Mihai Chiper*

"TRAITORS' HONOUR": THE CASES OF GENERAL ALEXANDRU VĂITOIANU AND OF AL. TZIGARA-SAMURCAȘ

(Summary)

Keywords: affairs of honour, duel, definitions of betrayal, patriotism, First World War

The paper deals with the cultural and social construction of the meanings of betrayal before and after World War I. The duel, an upper class ritual pre-existing the war, becomes a means of defence against the accusations, and the affairs of honour acquire a new function: that of integrating/excluding citizens that are deemed compromised for the national cause. The cases of General Alexandru Văitoianu and of Al. Tzigara-Samurcaș oppose simplifying pairs like "brave heroes – coward traitors", which historiography is often tempted to resort to. From this standpoint, the definition of betrayal becomes the result of an exercise of power that most of the accused rejected as such.

* Cercetător ştiinţific, Institutul de Istorie „A. D. Xenopol" al Academiei Române – Filiala Iaşi.