

son œuvre maîtresse, *Istoria Țării Rumânești*, restée anonyme et inachevée, était inconnue au XIX^e siècle et peut encore susciter les doutes de quelques historiens et philologues. Sa contribution à l'histoire de la culture roumaine a dû attendre le travail de N. Iorga, de M. Ruffini et de V. Căndea pour être mise en lumière. Sa correspondance éditée dans ce volume et les pages inspirées qui l'accompagnent et l'éclairent apportent leur propre pierre à cet édifice historiographique qui a renouvelé la perception de la personnalité de Constantin Cantacuzène.

En fermant ce livre, notre compréhension de ces deux grandes figures et de leur place dans l'histoire de la culture roumaine se retrouve en effet considérablement enrichie. La lecture des lettres dans une traduction élégante et précise, qui témoigne d'un long commerce avec les écrits de l'époque, nous donne un instant le sentiment que le prince et le *stolnic* nous parlent de leur propre voix.

Andrei Timotin

Penka DANOVA, *Анонимна хроника за графовете Булгари края на XVII век* (Anonymous Chronicle in the Bulgari MS from the seventeenth century), Sofia, Paradigma, 2014, 200 p.

Our journal, several times, even in this issue, paid attention to fictitious genealogies that represented a Balkan form of historical culture and a memory of late empires (Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian). They emerged from nobiliar ambition, competing with the tradition of Western aristocracy and making use of a full or incomplete knowledge of history. Such, partly imaginary and partly real, genealogical compilations existed since the fifteenth century, but developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth, under the influence of contacts with Western culture.

A family chronicle from Corfu has been recently published in Athens and we have here its translation into Bulgarian and comments by Penka Danova, with a preface by Nadya Danova, both our colleagues being acquainted with a wealth of Renaissance material concerning the national identity of the Bulgarians.

The original manuscript was written in Baroque Italian at a date which should be connected with the annoblishment of the well-known Voulgaris family of Corfu by the Venetian Senate. This happened before the lifetime of the most famous member of that family, Evgenios Voulgaris (1716–1806), probably when Antonio Bulgari prepared himself to receive the title of count in 1698. The name insinuated a relation with the earliest rulers of medieval Bulgaria and also with the Palaeologos (through Despot Thomas who, on his road to the Italian refuge, stopped in Corfu in 1462). Actually, that Thomas of Morea was taken as ancestor by no less than twelve pseudo-Palaeologos lineages (see the preposterous „genealogical review” by Charles A. Gauci and Peter Mallat, Malta, 1985). The author of the story was obviously an Italian, probably a Jesuit, and not very gifted for the work he had begun. His immediate sources, identified by the editor, were Foresti, Maimbourg (also used by Cantemir) and, for Ottoman history, Sagredo. The concern of relying the Bulgari family to a long royal past met with failure and inadequacy. However, even if the result was kept unpublished, it is one of the earliest attempts to write a history of the Bulgarian people – an example of antiquarianism. As it is, looking back as far as the seventh century and carrying further till the fall „under the Turkish sword”, it reflects the frustration of the Corfiote nobility between Byzantium and Venice.

Danova's introduction wanders through the text without insisting on the real history of the Bulgari/Voulgaris. It could be found in M.D. Stourdza's *Dictionnaire Historique et Généalogique des Grandes Familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople* (Paris, 1999). A document should also be added about the fabulous genealogy which plaid a part in the Voulgaris family tradition. There is a letter from Jacob Voulgaris to Alexander Mavrocordato, 5 September 1822, where he claimed to be “natif de Corfou, grec d'origine et issu d'une famille d'ailleurs qui compte parmi ses ancêtres des Princes régnants en Serbie, Bosnie et Bulgarie” (Μνημεία της ‘Ελληνικής ιστορίας, V.1, Athens, 1963).

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