Bucharest, 1858.

Artist: Carol Popp de Szathmari.

The Lithographic Establishment of Gustav Wonneberg.

Publishers: Dimitrie Pappasoglu, Rusou and Petri.

At the top the legend, separated from the image Metropolitan Eftimie: **DEDIKAT OЩІ-РЕІ РУМЪНЕЩІ.**

In the upper left corner, the inscription: **Банѣ Мѣхалѣа.**

In the upper right corner, the inscription: **Банѣ Манта.**

In the lower left corner, the legend: **Snat: Byzsky.**

In the lower right corner, the legend: [...] **Фъркаш.**

In the left side, on a shield, the legend: **КЪЛУГЪРЕНІ/ 1595.**

In the right side, on a shield, the legend: **TOPDA/ 1601.**

In the down-central part: **LA SF. MЪNЪSTIPE DEALŲ.**

³² BOGDAN 1955, catalogue no. 153; PENTELEICIUC & KISS-GRIGORESCU 1974, catalogue no. 145; PUNGĂ 2009, 149.

³³ PUNGĂ 2009, 249, catalogue no. 516.

³⁴ PUNGĂ 2009, 170, footnote 59.

In the down-left part: **Editori Mr. Popazoglă și Rusou & Petriu.**

In the down-central part the name of the author of the lithography: **Ch. P. de Szathmari lith.**

In the down-right part: **Stabilim. Litogr. G. Wonneberg. Bukarest.**

D = 40,5 x 46 cm. D interior = 23,6 x 30,5 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 30998/2.

6. *Stefan the Great at 1504 year*, Bucharest, before 1867.

Artist: Carol Popp de Szathmari.

The Lithographic Establishment Sander&Comp.

Editor: Dimitrie Pappasoglu.

Inscription: **STEFAN CEL MARE - AL MOLDAVIÎ/ la anul 1504.** The legend is separated by a crowned eagle holding a cross in its peak and two swords in its claws. On its chest there is a bull with a star between his horns.

Under the portrait, on the left: **Editor Maior D: Pappasoglu.**

Under the portrait, on the right: **Etab. Lith. Sander&Comp.**

D = 51 x 38 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 461.

7. *Michael the Brave and the Executioner*, Bucharest, 1872.

Lithographer: Hipolit Henryk Napoleon Dembitzky.

Lithographic workshop Honoriu C. Wartha.

Inscription: **MIHAIŢ BRAVULŢ ŞI CALĂULŢ.**

Between framework and the legend, on the left: **Librariu Editoru H. C. Wartha.**

In the framework on the right-lower part, the signature of the lithographer: **HDEMBITZKI.**

In the down-central part: **Premiu la Calendarul pentru Toţi pe anul 1872.**

D = 51 x 33 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 48721.

8. *Tudor Vladimirescu's bust*, Bucharest, 1879.

Engraver: Theodor Aman.

Under the portrait on the left side: **Th. Aman 1879.**

D = 19 x 13 cm.

Collection of Engravings, inventory number: I 102.

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Fig. 1. General Gheorghe Magheru.



Fig. 2. Barbu Dimitrie Stirbei.



Fig. 3. Stefan the Great and Ms. Voichita.



Fig. 4. The scene of Michael the Brave' s murder from Turda.

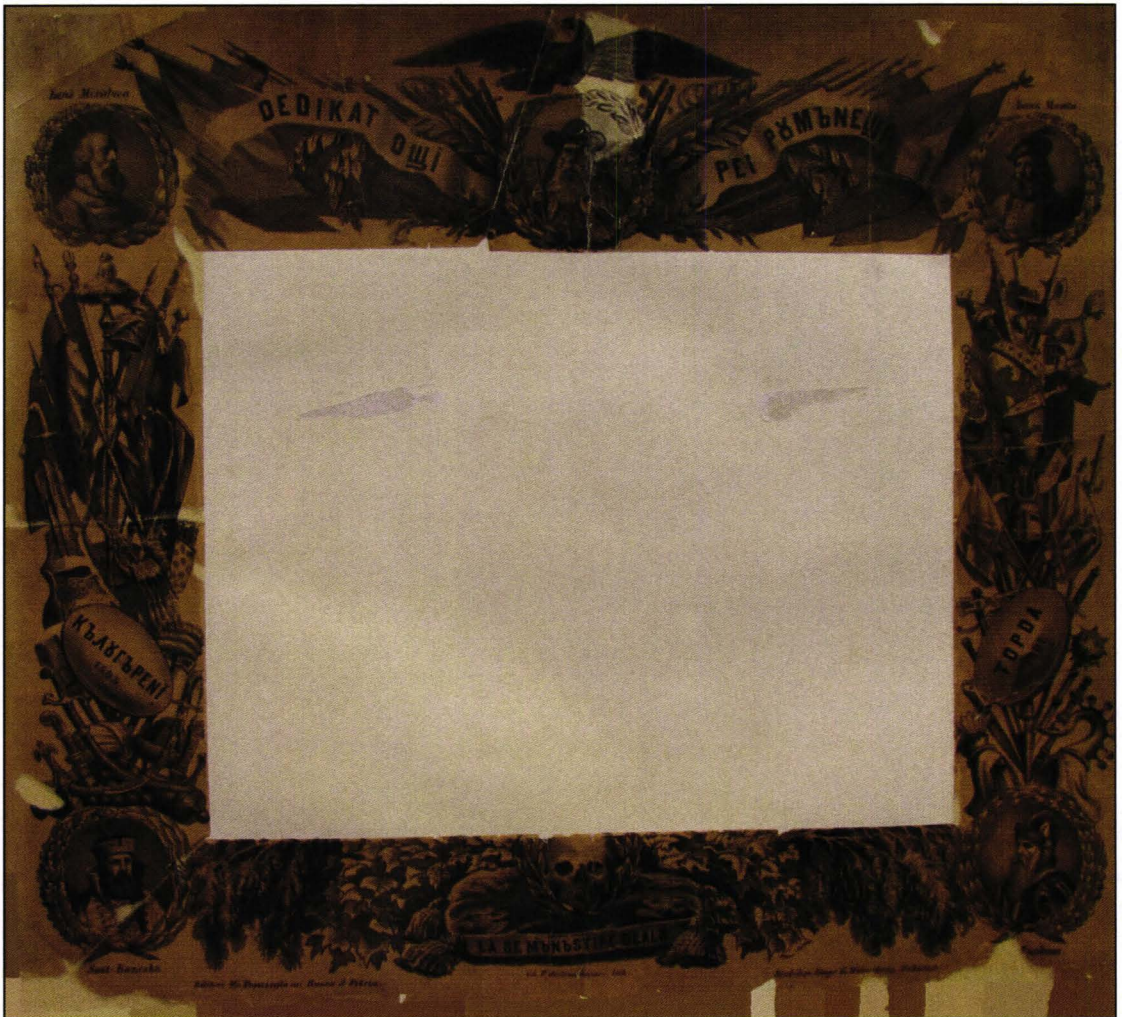


Fig. 5. The scene of Michael the Brave' s murder from Turda.



Fig. 6. Stefan the Great at 1504 year.

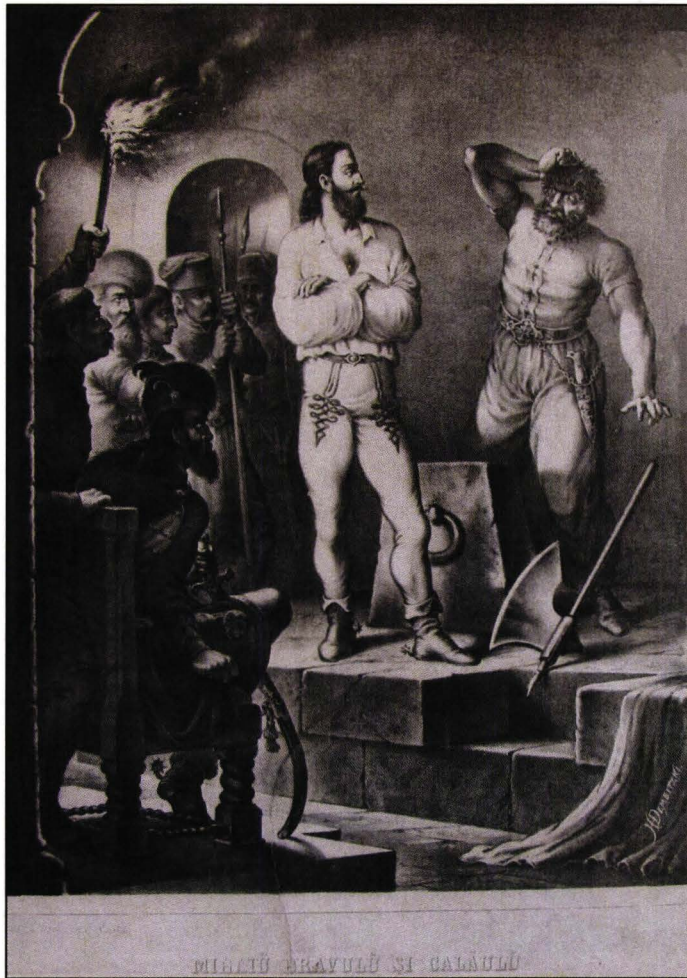


Fig. 7. Michael the Brave and the Executioner.



Fig. 8. Tudor Vladimirescu's bust.