

WALLACHIAN NOTE FROM 1772 IN THE SHUMEN DAMASKIN BOOK AS A SOURCE FROM THE BULGARIAN HISTORY

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Rezumat: În unele manuscrise bulgare există note scrise de scribii valahi. Una dintre ele se află într-o carte tip Damaskin din sec XVII-lea cu semnătura 2622 din Muzeul de Istorie din Shumen, Bulgaria. Este publicată în original și tradusă în limba bulgară în 1990, dar până în prezent nu a făcut obiectul unei cercetării științifice. Informațiile de la autor sunt rare, știm doar numele lui - Vasilije. Textul scurt conține informații interesante despre "Războiul de șase ani" dintre Imperiul Rus și Imperiul Otoman din 1768-1774. Pentru unele dintre evenimente, această notă este singura sursă. În literatura bulgară există mai multe date din război, dar niciuna nu conține informații mult mai cuprinzătoare decât cele ale lui Vasilije. Manuscrisul scriitorului valah este valoros nu numai din cauza informațiilor istorice interesante. Este un exemplu al interacțiunii culturale întârziate dintre bulgari și valahi, când râul nu este graniță, ci o punte între cele două popoare.

Abstract: In some Bulgarian manuscripts there are notes, written from Wallachian scribes. One of them is in a book of the Damaskin type from the 17th c. with signature 2622 in the Museum of History in Shumen, Bulgaria. It is published in original and translated in Bulgarian language in 1990, but until now it has not been subject of scientific research. Information from the author is scarce, we know just his name – Vasilije. The short text contains interesting information about the "Six-year war" between the Russian and the Ottoman Empire from 1768-1774. For some of the events this note is the only one source. In the Bulgarian literature there are some more data from the war, but no one of them contain much more comprehensive information than Vasilije's. The Wallachian bookman's writing is valuable not only because of the interesting historical information. It is an example of the late cultural interaction between Bulgarians and Wallachians when the river is not a border, but a bridge between the two peoples.

Cuvinte-cheie: manuscrise bulgare; Scribii valahi; "Război de șase ani"; Imperiul Rusesc; Imperiul Otoman.

Key-words: Bulgarian manuscripts; Wallachian scribes; "Six-year war"; Russian Empire; Ottoman Empire.

Though rarely, on the pages of Bulgarian manuscripts appear useful notes, written from Wallachian scribes. One of them is almost unknown to the science. It is in a manuscript, preserved in the Museum of History in Shumen, Bulgaria, with signature 2622. The book is of the Damaskin type, it dates from the 17th c. Its origin is unknown. It entered in the museum as a donation in 1906. Manuscript contains 27 speeches – 26 of Damaskinos Stouditis and one of Theophanes Rhetor. In textological attitude this manuscript matches completely with the Elena Damaskin, signature 2008 in the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia.

Notes from the writer, who wrote the book, are not saved. On the back endpaper are written some notes in Greek language whit Armenian letters, but they are fragmented and their sense cannot be understood.

In folio II v there is a note in Wallachian language, written with Cyrillic alphabet vertically on the sheet:

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“МѢ(Л)ТЪ СЪНЪ ТАТЕ ДѢМИТАЛЕ ФРАТЕ КЪ ТАРЕ МѢ(Л)ТЪ СЪНЪ”

“Many health to you, brother, because too much health...”

In folio III r is preserved another note, wrote from the same bookman:

“Съ се щѣ де кѣндѣ ам венитѣ еѣ Василе ла ШѢмле кѣндѣ аѣ ериатѣ везирѣл ла ШѢмле ве лет
ѣАФѢВ [1772] шаѣвенитѣ москални: РЛ: [130] мпреѣнѣ кѣ генѣрарѣлор шитраѣе варѣ аѣ арѣѣ Тротѣкаа
ши Тротѣкаа шеѣе паша Сарѣ Ханѣ та Рѣши москални аѣ тѣет рѣѣ пе тѣрѣи. Шам скрис еѣ Василе wt
N...”

“To be known when I – Vasilije, was coming in Shumen, when the Vizier is wintering in Shumen in the year 1772 and came 6 thousand Muscovites in Ruse and all of them were killed by the Ottomans, which took 130 captive Muscovites, along with the General himself. During this year Tutrakan was burned and in Tutrakan was sitting the Pasha of Sarukhan. And in Ruse the Muscovites poorly slaughtered them the Ottomans. And wrote I – Vasilije, from N...”

The two Wallachian notes in original and translated in Bulgarian language are published in 1990¹ in an article from the Slavonic manuscripts in the Museum of Shumen. Until now, they have not been subject of scientific research.

Valuable for the science is the second note, which contains important historical information. It is secondary – made not from the author of the manuscript, but from some later user. From the short text we understand the writer’s name – Vasilije, but the name of his city is not preserved. The fact that he leaves a note in a manuscript in foreign language, presents him as an experienced writer. Remains a mystery how Vasilije received access to the book.

In the notice he talks about the “the Six-year war” between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. War comes in 1768 at the management of the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III (1757-1773) and the Russian Empress Catherine the Great (1762-1796). It finishes with the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji in 1774. The conflict begins because of the Crimean Tatars.

Notice speaks about an attack against the Bulgarian town Ruse in 1772, but in this year, there is no military actions. After the capture of Crimea in 1771 the combat operations are transferred along the Danube river. The Russian Army contains three divisions – the First under command of general Peter Rumyantsev (1725-1796) is located in Moldova; the Second division under command of general Peter Olits (?-1771) is along the Olt River; the Third, commanded by general Otto Weismann (1726-1773) is in the region of Brăila. After the Olits’s die the commend of the Second division takes general Nicolas Repnin (1734-1801). In this time his army is concentrated around Giurgiu, but Repnin decides to attack Turnu Măgurele. The Ottoman garrison in Ruse took advantage and for several hours managed to repel the Russians from Giurgiu.

More likely the note gives information for the second stage of the war, coming after the failed peace talks in 1772. In the spring of 1773 starts the “little war” - small squads periodically cross the river and attack the enemy. In the 10 (21) of May 1773 general Alexander Suvorov (1730-1800), commander of the Russian troops, organizes a nightly attack against Tutrakan. The Ottoman garrison was shattered, but the city was burned, and its inhabitants were transferred to the other side of the river. Five days after general Repnin decides to make a landing operation near Ruse. The Russian soldiers fought bravely, but there are 265 killed and 49 wounded. Repnin was captured, but soon general Suvorov exchanged him for a captured Ottoman warlord².

In the note the battle of Ruse is dated where 1772 instead 1773. Number of the killed and captive Russian soldiers is exaggerated. However, is correct the information on the loss suffered and the capture of the Russian General. For the burning of Tutrakan, the note of the Wallachian writer is the only source.

Vasilije reports that the Vizier is wintering in Shumen. His information is confirmed by the priest Theodor from the city Kotel, who writes that “in this time vizier has become Myisin Oglu,

¹ Караджова, Узунова, 1990, pp. 125-186.

² Петров, 1874, p. 39.

who wintered this year in Shumen”. Under the name Myisin Oglu is hiding the Great Vizier Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha (1771-1774). During the second stage of the war he defended Shumen with a 10,000-strong army. In the Wallachian text is said that the Pasha of Sarukhan is in Tutrakan. This is not confirmed by other sources. The war includes governors of some remote provinces, who arrive with troops in the Danube area. During the 18th c. Sarukhan is under the power of the Karaosmanoğlu family. The founder of the family Haji Mustafa Agha is muteselim of Sarukhan from 1743. His heirs ruled the area for decades, in 1772 governor is his son Mehmed Agha. Haji Ahmed Agha, the youngest Mustafa’s son, was called to defend the island of Chios. In 1771 he is in Shumen³. There is no evidence that he was in Tutrakan, but it is very probable. Therefore, the Vasilie’s information of the Pasha of Sarushan's pasture presence in Tutrakan must be considered credible.

In the Bulgarian literature there are some more data from “the Six-year war”. Theodor the priest gives two notes – in the Kotel Collection⁴ and in a Religious collection⁵. The first text is from 1771, and the second – this whit the Vizier’s name – is from 1772. In one secondary note are mentioned the military actions in Ruse in 1771. Two writers give information from the end of the war. Dimo Abadji talks about “peace between Turks and Muscovites”⁶. He dates the event in 1776, but it is the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji from 1774. Information from the same contract gives Stephen Takdjilski⁷.

No one of the Bulgarian notes contain much more comprehensive information than Vasilije’s. The Wallachian bookman’s writing is valuable not only because of the interesting historical information. It is an example of the late cultural interaction between Bulgarians and Wallachians when the river is not a border, but a bridge between the two peoples.

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³ Nagata, 1997, p. 35.

⁴ Kotel Collection, Sofia, National Library, № 1174, f. 32r.II - Петканова, 1962, pp. 175-177.

⁵ Religious Collection, private property of N. Popnikilov, f. 75r - Попниколов, 1990, p. 360; Попниколов, 1992, pp. 415-420.

⁶ Hagiographic narrative for Alexis Man of God, Sofia, National Library, № 1094, f. 19v.

⁷ Collection, National Library, № 1001, f. 66r.