
Postgraduate Certificate in Romanian Literature and Culture

Historical Contexts of Romanian Culture

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The Postgraduate Certificate in Romanian Literature and Culture explores the rich tapestry of Romanian history, literature, and culture. To fully appreciate the nuances of Romanian culture, it is essential to delve into its historical contexts. This section will provide a comprehensive explanation of key terms and vocabulary related to the historical contexts of Romanian culture.

1. Dacia

Dacia was an ancient region located in present-day Romania. It was inhabited by the Dacians, a Thracian tribe, known for their fierce resistance against Roman conquest. The conquest of Dacia by the Romans under Emperor Trajan in 106 AD had a profound impact on the region's culture and history.

2. Romanization

Romanization refers to the process by which a non-Roman society adopts Roman culture, language, and customs. The Roman conquest of Dacia led to the gradual Romanization of the region, with Latin becoming the dominant language and Roman customs influencing local traditions.

3. Byzantine Influence

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, Romania came under Byzantine influence. The Byzantine Empire, with its capital in Constantinople, played a crucial role in shaping Romanian culture, religion, and art. Byzantine influence can be seen in Romanian architecture, religious practices, and iconography.

4. Transylvania

Transylvania is a historical region in central Romania known for its diverse cultural heritage. It has been inhabited by various ethnic groups, including Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, and Roma. Transylvania has been a melting pot of cultures, languages, and traditions, making it a fascinating area for studying Romanian culture.

5. Ottoman Rule

In the 15th century, Romania came under Ottoman rule, which lasted for several centuries. The Ottoman Empire left a lasting impact on Romanian culture, introducing elements of Turkish cuisine, music, and architecture. The struggle for independence from Ottoman rule also shaped Romanian national identity.

6. Phanariots

The Phanariots were Greek families from the Phanar district of Constantinople who held positions of power in the Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia during the Ottoman period. The Phanariots played a significant role in Romanian politics and administration, influencing the cultural and social landscape of

the region.

7. Enlightenment

The Enlightenment was a cultural and intellectual movement that swept across Europe in the 18th century, promoting reason, science, and individual rights. In Romania, the Enlightenment had a profound impact on the development of Romanian literature, philosophy, and political thought. Writers and thinkers like Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir embraced Enlightenment ideals in their works.

8. Wallachian Revolution of 1821

The Wallachian Revolution of 1821 was a rebellion against Ottoman rule led by Greek nationalist Alexander Ypsilantis. Although the revolution was ultimately suppressed by the Ottomans, it marked the beginning of a period of nationalist awakening in Romania. The revolution inspired Romanian intellectuals and poets to advocate for independence and national unity.

9. Union of Moldavia and Wallachia

In 1859, the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia united to form the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, under the rule of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza. This union laid the foundation for the modern Romanian state and marked a significant milestone in the country's quest for independence and unity.

10. Romanian War of Independence

The Romanian War of Independence, also known as the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, was a conflict between Romania and the Ottoman Empire, supported by Russia. The war resulted in Romanian independence from Ottoman rule and the recognition of Romania as a sovereign state. The war marked a crucial moment in Romanian history and solidified Romanian national identity.

11. Interwar Period

The interwar period in Romania refers to the time between World War I and World War II when the country underwent significant political, social, and cultural changes. During this period, Romania experienced economic growth, cultural flourishing, but also political instability. The interwar period is known for its vibrant literary scene, with writers like Mircea Eliade, Eugène Ionesco, and Lucian Blaga making significant contributions to Romanian literature.

12. Communist Era

In 1947, Romania became a communist state under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, followed by Nicolae Ceaușescu. The communist era in Romania was marked by repression, censorship, and economic hardship. The regime's policies had a profound impact on Romanian culture, literature, and the arts, with many writers and artists facing persecution for their dissenting views.

13. Romanian Revolution of 1989

The Romanian Revolution of 1989 was a series of protests and demonstrations that led to the overthrow of the communist regime and the execution of Nicolae Ceaușescu. The revolution marked the end of communism in Romania and paved the way for a transition to democracy. The events of 1989 had a

profound impact on Romanian society and culture, ushering in a new era of freedom and expression.

14. European Union Accession

In 2007, Romania joined the European Union, signaling its integration into the broader European community. EU accession brought economic opportunities, political stability, and cultural exchange to Romania. It also posed challenges in terms of adapting to EU regulations and standards while preserving its unique cultural identity.

15. Contemporary Romanian Culture

Contemporary Romanian culture is a vibrant tapestry of traditions, influences, and voices. Romanian literature, film, music, and art continue to evolve, reflecting the country's complex history and diverse heritage. Contemporary Romanian writers like Mircea Cărtărescu, Herta Müller, and Norman Manea have gained international acclaim for their innovative works that explore themes of identity, memory, and history.

In conclusion, the historical contexts of Romanian culture are essential for understanding the complexities and nuances of Romanian literature and society. By exploring key terms and vocabulary related to Romanian history, from Dacia to the European Union accession, students of Romanian literature and culture can gain a deeper appreciation of the forces that have shaped Romania's unique identity and cultural landscape.