

aux fonds que leurs producteurs ont créés. Normalement, quand les archives de ces ministères seront versés à terme aux Archives Nationales, ces dossiers devront être re-classés à leur place d'origine. Les principes archivistiques roumains et internationaux sont violés. C'est un mauvais exemple d' "attention" que les institutions de l'Etat nous accordent!

Je souhaite à nos invités de l'étranger et à nos collègues des archives départementales qui participent à la célébration de 175 ans de l'institution moderne des Archives de l'Etat, devenue depuis 1996 les Archives Nationales de Roumanie, santé et bonne continuation dans leur activité!

## **Few Observations on the National Archives of Romania in Relation to the Requirements of the Post-communist Romanian Society**

**TUDOR RĂȚOI**

Deputy Director General of The National Archives of Romania

Soon to celebrate their bicentennial, the National Archives of Romania have had since the beginning of their existence a dimension directly related to the evolution of society, as they were meant to manage, protect and ensure specific conditions for valorizing the records kept in the Romanian Archival Heritage.

It is to underline that founded as an expression of the need of modernization in a very important sector of Romanian society, which was emphasized in the Organic Regulations implemented in the two Romanian Principalities during 1831-1832; the Archives themselves became subsequently a means of modernization.

Certainly, this paradox emanates from the universal condition of the Archives, an institution whose role *par excellence* is to conserve, hence its conservative nature from a structural point of view.

Consequently, especially in the public perception, one question could be raised: *how can such an institution participate in the modernization and evolution of society?*

We could easily notice that this suspicion is justified in semblance, because in fact the Archives have always had a dimension related to the needs of society as it evolved in time, and this dimension was an important one.

If we only were to mention the relation which is frequently established between the Archives and their solicitors, natural persons and corporate bodies in all their diversity, it would be enough to demonstrate the veracity of our statement.

Archival documents are kept and preserved not for a purpose *per se*, not for preferential use by the alleged initiated, but in order to serve as vivid values for all those who wish to enjoy their beauties and mysteries.



To the same effect, nothing is more eloquent than what the National Archives represented and represent for the Romanian post-Communist society.

From this point of view, before any judgment on the place and role of this institution within society, it is worthy of note how the National Archives responded in a fair manner to the requirements

generated by the deep changes taking place in Romania during the past 15 years.

Promoting and implementing a vast reparation legislation meant to rehabilitate a great number of people who had to bear one way or another with the Communist regime, the Archives were called to identify and make available for them the testifying proves.

For over 15 years the National Archives entered hundreds of thousands if not millions of claims addressed by those citizens entitled to such a gesture, the majority of them receiving total or partial positive responses; this tendency is still far from roaching a downward trend.

This is why we believe it is not mere exaggeration to say that taking part in the process of private property restoration; the National Archives of Romania contributed and contribute to the structural re-configuration of the current and future Romanian society, but also in giving it impetus for development and a healthy democratic functioning.

At the same time and in the same direction of reconstruction and social structural change concurred all the answers given by the Archives to the more insistent and pressing requests made by a great part of the scientific research, interested in *the recent history*, by this understanding at first the history of the half of century of Communist regime in Romania. Giving access under law

provisions to the majority of records created during this regime, with their complexity, which at times transcends the objectives of scientific research, the Romanian Archives took part and take part in presenting the authentic history of this country in the above mentioned period, and by doing this, in the process of assuming the past, as it is currently called, and of moral drainage of the post-Communist Romanian society.

It is almost futile to say that after 1990 this position of the Romanian Archives and not only theirs facing the volume, the novelty and imperativeness of requests/claims coming from different directions forced the institution to reorganize its overall activity and also that of public relations in regard to the dynamics and nature of requirements and to the main categories of public interested in obtaining documents.

In this context, we shall not insist on the fact that the entire effort had to be carried out with limited staff and logistic resources, according to the well-known principle: *the Archives – increased responsibilities, limited resources*.

If at times the archivists were dissatisfied with their own condition or expressed their discontent towards the deficiencies of their institution, obviously this fact had little response if not any in the extra-archival environment. It was therefore considered to be useful that the Archives should be summoned to participate in the process of institutional modernization of society, which had to be carried out not only in relation to the future, but also to the past, in the spirit of a definition given to the Archives by one of their first directors, Gh.Asachi who rightfully believed that the Archives were *a public wealth, serving as foundation stone for the legislators and history of the country*.

Taking this into consideration, after 1990, a series of initiatives promoted at central and especially local level in different sectors of the administration or other fields of the Romanian society contributed to the institutional reorganization of the State and society, after having thoroughly studied the old laws and documents related, since it is known that a solid codification should be equally based on the novel spirit and tradition.

However, the current Romanian society implies responsibilities for the Archives in the relation they have with the record creators. Such responsibilities have existed before. Still, in the future they should be exercised in the context of the increasing diversity of creators in relation to the nature of property, the democratic substance of society, the diversification of the categories of records etc. Such realities entail for the National Archives a massive effort of modernization, adjustment and integration within the course which the entire society is taking.

We must admit that we are not familiar with some of these requirements, that others take us by surprise and unprepared, for others we simply have no

resources so as to implement them, while others require new attitudes and mentalities etc.

All of them must be solved sooner or later since the identification of the place and the identity of the Archives within nowadays Romanian society depends on this exigency.

And although no one knows how the future Archives will look, we must feel confident in the stability and durability of this institution.

## **Continuité et réforme dans l'archivistique roumaine contemporaine**

**IOAN LĂCĂTUȘU**

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L'institution des Archives Nationales, avec son vénérable âge – 175 – a généré en même temps des concepts et des pratiques constituant l'école archivistique roumaine, qui est le résultat de l'expérience de dizaines des générations d'archivistes, et une culture institutionnelle distincte, avec ses spécificités. A cet anniversaire, les Archives Nationales de Roumanie se présentent comme une institution ayant une riche tradition digne de respect non seulement dans notre pays, mais aussi au niveau de la communauté archivistique européenne<sup>1</sup>.

Au seuil de l'entrée de la Roumanie dans l'Union Européenne, j'envisage deux priorités que les Archives Nationales doivent affronter: la réalisation d'une synthèse de la théorie et de la pratique archivistique roumaine et la mise en accord, l'harmonisation avec la législation et la pratique archivistiques qui existent déjà au niveau européen.

Dans ce contexte, un grand défi de l'archivistique roumaine est celui de la re-évaluation et revalorisation de la pratique autochtone en rédigeant un nouveau traité ou manuel d'archivistique roumaine ayant une signification comparable avec la parution du fameux livre du professeur Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu en 1971<sup>2</sup>.

Une grande partie de l'expérience accumulée par les archivistes roumains au fil du temps est inscrite dans les publications des Archives Nationales. En vue

<sup>1</sup> Corneliu-Mihail Lungu, *Instituția Arhivelor Naționale la 175 de ani*, dans „Revista Arhivelor” no. 2/2006, Bucarest, p. 9-15.

<sup>2</sup> Adriana-Florica Muntean, *Manualul arhivistic între tradiție și actualitate*, dans „Buletinul de Informare și Documentare Arhivistică”, 2005, Bucarest, p. 9.