

OIL AND WAR IN ROMANIAN HISTORY DURING THE XXth CENTURY (I)

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Rezumat. *Petrolul a reprezentat un factor esențial în evoluția societății moderne, bazată pe utilizarea mașinilor cu motoare cu combustie internă. Extracția petrolului s-a intensificat, ca urmare a perfecționării tehnologiilor, iar prin rafinarea acestuia s-au obținut produse cu calități superioare. România s-a numărat printre primele țări producătoare de petrol, încă din secolul al XV-lea, iar de la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea dispunea de rafinării moderne. Renunțate companii petroliere din SUA, Germania, Marea Britanie au făcut investiții în exploatarea petrolului românesc. Războaiele mondiale din 1914-1918 și 1939-1945 au depins într-o foarte mare măsură de resursele petrolifere. "Aurul negru" din România a devenit un teren de dispută între marile puteri. În mai 1940, guvernele de la București și Berlin au semnat "pactul petrolului".*

Abstract. *As far as the evolution of the modern society was concerned – an evolution based on the usage of internal combustion engines – oil has represented an essential factor. As a result of improved technologies, the process of oil extraction has intensified. Furthermore, by refining oil, superior quality products were obtained. Ever since the 15th century, Romania ranked among the first oil-productive countries. By the middle of the 19th century, Romania already had several modern oil refineries. Famous oil companies in the United States, Germany, and Great Britain have made investments in the exploitation of Romanian oil. The World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 have largely depended on oil resources. The Romanian "black gold" has become a field of dispute between the great powers. In May 1940, the governments of Bucharest and Berlin signed "the oil pact".*

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It is unnecessary to argue, here and now, *what petroleum represented or represents* for the evolution of the World at the beginnings of this century and millennium. I have no doubt that petroleum – or so-called "**the black gold**" or "**the King**" of contemporary economy, politics and world relations – had become a veritable *nervum rerum* for the development of modern civilization on the whole. Recently, Professor **Aymeric Chauprade**, a well-known French geopolitician, pointing out the place and the role of petroleum in contemporary world, surprised in this kind the key-elements of the **oil question** in this moment: «*En 1917, en faisant sortir les soldats des tranchées, le pétrole renversa le cours de la guerre. En 1945, la mobilité tactique rendue possible par le contrôle des ressources pétrolières se révélait déterminante dans les victoires américaine et russe contre l'Allemagne. En 1995, lorsque Belgrade cédait à Washington,*

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