

Midterm Scientific Report for the years 2013 and 2014

The Romanian treasury of the Simonopetra monastery – Mount Athos: historical documents and applied research

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The archives of monasteries of Mount Athos represent the most important deposit of unpublished documents concerning the medieval and modern history of the Romanian Principalities, outside the Romanian frontiers. The Romanian documentary fund of the 20 great monasteries (in Slavonic, Greek, Russian, French, Romanian, but also Romanian with Cyrillic characters) dates from the 15th-19th centuries. They were drafted both at Mount Athos and at the monasteries subjected to Mount Athos, situated in the country; the second type of documents was confiscated by the Law on the secularization of monastery estates (1863) and taken to the Holy Mountain. The Romanian historiography has been able to use just a small part of this fund, considering the existence of a few copies in the National Archives of Romania. Afterwards, through the efforts of Romanian and foreign historians, some of them were made public before the First World War and in the interwar period. Following the Second World War, considering the political system in Romania, it became very difficult to study the relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos. However, this important matter of Romanian and European history has enjoyed the attention of famous Romanian historians and of certain foreign specialists. A crucial event for discovering the relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos was the opening of the Holy Mountain archives, starting with the 90s. This event was the outcome of great efforts from the part of the Romanian researchers in exile Dumitru Nastase and Florin Marinescu. After 1990, Florin Marinescu elaborated five volumes – with Greek abstracts – comprising documents within the archives of five monasteries (the director of this project contributed to two of these volumes), as well as three volumes in Romanian (one with integral documents and two with abstracts), edited by Petronel Zahariuc and Florin Marinescu. From a scientific perspective, the study of Romanian archives at Mount Athos is essential: this is one of the few places where new information regarding the history of Romanians can be found. By publishing the documents from a new Romanian archive at Mount Athos (archives of the Simonopetra monastery), many fields of Romanian history will be enriched. These documents will be used for writing original studies, meant to clarify an important chapter in the history of Romanians: the relations with Mount Athos. This chapter within the history of Romanians contributes to determining the role and place of Romanians in Eastern European Culture and to unveiling

the cultural connections with the other Orthodox peoples. Because it was very difficult to access the archives and libraries of Mount Athos (it became possible only three decades ago), a sustainable scientific work is necessary for publishing the tremendous amount of documentary material discovered and for the historical interpretation of the new information comprised in these documents. The processing and publishing of the documents within Mount Athos archives (in this case, of the documents within Simonopetra monastery archives) requires solid notions of Slavonic, Greek, and Romanian-Cyrillic palaeography, as well as long-term experience in the valorisation of these documents. The purpose is to integrate them within the overall picture of the history of Romanians. By publishing the Romanian documentary treasury of Mount Athos and by using these documents to write history, the Romanian historical research will be significantly more present in the international bibliography concerning the role and place of Mount Athos in the history of the Orthodox Church and of Europe in general.

Description of the activity conducted in 2013:

Though the allotted time has not been in their favour, researchers within this project have managed to complete research stages within public archives in Romania: Bucharest (National Archives, Romanian Academy Library, National Library of Romania), Iași, and Târgu-Jiu, in the archives of the Metropolis of Moldavia and Bukovina, in the archives of the monasteries of Sucevița, Putna, Golia, and Saint Sava in Iași, as well as in the archives and libraries of Chișinău (Republic of Moldova). Moreover, two of the team members – Florin Marinescu, PhD, and Nikolaos Mertzimekis – continued their research in the libraries of Athens and – a very important detail – in the archives of Mount Athos monasteries (Greece).

Because we have worked with unpublished documents, the outcomes have a great value and scientific level; hence, they contribute to a better knowledge of ecclesiastical and political history within the Romanian Principalities from the 15th century to the Union of the Principalities.

The team members presented five papers in the country, at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University – Iași, the Putna Monastery (Suceava), and the “N. Iorga” Institute of History, Bucharest. This way, they valued the documentary material collected while working on this project. According to the project schedule, three papers were accepted for publication in prestigious journals in the country, in “Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie” (CEEOL), all comprising the project acknowledgment.

Funds have been used in a correct and balanced manner, depending on the objectives, activities, and categories of budget mentioned in the project schedule. The equipment purchased fortunately completes the endowments of the Laboratory for the research of Romanian-Athonite relations, within the Medieval History Department of the Faculty of History, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, Iași. Therefore, we were able to process the documentary material for the volumes of documents, which we intend to publish, in the years to come, at the “Al. I. Cuza” Press, Iași, and at the “Doxologia” Press (which belongs to the Metropolis of Moldavia and Bukovina).

The work within this project included a close collaboration with the young researchers. Hence, the young researcher – and PhD candidate – Sorin Grigoruță has already begun attaining the goals of this project; first, he improved his knowledge of Romanian-Cyrillic palaeography and Slavonic palaeography, which has enabled him to be part of the team editing the volumes of documents we have in plan. At the same time, this project has contributed to the PhD candidate’s improvement of skills and monthly income. For these reasons, I am persuaded that he will write a valuable PhD thesis. Furthermore, the bachelor, master, and PhD students who acquired Cyrillic palaeography notions will be able to work successfully in archives, museums, and libraries, where they will process funds and collections of documents, manuscripts, and old Romanian books.

The scientific activity conducted during these three months has led to the outcomes we had expected. We attained the goals set for these three months within the project. It is also worth highlighting that the research infrastructure was completed; therefore, the research work will continue successfully in the following years.

Description of the activity conducted in 2014:

In 2014, the scientific goals proposed in the project schedule were attained. Therefore, two of the project members – the director, Petronel Zahariuc, and Florin Marinescu, PhD –, in collaboration with Ana Stefanatu, published a volume of documents from the archive of the Xiropotam monastery. The volume, in Greek, is titled *Ρουμανικά έγγραφα του Αγίου Όρους. Αρχείο Ιερας Μονης Ξηροποτάμου, τόμος δεύτερος, Αθήνα <Romanian Documents from the Holy Mountain. Archive from the Holy Monastery of Xiropotamu, tome II, Athens>*, 2014, 675 p. This volume comprises 1,600 abstracts of documents dating from the 18th-19th centuries, concerning the history of the Romanian Principalities and their relations with Mount Athos, preserved in the archive of this great monastery of Mount Athos. This is the fourth such volume; the other three were published in 1997, 2005, and 2013 (one in

Greek and two in Romanian). All four volumes exhausted the rich Romanian archive of the Xiropotam monastery of Mount Athos.

Besides this volume, comprised in the project schedule, another team member – Bogdan-Petru Maleon – finalized a volume of ecclesiastical history studies, currently in press at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Press; it is scheduled for publication in the first months of 2015. The volume – *Cercetari privind ideologia puterii și organizarea ecleziastică în Moldova medievală* – reunites ten texts elaborated in the past eight years, which were published in various scientific volumes and historical periodicals. The selection of studies took into account the theme of this project, reason for which the main themes are related to legitimacy sources of princely power, to the relationships between the Prince and the Church, to the constitution and structure of ecclesiastical dominations, to the incomes of ecclesiastical courts, to the way Moldavian monasteries administered material goods, etc. The publication of this volume brings light on less known issues, regarding the way in which the relations between the political power and the ecclesiastical authority evolved throughout the Moldavian Middle Ages.

In addition, the project team published nine papers (only five had been initially planned), all including the acknowledgment of the project: six in IDB journals (“Revista Istorică”, “Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie”, “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «A. D. Xenopol»”, “Analele Științifice ale Universității «Al. I. Cuza»”, Iași, s. n., history, “Historia Urbana”), and three in volumes of studies edited at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Press, Iași. At the same time, two other papers were accepted for publication in another IDB journal (“Analele Putnei”, CEEOL); both of them belong to a young postdoctoral researcher, who joined our project this year (Ioan-Augustin Guriță). Three of the papers published comprise over 100 Slavonic-Romanian and Romanian unpublished documents (with Romanian-Cyrillic characters), dating from the 16th-18th centuries. These volumes belong to the archives of Athonite monasteries of Simonopetra and Dohiariu, and they represent the solid foundation for two volumes of documents, which we plan to publish, as part of the project, in 2015 and 2016. Another study – the one regarding the history of the Dragomirna monastery – depicts the historical evolution of this place of worship, as well as its state when the abbot Paisie Velicovschi, accompanied by 64 monks who had left Mount Athos, arrived there to seek shelter in the Romanian Principalities. This moment represents the beginning of a new era concerning the Romanians’ knowledge of the life and history of Mount Athos monasteries.

Concerning the scientific events, the project members presented ten papers (only four had been planned) during national and international symposia organized in the country (Iași, Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Lower Danube Archbishopric, Strehaia and Severin Bishopric, Putna Monastery, Dragomirna Monastery), on the history of relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos or ecclesiastical and political history; these papers are related to the general theme of the project. Two of the papers revealed two travels (pilgrimages) at Mount Athos, in the 19th century, and two travel “journals”, each comprising several hundred pages and written in Romanian-Cyrillic characters (in 1840, the monk Chiriac of the Secu monastery, and in 1858-1859, hieromonk Andronic from the Neamț and Secu monasteries). The first “journal”, written by monk Chiriac, has not been sufficiently known, because there was only a poorly edited edition dating from the interwar period, belonging to G. Giuglea. The second journal had not been published before and it comprises a first “history” of the entire Mount Athos, based both on personal observations and research, and on having read a vast bibliography, mostly Russian and Greek. This “journal” represents the first history of the relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos, because the author summarizes – for most monasteries – the donation acts of the Romanian princes, boyars, and hierarchs, from the 14th century to mid 19th century. In addition, this priceless manuscript contains important information about the constitution of Romanian monasteries at Mount Athos in the 19th century (Prodromu and Lacu convents). For all aforementioned reasons, I consider the intent of publishing this volume about Mount Athos in the following years a very useful endeavour. During this year (2014), we published another travel journal dating from 1862, also comprising Romanian-Cyrillic characters, belonging to a traveller (pilgrim) from Walachia, probably called Alexandru Ion; this travel journal is shorter, but very interesting. Another aspect of Romanian-Athonite relations that drew the attention of project members (Florin Marinescu, Petronel Zahariuc) was the way in which Constantin Brâncoveanu helped Mount Athos and the entire Lower Danube Christendom.

In order to attain, under the best circumstances, the objectives of this year, the team members had several research stages in archives and libraries on the country and abroad, as follows: Mount Athos monasteries and libraries of Athens (Florin Marinescu), L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociale, Centre d'Études des Mondes Russe, Caucasien et Centre-Européen, Paris (Petronel Zahariuc), Romanian Academy Library and National Archives of Romania (Sorin Grigoruță), “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, Bucharest, and National Archives of Suceava (Laurențiu Rădvan, Liviu Pilat, and Petronel Zahariuc).

In the spring of this year, we welcomed another young researcher in our project team: Ioan-Augustin Guriță (he has a bachelor's degree in Orthodox Theology and History and a PhD in the Ecclesiastical History of 18-th century Moldavia). He has proven valuable knowledge of Orthodox Church History and he is able to help us attain the project goals. At the same time, also by using the scientific experience of this project, the young PhD candidate Sorin Grigoruță – research assistant with the “A. D. Xenopol” Institute of History – managed to finalize his PhD thesis, which he is to present at the end of this year (15 December 2014). A very important chapter of this thesis concerns the Public medical assistance in Moldavia (1700-1831), where the author included a study on monastery *bolnițe* (hospitals) and on the history of the Hospital within the Saint Spiridon Monastery, Iași.

Team members have conducted intense research activity this year; they managed to attain all goals proposed, by publishing two books and an important number of studies, as well as by attending scientific symposia and conferences. Both the experienced and the young researchers contributed successfully to the outcomes of this project; I am persuaded that we will continue in the same enthusiastic rhythm in 2015 and 2016.

28 November 2014

Project director,

Prof. Petronel ZAHARIUC, PhD