

SYMPOSIUM L'ÉPOQUE PHANARIOTE, 21–25 OCTOBRE 1970. A LA MÉMOIRE DE CLÉOBULE TSOURKAS. Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1974. 481 pp.

The thirty-seven papers which comprise this volume were presented at a conference of Greek and Rumanian scholars at Salonika in 1970. They concentrate on the Phanariot regime in the Rumanian principalities and emphasize the beneficial contributions of the Phanariot princes and of Greek culture to the development of Moldavia and Wallachia in the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century. This positive note reflects the view of contemporary Rumanian historiography toward the Phanariot period and contrasts sharply with the generally negative assessment of it in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Taken as a whole, the papers provide a useful overview of the subject. Cultural, legal, and economic as well as political problems are considered. Among the most interesting articles are those that attempt to measure the degree of influence exercised by the Phanariots on Rumanian society. Taking a quantitative approach, Ion Ionașcu finds that Greek and Levantine elements on the princely councils in Moldavia and Wallachia did not exceed 25 percent during the period 1711–1821; Cornelia Papacostea-Danielopolu draws a useful distinction between the anti-Phanariot feelings of the majority of Rumanians in the 1820s and their receptivity at the same time to Philhellenic ideas; Alexandre Cioranescu analyzes the collective anti-Phanariot sentiments in the first true Rumanian novel, *Ciocoii vechi și noi*, by Nicolae Filimon; and Alexandru Dușu describes the intermingling of the old traditions of humanism with new infusions of ideas from Greek and Western sources (through Greek intermediaries) in the last decades of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, a period he characterizes as a “crisis of conscience” for Rumanian society.

As for political and legal history, Șerban Papacostea stresses the importance of Constantin Mavrocordato's Charter of 1741 as a fundamental text for understanding the nature of the Phanariot regime and of Rumanian society generally. Valentin A. Georgescu studies the various projects drawn up by Michael Fotino, one of the main figures in the development of Wallachian law, to endow the principalities with a new and comprehensive code. He ascribes Fotino's failure to his almost exclusive reliance upon Byzantine codes and his neglect of Wallachian realities, which aroused widespread opposition from the native aristocracy. Dumitru Limona and Olga Cicanci investigate the commercial activities of the Greeks in the Rumanian principalities, drawing upon, respectively, the archives of Greek merchant houses in Bucharest, Sibiu, and Brașov, and the Greek church in Vienna. The inclusion of bibliographical essays dealing with Rumanian and Greek historiography on the Phanariots would have been of great value. The article by Cléobule Tsourkas, which is limited to three Greek works on Rumanian history published at the beginning of the nineteenth century, is the closest one comes to a scholarly appraisal.

Although this volume contains a number of interesting pieces, it is, nonetheless, something of a disappointment. Many of the papers are synthetic and contain little that is genuinely new.

KEITH HITCHINS

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*