

**„ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY FROM IAȘI**

*Faculty of History*

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**IAMANDI FAMILY,  
HISTORICAL ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION  
(UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY)**

**Abstract of the doctoral thesis**

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## INTRODUCTION

To understand the past it is quite necessary to know the evolution of aristocratic families who had an influence or put the “seal” on it. It is the merit of the Genealogy, as a special science of the History, to study the birth and the evolution of nations and families, their kinship and the role they play in the development of certain events.

Reconstruction in terms of pedigree and prosopography of the Iamandi family’s past makes the research subject of this paper<sup>1</sup> for the first time in Romanian historiography. Studying the evolution and the role of the Iamandi family is part of a work program of a relatively new direction of historical studies, namely the research of the elites, which have been spoken of by many historians lately.

Iamandi family has not made the subject of any extensive study which might have revealed ascendants or descendants, as well as its importance. Over time, after the first record, in the nineteenth century, in butler Constandin Sion’s *Moldavian Archontology*, concerns and contributions to establish the Iamandi family tree had important names in Romanian historiography, beginning with Nicolae Iorga, who published the article: “*From the Lost Lands, Landowners and Peasants in Bukovina and Bessarabia in the First Decades after the Annexation*” (AARMSI, Series II, volume XXXV, 1912-1913). There followed in the interwar period, Gheorghe Ghibănescu, C. D. Anghel, C. Gane, and in more recent times we can mention Emanuel R. Bogdan, Eugen D. Neculau, Mihai Sorin Rădulescu. Also, another Iamandi family tree was created by Mona and Florian Budu-Ghyka. There are several other articles as well dealing, in short, with only the activity of some family members, especially those in the first part of the twentieth century, written by Traian Nicola, Florin Faifer, Oltea Rășcanu-Grămăticu, Crisanta Podăreanu and Sorin Popescu.

By analysing the preserved sources I showed how a Greek, arrived at the end of the seventieth century in Moldova, managed to

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settle down, develop and, together with his sons, by dating strategies or accumulation of property in the lands between the Carpathians and Dniester, give rise to a vast family tree.

In terms of sources used for sketching the biographies of Iamandi family members, we used collections of unique documents kept in country archives, as well as published ones. Completion of such genealogical data could be achieved by analysing and interpreting a variety of documents, issued of both the authorities of the Moldavian country, and the family members as well, such as: property papers, correspondence, commemoration sheets, wills, dowry sheets, newspapers, religious books, chronicles, seals, information gathered from descendants of today, manuscripts of genealogists, etc.. In addition to these, we add epigraphic information, family pictures, literary works, as well as memoirs of contemporaries, for more recent periods, religious monuments.

From the methodological point of view, Iamandi family study was performed by combining the two types of historical inquiry, genealogy and prosopography. First, we performed the establishing of the descending members, then the description and assessment of the family relations with other people. Sometimes parentage is confusing, and for solving such problems it was necessary to resort to analysing the evolution of estate properties (*dominion genealogy*), which can lead to interpreting the voids left by documents and getting clues concerning relatedness. To the same purpose, we resorted to the analysis of various ranks held by those landowners at a certain point in time.

Prosopography analysis enabled us to devise biographical notes for almost every representative of this family, whose information, where testimonies allowed, were grouped into four points: I. *Family*; II. *Professional and public carrier*; III. *Owned property*; IV. *Cultural and founding activity*. Simultaneously, we will proceed to integrate all this information in the social, political and cultural conditions in which Iamandi family descendants have lived.

The temporal range considered in the present research is very large, beginning with the end of the seventeenth century, when documents mention the first Iamandi members in the Romanian Principalities and ending in the middle of the twentieth century (when the agrarian reforms led to the disappearance of the great estates, to which was added the communist regime, causing changes in the life of

Romanian aristocracy; gradual extinction of the family, either by descendants being women unlikely to bear the name, or by the departure of some followers abroad).

Analysis of medieval and modern documents, some of them created by bearers of the name themselves, show us that most of them appointed themselves as *Iamandi*, but cases have also been identified in which *Diamandi* or *Emandi* appeared. Beginning with the nineteenth century, in parallel with the three forms already mentioned, some of the family members began occasionally to call themselves *Iamandy* or *Diamandy*. As for us, we chose to use all four names that the bearers themselves found it necessary to use, indicating that, for every character we chose to use that form of the name each considered to name himself/herself more often.

The paper is structured in five chapters.

**The first chapter** discusses, in general, the main entry points and features of the arrival of the Greek rulers in the Romanian Principalities, by the end of the eighteenth century, as they were reflected in Romanian historiography, with particular attention being paid to those rulers who were bearers of the name “Iamandi”.

**The second chapter** presents the career and the main points in the life of the first Iamandi, the creator of the nation, Capuchehaia<sup>2</sup> at Bender and Hotin, and his sons, with special attention being paid to straightening older historical interpretations related to marriage and Greek Iamandi posterity.

**The next two chapters** are dedicated to the followers of the two great branches of the vast genealogic tree, a larger number of pages being allocated to landowners in the second half of the nineteenth century, involved in the modernization of the country, or to politicians and diplomats, such as the socialist George Diamandy, respectively Constantin Diamandy and Theodor Emandi.

**The fifth chapter** deals with some of Iamandi name bearers who were not localized within the tree, but of which there are indications according to which they belong to this family.

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<sup>2</sup> *Capuchehaia (s. f.) = Agent, diplomatic representative of Romanian rulers in the Ottoman Empire. Settled in the fifteenth century, they were often Greeks from Constantinople. Likewise were called the agents of the lords near the steps of the Danube cities and, sometimes, soldiers from the vizier's personal guard – Ed.*

The annexes of this work are intended to shape a clearer picture of the information in the text, especially through the genealogical spokes, summarising the family lineage, as well as through photographs of those who were the Iamandi nobles, that are meant to inspire some of the information presented in the text.

## CONCLUSIONS

A series of conclusions were obtained out of information gathered around the characters subjected to this analysis. We have seen, however, how a Greek, arrived in the Romanian Principalities in the late seventeenth century, managed to settle down. He contracted marriages with daughters of influential Romanian boyars in his time, and his descendants were related in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to other old Moldavian boyar nations, big or small, such as Sturdza, Cantacuzino, Miclescu, Catargiu, Hurmuzaki, Kogălniceanu, Balș, Râșcanu, etc.

Greek Iamandi kinship with the local nobility facilitated his integration, being assimilated among Moldavian boyars without difficulty, even since the first generation. He was also favoured by dignitaries of liability which he held, and by taking possession of estates, particularly by princely donations, but also by purchase, together forming the economic base of his descendants. Once strengthened the economic potential, it allowed him to build a church (Epureni, in the country Fălciu). He wasn't devoid of culture and acted as a great diplomat, multilingual, knowing Greek, as mother tongue, Romanian, with its Cyrillic alphabet, and Turkish, which he had a very good command of, for we encounter him writing complaints in this language. He benefited of the climate of the era in which he lived, which coincides with the period of an increase in the Greek influence in the Romanian Principalities and the establishment of the Phanariot rulers.

Greek Iamandi did not restrict himself only to be appointed functions and authorities, but fully integrated in the Moldavian society, establishing the basis of a new manorial generation. For three centuries, up to the mid-twentieth century, the nation of Iamandi perpetuated in nine generations, starting from the Greek Iamandi as

Medelnicer<sup>3</sup>, a true *pater familiae* (162 direct descendants, only by men). There are also many descendants by women, known or suspected to be, and there are probably more Iamandi descendants we do not know, especially in Bessarabia.

Although the Phanariot Era was favourable for them and we can see some of them in charge of special missions in the context of major events, few followers of the Capuchehaia were appointed functions and important dignitaries, at least until the middle of the nineteenth century. However, they played an important role locally in the administrative apparatus of the country, many of whom were appointed to handle, several years in a row, functions such as de stewards, then district heads in various provinces and districts of Moldova. Also, they went through the Greek Etheric times, Austrian and Russian occupation, and the dissolution of the old noble classes. They went, thus, through the period of Organic Regulations, when the aristocratic ranks were assimilated to the administrative functions, in a time in which it takes place the acceleration of modern Romanian society development, the formation and development of the national culture, the affirmation of the Romanian nation, of the national consciousness and personality.

Against this background, they actively participated to the Revolution of 1848, the election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, whom they supported, being filled with the unionist current of the time, supporting him, each by his own possibilities. Entering the constitutional period, they will be part of a body well educated in western schools (Paris, Dresden), which built and managed modern Romania, contributing to the support of Carol I, managing and improving the issues raised by the conduct of the War of Independence, the first World War, building the Great Romania.

The last part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century was going to bring the affirmation of people with exceptional character of this nation, if we are to mention brothers George and Constantin Diamandy. The former was noted in the realm of drama and socialist political movement and is one of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Medelnicer (s. m.) = Title given during the Middle Ages in Romanian Country and Moldova to the boyar who poured the country ruler water to wash hands, also put salt and served a portion of meal before the country ruler – Ed.*

Romanians who made known the value of archaeological discoveries at Cucuteni to western public opinion, and the latter was a brilliant diplomat, a good friend of Ion I. C. Brătianu, both contributing to building the Great Romania.

In terms of their doctrinal orientation, all of them tended towards liberal (including the socialist George Diamandy, later on) or conservative policy, manifesting active in public debates, in Parliament or in newspapers and pamphlets, and some of them fought for keeping the old ordinances.

From an economic perspective, administration of estates, namely agriculture, was the main occupation of Iamandi boyars. Since the vast majority of Romanian nobility was deprived of a modern economic sense, some of the Iamandi members will encounter the phenomenon of turning the boyars into bourgeoisie, concentrating on skills which were specific to this social category.

From the analysis of Iamandi boyars' land properties one can observe that, from a geographic perspective, the estates were mostly located in three areas corresponding to the former provinces / districts Tutova, Falciu and Botosani. By wills, Iamandi descendants left their estates to all children, regardless of gender, they had the same rights concerning inheritance, and the brothers coming from two successive marriages enjoyed equal rights division. In lack of offspring, the properties were given to close relatives, usually to grandchildren.

All this estate capital, the basis of the Iamandi boyars' economic power, suffered and decreases substantially after successive agrarian reforms, starting with the one in 1864 and the ones in the first part of the twentieth century. Moreover, attracted by life in the cities, many of them began to lease properties, with a direct effect of impoverishment of some of them.

Wealthy Iamandi descendants have founded churches (Epureni, Podul Turcului, Musata, Gura Idrici, Simila) of have made significant donations to places of worship (consisting of estates, religious items, money), that after death, their name to be remembered. For the founders' followers, restoring these places was a duty they had to fulfil.

One can also add the numerous charities, represented by acts of donation made to various institutions, contributing decisively to the establishment and administration of hospitals (Husi, Barlad), libraries

(Husi), schools, or treating Romanian soldiers' wounds in the Independence War.

Another important feature we find in the members of this family is the important role given to art and culture. If Ionita Iamandi's occupation, at 1742, was transcription of religious books, over a century and a half, in early twentieth century, some of his followers have given a more important (George Diamandy) or a more inconsequent role (Mr Theodor and Mrs Elena Emandi) to writing some novels, of which transpires the regret towards the disappearance of the old aristocratic world.

Since the eighteenth century one can observe in Iamandi descendants the lack of maintaining or demanding the tradition of their Greek ethnic origin. Also, few of Iamandi followers today, descendants by women, still have the consciousness of followers of an ancient manorial nation. However, over time, one could observe that Iamandi descendants proved the existence of a *genealogical consciousness*. Let us remember an example of valorisation of the genealogical consciousness, namely the words of the Bessarabian Nicolae Iamandi, in 1847: „*I beseech you that at least Iamandi family hurry to persist to strengthen in wearing the aristocratic coat*”.

At a time when many landowners have been tempted to invent their own imaginary genealogy, tied to the origin, history and composition of their family, creating various genealogical myths, the analysis of the documents and Iamandi descendants' own testimonies attest that in their minds this imaginary did not develop.

In conclusion, through the evocation of Iamandi family past, the present paper presents a detailed segment of Moldavian society elite during the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, framing some people's destinies and tribulations, most often used, but unknown or forgotten and which contributed to the development of Romanian society in various spheres of activity and places.



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