

setzt sind (z. B. Kalender von Großgriechenland: 'Ημερολόγιον τῆς Μεγάλης Ἑλλάδος; Rhodos Betreffendes: Ροδιακά u.s.w.), so daß er auch für den Sprachkundigen keinen Nutzen hat, wenn diesem nicht sowieso die Titel bekannt sind.

Doch verliert auch durch diese leider notwendigen Abstriche die Sammlung nicht ihren Wert und man kann ihr nur weiteste Verbreitung unter allen Volkskundlern und Freunden Griechenlands wünschen, die mit diesem Buch einen Zugang finden zu einer Legendenliteratur, die nicht nur für den Wissenschaftler interessant ist, sondern auch für den Laien eine Quelle des Genusses und der Erbauung darstellt.

Thessaloniki

PAUL SPECK

Samuil Micu, *Scurtă cunoștință a istorii romînilor*. Edited with an introduction by Cornel Cîmpeanu. București, Editura știintifică, 1963. Pp. XLXIX + 237.

The publication of Samuil Micu's *Short History of the Rumanians* is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the intellectual and social history of the Rumanians of Transylvania in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This was a period of great ferment, during which Rumanian intellectuals, stimulated by their contact with the ideas of the Enlightenment, sought to obtain political and religious equality with the dominant Magyar, Szekler, and Saxon "nations." In order to prove their priority in Transylvania and, hence, the justice of their claims to at least equality with their neighbors they made detailed studies of the origins of the Rumanian people, which resulted in the appearance of the first modern histories of the Rumanians. In all of them they took great pains to demonstrate the pure Roman origin of the Rumanian people and their uninterrupted sojourn in Dacia (Transylvania) since the colonization of the country by the Emperor Trajan at the beginning of the second century A.D.

As men of the Enlightenment Rumanian intellectuals shared the faith of their contemporaries in education and reason as the keys to human progress, and undertook an ambitious program of education to lift their people out of the ignorance and superstition in which they had languished for centuries. In the process they produced an astonishing variety of works ranging from learned treatises on history and science to schoolbooks and agricultural manuals. With but a few exceptions their political views were also typical of the age, for they believed that only the enlightened could guide society successfully toward its

ultimate perfection. They abhorred popular revolution as an instrument of social change, for they believed that it would inevitably result in chaos.

Samuil Micu (1745-1806) was perhaps the most representative figure of the Rumanian Enlightenment in Transylvania. Encyclopedic in his interests, he is remembered today as a pioneer in the scientific study of the Rumanian language and Rumanian history. His first love was undoubtedly history, for he believed that it could perform best those tasks which he considered most important: teaching his people about their glorious heritage; providing them with heroes to emulate; and proving their right to equality with, if not ascendancy over, their neighbors.

His *Scurtă cunoștință a istorii rominilor* not only recounts the principal events of Rumanian history from Roman times to the end of the eighteenth century, but provides an interesting insight into his political and economic thought as well. Written between 1792 and 1796 and intended for the general reading public, it was also a manifestation on the cultural level of the Rumanian national movement of the early 1790's, which had succumbed to the reaction which set in after the death of Joseph II in 1790. During the remainder of Micu's life history offered the Rumanians their only significant opportunity for effective political action. This explains in part why Micu, whose work in general exhibited high standards of scholarship, sometimes allowed his nationalist sentiments to obscure his judgment. In attempting to prove the purity of Rumanian descent from the Romans, for example, he insisted that Trajan's legions had exterminated the native Dacians and that the colonists who had repopulated Dacia had come only from Rome or the Italian peninsula. Modern scholarship has amply demonstrated the falseness of both premises. Micu's arguments concerning the continued sojourn of a Romanized population in Dacia throughout the troubled period of the Middle Ages and the Latinity of the Rumanian language are, in spite of certain exaggerations, more convincing.

In politics Micu was an admirer of the brand of enlightened despotism practiced by Maria Theresa and Joseph II. He rejected revolution as a means of solving the problems of society and castigated the leaders of peasant uprisings in eighteenth century Transylvania as "common [men], ignorant and savage" and "accursed [men]." Only the educated and the enlightened could, he believed, bring about salutary changes in society. He did not, however, hold the common people in contempt, but, like his colleagues, sought through books and

schools and preaching to eliminate superstition and ignorance among them and thereby raise them to the ranks of the educated.

Included in the present edition of *Scurtă cunoștință a istorii românilor* is a useful introduction which discusses the political and social conditions obtaining in eighteenth century Transylvania, the importance of the work in Rumanian historiography, and the principal ideas which it contains. There is also an annex containing copious explanatory notes and a glossary of words and expressions with special or unusual meanings.

Every scholar concerned with the social and intellectual history of the Rumanians of the Habsburg Monarchy may hope that the appearance of similar critical editions of the hitherto unpublished manuscripts of Gheorghe Șincai and Ion Budai-Deleanu, Micu's great contemporaries, will not be long delayed.

Wake Forest College  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

KEITH HITCHINS