

Regina Elisabeta văzută de N. Iorga

(Edition by Sanda-Maria Ardeleanu, Mihai Ardeleanu and Alexandrina Ioniță. Partial translations from French by Mihai Ardeleanu. Index of persons by Alexandrina Ioniță, Casa Editorială Demiurg, Iași, 2015, 208 p., illustrations included)

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In addition to the previous years, the 2015th CISL – which furthered even more the good reputation of the University from Suceava – came with numerous surprises, one of which being the book release. With difficulty you would have chosen among the numerous propositions, yet Nicolae Iorga's name compels by far and eases the reader's selection.

Enjoying the position number 5 within the collection, now of great resound among the Romanian and foreign **Francophilofones** – *Intelectuali români de expresie franceză* (*Romanian intellectuals of French expression*), whose beautiful qualitative evolution is taken care of by Professor Sanda-Maria Ardeleanu –, this work gathers nine articles, some more ample and some more restricted, ordered by the editors in the chronological order of the publishing (1916-1939).

Two of these articles, the most ample ones, were published by the author in French, and now they find themselves in the harmonious translation of Mihai Ardeleanu, whose literary offer is more and more generous through its variety (people from Suceava can not forget the superb work *Mobilizarea. 1916-1917*). The bilingual version of the work was thought of by the editors in order to offer the readers a larger accessibility, an aspect highly generous, and, likewise, the spirit of the entire collection.

Far from being written during youth, in the period before his affirmation, thus possible of colourful interpretations, N. Iorga wrote the articles after he began publishing the impressive collection of documents and his great synthesis of the Romanians' history, when he was already well known also abroad. Queen Elizabeth had barely passed away, after a long and not exactly happy life, in a country which, at the beginning, was foreign to her, but which, afterwards, became hers, and towards which she fulfilled her duty towards the royal family and towards the country, with many efforts and with great personal sacrifices. It is exactly what N. Iorga emphasizes, who does not adopt an elegiac, nor laudatory tone, but rational and appreciative, such as we expected. In the nine articles and small disparate texts in other writings, the historian emphasized, from the queen's death until close to his own death, more discretely or more accentuated, the personality of the first queen of the Romanians, who understood that, while not having the right to make state politics, created her own politics and culture by adapting to the new, Romanian, environment, and by adopting its spiritual values, first by learning the Romanian language and by knowing the Romanians' literature, and afterwards by promoting the nation's culture which became hers (literature and folklore, music and folk art etc.) through translations, cultural patronage and even through her own writings (*Colțul penajilor mei, Istoria vieții lui Carol I, Romanul unei prințese, Poveștile Peleşului*), at Court and in the diplomatic circles, in the country and abroad.

To the numerous books written more than a hundred years ago, about queen's life and cultural activity, it is added the present work, whose achievement lies in not only putting together N. Iorga's articles about the Romanians' first queen, but, mostly, in the fact that the historian, during almost a quarter of a century, at different commemorations

of the queen, was explaining to the Romanians her importance in the history, culture and the people's unity, sketching her personality upon the understanding the reader, who did not had the possibility to meet her at Peleş.

The reproduction of the original illustration, the editors footnotes and the index of persons help the reader to integrate himself within the time's spirit, for a better understanding of the people and thinking at that time, and for a faster retrieving of the information in the work's volume, thus, making it permanent for whomever wants a thorough information about this subject. On the other hand, it must be emphasized that the information from the present work can be linked with those from the Carmen Sylva Research Centre at the Wied Princely Archive (www.carmensylva-fwa.de).

If her translations and those of her foreign friends meant important moments in the integration process of the Romanian culture within the European culture panoply, by way of the German and French language, her patronage – it is true, severely censured by Mite Kremnitz and Titu Maiorescu – meant the encouragement of the literary and artistic creativity within her generation. These aspects, as well as those referred to the queen's writings are, sometimes, delicate, sometimes strongly revealed in N. Iorga's articles. The statements of some of the time's personalities, but also those of the author's, gathered for the first time, after they lay for almost a century scattered in magazines and newspapers, are gathered now within a volume with strongly descriptive and assessment memories of Carmen Sylva's personality, embedded in the history and national culture, from whose covers she smiles nostalgically, in a traditional folk dress of an unmatched beauty, as inducement to go return to the discovery of our own and their furtherance.