

“Revista istorică”, XXIX, 2018, nos. 3-4

ABSTRACTS

MARKETS AND MERCHANDISES IN NAPLES: ENGLISH TRAVELLERS' IMPRESSIONS (18th-19th CENTURIES)

CLAUDIA PINGARO

The paper examines the impressions of English travellers of food products distributed and marketed in Naples in the 18th and 19th centuries. The travel diaries of many tourists are full of descriptions about the food sold in shops and markets in Naples. Attracted first and foremost by the vestiges of the past and the fascination exerted by classical Antiquity, the Englishmen who took to the streets of the Kingdom also recounted the image of the bustling trade and business that took place in the Neapolitan markets, describing the typical products of the time, from the fruit of the earth to those coming from the flourishing fish market, exhibited and praised by the sellers, who exalted their quality and convenience. Henry Swinburne (in the 1770s), Richard Keppel Craven (at the beginning of the 19th century), Marguerite Gardiner, countess of Blessington (in the 1820s), Arthur John Strutt (in the 1840s), George Gissing (in the 1880s) described in their travel reports, at different times in the history of the Kingdom, the varied Neapolitan reality, in which food and products of all kinds were, among other things, the object of feverish commercial activity, both in Naples and in the province.

RADU THE GREAT VOIVODE OF WALLACHIA – THE CHALLENGES OF A PORTRAIT

RAMONA NEACŞA

If we try to sketch the portrait of a historical personality such as Radu the Great of Wallachia, it is only natural to turn to historical sources, especially because the modern scholars have largely ignored or underrated his reign. A keen analysis of the medieval sources points to a quite controversial image, which wavers between a bad prince and a good prince. The historical memory of Radu the Great's reign was differently preserved in various categories of sources, which have circulated in parallel in the same period. Thus, the hagiographic memory, owed to *Saint Niphon's Life*, included also in several Wallachian chronicles, reveals the image of a weak, sinful and eventually cursed prince. This portrait is in high contrast with the iconographic sources, with the image preserved in the princely charters or in some foreign narratives sources such as the work of Leunclavius. The analysis of these

documents reveals a strong, skillful prince, who played an important role in the relations of power in South-Eastern Europe. All in all, the contrast between Radu the Great's portraits depended heavily on different strategies of legitimization, which, in their turn, were strongly influenced by the struggle for power in Wallachia at the beginning of the 16th century.

L'INEVITABILE CARICO DI INSEGNARE LA PACE: MELETIOS PIGAS AND THE OTTOMAN-WALLACHIAN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

OVIDIU CRISTEA, OVIDIU OLAR

A fragment included in the *History of Venetian Crete* by Ioannis Vergitsis, a Padua-educated jurist from Candia, insists on the role played by Meletios Pigas, patriarch of Alexandria and *locum tenens* of the patriarch of Constantinople during the Ottoman-Wallachian peace negotiations. Such new evidence, corroborated with other contemporary documents, enables a new approach to the peace negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and the lord of Wallachia, Michael the Brave. While the incident is well known in historiography, the sources analyzed in the present paper offer new insights into a very complicated and tortuous diplomatic episode. Following in the footsteps of the Cretan chronicler, the authors read the fragment concerning Pigas and Michael in the light of Venetian archival documents, they argue that such a comparative approach is important for those trying to reconstruct the history of the events in Central-Eastern Europe at the end of the 16th century, and propose – very briefly – a connected history of the “Long War” against the Turks.

INSTITUTIONAL CENSORSHIP FOLLOWING THE ENFORCEMENT OF ARTICLE 16 OF THE ARMISTICE CONVENTION (23 AUGUST 1944 – 6 MARCH 1945)

RALUCA-NICOLETA SPIRIDON

The censorship of certain books, periodical and non-periodical publications, alongside with theater representations, and movies varied after August 1944 and was influenced by stipulations of international conventions and internal laws or regulations. Immediately after 23 August 1944 one can observe a more than extensive application of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention with the Soviet Union. That meant a return to a strict censorship of the Romanian press and publishing houses.

The present study reconstructs the whole legal and institutional framework by which Romanian censorship functioned between 23 August 1944 and 19 March 1945, in close connection with the other forms of control directed towards the total subordination of mass media. We tried to evoke the way in which Romanian society became acquainted with the Soviet-type censorship as a result of the enforcement of Article 16 of the Armistice Convention by gradually restoring all institutional and legal mechanisms prior to the change of Romania’s alliances in August 1944.

FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WORLD HISTORY TO THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY (1944–1949): AN ENTANGLED TRANSITION

CRISTIAN VASILE

This study discusses the institutional subordination of the Institute for the Study of World History and the Institute of History and Philosophy in Romania in the early post-war years, as well as the behind-the-scenes of the newly Soviet-type research system, including the reconfiguration of historical research. The latter became a cultural field that would be visibly subordinated to the Marxist-Leninist “ideological front” due to historians and communist party members such as Mihail Roller and Petre Constantinescu-Iași.

Besides emphasizing the activity of the Institute’s directors – Gheorghe Brătianu, Andrei Oțetea, Petre Constantinescu-Iași – I have focused on both the political controversy surrounding the scientific research reform (between 1944 and 1947) and on some political and institutional actors who became significant decision-makers in the sphere of education and social science research after 23 August 1944 (Ștefan Voitec, Gheorghe Vasilichi, Constantin Daicoviciu) and of political-historiographical propaganda (Iosif Chișinevschi, Leonte Răutu, Mihail Roller).

THE DS-896 SOURCE. PETRU DUMITRIU’S DEFECTIO (UNPUBLISHED SOURCES)

RADU TUDORANCEA

This paper examines the circumstances and evolution of a rather surprising if not completely unbelievable case of defection of a well-known Romanian writer of the 20th century, Petru Dumitriu. Dumitriu had been regarded, at that time, as a personality of the Romanian literary life and, even more, a sort of a top-flight contemporary writer developed by the Romanian Communist regime during the first postwar decades, until his defection in West Berlin, in 1960. Apart from his obvious conformist writing displayed during the early years of his literary career (*Drum fără pulbere*), his huge talent was exhibited once he published *Cronică de familie*, a masterpiece of Romanian literature of the second half of the 20th century. The former protégé of the Communist regime (director of the State Publishing House for Art and Literature – ESPLA and winner of the State Prize – 1951) defected to the West in 1960, thus becoming (for the US intelligence services) a source of fresh and accurate information regarding the cultural policy of the Communist regime and the new evolutions occurring within the literary and intellectual circles of Romania. Based primarily on archival sources, both Romanian and American, the paper sheds new light on a rather controversial and lesser known dimension of Romanian *intelligentsia* of the first postwar decades.

RECONSTRUCTING POST-WAR DRESDEN AND COPING WITH THE NAZI PAST

RAUL DENIZE

Recent historiography regarding post-war Germany is usually focused on the understanding and acceptance of the Nazi heritage. The process of coping with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) usually overlooks the fact that many Germans faced the past as dwellers of cities deeply marked by the Nazi regime. Thus, the way in which various German cities pursued an urban *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has been rather ignored. During the Nazi period, Dresden's infrastructure was modernized and the new Autobahn network reached the city. Before the construction of civilian buildings was postponed due to the war, many districts were rebuilt, countless houses being demolished in order to free up space and widen the streets. Several "garden suburbs" were built on the outskirts of the historic city, which were designed in the traditional "Germanic" style promoted by the Nazis. Truly alarming was the idea of constructing a gigantic building – Gauforum (conference hall and party headquarters) – which would have entailed extensive demolitions. It was only because of the war that the city was spared from this planned disfigurement.

After the Second World War, Dresden officials and residents tried to divert attention from their collaboration with the National Socialist regime by selectively rebuilding historical buildings and concealing the shameful places of memory. While the bombing of Dresden and the destruction of Frauenkirche were transformed into symbols of wartime German suffering, the destruction of the city synagogue by the Nazi regime in 1938 was largely ignored. This policy of denying any responsibility for the horrors committed during the Third Reich characterized both the GDR and reunified Germany. Regardless of the political context, the discussions surrounding Dresden's past took the form of a victimization speech rooted in National Socialist propaganda.

OPERATION ROMANIAN VILLAGES IN THE UK IN 1989

NICOLETA ȘERBAN

In the second half of the 1980s, the Romanian Communist regime established a plan to demolish 7,000–8,000 villages from the existing 13,123 and to move the population (approx. 10 million people) to newly built blocks of flats. The pharaonic project sparked a big protest movement in Western Europe against the planned destruction of the cultural heritage and the violation of human rights. The protest movement started in Belgium (February 1989) and spread to France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, etc. In Britain it was launched in May 1989 with the support of influential political figures such as Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary at the time, and MP Bernard Braine. Ioană Strănescu (Costide) from the British Romanian Association (Asociația Culturală a Românilor din Anglia – ACARDA) played a major part in implementing the movement on the British soil. The response of the British villages was positive: 74 villages took part in the campaign. Even though the success of the movement wasn't as considerable as in France and Belgium, the British

communities established links with Romanian villages. Those links continued to function after 1990 through humanitarian aid to the Romanian villages.

ISTORIE E NOVELLE DE LEVANTE FROM SPRING 1468: UZUN HASSAN, MOREA AND THE 30,000 SOLDIERS FALLEN AT BAIA

ALEXANDRU SIMON

Several documents regarding the medieval history of East-Central and South-Eastern Europe were published in the second half of the nineteenth century. Most of these documents came from Italian archives and libraries. Usually, the editors did not have direct access to the documents and often only dealt with information provided by various scribes. As a result, several sources were either miss-edited or omitted. Such was the case of the numerous documents in the archive of Mantua.

One of these documents, a report sent from Ragusa on 20 April 1468 by Francesco Maffei, the secretary of cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, to Barbara of Brandenburg, the marchioness of Mantua, constitutes the basis of the present study. Erroneously ascribed to a fictitious rector of Ragusa, the letter gives a rather vivid account of Ottoman warfare and diplomacy, as well as of eastern power plays. The main points in the letter are: (1) the mention of a *bassa de Normandia* (a remarkable recollection of old Norman/Sicilian rule in the South-Western Balkans), a pasha heavily involved in the Venetian-Ottoman negotiations – the *bassa* was thus most likely the influential Mahmud Angelović; (2) the – indirect – acknowledgement by Matthias Corvinus of Hungary that he had lost nearly half of his troops (5,000 dead) in the battle of Baia against Stephen III of Moldavia (who, in return, had lost 25,000 soldiers, bringing the total number of casualties to the towering figure of 30,000). Neither of these points was auspicious for the planned anti-Ottoman counteroffensive (for which Maffei had been sent to Ragusa). After Skanderbeg's recent death, the only crusader hopes lay in Uzun Hassan in Asia Minor and in the Venetian victories in Morea, if one was to trust the Venetian news of the Republic's successes against Sultan Mehmed II. Francesco Maffei consequently aborted his West-Balkan mission and returned to Rome.

A PRINCE'S SON IN LAW AND TWO RAGUSAN MERCHANTS IN AN EXCEPTIONAL DOCUMENT FROM PROTATON MONASTERY (MOUNT ATHOS)

PETRONEL ZAHARIUC, OVIDIU CRISTEA

The starting point of the paper is a document from Protaton Monastery, ordinary with regard to its content (it deals with the sale of a village – Pleașovul – to the grand treasurer Necula Catargiu), but exceptional in its form. It is the only Italian document ever issued by the Wallachian chancellery, a fact strongly related with the two main characters involved in the selling of the aforementioned village: the

Ragusan merchants Giovanni de Nicollo and his son Mattia. The document completes the facts already known from some other Romanian charters related to the same transaction. The Italian document tells the whole story of Pleașovul village from the first decades of the 16th century to the reign of Leon Tomșa in 1631. The two Ragusans became masters of the village in 1628 due to an unpaid debt and they sold it in 1631. The episode was more than a usual commercial transaction as it involved murder, theft, an investigation and a decision of the princely council signed and sealed by all the important Wallachian boyars. The Italian version was a sort of insurance for Mattia, son of Giovanni de Nicollo, that he sold the village as a rightful owner.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF SOME MONASTERIES FROM MOLDAVIA AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ZOGRAF MONASTERY OF MOUNT ATHOS

Archimandrite POLICARP CHIȚULESCU

The document catalogues from the Mount Athos archives and libraries are far from having been published in their entirety. Consequently, as researchers have access to the repositories that are interesting for the culture and history of South-East Europe, more information comes to light concerning the Romanian area. One such case is the document collection entitled *Medieval Slavic Acts from Mount Athos 1230–1734*, published in 2018 by a well known Bulgarian professor, Cyril Pavlikianov. By analyzing the formerly unknown documents that he published, we were able to extract interesting information concerning the Corbu, Dobrovăț, St. George – Vaslui, St. Nicholas Racovița Monasteries in Moldavia, their founders and their relationship with Mount Athos. We also highlighted data from these documents concerning donations to princely foundations or to Mount Athos, as well as the rulers' solutions in the case of some legal complaints brought before them by their subjects.