

**Radu Ioanid, *La Roumanie et la Shoah: Destruction et survie des Juifs et des Roms sous le régime Antonescu, 1940-1944* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2023), pp. 576.**

by Ștefan Cristian Ionescu

While Romania was the second largest Holocaust perpetrator, the history of its atrocious record is still under-researched by scholars and rather unknown to the wider public. This outstanding book, authored by the Romanian-American historian Radu Ioanid, is the second French edition of one of the first and the most important studies in the historiography of the Romanian chapter of the Holocaust. Initially published in Romanian in 1998, then in English in 2000, followed by the first French edition in 2002, the book critically examined the neglected sufferings of the Jews, Roma, and religious minorities during the pro-Nazi regime of the antisemitic General Ion Antonescu. At the time of its first publication, this well documented book represented a breakthrough—together with Jean Ancel's *Transnistria* which was published in the same year, 1998—in elucidating the history of Romania's participation in the Holocaust after decades of silence and negationism. Based on a wealth of primary archival sources used for the first time by Ioanid, at that time working for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (henceforth, USHMM) in Washington D.C., the book uncovered the participation of the Romanian state institutions and individuals in the numerous discriminatory policies and crimes perpetrated against the Jews, Roma, and protestant religious groups in Romania and former Soviet territories. More than two decades later, Ioanid has updated and improved his book with newly available historiographical references and archival documents that became available in the rich collections of the USHMM or were published after 1998. The new French edition of the book matches the third Romanian edition published in 2019, which was followed by the English version in 2021. In addition to new official documents and secondary literature, the current edition contains more photographs of better quality that are crucial in documenting the horrific crimes perpetrated by the Antonescu regime. Although some of the images are difficult to look at, they are very important visual evidence of the wartime violence unleashed against innocent Jewish, Roma, and other civilians. The wealth of

official documents is convincingly complemented by numerous survivor and eye-witness testimonies that were collected or published during the last few decades. In terms of its structure, the book is divided in 10 thematic-chronological chapters and an Epilogue. The chapters focus on the legal status of the Jews before World War II (henceforth, WWII), the local fascism and antisemitic legislation, the mass killings before the invasion of USSR, the mass crimes from the summer of 1941, the deportations, camps, ghettos, and the crimes perpetrated in Bukovina and Bessarabia, the death zone of Transnistria, the plight of the Roma, the persecution of Protestant churches and other religious minorities, the discussion of the survival of most Romanian Jews, the status of the Romanian Jews living abroad, and the Antonescu officials' view of their regime and its policies.

Chapter five is particularly relevant for understanding Antonescu's genocidal policies as it investigates the region of Transnistria, which was an occupied territory in the South-West part of USSR. This region became the main deportation area used by Antonescu to remove hundreds of thousands of Jews and Roma from Romania and lock them—as well as the surviving local Jews—in a huge network of camps and ghettos before the final deportation/removal. Ioanid shows how the Romanian military and civilian authorities engaged in Transnistria in the systematic exploitation and mass murder of the deported and local Jews and Roma, sometimes in collaboration with the German authorities.

In addition to the substantial corpus of new documents, in the current edition of the book a short chapter on the persecution of Protestant churches and other neo-Protestant religious minorities has been added. The discussion of the variety of groups persecuted for religious reasons during WWII is an important addition to Holocaust historiography as, usually, historians have neglected Antonescu's discriminatory policies targeting the recognized (such as Adventist and Baptist) and unrecognized (such as Pentecostal, Nazarene, Millennialist, and Inochentist) religious minorities, often deemed by the Romanian officials as dangerous "sects." The author shows how the persecution against the religious minorities included intense surveillance, arrests, camp internment, confiscation of property, and forced conversion.

Ioanid also briefly discusses the persecution of the Ukrainian minority, which was seen by the Antonescu authorities as a major national-biological threat to the Romanian ethno-nation. It would have been great if the author further expanded

this part of his study by more minutely examining the ideological justifications of Antonescu's hostility towards the Ukrainians as well as his plans and measures targeting this group in Bukovina, Bessarabia and, especially, Transnistria. Overall, this new edition of Ioanid's book offers an improved and remarkable study that elucidates the horrific record of the mass crimes perpetrated by the Antonescu regime against the Romanian and Soviet Jews, the Roma, and religious minorities. The book provides not only a major historical reconstruction of an important chapter of WWII history but also a warning to contemporary societies about the risks of ethnic and religious based hatred targeting minorities. Hopefully, the book will make a major contribution to the fight against the rising antisemitism, neo-fascism, authoritarianism, and Holocaust denial.

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