

BOOK REVIEW**THE GREEK PRESENCE IN MEHEDINTI**

(AUTHORS: PAULA SCALCĂU and TUDOR RĂȚOI)

Sofia Elena COLESCA

Research Centre in Public Administration and Public Services, Academy of Economic Studies
Calea Serban Voda, 22-24, Bucharest, Romania
sofiac@man.ase.ro

A new monograph regarding the role of the Greek element in the Romanian society has been recently published by the Greek Union of Romania. Its authors are two well-known historians from Turnu Severin: Paula Scalcau and Tudor Ratoi.

The 328 pages study traces the Greek presence in the Mehedinti area, from the first Rhodos amphorae and Macedonian coins discovered in this region and the first Greeks who followed emperor Traian in Dacia to the Greek Community which exists today. Although it hasn't been long since the publication of Paula Scalcau's volume "From Papingo to Turnu Severin", which deals with the people from Epirus who settled in the town on the Danube, the subject was far from being exhausted. More research followed not only on the Greeks from Severin but on those from the entire Mehedinti area and not only on the people who came from Epirus but from the entire Greek world: from Macedonia, from the islands or from Asia Minor. The



cooperation between the authors, who both graduated the “Al. I. Cuza” University in Iasi, began a decade ago with the birth of the idea to start a rigorous research on the history of the communities.

Here are the main chapters of the monograph: Brief Historical Events of the Greek Presence in the Area; The Trades of the Greeks in Mehedinti (merchants, land agents, innkeepers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, writers); The Origins; The Social, Cultural and Philantropical Work of the Greek Community; Nationalizations and Expropriations; Philhellenism in Severin; The Greek Book in the Severin Libraries and Archives. The monograph is completed by the documents in the annexes and the 26 genealogies of the most important families, a summary in Greek and the name index. The volume also contains 248 illustrations, documents and family photographs. Most of them come from private collections in Severin, but also from Craiova, Lugoj, Bucuresti, Targu Mures, Athens, Papingo, Vlasti, Thessaloniki.

The preface, written by the historian Georgeta Filitti, is entitled “*A Timeless History*”, because the volume „*breaks the pattern of those who quietly do research on the past and interpret the information and the two authors constantly connect the past documents to the life of the community. They went even further and established a moving connection with the present inhabitants of the origin villages, who are related to the Greek people who live in Severin today. This is the substance of the volume: history and everyday life*”.