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THE PRINTING SHOP OF MOSCHOPOLIS

Moschopolis was —and is— a famous place¹. Quite naturally, it attracted like a magnet all kinds of historiographical legends and myths, traditionally widespread in the history of the Balkans, where romanticism always disguises national and revolutionary traditions. Besides the famous «library of Moschopolis», which was unmasked as a pure legend already by the German linguist Gustav Weigand and the Greek historian Georgios Laïos, our printing shop is another good example for this proliferation of legends. It is famous for the publication of a number of extremely interesting Legends of Saints (*Vitae Sanctorum*), mainly of the Slavic Saints Kliment, Naum and Jovan Vladimir/Gjon Vlladimiri².

Even bigger is the number of legends which do circulate until today in the historiography about Moschopolis, notwithstanding the nationality of the author and/or the place of publication.

The history of the present-day village of Voskopoja has been studied by Greek, Rumanian and Albanian authors, but until now not by professional historians!

Concerning the printing shop of Moschopolis, we have to recognize the fact that its books are extremely rare in European libraries and therefore offer a large area for legends and myths. These legends refer:

1) to the historical location of the Moschopolis Press in the frame of the history of book printing in South-Eastern Europe (the printing shop of Moschopolis was by no means the first and/or the only printing office in the Balkans, as we learn from monographs and even encyclopedias),

2) to the year of foundation of this printing shop,

3) to its concrete location and organization,

4) to the number of books printed,

5) to the number of languages used in these books,

6) to the personalities working there, and finally

7) to the more (or less) interesting contents of the books published in Moschopolis.

The study of the general history of the town and of the history of its cultural insti-

1. For more detailed information see M. D. Peyfuss, *Die Druckerei von Moschopolis, 1731-1769*, Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas, 13, Wien 1996², pp. 8-46, mainly the chapter on the general history of the town (an Albanian translation of this book —short version— is being prepared by my student M. Gjergj Misha).

2. A large part has been reedited recently in *Cyrrillomethodianum* 10, Thessalonique 1986 (1996, in reality!).

tutions needs a lot of critical methodology.

1) The art of book printing was brought to the Balkans very early. In the nineties of the fifteenth century, the first Slavonic books were printed in Senj/Zengg (Blaž Baromić, *Missale* in *glagolica*) and in Cetinje (Makarij, *Oktoechos* in *ćirilica*). It is not yet quite sure if the beginnings of Jewish bookprinting are to be dated as early as the 1480ies, but after 1512 Hebrew books were printed in Salonika by Jews from Portugal, and since 1527 by the famous Soncino family from Italy, established in Constantinople and Salonika. The Armenians also started to print in Constantinople in the second half of the 16th century (Abgar Tochateci/Evdokaci). At that time, the art of book printing also spread to the Albanian lands, but the books printed there reportedly (*Triodion*, Skutari/Shkodra 1563; another book from Durrës/Durazzo 1584) were in Slavonic and in Latin, while books in Albanian were published exclusively in Italy (Buzuku, *Meshari*, Roma 1592).

But Moschopolis was not even the first Greek printing office in the Balkans³. As early as 1627 the famous «reformist» Patriarch Kyrillos Lukaris established a printing shop in Constantinople, but it remained just as short-lived as later initiatives for issuing greek and karamanlidika books in the middle of the 18th century (the Patriarchs Kyrillos V. and Samuel Chantzeres are often quoted in this context, but their personal contribution to the spread of book-printing is quite unsure). In 1759, an isolated *Psalterion* was published reportedly on Mount Athos by a printer who had worked before in the Moldavian capital Iași⁴.

2) The years 1710, 1712, or 1720 are often quoted as years of foundation of the Moschopolis printing shop, but the first verifiable book has the imprint 1731 and contains an Akoluthia for St. Theodora of Salonika. This means that even the Ottoman Turkish prints of Ibrahim Müteferrika (since 1728/29) are a little older than the oldest Moschopolitan book.

3) We do completely lack information about the reasons and the concrete circumstances of the foundation of the printing office, but we can suppose that the technology was imported from Venice, which used to be in a very close commercial contact with Moschopolis since the middle of the 17th century (we know a lot of books printed in Venice, but written or financed by people from Moschopolis).

4) Between 1731 and 1760 only twenty bibliographically accessible books have been printed with the indication «En Moschopolei», while one more print from 1769, evidently provenient from the same printing press, does not indicate the place of publication. It is often localized in Bucharest, but I have proved the invalidity of these arguments.

5) All these Moschopolitan books are printed exclusively in Greek, and nobody ever could show me a polyglott Moschopolitan print or a book in Aromanian, Albanian or Slavic originating from this office. But the existence of such prints is still advocated by

3. We exclude the Greek prints of Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia and Galicia, where a Greek-Slavonic grammar was published in Lwów in 1591.

4. The location on Mount Athos possibly is a mystification! The printing of only one single book on Mount Athos in this period is quite improbable.

authors from Romania, Albania, and Macedonia (FYROM), probably not only inspired by pure nationalism but also by the fact that several famous polyglott and xenoglott prints of that time evidently do have some relation to the cultural world of Moschopolis; however they have been printed much later and far away of our town, namely in Venice (Kaballiotēs, *Protopeiria*⁵, or Daniel, *Eisagogike Didaskalia*⁶), in Vienna (Ukutas, *Nea Paidagogia*, and Bojadschi, *Grammatike romanike etoi makedonoblachike*⁷), or in Buda and Pest (Roza, *Exetaseis* and *Măiestria ghiovă siri*⁸).

6) On the authors, editors, correctors and printers of Moschopolis we do have extremely contradictory information. There has been a lot of discussion about the question, if Hierodidaskalos Gregorios Moschopolites and Gregorios Konstantinides/ Konstantinu, both mentioned in several books from Moschopolis as author and/or editor, have been identical persons or not⁹. This question is the origin of legends about the existence of two different printing offices in Moschopolis.

Print number V from 1740 (an Akoluthia for St. Naum) and some copies of print number VI (Akoluthia for St. Kliment Ohridski) prove that both Gregorys are in fact one and the same person. In St. Naum's Akoluthia we are informed on the title page that the proofs of the book were read by «the printer Gregory from Moschopolis», in the original: Διορθώσει δὲ τοῦ Πανοσιωτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου ἐν ἱεροδιδασκάλοις Κῦ Κῦ Γρηγορίου τοῦ Μοσχοπολίτου τοῦ καὶ τυπογράφου and not καὶ τοῦ τυπογράφου. And in the portrait of this Gregorios, which we find in some copies of St. Kliment's Akoluthia¹⁰, the inscription reads Ὁ ἐν ἱερομονάχοις Γρηγόριος Μοσχοπολίτης καὶ τυπογράφος.

We do not know anything for sure about Gregory's life. The information offered for instance by Basiles Krapsites¹¹ is obviously nothing but vivid imagination —since he does not give us a single source. On the other hand, the books from Moschopolis do contain, if we read them in an attentive way, several information on this hieromonachos, who was not only a printer and proof reader but also a talented author of liturgical and other texts.

The identity of one more author of our printing shop has been questioned: Michael (tu) Gkoras or Hypeschiotes signed an epigram in a book of 1744 (the *Epistolarium* of Theophilos Korydalleus, print no. XV) with both of his surnames, establishing his identity once and forever. He wrote small verses, epigrams, dedications for several moschopolitan

5. E. N. Kekrides, *Theodoros Anastasiu Kaballiotēs (1718;-1789). Ho didaskalos tu Genus*, Kabala 1991.

6. A. Konstantakopulu, *He neoellenike glossa sta Balkania (1750-1850). To tetraglossio lexiko tu Daniel Moschopolite*, Ioannina 1988.

7. Cf. the recent reprint M. G. Boiagi, *Gramatica aromână ică macedonovlahă*, Freiburg 1988 (1990, in reality!).

8. Without any success I tried to convince publishers in Athens of the necessity of issuing (commented) reprints of these extremely rare —and interesting— books! For the whole group of texts see the recent work of A. Azelis, «Versuche zur Verschriftlichung des Aromunischen um die Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jh.», *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert und Österreich* 10 (1995) 73-83.

9. St. Adhami, *Voskopoja*, Tiranë 1989, pp. 67-69, favours the theory of two separate identities.

10. The portrait was not reproduced in *Cyrrillomethodiana* 10, Thessalonique 1986!

11. B. Krapsites, *Λόγιοι της Ηπείρου (1430-1912)*, Αθήνα 1979.

books, he did the proof-reading of the Akoluthia for the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberiupolis (1741, print no. VII), he contributed in several ways (epigrams and corrections) to the *Syntagmation orthodoxon* of 1746 (print no. XVII), and it was he who wrote the Akoluthia for St. Anthony from the same year (print no. XVI). If he was the son or the nephew of the Bishop of the diocese of «Gkora kai Mokra» in the «klima» of Achrida is unknown; it is possible, however, that his surname has absolutely nothing to do with the Bishop at all!

One more author has to be mentioned because of his relationship with our printing shop, but we cannot discuss his activity here in all details: Theodoros Anastasiu Kabalioles († 1789) has published two books in Moschopolis (an *Oktoechos* in 1750, print no. XIX, a *Greek Grammar* in 1760, print no. XX), but not his famous *Protopeiria* which was published in Venice, 1770 and reprinted so often by European linguists and historians, from Johann Thunmann in 1774 to Armin Hetzer in 1981.

7) Out of totally twenty one (twenty in the worst case) Moschopolitan prints, not less than nineteen were of religious content. From these, fourteen were Akoluthias for selected Saints. Six of these were published simultaneously and in most cases bound together according to a table of contents printed in the first booklet, the famous *Collection of St. Kliment Ohridski*. But we do find isolated copies of single Akoluthias from this collection, and not every bookbinder did respect the order of the table of contents.

Two remarks are necessary here: First, it is obvious that after 1746 no more Akoluthias were printed in the following period, which corresponds nearly to a quarter of a century (to the last book, dated 1769). We do not know the reasons.

The second remark refers to the Saints to whom these liturgical texts are dedicated. In most cases—but not always—the Saints are typical personalities of the cultural area of Moschopolis-Achrida:

St. Naum/Nahumus, «thaumaturgos» and «čudotvorec»! His famous monastery is located on the southern shores of Lake Ohrid, at a distance of about 35 km from Moschopolis as the crow flies, and it exercised a kind of patronage over the Moschopolis printing shop for several years. We do not know the details and we do not know exactly why our printing office used the ikon of St. Lukas (always known as an intellectual) for its imprint.

The claim that the printing shop was located at St. Naum's monastery is one of the numerous legends we can find in the literature until today; even the monastery was located by some ignorant authors in the town of Moschopolis!

St. Naum (+910) was a fellow of St. Kliment Ohridski (+916) and, together with him and other three Saints, a disciple of the famous Thessalonican brothers St. Cyrillus and St. Methodius. All together used to be worshipped and portrayed as the so called «Seven Saints» —Hagioi Heptarithmoi, Sveti Sedmočislenici (Cyrillus, Methodius, Kliment, Naum, Sava, Gorazd and Angelarij)— in the former Archbishopric of Achrida¹². The

12. The recent Macedonian publication by V. Stojčevska-Antik' and S. Nikolovski-Katin, *Vo čest na svetite Kiril i Metodij*, Skopje 1994, has no scientific value at all.

oldest collective portrait of these Seven Saints dates from 1612 and is to be found in the Slimnica Monastery on the shore of Lake Prespa. I found excellent frescoes and ikons of the «Seven Saints» from the 18th century in the churches of the Albanian Myzeqeja just as in churches of the highlands surrounding Moschopolis (Llënga, Vithkuqi), only in Moschopolis itself no such fresco has been preserved. The «Seven Saints» are worshipped as such until today in the churches of Bulgaria, Macedonia (FYROM) and Serbia. I do not know if the «Seven Saints» have a definite place in the official church calendar of the Orthodox Church of Albania.

In the 18th century, the «klima» of the Patriarchate/Archbishopric of Achrida stretched from the Albanian shores of the Adriatic Sea at Durazzo/Durrës, Apollonia/Pojan and Valona/Vlorë to the Pirin mountains of the diocese of Tiberiupolis/Strumica. Its political history is characterized by the struggle between local and Phanariot fractions which cannot be simply identified with and reduced to a «slavic» and a «greek» orientation; the official language of the Archbishopric of Achrida was, at least in the 18th century, exclusively Greek (that is why unofficial texts were sometimes written in bulgarian but with greek characters). The struggle ended, as we know, with a victory of the Phanariot fraction —the Ottomans abolished the independence of the Archbishopric in 1767, under Üçüncü Mustafa (the III.), quite simultaneously with the abolishment of the Archbishopric of Ipek/Peć (1766) and surely in some close relationship with the so-called catastrophe of the town of Moschopolis, which has been the most powerful economic centre of the whole «klima» until these years.

The book printing and editorial activity of Moschopolis have been interpreted until now in quite different ways.

It is impossible to ascribe the book production of Moschopolis to an early flash of anacronistic nationalism as it has been seen mainly by Russian or Bulgarian authors as Gil'ferding, Tunickij and Snëgarov.

Not completely without any reason, the Moschopolitan Press has been interpreted mainly by Greek authors as a mean in the campaign of propaganda against Islam on one side (but only one Akoluthia from 1742, print no. XI, is dedicated to a «Neomartyr», Nikodemos of Berat, executed for inadmissible reconversion around 1709) or against Catholicism and Reformation on the other side (here we have to quote mainly the *Synagmatation orthodoxon* of Konstantinos Hagionaumites from 1746, print no. XVII, the undated *Aletheia Krites* by the Jesuit renegade Leandro Lombardi/Pater Bentzone, print no. XVIII, and the *Orthodoxos didaskalia* by the Alexandrian Patriarch Meletios Pegas, published in 1769, print no. XXI).

The preponderance of religious writings in the book production of Moschopolis (over 90% by titles, but we do not know the circulation!) is paralleled not only by the supervision of the Monastery of St. Naum as quoted on several title pages, but also by the spiritual guidance of the Archbishopric of Achrida, which was ruled from 1718 to his death in 1745 by the famous Moschopolitan Patriarch Ioasaph, who printed only a *Synchorocharti* (Indulgentia, Ablaßbrief) in Moschopolis in 1742, but is quoted in several other

booklets (V, VI, VII, XV).

In addition to these religious motives, not instead of, I would like to propose another interpretation. We have to consider the activity of the Moschopolitan printing shop in the light of the struggle of the domestic party for maintenance of the independence of the Archbishopric of Achrída against the Phanariot fraction which finally succeeded in 1767 with the help of the Ottomans. The largest part of publications refers to local Saints, not only to the famous «Heptarithmoi» as a group and as individuals (St. Naum, St. Kliment Ohridski), but also to St. Jovan Vladimir/Gjon Vlladimiri, St. Nikodemos, St. Erasmos, and the Fifteen Saints of Tiberiupolis.

The wall paintings and the icons of the churches of the diocese and the so-called «chartines ikones» (so well catalogued by the late Mrs. Papastratos), the copperplate engravings produced in Vienna and other towns give us an ever deeper insight into the meaning of the notion of «patrida» at that time by showing us interesting «vedute» of the famous orthodox monasteries of the region: From St. Mary's Monastery of Ardenica on a hill overlooking the Myzeqeja lowlands in the West to St. Jovan Vladimir's Monastery near Neokastron/Elbasan in Central Albania and to the remote monasteries of St. Marina/ Marena near the Aromanian village of Llënga, St. Naum on the shores of Lake Ohrid, St. John Prodromos' Monastery near Moschopolis and St. Peter and Paul's Monastery near Vithkuqi.

The book production, the wall paintings, the icons and the engravings were clearly inspired by popular religiosity and by local patriotism (irrespective of any kind of nationality which in the Balkans of the 18th century did not yet play the destructive role it had to play in the 19th and 20th centuries).

If it is allowed to search for an ideological interpretation, book printing in Moschopolis was an attempt to promote local orthodox solidarity among the faithful flock of the Archbishopric of Achrída endangered in the same way by Phanariot and Ottoman Centralism¹³.

Historians are working in the dimension of time and always have to consider the past *and* the future... For my monograph on the printing shop of Moschopolis, I have worked in many European libraries, from Rome to St. Petersburg and from Chios to London. It is possible that further titles from the Moschopolis Press might be found in the future and that our image of this publishing house may be changed.

13. In the vivid discussion following my statements, it was maintained by partners in discussion—and repeated by members of the chair—that the main source on «the so-called catastrophe of Moschopolis» of 1769 (these were my own words), the Prodromos-Codex, invokes «turkalbanoi» as malefactors. In reality, the source, published very seriously by the former Metropolitan of Xanthe, Ioakeim Martinianos, speaks exclusively of «mportziledes» and not at all about «turkalbanoi». As I stressed in the discussion, even the Ottoman «büyükbaşı» of Körice/Korytsa/Korça came to help the inhabitants of Moschopolis with two hundred men against the so-called «mportziledes», who are never identified in the source as «turkalbanoi». The «mportziledes» were a symptom of internal «anomaliai kai tarachai» (the Moschopolitan source) and of the «civil war within the establishment» (the American historian Peter Sugar), so a kind of Mafia phenomenon (defined as such by the German A. Hetzer) and had nothing to do with modern national/religious conflicts (which only seemingly dominate the scenery in Bosnia).

But systematic research has to be done quickly in the churches and church ruins of Albania. I sincerely stress my fear that premature repair of monuments by local clerics may destroy more than atheist fanaticism did succeed in fact!

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

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ΤΟ ΤΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΜΟΣΧΟΠΟΛΗΣ

Τα βιβλία που τυπώθηκαν στη Μοσχόπολη (η σημερινή αλβανική Voskoroja) στο διάστημα 1731-1769 είναι οι μόνες, ουσιαστικά, πηγές που διαθέτουμε αναφορικά με την ιστορία του γνωστού αυτού τυπογραφείου που κακώς αναφέρεται συχνά ως το παλαιότερο στα Βαλκάνια. Λανθασμένες είναι, επίσης, και πολλές από τις πληροφορίες που παρέχονται από διάφορα εγχειρίδια και εγκυκλοπαίδειες. Μέχρι σήμερα έχουν εξεταστεί μόνο είκοσι ένας τίτλοι, οι οποίοι είναι όλοι αποκλειστικά ελληνικοί! Η πλειοψηφία τους είναι θρησκευτικού χαρακτήρα και αναδεικνύουν τη στενή σχέση του τυπογραφείου όχι μόνο με το γνωστό μοναστήρι του Αγίου Ναούμ αλλά και με την Αρχιεπισκοπή της Αχρίδας που καταργήθηκε το 1767, σχεδόν ταυτόχρονα με το ίδιο το τυπογραφείο. Μέσα από τη σχέση αυτή μπορεί να εξηγηθεί η κυριαρχία των τοπικών σλαβικών παραδόσεων στο μεγαλύτερο μέρος των εκδόσεων του τυπογραφείου αυτού, παραδόσεις αντίστοιχες των παραστάσεων γνωστών Σλάβων αγίων της περιοχής στις εκκλησίες της Μοσχόπολης (αλλά και του Myzeqe, όπου είχαν τα χειμαδιά τους οι Αρομούνιοι βοσκοί των βουνών της Μοσχόπολης).