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THE CHRONOGRAPHS - ASPECTS OF BYZANTINE INFLUENCE ON THE ROMANIANS

Historiography always played a most important role in Byzantine culture. Grafted onto the solid trunk of the classical spirituality of the Graeco-Romans, the Byzantine world has ensured itself an eternal and universal place in both time and space. During its dispute with the Holy See concerning the “true Catholicism”, its stopping, for centuries, of the torrents of both the Oriental peoples and the Northern “barbarians”, its defiance of the Occidental peoples’ luxury and conquests, Byzantium thus acquired, in the course of time, an individuality of its own, within the context of world history and culture. Historiography was its faithful servant, when it tried to assert its claim to be acknowledged as an Oecumenical Empire. Great intellectuals, such as Michael Psellos, Michael Athaliates, Nikephoros Bryennios and others, and even emperors such as John Cantacuzene, or imperial princes and princesses such as Anne Comnenus, not to mention insignificant known or anonymous, chroniclers, have all helped in the course of time to record pages of glory and humiliation, of the hopes and defeats of both Byzantium and its emperors. Although partiality and bias have sometimes played a leading role in their historical narratives, “in general their way of understanding the events, their way of enlivening these same narratives by means of dramatic episodes and means, their style woven into the pattern of Greek classical historiography, has been highly appreciated by the greatest Byzantinists of our time”\(^1\). At the same time, while they place the Byzantine historians, according to Charles Diehl, in the ranks of those imbued with “a very high intellectual level, a most superior one, owing to their skill in politics, to their mental refinement, to their feeling for compositions, to their gift of style”\(^2\), these works could be understood by only a small number of readers, members of the imperial court, the aristocracy, the intelectual classes. There also existed, however, the simple people, the endless masses of the earth’s slaves, who, through the anonymous

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1. Nicolae Cartojan, Cărțile populare în literatura românească (Chapbooks in Romanian Literature), vol. II, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 1974, p. 34.
sacrifice of their daily labour, supported the others. All these people were taught to worship the “Lord’s Anointed” i.e. the emperor, to hate internal dissension and to love peace; they learnt to lay down their lives in wars for the defence of their masters and their masters’ property; they were fully persuaded that the social system was ordained by God’s Will, no less! To achieve this end, the Byzantine spirit cleverly created popularized literature. This frequently resulted in great compilations and anthologies, which were multiplied by copyists and then distributed in the villages. Historical fiction was assigned the first place, alongside the Apocrypha, hagiographies, and morality literature. As early as the 6th century a certain Melalas, followed later on by Dorotheus, bishop of Monembasia, and by Matthew Cigalas and many others, were compiling series of historical narratives that extended over a long period of time, and soon went beyond the frontiers of the empire itself!

After the Fall of Constantinople, that great bulwark of the Byzantine world, a new period began in the history of South-Eastern Europe. A great transformation occurred, not only with respect to the changes in the political frontiers, or the shifting of the centre of gravity of the military forces, but also in the orientation of the spirituality and the superstructure of both Europe in general and South-Eastern Europe in particular. Fundamental changes took place in the consciousness of the people living in this geographical area. Although, politically speaking, Byzantium could no longer survive, and although the gateway to Europe had been breached by the Turkish giant, Byzantine culture could not, however, be destroyed! The aspirations of the vanquished peoples were the same as these of the world yet unconquered by the Turks. Alongside the political interests, there were also the religious ones, too. Byzantium could not mortify itself and kneel down before Rome. It needed allies and protectors from the still unvanquished Orthodox world. However, all the Balkan Peninsula south of the Danube was already in the Turks’ hands. The only Orthodox countries still independent were the Romanian Principalities and the Tsarist Empire north of the Black Sea. Thus a mass migration took place, from the Balkans towards these states, leading to a real transference of human, material, and spiritual values. The Romanian Princes (“Voivods”), who had hardly succeeded until then in founding and centralizing their states and who had barely managed to face up to the perils surrounding them, by defeating the foes coming either from the south of from the north-western Carpathian Mountains, adopted the title of “God’s crowned monarchs”, whose sacred mission was to defend and to protect the Orthodox Church, which was threatened with downfall and destruction. Alongside the Russian Tsars and Patriarchs, the Romanian Princes and Metropolitan Bishops very soon began to
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show themselves quite magnanimous towards the refugees and the Christian subjects of the Sublime Porte. As Nicolae Iorga has put it, these attitudes marked a transference of the imperial theme of Byzantium itself north of the Danube\textsuperscript{3}. The Romanian Principalities gave Mount Athos and the Holy Land important properties, money, and goods over a long period of time. Romanian Princes married members of Byzantine dynasties, and some of them even sought pedigrees among the famous ruling families of Byzantium. A few centuries later, the Phanariot Princes assumed for themselves the "sacred" mission of the descendants of the former occupants of the imperial throne; their intention was thus directed not only towards strengthening their authority over their subjects, but also towards asserting their role (which was in fact, illusory) of "liberators"\textsuperscript{4}.

In fact, the Romanian Princes did what they could to assert themselves as protectors of the Byzantine Church and culture: for instance, they initiated and favoured the dissemination of a rich literature, either in the original or translated into Romanian or Old Slavonic. Thus tastes in Romanian society became various, as Old Slavonic customs were gradually replaced by Greek-Byzantine ones. The Princes' courts were increasingly populated by Greek scholars, refugees from Byzantium after it was conquered by the Turks. Schools appeared where the pupils were taught in Greek and where they learnt about Greek culture, while the offspring of the ruling classes were educated in accordance with the requirements of these new influences\textsuperscript{5}. Then, during the reigns of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu-Basarab (1688-1714) in Wallachia and of the Princes of the Cantemir family (Constantin - 1685-1693, Antioh - 1695-1700 and 1705-1707, and Dimitrie, the great scholar and writer - 1693 and 1710-1711) in Moldavia, the higher branches of Romanian culture came to resemble Greek culture in every way. Its sources were studied

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{3} Nicolae Iorga, \textit{Bizanț după Bizanț} (Byzantium After Byzantium), Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 1972, p. 124 ff.
\item \textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibidem}, p. 154 ff. The Romanian "Voievozi" ("Princes", originally "Military Leaders") began to be considered throughout the Greek, i.e. the Greek-speaking, world as legitimate successors to the Emperors who once reigned in Constantinople, so that they were mentioned alongside of the Patriarch of Constantinople (Byzantium), in the place kept since ancient times by the Emperors, in the commentaries of a bishop contemporaneous with several of them. It was under their rule that Bucharest and Jassy became for the first time "The True Lights of the East", as the Eastern peoples found in them their leaders and their benefactors (See Nicolae Iorga, \textit{Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea} (1688-1821))\textsuperscript{(The History of Romanian Literature in the 18th Century (1688-1821))}, vol. I, Bucharest, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1969, p. 27).
\item \textsuperscript{5} \textit{Ibidem}, \textit{Bizanț după Bizanț}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 205 ff.
\end{itemize}
by the Romanian aristocracy and, of course, by all the refugees from the former Byzantine world. As the Romanians’ tastes became more and more refined, they naturally needed an adequate literature, and this led to a flood of important manuscripts and printed texts, either in Greek or translated into Old Slavonic and Romanian. Greek chronicles, verse, satirical poems, liturgical books of all kinds, philosophical and ethical writings, together with translations of patristic literature and works by other church writers comprised the literary picture of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The climax of Greek influence was reached during the reigns of the Phanariot Princes.

It should be stressed, however, that Romanian society did not by any means passively accept the evolution of this phenomenon. Many young people were sent either to complete their studies in Constantinople or to take the habit on Mount Athos, and this allowed them direct contact with the leading lights of Byzantine culture. This continued even after the Turks’ conquest of the last remaining seats of resistance in the old Byzantine Empire. Princes estet! Radu Mihnea, (who ruled Wallachia - 1601-1602, 1611-1616, 1620-1623, and Moldavia - 1616-1619, 1623-1626), Constantin Duca (=Dukas) (who ruled Moldavia - 1693-1695, 1700-1703), and the great scholar, Prince Dimitrie Cantemir, mentioned above, were sent to Constantinople, “to serve their apprenticeship”, so to speak, as were renowned scholars such as the Spatharus (i.e. the “Sword-Bearer”, a kind of War-Office Secretary) Nicolae Milescu (1636-1708), the High Steward and historian Constantin Cantacuzino (=Cantacuzene) (1650-1716), and many others. The reigns of the Wallachian Princes Şerban Cantacuzino (=Cantacuzene) (1678-1688) and Constantin Brâncoveanu-Basarab (1688-1714) saw a decline in Old Slavonic influence, previously nurtured for so long by the territories south of the Danube.

Together with works of certain scientific rectitude, in the terms of the age, various collections of narratives dealing with world history were also compiled, which recounted “the most important” events in the history of Mankind. They encompassed Jewish, Assyrian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine history, and some later collections also included events from Turkish history. Often, according either to various other chronicles and annals or to their own recollections, the translators allowed themselves to add various other events from the history of their own peoples, as we shall see further on. Consequently, Romanian literature has preserved quite an impressive number of chronographs, which circulated in the form of several

6. Idem, Istoria literaturii, ... op. cit., p. 4.
manuscripts and were modelled on late Byzantine chronographs.

a) The first Byzantine chronographs read by Romanians came to our

8. The best known are: The Library of the Romanian Academy, Section of Romanian MSS, 48 (1785), 53 (1766), 86 (1689), 108 (1707), 116 (1799), 143 (1729), 166 (1803), 254 (1766), 344 (1837), 402 (from the 18th century), 505 (1815-1816), 587 (from the 19th century), 763 (from the 17th-18th centuries), 722 (from the 18th century), 938 (1810), 1070 (1757), 1073 (1783), 1126 (1792), 1182 (19th century), 1238-1241 (1853-1858), 1264 (1778), 1265 (18th-19th centuries), 1358 (1770), 1385 (18th century), 1389 (18th century), 1412 (1827), 1469 (1732), 1470 (1811), 1536 (1776), 1578 (18th century), 1296 (1781), 1479 (19th century), 1536 (18th century), 1578 (18th century), 1766 (18th century), 2410 (1814), 2443 (18th-19th centuries), 2572 (1820), 2583 (18th century), 2599 (18th century), 2609 (the 18th century), 2757 (18th century), 3190 (18th Century), 3391 (18th century), 3399 (18th century), 3403 (19th century), 3450 (18th century), 3456 (18th century), 3517 (17th century), 3527 (18th century), 3537 (1814), 3556 (18th century), 3671 (19th century), 3797 (18th century), 4161 (1838), 4241 (1766-1767), 4243 (18th century), 4248 (1762), 4478 (1822), 4621 (1824), 4622 (1824), 4625 (18th-19th centuries), 4698 (1806), 4793 (18th century), 4802 (1805), 5055 (18th century), 6025 (1769), 6065 (18th century), 3372 (1781), 3049 (1818), 1417 (1775), 3514 (1787); The Astra Library in Sibiu (Cf. Mihai Moraru, Cătălina Velculescu, Bibliografia analitică a cărților populare laice (Analytical Bibliography of Secular Chapbooks), part II, Bucharest, Editura Academiei, 1978, p. 374; The Oltenia Museum Library, Craiova MS 81 (about 1750). For the references concerning the diffusion of the MS of the chronographs in our country see M. Gaster, Războiul Troadei (The War of Troy), in Byzantinische Zeitschrift, III, 1894, pp. 528-552; N. Cartojan, Legendele Troadei in literatura veche românească (The Legends of Troy in Ancient Romanian Literature), in Analele Academiei Române, Sectia literară, seria III, t. III, 1925-1927, pp. 57-129; M. Ştefanescu, Cronica lui Manasses in literatura româno-slavă veche (Manasses’s Chronicle in Ancient Romanian and Slavonic Literature) Jassy, 1927, 37 p.; id., Influenţa cronicilor lui Manasses asupra poeziei româneşti vechi (The Influence of Manasses’s Chronicle on Ancient Romanian Poetry), in Arhiva, XXXVII, 1930, pp. 121-123; V. Grecu, Cronograful lui Dorotei al Monembasiei (Dorotheus of Monembasia’s Chronograph), in Codrul Cosminului, II-III, 1925-1926, pp. 537-556; D. Russo, Cronograful lui Dorotei al Monembasiei (The Chronograph by Dorotheus of Monembasia), in Studii istorice greco-romane, Bucharest, 1939, pp. 68-86; idem, Cronograful lui Cigala (Cigala’s Chronograph), in Idem, pp. 87-91; idem, Cronografele româneşti (The Romanian Chronographs), in Idem, pp. 91-100; D. Strugaru, Cel mai vechi cronograf românesc de provenienţă rusală (The Oldest Romanian Chronograph of Russian Origin), in Romano-Slavica, X, 1964, pp. 89-98; idem, Cronografele româneşti de provenienţă rusală (The Romanian Chronographs of Russian Origin), in Omagiu lui Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, Bucharest, 1965, pp. 363-368; Paul Cernovodeanu, Cronograful Mitropolitului Dimitrie al Rostovului (The Chronograph of Dimitri Metropolitan Bishop of Rostov), in Mitropolia Olteniei, XXII, 1970, nr. 5-8, pp. 692-704; idem, Préoccupations en matière d’histoire universelle dans l’historiographie roumaine aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles in Revue Roumaine d’Histoire, IX, 1970, nr. 4, pp. 677-799, X, 1971, nr. 4, pp. 705-728. Concerning the penetration of the Byzantine Chronographs into the Romanian Principalities, see A. Cioranu, Jérémie Cacavela et ses relations avec les Principautés Roumaines in Revue des Études Sud-Est-Euro-
land in Old Slavonic versions, since they had been transmitted through Serbian or Medio-Bulgarian channels. This influence was "crowned", so to speak,

9. Nicolae Iorga said: "At the very moment when Byzantium was about to vanish, its literature enjoyed a new increase in its popularity among the neighbouring Slavs. Thus, several Bulgarian translations were made: by the Byzantine writer Zonaras in 1332, by Manasses in 1331-1340, and a little later by Simeon Logothetes. A monk named Gregory from Hilandar translated fragments by Zonaras into Serbian in 1408. Other intellectuals such as Euthymius of Tarnovo, Theodore, Gregory Tsamblak, and Constantine the Philosopher "are, in their works and in themselves purely Byzantine, without any admixture" (Nicolae Iorga, Istoria vietii bizantine (The History of Byzantine Life), Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 1974, p. 531. These translations came to us very early, so that one may speak about the existence in the Romanian Principalities at the end of the 16th on century, of a whole collection of old slavonic chronicles, including Povestire pe scurt despre domnii moldoveni, de cind s-a început Țara Moldovenescă (A Short History of the Moldavian Princes from the Beginning of the Country Called Moldavia). See Alexandru Piru, Istoria literaturii române de la origini pînă la 1830 (The History of Romanian Literature from Its Origins to 1830), Bucharest, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1977, p. 19). Concerning the influence of the Old Slavonic chronographs on the Romanians, see Emil Turdeanu, Din vechile schimburi culturale dintre români si iugoslavi (Some of the Ancient Cultural Exchanges between Romans and Yugoslavs), in Cercetări literare, III, 1939, pp. 141-206; idem., La littérature bulgare du XVIe siècle et sa diffusion dans les Pays Roumains, Paris 1947; Damian P. Bogdan, Textele slavo-române in lumina cercetărilor ruseşti (The Old Slavonic-Romanian Texts in the light of Russian Research), in Relatii româno-ruse in trecut (Russian-Romanian Relations in the Past), Bucharest, 1957, pp. 248-291; Anton Balotă, La littérature slavo-romaine à l’époque d’Étienne le Grand, in Romano-Slavica, I, 1958, pp. 210-236; P. P. Panaitescu, Les chroniques slaves de la Moldavie au XVe siècle, in Romano-Slavica, I, 1958, pp. 146-168; idem, Începuturile istorio­grafiei în Țara Românească (The Origins of Historiography in Wallachia), in Studii și materiale de istorie medie, V, 1962, pp. 195-255; idem, Începuturile și biruinta scriului în limba română (The Origins and the Prevalence of Romanian Writing), Bucharest, 1965, 230 p.; A. V. Bol-
in 1620, by the pen of a monk named Mihail Moxa\textsuperscript{10}, who, having read Manasses’s Byzantine chronograph through the agency of an Old Slavonic version of it, well-known all over the Balkan Peninsula in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, then translated it into Romanian\textsuperscript{11}. However, his translation could be more accurately described as an original “re-creation” of the chronograph\textsuperscript{12}. His version had only a very limited circulation in the Romanian territory\textsuperscript{13}.

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It did have one merit, however: it started a series of translations of Byzantine chronographs from Old Slavonic, which continued in the face of obstacles until about the beginning of the nineteenth century. One might quote in this respect the translations made of the chronograph by Dimitrii of Rostov due to the pen of Nicodim Dobrușanul, preceded by some others.

b) The oldest chronograph to be translated directly into Romanian, was by Dorotheus, Bishop of Monembasia; but this was in fact no more than a prosaic paraphrase of Manasses’s chronograph. The title was copied for the first time in Moldavia in 1631; the translation and the publication of the whole work were subsidized by Apostol Tzigara, son-in-law of the former Prince of Moldavia Petru Șchiopul (=Peter the Lame, who reigned, with minor interruptions, from 1574 to 1592), and it was printed in Venice in 1631, under the title *Biblion istorikon periekhon en synopsi diaphorus ke exokhus istorias* (*Carte istorică cuprinzînd în rezumat diferite și importante istorii*) (A Historic Book Comprising - in Summary - Various Important Stories). The printed work was dedicated to Xenakis, the Metropolitan Bishop of Philadelphia (1617-1623) and to Prince Alexandru Coconul (Alexander the Young Prince) of Wallachia (1623-1627) and of Moldavia (1629-1630), a descendent of Prince Petru Șchiopul mentioned previously. This chronograph comprises the Old Testament, as well as several events from Persian, Macedonian, Egyptian, Roman, Byzantine and Turkish (until the reign of Sultan Amurath III) history, and from the history of the Patriarchs of Constantinople. The work also includes a series of legends, *Neorînduielile bisericești* (*The Disorders in the Church*)

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16. The Library of the Romanian Academy, MSS Rom. 1570 (1811) and 2410 (1814).
17. In 1776 at Putna Monastery, a *Russian Chronograph* by Nikodim Grigorovitch was translated into Romanian (ibidem, MS Rom. 1536). In 1756, at Huși, Bishop Inochentie and Moldavia’s then reigning Prince, Constantin Mihail Racoviță, gave orders, which were obeyed, that a *Russian Chronograph* should be translated into Romanian by Hiero-Deacon Gavrili, under the title *Viața marelui Petru Samoderjet a toată Rusia* (The Life of Peter the Great, Autocrat of All Russia). In 1767, a certain monk named Rafail translated into Romanian the chronograph entitled *Istoria slovenilor* (The History of the Slovenians) (sic), which was “compiled and gathered from various Annals” (ibidem, MS Rom. 249).
18. See Nicolae Cartoian, *op. cit.*, II, p. 25; D. Russo, *Cronica de la 1570* (The Chronicle from 1570), in *Studii istorice greco-române*, I, 1926, pp. 57-58; Manasses’s *Chronograph* was constantly “remade” by other Byzantine chroniclers, such as Theophanes, Georgius the Monk, Kedrenos, Zonaras, and others. All these “remakings” are the basis of the *Chronograph* due to the pen of Dorotheus of Monembasia (see Al. Piru, *op. cit.*, p. 105).
by Bishop Hierotheus of Monembasia, a chronicle of the Principality of Morea, the history of the Byzantine Emperors of Nicaea, the statements adopted by the Synod of Ferrara-Florence, a description of the conquest of Brussa by Sultan Orkhan, a list of the doges of Venice up to 1629, a short narrative about the relics of Constantine the Great (considered a Saint by the Eastern Orthodox Church), and a catalogue of the rituals previously in use at the Byzantine Emperors’ court. This Byzantine chronograph was reproduced by means of a great many manuscripts, and also a number of republications in the years 1637, 1654, 1676, 1681, 1684, 1686, 1691, 1743, 1750, 1761, 1763, 1781, 1786, 1792, 1798, 1806, 1814, 1818. Dorotheus’s chronograph was translated into Romanian quite early on, and there are five extant manuscript copies of the first Romanian version of it, one of which is from Transylvania. These five manuscripts come from the pens of some minor copyists from the villages of Bezdead (in the district of Dâmboviţa), Starchiojd (in the county of Bihor), Turkeş (in the county of Braşov), from Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia and from Cernica Monastery, near the town of that name. Dorotheus’s chronograph was highly appreciated by several outstanding representatives of the ancient Romanian culture. For instance, the famous Metropolitan Bishop of Wallachia, writer, scholar, calligrapher and printer, Antim Ivireanul (Anthemus from “Iberia”, i.e. from Georgia), used it in its original Greek form, or translated fragments from it to quote in his Homilies, while the equally famous Metropolitan Bishop of Moldavia, writer and poet, Dosoftei (=Dosophteous) is considered to have produced one of the best Romanian translations

19. D. Russo, Cronica de la 1570, op. cit., pp. 57-58; See idem, Istoriografia greco-romană (Greek-Roman Historiography), Bucharest, 1923-1924, concerning Dorotheus of Monembasia.


of the work\textsuperscript{23}; it was also widely used by the chronicler Macarie (=Makarios)\textsuperscript{24}. Dorotheus's version was also used by many Russians who translated the work\textsuperscript{25}.

c) The Cantacuzine (=Cantacuzene) family\textsuperscript{26} produced more consistent and better organized translations of the Byzantine chronographs into Romanian. It was very much in their interest to do so, as these chronographs could serve as proof of their imperial descent (from the Cantacuzene Byzantine Emperors), and could thus indirectly support the Cantacuzine family's claims to the thrones of Wallachia and Moldavia, against the pretensions of the other autochthonous boyar families and "parties". One manuscript of such a translation is from the pen of Pătrașcu Danovici, "trevii logofăt" (="chancellor of the third rank")\textsuperscript{27}. Although he mentions it only very perfunctorily in the preface\textsuperscript{28}, he has chiefly used the version by Dorotheus of Monembasia, but has supplemented with new compilations. The Cantacuzenes used to engrave their coat of arms or a verse dedicated to them on the pages of such translations, for obviously political aims. Pătrașcu Danovici's translation was then widely copied in manuscript, or even printed, form until about the middle of the nineteenth century, when the "age of the chronograph" eventually ended. However, these copies have not preerved the genuine original form of the

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  \item 23. George Călinescu, \textit{Istoria literaturii române de la origini pînă în prezent} (The History of Romanian Literature from Its Origins to the Present), Bucharest, 1941, p. 19.
  \item 25. I. Ștefănescu, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 125.
  \item 26. Concerning the Cantacuzino family see Nicolae Iorga, \textit{Despre Cantacuzini} (Concerning the Cantacuzino Family), Bucharest, 1902, CLXIII pp.; idem, \textit{Genealogia Cantacuzinilor} (The Genealogy of the Cantacuzino Family), Bucharest, 1902, 566 pp.; idem, \textit{Documente privitoare la familia Cantacuzino} (Documents Concerning the Cantacuzino Family), Bucharest, 1902, 360 p.
  \item 27. The Library of the Romanian Academy, MS Rom. 86.
  \item 28. This book is a new compilation, for it comprises many of stories taken from many books describing the history of the world since its creation until the very years in which we are living, it speaks about the pious Christian emperors and about the way they reigned and ruled and about the patriarchs of Tsarigrad (=Constantinople, "The Town of Tsars", i.e. "The Town of Emperors"), taken in order, about the way these same patriarchs balanced their life and their See, and the way the Emperors balanced their life and their Throne; it shows, too, how the Turks conquered Tsarigrad and seized it from the Christian emperors and the thraldom they brought with them and how much damage and corruption they inflicted on Tsarigrad and how many Turkish emperors have reigned and ruled until now, as all this is specially written down and chronicled in a book called Turkey-Greece (sic), which is written in Arabic and in Turkish, but with Greek letters..." (\textit{ibidem}, f. 16v).
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work. Often the copyists have allowed themselves to add new items of information picked up from various other chronicles. For instance, MS 3456 from the Library of the Romanian Academy is a most interesting compilation in this respect. Apart from the Greek work proper, the copyist has also included information collected from other sources, which were probably of Old Slavonic origin, according to the terminology used in them. Most of these additional new data deal with events and facts concerning Moldavia. It is possible that this copyist also used internal annals, official documents from the chancellors' offices, another Greek chronicle, different from the original, as well as the historical work by Matthew Cigalas.

The Byzantine chronographs were widely diffused throughout the Romanian Principalities. In addition to these groups of chronographs, there was also another group of compilations whose origin is far less well-known.

29. From f. 312r onwards he uses a Greek chronicle, which he calls *Pentru prada Țarigradului cind dobândi turcii, scrisă de Mateteiu (sic) Krisie* (Concerning the Plundering of Tsarigrad (=Constantinople, cf. supra) When the Turks conquered It as written, by Matthew Krisies") (The Library of the Romanian Academy, MS Rom., 3456, f. 312r-f. 312v).


32. In 1757 Constantin Săldăcariul "the Old" (i.e. "senior"), copied out a *Chronograph* (Lib. of the Rom. Acad., MS Rom. 1070). In 1783 it was the turn of the "Logofât" ("Chancellor") Nicolaie to copy out a *Chronograph*, as he did not like "to idle" (*ibidem*, 1073). Another *Chronograph* was copied in 1792 after one translated into Romanian in 1778, by "Neculai sin Mialache cluceru" ("Nicholas the son of Michael the Lord Steward"), during the reign of Prince Ioan Alexandru (John-Alexander) Ipsilanti (*ibidem*, 1126). In 1778, Samoil Dascăl (Samuel the Teacher) made a translation after Constantin (Manasses?) (*ibidem*, 1264). In 1770 a short *Chronograph* appeared; it comprised "The History of many emperors, who ruled over many countries and islands, of many princes of Hungary, of the brave Slovenian-Serbian (sic) princes, of the blessed princes of Wallachia, according to the Annals and Chronicles, and of the Emperors of Ancient Rome, as they are written down in History..." (*ibidem* ff.
Some of these seem to be quite novel variants of the chronographs\textsuperscript{33}.

The chronographs are most important for Romanian historiography, not only because of their former significance or the fact that they were genuine elements of cultural exchange in South-Eastern Europe, but also for the references in them to the Romanian people. Some of these references are from Byzantine and Turkish sources most of which remain unknown, while others are made by the translators or the copyists themselves, on the basis of their own knowledge, since several of the events they described occurred in their own lifetimes. Sometimes the chronographs translated into Romanian supplement the general historical background provided by the Romanian chronicles and annals. One example is MS 49 from the Library of the Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania, written during the time of Peter the Great (1682-1725), the contemporary and ally of the learned Prince of Moldavia Dimitrie Cantemir mentioned previously. One should also emphasize here the great moralizing role they played vis-à-vis their readers, for their authors were fully in accord with the renewed principle of ancient historiography, \textit{"Historia Magistra Vitae (est)"}\textsuperscript{34}.

Another \textit{Chronograph}, by Iosif Lamska was translated into Romanian and circulated throughout our territory during the 18th century; besides the usual biblical legends, it contained several references to the Russians, the Serbians, and the Bulgarians (\textit{ibidem}, 1385). During the years 1850-1858 a monk named Andronic from Neamț Monastery compiled, a \textit{Chronograph} in 4 vols...comprising \textit{"The World’s History from Christ to 1700"} (\textit{ibidem}, 1238-1240). Although all these MSS are mere compilations, they are not lacking in interest, owing to the variety and the novelty of the sources used in them.

33. MS 3456 from the Library of the Romanian Academy seems to be a quite “novel” variant, within the general context of the \textit{Chronographs} translated into Romanian. On f. 333\textsuperscript{r} a fragment from the “Annals by Father Nectarios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, dealing in short with the birth and life of Mahomet” is interpolated.

34. The MSS of some \textit{Chronographs} contain, “squeezed” into them, several translations from Theophrastus’s \textit{Characters} (Lib. of the Rom. Acad. MS Rom. 27, ff. 1-13) or from the \textit{Dialogues} between Emperor Hadrian and Epictetus the Philosopher (\textit{ibidem}, ff. 14-120). Here are some quotations: “When the ruler of the people shows himself to be always desirous of following the path of God, or when he fears God, then his subjects do not fear, in their turn, that they will be subjected to unlawful or to unjust punishments; and if they know him to be faithful and God-fearing, they could not dare to plot against him, as God Himself would come to his rescue” (Lib. of Rom. Acad. MS Rom. 49, f. 221); “This book of history, being most ethically and cleverly conceived, has aroused in me the desire to translate it into the language of our Mother Country. My dear readers will receive from it various pieces of good advice, while parents will learn how to choose a good teacher for their children, so that they will be well-bred and educated and avoid bad company, so that their own innocence will protect their youthful souls... This book of history shows a whole chain of misfortunes that come one after another, overwhelming mortals from the very moment they are compelled to
In point of fact the term “chronograph” was used not only for those compilations from the Byzantine authors, but also for some of the “local” annals originating in the Principalities themselves. In this respect it may be

flinging themselves into the stormy abyss of this world, but ultimately it shows, too, that an improved soul, in spite of all the worldly misfortunes rushing at it, will attain happiness, without any doubt and in spite of all temptations (ibidem, MS Rom. 31, ff. 1-3); “What makes so sweet and beautiful the description of the historical events occurring in an empire, is to be found in both generous and heroic deeds and their consequences as so often evoked with the greatest pleasure and in the various characteristics of the great men that have ruled this empire and who have thus made this book to show the most true and interesting image that anybody could ever produce” (ibidem, MS Rom. 150, f. 22); “This is why, dearest readers, you must read and carefully ponder over it, in order to be sure that history-reading is most useful and instructive, as it teaches people who are not afraid of toil that Holy Writ makes us know God and pray to him to forgive our sins. Holy Writ, as well as the books of history, makes us know the most ancient events as if they were taking place before our very eyes. Many learned men toiled and worked hard to write these history books, depicting the events occurring during the lives, rules, and reigns of the glorious Emperors and Princes and High Officials, what they were, how they suffered their misfortunes, thus showing and teaching posterity how to live honestly, how to keep a just balance during their lifetime, i.e. how to guard themselves against evil and from, how to follow good and glory, so that they may, by striving hard, achieve immortal fame, according to the examples set out in this book. In this way, by seeing the ordeal undergone by good people in order to reach honesty, good renown, and immortal fame, i.e. to enter the paradise of good and God-fearing people, and by seeing, too, the final fall of bad men, punished for their blasphemies and their rashness the readers will learn to humble themselves; and that is why I pray God to give you good thoughts to achieve in the best possible way the good things learnt from your reading of this book” (ibidem, MS Rom. 2599, f. 315v).

35. In many instances the term “Chronograph” is not used solely for world history, but also for collections of internal chronicles and annals, and sometimes for a single chronicle or volume of annals. For instance, MS Rom. 53 from the Library of the Romanian Academy, has the following note on f. 1: “Chronograph, that is Annals, in Moldavian” (1766); this Chronograph comprises the Chronicles by Miron Costin, Ion Neculce, and Nicolae Costin. See, too, MSS Rom. 103-104, 125, 239. Another notion conveyed by the term “Chronograph” is that of a collection of Chronicles and Annals, either complete or fragmentary, dealing with a certain age, reign, or event. See for example, ibidem, MS Rom. 58, where several chronicles concerning the reigns of Nicolae Mavrocordat have been collected, including those by Nicolae Costin and Radu Popescu, this compilation having been made by the Priest Stanciul in 1722. See, also, MS Rom. 100. I have discovered myself, quite recently, at the Monastery of Căldărușani, a novel variant of the “Chronicle of the Cantacuzino Reigning Princes and Their Family” entitled “The Life of Prince Matthew Bassarab Voievoda according to the General Chronograph That Can Be Found Here Supplemented with a Text Depicting His Reign Until Its Very End”. (See Alexandru Stănciulescu-Bîrda, O nouă variantă a Letopiseţului Cantacuzinesc (A New Variant of the Cantacuzino Chronicle), in Mehedinţi - istorie şi cultură (The District of Mehedinţi - Its History and Culture), Drobeta-Turnu-Severin, 1979, pp. 55-60).
said that, from the point of view of our historiography, the contents of the chronographs are invaluable. Their authors did indeed paint genuine portraits of their time. One may also add that in many an instance these authors sided with the oppressed masses of the people, bemoaning their fate and situation. They placed the crucial moments of the Romanian people’s history within the context of world history. The battles between the Romanians and the Turks are depicted in a most rousing-patriotic way, one is aware of the translator’s or the copyist’s noble intention of arousing the reader’s pride in the glorious past and enthusiasm for the struggles to come. The renowned Princes, such as Mircea the Old of Wallachia (1386-1418), John Corvin

and more wealth, he overwhelmed people with exactions, and with burdens so unreasonable, that people were wailing and bawling and squalling throughout the whole country". (Lib. of the Rom. Acad., MS Rom. 1926, f. 571v).

37. “During the second year of Sultan Bayezit (II)’s reign (1481-1512), this same emperor invaded Moldavia with a big army and gave battle with the Moldavians, so that the war was very heavy (sic) and (there follow a few illegible words) and he could not venture so deep into the country, as the Moldavians were backing one another up very strongly; he could enslave only the walled cities of Cetatea Albă and Chilia and the villages round them, but no other parts of the country. The reason for all this was that previously Moldavia’s Prince (Stephen the Great, 1457-1504) with all his subjects had given hard battle with Emperor Sultan Mehmed (II) (1451-1481), who was this emperor’s father, i.e. Sultan Bayezit’s father, and had utterly defeated him, by destroying nearly all his army, so that he himself barely escaped with a few soldiers by fleeing in some vessels on the Danube. Thus before he died, Sultan Mehmed vouchsafed to Sultan Bayezit his desire to settle accounts with the Moldavians for the Turkish blood they had shed and for the shame they had put him to. His son Sultan Bayezit came to Moldavia for this purpose, but could not do anything, except enslave some people living at the borders of our country, as we wrote previously. Ten years later this same emperor invaded the country of the Albanians, but he could do nothing there either, as he found there only stony places, with rocks and mountains, with most narrow and sinuous paths, that could hardly be covered on foot, and not at all on horseback, so that there, too, they could only enslave a few women and children; and they gave up the campaign and whirled themselves (sic) back up again to Tsarigrad (=Constantinople)”. (Lib. of the Rom. Academy, MSS Rom. 1926, ff. 503-504; 1921, ff. 430v-431; 2599, ff. 304v-305r).


39. Here is a description of the battle of Rovine: “And Sultan Bayezit (I) rose up in arms with his Turks to give battle with the Romanians, i.e. to fight Prince Mircea; the war was so great and terrible that it became so dark that one could no more see the heavens, so many were the arrows; and it so happened, that Bayezit lost all his army (Bayezit I - 1389-1402), and all his bashaws and all his Christian princes and vassals were killed by Prince Mircea’s soldiers (Mircea the Old, 1386-1418). Among those killed then were Constantin Dragovitch and Marko Kralevitch and such bloodshed occurred that all the valleys around were gory”. (Cf. Al. Piru, Istoria literaturii române de la origini pînă la 1830, op. cit., p. 75 and Dan Zamfirescu, O permanență a istoriei și culturii românești, op. cit., p. 5). “And after his death
Hunyady of Transylvania (1440-1456)\(^{40}\), Stephen the Great of Moldavia

(i.e. of Sultan Murad I - 1360-1389) his son Sultan Bayezit (I) came to the throne; he was nicknamed Yilderim (that is, “Thunder” in the Turks’ language) and he remained in his empire only for a very short time, in order to prepare his army, then went to give battle with the Bulgarians; and he defeated them in a great war that he fought like “thunder”, as he was nicknamed, so that he conquered all Bulgaria, with all its walled cities, towns, and villages; and he took Marko, the Bulgarians prince prisoner, together with his boyards and he beheaded them all. And besides Bulgaria he occupied all Serbia, and made all its inhabitants his subjects, and in (illegible) A.D., he conquered Bosnia too, and afterwards he attacked Hungary, i.e. the country whose people call it Orta Magyar (=Magyarország), that is, the Country of the Hungarians [illegible words] and occupied many walled cities and villages and enslaved many people. Then he conquered Albania and the country of the Geto-Wallachians (i.e. the country of the Kutso-Vlachs), although he could not conquer all its lands, but only the sub-Alpine regions” (Lib. of the Rom. Acad., MS Rom., 1926, f. 476).

40. “In the meantime, Emperor John of the Greeks [John VIII - 1425-1448 - of Constantinople] had no hope of help from anybody, save from Vladislav [Wladislav, Ladislas, Ulaslo] the King of Hungary, whom he had called to the rescue, together with John Hunyady, the Prince Regent (and Voivod of Transylvania) of Middle Hungatia. And the vizier left by the former Sultan Murad II (1421-1451) to guide young Sultan Mehmed II wrote to him to enthrone himself again, and to give good advice to his son, and so the old Sultan did indeed. In the meantime the Hungarian King and Prince John raised a large army to give battle with the Turks and crossed the Danube, pillaging the Bulgarian villages and towns, and they quartered themselves in Varna, but their plundering went on. However, the Turks did not care for it at all, as they went on walking (?) together with their Sultan. Thus Sultan Murad went to Scutari, just on the other shore of the sea, in front of Tsarigrad (Constantinople), while Khalim (=Khalil) Bashaw came with another Turkish army to meet him on the other shore, next to Tsarigrad. Then the Sultan bid Emperor John to give him vessels with masts to cross the sea as rapidly as possible, at Kalinomos (?), otherwise there would be war between them; and the Greek emperor, either from fear or from stupidity, obeyed him immediately.

And so the Turks went straight to Varna. And the Greeks did not ponder over the matter, as the Hungarians had come to their rescue; had they delayed helping the Sultan to cross the sea, the Hungarians would perhaps have overcome the Turks and would have caught Sultan Murad too; thus, the Greek emperor could also have sent some soldiers to the Hungarians, with some of his generals. But he and his Greeks helped Sultan Murad instead, so as not to disturb their feasts. And it so happened that all the Turkish armies came to Varna: Sultan Mehmed with the western troops and Sultan Murad with the eastern troops. And when the battle began, at first the Hungarians defeated some Turkish troops, and killed many Turks and many of their commanders. However, the Turks gained the upper hand afterwards and finally won the battle, owing to the drunkenness and wrong headedness of King Vladislav of Hungary for he and his followers would not listen to the wise Prince John (of Transylvania), who wanted to show them how to fight the Turks properly, but attacked the Sultan’s tents blindly with their king and the Hungarian king, young and venturesome, was then killed; and the Turks beheaded him and had his head put on a pike and went around the battlefield with it, crying that the King of Hungary had been killed, so that all the soldiers should learn it. Thus, the Hungarian army, seeing that their king was no more, began to
(1457-1504)\(^{41}\) and Michael the Brave of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania (1593-1601) together with their armies are vividly brought to life. The Romanian Principalities maintained permanent contact with their neighbouring countries, for they were not at all inferior to them; to quote the words of the author of one such chronograph: “Let us take either Cyprus, or the Crimea, or our own country, for they are all equally large”\(^{42}\). In the opinion of the chroniclers, the histories of these countries and of the Romanian Principalities were inseparably united. Although sometimes the style of these chronographs is really rather anecdotal\(^{43}\), that is to say, their authors often include legends or mere tales among the historical events, this gives the texts a most exquisite individual flavour\(^{44}\) which, during the centuries since their compilation has won them, a certain literary value, too\(^{45}\). Many of these tales or narratives have become part of the unwritten folk culture\(^{46}\). Of course, one must remember that these chronographs also contain a number of errors in their account of historical events, which in some instances have been deliberately distorted, for obvious political reasons. However, the dominant idea in the chronographs is that of the unity and unbroken continuity of the Romanian people on their territory from the very beginning. They were intended to be exhaustive histories of the whole world, and that was why their authors included in them all they flee the battlefield. And the Turks chased and killed them, but most of them were drowned in a bog near Varna. As for Prince John, he knew, even before the king’s death, that all would go so ill, for he had counselled the king, after the first Hungarian successes in battle, to let him fight the Turks, as they were already tired, but for their infantry. But the king, being young and frolicsome, did not want to listen to Prince John’s wise counsel to let him fight the Turks first, and to come afterwards with fresh troops to back him up, after the Turks were completely exhausted; he listened to the advice of the young people round him and attacked the Turks blindly and met his death, for a janissary cut off the front legs of his horse and thus the king was killed as he deserved. However, Prince John succeeded in rescuing his own army and went peacefully back to his own country [1444]. This was the war of King Vladislav of Hungary, whom the Greek Emperor called to the rescue. After this Sultan Murad died at Ndrii (= Odrii, i.e. Adrianople), and was succeeded by his son Sultan Mehmed (II), who thus came to the throne for the second time” (Lib. of the Rom. Acad., MS Rom., 2572, ff. 175r-175v).

42. Ibidem, f. 315v.
44. See for example Cronograful lui Mihail Moxa, op. cit., p. 90 and Paul Cernovodeanu, Cronografele de tipul Dorotei, op. cit., p. 133.
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could find concerning the historic evolution of Mankind and, within it, of their own people. This accounts for the fact that the Romanians have never been an isolated people, but have played their part in international history with a quite specific "predestined mission" of their own, according to Nicolae Bălcescu, the great writer, historian, and 1848 revolutionary (1819-1852).

In spite of their naïveté, so evident in many chapters of their works, the chronographers and translators continually sought an adequate terminology, so necessary for and so specific to a complete illustration of historical phenomena. Theirs was consequently a most precious contribution to the magnificent process of the development of the elements of Modern Romanian. “The dozens of anonymous translators, either from Old Slavonic or from Greek, into Romanian, as well as the hundreds of copyists of the thousands of Romanian manuscripts from the age of the Phanariots, are by no means “less national”, than Gheorghe Lazăr, the great founder of modern Romanian education, even if they did translate various Byzantine works for general use”.

The manuscripts of the chronographs have made known to us various translators and copyists—that is various Romanian intellectuals and scholars from a certain historical period—who would otherwise have remained anonymous. For example: Constantin Veisa, Pătrașcu Danovici, Dimitrii Ursachi, Ioasaf Luca, Grigori Cuciureanu, Ionită sin (=“son of”) Şeitan ot (=“from”) Turches, Niculae sin Mihalache clucerul (=“Lord Steward”), Andronic Duhovnicul (=“Father Confessor”), and so on. Mediaeval Romanian society’s interest in chronographs, whether Byzantine or Old Slavonic, emphasized above all Europe’s general propensity and the Balkan peoples’ individual tendency towards gathering all their forces in order to resist the Ottoman threat.

In this way the chronographs show themselves to be worthy of a prominent place among the factors which allowed Byzantine influence, to begin with

47. P. Cernovodeanu, Préoccupations en matière d’histoire universelle,..., op. cit., p. 677.
49. Lib. of the Rom. Acad. MS. Rom. 48.
50. ibidem, 86.
51. ibidem, 108.
52. ibidem, 254.
53. ibidem, 938.
54. ibidem, 1126.
55. ibidem, 1238-1241. To these one might add many more: (ibidem, 27), Ioanichie Popescu (ibidem, 938), Samuil (ib. 1264), Iosif Samșca (ib. 1385), Scarlat Grădișteanu (ib. 1412), Nicodim Grigorovici (ib. 1536), Pavel Ștefulescu (ib. 2599).
its Old Slavonic and Serbian form, to reach the regions north of the Danube and thus to be assimilated by the Romanian people. The Romanians were by then mature and, owing to their sound culture and national conscience, able resolutely to strive for their legitimate place, both political and geographical, in South-Eastern Europe.