

**Octav Vorobchievici, *Hotare și măști*, Volumul I: *Războiul generalilor* [Boundaries and Masks, Volume 1, The Generals' War], Dumitru Preda (ed.) (Editura Cavallioti: Bucharest, 2011), 204 p., ISBN: 978-606-551-026-5**

by Cătălin BOBOC\*

This book constitutes the memories of a man who knew to answer positively to the country's request of him being a faithful soldier, regardless of his distance or of the dimension of the peril.

Dumitru Preda, university professor and the Romanian Ambassador at Havana, offers in his introductory study information about Octav Vorobchievici. The later was born in Barlad - Tutova district, on April 19<sup>th</sup> 1896<sup>1</sup>. Young Vorobchievici went to primary, secondary school and high school in Ploiesti. On July 1<sup>st</sup> 1916, he received the 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant degree, after graduating from the Infantry Military School in Bucharest. Octav Vorobchievici studies at the Superior School for War in Paris. His military career development was a rapid one. Adjutant colonel Octav Vorobchievici's officer career commenced in 1916, little before Romania's entrance into the WWI had suddenly been interrupted at the end of 1944, just before his promotion as general. The years that came were no where near happy; he was staged in several court trials, and his detention was a humiliating one. Nevertheless he did not surrender. However, none of the above mentioned, managed to put him



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<sup>1</sup> Dumitru Preda, *Octav Vorobchievici: un solat dăruit țării și scrisului* [Octav Vorobchievici: A Soldier of His Country and of Writing], in Octav Vorobchievici, *Hotare și măști*, Volumul I: *Războiul generalilor* [Boundaries and Masks, Volume 1: The Generals' War], Dumitru Preda (ed.), Cavallioti Press, Bucharest, 2011, p. VII.

down. In 1968, he is finally rehabilitated and he receives “Virtutea Osteneasca” for his merits in the two world conflagrations.<sup>2</sup>

Octav Vorobchievici also stood up as a writer; his volumes: “Polonia, vecina necunoscuta de la Miază-Noapte” (1921), “Doi ani de garnizoana la Paris”, “Între Verdun și lumina Armistiului” (1931) or “Arta comandamentului în război” (1935) were very well received by critics and readers. He was editor for “România militară” and “Lumea militară ilustrată” magazines. He dies on April 7<sup>th</sup> 1987 at Rosiorii de Vede, the place where he had retired.<sup>3</sup>

Going back to the book, one can notice from the initial writings, the author’s talent, not only for his military service, but also for his writing skills. His 1<sup>st</sup> volume titled “USA Casei” reveals a fascinating, yet tragic inter-war Spain. The author describes the country as a house: “inside which I had not been invited, but whose anxiety I had to unravel. Its lurid illness was little taken into consideration in the long period prior to its violent burst. Underneath the house’s roof the ruling actors of the continent hurried to rest their battle techniques and to experiment their tools against the ones who pretended to resist them”<sup>4</sup>. At the beginning of the volume, the author also confesses his belief: throughout his life, he was a man of duty, one who “did not waste time”<sup>5</sup>, as “happiness for him is built upon fulfilling one’s duty. A soldier knows his accomplishment when gives his best. Including his life”<sup>6</sup>.

Other titles stand up as well; “Fără masă” (pp. 107-118), “Privighetorile care cântă cu ochii închiși” (pp. 121-132), in which Octav Vorobchievici excellently analyses the The Nazi Germany’s ascendant path while listening to the Peace Symphony. During the German ascendancy, France and Great Britain seemed to be unaware of what was happening; in “De ce nu știu să moară la timp maresalii îmbrăcați” (pp. 133-150), the author draws a remarkable portrait of Marshal Philippe Pétain, WWI hero and Hitler’s partner in WWII. The last two titles of the volume: “Tată, înapoi-ți acasă!” și “Pragul fără întoarcere” (pp.151-172) show images from the very beginnings of WWI.

This volume is neither impersonal nor too poetic, it is both a book one can read throughout one night, but also a handy instrument for those who wish to discover Spain and the later half of the 4<sup>th</sup> decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XIII.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. X – XIV.

<sup>4</sup> Octav Vorobchievici, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*.