



Laura Dumitru

### ***Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669). A Conference in Rome***

Enjoying a prestigious company - Zentrum Mittelalterforschung, Institut für Byzanzforschung in Vienna, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, Accademia di Romania in Rome, Istituto Storico Austriaco in Rome and Ecole Française de Rome -, the Romanian Academy had the successful initiative to organize in Rome, on November 25-27, 2010 the conference having *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669)* as main topic. Even taking only the title in consideration, it results that the intention had a larger transparency in view, by surpassing the narrow frame of national and even bilateral history. By focusing upon the Italian space, the event proved that one could scientifically investigate beyond the barriers of self-isolationism and self-sufficiency.

The organization committee, represented by Iulian M. Damian, Dan Ioan Mureșan și Alexandru Simon, succeeded in gathering in the 'Eternal City' not only Romanian and Italian researchers and scholars, but also representatives of various scientific institutions from France, Austria, Bulgaria, and Finland. Certainly, this detail made that a real 'Babel tower' be built inside of the various papers and debates. Hence, the discussions were in Italian, English, French, and German, and many times each speaker used another language than his/her native one. It represents an additional reason in order to regard the conference as a positive event.

The conference gathered together scholars whose historical concerns focus inside the two events regarded this time as borders: the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 by the Venetian and non-Venetian participants to the Fourth Crusade and the fall of Crete in the hands of the Ottoman Turks following the long siege between 1658 and 1669.

On this occasion, the papers were grouped on panels, which were separated by debates and discussions, which proved to be extremely useful in clarifying various respects risen during the speeches.

The first day of the conference had Istituto Storico Austriaco di Roma as host. After the welcome speeches delivered by Richard Bösel – director of the Austrian Institute, Mihai Bărbulescu – director of Accademia di Romania in Rome, and Ioan-Aurel Pop – representing the Romanian Academy), the papers of the first two sessions were presented. The session entitled *Coordinate dell'influsso Italiano: dal Basso Medioevo alla Prima Età Moderna* was moderated by Claudine Delacroix-Besnier (Amiens) and brought together the papers presented by Luigi Pellegrini (*Verso la sponda orientale del Mediterraneo: i frati minori in terra dalmata e bosniaca*) and Ioan-Aurel Pop (*Bucharest-Cluj*) (*Il Papa, Venezia e 'il duca Valacho' nella crociata antiottomana di fine Quattrocento*). Dedicated particularly to the economic respects, the session entitled *Economia e scambio: rivalità e collaborazione nel Mar Nero e nel Mediterraneo Orientale* gathered the following papers: *The Treatise between the despote John Terter (AD 1387) and the Genoese of Pera – Character and Political and Economic Signification* (Ivan Biliarski, Sofia), *Alcune famiglie di mercanti ragusei fra XVI e XVII secolo: i De Stephanis-Scoccibucca (Stjepovic-Skocibuha) e i Facenda* (Gianluca Masi, Florence) and *Pratiche di devozione e distribuzione testamentaria del patrimonio nelle famiglie di dragomanni provenienti dalla comunità italo-levantina di Beyoğlu (Pera di Costantinopoli) nei secc. XVI-XVIII* (Cristian Luca, Galați).

Taking place in the library of Accademia di Romania, the subsequent sessions carried on as follows: the third one was entitled *Crociata ed unione delle chiese: paradigmi dell'espansione in Oriente e delle [sic!] difesa in Occidente* and presided by Ivan Biliarski. It consisted in the following papers: *La Santa Sede e le politiche dei Re d'Ungheria al Basso Danubio (1204-1241)* (Tudor Sălăgean, Cluj); *Unione religiosa, unità politica, alleanza militare. I legati pontefici in Oriente al tempo del concilio di Firenze e la loro missione* (Benjamin Weber, Paris); *Image de l'Union et de la croisade dans le Dialogue avec un moine contre les Latins de Théodore Agallianos (1442)* (Marie-Hélène Blanchet, Paris); *'La longue campagne' (septembre 1443-janvier 1444), analyse des opérations militaires d'après les sources de l'époque* (Emanuel Constantin Antoche, Paris); *Dalla 'lega italica' alla 'crociata italica': la spedizione contro 'il Turco' da Niccolò V a Pio II* (Iulian M. Damian, Rome); *Ein kleiner Ort ganz groß - der Hof von Mara Brankovic in Ezeba als Treffpunkt zwischen Levante und Ponente im 15.*

*Jahrhundert* (Mihailo St. Popovic, Vienna); *Venice and the Ottoman Conquest of Caffa: Preliminaries and Impact (1473-1477)* (Alexandru Simon, Cluj); *'Iter Ponticum': la reconstruction politique d'une espace international dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (les acteurs et les stratégies)* (Güneş Işıksel, Paris) and *L'humanisme grec dans la renaissance italienne. Aspects d'un transfert culturel idéaliste* (Christian Gastgeber, Vienna).

Finally, the fourth session took place under the topic of *Cultura 'Latina' in Oriente – Cultura 'Greca' in Occidente* and was moderated by Christian Gastgeber. It gathered the papers presented by: Claudine Delacroix-Besnier (Paris, *Rencontres entre théologiens grecs et latins et échanges culturels sous les règnes de Jean VI Cantacuzène et de Jean V Paléologue*); Antoine Lévy (Helsinki, *Lost in 'translatio': Palamites and Thomists on the 'diakrisis kat' epinoian' in late 14<sup>th</sup> century Byzantium*). It continued in the conference's last day with: Francesca Marchetti (Bologna, *Herbal manuscripts from Byzantium in Padova and Venice*); Şerban Marin (Bucharest, *A Venetian Chronicler in Crete. The Case of Lorenzo de' Monaci and His Possible Byzantine Sources*); Dan Ioan Mureşan (Paris, *Paolo Morosini, la bibliothèque de Bessarion et la politique orientale de la Sérénissime*); Paolo Cherubini [Palermo, *Il cardinale Iacopo Ammannati (1461-1479) e la questione orientale*]; Aurélien Girard [Reims, *L'union avec les chrétiens de Syrie et la production culturelle roumaine à destination du Proche-Orient (1620-1660)*].

On organisational level, one could note obvious discrepancies between the consistences of the first two panels – 2 papers, respectively 3 – and the one of the other two – 9 and 7, respectively. Meanwhile, the paper delivered by Christian Gastgeber could better be integrated in the fourth session, referring to the Greek-Latin cultural relationship.

However the things stand, the matters approached a variety of topics. Henceforth, initiatives like this conference should be continued, since they demonstrate first and foremost transparency, but also provide high level scientific contributions<sup>3</sup>. It also contributes to the going out of the Romanian historiography from its own isolation.

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<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, it was in 2012 when the papers of the conference were edited by the prestigious publishing house Peter Lang. Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften in Frankfurt on Main-Berlin-Bern-Brussels-New York-Oxford-Vienna. Edited by Iulian Mihai Damian, Ioan-Aurel Pop, Mihailo St. Popovic, and Alexandru Simon, the volume *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669)* was inserted in the series entitled *Eastern and Central European Studies*, coordinated by Christian Gastgeber and Alexandru Simon. Unlike the conference itself, the papers in the volume are distributed according to the order of the participants' names. One could also note that a part of the papers are not included in the edited version, while others changed either the language, or even the title itself. In exchange, the editors inserted articles signed by Anna Calia (San Marino, *The Venetian-Ottoman Peace of 1479 in the Light of Documents from the Venice State Archives*), Bernard Doumerc (Toulouse, *Le problème des confins en Morée vénitienne à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*), Andrea Fara (Viterbo, *Italian Merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period (XIIIth-XVIth Centuries)*), Emir O. Filipović (Sarajevo, *'Ardet ante oculos opulentissimum regnum...' Venetian Reports about the Ottoman Conquest of the Bosnian Kingdom, A.D. 1463*), Borislav Grgin (Zagreb, *Antonio Bonfni on Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia in the Fifteenth Century*), Matteo Magnani (Paris, *The Crusade of Amadeus VI of Savoy between History and Historiography*), and Emanuelle Pujeau (*Malte, clef de l'Europe en 1565?*).

18.00: Antoine Lévy,

*Last (in translation) Palamites and Thomists on the 'diakrisis kat' epinoian' in late 14th century Byzantium*

18.30: Dibattito

Sabato, 27 novembre 2010, ore 10.00  
Accademia di Romania in Roma  
(Piazza José de S. Martín, 1)

10.00: Francesca Marchetti,

*Herbal manuscripts from Byzantium in Padova and Venice*

10.30: Serban Marin,

*A Venetian Chronicler in Crete. The Case of Lorenzo de' Monaci and His Possible Byzantine Sources*

11.00: Dan Ioan Muresan,

*Papal Marasmi, la bibliothèque de Bessarion et la politique orientale de la Sérénissime*

11.30: Dibattito, seguito da pausa caffè

12.00: Paolo Cherubini,

*Il cardinale Iacopo Ammannati (1461-1479) e la questione orientale*

12.30: Aurélien Girard,

*L'union avec les chrétiens de Syrie et la production culturelle romaine à destination du Proche-Orient (1620 - 1660)*

13.00: Dibattito e conclusioni finali



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**L'Italia e la frontiera  
orientale dell'Europa.  
1204-1669**

**Italy and Europe's  
Eastern Border. 1204-1669**  
CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE DI STUDI

ROMA, 25-27 NOVEMBRE 2010

*Serban V. Marin*