

•
ANALELE ȘTIINȚIFICE
ALE
UNIVERSITĂȚII „ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA”
DIN IAȘI
(SERIE NOUĂ)

ISTORIE

TOM LXXI
2025

Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași

COLEGIUL DE REDACȚIE:

Nelu Zugravu (Iași), Neculai Bolohan (Iași), Alexandru-Florin Platon (Iași), Petronel Zahariuc (Iași), Ștefan S. Gorovei (Iași), Maria Magdalena Székely (Iași), Cristian Ploscaru (Iași), Claudiu Topor (Iași), Gabriel Leanca (Iași), Gheorghe Iacob (Iași), Ovidiu Buruiană (Iași), Victor Spinei, membru al Academiei Române (Iași), Ioan Aurel Pop, președintele Academiei Române (Cluj-Napoca), Ovidiu Cristea (București), Rudolf Dinu (București), Antal Lukács (București), Ion Eremia (Chișinău), Ion Varta (Chișinău), Dennis Deletant (Londra), Carol Iancu (Montpellier), Hans-Christian Maner (Mainz).

COMITETUL DE REDACȚIE:

Laurențiu Rădvan (redactor șef),
Lucrețiu Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Ionuț Nistor, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu,
Adrian Vițalaru (secretar de redacție),
Mihai-Bogdan Atanasiu (secretar de redacție).

Responsabilitatea pentru opiniile exprimate în textele publicate revine în exclusivitate autorilor.

Manuscrisele, cărțile și revistele propuse pentru schimb,
ca și orice corespondență se vor trimite redacției:

Laurențiu Rădvan

Facultatea de Istorie
Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași
B-dul Carol I 11,
700506, Iași, România
Tel.: 40-(0)232-20.12.74
e-mail: radvan@uaic.ro

ISSN 1221-843X
eISSN 2821-4617
Printed in Romania

CUPRINS

Andi Mihalache, <i>Seninul întortocheat al cerului: cromatică, istorie și cultură (I)</i>	7
Daniel Mirea, <i>Datarea a patru documente din timpul lui Sigismund de Luxemburg și al lui Vlad Dracul</i>	47
Alexandru Simon, Petru Aron, Iancu de Hunedoara și Mehmed al II-lea în ajunul bătăliei de la Belgrad: informații dintr-un „raport venețian de sinteză” de la sfârșitul lunii aprilie 1456	73
Livia-Ioana Potop, <i>Instrumente notariale din Transilvania medievală: considerații privind păstrarea și transmiterea unor surse arhivistice mai puțin obișnuite</i>	91
Mihai Covaliu, <i>Între diplomație și primejdie. O misiune moldovenească la Veneția (1505-1506)</i>	101
Andrei Constantin Sălăvăstru, <i>Rebels for the faith: The Sorbonne's seditious propaganda during the French Wars of Religion</i>	113
Gheorghe Lazăr, <i>Despre logofeții de taină ai Cancelariei Țării Românești. Studiu de caz: Iane Dâmboviceanu</i>	129
Elena Bedreag, <i>Înrudiri, cheltuieli și alte „mărunțușuri” în câteva documente patrimoniale din veacul al XVIII-lea</i>	157
Iulian Moga, <i>Saint Xenia's Feigned Foolishness</i>	179
Alexandru Gorea, <i>Focul din 1784 și reconfigurarea centrului puterii domnești la Iași</i>	191

Laurențiu Rădvan, <i>Considerații cu privire la un plan rusesc al Focșanilor (1828)</i>	211
Simion-Alexandru Gavriș, <i>Centralism și autonomie locală în legislația administrativă a guvernării Lascăr Catargiu (1871-1876)</i>	225
Simion Câlția, <i>Reglementarea prețului pâinii în București (sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea – începutul secolului al XX-lea)</i>	237
Tamara Botez, <i>„Monarhia de rol” și portul popular ca formă de legitimare în România (sfârșitul sec. XIX – începutul sec. XX)</i>	259
Ciprian-Lucrețius Suciu, Florin Marinescu, <i>Duhovnici români la Sfântul Munte Athos: superiorul Antipa Dinescu</i>	275
Claudiu-Lucian Topor, <i>România în vecinătatea războiului: chestiunea înarmărilor între 1914 și 1916</i>	287
Ana-Maria-Ioana Lupășteanu, <i>Război și propagandă în Bucovina austriacă. Misiunea lui Nathan Eidinger la București (1915)</i>	309

Bianca Șendrea, <i>Structura mării proprietăți și agricultura din Transilvania după reforma agrară din 1921</i>	319
Ionel Doctoru, <i>Sediul Legației române de la Paris (1922-1930). Între aspirații și realitate</i>	333
Bogdan-Alexandru Schipor, <i>Dragoș Cotlarciuc, an (almost) unknown expert on Baltic Region at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1938-1939</i>	343
Árpád Hornyák, <i>Depiction of Hungarians in 20th century Serbian history textbooks</i>	353
Geanina-Ancuța Costăș, <i>Relații culturale româno-britanice: o analiză a programului de schimburi culturale (1963-1965)</i>	369
Iana Balan, <i>Imperative politice, schimburi culturale și strategii universitare. Lectori ieșeni de limba română la Universitățile din Polonia în anii 1967-1989</i>	381
Lucica Iorga, Lucian Leuștean, <i>Tribulații în cadrul lagărului socialist: întâlnirea de la Ialta (2 august 1971), cu România personaj principal în absența (un document și câteva considerații)</i>	409
Victor Rizescu, <i>Marxism și naționalism, continuitate și ruptură. Două teme de sociologie istorică în patru etape ale istoriei românești</i>	437

<i>Recenzii și note bibliografice</i>	449
<p>Duane W. Roller, <i>Imperiul Mării Negre. Gloria și decăderea lumii lui Mitridate cel Mare</i>, trad. Sergiu-Adrian Adam, București, Editura Humanitas, 2025, 372 p. (Alex-Marian Cornea); Martyn Rady, <i>Habsburgii. Ambiția de a stăpâni lumea</i>, traducere din limba engleză de Lia Decei, prefată de Matei Cazacu, București, Editura Corint, 2023, 585 p. (Ana-Maria-Ioana Lupășteanu); Avram Iancu – un om între oameni. <i>Lucrările Conferinței Internaționale: Avram Iancu – 200 de ani de la naștere: omul, contemporanii, epoca</i>, Deva, 9-10 mai 2024, coord. Ioan Bolovan, Ioan Sebastian Bara, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Academiei Române, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2024, 713 p. (Constantin Ciobanu); Pierre-Antoine Dessaux: <i>Vermicelles et coquillettes. Histoire d'une industrie alimentaire française</i>, Tours, Presses Universitaires François-Rabelais, 2023, 308 p. (Simion Călția); Carmen-Sorina Rîjnoveanu (coord.), <i>The wars of independence, diplomacy and society. New perspectives and approaches on the Great Eastern Crisis 1875-1878. Războaiele de independență, diplomație și societate. Noi perspective și abordări privind Marea Criză Orientală 1875-1878</i>, București, Editura Militară, 2023, 284 p. (Maria Cerniș); <i>Relații politice și militare româno-otomane-turce 1878-1989: documente</i>, volumul I, 1878-1938 = <i>Romanian-Ottoman-Turkish Political and Military Relations 1878-1989: documents</i>, volume I, 1878-1938, coord. Carmen-Sorina Rîjnoveanu, responsabil de vol. Manuel Stănescu, București, Editura Militară, 2023, 559 p. (Andrei Grigoraș); Eduard Andrei, Laurențiu Vlad, <i>Două istorii ale participării României la Expoziția Universală de la New York (1939-1940)</i>, Târgoviște, Cetatea de scaun, 2024, 281 p. (Mădălin Anghel); Constantin Hlihor, <i>Cu mâinile altora: România și războaiele prin intermediari în Africa (1970-1985)</i>, București, Corint, 2025, 364 p. (Teodor-Petru Bărgăoanu).</p>	
<i>Abrevieri</i>	473

Saint Xenia's Feigned Foolishness

Abstract: Foolishness for Christ is a rare charism of the Holy Spirit. Few are called to perfect themselves through this path of extreme asceticism, but even fewer are those who manage to complete this incredibly difficult endeavour. Following the path of self-sacrifice and assuming the identity of her unexpectedly deceased husband, Saint Xenia continued to live for countless years without a permanent dwelling, enduring fierce cold, heat, thirst, hunger, mockery, insults, and temptations of all kinds, for the sake of her boundless love for God and her husband. Differences in perception between the initial sparse information available in the press at the time and other contemporary works and current perception are noticeable and worth emphasizing.

Keywords: St Xenia; Russia; Peter the Great; prophecies; self-sacrifice; holy fool.

The City of Peter and the Storona of Sankt Petersburg

The city of St. Peter was founded in 1703 by Tsar Peter the Great to become an outpost of Western civilization on Russian soil. From the very beginning, Peter I reserved this role for it as part of a vast ambitious megalomaniac project to europeanize Russia in all aspects, from the institutional and military level to the gradual change of Russian mentalities and self-perception, particularly among the Russian elites:

“Everything in the new capital was intended to compel the Russians to adopt a more European way of life. Peter told his nobles where to live, how to build their houses, how to move around the town, where to stand in church, how many servants to keep, how to eat at banquets, how to dress and cut their hair, how to conduct themselves at court, and how to converse in polite society. Nothing in his dragooned capital was left to chance. This obsessive regulation gave St Petersburg the image of a hostile and oppressive place. Here were the roots of the nineteenth-century myth of the ‘unreal city’ – alien and threatening to the Russian way of life - which was to play a central role in Russian literature and art”¹.

* Associate professor PhD, Faculty of History, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Romania; moga.iulian@gmail.com. I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Marina Vraciu for all her help and support.

¹ O. Figes, *Natasha's Dance. A Cultural History of Russia*, New York, Metropolitan Books, 2002, p. 12-13.

The efforts and sacrifices made to build the city in this bleak and swampy place were immense, including countless lives lost. A quarter of a million serfs and soldiers were brought from Siberia and the Caucasus as primary workforce. The city occupied a very important strategic position and from the very beginning had an extraordinary potential for economic development. The area used to be frequented by merchants in the past, as evidenced by the pre-existing channel linking the Baltic Sea with Lake Ladoga among numerous islets and marshlands.

The place where Catherine II later built her summer palace on the Pulkovo heights was known to the locals not as Tsarskoe Selo, but as Sarskoe Selo, which comes from the Finnish *saari*, meaning *island*². The whole area where the town was to be founded was also of particular strategic importance, having been taken over from the Swedes after the military clashes of the period, but inhabited largely by a population of Finnish origin. Peter I wanted the city to become a symbol of western-style secularized modernity to counterbalance the influence and role that Moscow had played until then, a city he did not love at all and which for him represented rather medieval backwardness and dependence on the influence of the church³.

The area in which Xenia Grigoryevna Petrova lived the years of her happily married life with her husband, Andrey Fedorovich Petrov, a senior officer and singer in the imperial choir, was suburban, more reminiscent of provincial boroughs than of a neighbourhood of an imperial capital : (having) shabby wooden houses with gardens and marshy courtyards (that were) used as vegetable gardens and vegetable plots, and narrow, winding alleys filled with puddles where ducks used to wade:

“This was the poorest area of the capital. Here you could see the long, narrow streets, most of which were unpaved, here you could see the wooden houses. The further you got away from the Bolshoi Prospekt, from its centre, the quieter it became, the more oppressive, the more gloomy, the darker, the more impoverished. Darkness ruled here, and only here and there, somewhere, some oil lantern burned. But its dull yellow light could not overcome the early darkness that fell here”⁴.

The house was bought by Andrey from his wife's dowry in Storona, the outskirts of the city, now located in the Petrogradsky district. Modern researchers have managed to identify exactly where Xenia's house was situated. It was located at the intersection of Petrovskaya (now Lahtinskaya) and Bolshoi Prospekt streets, and now there is a public square there⁵.

² *Ibidem*, p. 4.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 9-11.

⁴ *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită și nebună pentru Hristos*, traducere de prof. Elena Călin, Galați, Editura Egumenița, 2018, p. 6-7.

⁵ N. Gorbacheva *Великие пророки Ксения Петербургская*, Moscva, Olimp, 1998, p. 12.

Written and oral tradition concerning the life of St. Xenia

As Sergey Shtyrkov points out in a recent study of the hagiographical tradition and hymnography associated with St. Xenia, there is little credible information as direct testimonies about the life of the saint, most of which first circulated orally and were reconstructed on the basis of indirect testimony⁶.

Two articles published in the local Petersburg newspapers in 1847 and 1873 by E. Grebenko and Stefan Opatovich mention some anecdotes about the eccentrics of the city; Xenia comes out not as a holy woman, but as a rather strange individual some would call a lunatic or an idiot as she wandered the streets dressed up in her deceased husband's uniform⁷. However, the earliest known reference, which dates from 1845 and refers to her as Axinia instead of Xenia, satirically portrays her as a woman who went insane after the death of her husband. She took over not only his identity, but also his clothes. Crowds of curious onlookers would throng the street that became "Andrey Petrov Street" precisely to contemplate the strangeness of this curious sight⁸. In an article published in the December 2, 1847 issue of the *St. Petersburg City Police Gazette*, the following could be read:

"Forty some years ago here, in Petersburg died Xenia Grigoryevna, known in her day as Andrey Fedorovich, the wife of court singer Andrey Fedorovich. Having many acquaintances, mostly from the merchant estate, she would visit them for charity and took nothing other than 'the tsar on the horse': that is how she referred to the old coins which had a design of a rider on a horse... Some called her 'insane', other 'leprous' or a 'holy fool; yet a third group used 'foreteller', because Xenia predicted good and bad fortune to the household she visited, albeit only rarely and reluctantly. At nights she would go off in the fields to pray to God for hours on end, bowing to the ground an all four directions. Her nocturnal departures at first prompted misgivings in mistrustful people and the police even began to keep track of her, but soon confirmed that she was indeed going to pray in the fields"⁹.

Some of the information has also survived in the hymnography of the saint and in the ordination of the services¹⁰. Others began to be collected and interpreted in the 20th century, in particular by the priest Dmitri Bulgakovsky, the journalist

⁶ S. Shtyrkov, *The Unmerry Widow: The Blessed Kseniia of Petersburg in Hagiography and Hymnography*, in P. Hunt, S. Kobets (eds.), *Holy Foolishness in Russia. New Perspectives*, Bloomington, Slavica Publishers, 2011, p. 281.

⁷ S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

⁸ N. Kizenko, *Protectors of Women and the Lower Orders. Constructing Sainthood in Modern Russia*, in V.A. Kivelson, R.H. Greene (eds.), *Orthodox Russia. Belief and Practice under the Tsars*, The Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, 2003, p. 107.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 109; *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 80-81.

¹⁰ S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 284; *Service to Saint Xenia of Petersburg*, in „The Orthodox Word”, 14 (1978), 4, p. 154-190.

N.N. Zhivotov and the priest Evgeny Rahmanin¹¹. In the existing pseudo-edition of Xenia's life in Romanian, their names are practically unrecognizable: Zhivotov becomes either Jivotovâi (!), or Jivatov or even Jivotova¹², and Rahmanin is recorded as Rahmaninov¹³. In fact, the text of the latter volume does not mention the name of the author(s) of the work, the original copyright title, nor the language from which it was translated.

As this oral tradition was systematized rather late, there are sometimes important differences in the perception of some modern authors, as well as different versions of the specific timing and significance for Xenia of losing her husband.



The first known caricatural depiction of Xenia, published by E. Grebenko in *Peterburgskaya storona* in 1845 (N. Kizenko, *op. cit.*, p. 108).

¹¹ S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 283-284, 293; J. Kormina, S. Shtyrkov, *Believers' Letters as Advertising: St Xenia of Petersburg's 'National Reception Centre'*, in „Forum for Anthropology and Culture”, 6, 2010, p. 115-116.

¹² *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 8, 13, 15 note 1 and 25.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 170.



The first official icon belonging to Archimandrite Cyprian, published in 1978 (N. Kizenko, *op. cit.*, p. 122).

Canonization, name and liturgical service

St. Xenia was the first of the holy women fools for Christ canonized by the Orthodox Church: in 1978 by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia and in 1988 by the Russian Orthodox Church with the date of commemoration January 24 in the Old Style, which corresponds to February 6 in the New Style. She was also the first of the holy fool ascetics with/in the new imperial capital, which had not previously known this religious phenomenon¹⁴.

Three versions of the akathistoi dedicated to the saint, five prayers and two versions of services have been written so far¹⁵. In some of them we find information that is not presented anywhere else. For example, in the second kontakion of one of the akathistoi we see that she was baptized after the name of

¹⁴ S. A. Ivanov, *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond*, translated by Simon Franklin, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 350-351.

¹⁵ S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

Xenia of Rome¹⁶, which was to indicate that she was a stranger to this world and as a stranger she would live¹⁷.

There are different interpretations as to why Xenia changed her name and deliberately chose her husband's name, as well as diametrically opposite explanations for the versions of the time of his death. According to (one of the versions belonging to) Zhivotov,

“When she had been married four years, Andrey Fedorovich fell ill ‘with a temperature/fever,’ ‘burning up’; doubtless, he had typhoid. An hour before his death, he returned to consciousness. He demanded a priest, confessed, and received the Holy Mysteries. He called his wife, blessed her with these words: ‘Serve our Lord God; glorify His Most Holy name’”¹⁸.

This was merely Zhivotov's personal opinion; it did not coincide with the official view of the church hierarchy, nor with other information on the nature of the tragedy, circulating at the time. Two of the three akathists dedicated to the saint mention that Xenia's husband died without receiving communion or being anointed¹⁹. One afternoon, after young Xenia and her husband had attended a party, Colonel Andrey Feodorovich Petrov died during this function. A documentary film made by Elena Plugatyrova in 2007 and broadcast on the Kultura TV channel under the title *Во имя любви: Ксения Петербургская* (*In the Name of Love: Xenia of St. Petersburg*) goes as far as to suggest that Xenia's husband was indeed ill with typhoid fever, but died as a result of alcohol consumption and that “it is even possible that he caused himself much greater harm.”²⁰. It is difficult to explain what this harm consisted of. What is certain is that her husband's death had a very strong emotional impact on both Xenia and the other people around her.

Metropolitan Filaret emphasizes that during the eight years that Xenia was absent from St. Petersburg, she was away seeking advice and instruction from renowned fathers and ascetics, preparing herself for the difficult mission that awaited her. Thus, in her wanderings, she visited Prince Ivan Ushakov, who would become abbot of the monastery in Sanaxar and was canonized under the name of Saint Theodore. He had also been a high-ranking officer in the imperial guard in Saint Petersburg and was about the same age as Xenia's husband. He had taken his way into the barren land following the sudden death of a young man at a party he was attending. “It is very possible,” says Metropolitan Filaret, “that this young officer was Xenia's husband, and that this sad event paved the way to sainthood for two of the Russian saints”²¹.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 285.

¹⁷ *Life of Saint Xenia*, in „The Orthodox Word”, 14 (1978), 4 (81), p. 153.

¹⁸ Translated by S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 297. See also *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 15.

¹⁹ S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 299-300 (with passages rendered in English and Russian).

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 301.

²¹ Metropolitan Philaret, *The Glorification of Saint Xenia*, in „The Orthodox Word”, 14 (1978), 4 (81), p. 191.

The same year, the local police newspaper in Saint Petersburg gave more details about what happened next:

“After her husband’s death, Xenia Grigorievna put on the deceased’s clothes and left her home, wandering about the dirty poor streets of St. Petersburg, trying to convince everyone that she was Andrey Feodorovich. She wore her deceased husband’s clothes for a long time, until they turned into rags. Known throughout the neighborhood as a crazy but honest woman, Xenia aroused pity, which turned into respected”²².

Deeds while living in Saint Petersburg

People close to Xenia knew her simple and harsh way of life very well. Xenia spent 45 years in the streets, without a home, endured the bitter cold of the Russian North or the summer heat, the insults, mockery, and humiliation of people, but she responded to all these trials with exceptional gentleness. She was not angry by nature. She had always a stick to lean on, which she only used once to threaten mischievous and rude children. This state of irritation was interpreted and perceived as a state of “terrible anger” by the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, but it was caused by the children’s overly obstinate and prolonged behavior²³. Not only did they take advantage of Xenia’s meekness and seeming helplessness by insulting and mocking her, but they also started throwing stones and mud at her.

The sudden change in attitude towards worldliness and the complete change of identity occurred immediately after her husband’s death. Xenia truly became “the stranger,” as indicated by the Greek origin of her name, and her new identity was now that of her husband, Colonel Andrey Feodorovich Petrov. Could this fact show that she had begun to follow the model of Saint Andrew, the fool for Christ? Most likely²⁴. Some argue that by deliberately assuming a masculine identity, she had basically eradicated all the weaknesses and frailties of the female nature²⁵.

Immediately after her husband’s death, vexing her relatives, Xenia, who was only 26 then, left Praskovia Antonova the house and everything in it, handed out her possessions to the poor, and went into exile²⁶. Her chose perpetual wandering as her way of life. With no home or place to settle down, penniless, Xenia entrusted herself entirely to God’s will, in total humility and profound

²² *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 81-82.

²³ N. Gorbacheva, *op. cit.*, 24; L. N. Mishina, *Особенности обозначения эмоционального состояния человека в «Житии святой Ксунии Петербургской»*, in „Гуманитарно-педагогические исследования”, 3 (2019), 3, p. 23-24.

²⁴ Metropolitan Philaret, *op. cit.*, p. 149; P. A. Bodin, *Language, Canonization and Holy Foolishness. Studies in Postsoviet Russian Culture and the Orthodox Tradition*, Stockholm, Stockholm University, 2009, 242-243.

²⁵ N. Gorbacheva, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

meekness. She had nothing left to connect her with anything worldly. Antonova writes about Xenia's total trust in God's care: "He who does not belong to the world belongs to God"²⁷.

Soon, the residents of St. Petersburg began to realize that the woman they had once ridiculed and regarded as nothing more than a wandering beggar dressed in rags was actually a prayerful person who had acquired the gift of prophecy and clairvoyance through constant unceasing supplication, her humility, and her extreme meekness. Some people began to entrust her not only with clothes and shoes, which she immediately gave to the poor, but also with large sums of money. However, she never kept more than a kopeck with the image of the tsar on it²⁸.

When arriving at the market or in a shop, everyone rushed to invite her to buy their goods because they were convinced that they would be prosperous. At that time, stories circulated about poor people who had become millionaires and millionaires who had been brought to ruin, the latter being those who had refused to give her the kopeck she asked for. To some poor man, she had said only this, looking at the kopeck with the tsar on horseback: "You will gallop with him," and he soon became rich²⁹.

There were also cases when Xenia refused to accept charity from a certain merchant, and this was clearly an ominous sign. She would tell some of them directly what the reason was, either because they were inflating prices or because they were humiliating the poor. Even the cab drivers would crowd around to take her in their carriages, knowing that they would prosper³⁰.

She would go at night to pray privately out in the fields, barefoot and on her knees, irrespective of the season or weather. Praying until dawn, she rarely dozed off. She would prostrate herself in all directions. She was careful not to be seen praying in public³¹. Sometime later, in 1794, towards the end of Xenia's life, she was seen by workers at night carrying bricks in her lap from the brick factory to help build the church in the Smolensk cemetery as quickly as possible³². When she was not praying in the fields or walking the streets of Storona, Xenia spent the night in the courtyard of the parish church of St. Matthew³³.

Some stories about Saint Xenia are quite amusing, especially when she revealed to certain people what they wanted to hide from her. A few even wanted to test her and see if she really understood. Somebody told her not to have cooked any fish pie that day, and she immediately replied that she had, but did not want to give it to her³⁴.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

²⁸ *Life of Blessed Xenia...*, p. 10.

²⁹ *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 54-55.

³⁰ N. Gorbacheva, *op. cit.*, p. 24-26.

³¹ J. Kormina, S. Shtyrkov, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

³² *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 76.

³³ N. Gorbacheva, *op. cit.*, p. 22; *Life of Blessed Xenia...*, p. 15.

³⁴ *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 81.

One day, Xenia went to visit some friends, the Belayev sisters. It happened to be just before lunchtime. One of them, Evdokia Denisievna Gaidukova, delighted to welcome her, sat her down at the table, but served her only the leftovers from other meals, apologizing that she could not offer her anything else because she had not cooked that day. But Xenia boldly told her that she should have told the truth. Not that she was interested in a roast duck, but she knew it was meant for the “ogre” of a husband she had³⁵. She called him that because she didn't really like him because of his gruff character and of his being a tippler who would always swear when he drank.

Nowadays, Saint Xenia is best known as a constant protector of families and marriages. Some examples are particularly relevant in this sense and have a completely unexpected ending. When she visited Paraskeva Ivanovna in the house left by her late husband, she suddenly urged her not to waste time sewing socks, but to go immediately to the Smolensk cemetery and take her newborn child. On one of the streets of Vasilievsky Island near the cemetery, a crowd had gathered because a serious accident had occurred. A cab driver had run over a pregnant woman, who died giving birth to a child there. Paraskeva took pity on the child and took him into her care, but she was never able to find his natural father. She raised him as her own child, although she also took care of four other orphaned children during her lifetime³⁶. And although she was illiterate, she gave him a fine education, and Andrey Ivanovich Antonov later became a high-ranking official in the imperial administrative service, as a state councillor³⁷.

Another happy story with a completely unexpected ending concerns another friend of Xenia's, the widow Golubeva. Her beautiful 17 year old daughter was of a quiet and gentle nature. While she was making coffee, Xenia told her to hurry to Okhta, because her husband was burying his wife. That seemed a completely absurd and shocking situation. However, the girl took her mother and went to the cemetery; and, indeed, they came across a funeral procession. A doctor was burying his wife, who had died in childbirth. Shortly after seeing her off on her final journey and burying her, the doctor lost consciousness and collapsed right next to where Golubeva and her daughter were standing. They took care of him, and just one year after this unfortunate event, young Golubeva married the doctor.

Most of the time, when she foretold misfortunes to happen to certain people, she spoke in parables or analogies, so as not to offend the person concerned or cause too much confusion. One day, while visiting a merchant's house, she told her hostess as she was leaving, looking out the window into the yard as if it were something trivial, that the nettle (Rus. *krapiva*) was beautiful, but would soon wither. And indeed, the hostess, whose name was Krapivina, lost her life shortly thereafter³⁸. Another day, when invited to the home of another merchant, after

³⁵ *Life of Blessed Xenia...*, p. 14.

³⁶ N. Gorbacheva, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

³⁸ *Life of Blessed Xenia...*, p. 12.

looking at herself in the mirror, she said that it was beautiful, “but you have nothing to look at yourself in.” Shortly thereafter, the mirror fell and broke, and the merchant died only three days thereafter³⁹.

Saint Xenia also predicted two important events related to the demise of certain members of the imperial family. The first of these was foretelling the death of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna⁴⁰. The second event was the bloody death in 1764 of former Tsar Ivan VI Antonovich, whom she called “poor Ulrich” after his father, Prince Anton Ulrich. Having been removed first by Anna Ivanovna, who was acting as regent, and then by Catherine II, he was held captive for 25 years, first in Riga, then in Solovetsky, Kholmogory, and finally in the Schlussemburg fortress in St. Petersburg. When Peter III came to the throne, Ivan’s situation got worse. Upon Peter’s death, Catherine II ordered that Ivan be killed immediately by the guards if anyone tried to free him. Second Lieutenant Vasily Mirovich and Lieutenant Ushakov planned a coup to depose Catherine II and, with the help of the 45 soldiers under their command, attempted to free Ivan Antonovich. The residents of St. Petersburg had no idea what was happening in the Schlussemburg prison, but it was during those days that the blessed Xenia began to weep. “What happened to you, Andrei Feodorovich, why are you crying? Did someone upset you?” they asked the blessed Xenia. She uttered words that no one understood, for they seemed completely meaningless: “Poor, poor Ulrich! There is blood, blood, blood there,” and she began to cry even harder. According to a contemporary of those events, upon hearing the news of Ivan’s death, which spread rapidly throughout the capital, the entire population of St. Petersburg was outraged and mourned him. And only then did the residents of St. Petersburg understand why the blessed Xenia had been crying three weeks earlier and what blood she had been talking about. Soon the Petersburgers, who had heard the predictions of the blessed Xenia, saw the blood with their own eyes, for Mirovich was beheaded on the scaffold.

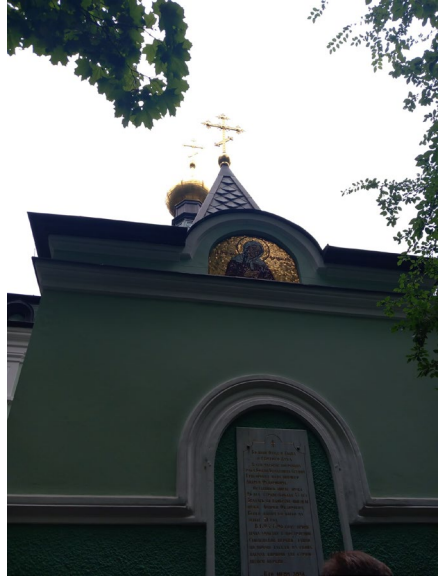
After Xenia’s death, the first chapel was built of gray stone with an iron roof, two small windows on either side, an oak iconostasis facing east, and an iron door facing west. Above the door on the outside, they wrote: “Servant of God Xenia.” Above the tomb, raised on a pedestal, they placed a plaque on which was written:

“In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Here lies the body of God’s servant Xenia Grigorievna, wife of the imperial singer, Colonel Andrey Feodorovich. She was widowed at the age of 26, wandered for 45 years, and lived to be 71; she called herself Andrey Feodorovich. Whoever knew me, let them pray for my soul for the salvation of their own soul. Amen!”

³⁹ *Sfânta Xenia cea smerită...*, p. 55.

⁴⁰ *Life of Blessed Xenia...*, p. 13.

She is an unparalleled example of love taken to the extremes, and not only of love for God, but also for her dear poor husband whose identity she assumed in order to save and redeem his soul. Her entire earthly life is a living proof of one of her assertions; there is no greater sacrifice than giving your soul for the other. Thus, she was not only great. She was uniquely great.



Images of the chapel and the grave of St Xenia in Sankt Petersburg (© Marina Vraciu)

ABREVIERI

<i>AARMSI</i>	= Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice
<i>AARMSL</i>	= Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile Secțiunii Literare
<i>AARPAD</i>	= „Analele Academiei Române”, seria II, București, 1879-1916
<i>AA.SS.</i>	= <i>Acta Sanctorum</i> , ed. Bollandisti, III ^a ediție, Parigi 1863-1870
<i>AB</i>	= Arhivele Basarabiei
<i>ACNSAS</i>	= Arhivele Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității
<i>AE</i>	= L'Année Epigraphique, Paris
<i>AIR</i>	= Arhiva Istorică a României
<i>AIAC</i>	= Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Cluj
<i>AIIAI</i>	= Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie „A. D. Xenopol”, Iași
<i>AIIC</i>	= Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Cluj
<i>AIINC</i>	= Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională, Cluj
<i>AIIX</i>	= Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A. D. Xenopol”, Iași
<i>ALIL</i>	= Anuarul de Lingvistică și Istorie Literară, Iași
<i>ALMA</i>	= <i>Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi</i> . Genève.
<i>AM</i>	= Arheologia Moldovei, Iași
<i>AMAE</i>	= Arhiva Ministerului Afacerilor Externe
<i>AmAnthr</i>	= American Anthropologist, New Series, Published by Wiley on behalf of the American Anthropological Association
<i>AMM</i>	= Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis, Vaslui
<i>AMMB</i>	= Arhiva Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, Iași
<i>AMN</i>	= Acta Musei Napocensis
<i>AMR</i>	= Arhivele Militare Române
<i>AMS</i>	= Anuarul Muzeului din Suceava
<i>ANB</i>	= Arhivele Naționale, București
<i>ANC</i>	= Arhivele Naționale. Serviciul Județean Cluj
<i>ANSMB</i>	= Arhivele Naționale. Serviciul Municipiului București
<i>ANG</i>	= Arhivele Naționale. Serviciul Județean Galați
<i>ANI</i>	= Arhivele Naționale, Iași
<i>ANIC</i>	= Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale
<i>ANR-Cluj</i>	= Arhivele Naționale, Cluj-Napoca
<i>ANR-Sibiu</i>	= Arhivele Naționale, Sibiu
<i>ANRM</i>	= Arhivele Naționale ale Republicii Moldova, Chișinău
<i>ANRW</i>	= Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, Berlin-New York
<i>ANSMB</i>	= Arhivele Naționale. Serviciul Municipiului București
<i>ANV</i>	= Arhivele Naționale, Vaslui
<i>AO</i>	= Arhivele Olteniei
<i>AP</i>	= Analele Putnei
<i>APH</i>	= Acta Poloniae Historica, Varșovia
<i>AqLeg</i>	= <i>Aquila Legionis. Cuadernos de Estudios sobre el Ejército Romano</i> , Salamanca
<i>AR</i>	= Arhiva Românească
<i>ArchM</i>	= Archiva Moldaviae, Iași
<i>ArhGen</i>	= Arhiva Genealogică
„Arhiva”	= „Arhiva”. Organul Societății Științifice și Literare, Iași
<i>ArhMold</i>	= Arheologia Moldovei

ASRR	= Arhiva Societății Române de Radiodifuziune
AȘUI	= Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași
ATS	= Ancient Textile Series, Oxbow Books, Oxford și Oakville
AUAIC	= Arhiva Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași
AUB	= Analele Universității „București”
BA	= <i>Biblioteca Ambrosiana</i> , Roma, Città Nuova Editrice
BAR	= Biblioteca Academiei Române
BArchB	= Bundesarchiv Berlin
BAR int. ser.	= British Archaeological Reports, International Series
BBRF	= Buletinul Bibliotecii Române din Freiburg
BCIR	= Buletinul Comisiei Istorice a României
BCMI	= Buletinul Comisiei Monumentelor Istorice
BCU-Iași	= Biblioteca Centrală Universitară, Iași
BE	= Bulletin Epigraphique
BF	= Byzantinische Forschungen, Amsterdam
BJ	= Bonner Jahrbücher, Bonn
BMI	= Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice
BMIM	= București. Materiale de istorie și muzeografie
BNB	= Biblioteca Națională București
BNJ	= Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher
BOR	= Biserica Ortodoxă Română
BS	= Balkan Studies
BSNR	= Buletinul Societății Numismatice Române
ByzSlav	= Byzantinoslavica
CA	= Cercetări arheologice
CAI	= Caiete de Antropologie Istorică
CartNova	= <i>La ciudad de Carthago Nova 3: La documentación epigráfica</i> , Murcia
CB	= Cahiers balkaniques
CBI	= <i>Der römische Weihebezirk von Osterburken. Corpus des griechischen und lateinischer Beneficiärer – Inschriften des Römischen Reiches</i> , Stuttgart
CC	= Codrul Cosminului, Suceava (ambele serii)
CCAR	= Cronica cercetărilor arheologice din România, CIMEC, București
CCh	= <i>Corpus Christianorum</i> , Turnhout
CChSG	= <i>Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca</i>
CCSL	= <i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i> , Turnhout, Brepols
CDM	= <i>Catalogul documentelor moldovenești din Arhivele Centrale de Stat</i> , București, vol. I-V; supl. I.
CDȚR	= <i>Catalogul documentelor Țării Românești din Arhivele Statului</i> , București, vol. II-VIII, 1974-2006
Chiron	= Chiron: Mitteilungen der Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, 1971
CI	= Cercetări istorice (ambele serii)
CIL	= <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> , Berlin
CL	= Cercetări literare
CLRE	= <i>Consuls of the Later Roman Empire</i> , eds. R. S. Bagnall, A. Cameron, S. R. Schwartz, K. A. Worp, Atlanta, 1987
CN	= Cercetări Numismatice
CNA	= Cronica Numismatică și Arheologică, București
CSCO	= <i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i> , Louvain
CSEA	= <i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiae Aquileiensis</i> , Roma, Città Nuova Editrice
CSEL	= <i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> , Wien, De Gruyter
CSPAMI	= Centrul de Studii și Păstrare a Arhivelor Militare Centrale, Pitești
CT	= Columna lui Traian, București

<i>CTh</i>	= <i>Codex Theodosianus</i> . Theodosiani, Libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis, I, edidit adsumpto apparatu P. Kruegeri, Th. Mommsen, Hildesheim, 1970-1971
<i>Cv.L</i>	= Convorbiri literare (ambele serii)
„ <i>Dacia</i> ”, <i>N.S.</i>	= Dacia. Nouvelle Série, Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne, București
<i>DGAS</i>	= Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului
<i>DI</i>	= Diplomatarium Italicum
<i>DIR</i>	= <i>Documente privind istoria României</i>
<i>DIRRI</i>	= <i>Documente privind Istoria României. Războiul pentru Independență</i>
<i>DOP</i>	= Dumbarton Oaks Papers
<i>DTN</i>	= <i>Din trecutul nostru</i> , Chișinău
<i>DRH</i>	= <i>Documenta Romaniae Historica</i>
<i>EB</i>	= Études Balkaniques
<i>EBPB</i>	= Études byzantines et post-byzantines
<i>EDCS</i>	= <i>Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss-Slaby</i> (http://www.manfredclauss.de/)
<i>EDR</i>	= <i>Epigraphic Database Roma</i> (http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php)
<i>EpigrAnat</i>	= Epigraphica Anatolica, Münster
<i>ERAsturias</i>	= F. Diego Santos, <i>Epigrafia Romana de Asturias</i> , Oviedo, 1959.
<i>EuGeSta</i>	= <i>Journal of Gender Studies in Antiquity</i>
<i>Gerión</i>	= Gerión. Revista de Historia Antigua, Madrid
<i>GB</i>	= Glasul Bisericii
<i>GCS</i>	= <i>Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller</i> , Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1897-1969
<i>GLK</i>	= <i>Grammatici Latini Keil</i>
<i>HEp</i>	= <i>Hispania Epigraphica</i> , Madrid
„ <i>Hierasus</i> ”	= <i>Hierasus</i> . Anuarul Muzeului Județean Botoșani, Botoșani
<i>HM</i>	= Heraldica Moldaviae, Chișinău
<i>HU</i>	= Historia Urbana, Sibiu
<i>HUI</i>	= Historia Universitatis Iassiensis, Iași
<i>IDR</i>	= <i>Inscripțiile din Dacia romană</i> , Bucurști-Paris
<i>IDRE</i>	= <i>Inscriptions de la Dacie romaine. Inscriptions externes concernant l'histoire de la Dacie</i> , I-II, Bucarest, 1996, 2000
<i>IGLN</i>	= <i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de Novae</i> , Bordeaux
<i>IGLR</i>	= <i>Inscripțiile grecești și latine din secolele IV-XIII descoperite în România</i> , București, 1976
<i>IILPecs</i>	= <i>Instrumenta Inscripta Latina. Das römische Leben im Spiegel der Kleininschriften</i> , Pecs, 1991
<i>ILAlg</i>	= <i>Inscriptions latines d'Algérie</i> , Paris
<i>ILB</i>	= <i>Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria repertae. Inscriptiones inter Oescum et Iatrum repertae</i> , Sofia, 1989
<i>ILD</i>	= <i>Inscripții latine din Dacia</i> , București
<i>ILN</i>	= <i>Inscriptiones latines de Novae</i> , Poznan
<i>ILLPRON</i>	= <i>Inscriptionum Lapidarium Latinarum Provinciae Norici usque ad annum MCMLXXXIV repertarum indices</i> , Berlin, 1986
<i>ILS</i>	= <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , 1892
<i>IMS</i>	= <i>Inscriptiones Moesiae Superioris</i> , Belgrad
<i>IN</i>	= „Ioan Neculce”. Buletinul Muzeului Municipal Iași
<i>ISM</i>	= <i>Inscripțiile din Scythia Minor grecești și latine</i> , București, vol. I-III, 1983-1999
<i>JGO</i>	= <i>Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas</i>
<i>JL</i>	= Junimea literară
<i>JRS</i>	= The Journal of Roman studies, London
<i>LR</i>	= Limba română
<i>Lupa</i>	= <i>Ubi Erat Lupa</i> (http://lupa.at/)
<i>MA</i>	= Memoria Antiquitatis, Piatra Neamț

<i>MCA</i>	= Materiale și cercetări arheologice
<i>MEF</i>	= <i>Moldova în epoca feudalismului</i> , vol. I-XII, 1961-2012, Chișinău
<i>MEFRA</i>	= <i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: Antiquité</i> , Roma
<i>MGH</i>	= <i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica inde ab anno Christi quingentesimo usque ad annum millesimum et quingentesimum auspiciis societatis aperiendis fontibus rerum Germanicarum medii aevi</i> , Berlin 1877-
<i>MI</i>	= Magazin istoric, București
<i>MIM</i>	= Materiale de istorie și muzeografie
<i>MM</i>	= Mitropolia Moldovei
<i>MMS</i>	= Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei
<i>MN</i>	= Muzeul Național, București
<i>MO</i>	= Mitropolia Olteniei
<i>MOF</i>	= Monitorul Oficial al României
<i>Navarro</i>	= M. Navarro Caballero, <i>Perfectissima femina. Femmes de l'élite dans l'Hispanie romaine</i> , Bordeaux, 2017.
<i>NBA</i>	= <i>Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana</i> , Roma, Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum
<i>NDPAC</i>	= <i>Nuovo Dizionario Patristico e di Antichità Cristiane</i> , I, A-E, 2e edizione, Marietti, 2006; III, P-Z, 2e edizione, Marietti, 2008
<i>NEH</i>	= <i>Nouvelles études d'histoire</i>
<i>OI</i>	= Opțiuni istoriografice, Iași
<i>OPEL</i>	= <i>Onomasticon provinciarum Europae latinarum</i> , vol. I-IV, Budapesta-Viena, 1994-2002
<i>PG</i>	= <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1886-1912
<i>PIR</i>	= <i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani. Saec. I.II.III</i> , editio altera, Berlin.
<i>PLRE</i>	= <i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , 3 vol., eds. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris, Cambridge, 1971-1992
<i>RA</i>	= Revista arhivelor
<i>RBAR</i>	= Revista Bibliotecii Academiei Române, București
<i>RC</i>	= Revista catolică
<i>RdI</i>	= Revista de istorie
<i>REByz</i>	= <i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
<i>RER</i>	= <i>Revue des études roumaines</i>
<i>RESEE</i>	= <i>Revue des études Sud-Est européennes</i>
<i>RGI</i>	= Revista Generală a Învățământului
<i>RHP</i>	= <i>Die römischen Hilfstruppen in Pannonien während der Prinzipatszeit. I: Die Inschriften</i> , Viena
<i>RHSEE</i>	= <i>Revue historique de Sud-Est européen</i>
<i>RI</i>	= Revista istorică (ambele serii)
<i>RIAF</i>	= Revista pentru istorie, arheologie și filologie
<i>RIB</i>	= <i>Roman Inscriptions of Britain</i> , Londra
<i>RIM</i>	= Revista de Istorie a Moldovei, Chișinău
<i>RIR</i>	= Revista istorică română, București
<i>RIS</i>	= Revista de istorie socială, Iași
<i>RITL</i>	= Revista de istorie și teorie literară
<i>RIU</i>	= <i>Die römischen Inschriften Ungarns</i> , Budapesta
<i>RJMH</i>	= <i>The Romanian Journal of Modern History</i> , Iași
<i>RM</i>	= Revista muzeelor
<i>RMD</i>	= <i>Roman Military Diplomas</i> , Londra
<i>RMM</i>	= <i>Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums</i> , Mainz
<i>RMM-MIA</i>	= Revista muzeelor și monumentelor, seria Monumente istorice și de artă
<i>RMR</i>	= Revista Medicală Română
<i>RRH</i>	= <i>Revue roumaine d'histoire</i>

<i>RRHA</i>	= Revue roumaine de l'histoire de l'art
<i>RRHA-BA</i>	= Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art. Série Beaux Arts
<i>RSIAB</i>	= Revista Societății istorice și arheologice bisericești, Chișinău
<i>Rsl</i>	= Romanoslavica
<i>SAHIR</i>	= Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae, București
<i>SAI</i>	= Studii și Articole de Istorie
<i>SANIC</i>	= Serviciul Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale
<i>SCB</i>	= Studii și cercetări de bibliologie
<i>SCh</i>	= <i>Sources Chrétiennes</i> , Paris
<i>SCIA</i>	= Studii și cercetări de istoria artei
<i>SCIM</i>	= Studii și cercetări de istorie medie
<i>SCIV/SCIVA</i>	= Studii și cercetări de istorie veche (și arheologie)
<i>SCN</i>	= Studii și Cercetări Numismatice, București
<i>SCȘI</i>	= Studii și cercetări științifice, Istorie
<i>SEER</i>	= The Slavonic and East European Review
<i>SHA</i>	= <i>Scriptores Historiae Augustae</i>
<i>SJAN</i>	= Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale
<i>SMIC</i>	= Studii și materiale de istorie contemporană, București
<i>SMIM</i>	= Studii și materiale de istorie medie, București
<i>SMIMod</i>	= Studii și materiale de istorie modernă, București
<i>SOF</i>	= Südost-Forschungen, München
<i>ST</i>	= Studii Teologice, București
<i>StAntArh</i>	= <i>Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica</i> , Iași
<i>T&MBYZ</i>	= <i>Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de recherches d'histoire et de civilisation byzantines</i>
<i>ThD</i>	= Thraco-Dacica, București
<i>TR</i>	= Transylvanian Review, Cluj-Napoca
<i>TV</i>	= Teologie și viața, Iași
<i>ZPE</i>	= Zeitschrift für Papyralogie und Epigraphik
<i>ZSL</i>	= Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde