



## THE ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES – HISTORICAL STUDIES

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*Romanian military historiography became a discipline in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the context of the renewal of the country's military forces and the struggle for national unity. This was not by accident, because the generation of the 1848 Revolution and the Union saw the armed forces as an instrument of national revival. Nicolae Bălcescu, the founder of this discipline, was very clear on that: "The country of Romanians, if it ever regains the position it once held among the peoples of Europe, will owe it more to the regeneration of its old military institutions". The messianic, optimistic vision of the great historian signified, first of all, a call to gaining more in-depth knowledge of Romanian military traditions, which would rapidly result in the strengthening of the military body.*

*In the absence of specialised institutions, which were established later, respectively at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this very complex task fell especially to military publications. From this point of view, the "România Militară" journal, whose first issue was published, as it is known, on 15 February 1864, did a groundbreaking work. The initiators of the publication, young military personnel from the first graduates of the military school, founded by Prince Barbu Știrbei, some of them with studies abroad, were convinced of the need for an intense theoretical activity in the military field. In fact, the journal was defined as being specialised in "military science, art and history". The stated objective of the editorial staff was to "gather and research the old military institutions of the country, which had been the glory of Romania for so many centuries..."*

*In its 155 years of existence, the "România Militară" journal and its successor today, "Gândirea Militară Românească", have greatly honoured*



*the objective of researching the Romanian military history. Whoever reads the publication, from the beginning until today, can see the variety of topics of military history, going from the old era to the one that is usually called the “immediate” or the “recent” one. It should also be highlighted that the topics regarding universal history have not been overlooked, which shows that the journal has promoted a fundamental principle of historical analysis, namely that it is only by being integrated into universality that the true dimensions of national history, including its military dimension, can be understood.*

*Starting from these general ideas regarding the role and place of military history in the editorial profile of the “Gândirea Militară Românească” journal, I welcome the initiative of the Editorial Team to publish a special issue that features episodes from the history of the Romanian armed forces. This special issue includes part of the scientific papers delivered within the Military History Section of the International Conference: “Security and Defence between History, Theory and Public Policies” (6-7 November 2019), organised by the Defence Staff in the context of the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this essential structure for the profile of the Romanian military body and 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Gândirea Militară Românească” journal.*

*The topics from the special issue are various, ranging from the organisation of the General Headquarters and the Great General Staff during the Romanian armed forces campaign from 1918-1919 to the portraits of military leaders who are less known to the general public, such as Brigadier General Gheorghe Dabija, General Ioan Dumitrache, General Alexandru Ioanițiu, General Aviator Alexandru Sabini. The articles that make up the journal thus provide the reader with interesting details regarding the tradition and history of the Romanian armed forces in the first half of the last century, highlighting the level of military leadership of that period.*

*The main idea stemming from these articles is that, in their evolution, the Romanian armed forces underwent different organisational and training stages, with an obvious tendency to diversify the specialties and types of military branches. The Romanian armed forces were not, nor are they currently, a rigid, static system, but they developed in relation both to the general evolution of the country from a certain historical moment, and to the dynamics of weapon systems and the reality of the battlefield generated by the permanent technological revolution.*



*To conclude, I invite you to read and discover relevant pieces of information and understanding on a topic of real scientific interest for all those interested in the national military past! Last but not least, I would like to congratulate both the authors, for their notable work and contributions, and the editorial staff of the “Gândirea Militară Românească” journal, for such an initiative, which is a sign of consistency and determination in materialising an objective assumed ever since the first issue of this publication.*