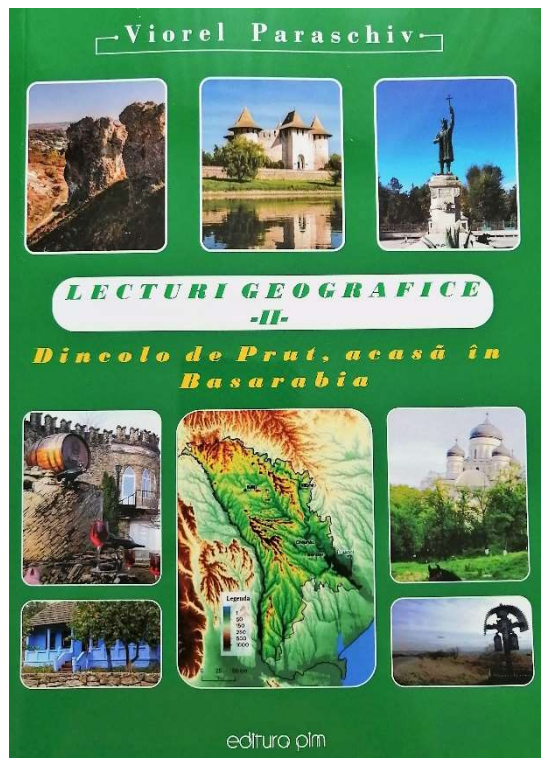


Book Review

"Lecturi geografice. II. Dincolo de Prut, acasă în Basariabia"
[Geographical Readings vol. II. Beyond the Prut River, at Home
in Bessarabia] by Viorel Paraschiv



The second volume of the publication Geographical Readings presents a part of the personal experiences lived by the author, professor Viorel Paraschiv, PhD, during the trips to Bessarabiain the last 30 years. The ISBN for this book is 978-606-13-4962-3.

The volume is structured in three sections: Along the Prut River, Middle Bessarabia-The Structural Plateaux on the Interfluve of Prut-Dniester and Along the Dniester River, each of which includes the travel impressions written by the author during the itineraries beyond the Prut River, both individually and in practical applications with geographers, in scientific events, or with students.

Through the almost 50 passages, the reader can discover a part of the tourist heritage of Bessarabia, the country's patrimony that, as the author says, is still insufficiently capitalised, but

which deserves to be discovered and promoted through various forms of sustainable tourism. The author managed to present his own vision of some objectives from Bessarabia (geomorphological-landscape, oenological and gastronomic, cultural-historical or spa-recreational objectives), a vision that he created through the field observations and discussions with the members of the local communities, but also through the study of the works of some great geographers, such as the notes of Simion Mehedinți, Emmanuel de Martonne, Mihai David, Gheorghe I. Năstase etc.

In the first section of the volume, Along the Prut River, we discover information about natural tourist elements of unique beauty, such as: "Emil Racoviță" cave from Criva, among the largest caves in gypsum in the world, a scientific reserve, located in the border area with Ukraine; the geomorphosite "Centum monticuli" a group of about 3.500 sliding mounds; The "Royal Forest" is a nature reserve located on the middle course of the Prut River; the muddy volcanoes of the Delia valley and of Bărboieni and the landscapes of the lower Prut valley, to the south of Cahul. The passages about the anthropogenic and cultural-historical elements come to complete the picture of the Prut Valley, passages in which we find information about: Ungheni, the largest city on the Prut River; Cahul, the largest city in southern and south-eastern Bessarabia; the border town of Lipcani, with its railway station dating back to 1893, a monument

with impressive architecture; Pererâta village, with Grigore Vieru's Memorial House; Stâncă Costești; the village of Braniștea, the most important centre of wood distribution in north-eastern Bessarabia in the inter-war period; the double villages on the Prut River, Sculeni, Medeleni, Costuleni and the old customs fortress, Țuțora.

The author guides our steps in the second part in the great interfluvium of the Prut River and the Dniester River, in Middle Bessarabia, in order to present us the beauties of these places: the chain of calcareous formations of reef type of the Prut river, with the fossils of corals and calcareous algae; "Beech Region" forest reserve; the monasteries of Central Bessarabia, such as those of Căpriana, Vărzărești, Hâncu, etc.; the wine treasure of Bessarabia, with the famous wine cellars from Cricova, Mileștii Mici, Purcari, Brănești etc.; as well as the elements of the urban cultural heritage from the capital of Chișinău, a city that has undergone numerous transformations throughout history, Edineț, with "Vasile Alecsandri" Public Garden, Bălți - the city between the hills, the third city in demographical size of Bessarabia, Fălești - the city of pink chestnut trees, Hîncești, a city documented since 1522 etc.

The descriptive picture of Bessarabia is completed in part III, Along the Dniester River, by the author's travel impressions about the fortresses of Soroca and Tighina, the pillboxes near the village Varnita - "Carol I" defense line, "the city of the Dniester River" - Tiraspol, the spiritual and architectural patrimony of the Dniester monasteries from Rudi, Saharna and Jâpova, but also about the village of Hristici, the native village of the great Bessarabian unionist geographer Gheorghe I. Năstase. The last passage of Part III is dedicated to the French geographer Emmanuel de Martonne who had a defining contribution in establishing the borders of Greater Romania at Peace Conference from Paris. The author supports the reinstatement of the memory of the illustrious French geographer in the current Republic of Moldova, starting from the role played by Emmanuel de Martonne in arguing to Europe that the territory of Bessarabia is a space of Romanian culture and civilization.

The publication written by professor Viorel Paraschiv combines the personal vision of a travel diary with articles filtered by an objective researcher, thus becoming an accessible and useful book for geographers, students and those who want to re/discover Bessarabia.

Bibliographic reference of the reviewed book:

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