

Abstracts

DAN IONESCU

A MANUSCRIPT OF DIONISIE ECLESIARHUL AT THE BARLAAM MONASTERY, METEORA

In the early thirties Marcu Beza discovered at the Barlaam Monastery / Meteora a Romanian manuscript, which he described in his book *Romanian Traces in the Orthodox Orient*. The brief description was accompanied by four photographs.

The manuscript, an abridged register of the Bucovăț Monastery (Oltenia), is adorned with miniatures, among which two full-page compositions deserve particular attention: Saint Nicholas, patron of the Romanian monastery, and All Saints', dedication of the Barlaam Monastery.

In 1934 N. Iorga published the text of the documents contained in the Barlaam register. They represent a choice of charters, reconfirming the monastic properties at different times. The Bucovăț Monastery was founded in 1572 and submitted to Barlaam in 1588.

A. Sacerdoțeanu, an experienced archivist, was the first to suggest (1967) that the Barlaam manuscript could belong to Dionisie Ecclesiarhul, an outstanding Wallachian chronicler, calligrapher and miniaturist of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. His suggestion was based exclusively on the textual analysis, using the Iorga transliteration as a starting point.

The full version of the Bucovăț register is preserved at the State Archives, Bucharest (ms. no. 443). It bears Dionisie's signature and the date (1813). The decorative and the palaeographic similarities between the Bucharest and the Barlaam manuscripts are obvious. Their title pages and Saint Nicholas miniatures display even a certain identity of details.

Further comparative material is offered by the obituary of the Bucovăț Monastery (State Archives, Bucharest, ms. no. 460). The manuscript is signed by Dionisie and dates from 1813 as well.

The page-setting, the graphic characteristics and the decoration reveal Dionisie as compiler, calligrapher and illustrator of the Barlaam Romanian manuscript, written probably at the same time with the other two Dionisie / Bucovăț manuscripts (1813).

As an abstract of the original register, the Barlaam short version was destined to be kept at the patron monastery. The figuration of the All Saints' scene besides that of Saint Nicholas points out the *ad hoc* destination of the Barlaam manuscript. Its function was more representative than purely documental.

The dedication of the Barlaam Monastery furnishes the best explanation for the presence of the All Saints' scene among the wall paintings from the naos of the Bucovăț church. This infrequent scene occupies a prominent place in the naos, namely the half-dome of the south apse.

KARATHANASSIS ATH. E.

THE EXAMPLE OF A GREEK SCHOLAR ESTABLISHED IN MOLDOVALACHIA: ALEXANDER AMIRAS, 1679-1740

Alexander Amiras, a distinguished scholar of the Phanariote period, is well-known for the important role he played in the political and cultural affairs of the Rumanian principalities. After an initial period of studies in Rome and Constantinople, he worked as a Counsellor to Charles XII, king of Sweden, at his court at Bendari, and later, to Prince Gr. Grikas at his court at Iasi, in Moldavia.

During this period Amiras a) translated from Moldavian to Modern Greek the chronicle of Miron and Nicolas Costin on the history of Moldavia (1729) b) wrote the history of the life of Charles XII during his exile at Bendari c) compiled a small treatise about the names of the Turkish Sultans.

The main thesis of this article is the systematic analysis of several problems concerning Amiras' scholarly work.

CONSTANTIN PAPOULIDIS

A CHARACTERISTIC DOCUMENT OF G. CATACAZY FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF RUSSIA

The author publishes a document of G. Catacazy, ambassador of the Russian Empire in Athens, towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of this country, dated in 1838. The content of this manuscript is revealing the mentality of the diplomatic representative of the Russian Empire.

In the document, which is now kept at the *Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia* (Moscow), G. Cataczy denounces to St. Petersburg the Consul General of Greece at Odysso, Mano, as a collaborator to the Greek newspaper *Athena*, which is «friendly towards the British», «member of the opposition», «extremely liberal», and «against the monarchy».

EVANGELOS KOFOs

GREEK REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS LEADING TO THE
ALBANIAN LEAGUE OF PRIZREN

Greek consular and diplomatic reports for 1875-1881 provide valuable source material for the Albanian national awakening and Greek reaction to it. While traditional Greek opinion in the 19th century considered Albanians and Greeks as kin peoples bound to be united under a common state roof, Albanians were viewed very much as part of the Ottoman establishment, thus unable to pursue a truly Albanian national policy. This view began to undergo considerable change under the influence of the events of 1877-1878. Certain attempts at concluding a Greek-Albanian alliance at that time failed on account of conflicting interests and mutual suspicion. After the Congress of Berlin, the Greeks carefully followed Albanian initiatives - thanks to detailed consular reports - and tried to assess their influence on Greek interests. And, although initially they tended to view the Albanian League of Prizren as Ottoman inspired, they gradually came to espouse the opinion that despite an initial encouragement by the Porte, the Albanian movement acquired its own momentum. As such, the Greek Government was compelled to weigh the Albanian factor more and more as a genuine force, emerging in the vicinity of the zone of Greek interests.

CONSTANTIN AP. VACALOPOULOS

HISTORICAL EVIDENCES ON THE POLITICAL
CONDITION OF ATHOS (1880-1884)

The present article is generally dealing with the political situation of Athos at the end of the nineteenth century and more particularly

with the circumstantial examination and analysis of the ecclesiastical disputes of 1883-1884 between the greek and russian monks of the monastery of Iviron and the skete of Prophitis Helias, attached to the monastery of Pandokrator. The author is extracting information from precious and unpublished reports of the British consul Charles Blunt in Thessaloniki and documents written by greek monks, presently conserved in the Archives of the Public Records Office.

J. V. KOFAS

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE RESTORATION OF KING GEORGE II

The article argues that the restoration of King George II in November 1935 was imposed upon the Greek people by an elite group of ultra-royalist elements who enjoyed the support of the British Foreign Office and certain British financial circles. Moreover, the King's restoration was the prelude to the authoritarian regime of General John Metaxas with whom the King collaborated to install a dictatorship after August 4, 1936.

A brief synopsis of the historical antecedents pertinent to the restoration are discussed beginning with the King's forced abdication in 1923. The focus of the study, however, is on the parliamentary regime which experienced a deep crisis in the 1930s and permitted the emergence of the extreme military and political right-wing elements whose ultimate goal was to restore the dynasty and install an authoritarian government.

A highly fraudulent plebiscite took place in November 1935 and George II was returned to Greece. The role of the British government in the restoration was significant because the King was an Anglophile who was committed to serving British economic/financial and diplomatic interests in Greece. The collapse of the volatile Greek republic therefore, was caused by endogenous as well as exogenous factors.

GRAIG LUTHER

GERMAN DEFENSIVE POLICY IN THE BALKANS,
A CASE STUDY: THE BUILDUP IN GREECE, 1943

Following the collapse of Rommel's forces in North Africa and the Allied landings in Morocco and Algeria (November 1942) Hitler

and the German High Command began to worry about the security of the vulnerable and weakly defended southern tier of their «Festung Europa». This concern centered on the Balkans, and most importantly, Greece. Indeed, throughout 1943, the Germans made a genuine effort to reinforce their position in Greece and throughout the Balkans; and the buildup accelerated in May 1943, following the success of an ingenious British «ruse de guerre» designed to mislead the German High Command on the eve of the Allied invasion of Sicily.

My essay traces the nature of the German buildup in some detail; it also attempts to clarify the strategic assumptions of Hitler and his advisors upon which the buildup was based. I will argue that, in 1943, the Balkans were an area of primary strategic concern for the Germans, and that fear of major Anglo-American operation in the area was very great. I will attempt to demonstrate, however, that German fears vis-a-vis the Balkans were predicated upon some fundamental inaccurate assumptions about the nature of, and tensions within, the Allied coalition.

My essay is based principally upon unpublished German military records - war diaries, intelligent assessments, situation reports, etc. As far as I know, it is the first attempt by a historian to trace the German military buildup in Greece in 1943 in great detail.