

**Archives, Historical Research and Local Memory.  
The Return of Moldavia's Documents to Iași after 150 years  
(Abstract)**

**Editor: Dorin DOBRINCU**

*Keywords:* patrimony, patrimonial concepts, archives, documents, research, memory, Moldavia, Iași, Romania, Bucharest, ecclesiastical fonds, fonds from Organic Statutes.

On April 26, 2012, the Romanian National Archives, in partnership with “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University’s History Department and “A.D. Xenopol” Institute of History, both based in Iași, organized in Iași a debate titled *Archives, Historical Research and Local Memory. The Return of Moldavia's Documents to Iași after 150 Years*. The following historians and archivists have participated at the conference: Arcadie Bodale, Cătălin Botoșineanu, Florin Cîntic, Mihai Cojocaru, Dorin DobrinCU, Sorin Iftimi, Florea Ioncioaia, Ștefan S. Gorovei, Andi Mihalache, Mihai Mîrza, Leonidas Rados, Claudiu Turcitu, Petronel Zahariuc. The conference was attended by a numerous public and researchers. A few archival documents were also on display at the conference.

What occasioned the debate was the return to Iași in March-April 2012 of a number of important archival records (fonds) that were produced in Moldavia and which in the second half of the 19th century were moved to Bucharest in an effort to centralize the archives. Some 11 archival fonds were brought to Iași in the first phase. These fonds come from the periods of Organic and post-Organic Statutes: *Adunarea Electivă Legislativă a Moldovei, Departamentul Treburilor din Lăuntru Moldova, Divanul Ad-hoc al Moldovei, Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice Moldova, Ministerul de Război Moldova, Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice Moldova, Obișnuita Adunare Obștească a Moldovei, Obștescul Control Moldova, Obștescul Divan al Moldovei, Visteria Moldovei, Visteria Moldovei – Direcția Poștelor Moldova*. A further 86 ecclesiastical fonds were transferred in a second phase, including documents issued by the Metropolitan Office of Moldavia, the Episcopate of Roman and Huși, as well as other 79 monasteries (*Agafon, Agapia, Aron Vodă, Barnovschi, Bârnova, Berzunți, Bistrița, Bogdana, Cașin, Cetățuia, Dancu, Fâstâci, Frumoasa, Galata, Golgota, Golia, Neamț, Pângărați, Probota, Popăuți, Răchitoasa, Râșca, Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur (Zlataust), Sfântul Sava din Iași, Sfântul Spiridon din Iași, Slatina, Socola, Soveja, Secu, Tazlău, Trei Ierarhi, Văratice, Vizantea, Vorona, Zagavia, etc.*) and 4 city churches (*Sfântul Lazăr din Iași, Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc din Iași, etc.*). In total the number of documents returned to Iași reached 416.55 linear meters (or approximately 1,365 linear feet).

Written in Slavonic, Greek and Romanian (Cyrillic) on parchment and / or paper, with various decorative elements and validation marks (seals, stamped seals), the Moldavian medieval documents depict a specific historical and cultural space. They reflect the development of regional and local history, being essential for reconstituting the complex image of a historical region (of a former state) with its own particular institutions, traditions and developments.

Participants at the conference – from various institutions and holding different patrimonial and historiographical perspectives – have addressed the context in which these records were transferred from Iași to Bucharest. They also talked about the development of patrimonial concepts in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the importance of returning *home* (term used by those present) of these funds, to be use for both professional historical research (documents are now close to the main institutions and researchers interested in them, located in north-eastern Romania, in Moldavian cities, especially in Iași, but also the Republic of Moldova) and for upholding local memory (*lieux de mémoire*). Historians and archivists have not hesitated to highlight issues little or never discussed in public with a general audience. Thus, historical facts relating to the conference topics were brought to the surface; interpretations of those facts were proposed; and suggestions were made for research topics based on the documents returned and/or their route throughout history, but especially in the last century and half.

At the end of this text three tables are presented: 1. Transferees of documents between the branches of the Romanian National Archives, in accordance with the principles of archival fond integration and respecting the documents' territorial belonging (2009-2012); 2. Moldavian ecclesiastical fonds transferred from Bucharest to Iași (March-April 2012); and 3. Moldavian Organic and post-Organic Statutes fonds transferred from Bucharest to Iași (March-April 2012).