

New Europe College Yearbook
2022-2023
Volume 2

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ALEXANDRA TEODOR
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ALEXANDRU VOLACU
MYROSLAV VOLOSHCHUK
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FOREWORD FROM THE EDITOR

The *New Europe College Yearbook* is an annual academic publication of the New Europe College – Institute for Advanced Study, committed to publishing original research undertaken by the fellows of the institute as part of their fellowship programme at NEC. The format of the publication is somewhat unconventional, because it brings together a wide variety of academic fields, styles and methods. In a sense, it is heterogeneous; in a different sense, it is liberal.

One cannot deny that knowledge is infinite, as Jorge Louis Borges once suggested in his famous *Library of Babel*. There is complexity, redundancy, intricacy, unlimited variety in the ways humanity produces and stores knowledge, and a publication could, just like a library does, mirror that complexity, redundancy, intricacy and variety – without reduction and insulation by field, style or method. The difference and the upshot would be that an ongoing academic publication is more dynamic and up to date than a library. It keeps up with the rhythm of knowledge production, not only with its form.

In spite of the variety of contributions, academic excellence prevails. All the contributions submitted to the *New Europe College Yearbook* by the institute's fellows are reviewed by experts in the academic or the scientific fields to which each contribution belongs. The reviewers are selected from among NEC's academic staff, the Editorial Advisory Board, NEC's alumni and collaborators who have agreed to participate in the review process. The reviewers assess a contribution considering its scientific quality, as well as its relevance and impact. In this sense, each contribution is vetted by a research community to which it is relevant and useful.

Nevertheless, each contribution also reaches a wider academic audience. Although the *New Europe College Yearbook* is not an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary publication, it fosters communication and openness among fields and disciplines, through its heterogenous

wide format, which is in line with the diverse format of the fellowship programmes themselves.

In this sense, the *Yearbook* is also a reflection of the community of researchers that is New Europe College.

Andreea Eșanu



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“... BUT INCIDENTS OF A PRIVATE NATURE CONTINUED...”: THE FATE OF THE KARAITES OF EUROPE IN MOSHE KOVSHANLY’S REPORT

Yuri Radchenko

Abstract

This text is devoted to analyzing one document, namely the report of the head of the Karaite community in Germany, Moshe Kovshanly, addressed in 1943-1944 to the former Hakham of the Karaites of Poland, Seraj Shapshal. In his report, Kovshanly describes the controversial Nazi policy toward the Karaites from 1933 till the time of the report. The article describes the process of how the Karaite population in Germany fled German repression, analyzes what Kovshanly was silent about in his address to Shapshal and for what reasons, and also discusses the participation of the Russian “white” emigration in the persecution of the Karaite population and the Jews in Germany.

Keywords: Karaites, Jews, Nazis, Germany, Occupation, Persecution, Community, Ukraine, Lithuania.

1. Introduction

The historiography on the fate of the Karaites¹ of Eastern Europe during the Nazi occupation is quite extensive². At the same time, many issues regarding what happened to the Karaite population in many areas of Nazi-occupied Ukraine at the local level have not been reflected in scientific, popular science and in journalistic texts. It is known that in some regions of USSR occupied by Nazis, the Karaites were shot together with the Ashkenazi Jews, as happened in Krasnodar, for instance. In some other locations, like in most places in Crimea, the Germans and their allies did not touch the Karaite population. In addition, even in complex studies devoted to the occupation of certain regions of Ukraine in 1941-1944 not a word is mentioned about the fate of the Karaites.

At the turn of the year 1943, the head of the Karaite community in Germany, Michael (Moshe, Mussa) Kovshanly wrote a letter to the *haham* (hakhan) of the Karaites of Poland, Seraya Shapshal. Kovshanly was the descendant of an emigrant from the former Russian Empire. He was appointed to his post in 1936 and while there, he played a major role in the fate of the Karaites in Europe during the Holocaust. In this letter, Kovshanly described the situation that prevailed among the Karaites during Nazi rule between 1933 and 1943. This document, based on oral testimony from Eastern European Karaites and German officials, sheds light on many aspects and details from 1933-1945 regarding the Karaites. Who were the people who gave testimony to Kovshanly? What, according to this report, were the specifics of German policy toward the Karaites in various regions of Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and Lithuania? Were they persecuted by the Germans and their allies? What was the “legal” basis in the process of implementing “Karaite policy” in Ukraine during the German occupation, according to Kovshanly? One important aspect of the history of the Holocaust and Nazi occupation in Ukraine is the relationship between Jews and Karaites. It is known that in different areas in Europe controlled by the Germans and their allies, relations between rabbis and Karaites were also fundamentally different. What were they like in different regions of Ukraine? How does this report describe the Jewish-Karaite and the Karaite-Tatar (Muslim) relations? An important fact is that Kovshanly and his wife actively collaborated with the Germans during the Nazi rule in order to survive. In 1942-1943, Kovshanly’s name is mentioned in a list of German officials. During the war he worked as Shapshal’s representative in Germany and in the occupied territories, and in his letters to SS officers he referred to himself as “deputy to His Excellency Haham of the Karaites S. Shapshal”. Each of his letters he ended, according to the requirements of the time, “with German greetings, Heil Hitler!” (“mit dem deutschen Gruss, Heil Hitler!”)³. There is information that Kovshanly worked for the unit “Reichsarzt SS und Polizei” (SS and police doctors)⁴ and his wife was “secretary to Rosenberg”⁵. The fact that after the end of the war Kovshanly went to South America and ended any public activity also speaks volumes. What facts of his pre-war and military activities was he hiding? The document describes the persecution of the Karaites by the Russian “white” emigration. Who were these people by origin and in what form did they take part in the persecution of Karaites and Jews? I will give answers to these and other questions in this article.

2. Karaites in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s

Kovshanly's report presents a fairly detailed picture of what the Karaite population was like in the pre-war period. In general, before 1914, the Karaites were unknown in Germany to non-specialists. Only the events of World War I and the revolutions in the former Russian Empire contributed to the fact that a very small number of Karaites – eleven people – appeared in Germany. All of them were native Russians, but they had ended up in Germany in different ways. There was only one woman among them. Kovshanly notes that most of the Karaites from Germany came to the country as prisoners of war of the Imperial Russian Army (IRA) and were engaged before the Nazis came to power mainly in hard physical labor, which was typical for emigrants of that time:

“From the beginning of the National Socialist regime until now, a small colony of permanent Karaites numbering eleven souls lived in Germany. Almost all the Karaites live in the city of Berlin. They are called permanent because they have been living in Germany for more than twenty years. Half of these Karaites are former prisoners of war during the WWI; the rest are divided into three categories: Soviet citizens (who went to Germany with the permission of the Soviet government), Turkish citizens, and stateless persons. All these Karaites are workers, mostly engaged in physical or menial labor, and their occupations are the following: two waiters in a restaurant, one chef in the kitchen of a restaurant, one typesetter in a printing house, a dress-room attendant in a theater, two car drivers, one auto mechanic and blacksmith, one dressmaker, two electricians”⁶.

3. Karaites and Russian White Emigrants

After the end of the Revolution and the Civil War in the former Russian Empire, a large number of emigrants who held a variety of political views found themselves in Germany. Prominent among these people was a general of the IRA, a native of Kharkiv province, Vasily Biskupsky. Once in Germany, he took part in the local political life on the side of right-conservative and right-radical groups. In particular, he helped organize the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch in 1920. Biskupski later became close to the Nazis and maintained an active correspondence with Arno Schickedanz⁷ and Georg Leibbrandt⁸. According to one version, it was in his apartment that Hitler once hid after the failed putsch from November 1923. After the

Nazis came to power in 1933, Biskupski tried to establish contacts with the Nazi leadership. His initiative was eventually supported by Heinrich Himmler. As a result, in May 1936 Vasily Biskupski became head of the "Russian National Office" (German: Russische Vertrauensstelle, RVSt) in Germany. Sergei Taboritsky and Peter Sabelsky-Bork became the deputy and secretary of the organization, respectively. The task of this institution, which worked under the control of the Gestapo, was to monitor "Russian emigration" in Germany, checking people for their "loyalty". Later, with the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, the RVSt sent 1.200 "white" emigrants to the Eastern Front as interpreters who served in the Wehrmacht, SS, police and local government, and participated in the Holocaust and other mass crimes. It is difficult to say how far the authority of RVSt extended: for example, whether Biskupski's structure had the right to check Ukrainians who were supporters of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi⁹, in whose army the head of the RVSt himself had served in 1918. Most likely, the authority of this structure was limited to those emigrants who considered themselves "Russians"¹⁰. This is largely confirmed by Kovshanly in his report:

"Before the National Socialists seized power, the Karaites in Germany lived quietly, working and content with their labor. Along with the already existing secret police of the National Socialist apparatus, a secret police department was created in Germany in 1934 to supervise all Russian natives, regardless of their nationality or citizenship, under the name 'Russische Vertrauensstelle' – the Bureau for Russian emigration, which was run by Russian emigrants in the service of the SS Gestapo. Their main task was to look after all citizens of Russian origin, as well as to establish a police force in favor of Germany"¹¹.

Starting with 1938, the task of the RVSt was also to provide the Germans with addresses where Jews from the "Russian emigration" lived. There is still no direct documentary evidence that Biskupski's men turned Jews over to the Gestapo, but we find indirect confirmation of this in Kovshanly's report. He reports that with the coming to power of the Nazis and the activation of the RVSt, the Karaites began to be persecuted, arrested and even sent to concentration camps. In these processes the key role was played by supporters of Biskupski's, who accused the Karaites of being Jews. In this way, Russian white émigrés tried to extend Nazi anti-Jewish "racial laws" to the Karaite population. It is significant that in his report Kovshanly asserts that the main reason why the Russian white emigrants

began to persecute the Karaites was because of their non-participation in the life of the emigration. Obviously, this was an excuse. Before the revolution, the Karaites were very well integrated into the Russian society and took an active part in the life of the emigration. The main reason behind RVSt's actions was the anti-Semitism from the ranks of the White Emigrants, which most likely poured out not only against the Karaites, but also against the "Russian" Jews in Germany:

"The Karaites did not belong in the circle of emigration at all, were not members of any emigrant political party, emigrant association or trade union. The Karaites kept their distance from high politics and led a peaceful life. The political neutrality of the Karaites and their non-alignment with the Russian emigration was a reason for the Gestapo to declare the Karaites an unreliable element and, since 1934, despite the small number of Karaites, persecutions, harassment and even repressions against the Karaites from the side of the German authorities began, with the help of Russian emigrants. There was such a situation that everyone was deprived of work and the right to work, and of the right to receive benefits for the unemployed. There are cases of humiliation, in which the Russian department of the Gestapo or the German Gestapo, the police or the labor exchange summoned Karaites and began to mock their biblical names and oriental physiognomies – calling them "Kikes", "Masons", "Communists", and, without hesitation, submitted them to beatings, threatening to put them in a concentration camp. For example, Avadia Rofo from Berlin, a former prisoner of war in 1914, was beaten ... on the premises of the German Gestapo after being denounced by Russian emigrants for refusing to enroll in the Union of Russian Officers. His own brother Aron Rofo, a former lieutenant in the Tsarist army, a prisoner of war in Germany in 1915, was similarly insulted on the premises of the Russian Vertrauensstelle, i.e. the Russian Gestapo. Veniamin Maximadzhi, having lost his job and the right to it and to unemployment benefits, as well as his passport and the right of residence, was imprisoned in a concentration camp, where his hands and feet were chopped off during the reprisal. Then, after being taken to the infirmary, he escaped from there to Vilna, where he died a few years later. Levi, a Turkish citizen, was imprisoned together with his wife for a year and three months from 1934 to 1936 for having traveled to Moscow in 1927 to visit his parents, who lived there. He was accused of espionage in favor of Soviet Russia..."¹².

4. Establishment of the Karaite community in Germany

An important route to salvation for the Karaites in Germany, and in the countries that later fell within its sphere of influence, was the organization of a community that could prove that Karaites were not part of the Jewish people. It was for this purpose that Kovshanly organized a meeting in Berlin at the beginning of 1935, in which a “community” of Karaites (in fact, a meeting of 11 secular people) was organized, with Kovshanly elected as its head. The question remains whether the Karaites in Germany would have established such a community had it not been for the danger of German repression. He reports that the German authorities did not follow the path of Poland and of other countries that adopted Imperial Russia’s experience in “Karaite policy”, which meant recognizing them as a separate denomination from Judaism. Kovshanly (consciously or not) fails to notice the changed realities –Nazis looked not at the intricacies of religion, but at “race” (in the understanding of the pseudo-science and -anthropology of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century):

“...the German authorities did not try to clarify the issue of the Karaites as Poland and Turkey did, but the Karaites living in Germany had to resort to self-defense, namely: at the beginning of 1935 in the city of Berlin in the apartment of Musa Kovshanly took place the first meeting of the Karaites, devoted to the issue of self-defense”¹³.

Kovshanly notes in his report that the Germans accused him of espionage “in favor of foreign intelligence” and that his apartment was searched. Most likely this is true and Biskupski’s men were involved.

5. Relations with Crimean Tatars and Nazi Officials

Kovshanly describes the restrictions to which the Karaites were subjected in Germany by the Nazi authorities in the second half of the 1930s, when they were suspected of being Jewish. He emphasizes that this happened at the instigation of Russian white emigrants. He also reports that at this time it became popular among the Karaites who lived in the Reich to mimic Tatars-Muslims and Orthodox Russians. This tendency can be seen in the way Kovshanly himself was called – Michael-Mussa, not Moshe.

In some places, such as Crimea, the good relationships between Crimean Tatars and Karaite nationalists contributed to the fact that the Germans did not touch the local Karaites. Later, after May 1944, when the Red Army entered Crimea, the same relationship was maintained. Thus, by the end of spring 1944, about a thousand Crimean Karaites who might have been involved in collaboration and feared possible persecutions from the Soviet authorities, retreated with the German army to the West. They found refuge there and established the “Verein der Tataren und Karaimen zu Wien” (“Association of Tatars and Karaites in Vienna”). Later, however, the word “Karaites” from the name of the organization was dropped because the Karaites began to leave the association. The reason for this was the conflict between Kovshanly and the Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Edige Kirimal¹⁴. In a letter dated February 12, 1945, Kovshanly accused his former friend and colleague Kirimal of not being of pure Tatar origin and of working for the NKVD¹⁵. Kovshanly does not mention this conflict in his report, apparently because he wrote the report to Shapshal earlier. But it is interesting that, in his memoirs, Kirimal completely bypasses the topic of his relations with Kovshanly and with the Karaite Turkic nationalists in general¹⁶. Kovshanly reported, among other things, that “the Karaite subject” began to be of interest to the organs of Nazi Germany involved in solving the so-called “racial questions”, but he mentions it in passing:

“Three years later, *i.e.* in 1937, all the Karaites and, in particular, Kovshanly himself had to get a job in their professions and, despite the fact that they had to work with their acquaintances illegally, they had to work for a pittance and for more than 12 hours a day. All Karaites living in Germany during this difficult time had to hide their origin and were forced to pretend to be Muslim-Tatars or Orthodox Russians, in order to avoid any more accusations. Having found no more accusations against Karaites, the Russian Gestapo continued to persecute the Karaites for their non-political nature and declared them ‘Jews’, *i.e.* it informed the German Gestapo and the Ministry for Racial Affairs – Rassen Forschungen¹⁷, that the Karaites were Jews who enjoyed rights in the former Russian Empire. Of course, the word ‘Jew’ was enough for the Germans, as they were not interested in the Karaite’s former legal status”¹⁸.

In the context of the events of the Holocaust, Kovshanly mentions the fate of Germany’s Jews during the Nazi period only once. He emphasizes that those Jews who “pretended to be Karaites” suffered, without saying who exactly told the German authorities who was a real Karaite and

who was not. It is significant that, in 1941, representatives of the Karaite community from Kyiv provided for the Germans and their collaborators the service of identifying “pseudo-Karaites”. The question remains as to what role the structure led by Kovshanly played in these processes:

“In general, in this latest account, the real Karaites did not suffer, because it had been said already that they hid their origins, only the Jews who hid their origins and pretended to be Karaites suffered”¹⁹.

The Karaite community repeatedly appealed to the German authorities with a request not to extend the Nuremberg legislation²⁰ onto them, invoking their former status in the Russian Empire. The head of the Karaite community in Paris, Semyon (Serge) Duvan, took an active part in these processes²¹. As a result, in 1939 by the decision of the Genealogical Office, the petition was granted. Later this decision was extended to 200 Karaites in occupied France, who in 1940 found themselves in the zone of Nazi control. Kovshanly describes the situation in which he succeeded in convincing the SS representatives that the Karaites were not Jews. Among the arguments that Kovshanly presents are the testimonies of Jewish historians who, out of a desire to save the Karaites, denied their Jewish roots. It is significant that Kovshanly confuses names, willingly or not. For example, instead of “Weisenberg” he writes “Weinberg”, and he also mistakenly calls the German Willy Bang-Kaup a “Jewish scholar”. As evidence, he also cites some articles apparently from Soviet encyclopedias of the 1930s, which claimed that the Karaites were a separate Turkic nationality. In his opinion, all this convinced the SS “scholars” that the Crimean Karaites were “pure Turks”:

“...In connection to this, in 1940, the headquarters of the German Gestapo in Berlin summoned Musa Kovshanly for an explanation. Scientific officials of the Gestapo who tried in every possible way to prove that the Karaites are Jews were present, but M. Kovshanly pointed out to them researches on the Karaites done by Jewish professors lik Weinberg, Feiker, Bang-Kaup and others, as well as the novelties from Soviet research according to which the Karaites are pure Turks. Of course, such proofs provided by the Jews themselves and by Soviet science put the Gestapo scholars in an awkward position. As a result, M. Kovshanly was released, the position of the Karaites in Germany and in France apparently changed and there was no more persecution in principle”²².

6. Karaites on the territory of the occupied USSR

The German attack on the USSR on June 22, 1941 marked a new phase of the Holocaust in Europe. In connection with these events, the "Karaite question" began to be discussed more actively in various Nazi structures. In the Lithuanian city of Trakai, in August 1941, the German authorities attracted Shapshal, who was one of the most active adherents to Karaite nationalism from the interwar period, to "consultations". As a result, on September 25, 1941, an instruction was issued on the territory of the Reichskommissariat Ostland, according to which it was impossible to "equate the Karaites with Jews"²³. This instruction was approved on October 1, 1941 by the political department of the Ministries of the Eastern Occupied Territories. It was decided that "harsh measures" should not be performed against the Karaites. At the same time, practice shows that although there was a ban on persecutions against them, many units, especially the *Einsatzgruppen*, upon meeting the Karaite population, independently applied the "final solution". Thus, for example, in Kharkiv several dozens of Karaite Jews were shot together with 10,000 Jewish rabbis in the winter of 1941-1942. The rest of the city's Karaite population survived the occupation. Moreover, starting probably from the end of January 1942, Karaite documents (real or fake) could save a person's life and even enable him to obtain a trade license²⁴.

As in Lithuania, the Germans and their collaborators used local Karaite and non-Karaite "experts" and "activists" to determine the status of the Karaites in each particular area. Thus, in Melitopol, on October 10-13, 1941, local Karaite Gelii (Hilel) Yalpachik, at the request of the staff of Sonderkommando 10a, together with his friends and a former *hazan*, sketched a "Brief historical and ethnographic information about the Karaites"²⁵, the original of which has not survived. Yalpachik later said that the head of the town council, Perepletechikov, helped them escape:

"The Germans thought that the Karaites were a special kind of Jews...They gathered together over a hundred of us and asked: 'Who are you, what kind of nation are you?'. I told them that we were like Old Believers, that we had an independent language of the Turkic group, our own religion, our own traditions... And Perepletechikov... came to the Gestapo to defend us. He said that he knew for sure that in tsarist times the Karaites enjoyed the same rights as the Russians and served in the army..."²⁶.

In Crimea, the Germans also turned to consulting local “experts” about the past of the local Karaites. In the spring of 1942, one Nazi officer, SS-Obersturmführer Alfred Karasek, communicated on this issue with the director of the Crimean Museum of Local Lore, Alexander Polkanov. By German order Polkanov wrote a brochure in which he “proved” the Turkic, pagan and partly Muslim origin of the Crimean Karaites. He probably used some of his notes and the narrative of Karaite Turkic nationalists of the interwar period in preparing this text. According to another version, Polkanov prepared this brochure on his own initiative and hid most of the books in the museum that proved the Jewish origin of the Karaites from German eyes. Polkanov was personally interested in saving the Karaites as he himself was married to a Karaite woman²⁷. Partly such actions, as well as instructions for the *Einsatzgruppe D* from Berlin contributed to the fact that the Crimean Karaites suffered little during the occupation. We find a rather peculiar reflection of some of these events in Kovshanly’s report. In his report he relies mainly on the testimonies of Karaites who found themselves in Germany and had previously stayed in various regions of the occupied USSR. Thus, he had several witnesses from Crimea and at least one Karaite from Kharkov – Mikhail Avakh. The latter left (or was taken away by force) to work as an Ostarbeiter in 1942. We managed to find his letter from Germany to Seraya Shapshal with a request to confirm his Karaite origin:

“Your Eminence, Deeply Respected Haji Gahan,

I, Mikhail Borisovich Avakh, was mobilized in Kharkiv and am now in the camp of Eastern workers, working in a factory. I was tracked down by the respected Kovshanly, who has helped me morally and as much as possible. I am 28 years old. I heard a lot about you in Russia from my grandmother Bekenesh Arabadzhi from Evpatoria. My heart is filled with joy that you are alive and healthy to the joy of all of us Karaites. I learned that our small nation exists and is united by you. I lost my mother, my father, my homeland. The only thing I have left is my dear Karaite community and its people. I know that I am not alone and my Karaite brothers will always help me. I have a request to you. I do not have any documents. My Karaite birth certificate was lost. I ask you to issue me a new certificate or a certificate replacing the old one. I wish you strength and health for many years.

With respect, Avakh Mikhail Boris”²⁸.

It is clear from the letter that Avakh, like many Karaites in Germany, faced the accusation of being a Jew. The same thing happened, for example, to Tatiana Gibbor, who was taken from Simferopol, and who had been working in a mine on a conveyor belt in Passenberg since the summer of 1942. One day a fellow worker denounced her to her boss, informing him that Tatiana was Jewish:

"She said that I was not Russian, but a Yuda. To the chief. He called me: 'Tatiana, are you a Juda?' And I said, 'No.' 'But Samarskaya... said 'you're Yuda.' And I said, 'No.' He could have done something if he said I was Jewish..... And he didn't even touch me... And then we went to the barracks and started beating her [the informer Samarskaya - Y.R.]. 'Are you not ashamed, shameless? How could you say that?'²⁹.

Interestingly, together with Tatiana in the group of Ostarbeiters arrived a Krymchakian girl (Krymchaks – Crimean Oriental Jewish Talmudists), who hid her identity, apparently pretending to be a Karaite:

"There was a woman who was Jewish, or Krymchachka, a resident of Crimea. And we were friends with her all the time?"³⁰.

In his text, Kovshanly reports about the shooting of Karaites by the Germans in a number of places (Kyiv, Kharkiv), often exaggerating the number of victims. Thus, in Kharkiv he records about a hundred dead. An important element of the language of the document is the demonstrative absence of suspicion that the Karaites might be of Jewish origin. Every case of execution of Karaites by the Germans on the territory of the USSR is "justified" by the fact that the Germans accused them of loyalty to the Soviet system, and not by the fact that their ancestors read the Torah in the *kenassa*. Perhaps Kovshanly wrote in this way fearing that the letter might fall into the hands of the Germans. In his account of the events in Kyiv, he also relies on the testimony of a German official, Heinrich Guse (Huse?), who served in the Ministry of the Occupied Eastern Territories [German: Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete]. It is difficult to say who this might have been. Perhaps it was the Reichskommissar for Ostland, Heinrich Lohse:

"...but incidents of a private nature continued. Thus, for example, are the words of the Karaites living in Crimea, like Kara-Kumysh-Karaman and

Mark Seriado. After the occupation of Crimea by the Germans in 1941, many Karaites were accused of supporting secret Soviet agents and were shot by the Germans. In 1942, after the landing of Soviet military units in Evpatoria and Feodosia, 110 Karaite souls were shot by the Germans in Evpatoria and 80 Karaite souls in Feodosia, accused of supporting the Soviet occupation. According to the words of the Karaite Michael Avakh in Kharkov, after the second capture by the Germans and during the first stay of the Germans in Kharkiv, 100 Karaite souls were shot by the German Gestapo, *i.e.* the whole colony accused of supporting the Soviet power. According to the words of a German official, Heinrich Guse, who served in the Ministry of the Occupied Eastern Territories [Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete], in 1943 the entire colony of Karaites in Kyiv, numbering 70 souls, was shot, standing accused of serving the Soviet authorities”³¹.

In his report, Kovshanly does not mention a number of regions in Central-Eastern Europe where Karaites lived during World War II, *e.g.*, Galicia, Volhynia, Odesa, Trokai, etc. The report also lacks information about the policy of the Nazis, their allies and their collaborators towards the Karaite Slavs who lived in Crimea and southern Russia. Thus, on the territory of the already mentioned Galicia, the small Karaite population did not suffer from the Germans. The Mortkovich family lived in Galich and Zalukva. According to the memories of Shimon Motkovich, there was even a German field commander’s office in the Karaite hut:

“Dad’s family lived in Galich, and Mom’s family lived in Zalukva The Germans did not touch the Karaites ... 5-6 families were there [in Zalukva before the attack of the Germans - Y.R.] ... The Germans, when they settled, they looked where there was a better economy, where there were clean people. The Germans did not touch the Karaites. They destroyed the Jews, but they did not destroy the Karaites. There were some German headquarters in Zalukva, where my aunt’s house was. And my aunt spoke German. And they cooked food there and so on. My father constructed roads ... We hid Jews ...”³².

The background of Kovshanly’s report was that the status of the Karaites was periodically subject to revision. Around the time of writing the report for Shapshal, a new instruction was issued from the “final” documents regulating the status of the Karaites on the territory of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine. On September 13, 1943, Commissar General Zhitomir from the Ministry of Occupied Eastern Territories issued the

instruction “On the situation and attitude to the Karaites”, which was elaborated and released in Berlin on July 31, 1943. The document repeated the already known theses about the non-Jewish origin of the Karaites:

“The Karaites are religiously and nationally different from the Jews. They do not originate from Jews, but are a Turkic-Tatar people, closer to the Crimean Tatars. They are of an ante-Asiatic and Oriental race with a Mongolian admixture and are foreign [*artfremd*] in relation to the German people. The mixing of Germans and Karaites is forbidden for racial reasons”³³.

At the same time, when the document mentions the prohibition of mixed marriages of Karaites and Germans, it refers to the “First Ordinance on the Implementation of the Law on the Protection of German Blood and German Honor” [*Erste Verordnung zur Ausführung des Gesetzes zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre*], which regulated exclusively the situation of Jews in Germany³⁴. That is, this instruction shows that the “suspicion of Jewishness” was never completely removed from the Karaites throughout the occupation of Ukraine. It should not be forgotten that among the Nazis there were people who called for the Karaites to be treated as Jews. For example, the Nazi publicist and writer Dagmar Brandt (pseudonym Mara Krüger) shared this position. She viewed the Karaites very negatively, calling them “fanatical Jews” and calling for their extermination. In 1943, she wrote a huge novel in 12 volumes, “Gardariki,”, more than 900 pages. Brandt “analyzed” the history of Western and Eastern Europe, demonstrating the “demoralizing role” of Jews in different eras, according to the Nazi worldview. Brandt portrays the Karaites as a Jewish group of “descendants of Japheth”, the “lost tribe of Israel”, who have always ruled “Kanaan” – Russia. One of the main characters in the third volume of the novel is Rahmani Ben Eliyahu, a Khazar merchant who lived in Kyiv in 720-725. Brandt’s seventh volume focuses on the history of the adoption of Christianity in Kyivan Rus’ territory. Prince Vladimir the Great is portrayed there as a man surrounded by Jews who have a strong influence on him. The prince himself is also described as the son of a Jewish servant girl, Malusha. Even Anastasius, the man who helped Vladimir during the siege of Chersonesus, is, in Brandt’s view, a baptized Jew from Babylon. The novel describes how the Karaite-Khazar missionary Yehu Fravitta ben Hanina proposes to Prince Vladimir that he convert to Judaism. The Khazar-Karaites are portrayed in the novel as an element hostile to the “Aryan race”, constantly organizing Jewish

conspiracies and corrupting the Russian statehood³⁵. In this atmosphere, in which the position towards the Karaites could have been reconsidered, Kovshanly wrote his report and chose his words very carefully.

7. Conclusions

Moshe (Mikhail-Mussa) Kovshanly is a very interesting and little-studied historical character of the period 1930-1940s. His biography and his activities from 1933-1945 require additional research. His report written to Shapshal in late 1943-early 1944 sheds light on many aspects of the life of the Karaites in Europe under Nazi rule. The letter-report is an example of an internal source of documentation about the Karaite community, but it is likely that Kovshanly was afraid of the German secret services and exercised some degree of self-censorship. For example, not once in his letter does he show doubt about the theory of the Turkic origin of the Karaites. Kovshanly's report gives us an idea of what the Karaite population in Germany was like by the time the Nazis came to power. He also described in some detail the attitude of the Reich towards the Karaites through different stages of Hitler's regime. Kovshanly reported that the main initiators of the persecution of the Karaites in Germany in the 1930s were Russian white emigrants from Biskupski's organization. The latter were searching for Jews among the Russian emigration and insisted on extending Nazi anti-Jewish legislation to the Karaites. There is nothing in Kovshanly's report about the German persecutors of the Karaites. Perhaps, he kept silent about it because of censorship. The document does not contain information about the attitude of the Ukrainian diaspora and emigration towards the "Karaite question" – for example, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalist under leadership of Stepan Bandera or the supporters of Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky. There is no information in the document about the collaboration from the part of the Karaite population and Kovshanly himself with various structures of the Nazi state. At the same time, based on oral testimonies of Karaite and German officials, Kovshanly gives an idea of the Nazi policy in the "Karaite question" in the occupied USSR, for example, in Crimea, Kharkiv and Kyiv. Information about a number of regions (for example, Galicia, Lithuania, Odessa) is missing. Most likely, Kovshanly did not have information about events in those areas at the time of writing the report. The document showcases the

contradictory and constantly changing policy of Nazi Germany towards the Karaites in 1933-1945.

When continuing the study of questions posed in this article, researchers should consider a number of archival sources. For example, it would be promising to examine the private archives of Kovshanly's and a number of other Karaites who were active during World War II. It would also be important to study and analyze German documents from the Federal Archives in Freiburg, Berlin and Ludwigsburg, archival trial files from the former KGB archives, documents from the Russian emigration (e.g., the Bakhmeteff Archive) and the Ukrainian emigration (e.g., Oseredok in Winnipeg).

NOTES

- ¹ Karaite Judaism or Karaism is a Jewish religious movement characterized by the recognition of the Tanakh alone as its supreme authority in Halakha (Jewish religious law) and theology. It is distinct from mainstream Rabbinic Judaism, which considers the Oral Torah, as codified in the Talmud and subsequent works, to be authoritative interpretations of the Torah. Karaites maintain that all of the divine commandments handed down to Moses by God were recorded in the written Torah without additional Oral Law or explanation. As a result, Karaite Jews do not accept as binding the written collections of the oral tradition in the Midrash or Talmud. During the 9th century C.E., a number of religious groups arose that denied the existence of Oral Torah. These groups came to be known as Karaites, and they were distinguished from the Rabbanites or Rabbinical Judaism. The Karaites believed in strict interpretation of the literal text of the scripture, without rabbinical interpretation. They believed that rabbinical law was not part of an oral tradition that had been handed down from God, nor was it inspired by God, but was an original work of the sages (*Karaites*, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/karaites>).
- ² Algamil, Y., *Ha-yehudim ha-karaim be-mizrach Europa be-avar u-be-hove*, "Ti'eret Iosef" Institute for the Study of the Karaite Jewry, Ramle. 2000; Arad, Y., *Toldot ha-shoa. Brit ha-moetsot ve-ha-shtachim ha-mesupachim*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 2004; Atchildi, A., "Rescue of Jews of Bukharan, Iranian and Afghan Origin in Occupied France (1940–1944)", in *Yad Vashem Studies* 6 (1967): 257–81; Backer, A., *Die Karaimer. Historischer Iberblick*, H. Leivik, Tel Aviv, 1990; Dodenhoeft, B., "Vasilij von Biskupskij. Eine Emigrantenkarriere in Deutschland", in Karl Schlögel (Hrsg.): *Russische Emigration in Deutschland 1918 bis 1941. Leben im europäischen Bürgerkrieg*, Oldenbourg Akademie, München 1995: 219-228; Feferman, K., "Nazi Germany and the Karaites in 1938-1944: between racial theory and Realpolitik", in *Nationalities Papers* 39, 2, 2011: 277-294; Feferman, K., *The Holocaust in the Crimea and the North Caucasus*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 2016; Freund, R., *Karaites and Dejudiaization: A Historical Review of an Endogenous and Exogenous Paradigm. Stockholm Studies in Comparative Religion* 30, Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm, 1991; Friedman, P., "The Karaites under Nazi Rule." in *On the Track of Tyranny. Essays Published by the Wiener Library to Leonard G. Montefiore, on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*. Ed. Max Beloff, The Wiener Library, London, 1960.
- ³ Kizilov, M., *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, De Gruyter, Warsaw, 2015, 346.

- ⁴ Freund, R., *Karaites and Dejudaization: A Historical Review of an Endogenous and Exogenous Paradigm. Stockholm Studies in Comparative Religion* 30, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1991, 92.
- ⁵ Kizilov, M., *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, De Gruyter, Warsaw, 2015, 348.
- ⁶ Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существования национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года до настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 1.
- ⁷ Arno Schickedanz (1892[1] –1945) was a diplomat of the German Reich who held paramount positions in both the NSDAP Office of Foreign Affairs (APA) and the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (RMfdbO). Both ministries he held positions in were under the command of Alfred Rosenberg, a friend since childhood and a leading Nazi theorist and ideologue. Schickedanz was a vehement antisemite, and his positions within Rosenberg's ministries often involved antisemitic programming. In particular, Schickedanz was a central figure in the expansion of the Foreign Policy Office. He was the proposed ruler of the Reichskommissariat Kaukasien, however this territorial entity never came into existence. Schickedanz died of suicide on the 12th of April 1945 (Biedermann und Schreibtischtäter. Materialien zur deutschen Täter-Biographie, Institut für Sozialforschung in Hamburg: Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik 4, Berlin 1987, S. 173.).
- ⁸ Georg Leibbrandt (1899 – 1982) was a Nazi German bureaucrat and diplomat. He occupied leading foreign policy positions in the Nazi Party Foreign Policy Office (APA) and the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (RMfdbO) as an expert on issues relating to Russia. Both agencies were headed by Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg. Leibbrandt was a participant of the January 1942 Wannsee Conference, at which the genocidal Final Solution to the Jewish Question was planned. In the postwar period, criminal proceedings against Leibbrandt were initiated, but the case against him was ultimately dismissed (Eric J. Schmaltz, Samuel D. Sinner, The Nazi Ethnographic Research of Georg Leibbrandt and Karl Stump in Ukraine, and Its North American Legacy Get access Arrow, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Volume 14, Issue 1, Spring 2000, P. 28–64.).
- ⁹ Pavlo Skoropadskyi (1873 – 1945) was a Ukrainian aristocrat, military and state leader, decorated Imperial Russian Army and Ukrainian Army general of Cossack heritage. Skoropadskyi became Hetman of all Ukraine following a coup on 29 April 1918 (Скоропадський Павло, Українська мала енциклопедія : 16 кн. : у 8 т. / проф. С. Онацький. — Накладом Адміністрації УАПЦ в Аргентині. — Буенос-Айрес, 1965, С. 1762-1764).

- ¹⁰ Dodenhoeft, B., Vasilij von Biskupskij. Eine Emigrantenkarriere in Deutschland, in Karl Schlögel (Hrsg.): *Russische Emigration in Deutschland 1918 bis 1941. Leben im europäischen Bürgerkrieg*. Oldenbourg Akademie, München 1995, S. 219-223, 226-227.
- ¹¹ Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существование национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года д о настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 2.
- ¹² Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существование национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года д о настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 5-7.
- ¹³ Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существование национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года д о настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 7.
- ¹⁴ Kizilov, M., *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, De Gruyter, Warsaw, 2015, 310-311.
- ¹⁵ Kizilov, M., *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, De Gruyter, Warsaw, 2015, 348-349.
- ¹⁶ Kirimal, E.M., *Der nationale Kampf der Krimturken*. Emsdetten/Westfalen, 1952.
- ¹⁷ There was no Ministry for Racial Affairs. It was a „Rassenhygienische und bevölkerungsbiologische Forschungsstelle“ within the Reichsgesundheitsamt / Reich Health Ministry.
- ¹⁸ Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существование национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года д о настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 6-7.
- ¹⁹ Хахану караимскому, Хаджи Сюрае-Бею Шапшалу. Доклад о положении состоянии караимов в период существование национал-социалистического режима в Германии и во время войны в период с 1939 года д о настоящего времени в занятых Германией странах на Западе и на Востоке, *Lietuvos Mokslo Akademijos Biblioteka (Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)* [MS LMAB], F.143, No1053, 6.

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- 23 *Холокост на территории СССР: Энциклопедия* / Гл. ред. И. А. Альтман, Москва, 2011, 386.
- 24 Радченко, Ю., Оккупация, категоризация населения и избирательность геноцида: случай караимов Харькова (1941–1943 гг.), *Ab Imperio*, 3/2022, 131-160.
- 25 *Ялпачик Гелий Семёнович (1912-1993)*, <https://karai.crimea.ru/183-jalpachik-gelij-semjonovich-1912-1993.html>
- 26 Гелий Ялпачик. Нас спасали добрые люди (записано со слов в 1992 году), в *Караимы Мелитополя, Мелитополь*, 2004, 35.
- 27 Kizilov, M., *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*, De Gruyter, Warsaw, 2015, 329-330.
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- ³⁵ Кизилов, М., Михайлова, Д., «Хазары и Хазарский каганат в европейских в европейских националистических идеологиях и политически ориентированной научно-исследовательской литературе», в Хазарский альманах, том 3 (2004), 50-51.

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ON OCCIDENTALISM, RUSSO-CENTRISM, AND THE (IM)POSSIBILITY OF DECOLONIZATION

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Abstract

The Russian full-fledged invasion of Ukraine intensified the discussion in the academia about the urgent need to decolonize Russian, Slavic, and Eurasian studies and finally to remove the Russo-centric bias, which has structured the field for decades. This essay contributes to this discussion by elaborating on the concept of Occidentalism, as it has been developed within the Latin American tradition of decolonial thought, and turning it into solid ground for epistemological and historical critique of the Russo-centrism beyond façade-style decolonization.

Keywords: Russian-Ukrainian War, Russian imperialism, decolonization, Orientalism, Occidentalism

“US intelligence officials are concerned that Kyiv could fall under Russian control within days, according to two sources familiar with the latest intelligence. The sources said that the initial US assessment from before the invasion – which anticipated that the Ukrainian capital would be overrun within one to four days of a Russian attack – remains the current expectation. Russian forces have moved to within 20 miles of Kyiv, senior administration officials told lawmakers on Capitol Hill Thursday night”.¹

For the CNN reporters, the US intelligence prediction on the bleak prospects of Ukrainian resistance just a day after Russia’s full invasion sounded more certain than a weather forecast in the time of climate change. It was simply an inevitable fact. This inevitability was propped by decades-long ruminations about Russian “authoritarianism,” “natural boundaries,” “persistent factors,” and “deep historical configurations,”

which have become a shared common sense among Western briefing rooms, university campuses, concert halls, think tanks, and art galleries. A common sense that made a European country the size of France naturally invisible. Of course, Ukrainian historical misfortune was lamentable, but hardly unexpected or intellectually challenging. A paroxysm of the proverbial Russian barbarism that, nevertheless, could not completely deny some deep appreciation. After all there was a great European Russian culture out there to sweeten up the bitterness of yet another barbaric outburst.² In a moment of awkward silence, when Kyiv failed to fall, the matter-of-factness of Ukraine's non-existence precipitated as discursive fallout.

History is written by the victors. And even the most consistent efforts to read it against the grain do not necessarily mean to recognize those who are destined to perish. As Ukrainians learned the hard way, the recognition was not meant to be achieved by conceptual sophistication, methodological rigor, and artistic subtlety, but by lots of Ukrainian blood. In a moment of awkward silence, when Kyiv failed to fall, the grunts of persistence finally could be recognized as "neglected voices."³

Indeed, there is something deeply Hegelian in this bloody war – an existential struggle for recognition, the dialectics of the master and the slave. In the Hegelian parable, one becomes aware of his own existence only by facing the prospect of death in the hands of the Other. In the current deadly struggle, the former master and slave, however, stare at a third party, thus complicating a straightforward dialectical resolution of the conflict. Ukraine has been seeking recognition not from Russia, but from the West – presently such recognition is imperative for survival. Russia does not even recognize that it is fighting Ukraine – Ukraine does not exist in its delusional imagination. Instead by killing Ukrainians it also seeks recognition from the West as an imperial equal. The point is that the West is implicated in this conflict not only militarily, politically, economically, but also imaginatively and conceptually.

But has this fact been properly reflected upon in the recent calls for decolonization of the Russian studies in the West? It seems that the toxic discursive fallout that covered the field of Russian studies as a result of Ukrainian perseverance made the urge for displacement of the uncomfortable question quite strong and hardly veiled by a hectic activity ranging from scraping the "Russian" from the names of the centers and institutional divisions, inviting to the table "peripheral voices," and purging bad ideas vaguely defined as Russo-centric. But can decolonization

proceed beyond this familiar mixture of “woke culture” and “identity politics,” which hides, but hardly washes away, the toxic discursive dust? What options then do we have to activate epistemological and historical critique of our habits of knowing the region?

In 1995, the American-Venezuelan anthropologist Fernando Coronil published a critique of Orientalism. Without denying the intellectual power and elegance of Edward Said’s arguments, Coronil pointed to a lack of critical engagement with Said’s ideas, particularly stressing the essentialized logic behind the application of the concepts of otherness and diversity and their uncritical celebration as a reverse effect of Said’s intentions. Coronil advanced the idea that in order to approach Orientalism beyond its superficial dismissal as “bad discourse”, one would need to shift to a reevaluation of the complex and evolving historical conditions (colonialism and imperialism) that made perception of certain parts of the world through an orientalist lens possible. He famously conceptualized the mechanism that frames the representation of essentialized cultural differences in terms of Western political epistemologies as Occidentalism, emphasizing its role in obscuring the “relational nature of representations of human collectivities and their genesis in asymmetrical relations of power [...] and thus to present as the internal and separate attributes of bounded entities what are in fact historical outcomes of connected peoples.”⁴ Defined like that, Occidentalism in Coronil’s formulation referred to the conditions of possibility of Orientalism.

It seems that Coronil’s intervention hardly lost its relevance 30 years later and can be expanded both historically and epistemologically, for discussing the reasons behind the Russo-centric epistemological bias both in our methodology and in the historical past. In this essay, first I will shortly introduce the specificity of the Latin-American decolonial approach by contrasting in more detail Orientalism to Occidentalism, then I will point to some benefits that engagement with Russian and particularly Soviet imperial and colonial experience could have for expanding the scope of the concept. Finally, in a historical-autobiographical manner reminiscent of the Latin American decolonial tradition, I will demonstrate how historical elaboration on the discourse of Occidentalism provides a vantage point for pushing the discussion of decolonization beyond the ritualistic choreography of identity politics and towards critical engagement with the toxic discursive fallout produced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

1. From Orientalism to Occidentalism

The well-established academic paradigm of postcolonialism usually is associated with diaspora scholars, who during the 1980s and 1990s raised concerns about identity, imperialism, colonialism, and nationalism to the center of Western academic agenda. The towering figure and the founder of this tradition was an American-Palestinian scholar, Edward Said, whose seminal *Orientalism* has been considered to be a founding text of postcolonial studies and defined our thinking about the above-mentioned issues up until present day. As it is well-known, Said mobilized his impressive erudition to present the idea of Orientalism as political, scholarly, literally, and artistic discourse, which since the 18th century has been employed by different iterations of Western imperialism to keep the essentialized passive, feminine, irrational, and underdeveloped “East” subordinated to the active, masculine, virile, and rational “West.”⁵ However, what launched Orientalism into academic stratosphere was not simply a passionate exposé of imperialistic Western biases, but the way his critique was framed. Said’s interpretation of Orientalism happened to be closely intertwined with his critique of essentialism, stagism, evolutionism, and developmentalism of modern European thought, which resonated particularly well with the rise of post-structuralist approaches, post-modernist irony, and an overall doubt about the validity of grand narratives now exposed as ideology and power. In addition, Said’s advocacy of conspicuously non-Marxist forms of academic activism aligned well with the proliferation of various forms of identity politics (along gender, racial, and ethnic lines).⁶ Not surprisingly Orientalism was eagerly embraced by the Western academia as an important ingredient in the methodological toolkit of the updated progressivism reframed now as multicultural equality achieved through identity politics.

The collapse of socialism in 1989 added yet another casualty on the list of essentialized fantasies – socialism itself. The end of history and triumph of capitalism implied the universal proliferation of liberalism, democracy, market – a hardware for the new era of globalization – with ideas of multiculturalism and political correctness substituting those of equity. In the new circumstances it was a duty for scholars to expose bad ideas (like Orientalism) or its equivalents as major obstacles on the way towards a new era. Given the need for ideological and geopolitical incorporation of the newly liberated Eastern European countries, Eastern Europe itself was proclaimed as yet another example of a distorted Western mental

mapping. Larry Woolf's *Inventing Eastern Europe* and Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* were good examples of that readiness of the Western academics to contribute to the cause of dispelling prejudices of the past and embracing the benefits of the multicultural globalization.⁷

In the world where history ended, it was enough to simply discard bad ideas in order to maintain the equilibrium. After relishing in debunking imperialist ideas (like Orientalism), it was logical to argue that not only Westerners has been perpetuating essentialist myths. The Others were not absolved of the sin either. Precisely in this context, the concept of Occidentalism was deployed for the first time as a mirror image of Orientalism. The Dutch journalist Ian Buruma and the Israeli anthropologist Avishai Margalit defined Occidentalism as simplified or stereotypical renderings of the West by non-Western societies.⁸ Occidentalism conceptualized this way amounted to a critique of the resurgent nationalisms (especially strong in Eastern Europe and stigmatized respectively), which usually would combine essentialized ideas about the nation with no less essentialized ideas about the West.⁹ In this combination, however, and quite ironically, mainstream globalized Western academia, funding agencies, and NGOs kept reproducing the same conceptual disparities that they were supposed to transcend: the West – again rational and composed managed to get rid of its own orientalist prejudices, while, as usual, the irrational other (the global East or South) was persisting in its essentialized nationalistic absurdities – a reason eventually to deny political sovereignty and even intervene on behalf of the reason in the best colonial manner.

On another level and quite subconsciously, the exclusive focus on the critiques of essentialism was a powerful way for maintaining the post-1989 liberal-democratic and capitalist *status quo* by denying both the trauma of post-socialist transition (the East European context), or the trauma of the experience of the long colonial subordination (the Ukrainian case).¹⁰ Given that left-wing ideas were quite effectively supplanted politically and intellectually in the aftermath of 1989, ridiculous and essentialist nationalism provided the only way for voicing these concerns, thus entrenching liberal-capitalist denial. In fact, the critique of Orientalism as essentializing methodology had been voiced already in the 1980s as a reminder of the lamentable shift of the Western social sciences and humanities from clear class analysis towards cultural interpretations.¹¹ However, these critiques were too reductive in their attempts to reduce Saidian insights to a reading of Orientalism as ideological justification for

colonialism. A more comprehensive position, as mentioned above, has been developed in yet another global periphery. Quite tellingly it came from Latin America and was related not simply to academic dynamics, but to a specific political constellation: powerful indigenous movements and a strong left – there was no state socialism and therefore no dialectical negation of the revolutionary politics.

In this regard Coronil's critique of Orientalism and Occidentalism was not simply an attack on Margalit and Buruma, but a condensed summary and conceptual sharpening of the research program of Latin American decolonialism, which is based on the modernity/coloniality approach which operates within a modified world-systems model of analysis that drew from dependency theory, liberation theology, Latin American philosophy, and later also Chicana feminism, subaltern studies, and postcolonial studies.¹² Provocatively, Coronil submitted that "Occidentalism" had to be understood not as an analytical category, which should be seen as a symmetrical counterpart to Orientalism, but rather a category that "refers to representations of cultural difference framed in terms of Western political epistemologies and therefore creates the "conditions of possibility of Orientalism."¹³ Occidentalism in this regard could not be seen as a causal factor behind colonialism, but rather an ever evolving work in progress of constructing occidental superiority as an expression of hegemonic epistemology and structural coloniality. The stress on conditions, rather than identities, subjectivities, and prejudices points to a fundamental contribution of Latin American decolonial studies, which recast the problem of the relationship between colonialism and modernity by setting it in a wider historical context, by offering a certain perspective on the world history which stresses interconnections and mutual dependencies in the production of the modern world.

While enumerating the conditions that enabled Western representations of cultural difference in the modern world in terms of radical alterity, subordination, and exoticism, Coronil included "colonialism and imperialism; a hierarchical system of nation-states; capitalism as a global mode of production of regions, persons, and things; a division of the person into private individual and public citizen; faith in secular science; and an expansive *universalism* supported by the sciences and by ideologies of progress."¹⁴

For sure, the decolonial thinkers are well aware that othering and essentialization are characteristic of human communities as well as imperial enterprises across history. However, the majority of participants in

Latin American decolonial paradigm would agree that the rise of European colonialism and imperialism did constitute a significant epistemological break with previous imperialisms. The rise of European colonial empires produced not just a different type of othering, but combined this othering with deep transformations in the perception of the world, identity, body, and geography – coloniality and modernity are understood as twins. The fundamental categories of political and social perception of the objective world are permeated with these processes of colonial transculturation. In this manner, thinkers like Coronil, Mignolo, Quijano, and Dussel suggest that bounded narratives about renaissance, secularization, modern science, modern society, History, are in fact products of centuries of colonial expansion and encounters, and not a legacy of a localized and separate European experience as it was once claimed by Reinhardt Koselleck.¹⁵ Not least important, as Coronil reminds us, increasing temporalization of the geographical imagination in the course of colonial expansion could hardly be disentangled from practices of political and economic exploitation.¹⁶ Absolutely, this process was not only repressive, but clearly had emancipatory and liberating aspects, which also should be understood as products of a mutually dependent, combined and uneven development.¹⁷

As such, this program invites us to explore the genesis of epistemological blind spots and biases not only in imagination and discourse, but in the totality of history, by turning world history into a collective enterprise of rewriting separate histories as part of the global whole. The pioneers of decolonial thinking themselves made a significant historical contribution by highlighting the importance of the experience of the early Spanish and Portuguese empires in the production of the European modernity instead of the exclusive critiques of British and French imperial enterprises. By pointing to this encompassing historical sensitivity, Coronil envisioned further expansion of both historical scope and conceptual ambition of the decolonial effort. He advocated something he called “tactical postcolonialism,” meaning the need for developing the theory as well as a decolonial narrative of world history and critique of Occidentalism from a variety of positions reflecting various geographical points as well as class/gender/racial experiences of those launching the explorations.¹⁸ It must be admitted, however, that Coronil’s call was not well received. Since the beginning of the new century some major proponents of the “decolonial option” took a conspicuously non-historical turn in their efforts to carve

out some space for themselves within Western academia and ascertain difference from the dominant types of postcolonial theory.¹⁹

It is one of my contentions that historicization is critically relevant for activating the conceptual potential of decolonial critique. In this regard Russo-centrism, similarly to Orientalism, could be seen as yet another function of the occidentalist mapping. It is not enough to dispel the bias, but instead it is necessary to reconstruct the historical constellation, which made it possible. In this regard, Russia is an important part of the world's historical panorama, mediating the perception of this huge region and shadowing the presence of numerous other people and their histories. Russia came to be defined as Russia in the occidentalist map of the world as an expression of both "otherness" and "sameness." Since the ascendance of the colonial age: Russia has solidified its place as conceptual opposition of the West.²⁰ The first conscious articulation of the West as a separate and superior civilization was formulated in the first quarter of the 19th century in opposition to Russia.²¹ In a similar manner the West turned into a structural constraint and epistemological fixture of Russian thought and quest for superiority.²² This conceptual crystallization, however, had a long pre-history, which has been hardly scratched in historical literature.²³ However, it seems to be analytically productive to take the perennial Russia and the West dilemma out of the confines of the European comparisons and expose it to more globalized, decolonial readings. From the latter's theoretical standpoint, the Russian development appears not so much as a peculiar distortion of some "pure" European pattern, situated on the lower level of the European gradient, but instead as a unique and at the same time typical variation of what Anibal Quijano defined as coloniality.²⁴ Once established as the antinomic Western Other both in Russian and Western discourses, Russia was eagerly building its cultural influence as well as self-perception on this legacy. By being racially similar and at the same time culturally different, Russia constituted itself as a perennial interlocutor mirroring Western identity, and as an exotic entity mediating the Western perception of the huge region. This continuous appropriation into the occidentalist framework was built on the previous legacy, marked particularly by Russian cultural advances as compensation for its supposed political and cultural backwardness. The Great Russian Novel, the Great Russian Ballet, the Great Russian Avant-garde, etc. marked important points of this appropriation. While a historical account of imperial Russia's place on the occidentalist map would necessarily complement the understanding of the making of the

vision of the modern world, the experience of the Soviet empire points to the possibility of redressing certain theoretical omissions of the conception of Occidentalism as it was formulated by Latin-American writers.

In decolonial critique, the coloniality of modernity is coextensive with different iterations of the capitalist system: from Spanish-Portuguese breakthrough through British hegemony to the US-centered capitalism. However, decolonial theory only obliquely addresses the fact that for almost seventy years there was an alternative to capitalism, moreover, this alternative had conspicuously anti-colonial and anti-imperial claims. Unfortunately, without serious historical scrutiny of the experience of state socialism, its position and importance in the workings of global coloniality have been simply dismissed by some authors working in the decolonial paradigm as not worth of exploration. Focusing on colonial subjects and other victims of Soviet projects of modernization, the complexity and ambiguity of the Soviet experience of transcending modernity became flattened out.²⁵ However, the question about the relationship between decolonial impulse and ultimate imperial Soviet forms, between the Russian and Soviet imperial frameworks, and ultimately about the Soviet variation of the occidentalist historical consciousness remains relevant.

Indeed, there could be no uniform way of approaching these questions. Rather they have to be approached by working from one's own positionality. As Walter Mignolo suggests, "politics of epistemology" necessitates the integration of one's own and little questioned premises of knowing and knowledge as part of the analysis. Theories, methodologies, and interpretations are articulated results of the tension that emerges between experience and research in the process of scholarly activity. Mignolo calls the nexus of experience and reflexivity one's fully embodied position in space and experience – the locus of enunciation.²⁶ Without trying to be too self-indulgent, it is necessary to highlight my own positionality as a source of critique of Soviet imperial formation. The elucidation of the necessary global design requires an autobiographical detour.

2. Locus of Enunciation and the Haunted House of Universalism

I was born in Uzhgorod, Ukraine a year before Chornobyl exploded, but luckily, I was not affected much by the immediate consequences of the nuclear disaster, being shielded by the high meadows and fresh air of the Carpathian Mountains. That was a courtesy of my grandfather, born in a

Northern Ukrainian village 50 miles from Chernobyl, but sent by the Soviet state to Transcarpathian Ukraine, freshly annexed from Czechoslovakia in the aftermath of the Second World War. He was an unlikely colonizer, who was supposed to bring happy modernization to his impoverished Ukrainian brothers, while carrying in the back of his mind the burden of the traumatic experience of collectivization, Holodomor, and war. To be happy and beaming with joy, one had to unlearn how to be sad. And Ukrainian was a sad language. My grandfather tried to unlearn it, but his Russian – the language of happiness, multinational friendship, universalism, and oblivion – betrayed his peripheral origins and sadness to the very end. My parents were doing much better, equating their urbanity, modernity, and happy disinterestedness in the past with the language of universalism. They were hardly alone in this quest, singing along with their peers across the Soviet space that there was no need to “be sad, since an entire life was ahead of us, so keep your hopes high and wait for better.”²⁷

The political fallout following the Chernobyl disaster, however, brought down the regime, the multiethnic empire, and hopes for the better grew faster than me getting the chance to enjoy the fruits of Soviet modernity. What one was left with instead was an imperial melancholy. The incredible linguistic and ethnic diversity of the region – in itself a result of centuries of inter-imperial competition – allowed to re-appropriate the new Ukraine’s modest nation-state building efforts as part and parcel of this imperality, not as its opposition. Most importantly for a descendent of imperial settlers – the claim of universalistic transcendence and superiority was reserved for only one language. Incidentally it was my language.

Even ten years after the collapse, the marks of the imperial cultural hegemony of the distant metropolis were scattered around the Uzhgorod city scape. The library collections of the imperial university (opened by the Soviets in 1945) reflected it well. The library itself was stationed in the former episcopal palace (a token of Soviet modernity, transposing religion for knowledge and culture), but its collections, aside from a set of episcopal *incunabula*, looked like a chest of accumulated imperial knowledge. The infinite shelves of Russian language Marxist scholarship – a veritable “Weltgeschichte” in Soviet style – looked particularly impressive. As students we routinely practiced rewriting *verbatim* passages from the Soviet books as our sole research practice. It was a ritual of repetition and imitation for the lack of better choice and everyday homage to a distant world of the former imperial center. It was unimaginable that one cannot only copy-paste the Marxist wisdom about the past, but explore the past

through original sources. Amidst this boredom and lack of opportunities (a courtesy of imperial structures), me and many of my fellow students found relief in reading the books of a historian of medieval Europe, Aron Gurevich. Encountering his work was like a blast. His books were different in terms of plotting, methodology, questions from anything practiced in Soviet historiography and reminiscent of the French *Annales* school. Incidentally, Gurevich proved to be instrumental in introducing the major authors of that school to Soviet readers.²⁸

In the intensified context of the Ukrainian discussions about post-coloniality reaching from across the mountains, no one doubted that the future meant rejecting the communist legacy, and embracing liberalism, capitalism, Europe, and thereby universality. On that account, Gurevich's anti-Sovietism and liberalism were impeccable, his devotion to the West uncompromised, and his Jewishness cosmopolitan to the core. Most importantly, however, he wrote about these things in the language of my choice. By celebrating Gurevich I wanted to celebrate Europe, universality and at the same time my own imperial pedigree and privilege. And the more eager I was to celebrate, the deeper the condescending joy at smaller, minor parts of my imperial puzzle, thinly framed as a quest for universality.

Ten years later, in one Moscow archival collection I found the exact visualization of my longing.

*"Once upon a time, somewhere, on another planet, there was a renowned white house packed with books. The book closets stored the busts of smartly smiling people and the portrait of [Oliver] Cromwell walking in his wide jackboots [...] In the room young people were studying Latin. Without breaking the obligatory silence, they enjoyed chatting about Anatole France [and] twice a week tried to prove philosophically the past and the present."*²⁹

This description was a fantasy of a young student of medieval manuscripts from Moscow, written in the late 1930s. The "white house" of his fantasy captured better than anything else how I imagined the cosmopolitan metropolis of my imperial dreams. I had a similar feeling of transcendence (beyond petty national divisions and rivalries), a relish in the world culture and, fortunately, in the language of my choice, while swallowing the gems of beauty in the tower of the old episcopal house. The celebration of my heroes opened the doors for the updated version of that house in Moscow. As it turned out, the house was no less cosmopolitan

and even more approvingly universalistic than ever. It provided not only the feeling of belonging, but boundless opportunities: one could go higher and higher exploring its endless rooms. These explorations eventually brought me to a no less impressive and universalistic version of the house – the American campus – a veritable universalistic home for soul searchers. A home brimming with joy, fun, and sophistication. But despite this, I was somehow allured to the basement of the old white house, where the busts and portraits as well as my own anxieties were stored: my country's gradually unraveling in the flames of imperial disintegration, which followed the annexation of Crimea and the war on Donbas. Or was my grandfather's sadness, which kept hovering over my reflection about the universalistic joy and sophistication? And there was some mystery. Who were these priests of the West in the inhospitable barbaric country that I loyally chose to celebrate? What did they represent? Where did they come from?

As part of my research on the pre-revolutionary tradition of medievalists scholarship, I could not but bump into the figure of Paul Vinogradoff (1854-1925), a man credited with creating a Moscow school of research on social and economic history of the European Middle Ages. It was via Vinogradoff that deeply engrained anxieties about empire, colonialism, and universalism made an unexpected comeback on my agenda.

Vinogradoff is most known and lauded for his contribution to the explorations of the English medieval past. The book he wrote on a subject of English villainage eventually won him a professorship in Oxford. It is much less remembered that the chair in comparative law that Vinogradoff obtained in Oxford's Corpus Christi was once occupied and named after Sir Henry Maine – a British colonial administrator in India. It was hardly a coincidence, since Vinogradoff's interest both in medieval past and comparative jurisprudence, similarly to that of Maine, were not of antiquarian nature.³⁰ While reading his texts carefully, one could understand that Vinogradoff's intellectual efforts were geared towards one goal: the instrumentalization of what he called "historical mindedness," which aimed at maintaining and improving the global domination of world empires. As he argued in his numerous texts, the global world of the early 20th century was incredibly diverse and uneven in its development, with its different parts representing different temporal snapshots of humanity's history. This diversity was governed by a "civilized humanity" (meaning elites representing European global empires). The stability and progress of this structure depended not only on economic means, military

troops, and cultural achievements, but also on historical mindedness. Vinogradoff's own Russian experience of the coeval coexistence of the modern and the medieval provided insights for exploring the European medieval past and *vice versa*, his studies of that past informed his political judgement of the Russian and global present. The Russian intellectual class, presented as universal *par excellence* due to lack of engagement into intra-European national skirmishes, could deliver universal recipes of historical-mindedness for the rest of the imperial world: instructing on the pace of evolution. At the same time historical-mindedness was his recipe for modernizing the Russian empire, overcoming its autocratic nature under the aegis of liberal intellectuals and in the name of civilized humanity.³¹ By the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, major imperial cities with universities (Kyiv, Warsaw, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kazan', Kharkiv, Odesa) had experts similar to Vinogradoff. All these historians formed an imperial web of professionals, who were related to each other by intellectual lineages, but also by commonalities of backgrounds and the shared goal of transforming history into a true science of historical mindedness.³² Almost all of them came from the ranks of petty nobility, clergy, and merchant class and originated ethnically from families of Slavic descent ("Great" or "Little Russian"). Many of these historians coupled their professional activities with political participation on the local scene, considering their contributions to national science, enlightenment, and local life as a solid ground for claiming a share of power from the politically backward autocracy. The reluctance of the Tsarist government to share power with liberal experts, however, hardly changed their attitude towards the role of imperialism in the overall design of potential liberal reforms. As Vinogradoff's close associate and student of English late medieval history Aleksandr Savin once said:

Let imperialism help us to overcome our internal ailments, to achieve the internal victory over our backwardness... Let the imperialistic and great Russia tempered in the crucible of the war resolutely go along the path, which would allow it to inscribe in the walls of its imperialistic temple the proud motto: *imperium et libertas*.³³

The revolution of 1917, however, smashed all their plans. There was neither liberalism nor empire anymore. What happened then to these Foucauldian experts and their claims for power? The house stories suggested that they became utterly marginal and harassed in the new

Bolshevik state. Against all odds, however, they managed to preserve their traditions of thorough empirical research and pass this knowledge to the new cohorts of Soviet students. But could their claims for power and entanglements with imperialism simply disappear? What power was driving me then towards them almost 100 years after Vinogradoff left Russia? There was no “white house” in the imperial Russia. It was a post-revolutionary creation intimately related to the new forms of power, governmentality, and imperialism generated by the Soviet experiment.³⁴ However, to understand this transformation, one needs to take into consideration the mindset and ambitions of the revolutionary winners – the Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks were revolutionary radicals, recruited from the ranks of the Russian intelligentsia and borderland subalterns, whose anti-capitalist and anti-Western ideas were built on a profoundly Occidentocentric vision of the world. Bolshevik Occidentocentrism originated in the late imperial period, in the revolutionary underground and in the radicals’ Western émigré colonies. There they developed a fascination with non-capitalist aspects of Western civilization, industrial power, comfort, and most importantly culture and science.³⁵ Despite the radicalism of their agenda, they did not mean to challenge the idea of the “West,” but only dreamed about the possibility of purifying it and spreading it across the globe. In a certain way, by launching the revolution in Russia, the Bolsheviks hoped to pave their way back to the West. However, once their effort to export the revolution abroad failed, they had to compromise and set on building socialism in one country. This was an important theoretical revision, which would have significant consequences for the evolution of the experiment, particularly when combined with their deeply engrained fear of infiltration and foreign threat.

In many ways, the Bolshevik commitment to culture and enlightenment was a building bloc of their anti-capitalist and anti-profit vision of the world, and of the revolutionary transformation. They believed that knowledge and education were the most effective tools to achieve the goal of creating the “new man.” However, their approach to culture and science reflected another deep contradiction: they were as much committed to spreading culture as to keeping this spread under total control, the goal of creating a completely liberated and independent personality was unseated by the fact that liberation may lead the liberated self into a direction different from that prescribed by the Bolsheviks. These contradictions were particularly vivid in the Bolsheviks’ approach to enlightenment in

the immediate aftermath of the Revolution, and crucial for understanding both the imperial and the revolutionary genealogy of the “white house” of medievalists.

In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, the Bolshevik commitment for spreading enlightenment led them not only to organizing campaigns against illiteracy, but also to democratizing drastically and expanding the higher education all around the former imperial space. In 1917-1922 new universities were opened across the country. Most of these universities hosted freshly established social science departments. However, after realizing that democratization of knowledge production did not necessarily mean ideological homogenization, the Bolsheviks opted for a hyper-centralized and controlled model of enlightenment. A semi-conscious solution to the tension between spread/excellence and control was to keep overly-autonomous and rarely-predictable knowledge production under the party’s ideological control through spatial concentration and surveillance. This meant that, as early as the 1920s, the Bolsheviks were pursuing a highly-hierarchized version of cultural revolution. They supported mass cultural campaigns, but preferred to bring to the periphery only strictly-controlled and prefabricated ideological knowledge. By the end of the 1920s, they had successfully eradicated the diversity of cultural and intellectual life in the former imperial space as a matter of security, thus unintentionally creating some structural disparities in access to knowledge and information. This would eventually serve as an important foundation for reestablishing the imperial identity and framework of the Soviet project and the creation of new imperial elites.

Medievalists were part and parcel of the process. In the 1920s their expertise on the origins of the West was highly appreciated by the leading Bolsheviks as a necessary prop for showcasing Soviet superiority in knowledge production. However, the production of this kind of knowledge was exceedingly concentrated in one place – in Moscow – as a matter of ideological control. By the late 1920s the imposition of the Stalinist ideological dogmatism, made independent knowledge production completely inviable. During the years of the Great Break (1929-1931) many medievalists were harassed and fired. Between 1934 and 1936, however, most of them were re-hired and employed by a much more expanded and robust Soviet Academy of Sciences and prestigious Moscow universities. It was precisely the moment when Moscow students conjured up an image of the “white house” for the first time. Why did this shift happen and what did their knowledge and expertise actually mean in the

new context, in which scholarly and political conclusions of their studies were known in advance?

The answer to this question is well captured in the characterization of medievalists that a party official responsible for monitoring the situation in the Institute of History gave to his superiors in 1936, after the divisions of medieval history were reestablished in the academic institute and university. He wrote:

They [medievalists] lack national consciousness. No one can sense that they are patriots of the USSR [...] They are present here more like attorneys for West European affairs [...] Our medievalists [resemble] merchants who came here from Venice or Florence and settled in a merchant's hall...But we need to have at least couple of them in the whole [Soviet] Union, those who would be able to deal with all kinds of special questions."³⁶

By “special questions” it was meant an ability to showcase a rare and supposedly useless expertise in editing Western Latin sources or to interpret the intricacies of the medieval land measurements, having a deep knowledge of vulgar Latin and an ability for paleographic research. In fact, their practice was transformed from a scholarly expertise into a display of aesthetic practice – a process which had a lot to do with the contradictions of the revolutionary experiment as global in its aspirations (world revolution) and local in its application (communism in one country). In the 1930s Moscow was intentionally constructed as a showcase for global aspirations, achieved no least through a forced display of Soviet cultural superiority. The privileged institutions (an expanded Academy of Sciences, an expanded Moscow University, the Moscow model schools, museums, theaters, publishing houses, and translation enterprises) were responsible for producing world-class culture and science, which would incorporate and transcend the best achievements of humanity, understood predominantly as achievements of the West. These institutions (along with the elites that served them) – heavily policed ideologically, yet lavishly funded – were constituting what I call Soviet Occidentalism, of which the medievalist “white house” was an integral part. However, the emergence of the universalistic and globally-oriented occidental hub in Moscow was closely entangled with yet another part of the Bolshevik ideological dilemma – that of building communism in one country.

During the 1920s, that country was built along the national lines as a conglomerate of national republics, with their respective political elites

and cultural establishments. National elites considered themselves to be a part of the global revolutionary movement, valued their national agency, and preserved a significant degree of autonomy from the Moscow center, particularly in the matters related to culture. The project of socialist nation-building was perceived by the cultural elites as going hand in hand with a quest for modern, urbanized, and sophisticated national culture. The “West” played an important imaginary role in this pursuit.³⁷ In the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, the diversity of indigenization policies of the 1920s, led by the national Bolsheviks had been curtailed, and national cultural elites were decapitated and replaced by loyal supporters of Stalin. Without questioning the multi-ethnic foundations of the socialist state, Stalin’s imperial turn towards celebration of the Russian state and nation, and fears of foreign influences led to cultural provincialization-autochthonization of the national cultures, their purging of any alien influences, and their commitment to the friendship with the great Russian people.³⁸ However, the policing was not fully applied to the center of the experiment, to Moscow. The combined effect of making sealed nationalized territories along with a conspicuously cosmopolitan, though tightly policed, center unintentionally worked towards an unexpected recreation of the imperial differences, which separated the imperial center and the parochial peripheries, but this time based not on economic exploitation or racial discrimination, but on unequal access to sophisticated culture and information. Since then the limited access to the world culture had to be mediated exclusively through the center of the experiment. It is true that Russian culture, aggressively promoted by the regime as a shared obligatory heritage, overlapped with the occidentalist priorities. However, it clearly went beyond prescribed limited purview and its precarious position was marked by a certain ethnic blindness. Was this center Russian at all in terms of national distinctions?

Looking at the composition and recruitment of the new cohorts of medievalists, one could only observe that the cosmopolitan and aesthetical business of medievalism was attracting a disproportionately large number of students of Jewish descent (children of those who moved to the center after the collapse of the imperial structure in 1917). In fact, Jews were overrepresented among connoisseurs as well as within Occidentalism’s various institutional corners. Most of them simply did not see any place for themselves in the multiple nationalisms of the utopian socialism in one country and thus chose the only ideological option available to them: the version of world culture with a Russian accent. By opting out

from celebrating the ethnically defined Russian imperialism, they were more eagerly embracing its cosmopolitan and universalistic version. The “Jewishness” of this elite was not a matter of percentage, but an aura of “otherness” that the conspicuous Jewishness created in marking that elite as not-quite Soviet, i.e. national enough. There were many Russians in their ranks, however, even those Russians who were part of the elite, by dint of their cosmopolitan aspirations and liminal place in the edifice of the Soviet project, became in a sense alien and thereby “Jewish.” The history of the Soviet imperial (occidental) elite was shaped by a combination of ideologically motivated privilege and repression, promotion and punishment. Since any story is better told as a story of the victim, both its privilege and position in the workings of the empire became substituted by a well-articulated tale of punishment. The punishment became a token of self-identity.

The rise of the official anti-Semitism, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust and the establishment of the state of Israel, made this elite even more distanced from the Russian national glory, from the Soviet state, and later from the communist experiment in general. Without being banished, exiled or deported *en masse*, this elite occupied a precarious, but unique position in the cultural and imperial hierarchies. Rejecting the national mythology, the national state, the national parochialism – promoted by the Soviet Russo-centric regime, they started to identify themselves with the distinctly imperial, cosmopolitan and universalistic version of Russian culture understood as epitome of world culture or rather translated world culture. Committed to servicing and expanding occidentalist institutions and discourses as a moral issue, they eagerly contributed to the solidification of the imperial structure of the Soviet experiment. By having a privileged access to Western things – including knowledge and culture – as well as being heavily oriented towards the West as civilizational standard opposed to their Soviet experience, these elites by their path-breaking contributions and efforts, by reimagining culture as a realm of autonomy, by re-excavating previously forbidden cultural heritage, and re-appropriating the imperial legacy as their (meaning Russian imperial) legacy, by pursuing universalism, actively contributed to the maintaining of the restructured imperial regime based on disregard for national traumas, on prescribed parochialism of national cultures, and on promotion of Russian as a medium of high culture. The cosmopolitan occidentalist elite was placed at the top of the enormous and huge hierarchical edifice of cultural governmentality and hegemony

build by the decades of Soviet experiments in the realm of culture. The “white house” of medievalists that I happened to study was just in the middle of the vast infrastructure of imperial institutions, epitomizing the Soviet quest for global domination.

The disregard for one’s own unwitting participation and complicity was, however, not present in discourse and discussions. The little nations of the Union turned out to be too little and negligible to become a point of reflection, together with their parochial and narrow nationalistic concerns. It is quite telling that both in the late Soviet period and in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse this academic and artistic elite turned a blind eye to the discourses that had any interest in the questions of coloniality, as marked by parochialism in their agenda, and too narrow (and politicized – the years of Soviet inoculation) to accommodate the global ambitions. Instead, the major goal was an ability to showcase transcendence and universality, catering to the universalist aspirations of the Western (and no less imperially oriented) interlocutors. The “white house” not restrained by Soviet structure and now even funded by the Russian oil money in another no less contradictory and bizarre attempt of showing off, was growing, shadowing its past and ominously looming over its disastrous future.

3. Russo-Centrism of Western Academia as Imperial Love and Reversed Occidentalism

“Not in my name,” was the only confused reaction when Russia openly attacked Ukraine in February 2022. As Ukrainians say, there are no “good Russians.” This does not mean that there are not individuals doing important work, helping refugees and so on. It is a conceptual statement, meaning the complete absence of reflection and the inability to cope with one’s own past instead of relaying it to nationalists, fascists, or even to Pushkin or Tolstoy for that matter. “Good Russians” are those that Ukrainians instinctively distrust the most, more than blood-thirsty imperialist nationalists, whose intentions are clear and whose words are direct, without taking any universalistic detours.³⁹

But does not a similar displacement characterize the Western academic talks of decolonizing Russia? An abruptly delegitimized Russo-centrism is no less abruptly blamed for bad ideas, bad heritage, sometimes dirty Russian money, while one’s own responsibility is conveniently removed. The generously invited peripheral neglected voices create a sense of

justice recovered and the purified, universalist, and objective academic position regained. Western academia emerges here somehow inimical to entanglements, and in occidentalist fashion a bounded entity outside the stream of time, with little epistemological or historical reflection.

One of the most obvious reactions has been to reconsider the origins of the field of Russian studies, particularly emphasizing the role of imperial liberal emigres, not much different from Vinogradoff, who supposedly infused Russo-centric bias into the academic discourse. During the decades of the Cold War confrontation, this bias allowed to dismiss or simply ignore the multiethnic nature of the USSR.⁴⁰ However, it was evident for everyone that the Soviet Union collapsed along the ethnic lines, which necessitated the reconsideration of the Russian and Soviet history as a history of multiethnic space. After 1991 a veritable boom of interest in peripheral and non-Russian histories consolidated itself in the so called “imperial turn” in Russian studies.⁴¹ This fixation on the empire, however, seemed to be not at all irreconcilable with the perpetuation of the Russo-centric bias. Could this fact be simply accounted for by the bad and old academic heritage? And how was it related to the new post-Cold War intellectual and political climate?

Indeed, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War was considered a true watershed in the history of the Russian field. The enemy was defeated, its archives were finally opened for normal work. The end of the cold war was fused with a sense of euphoria and enthusiasm. The ideological shackles were finally cast away, the old biases and prejudices put aside, and a new era of global cooperation was dawning. The West, its liberal democracy, capitalism, and critical self-awareness (including transcendence of hegemonic orientalizing discourses towards the others) were considered objectively universal in their significance. A real end of history was at the length of an extended hand. Self-righteous feeling of transcendence has been usually framed as no less self-reflective overcoming of the Cold War binaries, simplification, and ideologization.

The “imperial turn” was part and parcel of this universalizing rhetoric of transcendence. Methodologically it was built on the appropriation of the vast constructivist critiques of nationalism. Geopolitically, however, it was powerfully shaped by the experience of bloody ethnic wars in Yugoslavia and across the Soviet peripheries. The new hegemonic reading of history after the end of history looked quite condescendingly and pitifully at the numerous little nations engaged into a senseless bloodshed and historical mythologizing. In these circumstances, empire as a category of analysis

provided an intellectually robust and superior model of approaching the history of the multiethnic space. At the end of history, nationalism seemed to be ridiculous and doomed to disappear in the globalizing multiculturalism of liberal democracy – a future epitomized by the timeless universalism of the American university campus. It is true that the empire was not democratic, but it was always imperial. In that climate, quite apologetic celebration of imperial diversity and vibrancy as well as a quite dismissive attitude towards national traumas were not uncommon. It is not very surprising that a strong aversion towards nationalism made implicit self-identification with the former imperial center and imperial elites devoid of national allegiances almost counterintuitive in the Western context. In this climate the occidentalist Russian elite (in itself urging to be fused into West driven globalization) might have appeared to be even more cosmopolitan and benignly imperial than their Western interlocutors. In turn, the former national peripheries seemed to be too parochial to be taken seriously. In the playful atmosphere of the 1990s, nationalism was related to the monotonous seriousness reminiscent of the Soviet ideological straightjacket. In turn, the empire seemed to be fun and funny. Here, the previous solidness of universalism merged with the ironical approach and sarcasm of the late Soviet occidentalist elite, which was ironically looking at the anti-colonial efforts of rewriting national histories and relishing its own superiority and position – neither Russian, nor national, but imperial and therefore universal.⁴² In the time of victorious liberalism and capitalism, this interlocutor was devoid of any nationally tinged agenda and equally callous towards real economic disaster, which hit the compatriots. Probably, these ironic and superior universalistic qualities were most powerfully reflected in Yuri Slezkine's contributions; the application of the late socialist *stio*b stylistics to reflect on the imperial past, somehow rendered seriousness in this department not only stylistically, but also intellectually flawed. His memorable metaphors "USSR as a communal apartment," "imperialism as the highest stage of socialism," and finally "the Jewish century" for comprehending Russian and Soviet imperial experience resonated powerfully with American academia's globalization moment, shielding its most cherished imperial blind spots with an exoticizing elegance and brilliance that only the occidentalist Moscow elite could produce. In the quite restrictive and boring system of peer reviewed arguments – Slezkine's intellectual *épatage* was truly imperious. Nationalistic concerns were not even dismissed, but laughed away, while one's own positionality was self-ironized to the point of

complete disappearance.⁴³ It may well be that by now the irony dissipated and the academic climate itself became more and more Victorian and repressive, but it hardly decreased the demand for universalist repertoires. Russia would never disappoint in that regard and its intellectual elites have always been around the corner with universalistic solutions: anti-capitalist rehabilitations of the socialist experience, anti-colonial struggles, cosmic aspirations, or revolutionary green deal transitions. The imperial romance of occidentalist elites makes it difficult to notice anything smaller than the universe. By celebrating global Russian culture, in fact, they were celebrating themselves. A strong and mutually reinforcing universalist alibi for the occidentalist elites was probably the figure of Osip Mandelstam – a Jewish Russian poet, shot by the criminal Soviet regime for his love of world (Western) culture.⁴⁴ In a moment of awkward silence, when Kyiv failed to fall, the imperial discursive fallout could not spare even Mandelstam.

4. Is Decolonization Still Possible?

So, what have we then to understand by decolonization? Or what does this decolonization achieve? It seems to me that the most widespread ascription of the word “decolonization” to a plethora of performative and theatrical expressions of solidarity with neglected voices hardly goes beyond the familiar occidentalist repertoire of Western academia’s “identity politics.”

So, is it possible to deepen and expand the “decolonization” call by intensifying the epistemological and historical critique of Russo-centrism and Occidentalism? I am rather skeptical in that regard. As I tried to show, a critique of Occidentalism has the potential to become a powerful research program of studying world history, but within the deeply occidentalist institutional structures. In that sense, it is not quite clear why to attach the word “decolonization” to something which is a routine academic enterprise.

So, what we are left with then? In the conclusion to his piece on Occidentalism, Fernando Coronil was asking how “can we articulate the future historically? How can we prefigure an emancipatory future, while tracking down its marks in the tensions of the present?”⁴⁵ Should we also add, by tracking down the limitations of the emancipatory drive, emancipatory wording, and emancipatory passion in the past? Sixty years ago, the global decolonization brought high hopes. Its promises, however,

where never fulfilled. Coronil was writing in the shadow of those defeats and his final remarks were brimming with a sense of broken and not tangible hope, when the prospects of the “disenchanted, inhospitable, and depopulated world” came to depend also on the “poetry of the present.”⁴⁶ Back then it was still possible to go along confidently with Benjamin’s wisdoms of fanning the “spark of hope in the past” and writing “history against the grain.”⁴⁷ After two decades of disastrous unraveling of the global *pax Americana*, writing history against the grain turned into a mundane academic genre, and it conjures up another and less hopeful Benjaminian imagery: that of playing a game of sophistication and artistry with a Turkish puppet.⁴⁸ No matter how high the pitch is or how neglected the voice, the puppet will respond promptly and efficiently. The contemporary puppet is more nuanced than the “historical materialism” of the past and clearly there is no point of trying to play a game of “decolonization” with it. Is decolonization then possible at all?

“Decolonization” as well as “colonization,” and “coloniality” are profoundly hybrid concepts and part of the modern conceptual grammar. The inquiry into their genesis and evolution reveals profound and often negative connection with the concept of universality. The present-day conceptual impossibility of decolonization reflects in a significant measure our inability to relate the traumas of the past to visions of the future, the increasing burden of vindictive particularism to fragile quest of the universal. Decolonization in this regard cannot be a matter of wording, of producing new radical and simultaneously domesticated knowledge, but one of searching for universality beyond too comfortable factories of radical knowledge, within the existing, newly imagined, and rarely attended spaces, and among a variety of publics. We might need new words for imagining decolonization, and decolonization itself is not one of them.

What we might be more confident about is that decolonization in the past and in the present was only a process of straightforward and liberatory movement into the future. As the prefix “de” indicates, it has also been about disintegration and traumatic decomposition. It might be helpful to avoid self-indulging into a hero-narrative while writing or reflecting about decolonization, and instead observe, archive, and narrate the debris that the process is leaving behind. The quest for universalism may well need such an archive in the future. And the awareness of this is something we owe, not least, to those who did not let Kyiv to fall.

NOTES

- ¹ <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/25/politics/kyiv-russia-ukraine-us-intelligence/index.html>
- ² About the cycles of fascination and distancing in relationship between Russia and the West see: Martin Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1999).
- ³ <https://www.aseees.org/convention/2023-aseees-convention-theme>
- ⁴ Fernando Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism. Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories" in *The Fernando Coronil Reader: The Struggle for Life Is the Matter*. Ed. by Julie Skurski et al., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 329.
- ⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978)
- ⁶ For a critique of Said and postcolonial theory in general see Vivek Chibber, "The Dual Legacy of Orientalism," In B. Abu-Manneh (Ed.), *After Said: Postcolonial Literary Studies in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 37-52; Vivek Chibber, *On Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London, Verso, 2013).
- ⁷ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- ⁸ Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004).
- ⁹ Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantacies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).
- ¹⁰ Ukrainian attempts to articulate this trauma by using the language offered by Said and postcolonial thinkers reflected this dilemma, while postcolonial thinkers were approaching the subject from the timeless temporality of Western academia, transcending both the fallacies of Euro-centrism and of local nationalism, the Ukrainian intellectuals following the advanced fashion tried to recast the nationalist cause, but in a mild version of institutional affirmative actions, only to be rejected as black faces. See for example, Mykola Riabchuk, *Vid Malorosii do Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2000).
- ¹¹ See for example, Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," *Khamsin* 8 (1981): 5-26; Aijaz Ahmad, "Orientalism and After: Ambivalence and Metropolitan Location in the Work of Edward Said" in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (London: Verso, 1992), 159-220
- ¹² Manuela Boatcă, *Global Inequalities Beyond Occidentalism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 81; Arturo Escobar, "Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program", *Cultural Studies*, 21 (2-3), 179-210;

- 13 Fernando Coronil, "Occidentalism," in *The Fernando Coronil Reader: The Struggle for Life Is the Matter*. Ed. by Julie Skurski et al., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 320.
- 14 Coronil, "Occidentalism," 320.
- 15 Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
- 16 Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism,"
- 17 For a recent intervention pointing in this direction see David Graeber's and David Wengrow's new interpretation of the sources of Rousseau's discourse on inequality: *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (London: Allen Lane, 2021); less thoroughly documented, but insightful reflection on Hegel and Haitian revolution by Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).
- 18 Coronil, "Latin American Postcolonial Studies and Global Decolonization," in *The Fernando Coronil Reader: The Struggle for Life Is the Matter*, 419.
- 19 Madina Tlostanova's insightful interventions and attempts to bring decolonial sensitivity to the understanding of Russia's place are characterized by a peculiar disregard for history as something known and useless. This nihilism, however, not only has detrimental intellectual consequences, but political limitations. See for example: Madina Tlostanova and Walter Mignolo, *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the America* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012)
- 20 See Dieter Groh, *Russland im Blick Europas. 300 Jahre historische Perspektiven* (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1988).
- 21 Riccardo Bavaj, The West: A Conceptual Exploration, *Europäische Geschichte Online* <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/political-spaces/riccardo-bavaj-the-west-a-conceptual-exploration>
- 22 Boris Groys, "Russia and the West: The Quest for Russian National Identity," *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 43:3 (1992), 185-198; Michael David-Fox, *Crossing Borders. Modernity, Ideology, and Culture in Russia and the Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2015).
- 23 Among the most exiting topics are Ukrainian church influences and the conceptualization of empire and sovereignty in the late 17th and early 18th century and transcontinental exchanges and civilizational discourses. On the impact of civilizational discourses see Ricarda Vulpius, *Die Geburt des Russländischen Imperiums. Herrschaftskonzepte und -praktiken im 18. Jahrhundert*. Beiträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas. Koeln: Boelau Verlag, 2020).
- 24 Aníbal Quijano has proposed the term "coloniality" to designate the global system of power grounded in the histories and ideologies of colonial expansion, whose main facets persist even after "colonialism as an explicit political order was destroyed." Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality" *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 (2007): 170. Although attentive

to the material and economic aspect of coloniality, Quijano also places emphasis on its cognitive and cultural power: "in spite of the fact that political colonialism has been eliminated, the relationship between the European also called 'Western' culture, and the others, continues to be one of colonial domination. It is not only a matter of the subordination of the other cultures to the European, in an external relation; we have also to do with a colonization of the other cultures, albeit in differing intensities and depths. This relationship consists, in the first place, of a colonization of the imagination of the dominated; that is, it acts in the interior of that imagination, in a sense, it is a part of it," Quijano, 169.

25 Superiority and lack of nuance and certain epistemological arrogance are particularly evident in Tlostanova's treatment of Ukrainian material, her dismissal of the reflection as not decolonial enough. See Madina Tlostanova, *Postsovetskaia literatura i estetika transkul'turatsii: Zhit' nigogda, pisat' niotkuda* (Moscow: Editorial URSS, 2004).

26 Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

27 This is a quotation from a 1975 hit *Entire Life is Ahead of You* by a popular band *Samotsvety*.

28 See for example Mark Blok, *Remeslo istorika* and Lucien Febvre *Combats pour L'Histoire* with prefaces by Gurevich.

29 ARAN f.1514, op.1, d.112, l.27.

30 On Maine see: Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire. Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

31 Vinogradov's essays on these issues are collected in Antoshchenko, A.V., ed. *Pavel Gavrilovitch Vinogradov. Izbrannye trudy*. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010.

32 On these efforts see: Tomas Bon, *Russkaia istoricheskaja nauka 1880 g. - 1905 g.: Pavel Nikolaevich Miliukov i Moskovskaia shkola*. St.Petersburg: Olearius Press, 2005; Wladimir Berelowitch, "History in Russia Comes of Age. Institution-Building, Cosmopolitanism, and Theoretical Debates among Historians in Late Imperial Russia," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 9:1 (2008), 113-134.

33 A.N. Savin., *Voina imperii i mir islama* (Moscow: Trud, 1915), 8.

34 I pursued this argument at length in my dissertation. Volodymyr Ryzhkovskyy, *Soviet Occidentalism: Medieval Studies and the Restructuring of Imperial Knowledge in Twentieth-Century Russia*, Georgetown University, 2019.

35 Faith Hillis *Utopia's Discontents: Russian Exiles and the Quest for Freedom, 1830s – 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021) specifically explores the effects that the experience of Russian revolutionary exiles in Europe had on the creation of the Bolshevik regime.

36 ARAN f.1577, op.5, d.30, l.88-90.

- ³⁷ Mayhil Fowler, *Beau Monde on Empire's Edge: State and Stage in Soviet Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).
- ³⁸ See discussion of this turn in Ukraine in Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 211-254, 345-372; and in Uzbekistan in Adeeb Khalid, *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 342-389.
- ³⁹ See a fascinating exchange between the Ukrainian artist Nikita Kadan and Russian artist Dmitrii Vilenskii, revealing the dynamic that I am writing about here. Dmitry Vilensky, "Letter to Nikita," <https://syg.ma/@dmitry-vilensky/letter-to-nikita>; Nikita Kadan, "On Words That Do Not Save Lives," https://arterritory.com/en/visual_arts/topical_qa/26363-on_words_that_do_not_save_lives/;
- ⁴⁰ See for example Susan Smith-Peter, "How the Field Was Colonized: Russian History's Ukrainian Blind Spot" <https://networks.h-net.org/node/10000/blog/decolonizing-russian-studies/12015665/how-field-was-colonized-russian-history%E2%80%99s>
- ⁴¹ For example "Imperial Turn," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 7:4 (2006), 705-712.
- ⁴² On the ironic mode of the late Soviet intelligentsia see Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton university Press, 2005).
- ⁴³ Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism." *Slavic Review*, vol. 53, no. 2 (1994), 414-52; Yuri Slezkine, "Can We Have Our Nation State and Eat It Too?" *Slavic Review*, Vol.54, no.3 (1995), 717-719; Yuri Slezkine, "Commentary: Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Socialism." *The Russian Review* 59, no. 2 (2000), 227-34; Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).
- ⁴⁴ Kevin Platt, "The Profound Irony of Canceling Everything Russian," <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/opinion/russian-artists-culture-boycotts.html>
- ⁴⁵ Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism," 361.
- ⁴⁶ Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism," 361.
- ⁴⁷ Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism," 361.
- ⁴⁸ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 225.

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THE STRANGERS TO THE WORLD: ATTITUDES ON SOLITUDE AND COMPASSION IN ORTHODOX AND BUDDHIST MONASTERIES*

Adrian Schiffbeck

Abstract

In the last decades, research has focused increasingly upon differences and similarities between Buddhism and Christianity. The geographical distance and different views on tradition, culture, spirituality and philosophy are often understood as dissociative elements. However, there are various characteristics bringing them closer. We explore these similarities with a particular focus on monasticism. By means of a qualitative analysis, we look at an Eastern Orthodox convent in Romania and a Buddhist monastery in Scotland. The research is meant to reveal the manner in which nuns and monks perceive solitude and compassion, and how these concepts are transposed in their daily lives.

Keywords: Buddhist, Christian, Compassion, Monasticism, Orthodox, Religion, Solitude

1. Introduction

Previous research has compared Buddhist and Christian life perspectives from a cultural point of view (Tang, 2015), from a socio-psychological and behavioral one (Perera 2015, Wallace 2014, Tsai Miao, & Seppala 2007), and from a theological and historical one (e.g., Thelle 2021). The dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism was also considered (Schmidt-Leukel 2005, Valea 2015). Less research has investigated Eastern Orthodox and Buddhist lifestyles in terms of monasticism. Where such studies were performed, the methods included the ethnographic approach (Choe &

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McNally 2013; Hardin & Kaell 2016) and interviews with practicing monks (Underwood 2005, Jenkins 1999) – but not in a comparative manner. Focusing on similarities, rather than differences between Buddhist and Christian Orthodox views on solitude and compassion, we attempt to understand how these concepts are perceived and lived by monastics belonging to both traditions. The topic is vast and a generalization of findings is hard to achieve. This limitation will be compensated by the quality and profoundness of the results: according to the data saturation principle, the research process is not to be extended when no more relevant information is to be obtained (Struebing 2013: 115).

Scholars have identified several elements binding Buddhism and Christianity in terms of monastic lifestyle and vision upon life and death. For instance, there is the detachment from the world, in Christianity, where the practitioner leaves the place he or she had been used to live and decides to “die” to the world, to become a stranger to everything he or she had been surrounded by. The goal may be to gain a new perspective on life (Monod 1936). The idea finds itself in conjunction with solitude – the isolation in prayer and meditation, becoming free from desire and distractions. Neither in Christianity, nor in Buddhism, are celibacy, retirement or joining a restrained community seen as sufficient conditions for following the difficult path of spiritual development. While, in this manner, one can be freed from disturbing thoughts and is able to focus on a transcendent life-style, he or she has to pay attention to an ethical way of thinking and behavior, too. Buddha addressed his disciples with the words: “Oh monks, I say that a robe-wearer is a [true] monk not simply by the virtue of wearing a robe, nor by being naked, nor by covering his body with dust and dirt, nor by performing ablution, nor by living at the foot of a tree” (Boisvert 1992: 136, Nanamoli & Bodhi 1995). Expressed otherwise, *habitus non facit monachum*. Virtues would rely on kindness, friendliness, compassion and generosity – included by *Bodhicitta* – which implies looking for enlightenment, but also for the welfare of others. Scholars have looked at the term in comparison to the Christian *Charity* (e.g., Perera 2015). Basically, solitude implies a state of mind, different from loneliness – pursuing silence, lack of distractions and concentrating on being conscious, on the essential. To this extent, studies on prayer and meditation conclude that they are more similar than different in nature: Buddhists venerating the founder of their religion know that he has passed away, and even without the conviction that he might hear their prayers, they do express them, as a form of aspiration towards positive ideals;

intense prayer can, thus, manifest itself in a genuine non-theistic manner (Gross 1992). Besides solitude, celibacy, prayer, meditation and ethical behavior – *memento mori* (remembrance that death is imminent) is also to be found in Buddhist and Christian monastic life-styles: focus on life as non-eternal results in an attitude of detachment from the ego (Boisvert 1992: 131, Nanamoli & Bodhi 1995).

These common conceptions show that monastic life-images and -styles in Buddhism and Christianity are not as different as a superficial analysis might reveal. There are philosophical beliefs and practical traditions in both attitudes, which deserve a closer attention. The research questions in this study do not take all elements described above into consideration, but, as mentioned in the beginning, they focus on solitude and compassion. Both elements have been investigated jointly with respect to the religious traditions we are interested in (e.g., Salazar 2014, Gordon 2014, Christie 2006), but not with reference to monasticism. We explore this under-investigated research topic and focus on solitude, in connection to compassion, among Christian and Buddhist monastics: What does *to “die” to the world* mean – is it a physical detachment from the environment, or rather an isolation in terms of mental renunciation? What is compassion about in Buddhism and in Orthodox Christianity, and how can it be achieved in conditions of solitude? These questions form the fundament of this research, and they will be addressed through interviews and by a narrative interpretation of the obtained data. The analysis attempts to reveal the way nuns in the Eastern Orthodox cultural context of a Romanian convent (Șag-Timișeni monastery, Timiș county), and Buddhist practitioners from a settlement in the UK (Samye Ling Buddhist monastery and Tibetan center, Eskdalemuir, Scotland) - understand their way of thinking and living, with respect to solitude and compassion. Comparing the collected opinions will allow for a better understanding of a phenomenon which received too little attention, and thus contribute to the scientific knowledge on this subject.



Fig. 1 Samye Ling Buddhist monastery and Tibetan center, Eskdalemuir, Scotland (photo)

The structure of the paper is as follows: we start with a theoretical perspective on the concepts of solitude and compassion, with focus on the last one and the way it is described in the literature. The theoretical chapter is followed by a description of the case studies and methods, and then by the results extracted from the visits we made to the Eastern Orthodox convent and the Buddhist monastery. Conclusions resume the findings, connect them to the theoretical concepts and tackle the limitations, suggesting future paths of investigation.

2. Theoretical considerations

First, with respect to **solitude** – it is a state of mind to be differentiated from loneliness: the person embraces detachment, seeks silence, avoids distractions, and pursues concentration on being conscious, on the essential part of reality. The individual contemplates higher levels of

existence, where stability and tranquility play the most important part and where exile is not measured in time and space, but in the search for an inner revelation – of the seemingly intangible God, and/or the self. By renouncing the noise of the world and practicing silence, by giving up personal relationships, family, friends, jobs, acquaintances and belongings, day to day habits – nuns and monks transcend the world and change their objectives and dedication. Solitude and renunciation are central to both Christian and Buddhist monasticism; they are to be understood as an “internally solitary state of mind rather than an external change of location” (Boisvert 1992: 130). It is not as much about moving to another place, as about deciding to think differently: “If you cannot control your tongue, you will not be in exile anywhere. Therefore, control your tongue here, and you will be in exile” (Ward 1984: 122, *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*). It is about the mental conviction of not belonging to the world, about retirement and dedication to prayer and meditation. The Buddhist monastic life-style is mostly perceived in terms of detachment from obstacles potentially standing in the way of the seeker on their road to enlightenment / to Nirvana (Nyanatiloka 1956: 32, Boisvert 1992: 133). Solitude regards leaving sensual pleasures, family and acquaintances behind, in order to pursue genuine spiritual awakening (Boisvert 1992).

The main question we are interested in is the manner in which **compassion** can be achieved and put into practice when the person lives in a solitary environment, such as a monastery. There are multiple ways in which the concept has been interpreted and understood in the literature. For instance, scholars have made a comparison between two notions belonging to the Buddhist and Christian philosophies: *Bodhicitta* and *Charity*. The first one, meaning to look for enlightenment and for the welfare of others – with *Citta* referring to mind, intelligence, thought or will, and *Bodhi* (awakening) meaning knowledge and freedom from limitations, possessed by the buddhas; *Bodhicitta* comprises “the mind or thought that takes the supreme bodhi of the buddhas as its aim” (Perera 2015: 121). To this extent, it comes to support the idea that solitude does not contradict compassion or generosity: “The best way to help beings is to become an awakened buddha, capable of teaching them the way to deliverance” (Perera 2015: 122). As we will see later, the element of *teaching* appears several times in the context of becoming compassionate – discussions with our interviewees, especially from the Buddhist environment, reveal the importance of the mentor / the teacher. *Charity*, on the other hand, is a word derived from *charité* / the Latin *caritas*, and put into connection

with *agâpê* – a relatively uncommon Greek word for “love”, used in the New Testament and usually contrasted with friendship (*philia*) or sexual love (*eros*); it stands rather for selfless love, for consideration for one another – the love that God showed by giving his Son for the world’s salvation (John 4:9-12). Charity is understood as a form of compassion, of love that is not conditioned in any way by personal relationships. The two love commandments from the New Testament illustrate this vision of the manner in which one is supposed to understand and put compassionate love into practice: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength... You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:29-31). Focus lies on God and on the human ability and obligation to visualize and apply charity through the divinity: “God *is* charity, and those who abide in charity abide in God, and God abides in them” (1 John 4:16). The Christian doctrine suggests the reference to the divine source of love as a primary action. Becoming an awakened buddha and developing compassion for all sentient beings are to be cultivated in the spirit of the *Anattā* doctrine (of non-self) (Flescher & Worthen, 2007, 202); with non-self not regarded as nihilism, but as the aspiration towards non-attachment – with focus on impermanence and on the unchanging essence. Bodhicitta and Charity thus imply a common focus on compassion and a fundamental distinction in terms of the source of love. They both “(...) involve a firm intention, which should become a habitual disposition, to show active love and compassion to other beings” (Perera 2015: 124). *Habitual disposition* relates to compassion as *moral responsibility*, which we will detail later. Scholars who have approached religious philosophies in a comparative manner concur that “all world religions encourage sacrifice of one’s own interest for those of another – a stranger, an outsider. Each religious tradition frames altruism in its own context, however” (Neusner & Chilton 2005: 1).

Before advancing to a detailed description of compassion in the literature, let us briefly mention some fundamental elements in Buddhism and Christianity, related to our subject and derived from the previous analysis, which should provide a more comprehensive view upon both religious and philosophical traditions. First, compassion, altruism and love, although central to both traditions, are seen as *potentials* to be cultivated, on one hand, and as *commandments*, on the other: love appearing in a rather horizontal plan in Buddhism, and in a triangular form in Christianity – humans and God, as givers *and* receivers (Flescher & Worthen 2007:

206-207). Second, *monasticism* is a central element in Buddhism, and less significant in Christianity. Third, Christians hold to the orientation towards *God as creator and protector*, whereas Buddhists focus on *human capabilities* to be trained and developed. Last, but not least, the element of *revelation* is seen as an understanding originating from God, on one side, and as deriving from practice, on the other.

What is compassion (about)?

If we attempted to define the concept, there would be a sum of elements to be taken into account, in connection to which the word has been used over time – among them, acceptance, allowance, awareness, care, connection, kindness, openness, patience, peace, resonance, respect, sensitivity, tolerance, understanding etc. Basically, it was defined as “a sensitivity to *suffering* of self and others, with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it” (Gilbert 2017: 73). A central part is played here by compassion’s unconditional nature – as “(...) it responds to the needs of the one suffering, without regard for what, prudentially, is a ‘just’ or ‘fair’ response on the part of the giver” (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 207). Then again, compassion flows in multiple ways: from the self to the other, from the one next to you with yourself as a receiver, and towards oneself. With respect to the phases of developing this feeling – following some of the categorizations found in the literature (e.g., Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 177) – we speak about emotional recognition, resonance, empathy, compassion, altruism, and, finally, love. The elements are interrelated and the phases do not necessarily occur separately. According to the Buddhist teachings, suffering is placed on a fundamental basis in The Four Noble Truths – stating its existence, the fact that it always has a cause, that there is a possibility to cease it, as well as a path leading to cessation, respectively to enlightenment. In the Bible, compassion and love arise from God and are given to humans as commandments; they emerge as means for salvation. In the New Testament, Jesus is the model of compassion, His words and behavior are to be followed by believers striving for eternal life. Compassion remains a key element for spiritual development to be ascertained and put forward in both philosophies.

Compassion and wisdom

Literature puts compassion in close connection to wisdom, seen as more than knowledge or intelligence. It is about *discerning awareness* –

first, not letting oneself overwhelmed by the other's suffering, which can lead to *exhaustion* (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 173-174): "The needs of the suffering always exceed the resources of those trying to attend (...)" (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 208). Discerning awareness refers to developing a balancing wisdom, to *knowing* what can be offered, when and under which circumstances, with regard to what the receiver needs. In this way, opposite effects can be avoided and resources can be used in a wise and effective manner. Second, "the potential to become enlightened can generate (...) deep *pride*" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 175). The seeker can see his or her development as superior, due to the perception of advancing on the chosen path. Therefore, "you need to cultivate strong courage to work for the benefit of other sentient beings. These two states – humility and courage – may seem contradictory, but it is the application of *wisdom* that reconciles the two" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 174). Courage refers to the balance we were talking about when avoiding exhaustion, whereas humility – in the Christian Orthodox view more present as *humbleness* – is needed for avoiding pride. Both attitudes, of courage and humbleness, contribute to a growing wisdom. Otherwise, "you can be very intelligent and unwise" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 176) – not being able to apply the information you have in an effective and efficient manner. After all, the goal of compassion is, more than anything, mental hygiene for the one offering it (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 222). In the end, wisdom needs compassion and compassion needs wisdom – the two elements are interdependent and their relationship can be resumed in a scheme like the following:

Knowledge → Intelligence → Awareness → Wisdom → Compassion

- where proper information (in opposition to ignorance) is supposed to be at the fundament of the process, with intelligence and discerning awareness coming to complete an efficient attitude and action, and with wisdom to be achieved in an interconnected manner with compassion. The goal is to alleviate suffering, on one hand, and to improve, or develop the qualities of your own mind, on the other.

Compassion and moral responsibility

One question we should ask when it comes to being compassionate is if this attitude is indeed necessary. Do we really want to be compassionate,

or is our nature focused primarily on ourselves (self-centeredness)? In this context, there is a certain degree of moral responsibility to be considered: "If you see millions of people suffer, remember that you cannot be happy (...). You have the *moral responsibility* to help as much as you can, in order to find one's own happiness" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 197). Responsibility does not refer here to an obligation, but rather to a process whereby one performs a good deed and gains his own advantages; happiness, as a consequence of being compassionate, comes from positive feeling generated by the act itself. A comprehensive study conducted in the 1990s on motivations for altruistic acts (Monroe 1998) reveals that some people are *instinctually* helpful and express their desire to respond in a natural manner, while others need a motivation for doing good; there is place for more research revealing the reasons for these differences (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 198). "What made you choose to do it? I didn't choose. They needed help! I did it. I *had to* do it" – was one of the reasons expressed by participants in this study (Monroe 1998); these people were not invoking a motivation, but compassion came as an *instinctual* moral responsibility. When refusing to take action, or avoiding to resonate with the one in need, one pretext generally invoked is that there is a *lack of opportunities* to do good, that people in difficulty are hard to find: it is, however, clear, that conditions for offering compassion are always there, as expressed in the Bible itself: "The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want" (Mark 14:7). Literature speaks, in this context, about balance when it comes to moral responsibility – between an ideal, supreme dedication towards the other, and ego-centricity, carelessness, or ignorance: "There are only a few who can love everyone in the same measure, but everyone has the capacity to turn his or her heart towards the stranger in need" (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 207-209).

Compassion is also to be regarded as a source and, at the same time, as a consequence of *gratitude*: being thanked to offers the giver a positive feeling and increases the chances of repeating the gesture; witnessing signs of compassion between others also offers a sense of rejoice – inspiring one's own generous acts (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 213-215). Although humans tend to focus on hardship and difficulties, and forget about gratitude – as "there is always some dissatisfaction with the nature of life" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 192) – manifesting thankfulness overcomes this negative perspective. In the Christian theology, gratitude is placed in close connection to *grace*, as a gift from God to believers – sometimes,

a determinant of one's own degree of religious faith, "measured in terms of surrender to the divine presence that inspires moral conduct" (Flescher and Worthen 2007: 209).

Compassion and solitude / retreat

To what extent can compassion be achieved under conditions of solitude, or retreat? Teachings and practices in Buddhism and Christianity alike show that positive feelings and the willingness to help may develop when distractions are avoided and when the mind can focus on understanding the true nature of reality. "(...) Many problems that we are facing today are due to the one-sidedness, *We* and *Them* (...) They do not consider themselves as part of *We*" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 187). Solitude as detachment from people and concentration on the self is denied in both philosophies - which emphasize spiritual development in the monastic context not as isolation, but on the contrary, as *communion*. Being able to focus on accumulating knowledge, on learning, on understanding, on discerning awareness, on developing wisdom, enhances the wish to alleviate suffering *on a relative*, or on an *ultimate level* – respectively by performing a concrete generous act, or by *teaching* people how to come to the sources of their suffering and overcome their problems on their own. To this extent, an analogy can be made with the psychological approach to the sources of personal difficulties known as cognitive behavioral therapy – where, generally, people are being taught that "it is your view that is making you miserable" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 193).



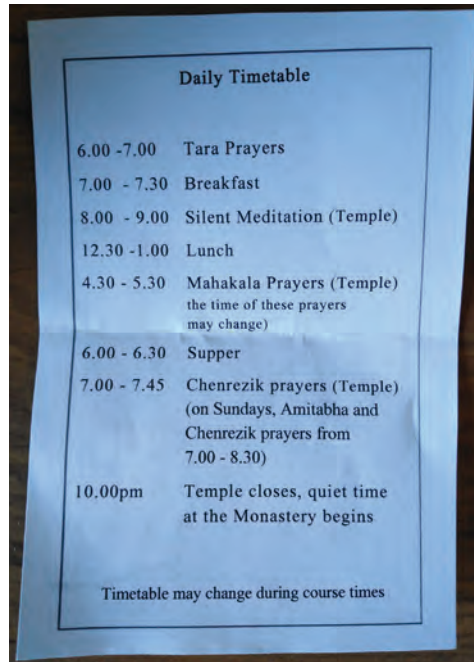
Fig. 2 Prayer rituals in the Buddhist temple, Samye Ling monastery (photo)

Practice in solitude (meditation, prayers, rituals) comes to develop the awareness that suffering may be caused by one's own mistakes, ignorance and bad habits, rather than blaming others for one's difficulties. In the Buddhist view, there are three main causes of suffering (Second Noble Truth): *anger*, *desire* (in the sense of greed) and *ignorance*. First, avoiding to become *angry* "is the hardest thing of all – letting the spark go out without catching on fire: (...) guarding the gateway of the senses" (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 169, 207); prevention plays an important part in learning how to deal with this obstacle. Second, *ignorance*, in terms of lack of information and understanding, or "wrong intelligence – brings wrong views, an unrestful state of mind"; it should be counterbalanced by education and developing the calmness of mind (Ekman & Dalai Lama, 2008: 170-172). Again, solitude comes to support this process: "It is through exterminating fundamental ignorance that we can be freed of all forms of suffering, the third truth"; misinformation and misconception (ignorance) leads to lack of understanding reality as emptiness of the

independent existence (Ekman & Dalai Lama 2008: 206). Third, *desire* causes suffering: greed and afflictive attachment prevent humans from cultivating positive attitudes and finding their emotional balance. Mind training in solitude, often under the guidance of a teacher – the Lama, or the Father confessor – leads to wisdom and, consequently, to being capable of offering more compassion, beyond close human connections: “Religious traditions (...) stand, in their own particular ways, to improve upon and *extend* the limited biological capacities for other-regard with which most human beings are born” (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 205).

3. Case studies and methods

The Buddhist monastery we have visited for this research is located in Southern Scotland and was founded in 1967 by Dr. Akong Tulku Rinpoche and Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche as the first Tibetan Buddhist Centre in the West. The name Samye comes from the first monastery to have been established in Tibet. Samye Ling is also an international center of Buddhist training, offering instruction in philosophy and meditation – in accordance to the Karma Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. A residential community of more than 40 people – monastic and lay volunteers, lives at Samye Ling (<https://www.samyeling.org/about/>). We have spent several days at this settlement, observing the way nuns and monks were carrying out their daily lives, respecting the Buddhist rules and traditions.



6.00 - 7.00	Tara Prayers
7.00 - 7.30	Breakfast
8.00 - 9.00	Silent Meditation (Temple)
12.30 - 1.00	Lunch
4.30 - 5.30	Mahakala Prayers (Temple) the time of these prayers may change)
6.00 - 6.30	Supper
7.00 - 7.45	Chenrezik prayers (Temple) (on Sundays, Amitabha and Chenrezik prayers from 7.00 - 8.30)
10.00pm	Temple closes, quiet time at the Monastery begins
Timetable may change during course times	

Fig. 3 Daily timetable at Samye Ling monastery (photo)

The daily program includes three sessions of prayers and one of meditation, which take place at the temple and where everybody is invited to take part. During the week, there are usually not many people present, but, at times (on weekends and when different courses are held here), the monastery, holding several accommodation facilities, “can become very crowded” (Interview Samye Ling monastery). Volunteers living here have different assignments and help the community to support itself – some of them embracing the Buddhist philosophy and dedicating themselves to study and practice and practice. Several nuns and monks are active and take part every day in the prayer and meditation sessions, others do this on their own and are, in their turn, assigned to specific activities. We took part in the rituals at the temple and spoke to three persons – the deputy abbot, the oldest monk living here, and one monk who also came here for a long time and who conducted several periods of retreat in Tibet and in other dedicated places, building on his capacities to understand more about Buddhist philosophy.

The Christian Orthodox convent of Șag-Timișeni lies in the Western part of Romania, in Timiș county, not far away from the city of Timișoara. It was founded in 1944 by the metropolitan Vasile Lăzărescu. 15 years later, the communist regime closes the convent and transforms it into living spaces for workers. The second Orthodox metropolitan / bishop of the Banat region, Nicolea Corneanu, insists for reopening the monastery, which the authorities agree upon in 1968. A number of 35 nuns live here and, due to the growing number of people visiting the convent, it was extended with a new church, as well as different facilities, spaces for accommodating pilgrims and so on (<https://mitropolia-banatului.ro/hram-la-manastirea-timiseni-sag/>). Nuns living here take part in two religious services daily, lasting more than two hours each. They are also involved in individual praying sessions and in administrative chores. The monastery receives many visitors especially during holidays and on Sundays – the fact that it is easily accessible from Timișoara making the place less isolated and, in a way, incorporated in the life of the region. From the discussions we had with one priest living here for several years, with the oldest nun in the convent, and with the mother prioress, there are few charitable activities involving the convent; the assistance offered by the nuns focuses on dialogues with visitors and pilgrims, and on prayers / moral support.



Fig. 4 Șag-Timișeni Christian Orthodox convent, Timis county, Romania (photo)

For collecting the data, we used qualitative methods, partially based on personal observations and mainly on in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Whereas in quantitative research scholars pursue generalizable findings, qualitative analyses focus on the principle of saturation, obtaining meaningful, in-depth information on a social practice and setting the limit of the sample at the point where no more substantive data is to be gained anymore (Miles & Huberman 1994). We used purposive sampling – a selective or subjective research method applied in accordance to the subject to be explored and relying “on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units” (Sharma 2017: 751). The number of interviewees (six persons) can be interpreted as a limitation – to be compensated by the meaningful data. The (recorded) conversations that lasted between one and two hours were conducted in the respective monasteries and focused on the way interlocutors understand, interpret and live solitude and compassion. Going on the field, talking to people and observing their lifestyles, rituals and traditions (observations are illustrated in this paper mainly by photographs taken on site), was, for us, not about setting hypotheses and formulating questions to test them, respectively studying a natural phenomenon. It was about exploring particular, individual perceptions of reality. These perceptions are then connected to a meaning, which, according to Keller (2012: 4), can have different levels of objectivity, depending either on a specific situational context, or on general social conditions. Following the *grounded theory* research style, theories are generated from obtained data based on an analytical interpretation and without losing the connections to the existing literature.

Qualitative interviews are, basically, divided into four separate, but often interconnected categories – guided, expert, narrative and ethnographic interviews (Struebing 2013). We conducted discussions with experts capable of looking into decisional processes, showing experience in that particular field, as well as knowledge to develop the process (Struebing 2013: 95). The narrative element was also present, as interlocutors talked about themselves and their personal stories, too. The in-depth character was provided by the same *meaning* to be pursued when developing the information – asking additional relevant questions and attempting to understand the way dialogue partners perceive and interpret the subject. Kvale (1996), for instance, describes in-depth interviews with two metaphors – first, with knowledge “waiting in the subject’s interior to be uncovered, uncontaminated by the miner. The interviewer digs nuggets of data or meanings out of a subject’s pure experiences, unpolluted by

any leading questions” (Kvale 1996: 3); second, with the interviewer positioning himself on the same journey with the dialogue partner: “The traveler (...) asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world, and converses with them in the original Latin meaning of *conversation* as ‘wandering together with’.” (Kvale 1996: 4; see also Legard, Keegan, & Ward 2003: 139). In both metaphors, the significance of words and stories should come to the surface without interferences from the researcher, but with focus on extracting relevant information and accompanying the respondent on the journey towards explaining their way of understanding the social practice.

4. Results

Let us advance to presenting the outcomes of this study, based on the ideas extracted from the interviews we conducted with nuns and monks living in the Christian Orthodox convent from Romania, and in the Buddhist monastery in Scotland. The focus in this section is on the concept of compassion and (according to the way it was depicted in the theoretical chapter) its relation to wisdom, moral responsibility, and solitude, or retreat.

Compassion and wisdom

With respect to developing discerning awareness, related to wisdom, that would allow the person to overcome potential obstacles (like exhaustion and pride) on his or her road to becoming compassionate, respondents from both settlements (especially from the Christian Orthodox convent) spoke about monastic life more or less related to solitude in its general understanding. That is, “I am seeing a lot of difficulties here, so does the priest, the Father confessor”, says one of the nuns. “Families with different problems come to us, they turn to the priest for prayers, buy different religious objects, take part in rituals, but most of them feel the need to talk to somebody” – tells another interlocutor from the same settlement. In other words, the priests and the 35 nuns living here are often approached by people asking for advice, and they respond to their needs – mostly by praying and offering them guidance; some nuns remain in contact with visitors and later receive messages on their phones from persons searching for solutions to difficulties: “We are here to help them with our prayers”.



Fig. 5 Religious service at Şag-Timişeni Greek Orthodox convent (photo)

Compassion needs to be treated with wisdom, in order for *exhaustion* not to incline the balance towards incapacity: “When so many people turn to us with tremendous difficulties – dramatic, tragic life stories – sometimes it’s a lot for us, too. But, by praying, you seek to free yourself, too, a little, from the burden”. In the Buddhist monastery, the veteran monk living here since 1984 tells us he never deviates from his daily praying schedule: “During Covid, I prayed very strongly that people in our monastery are not affected. No one got sick. For me, this is a proof that prayers work. I have total confidence in this. I don’t know what others think: if you have 30 people, you will have 30 different ways of thinking”. Buddhists believe exhaustion can be avoided and wisdom can be achieved, in relation to compassion, when the ego is left aside and focus is set on the other: “Exhaustion is very much related to me being important”, tells us one monk. He emphasizes that balance between one’s own capacities and

the needs of the other can be achieved by appreciating your limits at their real value: “It is natural to be tired. But I can do a little bit. I can do what I can do. I always try and do my best” (Interview Samye Ling monastery).

Second, in relation to *pride* as an obstacle, literature proposed humility and courage as counterparts: “The path is to let your pride be destroyed, to not react. Humbleness, yes. Give up a bit – otherwise, where will you end up? Two hard stones. Abandonment is not cowardice. With Jesus on your side, you will prevail. He said: ‘In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world’”, tells us one of the Orthodox nuns. She underlines humbleness – different from humility, but still, opposed to pride, and not in contrast with courage. Renouncing a conflict would not be a sign of cowardice, but would imply *the courage to be humble*, to let go of the ego and, thus, develop compassion. For Christians, God is the one to relate to when striving towards such a difficult attitude, the one helping on this path: “Before Christ, the line of thinking was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Jesus came with love, with forgiveness, with turning the other cheek. If someone hits you, it’s difficult to do that – but, with a strong faith, you can reach this measure” (Interview Șag-Timișeni convent). Along the same line, the nun states that, for achieving a way of thinking and a behavior orientated towards genuine compassion, solitude can help – offering peace and quietness for prayer and meditation. But, on the other hand, “when you come to the monastery, the devil comes after you. It’s a continuous fight with yourself here, too. The whole life is a spiritual struggle”. One of the Buddhist monks also refers to pride; in his opinion, humans are inclined to feel good about themselves when achieving something positive: “It is natural to have a little pride or self-content for what you do, as long as you are not looking for it and it doesn’t become a goal”. It is, again, about the balancing wisdom – being intelligent and wise at the same time, discerning with knowledge and awareness (overcoming ignorance) between what one can offer and the needs of the potential receiver; so as compassion can manifest in a benefitting manner for both actors involved.

Compassion and moral responsibility

In the theoretical subsection dedicated to compassion in relation to moral responsibility, focus was set, first, on *own advantages* (in terms of positive feelings) following beneficial gestures; second – on the *instinctual*, unmotivated inclination to help; third – on the implicit presence of

conditions for being compassionate; and last, but equally important, on *gratitude* as a central element encouraging compassion. With respect to *advantages* / a certain satisfaction, this research showed that, for monks and nuns attempting to expand compassion, self-content would need to come naturally, without being the goal of their action: “We stay in in a monastery not to be happy. This isn’t our goal, it is to try and free beings from suffering”, tells us one monk at Samye Ling. Another partner of discussion from the Buddhist settlement speaks about a natural way of trying to expand the positive feelings for the family to people he or she has never met – as a form of moral responsibility: “Basically, not that you love your son or that I love my mother is wrong; it’s a starting point: use that love, use its example to try and develop and expand it to everybody else. Everybody could have been my mother. Then why do I love her in this life more than I love you?”. The monk expresses a metaphor related to this action of sharing: lighting candles of others, without losing the light of your own; compassion would thus be looked upon as the natural feeling for close ones to be expanded without losing the love that is already there.

Second, in relation to *instinctual* responsibility – “the whole motivation, the whole essence of practices is to help and benefit others. My happiness doesn’t become important, others’ happiness becomes more and more important. Once you really develop that mind state, you will sort of automatically be of benefit to people”, says one of the monks living at Samye Ling. He continues by underlining that “you can’t make somebody love you. But, then, if you’re not important, it doesn’t matter if they love you. You love them. You don’t force yourself. You *just do it*”. This reminds us of the study presented in the theoretical subsection where we spoke about doing a good deed from a natural impulse, without constraints or commandments from outside, or without expecting certain benefits. The gesture connects to what we have mentioned in the literature review earlier with reference to compassion’s *unconditional* nature – responding “(...) to the needs of the one suffering, without regard for what, prudentially, is a ‘just’ or ‘fair’ response” (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 207). Instinct, unconditionality and naturalness overlap determining an ideal understanding of responsibility – to be trained and cultivated by the seeker for spiritual development in both traditions, with the focus on God as a point of reference / a supporter, in Christianity: “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:37-39). One of the nuns at Şag-Timişeni Christian Orthodox convent

explains this vision: “God is your priority – respect others, but no more than you love and respect God; it’s His commandment”, and clarifies that God as a priority should not mean that positive feelings towards others would have to decrease. In the end, the instinct, or the potential to be compassionate is present in every single being: “We are like a diamond that needs to be polished and cleaned” (Interview Samye Ling monastery). So, moral responsibility can be a predetermined feature of character, but it can also be trained and developed towards perfection: “One should consider becoming a monk out of conception, not out of deception”, tells us the priest living at Şag-Timişeni convent for several years. Spiritual development, improvement of your mind, of your being, of your natural born moral skills, of the inclination towards compassion, polishing the raw diamond within ourselves (on the way to Nirvana, or to Salvation) are thus key elements in both monastic traditions – although ideologies, scriptures and teachings present them in different manners.

Third, compassion as moral responsibility came in connection to acknowledging that *conditions* are always there for the intention to alleviate suffering. Interlocutors from the Buddhist monastery point, once again, towards the necessity to expand existing compassion for close ones – considering the fact that strangers in need of support are always there: “To be kind with all beings – it’s difficult. Start by thinking which one is closer or kinder to you. It’s easier this way. Then, gradually – community, human beings. Then, all beings. Try to develop it this way”. Nuns at Şag-Timişeni convent express the idea in a similar manner, emphasizing that, in a solitary/socially restricted environment, there are sufficient conditions for developing and offering compassion, too: “Who is inclined towards having a family embraces some responsibilities, raising their children with the fear of God and leading a Christian, moral life. With us, the target is the same – we have our responsibilities, too”. Again, views in both traditions differ in terms of the point of reference (the teachings of Buddha on one side and the Bible on the other), but approaches towards becoming compassionate as a moral responsibility, taking available conditions into consideration, are similar.

Finally, *gratitude* was an element in the literature connected to compassion as a morally responsible attitude – in terms of feeling stimulated by thankfulness from the receiver, on one hand, and of the own gratitude as a motivator for becoming more compassionate, on the other. “In the Buddhist way of thinking, all sentient beings are our parents, they are equal to our mother and father. Just as we want to benefit them

in this life, try to have that feeling for every single sentient being – that is the essence of compassion”, are the words of a Buddhist monk, who, again, refers to expanding a natural attitude and developing it based on the gratitude one has for his or her parents: “If you can help someone, help them now. I don’t remember the previous life of my parents. I remember this life with them. But, possibly, you are my previous father or mother. This is the reason I should try to develop compassion”; “my mother was kind, helping me day by day. I need to repay her kindness in some way”. Feeling grateful, appreciating the efforts of the other, *repaying* kindness are leitmotifs for feeling morally responsible and developing compassion. In the Christian Orthodox monastery, it is also about the inspirational grateful attitude of *others* – people who come here for advice (like we mentioned earlier) and who, in turn, are thankful for receiving support from the nuns. This (external) thankfulness inspires nuns to continue with their support: “After they leave, it depends on their faith. But many come back with a shining face, thanking us” (Interview Şag-Timişeni convent). God is at the center of the scale of values this time, too, with the conviction that He is the one to be related to – in terms of the grace we were talking about earlier: “If you have no love for God, it’s hard to have compassion for people. Everything relates to the love for God and to his compassion for us” (Interview Şag-Timişeni convent).

Compassion and solitude / retreat

Coming to the most relevant part of the analysis, in terms of connecting compassion to solitude – first, there was the element of *communion*, as opposed to one-sidedness – emphasized in the literature in an apparently paradoxical sense (as being connected to solitude): People who make the choice of living in a monastery are not supposed to detach themselves entirely from society; on the contrary, the goal is to develop communion and positive feelings towards others “The Christian, in his essence, cannot live without love for others. The nun or monk embraces solitude and ties it to compassion. In the end, the monastery is a family, too”, tells us the priest living at Şag-Timişeni convent. In his turn, one Buddhist monk explains the apparent paradox of being more generous in a solitary environment along the same line: “If I just carry on engaging in the world, I’m never going to *truly* be able to develop the qualities of my mind that will allow me to *really* help other people” (Interview Samye Ling monastery / respondent’s own accentuations). Our dialogue partner further refers to

the already mentioned metaphor of the diamond being polished under conditions of solitude – when one would be “freed from distractions and focus on developing his or her mind, uncovering his potential, cleaning away the mud from the diamond” and discovering his true nature. The Christian Orthodox view can be summarized in a similar approach – again, with the difference that God is the one to relate to in every action, and with the specification that prayers are the main instrument for showing compassion. The Orthodox priest resumes it: “Staying in a monastery cannot be regarded as separate from compassion. Because it’s about the path towards spiritual fruition. You are close to everybody, first of all by praying for them”; one of the nuns underlines the difference between solitude and isolation, stating that “in the monastery, you are not quite as detached from the world – we have people coming here all the time, asking for advice. We have different activities, go to the nearby town – it’s not isolation”. Again, the fundamental differences between loneliness / isolation, and solitude are to be ascertained here to the extent to which, as the Orthodox priest puts it, “we go to the monastery and become solitary not out of hate, but out of love for the world. Monks rediscover communion in the frame of an accepted solitude” (Interview Șag-Timișeni convent).

Second, in relation to compassion and solitude, there was the theoretical element of *relative* and *ultimate help* to be put forward; in this context, one Buddhist monk explains that, in the Tibetan tradition, there are long periods of retreat, of almost complete silence, inside a closed and restricted environment, to be undertaken by the one pursuing the state of Buddhahood. These periods are marked by study, meditation, self-analysis and understanding emptiness – the true nature of self and reality: “You do not need to be solitary in order to practice compassion, but retreat (although it may seem selfish) allows you to do it totally” (Interview, Samye Ling monastery). *Totally* would be associated with the *ultimate* kind of help, beyond the relative, concrete one – in terms of supporting the person to understand, process, interpret and learn from the particular causes that lead to his or her suffering. To this extent, the analogy with the cognitive behavioral therapy, mentioned in the corresponding literature subsection, is relevant in terms of focusing on the self as the main tool to be looked at when approaching the causes of suffering: “We are our own protectors and enemies” (Interview Samye Ling monastery). The ultimate help one can offer, after reaching a higher level of understanding reality in solitude, would lead to the receiver acknowledging his or her determinant role in relieving their own suffering. The psychological, scientific (experimental)

approach is, thus, completed by the spiritual (experiential) one – in the sense of recognizing (instead of ignoring) the real causes of suffering and approaching them correspondingly; according to the guiding principles of the Four Noble Truths. With Orthodox Christianity, God is the creator, protector and main relational point for believers; this vision of the supernatural force does not diminish the person's own responsibility towards reaching the ability to help people on an ultimate level – that is to teach and guide them towards becoming capable of overcoming suffering on their own.



Fig. 6 Monastics and lay volunteers take part in a training session at Samye Ling (photo)

In the same context, literature emphasized the importance of the *teacher* – Lama or Father confessor – for a nun or monk to gain the necessary knowledge and wisdom needed for expanding compassion: “Living in solitude is not enough for improving yourself; receiving teaching from someone who is experienced is very important”, says one monk from Samye Ling – whereas another interlocutor from the same settlement

emphasizes this path in the sense of making solitude fruitful: “You need to spend time with your teacher, your Lama, to develop your practice, to get to a stage where *true* isolation becomes beneficial” (respondent’s own accentuation). In the Eastern Orthodox environment, the Father confessor has a significant role, whereas, again, the relation to God is considered the most important one and is to be taken into account under these instructive circumstances, too; the priest from Șag-Timișeni indicates that going to the monastery is “like an exercise, a practice which cleans the mirror of your heart and by means of which you rediscover God. It’s like a healing therapy for your soul”.

The ability to become more compassionate during solitude was related to preventing and diminishing *anger*, *desire* (*greed*) and *ignorance*, too: “I have developed the idea that this is *my* watch and it’s important. I will suffer a lot if it breaks” (Interview, Samye Ling monastery / respondent’s own accentuation). The dialogue partner refers here to afflictive attachment to persons, as well as to objects – when we perceive them as possessions. This attitude can cause anger, too, which has to be avoided and prevented, in order for the mind to focus on the essential. For giving up desire or greed, he reinforces the Buddhist conduct of no harm and the view of no self. The last one, again, by looking at the empty environment with an “intermediate vision between nihilism and eternalism” (Interview, Samye Ling monastery). The particular view of no self, and the conduct of no harm, accompanying the solitary seeker towards less desire and anger / towards becoming compassionate, are related to avoiding or overcoming ignorance, too – as they involve not only knowledge and intelligence, but, primarily, the pursuance of wisdom.

5. Conclusions

This research aimed at studying solitude and compassion with focus on how they are understood, interpreted and lived in monastic environments. We used qualitative methods, conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with nuns and monks from a Christian Orthodox convent in Romania and from a Buddhist monastery in Scotland. The goal was to reveal common elements and differences with reference to becoming compassionate while living in solitude.

First, in relation to compassion and *wisdom*, we focused on exhaustion and pride as obstacles on the road to becoming compassionate. According

to the literature, wisdom is necessary for exhaustion to not intervene in a disturbing manner. Preventing fatigue is perceived by nuns and monks from both settlements in connection to *prayer*. Regardless of whether we speak about God or about deities as the addressees, asking for support helps the monastic to avoid becoming exhausted. The potential obstacle of pride is also to be treated with discerning awareness and with a balancing wisdom, taking, as described in the literature, courage and humility into account. The main nuance to be considered here in terms of conceptualization is the focus on *humbleness* in Eastern Orthodoxy – slightly different from humility and implying dignity, courage and modesty. Statements extracted from the interviews stress knowledge and awareness (by overcoming ignorance) accumulated in a wise manner, as well as distancing oneself from ego-centricity, in order to avoid pride. Buddhist respondents also emphasized the allowance of becoming tired and feeling self-contented to a certain degree, as human natural tendencies.

Second, compassion was put into relation to *moral responsibility*, considering own satisfaction, instinctual generous acts, conditions for manifesting compassion, and gratitude. As mentioned above, own satisfaction is seen by respondents, especially from the Buddhist environment, as a natural thing to a certain degree, as long as it does not become a goal for somebody's actions. As for the instinctual inclination to help, Buddhist dialogue partners perceive it mainly in terms of repaying kindness coming from persons who might have been our parents in previous lives, whereas Christian Orthodox interlocutors see it as a commandment from God, to be put into practice. Becoming compassionate by acknowledging that conditions to help are always available was another element emphasized in the scientific literature. Similarities appear here in terms of the focus on the *family* – expressed by the Orthodox nuns as a form of responsibility, alongside the one assumed in the monastery; by the Buddhist discussion partners – as the starting point towards expanding compassion. The perception of gratitude was slightly different – in terms of 1. the reference to God and His inspirational grace in the Christian context, and 2. gratitude *from us* as a form of repaying kindness (Buddhism), respectively *from others* as a motivation for us to perform further generous gestures (Eastern Orthodoxy).

Third, with respect to compassion and *solitude*, we emphasized communion, the relative and ultimate help, as well as the element of teaching. Results showed that – again, with the main difference in terms of the point of reference – Buddhist and Christian Orthodox nuns and

monks perceive solitude not as detachment, but as communion: going to the monastery “not out of hate, but out of love to the world”. Avoiding distractions, focusing on developing your mind, your relationship to God or to Buddha, to others, and in the end to yourself means a “detachment from attachment” (Interview Samye Ling monastery), rather than from people; it is stepping beyond afflictive emotions. The ultimate help – at the superior level of the relative, concrete one – offered to the receiver, contributes to his or her understanding of the own role in alleviating suffering. Last, but not least, the teacher (perceived as more important by Buddhists) accompanies the solitary seeker on the difficult road towards achieving compassion and wisdom.

Resuming, results reveal factual similarities between the two philosophies, despite ideological differences – primarily in terms of the vertical vs. horizontal relation to the source of compassion (divine - human dichotomy): solitude does not make the seeker lonely, but contributes to increasing communion (to God and/or the others). “If nothing else, Christianity, Buddhism and the other religious traditions of the world are similarly functional human derivations, which have historically been enormously influential in helping large numbers of people to alleviate suffering everywhere” (Flescher & Worthen 2007: 203). Limitations of this study are mainly related to restricted samples and the choice of research fields according to existing conditions. However, the work was a qualitative, exploratory (rather than explanatory) one, and it was not constructed statistically, but pursued to extract and develop meanings on the topic of interest. Further approaches may take mixed methods into account and use larger samples, to investigate the topic more thoroughly and pursue generalizable findings. A focus can be put, for instance, on *balance* in relation to compassion in different religious traditions: carrying for everybody to the same, elevated extent vs. perceiving this goal as unachievable or unnecessary (“I cannot do it” and “I do not have to do it”); respectively, pursuing a total, unconditional type of compassion vs. self-centeredness.

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CARING FOR OUR BROTHER'S CHILDREN GREEK AND MACEDONIAN CHILD REFUGEES IN SOCIALIST ROMANIA IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR*

Beatrice Scutaru

Abstract

This chapter focuses on the aid provided by Romania to refugee children in the aftermath of the Second World War. Drawing on the case of the Greek and Macedonian children, who arrived in Romania between early 1948 and 1949, this chapter explores the role of this socialist state – often perceived as a space of departure and in need of support – as a provider of aid and care to a brotherly nation and its children. This chapter provides a new perspective on the “East” and advances our knowledge of a neglected actor in the history of humanitarianism.

Keywords: Refugees, children, Romania, humanitarian aid, children's homes, socialism

1. Introduction

“Ultimul care pleacă stinge lumina! [The last one to leave must turn off the lights!]” is a joke Romanians have been making for decades.¹ Besides its humorous intentions, this witty joke reveals the importance held by the idea of emigration in the Romanian mentality. This was a reality during socialism, which continues until the present day. Romania is, indeed, a place of departure, a space which individuals and groups flee to find refuge and a better life elsewhere.² Romania has also received, throughout the years, substantial aid and support from foreign countries and international organisations.³ Generally speaking, Romania, and Eastern Europe, are

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perceived and researched mainly as spaces of departure, in need of and receiving humanitarian aid.⁴ What is less known, however, is that Romania is also a space of refuge and has a long tradition of providing aid and support to countries and individuals.⁵

During the Cold War, as other East Central European countries, Romania provided humanitarian and developmental aid to numerous countries. This support took various forms: e.g., diplomatic support, fundraising campaigns and collection of goods from the population, medical expeditionary corps.⁶ While part of this support was provided abroad, Romania also received various groups of refugees on its own territory.⁷ Many of these were children.⁸ During socialism, Romania received three main groups of children: Greek and Macedonian, North Korean and Chileans. All came to Romania at different moments in time, 1940s, 1950s, and 1970s, from brotherly nations, and received help in the name of socialist international solidarity. Romania's action is part of a group of efforts taken by all member countries of the Eastern Bloc, at the behest and/or with the support of the Soviet Union.

The Greek and Macedonian children were the first to arrive, starting 1948 (6,000 children). North Korean children are part of the second group to come to Romania after the Second World War: between 1,000 and 3,000 children were hosted in Romania from the beginning of 1952 until 1960 when all were repatriated. In the 1970s, after Pinochet's coup d'état, about 2,000 Chileans (children and their parents) found refuge in Romania. This chapter will focus on one group of children, the Greek and Macedonian who started arriving in Romania in the spring of 1948, to illustrate the type of support Romania provided to children in the immediate aftermath of the war. This study of Romania as a country providing care and aid to refugees aims to provide a new perspective on the "East" and to advance our knowledge of a neglected actor in the history of humanitarianism.

The chapter will explore this phenomenon over a short period of time, between 1948 and the beginning of the 1950s, a time of great change at political, economic, cultural, social, etc. levels. During this period, which corresponds to the children's arrival, socialist Romania was engaged in a process of consolidation of power and of state-building. At the same time, through the aid provided to these children the young socialist Romanian state also constructed an identity as a provider of welfare. While tackling the various logistical challenges that arose from having to transport and house relatively large groups of people, Romania was engaging in the

process of state-building while contributing towards the state-building efforts of their foreign guests and their respective governments.⁹

Romania, like all host countries of the region, had to create a network of institutions for housing and educating unaccompanied children. Most Greek refugee children and young people were initially placed and cared for in these large, state-run institutions, the type of institutions that represent, in the national and international collective imagination, the flawed system of childcare and protection in Romania. While the institutionalisation of children and its terrible effects have been widely researched, especially for the post-1989 period,¹⁰ few studies focus on the early period of the communist regime. The aim of this chapter is also to contribute to this rich literature with an analysis focusing on the early years of the communist regime. This analysis will allow for a better understanding of the first steps taken in establishing a new child protection system.

Drawing mainly on the archives of the Romanian Red Cross, the main body dealing with Greek and Macedonian refugees in Romania, this chapter is structured in three parts. The first section of the chapter will present the broad context and type of aid provided to Greek communists during the civil war by the members of the Eastern Bloc. The second and third sections will explore the type of care provided to Greek and Macedonian children in various Romanian institutions. These follow the steps taken by the authorities to provide support to refugees: first, there was the emergency arrangement and allocation of children in large groups and structures. This period is followed by a more structured life in the settlements and then integration into the mainstream school system and Romanian society.

2. Transnational support for the Greek brothers

2.1. The Eastern Bloc mobilises

The Greek Civil War erupted shortly after the end of the Second World War and lasted between 1946 and 1949. The conflict was one of the first battlegrounds of the Cold War. It was also an 'internal' war in which external actors played important roles. While the involvement of Western powers is well known, less has been written on the involvement of the Soviet Bloc.¹¹ The aid provided by the members of the Socialist Bloc to the

Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and its army was kept a secret, especially so that Western powers did not become aware of the fact, which could have led to renewed conflicts in Europe; only a small number of people, in each country, knew what the aid consisted of. Officially, socialist countries were sending humanitarian aid. Non-officially, besides food, clothing and medical equipment, the Greek communists also received weapons, ammunition, petrol, etc. The aid was provided in three phases: first between July 1946 and spring 1947, with a second phase between the summer of 1947 and October 1948. The third one lasted between autumn 1948 and April 1949.¹²

The support provided to the KKE can be divided into five categories: (1) weapons, ammunition, medical and personal hygiene supplies, food, clothing, equipment, vehicles; (2) money transfer; (3) training of officers and fighters in various camps established across socialist countries; (4) taking care of wounded partisans; (5) care of children and adults on the territories of eastern socialist countries.¹³ Until 1948 and the conflict between Stalin and Tito, the bulk of the support was provided by and transported through Yugoslavia. Besides weapons (initially of German origin to conceal the identity of the actual suppliers) and provisions, Yugoslavia also helped the KKE's propaganda needs: the Communists' Free Greece Radio station was transmitting from Belgrade, where was also the office of the KKE in exile.¹⁴ The Bulgarians and Albanians also played a substantial role. Besides supplying with weapons and provisions, Bulgaria also received injured and sick partisans for treatment and later training in preparation for their return to the front.¹⁵

Mid-1948, following the Tito-Stalin clash and the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform, the situation changed dramatically. The KKE chose to remain faithful to Moscow, and the other East European countries eventually took responsibility for most of the support to the KKE and its army. Officials from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Greece met on various occasions to organise the new paths of transport of aid.¹⁶ Despite this collective mobilisation, the socialist parties' attitude towards the Greek conflict was not linear or uniform. With the exception of 'internationalist solidarity' towards the KKE, which manifested itself in various ways during the conflict, geographic proximity, internal politics, the international conjuncture and particular political stakes helped to shape the position of the communist parties as much as the 'revolutionary duty' did.¹⁷

Initially limited, Romania's aid to the KKE and its army increased to large quantities of food, clothing, medicine, weapons, horses and fuel. Romania seems to be the only country which provided the Greek partisans with fuel. Additionally, starting April 1948, Romania also starts receiving thousands of children and hundreds of sick and injured partisans.¹⁸ The latter represented an essential aspect of the aid Romania provided to its Greek brothers.

2.2. Receiving the Greek refugees in Romania

The Greek civil war, indeed, caused not only enormous human losses and material damage, but also massive internal and international population displacements. In the early 1950s, around 100,000 refugees from the Greek civil war were living in Eastern Bloc countries. Of these, about 20,000 were children.¹⁹ Given the Cold War context, the humanitarian assistance provided was politicised, a political project combining humanitarianism with state planning and a socialist agenda.²⁰ The 'brotherly' support given to the Greek Communist Party and refugees by the countries of the new Eastern bloc can be seen as part of a policy of internationalist and revolutionary solidarity, influenced by Cold War conflicts and national foreign policy interests. This reality is reflected in the criteria for accepting foreigners seeking asylum: refugees were not granted asylum individually but were accepted collectively in the host countries thanks to the goodwill of the communist leadership, whose decision was purely arbitrary. Not officially recognised as refugees or covered by the Geneva Convention (1951), Greeks and Macedonians had the legal status of "stateless persons" and remained dependent on the goodwill of the regimes, without individualised rights or the possibility of relying on institutionalised legal protection, independent of the executive.²¹ Despite their precarious legal status, the displaced population was generally well cared for in the host countries.²²

Greek refugees arrived in Romania in three waves: first came the children, second the ill and wounded and third the remaining partisans and elderly, after the defeat. Among the partisans were also the leaders of the KKE, which had moved its headquarters to Bucharest.²³ Between 1948 and 1949 arrived in Romania about 1,200 ill and wounded partisans that were treated at various hospitals in Bucharest and Sinaia. Many were suffering from serious conditions, such as tuberculosis, and were taken care of in various sanatoriums in Snagov, Argeş, Bacău, Prahova,

Humedoara and Slatina. When their conditions could be better attended elsewhere, some partisans were transferred abroad: e.g., those suffering from cranio-cerebral injuries were treated in Hungary, by the famous Dr Zoltan. About 800 of those who got better in East Central European countries, among which Romania, returned to Greece in April 1949 to fight in the last months of the civil war. Once the civil war was lost by the KKE, the partisans and the military and political leadership crossed the border in Albania. Those, along with the wounded already present in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were distributed to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Eastern Germany and the Soviet Union.²⁴

Early 1948, the Greek Communist Party decided to evacuate children from the war zone. Displacing children to protect them from conflict is not a new practice. Children are perceived as the primary victims of armed conflict, being both targets and instruments. The conflicts of the 20th century had one characteristic which strongly influenced the 21st century: the domestic front starts to be involved in the conflict at an unprecedented level, leading to a sharp rise in civilian casualties, among which children.²⁵ Increasing concern for children and anxieties about the effects of war on them also popularized the practice of sending children away from their home areas after, during or in preparation for conflicts.

Between 1917 and 1925, about 500,000 German and Austrian children were sent to other countries in Europe, mainly Switzerland and the Netherlands, as a way to give them proper food and recreation. The schoolchildren were seen as war victims, but the authorities also believed this program would help ensure the children would not grow up to become a threat to the rebuilding of Europe. Between 1937 and 1939, about 30,000 Spanish children were sent to France, Belgium, Great Britain, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the Soviet Union and Mexico in order to remove them from the war zone. Between 1939 and 1945, before, during and after the Winter War between the Soviet Union and Finland, about 70,000 children were sent to other Nordic countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, in order to protect them from war and its consequences. After the beginning of World War II, children were massively evacuated from British cities to the countryside and overseas members of the Commonwealth of Nations in order to protect them from enemy bomb attacks; it was estimated that, between 1939 and 1941, 3 million people, mostly children, were uprooted from urban areas in Great Britain. Between 1939 and 1940, massive evacuations were also conducted in France in order to protect people, especially children, from

German military invasion.²⁶ Moreover, when the war between Germany and the Soviet Union broke out in 1941, more than 264,000 children were evacuated from Leningrad and other major cities and sent to other parts of the country to escape invasion and the siege by German forces. Between 1940 and 1943, the Nazi regime organised the evacuation of 3 million children from urban areas to the countryside and safer occupied countries in order to save them from Allied aerial bombings.²⁷ The actions taken by Greek communists, thus, inscribe themselves in a long tradition according to which displacing and (re)educating children was the best way to protect them and the future of the nation.

The evacuation of children to the neighbouring communist states – Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia – began in the spring of 1948. From there, the children continued their journey further to Hungary, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia. The process lasted until 1949. All Eastern Bloc countries received and offered aid to the evacuated Greek and Macedonian children. Nearly 6,000 children were placed in children's homes in Romania until they entered the national education system or the workforce. They were placed in 13 children's homes. Some of these children have lived in Romania all their lives, while others have returned to their country of origin or migrated to other countries in Europe and the United States. All of them, however, have been taken in by the state.²⁸

3. Emergency welfare while waiting to return to Greece

3.1. Managing the emergency

When the children arrived, as in other countries in the region, Romania was going through a period of great change. At the end of 1947, the Romanian Popular Republic was established (after the king was forced to abdicate). A soviet style inspired political, economic and social system had started to be implemented, based on one party rule, a command economy, and Marxist-Leninist ideology.²⁹ A new communist constitution was also implemented, in 1948. When the children arrived, socialist Romania was thus engaged in a process of consolidation of power and of state-building. To house and care for these children, Romania, like other host countries in the Eastern Bloc, had to create a network of institutions for housing and educating unaccompanied children. This situation also forced the country to start looking beyond the politics and economic emergencies and focus

on the welfare system. Initially, an emergency-and-basic-needs sort of welfare was set up. While tackling the various logistical challenges that arose from having to transport and house relatively large groups of people, Romania was also working on its identity, constructing an identity as a provider of welfare. Hence, they were literally engaging in the process of their own state-building while contributing toward the state-building efforts of their foreign guests and their government.³⁰

In April 1948, 892 children arrived in Romania.³¹ The numbers grew rapidly and at the end of the following year Romania had 7379 people in its care, most of them between 0 and 16 years of age.³² As in all the countries in the region, the main organisation dealing with the refugees was the Romanian Red Cross, which collaborated with the Ministries of Health, Education and Labour, as well as with the National Committee for the Relief of the Greek People and the National Liberation Front (EAM). Created at the end of the 19th century, the Romanian Red Cross was reorganised on 23 September 1948 (Law for the Organisation of the Romanian Red Cross) and was under state control.³³ In addition to the central structure in Bucharest, the Red Cross also opened a number of branches at county level. These branches dealt with refugees, in collaboration and with the help of the Central Committee in Bucharest.³⁴

On 6 April 1948, the 892 children arrived in Călimănești,³⁵ a small town in the county of Vâlcea, in Oltenia, a well-known and popular spa resort. Colonies were created in spa resorts because there was a very high capacity for accommodation (the hotel in Călimănești, for example, had a capacity of 245 beds). This setting was also considered to be more conducive to recreation and healing for sick children, compared to a place in the city.³⁶ Many of the children were ill (suffering from rheumatic fever, trachoma, mange, lice, bronchitis and psychological trauma), some were orphans, others frightened and disoriented. Most of the refugee population were children aged between 3 and 14. This meant they were born just before or during the Second World War and spent the first years of their lives in conditions of terrible hardship and famine, witnessing numerous deaths between 1941 and 1943. To this we can add the civil war that broke out in 1946. These children had thus suffered traumas whose effects and duration were difficult to assess.³⁷

Teams of nurses arrived from Bucharest and, together with a member of the Red Cross management in Bucharest and the local authorities (the local mayor and the staff of the Red Cross from Râmnicu Vâlcea), they formed teams to help with the reception of children.³⁸ The children were

initially housed in the local primary school where they were medically examined, bathed, dewormed and dressed in new clothes sent by the Red Cross in Bucharest.³⁹ Under the supervision of the nurses, a group of young people from the Young Workers' Union (UTM) helped with the disinfection of the clothes. A medical form was created for each child. They also received a medallion with the figure of General Markos on one side and a serial number on the other. Two members of the Union of Democratic Women of Romania (UFDR) were in charge of this operation.⁴⁰ Most of the children were then transported to the State Hotel where a children's camp was organised. This camp existed for almost 9 months.⁴¹ Those with more serious medical problems, which could not be solved locally, were sent to hospitals in the region (e.g. to Vâlcea County Hospital) and in Bucharest.⁴²

The living conditions, while better than in a country at war, were still very difficult and Călimănești was a particularly difficult experience. Testimonies of children who spent time at the camp mention the hardships endured here. According to Danforth and Boeschoten, "the children who passed through Romania remember with horror their time at the house in Călimănești, where a typhus epidemic broke out and hunger was so strong that the children had to catch frogs and snails and pull the leaves off the trees in order to eat something, anything".⁴³ The economic situation was very difficult across Europe. Romania was no exception: in 1946, the average European food production was only 36% of that of 1938. Many countries therefore resorted to rationing food consumption. In Romania, rationing was abandoned only in 1954.⁴⁴ The children of Călimănești were therefore not the only ones facing serious food shortages during this period. In the reports sent by the colony's employees, some of the difficulties were acknowledged (epidemics, cold, communication difficulties) and blamed on the lack of preparation in the organisation of the colony, phrases such as "unexpectedly", "in a hurry" being found in the reports sent to the Red Cross Central Committee in Bucharest. In addition, the managing and deputy directors admitted lacking experience: "we had never even been in a children's home".⁴⁵ No mention is made, however, of supply difficulties which appeared regularly in the reports drawn up for the following period. From the documents we only learn that supplies were provided from various sources, with local products from Călimănești and Râmnicu Vâlcea, supplemented with food brought from the Red Cross warehouse in Bucharest.⁴⁶ This demonstrates an interest in providing food for children, despite the difficulties at national level. National and

international interest in the children's situation, as evidenced by numerous visits by representatives of the National Liberation Front (EAM) as well as RPR (Republica Populară Română) deputies, the vice-president of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, or ministerial representatives have certainly played a role in this attitude.⁴⁷

3.2. The importance of health checks and the fear of disease

The children's health and especially keeping epidemics in check was an essential concern ever since the children's arrival in Romania. The first objective was to identify the health status of children and find ways to treat them. In a 1950 report, the Romanian Red Cross argued that the main objective was to cure children and improve their physical condition. Only then work could be done to raise the children's cultural and civic level in order to prepare them for the work of rebuilding their homeland after the KKE's victory.⁴⁸ Children were weighed and measured monthly to monitor their progress. Weekly they were bathed, and their underwear changed. Medical check-ups were also carried out.⁴⁹ This interest is illustrated by the series of visits to the colony by specialist doctors (radiologists, dentists, etc.), as well as by the number of staff employed in the sanitary section: 1 doctor, 2 head nurses, 15 nurses and auxiliary nurses. The infirmary was one of the first created in the colony, with 17 beds at the beginning. Later special isolation wards were built (65 beds). A total of 670 children were admitted and treated in the infirmary, the most common illnesses being mumps (255), influenza and flu (111) and bronchitis (98).⁵⁰ A large number of vaccinations were also carried out, in particular to limit the risk of contagious diseases (anti-diphtheria, anti-typhoparasite, anti-scarlet fever), as well as tests for malaria. Children identified as anaemic were given vitamins and food supplements. Also, in order for all children to "develop normally, vigorously and healthily" they had to follow a physical education programme.⁵¹

Despite these measures, outbreaks have been identified in the colonies. These were due to several factors: e.g., at Călimănești, the children arrived during the cold season. The hotel where they were staying, although very spacious, did not initially have enough beds for all the children, who slept 2-3 to a bed, which favoured the spread of contagious diseases. In addition, the building was set up to receive tourists only in the summer and had no heating, which favoured numerous cases of bronchitis and flu. Moreover, keeping the sick in isolation was very difficult, as they

were “stolen” from the isolation pavilions by family members.⁵² Family members and/or members of the village or region of origin were the only elements that allowed them to feel safe. They thus did not want to be separated from their family members. Also, a change could take place at any time and they could be moved to another institution or country (as it had happened before their arrival to Romania and will continue to happen) so family members were afraid of being separated. In addition, at least in the initial stage, none of the staff spoke Greek or Macedonian, which made communication and establishing trust very difficult.⁵³

Interest in children’s health continued to be central, as evidenced by numerous reports and statistics on the medical situation, as well as visits by representatives of the Ministry of Health. Medical work was divided into two categories: preventive and curative. Preventing epidemics and keeping children in good health was central to the work of the medical staff of the homes. To this end, on 10 October 1948 the Ministry of Health sent out health instructions for the organisation and operation of the colonies. Those who did not follow the instructions risked being held responsible for any epidemic that may occur.⁵⁴ Following this threat, the Sinaia colony finally set up an infirmary in a separate building (the Bucegi dormitory) in order to better isolate children with contagious diseases.⁵⁵ This action, carried out in January 1949, had been requested by the Ministry of Health and the National Committee for the Relief of the Greek People throughout 1948, without success. In addition to the existing facilities in the colony, medical staff could also send the sick children to hospitals in the region or to Bucharest as well as to other spa resorts.⁵⁶ Despite this better organisation, the staff in Sibiu regularly lacked medicines: month after month, the reports ended with a section highlighting the “total” and “permanent” lack of the usual medicines, but also of medical equipment such as instruments for the dental surgery, X-ray machines, ultra-violet rays for children with rickets, and a laboratory for emergency analyses.⁵⁷

4. Building a life for the children once the war was over

4.1. A more structured way of life

Once the emergency surpassed, some of the colonies were closed and the children were moved to other colonies where they started a more structured life. One of the first colonies to be closed was the one

in Călimănești: 503 children left on 23 October 1948, followed by a batch of 300 children on 4 November. The last children left the colony on 5 December.⁵⁸ Conditions were created for better organisation and operation of the colonies and schools. This happened 'organically', within each colony, but also at the central level: in 1952, rules of operation were established at national level, inspired by the Soviet Union model, which were then adapted and adopted within each colony.⁵⁹ To better illustrate how the children's lives were organised, these sections will focus especially on only one colony, the Sinaia colony.

One of the first created in Romania, the Sinaia colony existed between 1948 and 1953 and was composed of two structures dealing with refugees: the Palace hotel and the Caraiman hotel. At the end of 1948, the Palace hotel had 53 'mothers' and 899 children and Caraiman had 175 'mothers' and 189 children.⁶⁰ The 'mothers' were the women who had accompanied and cared for the displaced children. Usually under 30 years of age, unmarried or widowed, they were initially chosen by the communist leaders of each village. Some accompanied their own children, while others were not related to them. These 'mothers' played a very important role in the children's lives, providing much-needed emotional and moral support in a context where most children had left behind everything familiar. Gradually, the role of 'mother' was taken over by specially trained local teachers and professional care givers.⁶¹

An activity initiated without much success in 1948 in Caraiman (but also in Sinaia), but which became more and more a reality, was building a very structured way of life for children. They got up early in the morning, exercised, washed and then had breakfast. In the morning they went to school and in the afternoon, after lunch, they did their homework and various leisure activities (in nature when the weather allowed). They could only leave the colony accompanied; contact with local residents and even with the children of the employees was limited. Strict discipline was enforced. Clothing was uniform, sent from the centre or made in the colony's workshop.⁶² Food was also very strictly controlled, with monthly, weekly and daily rules and rations scientifically decided, approved by the director, according to the rules set by the Ministry of Internal Trade.⁶³ Children were organised in rooms and on floors according to age and gender. In Călimănești, for example, on the first floor were children up to 7 years old, boys on one side and girls on the other. On the second floor were the older girls and on the third floor the older boys.⁶⁴

4.2. Educating the future generation

Education was an essential aspect of these children's lives. Once the children recovered physically from their travels and various illnesses, they started to go to school. Children over 7 went to school and those under 7 to kindergartens and nurseries. Initially classrooms, kindergartens and crèches were improvised into rooms and lounges on each floor.⁶⁵ However, the colonies in Romania, as in other host countries, faced a lack of Greek and Macedonian textbooks and an insufficient number of teachers.⁶⁶ In May 1948, there were only 15 Greek language textbooks in Sinaia and the translator was trying to organise activities with the children in their mother tongue.⁶⁷ In 1949, the Greek Committee "Help the Children" (EVOP) started publishing Greek and Macedonian textbooks. Some were translations of Soviet textbooks, others newly written.⁶⁸ Also in 1949, in April, with the support of the Greek representatives in Romania, the homes and especially the children's education facilities were reorganised. Primary school was now from grade 1 to grade 6. Each class had between 30 and 45 children, with 1 or 2 teachers. In addition to the mother tongue, the children also attended Romanian classes 5 times a week.⁶⁹ Refugee children started learning the language of the host country in 1949-1950 and later. When it became clear that the Greek communists had lost the war, all education was conducted only in the language of the host country,⁷⁰ in this case Romanian. However, as Eleni admits in an interview in 2013/2014, the process of learning Romanian was difficult and not exactly welcomed by the children, many of whom believed that they would soon return to Greece and would not need Romanian.⁷¹ Language teaching was done through playful, specialized, sport or artistic activities. When the children had learnt Romanian well enough to be able to study for 3-4 hours a day, classes of pupils were formed and the Romanian curriculum was taught. Eventually, this would lead to an easier integration of children into the public education system as well as into the labour market.⁷²

With the help of a teacher from Bucharest, the improvised kindergartens were better organized, all classes were on the first floor, with 2 teachers each. The main problem that now needed to be addressed was the lack of training of most of the teachers. This led to difficulties in managing the children and keeping to the set timetable.⁷³ This situation was also found in other childcare institutions and was the result of decisions taken by the Romanian government: in 1948 the Concordat with the Vatican

was cancelled, and the educational institutions of all churches were nationalised (law 175 on religious cults). In 1949, all teaching, health care and other charitable activities carried out by churches were banned. Qualified nurses could continue to work only if they renounced their religious dress.⁷⁴ To make up for this lack, colonies were also used to train new specialists in the field. In Tulgheș there was a school for educators and in Sinaia 3 experienced educators (one with more than 20 years of experience) allowed the others to acquire knowledge through practice and daily classes.⁷⁵ This transmission of knowledge acquired before the Second World War demonstrates the existence, to a certain extent, of a continuity of practices and notions of pedagogy from the interwar period to the communist period, also found in the child protection system in Hungary.⁷⁶ For example, in Călimănești, children under 7 years of age attended Froebelian classes, the principles of which were developed in the 19th century, which sought to develop their skills by all possible means (games, songs, manual work, etc.).⁷⁷

Life in the colonies was also highly politicised. Discipline, uniform dress and numerous organised activities played an important role in instilling Communist Party ideology in children and turning them into model workers.⁷⁸ After improving the children's health, the aim was to raise their cultural and civil level. From the very beginning, regular meetings were held to explain to the children why they had been displaced from their homeland, leaving behind everything they knew. They listened to radio broadcasts and the Free Greece Radio Journal, read newspapers they had received in the colony, and created wall newspapers with cuttings from the newspapers they had received, as well as articles written by the children. These were changed about every 15 days.⁷⁹ The children were encouraged to join the existing communist youth organisation or create new ones. In Sinaia, the children's organisations were Epon and the Pioneers, which held meetings every 2 days.⁸⁰ The need for good training was also stressed: children had to learn well in order to return home as teachers, engineers and skilled workers to help build a new, democratic and socialist Greece.⁸¹

4.3. Labour was essential

The integration of children and accompanying adults into the labour market was also a very important issue. Adults, especially 'mothers' and employees, were responsible for establishing control over children's lives,

but they too had to be controlled. While the care staff could be employed locally, all other positions were decided centrally. For example, in 1948, the Sinaia colony required staff who spoke the children's language to be able to do Greek and Macedonian language courses.⁸² The roles and duties of each were very well defined and evaluated on a monthly basis and were an important part of the monthly reports sent to the Red Cross in Bucharest. The Sinaia colony has a special situation: the children are accompanied by a large number of adults who could be integrated into the labour market. This is exactly what the colony's management tried to do. The "Greek women", as they are called by the colony's administration, took part in most of the tasks alongside state employees. When the colony was opened, various groups were formed to carry out certain tasks and the newly arrived women were integrated according to their knowledge and needs. After an initially difficult period, by March 1949, about 70% of the "Greek women" had been employed, which allowed the colony and the state to save significant sums of money: they saved the work of about 30 employees who were assigned elsewhere. For example, on the floors, cleaning was done by "Greek women", who also worked in the kitchen, were responsible for rooms or floors, supervised the children and worked in the tailor shop.⁸³ School-age children, especially girls, also took part, cleaning the rooms and the dining room, helping to serve meals, etc. In Călimănești, tailoring, knitting (for girls) or shoemaking (for boys) workshops were organised to keep the children busy,⁸⁴ but also to instil the idea that everyone should participate in (re)building the country.

Caring for large numbers of refugees, some of them unfit for work, was a major financial burden for Romania, as it was for other host countries. The situation was complicated by the destruction and hardship of the post-war period and the loss of a large part of the workforce due to the expulsion of members of ethnic minority groups. In this context, able-bodied Greek and Macedonian refugees were integrated into the workforce to contribute to the "socialist reconstruction" effort.⁸⁵ The productivity of all, whether employed or in the care of the state, as well as the ability to save money, especially through voluntary work, is highly valued and encouraged. Competitions are one of the methods used. If in August 1948 the "hard-working" workers were congratulated,⁸⁶ in June 1949, competitions became essential to the work in the colony: "the work [of the colony] has been conducted largely on the basis of individual socialist competitions in all sectors of labour". Checked by a control committee, the results of the competitions were publicly displayed at the end of each

week.⁸⁷ Following the model of the Soviet Union, the so-called heroes of labour, the stakhanovist or hard-working workers, were emphasised and encouraged.⁸⁸

The situation became more complicated when some refused to play the game. For example, the activity report of February 1949 stated that “some of the Greek comrades are of real help to us in several sectors of work, and with some, we have not been able to train them”⁸⁹ and in April “we cannot get along with the Greek comrades to get them into work”.⁹⁰ Even though the refugee women and the Romanian staff collaborated in the preparation of the menus, and the “Greek women” helped with the food processing work, they did not “participate in the preparation of the food, although the Romanian staff has repeatedly requested this”.⁹¹ However, the above quotes refer to the most constant difficulty encountered by the colony’s administration: the women in the Caraiman hostel, where the youngest children are assigned, “do nothing but sit with their children in their arms all day long and when you ask them why they don’t do something, they reply that they have to sit with their children in their arms because that’s all they have left, because they have lost their husbands and children and they don’t want to lose the one they are holding”. Many of the women refused to let their infant children go to the nursery organised in the colony, which would free up their day and allow them to integrate into the labour market.⁹² At a time when the country needed industrial labour, women were entering the workforce. As in Hungary, refusal to participate in productive work by those fit for work was considered an immoral act to be rectified at any cost. The situation was even worse where mothers were concerned, as their refusal was considered a moral danger to their children who thus risked not becoming useful members of society, and even turning into criminals.⁹³ In Sinaia, a number of 6 women were held responsible for all the hardships, dragging the other women along, and the administration demanded their “removal”.⁹⁴

5. Conclusions

The evacuation of children during the Greek civil war is one of the most tragic and contested episodes in modern Greek history. While historiography has so far focused mainly on conflicting interpretations of the civil war, political emigration and the controversial displacement of children, the issue of humanitarian aid to refugees from Eastern Bloc

countries remains less researched. This chapter contributes to a rapidly developing literature that examines Eastern Europe not only as an area in need of and receiving humanitarian aid, but as an important actor in the history of humanitarianism. Here we have seen Romania as a provider of humanitarian care and aid. Despite the many difficulties Romania was going through in the post-war and nation-building (re)construction period, the archives show real attempts to provide aid and support to Greek and Macedonian refugees over a long period of time. In order to support this displaced population, significant funds were allocated, new infrastructure was provided and built, and a regime of (child) protection and control accompanied them throughout their lives.

This chapter also contributes to a better understanding of the early stages of the new child protection system developed in the RPR. It combines, as expected, new ideas about child labour and education and a tendency towards structuring and medicalisation, with elements of a continuation of the interwar period. The end of the Second World War thus marked not an absolute break with the previous period, but a period of transition. Initially, the refugee status of Greek and Macedonian children was considered temporary. Therefore, their education was aimed at their planned involvement in the socialist transformation of Greece. With the extension of their stay, refugee children became an integral part of society. They gradually integrated through education and professional expertise, entering the workplace or belonging to mass organisations and party structures. Even if their trajectories were different, one constant was the presence of state representatives in the lives of these children and young people, a state that combined humanitarian aid with state planning and a socialist agenda. Lessons learned during the arrival and first years of care of the Greek and Macedonian children were also put to use later on, when the North Korean children found refuge in Romania. A similar process was followed, but each step was a lot better organised, avoiding the repetition of some of the difficulties encountered at the end of the 1940s.

NOTES

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- 57 Idem, file number10/1949, f. 11, 34, 54, 56, 89, 134, 142, 173.
- 58 Ibidem, f. 7.
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ANTIQUITY IN USE IN URBAN CONTEXTS

predictive analysis for urban archaeology*

Alexandra Teodor

“The (...) landscape itself, to those who know how to read it aright, is the richest historical record we possess.”¹

Abstract

What do modern cities developed upon ancient urban structures owe to the latter in terms of physical configuration? – This is the question my study begins with. It surely does not end with a straight answer, but it provides a preliminary methodology useful for deepening the study. In order to pave the way for the proper investigation of this vast subject, my project sets out to provide a preliminary classification and selection of case studies, creating the framework for a monograph on the integration and use of antique structures in modern urban settings. This type of synthesis is lacking yet. A secondary objective is to offer the methodological instruments to discover (and document) ancient structures hidden within modern cities – *i.e.*, where indeed they are most likely to be found.

Keywords: urban morphology, antique urban structures, adaptive reuse, predictive archaeology, heritage conservation

1. Introduction

This is an exploratory study set between urban archaeology and historical urbanism, broadly in the area of urban morphology.² The purpose is to collect data, experience and understanding from better documented contexts, and to transfer this cumulated knowledge to contexts that have received less attention. It developed as an alternative approach of

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investigation for a case where the two domains seem to fail each other, instead of collaborating (see section 2, *Constanța*).

Although any historical city in Europe is the object of countless archaeological reports and publications, and historical urbanism started its career with the ancient cities,³ and while the object of study is apparently the same for both disciplines – the city –, in reality (or in the actual practice) there are considerable gaps between the two domains and common flaws, as follows.

(1) It was considered for a long time that the archaeological layers of an ancient city occupied by modern settlements are seriously, or definitively compromised. This preconceived idea still seems to be vigorous in some places,⁴ and the same is implied indirectly when considering by default structurally distinct phases for any historical city (see section 3, *approach*).

(2) While various archaeological discoveries were recorded in cities whenever they were recognized as such, in various forms (more or less professional), **urban archaeology** developed as a field of study only since the 1980s, for the purpose of documenting and, where applicable, preserving the valuable structures of the past, in the context of urban investments and development.⁵ The dedicated European charters actually stress the paramount importance of integrating cultural heritage with the spatial planning process.⁶ **Historical urbanism** (seen as a branch of urban history, and of urban planning as well)⁷ covers a wide palette, developing knowledge on the span between the prehistoric and contemporary periods; it is also the instrumental discipline grounding the regulations for future urban development, which are specifically related to heritage.

Most commonly, urban archaeology is merely a puzzle of random discoveries; thus, rarely a city has benefitted from a systematic approach in its archaeological documentation.⁸ In this case, even a city plan documenting all excavations up to a recent date in a detailed representation is frequently too much to ask – it simply doesn't exist, nor does the man for the job, or the job itself. The documentation specific to urban planning, on the other hand, integrates all types of sources for the history of the city, including the archaeological evidence, but mainly on a general level of detail (e.g., sites mapped by chronology and/or archaeological cultures, areas which need to be protected, investigated etc.). Thus, there are at least two levels where these disciplines barely meet or are even in an apparent conflict: the scale of the approach, as previously mentioned, but also the main purpose – since the first is to enrich our knowledge of the cultural

past by highlighting previous structures of the city, while the second is to allow the city to grow over its existing structures.⁹

(3) Theoretically, any intervention in a determined historical urban area is likely to reveal archaeological evidence, including built structures which may require conservation and protection. But the city is not made only of bits of land, be they streets or unbuilt areas (parks, gardens, or simply empty parcels); a good part of the urban fabric consists of buildings.¹⁰ These are protected due to a set of values based on various criteria, the age of the built structures playing usually a prominent role besides architectural qualities and style, but they don't include by default the archaeological ones. In urban history, the age assigned to buildings is normally determined on the basis of cartographic evidence and stylistic elements, sometimes on archival data, but rarely on detailed on-site investigation, historical research and archaeological excavations.¹¹ And this is where another gap can appear, because the actual age of the buildings is not necessarily a uniform, or a simple parameter; in fact, the older the building is, the more complicated it gets to correlate dates with its multiple parts.

(4) While the specific data management tends as a rule to be overwhelming, as it is in the case of large historical cities, focusing exclusively on what is already known implies ignoring what is yet unknown – and this carries the potential of involuntarily destroying valuable remains.

Hence, the strategy for protecting what the urban fabric *may* contain (the yet uncovered archaeological/architectural remains of the past) must have another starting point: **predictive urban archaeology**, preceding the preventive one¹². And it should be applied to the entire urban fabric, both to the unbuilt, and especially to the built one.

*Predictive urban archaeology*¹³ is obviously nothing but the consecrated *predictive archaeology*¹⁴ (much more often dedicated to non-urban sites, for which it was developed in fact), only applied to urban environments, moreover integrated with urban morphology.¹⁵ I do not intend to theorize it more than I already did, of necessity, but rather to contribute towards developing this interdisciplinary field, by starting from a very specific (though wide) topic: the modern cities developed upon ancient cities, or the other way around, ancient cities contained within modern cities; simply put, *living ancient cities* (see section 2).

At the end of the introduction, I need to add my concern whether this topic has ever been tackled before in a dedicated form. Although finding similar or convergent approaches would surely have been useful to start

with, it was not the case until delivery of this manuscript. Regardless of the already existing contributions I may have not been aware of, the method proposed here can only be to the benefit of this fascinating field of study.

2. The questions and the premises

The main question which initially fueled this investigation, and then spread into multiple and entangled threads, was the following: Is it worth studying, in search for corresponding ancient structures, the present-day urban fabric of cities like Constanța?¹⁶ Urban continuity since Antiquity has been questioned there, and the city is generally considered having been built anew – on top of the ancient one. Presuming it is worth identifying and exploring common elements between the ancient and the present urban structures, what can we expect to find, or what should we be looking for, and where? Obviously, the direct answers to these questions won't be found by looking at other cities, but each experience can only improve our understanding of the larger phenomena, at least regarding the “what” and “where” (see sections 5-6). This, in fact, is not only about Constanța, but about any historical city. After framing the background case-study, the main concepts upon which the investigation method was built will be presented (section 3).

Constanța

The area known as “The Peninsula” preserves the oldest ancient city overlayed by a modern city on the territory of Romania – *Tomis*, today Constanța.¹⁷ Some archaeologists and historians claim there was no urban continuity in Constanța from Antiquity to the Modern Period; in fact, there is no clear-cut evidence, but only an absence of one.¹⁸ Nevertheless, as recently as ten years ago (in the early 2010s), bulldozers excavated Piața Ovidiu (the modern square presumed to have been the *agora* and later the *forum*, in Antiquity) and some major streets in this historical area, tearing through archaeological deposits of Greek, Roman, and Ottoman eras, *without any* previous and proper archaeological investigations; thick layers of reinforced concrete were eventually poured on top. This could have been a unique opportunity to collect essential data regarding the evolution of the city on a wider scale than the usual ongoing preventive

archaeology or the very limited systematic excavations could offer; it did not have to entail a ban on the development of the Peninsula, but simply a different planning of the modernization project. For this to occur, the decision-makers would have had to acknowledge the city's potential for buried evidence of the past – and they did not. Unfortunately, for most of the population, including the administration, the ancient city under their feet is not worth much except when some colorful mosaic or sophisticated marble capital accidentally resurfaces, but never as a whole. In their perspective, the modern city is a completely different city than the ancient city, with an entirely different name and life;¹⁹ most of the visible landscape in the Peninsula consists of nothing but modern architecture, not older than a mere century – so why bother thinking about, let alone spending resources on preservation? This glib approach to the urban heritage, both archaeological and architectural, is, I argue, fully unwarranted.

physical continuity

One of the main premises of this study is that, theoretically, **the physical continuity of urban structures** is possible despite the probable, or evident urban discontinuity. This does not imply that the structures were continuously used,²⁰ but only that they were, at some point, reused *in situ*.²¹ Anyone could come across some examples of coherent and functional structures (urban or rural) built in different sequences of time – a simple house, a palace, or a fortress; similarly, it does not necessarily imply that they were always/permanently occupied, it only means that they were reusable for as long as they preserved some structural qualities. It is precisely how fragments of some initial structures survive, over long timespans, integrated in subsequent structures, and therefore in use – even if there were any intermediary phases of abandonment. When this phenomenon occurs in urban environments, and continues to our days, they can be seen as historical “living cities”.²² From the perspective of this investigation, a **living ancient city** implies that the ancient urban fabric is in direct structural connection (thus, in physical continuity) with the present urban fabric: streets having largely the same imprint, even if the ground level is considerably higher, and buildings integrating structures from the ancient to the contemporary phases.²³ Conversely, when the archaeological remains of a historical city are discontinued (or separated) from the contemporary structures, regardless of the cause (natural, or artificial),²⁴ the corresponding areas are no longer parts of the “historical

living city,” but rather of the “contemporary living city” overlapping the extinct area of the historical city. It is perhaps necessary to point out that the “historical living cities” are rarely, within the course of history, the result of deliberate planning, but rather of vernacular, or organic evolution, influenced by multiple factors.

(urban) adaptive reuse

I initially used in the subtitle of my project the concept of “**adaptive reuse**”, quite fashionable today for replacing consecrated terms like “conversion”, and being for this reason rejected by some.²⁵ I intuitively stuck to it because it bonds these two essential (though partially overlapping) terms for *in situ* preservation: “reuse” and “adaptive”.²⁶ The consecrated expression (see below) uses “adaptive” for the functional aspect of the physical reuse, but obviously any reuse implies a certain amount of adaptation (not only functional, but possibly technical, maybe also esthetic, and so on). My interest is on the ***in-situ reuse*** of ancient structures within present-day structures, implicitly with all the intermediary phases. Nevertheless, “**adaptive**” better highlights the phenomena that determine a pragmatic reuse of built structures: it is the nature, or rather the culture, of the people who choose to do so (regardless of the source of their motivation), as will also be pointed out further. Although it is basic and normal at the scale of wider history,²⁷ the adaptive component is precisely what I (or we) see today as fascinating,²⁸ simply because it has been obscured by recent history – sometimes completely.

There is a European declaration from 2018, titled *Adaptive re-use of the built heritage: preserving and enhancing the values of our built heritage for future generations*. It claims **adaptive reuse as a strategy aimed at preserving heritage** buildings that had lost their initial function, but which are seen as having cultural, historical, spatial and economic values, while at the same time adapting the place for new uses.²⁹ This document tells us, basically, to stop demolishing older buildings in order to build new ones – an obvious and chronic disease of the 20th century, running well into the 21st. Perhaps it is not useless to say that our European historical cities preserved most of their urban fabric well into the late 19th century (or in some fortunate cases into the present day), as a result of unplanned, not strategic, adaptive reuse (or however we want to name this process). We are now actually struggling to retrieve a secular way of evolving built landscapes, be they urban or rural.

The concept of adaptive reuse, usually associated with buildings and building ensembles, can also be used for the urban ensemble, *i.e.*: the urban (scale) adaptive reuse.³⁰ Obviously, it is reduced or reducible to multiple architectural instances of adaptive reuse, but not only – there are also streets, squares, property limits etc. In this paper, I will explore how urban structures get to be preserved in time, and how easy it is to erase centuries of urban evolution in just a few years, simply by ignorance. What once used to be practiced naturally, today turns out to be required as a strategy, with serious issues of implementation, let alone success. Hence, this study is also a contribution to the **urban strategy of adaptive reuse**; and it perfectly fits urban archaeology – like two neighboring pieces of puzzle.

patterns of reuse

The pattern of reuse refers to the most common way(s) by which a type of structure is normally being reused from different criteria, such as functional, structural, or esthetical – in various combinations. Although patterns of reuse were initially the main focus of this project, they gradually became secondary – as explained in section 3, approach. Nevertheless, the relevance of this topic is crucial for both the scientific purpose (understanding the transformation of the urban fabric), and the predictive direction towards cultural management. Therefore, without aiming at a systematic approach, some observations could be made that I believe to be useful for further analyses and classifications of reuse patterns (see section 6). References to various types of reuse have been present in the scientific literature for long, but merely as collateral observations; dedicated studies are rare. Furthermore, most authors usually approach the reuse in terms of function (this is frequently the most accessible information),³¹ rather than look for the physical transformation of the built structures in time – which is not always immediately perceptible, except for the evident narrowing and partitioning in some cases. I am less interested in the functional aspect, instead my focus is on how a building structure (or street, square etc.) was physically occupied at different times, reduced, expanded, modelled, integrated, etc. – thus unintentionally preserved to our days. Moreover, the project is set to establish to what extent the ancient structures determined the subsequent configurations, for any situation between the architectural and the urban scale.³²

3. The method

delimitation

There is an immense literature on the cities in Europe that developed from ancient urban settlements; it mainly consists of historical and archaeological sources, but also of architectural and urbanistic ones, documenting or simply mentioning numerous instances of (adaptive) reuse of ancient built structures during history.³³ There are also numerous studies which hint, by resorting to intuition rather than mentioning archaeological data, to a multitude of former Roman living cities, especially in Italy.³⁴ However, these impressive conservation case studies are not sufficient for my purpose to highlight the potential of those cities that have a less clear evolution. There is no Atlas,³⁵ nor is there a database³⁶ collecting relevant information for generating various hierarchies of the cities, depending on numerous criteria: size in area or population, economy, amenities and so on, all correlated to a historical timeline, or even more, relevant data for urban morphology³⁷. In fact, such a project would be huge and probably very difficult to handle; it might be seen as utopian.³⁸ But then it's true that for documenting and/or analyzing anything at all about cities in history we can only fish in a very wide and turbid sea. Therefore, my approach is rather exploratory and deliberately random: whatever I would start with would be good, as long as it's a modern city with ancient roots.

The only limitation I began with was defined by two conditions: one is cultural, as I am mainly interested in former Roman urban centers,³⁹ and the other is geographical (or maybe also cultural), as I chose to focus on **European cities**. The latter is not because I ignore the importance of the North African or the oriental parts of the former Roman empire, but mainly because of my personal language limitations (Europe is already too much, and impossible to cover in this short space and time). I also let myself be guided by the intuition that the more varied the examples are, the better – regardless of their number. Hence, I will analyze cities regardless of their apparent historical continuity or discontinuity, sheer prominence, aspect, monumentality, recent interventions and their political backgrounds etc.

instrument(s)

Intuitively, the most relevant instruments for this subject are **city plans**, or more precisely the spatial data. Regardless of how rich a source can be in information about a city, in the absence of spatial representation

and correlation of the given information, it remains quasi-irrelevant for our purpose. Therefore, the existence of general archaeological city plans (representing all the known ancient remains) became the main criterion for selecting potential case studies. Archaeological plans for the different investigated areas in the city obviously exist (or they should) everywhere urban archaeology is practiced, but their accessibility is a different aspect. Hence, in order not to transform the project into one of collecting and assembling plans, I simply used whatever useful plans I encountered in some important synthesis works (see section 5). Note that these plans are not always (or rarely) updated with the most recent archaeological discoveries⁴⁰ – nor did it become my purpose to update them.

The minimum data for the proposed analysis is, thus, the plans of the archaeological structures known/discovered in the city, and the present-day configuration. While for the first category the data is, simply put, extremely heterogeneous, for the second category there is a perfect source to ensure not only a uniform scale of representation (a bigger problem than it would seem at first glance),⁴¹ but also a fairly updated situation of any city: the Google Maps imagery.⁴² These two main data sets are combined in a CAD or GIS environment,⁴³ useful for the most basic evaluation: the overlapping representations of the ancient and the modern structures – as precise as possible in terms of measurements, depending on the accuracy of the archaeological plans.

approach: process, or strategy?

As already mentioned, this project was initially all about the transformation of the urban fabric (even if, admittedly, heritage preservation has been one of my active concerns for many years now). Hence, I have drafted – among various lists and possible classifications – a short template for the case study analysis, as well as a correlated table for a centralized evaluation of the case study corpus. Based on the published material, and using the instruments mentioned above, the plan was to collect relevant data, with the purpose of identifying the transformations of the urban fabric, and if possible, their large-scale patterns – hence, **the process**. There are at least three major drawbacks in this approach – only partially foreseen at the beginning. One, the difficulty in finding comprehensive archaeological plans for the cities. Second, and most important, it largely relies on what is known *via* archaeological excavations – many times not much, or apparently so where the excavation plans are not updated. There are cities

where based on their documented history, the ancient urban fabric must have been continuously reused and transformed, but the archaeological evidence, at least at a first glance, seems very scarce (e.g., Palermo⁴⁴). The third aspect is that this method works fine for smaller areas of the ancient cities (e.g., Sofia and Barcelona), but not so for the larger ones (e.g., Thessaloniki and Rome).

I applied this method only for two cities (see section 4): for Sofia it revealed random, maybe curious, but limited correspondences, rather difficult to explain initially (before learning about the urban transformations from the 20th c.); instead, Barcelona displayed a beautiful preservation story, at least at first sight (without documenting details about the interventions of modernization in the pre-modern and modern periods). – Two contrasting evolutions, difficult to articulate one to another in a comparative approach, strictly on the ancient-present correspondences. – Then the path changed direction quite rapidly, with the case study of Thessaloniki. There was a great discrepancy between the apparent potential the city had to preserve ancient structures, based on its acknowledged continuity and the general aspect of the street network, and what I was learning about its modernization. Until proven wrong, I was quite certain that the modern transformations were localized rather than general, and that by no means would all be lost regarding ancient built structures discretely preserved in the historical urban fabric; unfortunately, for what I've called "the living city" (see section 2, *physical continuity*), it is lost almost entirely. The disappointment in realizing this (packed with the acknowledgement of how destructive a couple of decades can be, compared to fifteen centuries) was balanced with an important discovery.

Briefly put here, but broadly explained in the dedicated study on Thessaloniki,⁴⁵ the discovery was on the extraordinary spatial relation between the **traditional urban fabric**⁴⁶ and the ancient structures it contains, revealed by the analysis made on the area of the Palace of Galerius. Notably, this revelatory image, similar to a radiography, was obtained in the case of an urban fabric that was intensively modernized (meaning almost completely replaced); perhaps a good parallel is the ruined building which thus reveals its ingenious constructive system, otherwise hidden. The simple overlapping of an historical cadastral plan (made before the urban intervention) and an archaeological plan (resulted due and during the urban intervention) revealed how the so-called "medieval", or "oriental" urban structures encapsulated (quite properly) the ancient ones. Not everywhere, not entirely, but in a significant

proportion. This is not a complete breakthrough, but it is probably the first demonstration of this intuition on a larger scale of urban fabric, based on archaeological data (except for Rome, which is a particular case – see section 5). It is true, though, that in the absence of such a brutal dissection in the traditional urban fabric – as it was in the case of Thessaloniki – this clear understanding would have probably long remained obscured.

Returning from Thessaloniki to the main project, I then realized that I had found a very relevant criterion to differentiate within the present urban fabric of all those countless cities. While the project remained largely the same, it gained a different emphasis (since the initial purpose was, basically and symbolically, already answered to: Yes, it makes perfect sense to search for ancient structures in the traditional urban fabric of a living ancient city.) In this new approach, the ancient area of the city was visually inspected for its potential to preserve ancient structures, with the new key of the “traditional” aspect as a reference (see section 5). According to some definitions, this is named predictive analysis. The consequence that this could also contribute to cultural heritage management, and implicitly to the more effective and wider **strategy** of urban adaptive reuse was also a strong motivation to change the direction of the project.⁴⁷

This would by no means imply that the two methods exclude one another, or that the initial one had no potential. In fact, they are complementary, and probably there is more to be added to each of them, or besides them. The following would be a preliminary approach that includes both:

1. Identifying the areas with a *potential to preserve ancient structures (the strategy)* (see section 5);
2. Overlaying the available archaeological plans and identifying the correspondences between the present and the ancient structures (enabling the understanding of **the process**);
3. Where they have good correspondence, the architectural level of detail may be approached (deepening the understanding of **the process**);
4. Where there are no correspondences, further investigation towards a possible interpretation would be necessary (damage produced by recent interventions, “natural causes” – such as, perhaps, longer intervals of abandonment, see again section 5) (also deepening the understanding of **the process**).

In this paper I could only cover a demonstrative application of the first two points, for a limited number of cities. The material collected and processed is however wider than what could be presented in this limited space, not to mention the great potential of the subject to expand anytime in the future, even with very limited resources – published literature, Google Satellite, and some adequate software; the outcome could be priceless. I am also aware that any advance in research will change, refine, and amplify this preliminary approach, depending on the author(s) and the cities investigated; certainly, I would do so, as the actual route of this project already indicates.

4. *The Good, the Bad and the Worse*:⁴⁸ some answers from Barcelona, Thessaloniki, and Sofia

This section is meant to briefly present the case studies for which more attention was paid along this project. The limited space does not allow a full presentation of the results, but only some highlights. Other cities, mentioned in section 6, were also briefly evaluated based on the identified archaeological plans and their present configuration.

Barcelona

A huge city today, Barcelona⁴⁹ (ancient *Barcino*) excellently preserved its historical center – the area of the former Roman fortification (ca. 11 ha), and apparently the medieval area as well.⁵⁰ The brief presentation below is based on the case study analysis made on the plan published by Francesca Pallarés in the 1970s (Fig. 1, right), for it already contained enough elements for the approach on the ancient-present day correspondences.

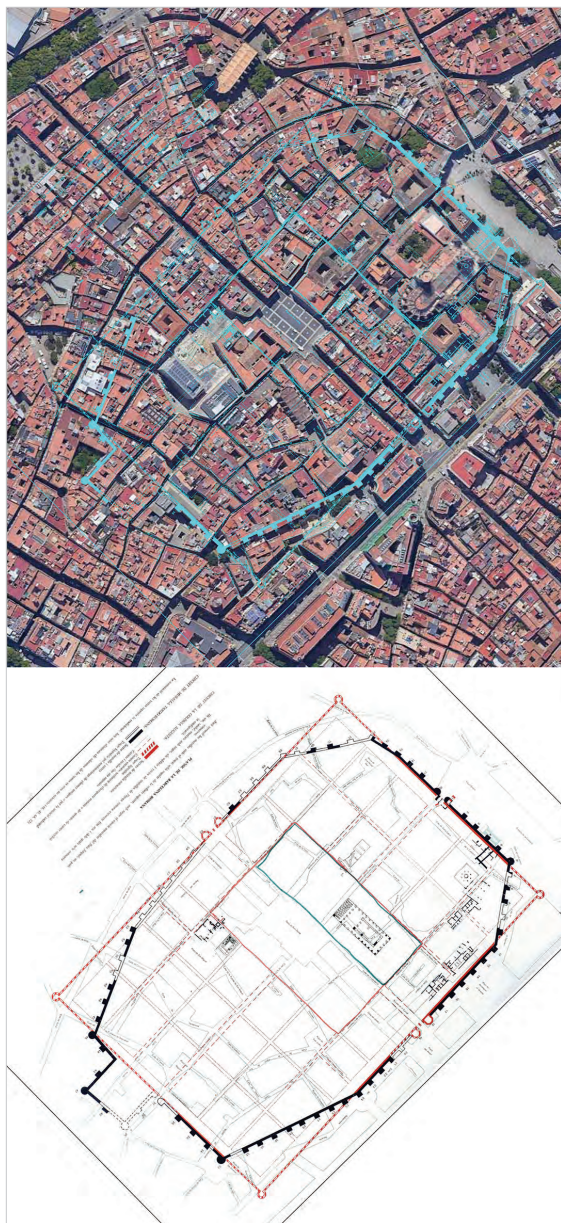


Fig. 1

The ancient perimeter is very well camouflaged into the medieval one; it's not easy to spot its position while looking at the historical area of the city from above (Fig. 1, left). It would also be difficult to say it is more regular than the medieval extension because it simply isn't. Perhaps the same trouble to distinguish them would be by walking on the streets.

The archaeological plan (Fig. 1, right; Fig. 2) reveals the slightly irregular plan of the Late Roman fortification – a rectangle (as it appears to have been initially) with the corners cut – as well as the street network restitution for the Early Roman phase of the city, and the main areas where built ancient structures were excavated by that time. Notably, the ancient fortification walls are coincidental or parallel to the actual outer streets, on almost the entire length; that means either a direct determination of the actual configuration (if the streets are ancient), or indirect determination (if the streets were cut later, but obviously constrained by the fortification). It is as if the Late Roman fortification was doubled outside by an offset of streets, thus creating an outer ring. This offset was only respected in a limited way inside the fortification – perhaps contributing to the difficulty to identify it at a rapid glance on the aerial view.

Besides the general observation that most of the ancient buildings have the same orientation with the ones subsequently built over them, the main outcome of this case study is on the reading of the street network. While analyzing the relation between the street network proposed by Pallarés (Fig. 2, the red axes) and the actual streets (having very good correspondence, *i.e.*, the same pathways), I noticed that they would not correspond along their entire length – obviously, since parts of them silted in time. Then I also noticed that other short street segments (including ones which were not included in that red grid) corresponded to some axes (thus, their extensions coincide) also parallel to the previously proposed grid. Since I stopped believing long ago in the perfectly equal interaxes, or other various “golden rules” of Roman urbanism (without attempting to prove them wrong),⁵¹ I systematically checked all the other possible correspondences – see the blue axes in Fig. 2. The most convincing of them, based on the archaeological evidence presented by this plan, is the

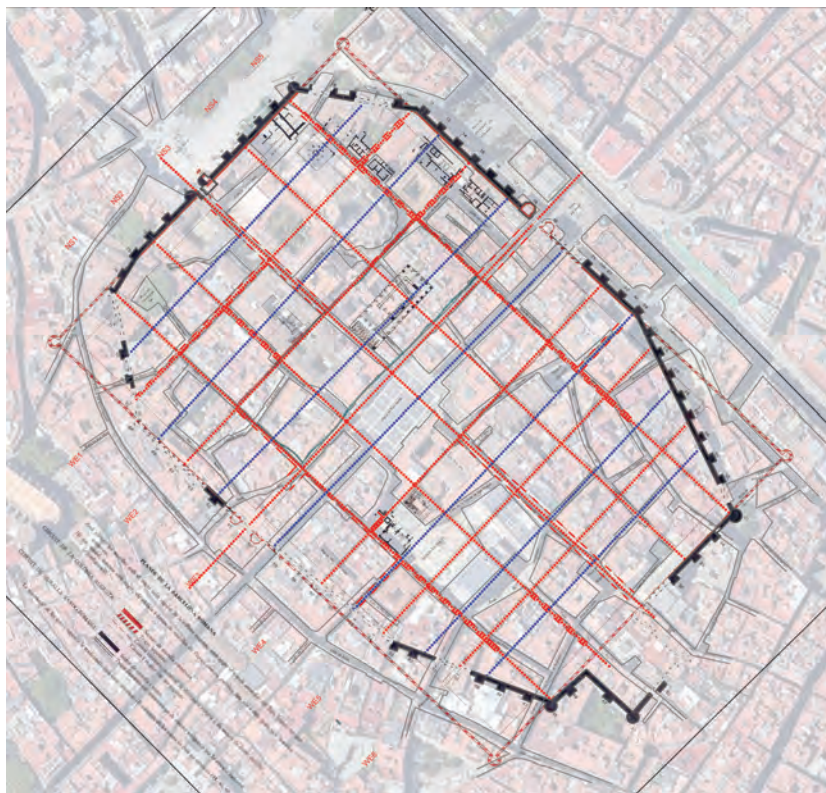


Fig. 2

one located between WE4 and WE5 – it shows at both ends evidence of coinciding ancient streets. Therefore, if this backward (or reverse) rationale could be accepted, it means that **the traditional urban fabric, and especially the street network can be considered as a hint for filling in the blanks of the archaeological plans.**

Thessaloniki

The study on Thessaloniki⁵² was the most time-consuming of all, partially because it was assembled for a dedicated publication,⁵³ but mainly because it was a complicated case to understand – therefore the title and content of the prepared article had to be changed a few times. I chose it from the various possible case studies for multiple reasons, both subjective and objective: I had previously visited it, read about it while preparing my PhD, thus had an idea about its considerable size (only the lower city has almost 200 ha), the greater regional importance in the Late Antiquity compared to the previous periods, and (partially for that) the very likely continuity into the present days.

When I learned about the Great Fire in 1917, very well documented with photographs, descriptions, and urban surveys, I became very enthusiastic about the opportunity to analyze how ruins get to be reintegrated after a great disaster, in a vernacular fashion. If so, it would have been a rare case of well documented destruction and repair after an event similar to many others in remote history: old enough to present the same basic conditions (materials and techniques, and type of destruction), but recent enough to be well documented. That I believed/hoped, but I was wrong, because it turned out that most of the ruins were further demolished, in the modern “bulldozer” fashion, and the newly built stock was largely built from scratch. Therefore, this first thread was abandoned.



Fig. 3

Another appealing aspect was that the plan of the city was encouraging at first glance, because it resembled quite well a Roman city. However, at a closer look, resemblance is all there is. The study consisted of comparing a city plan before the Great Fire and the present state for the analysis of the street network (Fig. 3), consulting different sources for the evaluation of the built stock, and finally, only for the area of the Palace of Galerius, comparing the same historical plan with the archaeological plans resulted from the interventions of modernization. The conclusions of the study indicate that the present urban imprint is similar to the traditional (meaning, the transformed ancient) city, but with significant alterations. While the street network still preserves part of the ancient grid, many historical streets were either significantly modified or even replaced. As for the main concern of our project, the buildings, they were almost completely replaced on basically the entire area of interest. Besides

realizing the bitterness of such a great loss (curiously underrated⁵⁴), this case study did pay off a great deal, but from a different direction than I might have expected. The main result of the last comparative analysis – also a very important methodological hint for the approach to the entire project – was presented in the last part of section 3; another illustration of the same result, not included in the dedicated study, is presented in section 6, *hippodromes*.

Sofia

The Capital of modern Bulgaria developed from the Roman *Serdica*, having had a significant regional importance throughout history, not only in Antiquity; notably, for a while it also functioned as headquarters of Constantine Ist.⁵⁵ The known fortified area is small (under 20 ha, see Fig. 4), but presumably the city was much larger in Antiquity; I could not identify such its perimeter, except for a fragment of it.⁵⁶

Sofia was the first case study approached; I chose it for the richness of the archaeological plan⁵⁷ – it seemed a convenient one to start with. However, by following the initial method (comparing various ancient and modern elements), at that moment there was not much I could say about or learn from it. I couldn't explain what I was seeing, only describe it as if I were half-blind (but this is a well-known phase in the research process). It was only later that I realized how unusual it is to have so much coherent (continuous) archaeological data for an urban site,⁵⁸ although nothing could be stated with certainty regarding the actual continuity of most structures. Thus, after analyzing Barcelona and Thessaloniki, a possible answer came forward, before even confirming it by other sources: modernization⁵⁹ (thus, massive programmatic interventions) is what favored such extensive discoveries, probably disconnecting many structures of the previous traditional urban fabric from what was subsequently built.⁶⁰ Except for two items of monumental architecture,⁶¹ what might have escaped under the few older buildings still unreplaced is of small proportion compared to the large areas already excavated on the surface of the (known) Roman fortification.



Fig. 4

5. The *Potential to Preserve Ancient Structures* (PPAS)62

For the topic and the study area delimited in Sections 2 and 3, following the conclusions drawn from case studies in Section 4, it could be said that **modern interventions** are the most relevant **preliminary marker** for the evolution of a city, while still not actually knowing the context. “**Modern**” refers here to the last 150 years, during which the most accelerated changes may have occurred in their configuration; this framing

deliberately ignores the previous programmatic interventions implemented mainly in Western Europe, considering their number and impact to be reduced. For the purpose of investigating patterns and the transformation process, it is less important when were the programmatic interventions made (although it is important that they were programmatic, as distinct from vernacular). Furthermore, when turning to the preservation of urban heritage, it becomes very relevant that significant alterations pertain to the last fifty years or so – not to mention that there are still ongoing processes in some cases.

At this point, a classification of the living ancient cities based on the apparent (directly perceptible) modern interventions has only three categories. The corresponding descriptions are general/relative:

- (A) cities that were merely preserved, with **minimal** modern interventions: limited alignments of traditional streets, a limited number of new streets/boulevards for facilitating circulation, a limited replacement or vertical extension of the built fabric;
- (B) cities with some (more or less) **moderate** modern interventions: quasi-generalized alignments of traditional streets, several new streets/boulevards for enhancing circulation, limited replacement or extension of the built fabric;
- (C) cities that underwent **significant** modern interventions: same as B, including reconfiguration of the street network and extensive replacement of the built fabric.

These categories will certainly not cover all the particularities the cities may present, while the different sizes of the ancient cities can render different problems of proportion relative to proposed parameters (which will be discussed later). Either the exceptions can be explained (like Rome, below), or the classification can be further adapted. Yet, this is a good starting point because modern interventions are quite easy to observe (wide and straight streets, frequently regular islands, large buildings etc.), therefore a first evaluation of our cities could be rapidly obtained.

However, modern interventions are not actually my direct interest, therefore this criterion can be reformulated. Instead, the focus here is on the cities' ancient structures contained within the modern ones, a theoretical situation that was conventionally formulated as the ***Potential to Preserve [in situ Reused] Ancient Structures (PPAS)***.⁶³ Since the two criteria are inversely proportional, the previous classification could be translated into the relevant key-criteria which will be further used, by the following rule:

- (A) cities that were merely preserved in the traditional configuration – **high** PPAS;
- (B) cities with some visible modern interventions – **moderate** PPAS;⁶⁴
- (C) and cities that underwent significant modern interventions – **low** PPAS.

Based on this rough classification, around 90 cities, including the case studies presented in this paper, were thus briefly evaluated. The following statistic is not likely to be relevant because of the non-systematic approach for the *full* list of the eligible cities; in fact, most of the sources I used were focused on Italy (around a third of the total number), which surely explains a lot. However, I will present it as a work-in-progress, with random and not necessarily the best examples:

- (A) **high** PPAS – more than half of the evaluated cities (most of them in Italy, but also predominant in Spain, while also to be found in other modern countries): Rome, Pavia, Verona, Palermo, Metz, Arles, Bordeaux, Barcelona, Merida, Sevilla, but also York, Regensburg, Cluj-Napoca, Kavala, Split etc.
- (B) **moderate** PPAS – about a third of the evaluated cities (both in western and eastern countries): Colchester, Aosta, Milan, Cartagena, Plovdiv, Constanța etc.;
- (C) **low** PPAS – under a quarter of the evaluated cities, distributed in the NW and SE of Europe: London, Amiens, Nijmegen, Köln/Cologne, Athens, Thessaloniki, Sofia, Mangalia etc.⁶⁵

As a preliminary assessment, this is obviously not a precise measurement; the experience of the evaluator with different types of urban fabric is also relevant, as well as one's moment of subjectivity. Therefore, it is not necessary for the initial evaluations to correspond with later ones, especially in the border areas of the three categories (I did change some on the second view). The next step is meant to further reduce the approximation.

Presented above is **the urban PPAS**, thus the urban level evaluation of a city; for any relevant/operational results, further evaluations are required, depending on the necessary level of detail, but also on the data available. Certainly, in the case of larger cities (but not only), once we zoom in, the urban fabric presents distinct configurations which are to be evaluated similarly: by the apparent degree of modernization, hence

the corresponding PPAS for each distinct area in the city presenting a homogenous/resembling configuration. I will name this, preliminarily, the **zonal/area PPAS**, which has a few additional categories (detailed below). None of the previously presented case studies were sufficiently rewarding for this task, instead the following may be the best of all.

guest star: Rome

I will simply dive in, without (un)necessary introductions; Rome is an overwhelming city, no matter how you approach it – on foot or on paper. After hesitating for a long time – not knowing how to use the huge data set the city benefits from, including the very relevant instances of ancient structures still in use – I realized the great methodological potential it has, precisely because of what is already known from multiple sources. In fact, there is one particular reason for introducing it in my study: *Forma Urbis Romae* – the incredible, unique and simply invaluable marble city plan we have from Antiquity.⁶⁶ Hence, not only does Rome preserve so much of its ancient urban and architectural structures, but it has a blueprint from Antiquity, which enables us to know exactly what ancient element corresponds to a certain fragment of the actual urban fabric, and *vice versa*; not quite the entire plan, but a fairly good part of it.⁶⁷ For the purpose of this project, it is an incredible tool in (at least) two directions: to test/verify the *Potential to Preserve Ancient Structures* method developed in the previous section(s), and to grasp threads on the patterns of reuse (see section 6).

Rome is obviously too complex to fit my modest classification. Within its 3rd century fortification covering ca. 1270 ha, it has large areas where the configuration of the historical fabric is still almost intact within the contemporary fabric, while other large areas are practically modern in their configuration, regardless of what there may be underground (see Fig. 5). Hence, the overall modern indicator is *moderate* (because there certainly were modern interventions), but obviously the urban level PPAS could be nothing but *high* – considering both its huge potential for future discoveries, but also the astonishing built fabric preservation already documented (Piazza Navona and Crypta Balbi, for example).

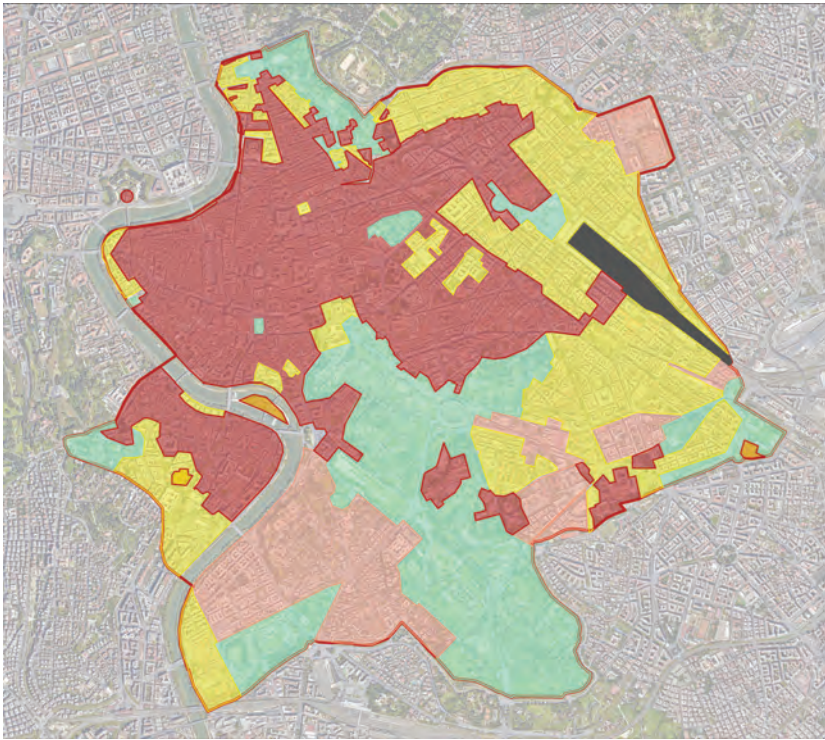


Fig. 5

For the perimeter of the ancient Rome, four categories of urban fabric were identified relative to the **zonal/area level PPAS**, within the fortified area (Fig. 5):

- high PPAS – areas with presumably preserved configuration from Antiquity, for streets, and some of the built structures; estimated to represent 35% (Fig. 6);
- moderate PPAS – areas having similar configuration with the ancient one, but visibly distinct: maybe a new street network having the same orientation; similar orientation of the buildings, but maybe smaller density or large buildings, hence lesser potential for the continuity of the built structures; estimated 15% (Fig. 7);
- low PPAS – areas having an entirely new configuration: different general orientation, including the streets, and obviously modern

buildings (here were also integrated the areas with insufficient data regarding the ancient structures); estimated 25% (Fig. 8);

- zero PPAS – archaeological and unbuilt areas – the ancient structures are preserved (or not), but their continuity with the current city has been obviously halted; and compromised areas – where the important infrastructure interventions definitively altered any archaeological deposit (with possible previous rescue excavations); estimated 25%.

Notably, the presumably discontinued area is considerable, around 50%.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

a comparative view of the PPAS

As an exploratory form of verification for the proposed methodology, similar areas from different cities will be compared for the high and the low PPAS. The moderate span is too wide between the two ends, and yet under-represented in the current analysis to be presented comparatively.



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

The conclusions drawn from the two comparisons of the *high* and *low* ends of the PPAS span (Fig. 9 and Fig. 10) are synthesized in Table 1. Other conclusions relative to moderate and low PPAS will follow.

built fabric elements	PPAS (<i>Potential to Preserve Ancient Structures</i>)	
	HIGH	LOW
streets	main streets: slightly wider and straighter than the rest; secondary streets: not necessarily straight, frequently sinuous course, rather narrow;	wide and straight streets, frequently orthogonal
building islands	mostly irregular, of various sizes, shapes and proportions; sometimes close to rectangles and trapezes, arranged in multiple combinations; can get difficult to distinguish; numerous and irregular inner courts	rather regular aspect, similar sizes and shapes, frequently close to rectangles; unified or similar inner courts
buildings	various sizes and orientations within the island; clustering and high horizontal density;	nothing typical (= great variety), except maybe similar orientations

Table 1 - Comparative features for areas with high and low PPAS.

Things are quite clear for the urban fabric with high PPAS: it must be dense, and rather irregular... that's not an intuitive feature for someone looking for ancient urban configurations,⁶⁸ because it resembles more the definition of a medieval urban fabric. However, the explanation is obvious: the ancient structures had to be used during the long Middle Ages in order to be preserved; maybe not continuously, but surely for significant periods of time. Therefore, the "medieval" aspect of an urban fabric surviving from Antiquity to the present is merely camouflage (see section 6); it had to be "medieval" as well, in order to also become part of the present. The important nuance is that an urban fabric encapsulating structures from Antiquity to the present is neither ancient, nor medieval or modern – it is all its phases integrated⁶⁹, no matter how the buildings may

transform (but not if entirely replaced). Obviously, the proportion of these conventional phases is another matter – perhaps for another occasion.

What value does such an urban fabric have? The cumulative value of their age only to start with; the immaterial value of the continuous (or connecting) adaptive reuse process; the symbolic value of being witness to the entire history of the city; and, I may add, the great luck of not being flattened by bulldozers. The list is open, but when we draw the line, the result will be the same: *the richest historical record we possess*. And if the evaluation is proved to be wrong, it can be reassessed – the “undo” procedure for overrated protection is possible. Conversely, if the evaluation is right, but it gets to be ignored (or is never made), the losses will be unknown and permanent – no “undo” procedure out there.

One may ask what is there to study in such a dense urban fabric? It's true, results can only come gradually and in very limited areas, from a strictly archaeological point of view (as in earth stratigraphy). The real challenge is to enable, besides the classical archaeology, legal and practical procedures for investigations specific for the field of building archaeology into these areas, prior to any other kind of intervention. In Thessaloniki, in the 1960s and 1970s, and in the past decades of present days' Constanța, Cluj-Napoca, Sofia (to mention just a few examples I learned about), the modern houses were (or still are) being demolished within the area of the ancient cities *before* archaeologists enter the site, if they ever do...⁷⁰ This practice simply has to stop; it doesn't mean a modern house could never be demolished (it could, if no cultural values can be attributed), but before that it needs to be studied extensively, in order to make sure whether or not it contains older, valuable structures. In this sense, the Crypta Balbi Museum in Rome is a great example (maybe except for the fact that not every street corner in any city would render structures pertaining to a Roman theater); the great city had its own history of destruction in the 1930s (similar to the ones in Thessaloniki, albeit for different causes), but by the 1980s there was a new law committed to the safeguarding of the ancient remains, in accordance with which the urban actors subsequently played their rightful role.⁷¹

For the moderate and low PPAS, one may set largely different expectations (although not necessarily, because this is not a precise science; continuous, or connected structures could still survive even in such areas, rather by accident). In previously modernized or recently built areas overlapping ancient cities, there will probably be predominantly underground archaeological remains. Their significance for the history

of the city is by no means less valuable, but simply of different types of value than the ones on which I focus here.

The conclusions drawn above are set from a heritage management perspective. From a scientific point of view, their significance doesn't lend itself to comparison because each archaeological situation has something to say – whether by presence, or absence of evidence.⁷² The moderate and low PPAS areas could be extremely relevant for archaeologists interested in urban history, even if the sites give weak responses. The concept *città ad isole* could be considered a key one in the many cases of presumed urban discontinuity.⁷³ These insular cities “comprised disparate, unconnected ('spatial destructuring') communities occupying a common location defined as a place in Antiquity, as opposed to unitary settlements integrated by public works (and infrastructure) managed by a civic authority”.⁷⁴ Simply put, these former ancient cities were, at some point(s) in history, merely settlements where life continued to pulse – may it be in a non-urban manner, depending on one's understanding of the term – ready to receive any impulse (economic, political etc.) from the wider context; this could explain why, some centuries later, they gradually became cities (in the generally accepted conception), and not simply archaeological sites.⁷⁵ Hence, instead of discrediting the entire evolution of the whole surface of a historical city by invoking discontinuity, the absence of data may be regarded through a different approach – but only if the absence of data is recorded through archaeological methods, not when the data is simply canceled by bulldozers. Any historical city deserves a systematic, dedicated investigation – if not always for the sake of the city itself, at least for what we owe to future generations.

6. Preliminaries on the patterns of reuse

Structures like Piazza Navona in Rome or Piazza dell'Anfiteatro in Lucca are spectacular, but they are rather among the exceptions when one looks at how the spaces of former monumental structures tended to be later occupied; the common pattern is different, sometimes almost (apparently) clueless. Two types of built structures will be presented here based on this preliminary survey, yet systematic evaluations will be further required: fortifications and hippodromes. However, any of the major urban built structures can be a generous research topic in itself.

fortifications

Although only a limited series of cities was analyzed, a consistent (in the sense of potentially covering) typology of evolution patterns was identified for fortifications. This is also because the cities themselves don't have a unitary evolution, hence multiple patterns can emerge on the perimeter of a single fortification – in fact, this is probably the most common situation. The types of the evolution for the lines of fortification are as follows:

- **free standing on both sides**, with different heights in terms of preservation: Thessaloniki (some segments), Rome (most of the 3rd c. fortification), only a small segment in Barcelona – presumably a rare type of conservation (Fig. 11, no. 1-4);
- **integrated in the built fabric on one side** (either inner, or outer) – usually delimiting a street/square on the free side: Barcelona, Thessaloniki, Rome, Sofia (?) - possibly a frequent type (Fig. 11, no. 5-7);
- **integrated in the built fabric on both sides**, regardless of the height of the elevation preserved: this could be the most common type of preservation⁷⁶ – also, the most difficult to investigate (Fig. 11, no. 8-9);
- **disconnected from the modern built fabric** – hence, possible to be found anywhere underground, in any relation with what is built (or not) above – see Sofia. Notably, when (some of) their elevations were preserved for a longer time, it is very likely that they determined some of the nearby configurations.⁷⁷

A possible interpretation is that when the fortifications were used for a longer time (towards the Modern Period – see Thessaloniki and Rome), even if only in order to mark the limits of the city, they were predominantly preserved visible. When they were functionally replaced by other fortifications during subsequent phases, also enlarging the urban area, they tended to be integrated into the urban fabric, albeit with considerable variation on its perimeter (see Barcelona). This observation could sometimes be useful in less documented urban evolutions, even for other types of built structures.



Fig. 11

hippodromes

The hippodromes (*stadium*, in Greek, and *circus*, in Latin) may be one of the most interesting structures to be studied for their evolution in urban contexts, because they had a typical easy-to-recognize configuration –

which is also the case of theaters and amphitheaters –, while also being large structures.

Famous precisely for its evolution is the Stadium of Domitian in Rome, better known by its modern name, Piazza Navona. However, it was not properly a hippodrome, but the Greek version of *stadium* for the athletic games – used here for military exercises; although it looks like a hippodrome, there are some differences: it may have been shorter than the typical *stadium* dedicated to chariot race, and it didn't have the *spina*; it also may have functioned together with an *odeon*. Given all these particularities, I have not included it in the analysis.⁷⁸ It was also not possible to consider *Circus Flaminius*, because in the used version of *Forma Urbis* it was misplaced.⁷⁹ The plan of *Circus Maximus* (Fig. 12, bottom) was included in the illustration solely for the comparative aspect of the (typical) building plan in the initial state.

When they were not completely separated from the subsequent urban fabric (like *Circus Maximus*), the typical pattern of *preservation through transformation* of the ancient hippodromes is less obvious than the one in Piazza Navona, but it is much more provocative. They are **discreetly integrated within the urban fabric**, with more or less visible clues, as presented in the case study below, and subsequently confirmed for others.⁸⁰

The illustration for the Hippodrome of Thessaloniki⁸¹ (Fig. 12, top/middle) presents two versions of interpretation regarding the orientation of the hippodrome – the semicircular end is either on the right (N), or left (S); both are possible, since from my point of view none can be fully argued for, while both can be defended in relation to the late medieval/traditional street network.⁸² It is remarkable how all the surrounding and contained streets depend on the configuration of the ancient massive structure:⁸³

- The arched street to the left (S) was probably parallel (whether interior or exterior) to the *carceres* (or *sphendone*) (it is why I suggested a possibly shorter general contour, with blue);
- On the top long side (W) there are three segments with different, but obvious relation: to the left (S), the massive walls and containing structures were included in the subsequent built fabric – note the two short streets halting precisely near the outer wall; the middle segment parallel to the main walls and interior to the bench area; the right segment and the upper (E) half of the *sphendone* (or *carceres*) are outlined by another continuous street; the outer line is “lost” only for the lower (W) half of the *sphendone*;

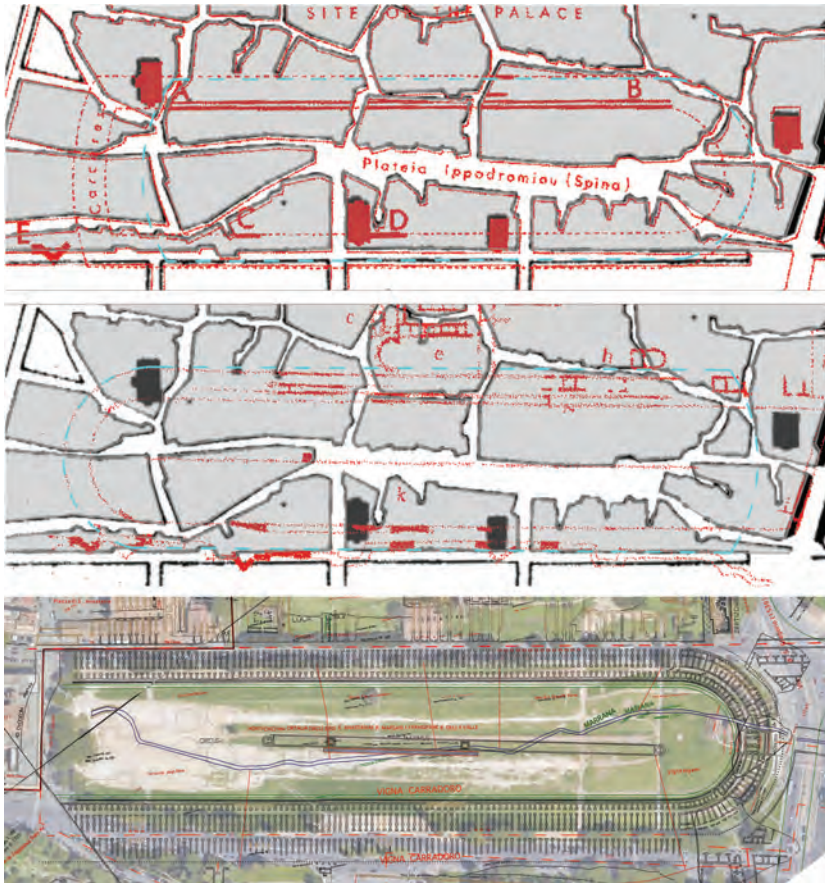


Fig. 12

- The bottom side (E) was delimited by the city's fortification, until this segment was demolished in the late 19th c; it was replaced by a new residential quarter, hence the “very straight” street for that time⁸⁴;
- The longitudinal street, crossing the former hippodrome, was recognized a long time ago to mark the *spina* and the possible processional routes connecting to both ends.⁸⁵ Notably, this street was wider than the rest, resembling a very elongated square, of which the historical toponym is very suggestive

(*Plateia Hippodromiou*, i.e. Hippodrome's Square).⁸⁶ This square was obviously the gathering place for all the surrounding streets, suggesting that the former arena, marked by the *spina*, remained in use since Antiquity, although gradually silting with new buildings.

- Last, but not least, all the radial streets which mark the two rounded ends of the former circus; these streets (or rather this pattern) are of great interest, I believe, because they indicate where and especially how the ancient structure was first breached after it went out of use, i.e., in direct connection to its shape and spatial organization. Their radial configuration points to the fact that the arena was in use (for whatever purpose, but most probably as a public space),⁸⁷ with the *spina* as a space coordinator, and new connections were made in time with the outer urban fabric; all these streets converge to the (now) imaginary (previously very much physical) line of the *spina* (corresponding to the upper limit of the late medieval square, see Fig. 12, middle).

Both fortifications and hippodromes, like any other large and solid structures, reveal similar patterns of transformation: they either delimitate a parallel street, or stop another's course into a *cul-de-sac*⁸⁸ when the building fragments are integrated in an island. Their structures simply couldn't be ignored, except for some passageways people pierced through to accommodate the necessary circulations once the area got to be used differently. Within a longer time span, the slow process of spoliating buildings could also have had neutralizing effects in terms of morphological determination, but I'd guess for such large structures it could have only been local, i.e. isolated when compared to the entire initial structure. Thus, it is relevant to see the spoliation as opposed to reusing the structure *in situ*. While they both could have coexisted as phenomena, at least for a while, the latter was far more pragmatic. My guess is that the abandonment and spoliation are complementary, and reflect a time of lesser urban population, hence reduced density of the residential fabric, while *in situ* reuse of the structures indicates at least a local concentration of population, if not a growing density in the entire city. Indirectly, this brings us back to the previously mentioned matter of *città ad isole*, to see its relevance from a different perspective – this time in using the buildings, not merely the urban area.

7. Conclusions

According to the widespread expression “can’t see the forest for the trees”, precisely because it is too obvious, before this study I couldn’t assess the impact of the recent interventions in living ancient cities, seen on the larger scale of two millennia. One could imagine things being changed anytime between the two periods of reference, thus not necessarily in the past century, for so many disasters and reconstructions are accountable in the histories of these cities; at the same time, intuition whispered that *tabula rasa* could only have occurred occasionally, and presumably not extensively at the urban scale, despite what the sources or their interpretations may suggest, usually in ambiguous terms. Since there was nothing to rely on, the premise was to (at least) pretend not knowing anything between the timeline points A and Z, where preconceived ideas could easily merge in, such as “discontinuity,” or “rebuilding (from foundation)” following “complete destructions” (whatever these expressions may mean, for any of the many authors using it).

This is what the case studies proved, beyond the obvious expectation: for most of the historical interval between Antiquity and the present, where conditions were favorable to some/any sort of continuity, the urban fabric (mainly streets and various built structures) was preserved and gradually transformed in a vernacular, organic manner. Therefore, it now seems safe to presume that one type of significant alterations in the long living urban fabrics are due to the interventions of the Modern Period, or even well into the Late Modern/Contemporary periods (depending on the context or conventions used)⁸⁹. These interventions are obviously associated with a higher degree of urban administrative control, with everything that it entails (politics, ideologies etc.). The other main cause for discontinuities in the historical urban fabric that one could argue for is the long periods of abandonment of certain areas of the living cities (thus not entirely!), as it happened in Rome – the *città ad isole* phenomena. While the latter can be seen as a local “natural death” in the evolution of the city, determined by the humans through their absence, the previous one implies direct human intervention, hence an “artificial death” (some would label it as “murder”, in other contexts). So far, I couldn’t identify a third or other more significant factors for important alterations of the urban configuration, but further studies may do so.

Things became a bit clearer now, at least theoretically: for a start, in a living ancient city, its entire known area is susceptible to contain

ancient structures, either underground or within the buildings; these can be continued by the present structures or discontinued (separated). According to the basic predictive approach proposed in this preliminary study, four large situations can occur: (1) the preserved traditional fabric has a high potential to preserve ancient structures; (2) the modern/contemporary fabric variably replacing the traditional one, upon a partially conserved configuration, has moderate PPAS (largely the same street network, with significant replacements in the built stock); (3) where long term abandonment or the modern interventions determined significant alterations of the ancient configuration, including the street network, there is a low PPAS; (4) the areas with urban fabric recently built on empty ground (the previously unbuilt areas), but also the archaeological areas, have zero PPAS (regardless of their archaeological content). Therefore, concerning the areas where the present urban fabric is not in a certain physical continuity to the ancient one, what can't be related to recent interventions needs to find an explanation in previous periods of evolution. Obviously, each case can provide important information for the evolution of the city if properly documented, and this study provides some starting hints on how, where and what to search for. There are probably a few hundreds of European cities out there for us to explore, and preferably to also preserve.⁹⁰

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ANNEX – Figure Labels

Fig. 1. Barcelona – **Pallarés 1975**, tav. 2 (both; blue on the right), overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery** (left).

Fig. 2. Barcelona – **Pallarés 1975**, tav. 2, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**. Red: the Roman street axes presumed by Pallarés; Blue - the added (or replacing) Roman street axes presumed here, based on the mediaeval streets which could correspond to fragments of the initial ancient streets.

Fig. 3. Thessaloniki – **Vickers 1972a**, fig. 3, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**. In Vickers' interpretation, the highlighted streets pertained to the Hellenistic street network. Note that the plan presents the situation before the Great Fire of 1917, thus prior to most of the interventions which replaced the built fabric on almost the entire historical area (except the upper town - NE to the abovementioned grid).

Fig. 4. Sofia – **Ivanov 2017**, fig. 1, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**. Note that some lines or structures are not necessarily representing ancient elements, such as the ones delimiting modern islands, and the former mosque integrated within the Museum of Archaeology (immediately E outside the fortification).

Fig. 5. Rome – the four types of PPAS areas mapped on the **Google Satellite Imagery**, based on the *FUR* plan of **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008** (not presented here for getting too difficult to read). Red: built areas with high PPAS; Light Red: built areas with moderate PPAS; Yellow: built areas with low PPAS; no PPAS are Green: archaeological areas or very low building density areas; and Gray, areas compromised by significant interventions (railways).

Fig. 6 – example of urban fabric in Rome with high PPAS; in the center, Piazza Navona/The Stadium of Domitian. **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**.

Fig. 7 (left) – example of urban fabric in Rome with moderate PPAS: the former *castrum*, in the eastern part of the city. **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**.

Fig. 8 (below) – example of urban fabric in Rome with low PPAS. **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**, overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**.

Fig. 9 – example of urban fabric in Rome (left) and Barcelona (right) with high PPAS. **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008** (Rome); **Pallarés 1975**, tav. 2 (Barcelona), both overlapped on **Google Satellite Imagery**.

Fig. 10 – example of urban fabric in Rome (left) and Thessaloniki (right) with low PPAS. **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008** (Rome); (both) **Google Satellite Imagery**.

Fig. 11 – Patterns of preservation/transformation of the fortification lines in Barcelona, Thessaloniki, and Rome: preserved, free standing on both sides (1-4); integrated within the built fabric on one side (5-7); integrated within the built fabric on both sides (8-9). There is also the discontinued type, not illustrated. For all: **Google Satellite Imagery**; Rome: **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**; Barcelona: **Pallarés 1975**, tav. 2.

Fig. 12 (top/middle) – The Hippodrome in Thessaloniki (part of/next to the Palace of Galerius), extras from overlapped **Vickers 1972a**, 160, fig. 3 (both; black), and **Vickers 1972b**, 27, fig. 1 (top, red); **Spieser 2015**, 20, fig. 1 (middle, red). Random scales and orientation. For both, the blue dashed line is my complementary interpretation of the building's outline, based on the presumed morphological correspondence with the traditional street network. **Bottom:** *Circus Maximus* in Rome, extras from **Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**, and **Google Satellite Imagery**.

NOTES

- ¹ W.G. Hoskins, quoted by **Aston 2002 (1985)**, 12. The author referred to the generic English landscape, but it can be applied to urban landscape as well (on the meaning of *landscape* see, the **European Landscape Convention 2000**, especially Art. 2).
- ² I perceived these disciplines to be dominant for my research; in fact, many more intersecting disciplines are involved, which will be mentioned where most appropriate – while others will surely be missed.
- ³ **Sitte 1945 (1889)**, 1-7, although focusing on the Middle Ages and Renaissance, uses Antiquity as foundation; **Unwin 1909**, especially chapter II; **Haverfield 1913**; obviously, prehistoric times were also consequently discussed, but the main or starting core was usually Antiquity, see **Lavedan 1926**. See also **Giovannoni 2016 (1931)**, 24 *sqq.* This focus on Antiquity also continued later, see **Ward-Perkins JB 1974**, **Gros & Torelli 2010 (1988)** etc.
- ⁴ It may not frequently occur literally in published materials, but it can be implied indirectly; it is also possible that I might have heard it more often in oral conversations. **Zahariade 2006**, 79, referring to Constanța: “The information on the general urban ordinance in Roman Tomis is today seriously stalled by the overlapping of the modern city over the ancient buildings. That makes the research and an exact evaluation of the urbanism in the city or the topographical disposition of the edifices almost impossible.” Although implied indirectly, see a similar perspective for Palermo in **Maurici 2015**, 13. While they are not entirely wrong in their evaluations, the emphasis is on what can’t be done or known, instead of the opposite perspective; after all, no archaeological site can benefit from an “exact evaluation”.
- ⁵ On the history of the discipline, see **Hodges 2015**, 274 *sqq.*; the basic methodology was elaborated in Italy in the 1980s, while the actual development in other European countries only started in the 2000s; for criticism of the Italian (leading) model, see *ibid.*, 283.
- ⁶ **La Valletta 1992**, see a relevant reference in **van Leusen and Kamermans 2005**, 9. The same is specified by the **European Landscape Convention 2000**, see especially the preamble – also relying on the previous relevant international documents mentioned there.
- ⁷ See a very recent approach here: Historical Urbanism - Shaping Cities Through Historical Research (<https://historicalurbanism.space/project-outline/>, June 30th, 2023). In fact, some scholars claim that “urban planning has declined and *de facto* ended as a unified management system of complex urban processes,” **Bandarin 2014**, 1.
- ⁸ **Bakirtzis 2003**, 40, n. 43 – referring to Thessaloniki, but the situation is similar elsewhere, perhaps with some exceptions.
- ⁹ On the divergence between the focus on the past (specific to archaeology) *versus* future (specific to urban and territorial planning), **Fairclough** argues

- that: "Such an approach [of Landscape Archaeology] can fail to engage with other landscape disciplines which firmly locate their landscape interest in the present or even (such as spatial planning and landscape architecture) the future", **2012**, 474. On the connection to urban morphology, *id.* 475.
- 10 Largely the same idea in **Degraeve 2014**, 3: "we should be aware not to talk solely about subsoil archaeology in cities. All cities have, hidden underneath layers of plaster and wallpaper, treasures of history."
- 11 One discipline connecting the two, albeit indirectly, is *building archaeology* – significantly less widespread: "Building archaeology should be handled in the same way as subsoil archaeological excavations, the distinction being of minimal relevance in an urban context organized around an ancient urban nucleus originating in the Middle Ages or the Roman times and even earlier," **Degraeve 2014**, 3. A comprehensive work on the traditional building archaeology in **Schuller 2002**, with a preface signed by Michael Petzet
- 12 A response to the (more than reasonable) question: "Shouldn't we consider preventive urban archaeology as a scientific strategy in itself?", **Degraeve 2014**, 2. Hence, my answer is "Yes, but even more than that, *preventive* should be preceded by *predictive*." The concept is explained below, in the text.
- 13 A Google search on "predictive urban archaeology" in April 2023 revealed many relevant webpages, most of them scientific articles containing all the terms – or maybe only two –, but none as an expression. Apparently, it is still an emerging (sub)discipline, gathering its strengths.
- 14 "(...) a technique that, at a minimum, tries to predict "the location of archaeological sites or materials in a region, based either on a sample of that region or on fundamental notions concerning human behaviour," **Kohler and Parker 1986**, 400, *apud Verhagen & Whitley 2012*, 52 – see *id.*, 52 *sqq.* for more definitions. For over three decades, it "has been used successfully (...) as a decision-making tool in cultural resources management," *id.*, 49; notably, not so much in archaeology: "This has largely resulted from the desire to use predictive models as tools for minimizing field effort rather than for explaining the differential spatial patterning of archaeological sites" (*id.*, 50).
- 15 A brief orientation in some of the literature on *landscape archaeology* (having yet another huge development, significantly different than the traditional urban archaeology or historical urbanism) – as the wider field of studies to which predictive urban archaeology would be subordinated – revealed limited examples for "living urban morphology" applications, at least in the European area I focused on. Projects on "living urban" are mentioned briefly in **van Leusen et al. 2005**, 41, where most of the examples are on other types of complementary archaeological studies (geological, geomorphological, and marine); the only other reference I found here for urban use is indirect, and inaccessible: "Municipal archaeologists, especially, tend to have a fund

of local knowledge that they use to assess the archaeological potential of land within city limits (Arnhem, Delft)," *id.*, 52, *passim*. The UK (rather administrative) project, *English Heritage's Urban Survey and Characterisation Programme* (Thomas 2006) and the more recent research project on Rome (Carafa 2022), although not explicitly having a predictive approach, head on the necessary technological premises towards it. The extensive study of Verhagen & Whitley 2012 (over 50 pages on predictive archaeology, including consistent bibliography) mentions nothing directly regarding urban applications. Perhaps the closest one, including urban morphology, is the study on mediaeval Brussels, see Vannieuwenhuysen et al. 2012.

16 This question was a secondary result of a study I published almost ten years ago. At that time, I had absolutely no preoccupation with the present-day urban fabric, which I used in my illustration only for reference purposes. Hence, it was by accident that I noticed an area where the hypothetical street network of the ancient city resembled the modern street network (Teodor 2014a, 123 *sqq.* and Fig. 12).

17 Some general presentations of the site, here: Zahariade 2006, 71-9; Custurea & Nastasi 2014.

18 I presented some arguments and relevant literature here: Teodor 2017, 89-80, and notes 4-5.

19 A critique on this general historical approach in Curta 2016, especially 106.
20 Wickham 2005, 646. For the background of this conclusion generally accepted now, see *id.*, note 131, with the bibliography. The reciprocal is considered possibly valid, albeit hesitant (supposedly, due to a general lack of research in this direction): "the maintenance of a considerable degree of urban vitality, at least in the successful cities of the peninsula [ref. Italy]; hence, probably, their continued spatial coherence," (*id.*, 653). For Italy, the concept of continuity is seen as nationalist (Hodges 2015, 282), and it was certainly used similarly elsewhere (e.g., Thessaloniki, in Greece, see Yerolympos 1996, 113, and note 36). However, urban continuity can exist, theoretically, regardless of these ideologies; at the same time, it is true that at least some of the archaeological documentation (as well as historical accounts) can be "contaminated" by these ideologies. It is why any other investigation method, addressing different questions, can be relevant for the bigger picture. For the ongoing debate on the generic urban (dis)continuity thread, see Curta 2016, especially pp. 89-91 and 106.

21 The Stadium of Domitian / Piazza Navona may be a very eloquent example since its structures were used in the state of ruin for centuries after it went out of its initial use. Only in the Renaissance period new buildings were erected upon the seating area, see Bernard 2007, 149, 151. This is a case of evident physical continuity of the built structures over the arguable functional continuity, although the ruins would have survived that long regardless of being used as deposits, dump, cemetery, workshops etc., or just abandoned.

- 22 On the “living city,” see also **Bandarin 2014**, 2, 5. In the same volume, **Bianca 2014**, argues that “‘Morphology’ could thus be interpreted as the knowledge of how to deal with the formal appearance of living structures,” 86 (my emphasis); see the entire paper for an extensive presentation on urban morphology.
- 23 I did exclude the property limits here only because they are difficult to document for the present day (especially for many cities), not to mention for historical periods. Otherwise, it is common knowledge that these are frequently more resilient than the buildings.
- 24 Natural, in the sense that the respective area ceased to exist at some point due to a process typical for the evolution of any human settlement; or artificial, if they were deliberately put to an end through human direct intervention. I returned to this idea in the concluding section.
- 25 Sometimes for good reason, because it can tend to be confused with *restoration*; for historical buildings these two terms can imply quite different approaches. This aspect is ignored by the Leeuwarden declaration on adaptive reuse (see note 29) – probably suitable to be further addressed (see “Through smart renovation and transformation, heritage sites can find new, mixed or extended uses,” p. 1 – my emphasis; in fact, renovation is frequently not compatible with built heritage, see **Petzet 2004**, 10-2 on *restoration*; 12-3 on *renovation*).
- 26 They are also valid for spoliation, but that will not be discussed here.
- 27 On the historical “adaptive reuse,” as well as a history of the practice and concept, see **Plevoets & van Cleempoel 2019**, especially chapter 1: “in the past, the practice of altering existing buildings for new uses occurred spontaneously and was handled in a pragmatic way. In this chapter we describe how adaptive reuse has evolved from a user-led process to a highly specialized discipline,” 7; the reduced circulation of the concept regarding the historical practice is also noted, *id.*, 8.
- 28 Although focusing on *spolia*, the idea is the same: “The contemporary fascination with *spolia* is part of a larger cultural preoccupation with reuse, recycling, appropriation, and re-presentation in the Western world. All of these practices speak to a desire to make use of preexisting artifacts (objects, images, expressions) for contemporary purposes.” **Brilliant & Kinney (eds.) 2011**, opening page.
- 29 The **Leeuwarden Declaration 2018**, preamble.
- 30 **Plevoets & van Cleempoel 2019** recently approached the urban scale *adaptive reuse*; however, the most relevant case study presented, on the *Historical centre of Split*, does not have a morphological character (115-9). The **Leeuwarden Declaration 2018** also mentions the “Multi-scale and territorial approach” referring to the architectural project which should integrate the existing structures into the contemporary building and its use: “heritage sites should be understood in their wider, surrounding context

(district and city) in order to fully consider their integration into their urban environment and natural landscape” (p. 2). This larger-scale approach is typical for any architectural project, but usually with reduced outcomes (treating one problem can’t always resolve others); only urban scale policies and projects can be effective.

31 In most cases, the reuse of temples and other important public buildings is highlighted, especially the ones being transformed into Christian churches, e.g. **Plevoets & van Cleempoel 2019**, 7, 121.

32 For example, it was observed that many *fora* in Italy became markets in the Middle Ages, or simply remained open spaces (naturally, with altered configurations), **Wickham 2005**, 652.

33 In the last volume of the three collections of studies *The Impact of The Ancient City* (covering the Greco-Roman Mediterranean), the editors claim that for their heavily funded ERC project of over six (!) years, they “soon discovered that it was impossible to do more than sample this vast area”, **Greaves & Wallace-Hadrill (eds.) 2022**, *Series preface*, p. v. For details on the project, see funder’s page (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/693418>) and project’s website (<https://impanccit.wixsite.com/impanccit>) (June 17th 2023).

34 See, for example, **Haverfield 1913**, chapter VII; **Ward-Perkins JB 1974**, many of the figs. 39-78.

35 There is an impressive project entitled the *Historic Towns Atlas*, initiated in 1955, declaratively targeting (among others) comparative morphological studies. Although it is a great resource of collected data for the documented cities (provided the volumes would have a wider availability, like the Irish (<https://www.ria.ie/>) and the Austrian (<https://www.historiaurbium.org/activities/historic-towns-atlases/atlas-working-group/austrian-historic-towns-atlas/>) collections, June 26th, 2023), it is not properly *one atlas*, but rather a collection of atlases; they are useful for those interested in certain cities, but not so much for someone oriented towards a preliminary statistic evaluation. On the project (and urban morphology), see **Conzen 2008**.

36 The only database I found so far closer to the necessity of this project is **Hanson 2017**, but unfortunately it is not very reliable; although it contains a huge amount of data (very useful to many purposes), there are some flaws which render it inoperable for relevant filter interrogation – for example, the area of Thessaloniki is provided for the Hellenistic period, when the city was considerably smaller (therefore, in a classification by size, the site would be missed – although being in fact quite large from the Roman period onward); there are also consistent shortcomings for the region of Dobruja (that I know better, see note 39), which make one wonder about the data quality on some areas of the Empire.

37 **Unwin** wrote, in **1909**: “It is to be hoped that some competent authority will take in hand the complete history of town development and town planning,

with a classification of the different types of plan which have been evolved in the course of natural growth or have been designed at different periods by human art," 16. Such approaches did exist, but obviously only for limited geographical and chronological spans, with methodologies adapted to some specific purposes, see for example **Haverfield 1913**, **Gros & Torelli 2010 (1988)**.

38 Perhaps it could be approached only with AI support, since the data necessary to process is continuously growing.

39 The PhD dissertation was on the Roman cities in Dobrudja, Romania (**Teodor 2014b**).

40 For readers less initiated in historical and archaeological literature, note also that a recent date of a publication is not necessarily a guarantee for updated illustrations, therefore it would have been a futile criterion.

41 Based on my experience, the errors in the graphic scales of city or site plans are something quite common. However, this may be the least of the problems related to plan representations, see **Greaves & Wallace-Hadrill 2022**, 8, with reference to Millet's paper in the same volume. For similar issues, see also **Teodor 2014c**, 505, *passim*.

42 This was obtained freely via Quantum GIS, using the QuickMapServices plugin, developed by NextGIS.

43 I used AutoCAD and QGIS (for both obtaining the Google Satellite imagery, and layers overlapping); the former supports georeferenced data and is more suitable for a detailed spatial analysis, while the latter is useful for a quick first evaluation, but also for the development of a long-term spatial database.

44 **Maurici 2015**, 24 *sqq*.

45 **Teodor 2023**, in press.

46 I use this referring to the urban fabric spontaneously developed in time through vernacular interventions, regardless of the existence of an urban administration.

47 This is why I also changed the initial subtitle of the project, "preliminary classification and case studies on the adaptive reuse of antique structures in modern cities," to "predictive analysis for urban archaeology".

48 I used this paraphrase after the film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* with the historical detachment one can have when the damage has been done for long; it was not meant to diminish in any way the historical significance or archaeological values of these cities. Conversely, it was meant as a signal that these more or less damaging interventions need to access a new level in our awareness: yes, important heritage was lost during modernization, undoubtedly made with good intentions. While criticising what needs to be criticised, my paper in fact suggests a possible approach towards what can be changed in this (by now historical) wrong direction.

49 A historical account in **Pallarés 1975**, 5 *sqq*.; more recent synthetic data in **Wickham 2005**, 658.

- 50 The historical centre is very easy to find on the satellite imagery: towards the sea, surrounded by the regular urban fabric of the Eixample area; see the city plans available on Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_planning_of_Barcelona) (June 23rd, 2023).
- 51 On this direction, see **Greaves & Wallace-Hadrill (eds.) 2022**.
- 52 A historical account in **Yerolympos 1996**, 88-99.
- 53 The information provided in this section relies on **Teodor 2023**, in press.
- 54 Europa Nostra Award (<https://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/winners/archaeological-site-galerius-palace-thessaloniki/>) (June 23rd, 2023) was granted in 2008 for an archaeological site which resulted from such an intervention – albeit some decades ago; the site (the Galerius Palace) is the one discussed both in the dedicated paper and here in section 6.
- 55 A historical account in **Čurčić 2010**, 51 *sqq.*
- 56 There is a debate whether the ancient city was expanded by another fortification (as the plan published here (http://ulpiaserdica.com/history_map_en.html#6%20vek) would suggest – no scientific source provided; June 23rd, 2023), or not – see **Čurčić 2010**, 51 and especially note 19 (pp. 839-40). Regardless of the existence of a larger fortification, it is obvious that the city was much larger than the under 20 ha the known fortification has; this means that the surrounding urban fabric should also be considered for evaluation.
- 57 A plan similar to the one assembled here, also updated and containing more of the *extra muros* discoveries is here (http://ulpiaserdica.com/maps_en.html) (June 23rd, 2023); some archaeological sectors have links to the pages presenting them.
- 58 Notably, it is typical for sites which are unoccupied by modern settlements; for Serdica/Sofia, it is even more extensive than many plans of the latter category – a relevant detail for the rapidity of collecting the archaeological data.
- 59 See **Yerolympos 1996**, 45 *sqq.* for a brief account on the modernization of Sofia. Apparently, the core pretext was the destruction of the “bomb attack in 1944 which necessitates the reconstruction and the rebuilt of the stricken center” (http://ulpiaserdica.com/ulpia_serdica_en.html, June 23rd, 2023). In this case I have not expanded the verification – i. e. to confront historical city plans with the archaeological structures known by now, but at first glance this seems similar to the case of Thessaloniki, if not worse.
- 60 Some relevant pictures can be seen starting from http://ulpiaserdica.com/objects_en.html, namely the links for the Eastern Gateway (http://ulpiaserdica.com/east_gate_en.html) and Triangle Turret (http://ulpiaserdica.com/tr_tower_en.html) (June 23rd, 2023 for all).
- 61 It seems only Saint George Rotunda and Saint Sofia Basilica have survived as monumental architecture, see Ulpia Serdica (http://ulpiaserdica.com/ulpia_serdica_en.html) and St. Sofia Basilica (http://ulpiaserdica.com/b_sofia_en.html).

- 62 Although this is in fact a methodological part, I preferred to separate it from the dedicated section 2 because it is also an outcome of this study; furthermore, it is also suitable to be continued (see section 7).
- 63 The [in situ *Reused*] inserted is to stress that this parameter refers to *living* (used) structures, not to the exclusively archaeological ones, possibly to be found anywhere in the city, functionally and/or structurally disconnected from the current urban fabric. Also, these should not be confused with *spolia* (which are usually elements rather than built structures) – a slightly distantly related and incredibly interesting topic, but frankly a very different one. When I first surveyed the literature for this project, it was mostly the *spolia* direction that I found approached, rather than the *in situ* reuse I was interested in – e.g. the work of Michael Greenhalgh (<https://www.librarything.com/author/greenhalghmichael>) (June 30th, 2023), or the volume **Brilliant & Kinney (eds.) 2011**, suggestively named *Reuse value: spolia and appropriation in art and architecture, from Constantine to Sherrie Levine* (as the subtitle indicates, it is largely on *spolia*, although the main title could also cover the *in situ* reuse).
- 64 All the situations that would not fit either the *high*, or the *low* categories can be preliminarily categorized as moderate (or preventively *low*, if there are such signs, since in a strategic approach this category should have a certain amount of priority in the “rescue” area), and then adapt depending on the detailed analysis.
- 65 Except for the case studies presented in this paper, the main sources used for the city plans briefly evaluated are: **Brogiolo 2013**, **Gros & Torelli 2010**; **Ward-Perkins JB 1974**; **Castagnoli 1971**; if not mentioned, online non-scientific material was used for orientation.
- 66 In terms of timespan, this document has probably one of the longest/histories of research, as it has been studied for about five hundred years since it was discovered, with intermittences. However, only recently it has been assembled for a proper investigation of the urban configuration. Many details about the marble plan, its discovery, investigation, potential etc. can be found at Stanford Digital Forma Urbis Romae Project (<http://formaurbis.stanford.edu/>); a promising project is Mapping Rome (<http://mappingrome.com/>), with a written introduction in **Tice 2013**, and a video (<https://www.nga.gov/audio-video/video/digital-history-conference/dah-tice-2.html>) (June 15th, 2023, for all links). I found no recent news on the latter, instead another very ambitious project has recently started, focused on collecting data in a dedicated Archaeological Information System, see **Carafa 2022**.
- 67 A vectorized version of Rodolfo Lanciani’s plan was used for this analysis (**Tani, Femia & Peluffo 2008**). The original plan can be consulted at David Rumsey Map Collection (https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/view/search?q=pub_list_no%3d%2210199.000%22&qvq=lc:RUMSEY~8~1&mi=0) (May 20th, 2023). On the recognized validity (including the reading

keys of the plan), but also on another continuation of the *Forma Urbis* project with new technologies, see **Carafa 2022**, 53-4.

68 Having to do rather with the typical (mis)conceptions about the ancient Greco-Roman cities – lately contested by more than one voice, **Greaves & Wallace-Hadrill 2022**, *passim*, with references, especially p. 9.

69 The same idea in **Giovannoni 2016 (1931)**, 24, but also in a recent theoretical approach on Landscape Archaeology (although referring rather to non-urban, it also applies to the urban environment): “(...) by presenting the continuum of (pre)history (as represented by past material culture) as a part of present-day landscape not merely as a pointer to understanding past environments or landscapes, Landscape Archaeology could become an important part of broader landscape research in addition to being a sub-discipline of archaeology,” **Fairclough 2012**, 471.

70 Presumably modest structures would not raise attention (not to mention the “invisible” earth stratigraphy for non-archaeologists) within a typical construction site; only the monumental ones, or human bones, may have such an effect: “In 2004 the construction works of the new Arena di Serdica Hotel of FPI Hotels & Resorts chain *unexpectedly* came across a part of a Roman wall. Archaeological excavations immediately started – thus the Amphitheatre of Serdica (...) was discovered!” (m.e.) (<https://www.arenadiserdica.com/pages/the-amphiteater-of-ancient-serdica>, June 23rd, 2023). Note the “unexpected” keyword, so frequently met in many news relating various discoveries within or around ancient cities – I am more familiar with the ones referring to the (otherwise well known) necropolises of ancient Tomis in Constanța. Similar comment for Thessaloniki in **Bakirtzis 2003**, 40, n. 43.

71 **Manacorda 1982**, section 1.

72 Any type of evidence also needs to be judged in context: e.g. most probably, it was a compromised archaeological deposit, but to what extent? – **van Leusen et al. 2005**, 59.

73 **Hodges 2015**, 269-70, also for “polyfocal communities (...) [as] a definable archaeological model,” and “a widespread European settlement form in the early Middle Ages,” *ibid.*, with notes; **Wickham 2005**, 652, with the cited literature.

74 **Hodges 2015**, 269.

75 See also Andrea Augenti, quoted by **Hodges 2015**, 282, with note 91.

76 Still, not in Rome, where it’s quite difficult to identify such a segment, if it exists; the only one I found that might contain fragments integrated on both sides is located south of the *castrum*, between “Porta Clausa” and Via Mozambano – a section of only about 50 m. Also, apparently none in Thessaloniki.

77 In Constanța, the modern Ferdinand Blvd. is quasi-parallel to the line of fortification towards the territory (**Teodor 2014a**, 117-8 and Fig. 12); it is

similar in Mangalia (**Teodor 2014c**, 524, and Figs. 13-4), presumably in many other places.

78 **Bernard 2007**, 149 *sqq.*

79 It was later proved that in the place where *Circus Flaminius* was located by Lanciani it was in fact the Theatre of Balbus. The confusion, which lasted for centuries, is due to the similarity between the semicircular end of the circus and the shape of the theater, see **Manacorda 1982**, 2.2.1.

80 The configuration is comparable for the stadium in Plovdiv, see Ancient Stadium Map (<https://ancient-stadium-plovdiv.eu/?p=92&l=2>, June, 26th 2023), and the one in Tarragona, around Plaça de la Font (Google Maps).

81 Presented from a slightly different perspective in **Teodor 2023**, in press.

82 Opposed to the *sphendone* (the semicircular end) are the *carceres* - also considered (here, at least) to have an arched shape - see it mentioned on the plan (top). Only limited archaeological evidence was revealed for both ends, difficult to interpret based on the drawings I found (but this could be my limitation). To some extent, until further evidence, both versions can be considered for restitution – but if we are to look at the historical street network overlapping with it, the variant of Vickers is more convincing.

83 Notably, not only the street network can be analyzed, but also the built fabric of the pre-modern Thessaloniki. Unfortunately, the entire area was modernized, therefore the connections preserved *in situ* are probably scarce, if any; however, the various archival documentation (archaeological, urbanistic, historical photographs and descriptions) may be very relevant for future investigations, see **Vickers 1972b** for some hints in this direction.

84 The Hamidiye Boulevard operation, **Yerolympos 1996**, 68 *sqq.*

85 **Vickers 1972b**, 28-9.

86 **Vickers 1972b**, 28.

87 *Ibid.*

88 **Bakirtzis 2003**, 55-6.

89 Wikipedia: Late modern period (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Late_modern_period, June 26th, 2023).

90 “(...) practice shows that when predictive models are not used, there will be less opportunity for archaeologists to influence spatial planning in the early stages,” **Verhagen & Whitley 2012**, 54. Notably, “heritage managers and politicians in the Netherlands have elected to assign an increasingly important role to archaeological predictive models in the planning process at the local and regional levels of government,” **van Leusen and Kamermans 2005**, 9.

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Tourist Guide

LABELLING THE WALDENSES: OTHERING A MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT

Aliaksandra Valodzina

Abstract

Over the past 850 years, the Waldensian religious movement has often been presented in the heretical narrative. The Waldenses were often seen as the embodiment of the very idea of heresy. Their image was othered in all possible ways to create the most terrifying impression: they were false saints, guilty of the sin of vainglory, Lucifer worshipers, and witches. They were spreading a heretical contagion around them, and they always turned back to their errors. The Waldensian magisters were imagined as cunning false prophets, scribes, and Pharisees, seducing silly weak peasants. The former were said to attract the latter with the “appearance of piety”, but in reality, they organize sexual orgies during their secret night gatherings. In the case of the Waldenses, shift of the image from modesty to promiscuity was especially necessary. The real Waldensian doctrine did not include any scandalous matters, such as human sacrifice that could automatically prevent most of the population from joining this sect. These modes of othering equate to the Waldenses becoming the pattern of heresy. In the XIV century, “heretics” and “The Waldenses” were near-synonyms. This amalgamation had very important consequences. First, they accumulate in themselves all the possible accusations of the heretics, and it hides their uniqueness beyond Catholic fantasies. Second, their name could be attributed to other dissident groups, which exaggerated the number of sectarians and imported foreign features to the Waldensian doctrine. Third, they could be used as a universal opponent in the inner Church polemic, replacing prelates – the real target of the accusations – with the aim of bringing attention to the problem.

At the same time, in their own narratives, the Waldenses were presented as martyrs for the true Church of Christ. This line was supported by the Protestants in the Modern Era.

As a typical religious dissident movement, the Waldenses occupy an important “place in memory” of modern scholars. Most large schools in historiography, including socio-economic history and gender studies, have the Waldensian movement in their sphere of interest, sometimes exaggerating their significance. All this “omnipresence” of medieval Waldensianism “seduces” scholars to dramatize the significance and dispersion of the movement, and,

what is less obvious but much more dangerous, to be less critical of works of their predecessors.

Modern historiography moved away from an interpretation of the Catholic medieval sources “from the contrary”, omitting all the insults and non-true statements. This paper proposes that the Waldensian women were more engaged in broad devout reading and teaching at home than in preaching to the mass audience. In parallel with early Christians, secret night gatherings could be understood as clandestine preaching meetings in situations of inquisitorial persecution. The Waldensians were forced to be tricky under interrogation, and their opponents exaggerated their educational level and homiletic abilities to shame contemptuous prelates.

The Waldensian movement is a throughline of the European religious dissident history through the centuries. Thanks to their presence on large territories and in different social strata, the Waldensian sources could provide data not only on the history of religion, but also on social history or microhistory, or the history of mentality. Cultural history could take into account their role as picture-perfect Other.

Keywords: Waldenses, heresy, religious polemic, othering, gender studies, Protestantism, witch-hunting, Luciferianism

1. Introduction

When studying historical sources and sometimes even historiography, a scholar encounters several basic questions: why did the author write it? Establishing the purpose of the author makes it possible to approach the source more critically: did the author deliberately distort the facts in order to present their point of view or to align with a certain historiographical tradition? It happened many times with medieval heretics when their Catholic opponents wrote offensive treatises against them. Since the beginning of the Modern Era, there have been different non-religious explanations of heresy. As one of the best specialists in the field of medieval religious movements, Peter Biller, said: “Flacius gave to heresies a Protestant mask, Engels revolutionary, Rosenberg Nazi, Koch feminist, – and by the 1970s their latest, ‘popular cultural’, mask was taking shape”.¹

During my studies, I discovered that the Waldensian movement fits every possible image of heresy. In this article, the main patterns of the heretical narrative will be analyzed, with the focus on the role and place of the Waldensian movement in the debates. The very word “Waldensian” becomes a synonym of “heretic”. If for the 13th century “heretic” is, most

likely, a Cathar, then for the 14th century, – this is a Waldensian.² The first part of the research paper will investigate the place of the Waldenses in the complex medieval image made not only of heretics, witches, and devil worshipers but also as a euphemism for an intra-Church polemic. Guy Lobrichon suggested a metaphorical reading of medieval texts, treating them as coded documents.³ At the same time, as it will be shown below, the approach of Leslie Lockett is also fruitful: sometimes a modern reader sees a metaphor where there is none.⁴ It is safe to assume that some even highly offensive descriptions of the heretics were based not only on insulting analogies but had real reasons, interpreted poorly by Catholic authors, or were direct retellings of the case without any pejorative connotation.

This omnipresence concerns not only medieval sources but also historiography. The Waldensian religious movement was an essential part of the Protestant historical narrative. This led to the methodology, used by Grażyna Szwał-Gyłybowa in her book *Haeresis bulgarica w bułgarskiej świadomości kulturowej XIX i XX wieku*. She researches the “place of memory” of the Bogomils in the Bulgarian mentality.⁵ Szwał-Gyłybowa shows the design of an image of a Bulgarian heretic as an ancestor of European religious reforms, rationalism, Enlightenment humanism, and even a New Age.⁶ Sometimes it coincides with the image of a Waldensian – a high-moral miserable persecuted predecessor of the Protestants. The second part of the article will deal with the interpretation of the Waldenses in class theory and gender studies as well as the correlation of their results with recent research.

Not all movements considered heretical by the Roman Catholic Church felt opposed to it from the beginning. The movements of the *devotio moderna*⁷ or *vita apostolica*⁸ were born within society and crystallized their doctrine at the same time as their opposition to the Apostolic See grew. “The confrontation of the self with non-self constitutes identity”,⁹ in other words – in controversy with the ecclesiastical authorities they developed their doctrine. Even the Cathar doctrine, for a long time considered external and extremely hostile to the Apostolic See, can be seen today as “profound evangelism, which did not want to separate from the Church”.¹⁰ Mark Gregory Pegg, one of the leaders of the new vision of the Cathars, claimed that “What transformed these individuals into heretics, what turned the accusation into actuality, was the violence of the Albigensian Crusade and the persecution of the early inquisitors”.¹¹ It were polemical treatises that transformed Cathars’ scattered beliefs

into a coherent doctrine.¹² And it was the Roman Catholic Church that made heresies. The same is true for the Church itself – the war on heresy leads to the unity of the official clergy.¹³ Ryan Szpiech asserts that “an affirmation of the core mythology of one is an implicit rejection of other, rival historical models, and a representation of the movement between such paradigms is likewise both a profession of faith and a repudiation of difference according to an exclusive historical model”.¹⁴

The Waldenses follow the same path.¹⁵ This medieval religious movement was started around 1170 in Lyon by its wealthy citizen Waldo. He was very close to the archbishop of Lyon at the time, Guichard of Pontigny († 1181) and shared with him some ideas on how to improve the morale of the clergy.¹⁶ Near 1174 he had given up his property and had started to preach the Gospels. Subsequently, with some of his followers, Waldo presented to the Pope the translation of the Bible in the “vulgar” language at the III Lateran Council in Rome in 1179. In 1180, he made a full-Catholic confession of faith. By contrast, only two years later, when a new archbishop of Lyon John of Canterbury (French *Jean Belles-Mains*, † 1204) forbade the Waldenses to preach, Waldo refused to obey him and, consequently, the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁷ After two more years, the Waldenses were called “schismatics”. The Pope condemned them as heretics (which is worse than schismatics) in the middle of the 13th century. On the contrary, the “heretics” themselves would think they were a part of the official Church since the beginning. The process of the separation lasted more than two centuries.

Some of the Waldenses chose to turn back to the unity of the Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless, a major part of the Waldenses remained in opposition to the Roman Papacy and crystallized in a strong but a heterogenous heretical movement. They denied the existence of Purgatory, the efficiency of indulgences, holy water, and in general all Church rituals. Furthermore, they rejected oaths as sinful. The Waldensian believers confessed their sins to the “masters” of their sect and not to Catholic priests. At their height, in the 14th century, the Waldenses had several extensive networks of regional communities from the Pyrenees to Western Pomerania, connected by wandering preachers. Moreover, the Waldenses formed a unique medieval dissenting movement that was transformed into a part of the Protestant Church, with the center near Turin and in Latin America.

2. The Waldenses in medieval sources

2.1. A polemical model

In general, the accusation of heretics was based on a standard template. Lucy Sackville, in her major work *Heresies and Heretics*, summarized the most frequent polemical techniques used by Catholic authors to attack their opponents (her study was later supplemented by Emmanuel Bain).¹⁸ Almut Suerbaum shows “the linguistic strategies they use to undermine, belittle and at times endanger an opponent, assessing the extent to which they [sermons – A.V.] use language as a means of attack”.¹⁹ Here, these techniques and strategies are discussed in the anti-Waldensian narrative.

Some of these techniques are direct insults. It is about, first and foremost, the comparison with dogs that go back to their vomit.²⁰ “But, returning to [his] vomit, he [Waldo] did not stop gathering and sending out disciples”.²¹ In most cases, this expression applied to relapsed heretics.

There were shameful euphemisms for heresies. First, it was an allegorical comparison to little foxes – an allusion to Song of Solomon 2:15.²² “These foxes go forth to waste the Lord’s vineyard, pitiful and utterly shameful persons, they have usurped the work of preaching, wholly or nearly illiterate, or rather non-spiritual”.²³

Much more frequent was the comparison of the heretical danger to poison and infection:²⁴

“And there is great danger that this sect will be overextended to include many Catholics of both sexes, who will be tempted to apostatize from the Catholic faith and be fatally infected with the heretical poison unless a Christian army stands in their way”.²⁵

Turning back to the theory of embodiment of feelings, the comparison of heretics with diseases could be more than a metaphor: they are believed to be “dead inside”.²⁶ The very body of heretics changes physically under the influence of their impious beliefs. For the medieval writers, Jews, Muslims, and heretics belonged to the same kind, even from a “corporal” point of view: they all had “the primordial passions, which disturb the peace of the holy”.²⁷ This question was deeply studied by Reima Välimäki.²⁸ Here, more important is not the cause, but the aim of such a pattern.

The metaphor of the human body and its diseases exists nowadays. Critical discourse analysis of this metaphor, made by Andreas Musolff,

showed that “just as it is imperative for a successful medical therapy to eliminate all agents of disease in case of a serious illness, so any socio-political elements of the nation that threaten its existence have to be eliminated.”²⁹ The labeling of the heretics as a disease legitimizes violence against them.

In the quoted example, the aim of the author seems to be almost the same: to show how wrong and dangerous heretics are. Grado Giovanni Merlo demonstrated that coercion to the Orthodoxy (namely the Catholic faith) goes through the creation of scary images of heretics.³⁰ With the Waldenses, such changing of the image was especially necessary. The real Waldensian doctrine did not include any scandalous matters, such as human sacrifice, that could automatically prevent the majority of the population from joining this sect. On the contrary, their life was the perfect following of the Gospels’ orders. An anonymous cleric, a Dominican monk or a catholic priest, wrote ca. 1260 in the diocese of Passau:

“Among all the sects that are or have been, there is no one more destructive to the church of God than the Leonists,³¹ and for three reasons: [...] Thirdly, because, while all the others with monstrous blasphemies of God bring horror to those who hear God, these Leonists, having a great appearance of piety – by the fact that they live righteously before men and believe properly in everything about God and all the articles that are contained in the symbol – only they blaspheme the Roman Church and the clergy, whom the multitude of the laity can easily believe”.³²

Here is a concept of *species pietatis* – “appearance of piety”. It means that heretics with high moral qualities were presented as hypocritical ones allegedly dissolute inside. There was a contrast between the external purity of a heretic and his/her internal evil. This *species pietatis* is a tool used by heretics to seduce miserable believers with their fake outer piety.³³

Such a polemical thesis enabled the clergy to accuse any person regardless of his/her behavior.

According to the clergy, there are two awful crimes that heretics could do secretly: orgies and preaching.

Heretics were described as morally weak, promiscuous, and indulging in sexual orgies in the dark.³⁴ For the first time, such accusations were used in the 2nd century against Christians themselves,³⁵ and from the 4th, this weapon was turned against Christian dissidents. It was St. Epiphanius of Salamis († 403) who described a Christian sect in which members not only

practiced promiscuity in the night but also consumed children conceived at these gatherings.³⁶

The Waldenses were blamed for nocturnal debauchery too:

[About what happens in a *synagogue*³⁷] “They eat and drink with great joy, starting when the peoples of the earth go to sleep, after drinking and eating they put out the light, saying: who has, holds,³⁸ and those men and women next step they hug each other and stay like that until dawn”.³⁹

During the 11th and 12th centuries, heretics were also blamed for child sacrifice and cannibalism. Ademar of Chabannes († around 1034) claims that a peasant-heresiarch had with him ashes of dead⁴⁰ children, which functioned as a magic powder: everybody, who took it occasionally with food or drink, became a heretic and could not resist a heresiarch.⁴¹ In the first centuries of the Waldensian movement, these accusations disappeared, only to return later during the witch-hunting of the Late Middle Ages.

The absence of gossip about this immoral behavior was tried to explain by the secret character of this part of the doctrine. Heretics operate in secret (even when they preach publicly).⁴² “They preach in secret and private places”.⁴³ The switch to secret preaching was made in the circumstances of growing inquisitorial persecution at the beginning of the 14th century. The most famous “inquisitor of heretical depravity” of Toulouse Bernard Gui († around 1331) mentioned the existence of “strangers” who should not be present at the Waldensian rites for security reasons.⁴⁴ The same attitude was registered in 1335 on the other side of the Alps.⁴⁵ Since the real Church of Christ should preach openly “under the light” (Matthew 10:27), all who preach secretly were seen as heretics.

The arrival of such heretics was announced in the Bible (2 Peter 2:1, 1 Timothy 4:1, Revelation 13:1): heretics, including the Waldenses, are false prophets.⁴⁶ This accusation was reciprocal: the Waldenses named the Catholic prelates *Judei prophetas, et scribe et pharisei*.⁴⁷ It shows that both the catholic clergy and the heretics had the same cultural Christian background and operated the same *topoi* for offending their opponents.

Apparently, not all heretics were prophets: the Church separated a “clerical core” from common believers. This core was imagined in contrast with the Catholic clergy which had knowledge from God. The heretical preachers used not the real sacral doctrine, but cunning tricks. Sophistic leaders stand out among the naive, deceived believers of heresiarchs.⁴⁸

“When they first turned to ordinary people, because they avoided crafty and learned people, they said that they knew the best prayers”.⁴⁹

The reason for the spread of heresy was seen not only in the laziness of the Catholic clergy but also in their incapacity to confront heresiarchs. “Often the rhetorical skills of those who hold heretical views are considered superior to those of Christians, and they therefore expose the listeners to the danger of being misled”.⁵⁰ “Let the negligence of the faithful doctors⁵¹ be shamed, who are not so zealous for the truth of the Catholic faith, as the perfidious Leonists are zealous for the error of unbelief”.⁵²

An external sign of the heretical Church not being the Church of Christ was that the heretics are divided and at war with each other, but the true Church must be united.⁵³ “The Waldensian doctors, who in their errors and opinions are divided into three groups, and, as a result, cannot create a church, because the church is united in faith, as it is said by Ephesians 4”.⁵⁴

At the same time, a historian who understands this polemical model cannot discard the data as completely fictional. Heated debates continue around the issue of nocturnal orgies.⁵⁵ Regarding the early Christian accusation of the 2nd century, we know that it stemmed from the misunderstanding of concepts of *brotherly love* and *the kiss of peace*.⁵⁶ Without dipping into victim blaming of the Waldenses, it would be useful to work on the question of what was hidden beyond such an accusation.

The issue of the inner division of the movement was proved by a source written by the Waldenses themselves. In 1218, there was a meeting in Bergamo between the so-called *Ultramontani* (French branch) and *Ytalici* (Lombardian branch).⁵⁷ Later, this division was discussed in several types of Catholic sources, but the presence of the original document proved its reality.

The information about heretical cunning could not be regarded as only offensive. As was noticed by John Arnold, “A man takes an ox by the horn and a peasant by the tongue”.⁵⁸ Inquisitors mastered the art of interrogation. These protocols became the main source of further accusations and persecutions. In such a situation, the skill of answering the inquisitors’ questions was crucial for surviving. “They resort to sophisms, hypocrisies, and evasions in words to avoid being exposed in their errors”.⁵⁹ Several instructions for the right response to the inquisitorial questionnaire are preserved. They could be found in the Anonymous of Passau,⁶⁰ David of Augsburg († 1272),⁶¹ Bohemian Kingdom around 1330.⁶² The latter source contains the most illustrative story of the Waldensian legend invented to deceive an Inquisitor:

“When you are asked if people come to you who hear confessions and deliver sermons, answer: ‘Some men came to us who [omitted by the editor] to us, and carry other household things necessary for women’. And this way, they escaped imprisonment and deceived the office of investigation so that none of them was cremated”.⁶³

All the listed characteristics are found in the works describing the Waldenses. In addition to the analysis of each of them, one more research question could be asked: Were the Waldenses such a universal heretical movement to have all the typical (in the eyes of a Catholic polemicist) heretical features? Or was this standard set planted by outside authors, mostly Catholic monks?

2.2. A universal opponent

Reima Välimäki proposed the third possible solution: the refutation of the “Waldensian errors” was just a convenient tool for demonstrating the correctness of one’s own opinion during intra-Church polemics. He claims that “inquisitors tried to brand their opponent as a Waldensian, even when they almost certainly knew that the accused was not a proper Waldensian, but a clergyman like themselves”.⁶⁴

This could explain the fact that by the end of the same century, the number of Waldenses in Europe was gradually decreasing, primarily due to the intensification of inquisitorial persecution, but the number of polemical works against the Waldenses was increasing.⁶⁵ The point at issue is that sometimes when there is the name “the Waldenses” in a source, its author would like to talk in reality not about them or about any other heresy, but about an internal Church problem. The Waldenses here serve as a metaphor for great sinners. “At that point, the unanswerable quality of this polemic became supremely evident: no case could be made for Jews, infidels or heretics”.⁶⁶ As mentioned above, the Church of God should be united. This very fact often prevented clerics from repeating the accusation of heretics in an attempt to point to the errors of fellow prelates. “Whereas direct polemical attack serves to undermine the opponent, attacks against a fictional sinner in singular use a strategy of misplaced invective – direct in its linguistic attack, yet distanced in order not to alienate the listeners.”⁶⁷ In this case, prelates – the real target of the accusations – were replaced by heretics with the aim of attracting attention to the problem and punish the culprits with maximum severity.

The coincidence of the development of this or that element of Catholic doctrine and the persistence with which the inquisitors inquired about it can be traced. It has been established that the Catholic polemic was “a way of affirming Christian identity by contrasting it aggressively with heretical forms of belief”.⁶⁸ Katrin Utz Tremp shows the dependence between the opposition of the Waldenses to the church and the establishment of some dogma in it. According to her, the decrease in the refusal of the Waldensian oaths is related to the shifting of the attention to purgatory and to the Marian cult, which the Waldenses at the peak of the church began to challenge more decisively.⁶⁹ It is necessary to note that the position of the Catholic Church in this case somewhat influenced the opinions of the inquisitors and the authors of polemical treatises, through whose “lens” the medieval Waldenses are being watched today. The procedure of the inquisitorial trial was built more on the active role of the inquisitor himself, who had template questionnaires.⁷⁰ Cases where an accused said more than was asked, were comparatively rare. This finding aligns with the data about heretical doctrine being more contingent on what an inquisitor asked rather than what the defendant really believed.

2.3. *Waldo as a false saint*

One of the ways to alienate an opponent is to add to their portrait a small detail that changes and desacralizes the whole perception one can have of them. The conversion of Waldo into the “true” faith was modelled in the Chronicle of Laon (France, 13th century) after the standard medieval life of a saint but with mocking details:

“On a certain Sunday, when he [Waldo] turned to the crowd, which he had seen gathered around a juggler (*joculator*), he was shocked by his words, and he invited him to his house, and made an effort to listen to him carefully. That was the part of his story, where Saint Alexis found blessed peace in his father’s house”.⁷¹

Francesca Tasca points out that despite all the outwardly positive description of Waldo’s first steps, there is “a red flag”: the reason for the appeal was not a sermon in the temple, but the story of a juggler-buffoon in the square. She suggests that this was emphasized specifically to neutralize its sacred significance.⁷² The reliability of the story about the life of St. Alexis has long been the subject of scholarly debate.⁷³ The paper by Tasca

raises another discussion point: is the very fact of *joculator* as the initiator of the Waldo's conversion humiliating?

Apart from a later image of St. Francis of Assisi († 1226) as the "juggler of God", there were other earlier examples. Not long before Waldo, there was another man near Laon, Aybert of Crespín (also known as Aibert of Tournai, † 1140), who changed his life due to a juggler. This fact did not prevent him from becoming a Catholic saint.⁷⁴

St. Bernard of Clairvaux († 1153), a famous and influential Catholic author, also described jugglers' performances as "pleasant, respectable, serious, attractive, that can delight the looks of celestial spectators".⁷⁵ King David himself is treated by Bernard as "playing in the face of God".⁷⁶ Here, real jugglers perform as the metaphorical opposition to "jugglers of God".⁷⁷ Using the scheme proposed by Tasca that the description of the Waldo's public speech was a mirror to the jugglers, it is possible to assume that Waldo could play the role not of a terrestrial, but a celestial juggler. This "mirror" could be traced also in the comparison of jugglers and public penitents.⁷⁸ Waldo's first act after his conversion, the distribution of his possessions as alms, is essentially a public penance for former wealth.

2.4. *Devil worship*

From the Late Middle Ages, interest in the contact between a man and the devil began to grow throughout Europe. As Herbert Grundmann, a well-known specialist in Medieval religious movements, noted:

"«Judges of heresy and moralists of the worst sort, however, easily stoked ordinary people's horror of night-time underground gatherings of men and women into incredible fantasies». This fantasy was 'Luciferan' heresy, a belief in a diabolical sect that worshipped Satan or demons in night-time orgies that included incest and child-murder. «Scholars following him [Herbert Grundmann] have convincingly deconstructed the sect of Luciferans as a clerical fantasy and imagined heresy – often precisely against Waldensians»".⁷⁹

Such evidence appeared in the records of Waldensian interrogations, for example, in 1315 in Schweidnitz (today Polish Świdnica near Wrocław) and at the same time in the Austrian Krems:

“And it seems to them that everything around becomes gold, and the heavens appear before them, and a golden throne, and Lucifer in supreme power, and angels fly around; and from that moment they are servants of Lucifer”.⁸⁰

At the same time, other authors, including such experienced inquisitors as Bernard Gui⁸¹ or polemist David of Augsburg,⁸² rejected these accusations. There are two possibilities here: either the worship of Lucifer was a regional feature of Waldensianism (which is unlikely), or the local inquisitors were influenced by anti-devil hysteria, confusing the Waldenses with the Cathars (who, as dualists, were accused of worshipping Lucifer/Devil/evil god, the creator of all material things). The data do not seem to be planted into the protocols, and the subject of devil adoration is absent from this trial’s questionnaire.⁸³ Since this information is scattered and rejected in other contemporary sources, it can be assumed that the inquisitors forced the accused (under torture or trickery) to confess their connection with hellish forces. The issue of Luciferianism of the Waldenses was deeply discussed by Jarosław Szymański⁸⁴ and Magdalena Ogórek,⁸⁵ who hold opposite views.

A stereotyped description of the adoration of Lucifer was also used in the allegations against the Waldenses. The Devil comes to his slaves as a goat, a monkey, or, most often, a cat. They kneel down before the beast and kiss him “at the opposite side”. This process could be seen in the illustration of *Sermo contra sectam Vaudensium* by Johann Tinctor († 1469)⁸⁶. Sometimes Satan set his servants – demons – in the form of animals: “And another demon who was worshiped in the form of a cat, who is called Temon, and also another who was worshiped in the form of a goat.”⁸⁷ Initially, this *topos* had been used with regards to the Cathars⁸⁸ but following the extermination of this movement, it was extended to the Waldenses and witches as well.

2.5. Witches on broomsticks

At the end of the Middle Ages, the popularity of the heretical *topos* in Western Europe started to fall, but the “witch-hunting” began to grow.

The Waldensian texts contain one of the first descriptions of the Sabbath in Europe (trial in Pinerolo near Turin, 1387-88).

"She [woman – leader of the regional branch of the sect] kept a large toad under the bed, which she fed with meat and bread and cheese. When he [the inquisitor] was asked why she was keeping it, he answered, that she might make the aforesaid potion [which they drink during the Sabbath] out of its excrements."⁸⁹

Starting from the early 15th century, there had been many rumors about a new sect in the Alpine region. Its members were mostly women (witches) flying on brooms. Inquisitor Claude of Toulouse, who had been waging anti-witchcraft campaign in Savoy since 1428, wrote about the origin of this sect "from Lyon" (not directly mentioning the Waldenses, but recalling that one of their names was "poor of Lyon", Waldo's hometown).

In 1429-1430, a large inquisitorial process in Fribourg in Switzerland was conducted by the Dominican inquisitor Ulrich von Torrenté from Lausanne. There are no records of the persecutions in 1429; only the treasurer's accounts of the city of Fribourg were preserved. The accounts are written in French and here the prisoners are referred to as *vaudois* and their crimes as *vaudoisie*. These terms had an initial translation "Waldensens" and "Waldensianism", but then the meaning "sorcerers, witches" and "sorcery, witchcraft" was added. The problem is that it is impossible to establish an exact moment in time when "Waldensianism" started to mean "sorcery, witchcraft".⁹⁰ During the next process, in 1437, by the term *vaudoises* they certainly understood "sorcerers, witches".

Mixing of the *topoi* of the Waldenses and witches was studied by Franck Mercier and Martine Ostorero.⁹¹ The process could be summarized in the next table:

Year	Place	Case
1315	Krems and Schweidnitz	the Waldenses worship Lucifer
1388	Alpine Valleys	the Waldenses organize Shabbat with sexual orgy and witch potion
1427	Alpine Valleys	inhabitants practice magic
1428	Alpine Valleys	the sect of broom-flyers is of Lyonnais origin
1428	Alpine Valleys	<i>gazzart</i> = Waldensian
1430	Fribourg	<i>vaudoises</i> = both the Waldenses and witches

Year	Place	Case
1440	Alpine Valleys	the Waldenses = witches
1447	Fribourg	<i>vaudoises</i> = witches
1449	Alpine Valleys	Waldensian lohaneta is a witch flying on a broom
1451	Lyon and Savoy	women flying on brooms signed as <i>les vaudoises</i> on a margin (first such picture in the history) ⁹²
1460	Arras	the Waldenses = witches

It is important to note that once again the Waldenses were in the spotlight of Western European religious history. No scholar asserts that they really practiced witchcraft; Wolfgang Behringer in his article *How Waldensians Became Witches: Heretics and Their Journey to the Other World*, shows the features of their daily life and doctrine that could lead to such conclusions.⁹³

Thus, according to the Catholic narrative, during the Middle Ages, the Waldenses accumulated all the possible negative features of heretics. Sometimes the Waldenses personified an enemy, “the other”. In other situations, their imaginary negative qualities were exaggerated to emphasize the danger and make the Roman Catholic Church purify itself and unite.

3. The Waldenses in Historiography

Modern historiography has not lost its interest in the Waldenses. Considering the previous bias of the medieval Catholic authors, first Protestant scholars created an opposite, extremely positive image of a Waldensian, similar to the one of a Bogomil in the Bulgarian national narrative.

Later historiography used them as an example for different theories, such as Marxism. Due to the lack of data, as often happens with Medieval Studies, it led to improper conclusions. The Waldenses have become a rhetorical device yet again, when their importance has been exaggerated to make a point in the research.

3.1. Predecessors of the Protestants

The situation with the perception of the Waldenses changed with the beginning of the Reformation: for the first time, they were positively marked by authors outside the sect.

The first Protestant preachers began to actively search for their predecessors in history, those who would carry “the fire of true faith in the darkness of the Middle Ages”, and found them in the same Waldenses,⁹⁴ emphasizing common points in teaching and ignoring differences.⁹⁵ The piquancy of the situation is that it was the Catholics who invented the idea of the Protestants as the descendants of the Medieval heresies⁹⁶ (an offensive idea from the Catholic point of view).

After realizing their mistake, the Catholics offered another version of the roots of Waldensianism. They started to talk about Waldo as an “unrealized St. Francis of Assisi”⁹⁷ or St. Dominic.⁹⁸ Indeed, there is much in common between the original ideology and statutes of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and early groups of the Waldenses who turned back to Roman Catholic Church (the “Poor Catholics” and the “Reconciled Poor”).⁹⁹ All groups emerged at about the same time and under the same circumstances. Later, these ex-Waldenses groups (together with their collective property) became members of the Catholic monastic orders. This gives the reason to some authors – supporters of the Roman Church – to underestimate the importance of the heretical component of the teaching of the first Waldenses, focusing exclusively on factors common to them and Catholics. In addition, as the latest studies show, the medieval Waldenses did not share the fundamental Protestant concept of “salvation by faith”.¹⁰⁰

It could be concluded here that the medieval Waldenses were neither “proto-Protestants” nor Catholics, but an independent religious movement that was born inside the Catholic Church, and left it for a number of reasons.

3.2. Class Theory against statistical and computer analysis

There is no consensus about the social structure of the Waldensian movement. Existing scarce data are highly controversial, the same as the opinions of scholars.¹⁰¹ The most radical statement belongs to Friedrich Engels, who used the Waldenses to illustrate his class theory. He described this movement as the reaction of patriarchal alpine shepherds to the penetration of feudalism.¹⁰² This approach effectively eliminated the

possibility of studying Waldensianism in the territory of the Soviet Union. Even though the social element in the religious movements of the High Middle Ages could not be discarded,¹⁰³ its superiority was not proved.

The publication of numerous sources enabled various types of quantitative analysis, which revealed new trends and facts. The severity of punishment (the number of burned convicts) was discovered to be lower.¹⁰⁴ One of the best examples is the work of Jean-Paul Rehr, devoted to the inquisitorial protocols of 1245-1246.¹⁰⁵ The main conclusion that the author makes is that the inquisitors were not really interested in exposing heresy and finding all possible heretics, but in constructing an accusation against narrow circles of influential families. For example, when answering a typical inquisitorial question “who else was involved in this?” after listing a few interesting names, they were satisfied with the phrase “and others”, instead of interviewing everyone in detail and writing down all the data.¹⁰⁶ Everything points to the conclusion that this process was politically arranged. The reasons for such an order are currently unknown, but the very fact of its finding changes the view of the credibility of the data we receive from this type of sources. In this example, the sources from the Languedoc show us a relatively high status of the accused. However, it is unclear if there were no poor Waldenses or if they were not mentioned because the inquisitors tried to accuse only some rich families and did not care about others.

3.3. Gender issues

The Waldenses were not left out of gender studies: the relationship between women and the Bible in the Middle Ages is studied often on the basis of data about the Waldenses.¹⁰⁷ The female role in the movement became the subject of many papers and was always presented as quite high because, at an early stage, women were also allowed to preach among the Waldenses.¹⁰⁸ In contemporary Latin sources, the Waldensian women preachers are called “poor women” (*mulieres pauperes*) or “silly women” (*mulierculae*). Biblical scholars see this as an opposition to teaching among women in the early Church.¹⁰⁹ These *mulierculae* are actually mentioned in every early work.¹¹⁰ However, the opponents of the Waldenses argued that the latter allowed women not to preach, but rather to seduce, as Eve seduced Adam.¹¹¹ It is safe to presume that this is related to the fact that silent Blessed Mary was ideal for Catholic polemicists. Over time, women preachers disappear from the pages of historical sources.

However, the very role of women in the early Waldensian movement started to be reconsidered in the latest papers. Thanks to the new research on inquisitorial protocols, we know that the number of women was lower than commonly believed.¹¹²

The image of a woman-preacher seems to have to be reconsidered as well. It is noteworthy that Waldensian sources are silent about this female duty; it means that there is no information about how the Waldenses justified women's right to preach, or whether it was equal to men's in their eyes. Perhaps, within the community, the role of a woman was initially classified as more auxiliary. In Latin, there are terms such as actually preaching (*praedicare*), encouraging (*exhortare*), or giving advice (*admonere*). It is possible to translate all three as "preach", but in the Middle Ages, the first one had a much stronger religious load and was rather perceived as "reserved" for specially authorized persons, while the other two could be allowed for others as well. In his "statute", Durand of Osca (highly educated cleric and founder of ex-Waldensian communities "Poor Catholics") used *exhortare* to describe their intentions to preach.¹¹³ In his defense of secular preaching, Peter Chantor († 1197) also uses *exhortare* and *admonere*.¹¹⁴ Catholic authors choose *praedicare* in their accusations against the Waldenses. This allows to hypothesize that the Waldenses did not necessarily allow their women to preach in the most radical sense of the word; they were more involved in intellectual charity work. For example, there is trustworthy evidence about a woman who read the Gospel of John to a sick female friend.¹¹⁵ Catholic polemicists, while using the first term, tried to emphasize the scale of the heretical problem and intensify their attacks.

4. Reasons

Such "ubiquity" of the Waldensian "heresy" has different reasons. First, the Waldenses, unlike the Hussites or the Dulcinians, were not a local phenomenon. In the period of its greatest prosperity, the Waldensian itinerant preacher could be found over a wide area, from Stettin on the Baltic coast to Tarragona in Spain. Thus, they were a global pan-European problem for the papacy, local authorities, and the Inquisition. Secondly, accordingly, the Waldenses were actively written about – many sources have come down to nowadays, created both by the Waldenses and their opponents.

Thirdly, modern researchers do not doubt the very fact of the existence of the Waldenses. Not only the aforementioned Luciferianism but also the “Heresy of a Free Spirit” are proven to be an invention of the Medieval inquisitors. There is a great discussion around the Cathars. It means such movements could not be regarded as a universal example anymore, and the Waldenses have taken their place.

Finally, the Waldenses (as part of the Protestant Church) exist now. They have their own historians, museums, publishing house, and even a High School (Facoltà Valdese di Teologia di Roma).¹¹⁶

All of the above makes the Waldenses one of the most popular medieval heretical movements among both medieval authors and today's scholars. Moreover, it makes the Waldensian movement not only yet another European medieval religious movement but a universal *topos* of “the other”.

5. Conclusions

Over the past 850 years, the Waldenses have often been presented in the heretical narrative. This movement has been the embodiment of the very idea of heresy. The Catholic Church used all available tools against it: from the incorporation of the proto-monastical communities (the “Poor Catholics” and the “Reconciled Poor”) to the crusades. Their image was othered in all possible ways to create the most terrifying impression: they were false saints, guilty of the sin of vainglory, Lucifer worshipers, and witches. Dead inside, they were spreading a heretical contagion around them, and even if the Roman Church made repent – they turned back to their errors as a dog returns to its vomit. The Waldensian magisters were cunning false prophets, scribes, and Pharisees, seducing silly weak peasants. The former attracted the latter with the “appearance of piety”, but in reality, they organize sexual orgies during their secret night gatherings. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholic plans to win this battle because it is united and preaches openly, as a real Church of God, and because it has real divine knowledge, whereas heretics pervert the Scripture, hiding in dens and are divided. This image of the ultimate evil was used by the clerics to debate inner Church issues, naming their opponents “Waldensians”. It equates to the Waldenses becoming stereotyped heretics. This amalgamation had very important consequences. First, they accumulate in themselves all the possible accusations of the heretics, and it hides

their uniqueness beyond Catholic fantasies. Second, their name could be attributed to other people, which exaggerated the number of sectarians, and imported foreign, but not so obviously false as open insults, features to the Waldensian doctrine.

At the same time, in their own narratives, the Waldenses were presented as martyrs for the true Church of Christ. This line was supported by the Protestants in the Modern Era.

The Waldenses as a typical religious dissident movement continue to occupy an important "place in memory" of modern scholars. Most large schools in historiography, including socio-economic history and gender studies, have the Waldensian movement within their purview, sometimes exaggerating their significance. All this "omnipresence" of medieval Waldensianism "seduces" scholars to dramatize the significance and dispersion of the movement, and, what is less obvious but much more dangerous, to be less critical of works of their predecessors.

Thus, as it was shown in the example of the Waldensian women, it is never enough to interpret the Catholic medieval sources "from the contrary", omitting all the insults and non-true statements.¹¹⁷ Even the choice of the Latin word *exhortare* instead of *praedicare* could lead to the conclusion that the Waldensian women were rather more occupied by wide devout reading and teaching at home than preaching to the mass audience.

Other insulting accusations should be reinterpreted as well. In parallel with early Christians, secret night gatherings could be understood as clandestine preaching meetings in situations of inquisitorial persecution. The Waldensians were forced to be tricky under interrogation, and their opponents exaggerated their educational level and homiletic abilities to shame contemptuous prelates.

The Waldensian movement is a throughline of the European religious dissident history through the centuries. Thanks to their presence on large territories and in different social strata, the Waldensian sources could provide data not only on the history of religion, but also on social history or microhistory, or the history of mentality. Cultural history could consider their role as picture-perfect Other.

NOTES

- 1 BILLER 1996, 17.
- 2 MERLO 1974, 3.
- 3 LOBRICHON, 86.
- 4 LOCKETT 2011.
- 5 SZWAT-GYŁYBOWA, 18.
- 6 SZWAT-GYŁYBOWA, 292.
- 7 A movement for religious reform, calling for apostolic renewal through the rediscovery of genuine pious practices such as humility, obedience, and simplicity of life.
- 8 Imitation of the primitive church, poor, simple, and penitential, with interests and activities restricted to the spiritual domain; a passionate love for souls at home and far afield; and evangelical poverty in common, either predicated on mendicancy or mitigated by the work of one's own hands.
- 9 CLASSEN xi.
- 10 BIGET, 266.
- 11 PEGG, 38.
- 12 MANSELLI, 333.
- 13 REGIEWICZ, 45.
- 14 SZPIECH, 219.
- 15 The most comprehensive study of the history of the Medieval Waldenses as of 2023 is BENEDETTI and CAMERON 2022. It also contains the most detailed historiography of the issue.
For more details see RUBELLIN 2003.
- 16 PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 17.
- 17 BAIN.
- 18 SUERBAUM, 143.
- 20 SACKVILLE, 155. An allusion to 2 Peter 2:22.
- 21 "Sed reversus ad vomitum colligere et disseminare discipulos non desistit". GONNET 1958, 46.
- 22 BAIN, 61. Appears already in Irenaeus of Lyons († 202) *Adversus Haereses* 8, 1, who wrote a large work against the Gnostics and Marcion.
- 23 "Ad demoliendam vineam Domini vulpeculae prodierunt, personae contemptibiles et prorsus indignae, praedicationes officium usurpantes, sed potius sine spiritu". GONNET 1958, 46.
- 24 BAIN, 63; KIENZLE 1998, 270-272; VÄLIMÄKI 2016.
- 25 "Et timendum nimis est sectam illam valde dilatari plurimosque catholicos utriusque sexus ab orthodoxa fide abduci et ab haeticorum veneno letaliter infici, nisi eis obstitum fuerit ex acie christiana". DÖLLINGER, 305-306.
- 26 KRAMER, 127.
- 27 AKBARI 2009, p. 40.

- 28 VÄLIMÄKI 2016.
 29 MUSOLFF, 303.
 30 MERLO 2008, 23.
 31 One of Catholic names for the Waldenses.
 32 "Inter quas omnes sectas, que sunt vel fuerunt, non est perniciosior ecclesie
 dei quam Leonistarum, et tribus de causis: [...] Tercia quia, cum omnes alie
 immanitate blasphemiarum in deum audientibus horrorem inducant, hec
 Leonistarum magnam habens speciem pietatis – eo quod coram hominibus
 iuste vivant et bene omnia de deo credant et omnes articulos, qui in symbolo
 continentur – solummodo Romanam ecclesiam blasphemant et clerum, cui
 multitudo laicorum facilis est ad credendum". PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 73.
 33 VÄLIMÄKI 2022, 33-35.
 34 SACKVILLE, 57.
 35 WAGEMAKERS, 338-339.
 36 WAGEMAKERS, 345.
 37 The name "synagogue" for a place of gathering of heretics and devil
 worshipers was taken from the Bible, Revelation 2:9 and 3:9.
 38 An allusion to Revelation 2:25 or 3:11. But if the Bible speaks of keeping
 the faith, then Catholic polemicists used it to prove the depravity of the
 Waldenses. The same applies to the image of the extinguished candle.
 39 "... comedebant et bibebant cum laetitia magna, incipiendo quando gentes
 de terra iverant ad dormitionem circa primum somnum et ultra, post bibitum
 et comestionem stinguebant lumina, dicentes: qui habet, teneat, et illic erant
 viri et mulieres proximo gradu sibi attinentes, et sic stabant usque circa
 auroram". DÖLLINGER, 257-258.
 40 Dead as a complete opposite to eternal alive Christ.
 41 In his later sermon, Ademar wrote about many heresiarchs, who had such
 a powder made from bones of dead men (no mentions of children), which
 they covered under the guise of medicine for naive peasants; and nobody
 could resist it. CALLAHAN, 226.
 42 SACKVILLE, 59.
 43 "Item praedicant in locis occultis et privatis". DÖLLINGER, 369.
 44 GUIDONIS, 250.
 45 MERLO 1977, 198.
 46 GONNET 1998, 14.
 47 GONNET 1998, 103.
 48 SACKVILLE, 20; BAIN, 59.
 49 "Quando autem primo accedunt ad homines simplices, quia astutos et
 litteratos fugiunt, dicunt se scire orationes optimas". GONNET 1998, 103.
 50 SUERBAUM, 145.
 51 Means "Church prelates".

- 52 "Let the negligence of the faithful teachers be shamed, who are not so zealous
for the truth of the Catholic faith, as the perfidious Lionist is zealous for the
error of unbelief". PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 71.
- 53 SACKVILLE, 33-36.
- 54 "... Waldenses suos doctores, qui tamen in suis erroribus et optionibus
tripartiti sunt, et per consequens ecclesiam non constituentes, cum ecclesia
ad Eph. 4 sit una similiter et fides". NEUMANN, 679.
- 55 TASCA 2008, 580.
- 56 WAGEMAKERS, 343.
- 57 PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 20-43.
- 58 ARNOLD 31.
- 59 "Recurrunt ad sophismata et duplicitates et fugas verborum ne deprehendantur
in suis erroribus". GUIDONIS, 255.
- 60 PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 71.
- 61 GONNET 1998, 162-163.
- 62 PATSCHOVSKY 1979, 179, 199, 233.
- 63 "Quando queretur a vobis, si veniunt homines a vos, qui audiunt confessiones
et faciunt predicationes, respondeatis: "Veniunt homines ad nos, qui
nobis [omitted by the editor], et portant alias res domesticas necessarias
mulieribus"". Et sic per hunc modum evaserunt ab incarceratione et officium
inquisitionis illuserunt, quia nullus ex eis fuit crematus". PATSCHOVSKY
1979, 199.
- 64 VÄLIMÄKI 2019, 224-225.
- 65 BUENO 248.
- 66 THOMPSON, 200.
- 67 SUERBAUM, 139.
- 68 SUERBAUM, 125-126.
- 69 UTZ TREMP 1996, 537.
- 70 For example, in the ninth chapter of the Bernard Gui's book (GUIDONIS,
256-257) or Peter Zwicker (one of the most effective inquisitor of the late
XIV century in the Central Europe). KURZE, 73-75.
- 71 "Is quadam die dominica cum declinasset ad turbam, quam ante ioculatorem
viderat congregatam, ex verbis ipsius compungtus fuit, et eum ad domum
suam deducens, intente eum audire curavit. Fuit enim locus narrationis eius,
qualiter beatus Alexis in domo patris sui beato fine quievit". EX CHRONICO
UNIVERSALI ANONYMI LAUDUNENSIS, 447.
- 72 TASCA 2018, 185-186, 192-195, 199.
- 73 TASCA 2018, 192 note 36.
- 74 ROACH, 28.
- 75 "Iucundus, honestus, gravis, spectabilis, qui caelestium spectatorum
delectare possit aspectus". ZINK, 168.
- 76 ZINK, 174.

- 77 ZINK, 170.
 78 ZINK, 171.
 79 VÄLIMÄKI 2022, 35.
 80 "Et videtur eis, quod omnia tunc sint aurea, et apparet eis celum et thronus
 aureus et Lucifer in maiestate magna et angeli circumvolantes; et quamdiu
 ibi sunt servientes Lucifero." PATSCHOVSKY 1980, 164.
 81 GUIDONIS, 248.
 82 GONNET 1998, 160.
 83 OGÓREK, 178.
 84 SZYMAŃSKI, 37-47.
 85 OGÓREK, 102-104, 111-118.
 86 http://expositions.bnf.fr/flamands/grand/fla_212.htm
 87 "Et alius est demon quam adoravit in formam cati quam nominant Temon
 et eciam alias eundem adoravit in forma capre." PATRIA, 135 n. 36
 88 BRUNN, 345-347.
 89 "[...] tenebat buffonem grossum sub lecto, quem nutriebat cum carnibus et
 pane et caseo. Interrogatus, propter quod tenebat, respondit, ut de stercore
 ipsius faceret poculum praedictum sive beneficia supradicta." DÖLLINGER,
 258.
 90 UTZ TREMP 2002, 117.
 91 MERCIER.
 92 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525033083/f216.image>
 93 BEHRINGER.
 94 WINGERD; OSOKIN, 410.
 95 PALOMBARO.
 96 CAMERON, 502.
 97 MERLO 1989, 49; VOLPE, 60.
 98 RUSSELL, 138.
 99 VOLODINA, 25.
 100 PALOMBARO 83.
 101 AUDISIO; BALOSSINO, 65; BYLINA, 108; MERLO 1977, 103-109;
 MOLNÁR, 121-133.
 102 ENGELS, 34.
 103 There was an Italian school started by Raffaello Morghen, Gioacchino Volpe,
 Cinzio Violante, and German Ernst Werner who fruitfully worked on this
 question.
 104 GIVEN, 222.
 105 REHR.
 106 REHR, 36-38.
 107 BENEDETTI 2015, 85.
 108 FEUCHTER; WOMEN PREACHERS; BENEDETTI 2015; MICK-EVANS;
 SHAHAR.

- ¹⁰⁹ WOMEN PREACHERS, 101.
¹¹⁰ GONNET 1958, 80-81, 100, 104, 155, 165; GONNET 1998, 141, 158, 209-210; PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 76; "BURCHARDI ET CUONRADI URSPERGENSIUM CHRONICON," 376.
¹¹¹ GONNET 1998, 158.
¹¹² GIVEN, 227.
¹¹³ PL 215:1513, 2016:29-30, 275, 601.
¹¹⁴ BUC, 45.
¹¹⁵ PATSCHOVSKY 1973, 63.
¹¹⁶ Homepage (facoltavaldese.org)
¹¹⁷ Pilar Jiménez Sanchez names this process "systematic dedramatisation". SANCHEZ, 19.

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Abbreviation:

PL - Patrologia Latina.

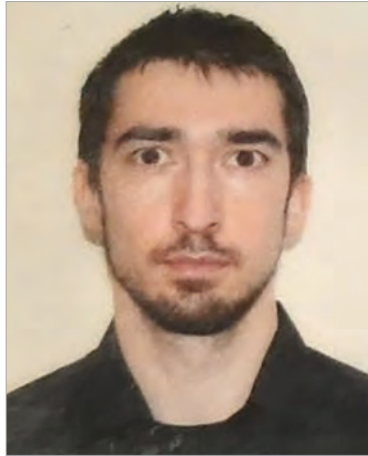
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STASIS AND DEMOKRATIA. A MAPPING OF RESILIENCE-DRIVING INSTITUTIONS IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

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Abstract

The chapter aims to outline the institutional architecture developed in Classical Athens with respect to the defence and resilience of democracy. In the first part I explain why and how the case of Classical Athens can be usefully drawn upon for engaging in contemporary institutional design. In the second part I describe several institutions from Classical Athens that aimed at and/or contributed to the prevention or resolution of anti-democratic challenges (*staseis*). The overarching purpose of this exposition is to set the basic foundations for a broader project that will draw on the institutional logic reconstructed from this historical case study in order to offer normative prescriptions for contemporary democratic resilience to autocratization challenges.

Keywords: Democracy; Democratic resilience; Neo-institutionalism; Stasis.

1. Introduction

There is a pervasive view in recent years amongst political scientists that democracy is declining at a global level. Some even go so far as to argue that we are experiencing a “third wave” of autocratization, which started in the early ‘90s and deepened at an accelerate pace in the past decade (Luhmann and Lindberg: 2019). These developments have, understandably, given rise to a shift in attention within democratic studies, which traditionally focused on democratization and democratic transitions and largely neglected the converse question of democratic breakdown (Cassani and Tomini: 2020, p. 273), with a few notable exceptions such as Linz and Stepan (1978). In the past decade, however, the study of what is

most often termed democratic backsliding or erosion¹ has become central to this field of research, with two broad areas of research being pursued, sometimes distinctly and sometimes in tandem. The first has an explanatory aim, in that it seeks to uncover the political, social, economic, agential and cultural features that facilitate or cause backsliding to occur (see e.g. Bermeo: 2016; Waldner and Lust: 2018; Przeworski: 2019; Haggard and Kaufmann: 2021 for some overviews). The second has a prescriptive aim, in that it seeks to address questions related to how backsliding can be prevented, or stopped and reversed once it has been triggered. This latter area, which is usually grouped under the term of democratic resilience (Holloway and Manwaring: 2023) is comparatively newer and arguably less developed than the former.

At this point, the reader of this chapter might be slightly puzzled. Why, after all, in a discussion that is seemingly focusing on Classical Athens, judging by the title, should we begin with an outline of the way in which contemporary democracy, and with it the field of democratic studies, has evolved? The reason for this will become clearer, once the aim of the broader project – for which the present chapter constitutes an opening foray – is stated. Concretely, the project seeks to contribute to the latter of the two research areas previously mentioned, i.e. the problem of contemporary democratic resilience. However, unlike the bulk of the literature developed thus far, which has been driven by pivotal case studies from the past couple of decades (e.g. Guasti: 2020a, 2020b; Laebens and Luhrmann: 2021) or larger time series focusing on the last century (Boese et al.: 2021), in the current project I intend to critically draw on a much earlier historical case in order to first construct a normative framework for better understanding and pursuing the goal of contemporary democratic resilience, and second, to outline concrete recommendations for institutional design flowing from the framework proposed. The broader project initiated here is therefore not one of political history, but rather of historically-informed contemporary political theory,² with the present chapter aiming to map out the historical institutional framework which will be drawn upon in subsequent works. By looking in-depth at the specific case of Classical Athens and attempting to excavate normative features that are relevant for present times, I am therefore engaging in a type of inquiry that is rather atypical for political theorists, but which is also not unprecedented, with several enterprises already advanced, such as the essays collected in Ober and Hedrick (1996), but also Schwartzberg (2004), Ober (2008a, 2017), or Malkopoulou (2017), to name only a few.

2. Why the Case of Classical Athens?

Having explained in the introductory section that the overarching aim of the chapter is to set the foundation for a broader project on contemporary democratic resilience, I believe it is worthwhile to justify (albeit succinctly) why the historical focus of the chapter – and the project as a whole – is placed on the case of Classical Athens. Three primary reasons underlie this decision.

First, the Athenian political system is sufficiently similar, in many respects, to contemporary democracies, but also sufficiently different, in many others, so as to provide a unique vantage point for spotlighting key issues which are ordinarily less perceptible to us. Both of these claims require further explanation. The former, in particular, may be deemed so controversial as to undermine the entire plausibility of the project, since it might be argued that Classical Athens was not in fact democratic. After all, while political inclusion was widespread when compared to other societies of the period, it only extended to adult male citizens, thereby excluding women, slaves, and metics. While a more precise account is subject to historical controversy, there are good reasons to believe that “during the fifth century the number of adult male citizens varied between 30,000 and 50,000 out of a total population of around 250,000 to 300,000” (Thorley: 2004, p. 79) and during the fourth century it remained at around 30,000, out of a population of at least 200,000 (Hansen: 2006, p. 45). If these figures are roughly correct, it follows that in Classical Athens political power was in fact concentrated in the hands of less than 20%, perhaps even 15% of the entire population, with the rest of the 80-85% being fully disenfranchised. Judging from the perspective of political equality, which is widely taken to be the core normative feature of contemporary democracy (e.g. Dahl: 1998; Christiano: 2008; Wilson: 2019), we then have a strong reason to object against using the democratic label with reference to the Athenian system.

While I cannot go into this complex debate here, it suffices to say that historians overwhelmingly label Classical Athens as democratic,³ understanding the term in a way that is broader and closer to what Athenians themselves likely had in mind, as “political power wielded actively and collectively by the demos” (Ober: 1993, p. 481) or as “legitimate collective self-governance by citizens” (Ober: 2017, p. 29). Regardless, whether the political systems of modern states and Classical Athens should be labeled in the same way is not essential for the kind of project undertaken here, as long

as they share a minimum of core normative commitments. For example, another emerging area of historically-informed research in political theory, which has been grouped under the label of *plebeian politics* (McCormick: 2011; Vergara: 2020), draws on the institutional architecture of the Roman Republic in order to devise democratic innovations for contemporary regimes, even though the case they build on surely departs from the ideal of political equality even more than the Athenian one. Moreover, if we take democracy to require more than political equality, such as a robust embodiment of popular control (Weir and Beetham: 1999), it could be argued that, *in some respects*, the Athenian system democratically outperforms representative systems and could be beneficially explored as a source for improving our current democracies.

The second reason for thinking that the Athenian experience might be relevant for the topic of democratic resilience has to do with the historical facts on the ground. There is some controversy over the exact timeframe we should use to talk about democratic Athens, but the most common position is to take the Cleisthenic reforms of 508/507⁴ as its starting point, and the reforms imposed by Antipater in the aftermath of the Lamian War in 322 as its end.⁵ This gives us a timeframe of about 180 years during which Athens is continuously ruled democratically, with the two exceptions of the oligarchy of the Four Hundred in 411 and the narrower oligarchy of the Thirty Tyrants in 404/403. But these brief exceptional situations are themselves suggestive of the entrenchment of Athenian democracy, since the regimes in question are overthrown in less than a year from their inception. In Classical Athens, then, we have a case study of a robust democratic regime, which manages to endure, and to quickly rebound from isolated constitutional crises, for almost two centuries.

Finally, it could be said that the Athenian case is not unique even amongst the Greek *poleis*, with many other enduring democratic regimes existing contemporary to it, so why focus on it to the detriment of others? Surely, none were as large, influential, or powerful as Athens, but this does not constitute a reason to prefer the latter since we are fundamentally interested in dynamic processes that are internal to a political community (although they can be affected by external circumstances). Rather, singling out the Athenian case is warranted in light of the fact that we have, with respect to it, an extensive collection of historical sources that we can rely on in order to better understand both the institutional architecture of the political system but also, importantly, (at least part of) the underlying logic and aims of these institutions. These range from (almost) complete

political and historical works written during the respective timeframe (e.g. Herodotus' *Histories* or the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia*), to speeches of the Attic orators such as Demosthenes or Lysias, surviving fragments from Attidographers (Harding: 2007), plays (particularly the comedies of Aristophanes), as well as archeological and epigraphic evidence, such as pottery shards used during ostracism votes and stelae containing legal provisions (see Hansen: 1991, pp. 4-26 for an overview).

To summarize then, there are three primary reasons why taking an in-depth look at the institutional system of Classical Athens may be helpful for contemporary institutional design when it comes to democratic resilience: it shares core normative features with contemporary democracies but is also sufficiently distinct so as to provide different perspectives from the ones present in recent case studies; it displays remarkable durability, withstanding as a democratic system (in different forms) for almost two centuries, often in adverse circumstances; and it can be much better understood when compared to other historical examples due to the extensive sources for evidence we currently have.

3. Democratic Resilience, *Stasis*, and Institutions: Some Preliminary Remarks

Before moving to the institutional mapping prefaced in the introductory section, it is important to make a few clarificatory points regarding the conceptual and theoretical framework employed. To start with, the concept of democratic resilience – central to the project – has been given a wide range of interpretations in the academic literature, from “an attachment to democratic ideals persists and such ideals continue to be canvassed in some quarters, in spite of hostility from the officially prescribed values and norms and apparent indifference from many elements in society” (Burnell and Calvert: 1999, p. 4) to “the outcome of critical actors’ efforts to represent marginalized groups in the face of threats to existing gender equality rights” (Chiva: 2023, p. 1). Most discussions of democratic resilience, however, rely (often implicitly) on two kinds of conceptualizations, which Volacu and Aligica (2023) have labeled as an *ex ante* account and an *ex post* one. While the former refers to “the ability of a political regime to prevent or react to challenges without losing its democratic character” (Merkel and Luhrmann: 2021, p. 872), the latter states that “a democratic system is resilient if it maintains its democratic

identity through a challenge aiming to undermine it" (Volacu and Aligica: 2023, p. 5).⁶ The central difference between the two is that while the *ex ante* account assesses systemic capacity, which depends on institutional and agential features of a polity, the *ex post* account assesses the outcome of a process triggered by the initiation of an anti-democratic challenge.

This difference can be made clearer by borrowing a concept from ancient Greeks, i.e. that of *stasis*, which has been described by Finley (1985, p. 44) as „one of the most remarkable words to be found in any language“. While rooted in ideas such as “placing” or “position”, the political usage of the term was quite diverse, with its most well-known meanings being those of faction and, most often, civil war (Finley: 1985, p. 44; Berent: 1998; Hansen: 1991, p. 269). However, we should be cautious not to draw a too strict of an equivalence between *stasis* and the modern sense of civil war, since the latter can exist for a variety of reasons including secessionism, sectarianism, the replacement of one set of political rulers with another without changing the regime, etc. Drawing on the sources mentioned earlier, and in particular on Berent (1998), we should rather understand *stasis* more narrowly, as a typically violent (but not necessarily so⁷) factional struggle for core constitutional reform (*metabole politeias*). In Classical Greece, this process ordinarily pitted an oligarchic faction against a democratic one, with one trying to overthrow the existing constitutional order that was defended by the other.⁸ But the concept can also be beneficially resurrected to describe a process which is still very much salient in contemporary times and is not really captured by another label, namely the case where there is a serious public contestation of constitutional foundations by a significant faction in society (either in terms of numbers or political influence). To clarify, by constitutional foundations I am not (necessarily) referring to constitutional provisions, but rather to the kind of political regime in place, which can be shaped through *some* constitutional, but also ordinary, legal instruments. There are already several terms that we ordinarily use to depict processes such as these. One is *revolution*, but, both in the social and strictly political sense, this necessarily entails a *transformation* of state structures (Skocpol: 1979, p. 4). Another is *democratic backsliding* or *erosion*, but this also requires the achievement of political change, and in a particular direction. By contrast, the concept of *stasis* is neutral in terms of outcomes, and could aptly be applied to describe the (violent or non-violent) process of factional struggle over constitutional foundations – which in modern times ordinarily pits an autocratizing faction and a (liberal)-democratic one –

even when this does not result in institutional change either ultimately or at any point throughout the process.

The concept of democratic resilience then, in both the *ex ante* and the *ex post* account, can be reconstructed around the notion of *stasis*, with the former representing the capacity of a democratic system for *stasis prevention*, and the latter representing a democratic *stasis resolution*. This distinction, which will be drawn upon in the following two sections, was visible in the institutional architecture of Classical Athens, particularly in respect to duties and liability for one's actions, even though it was not explicitly articulated as such. Just to give one example, since I will subsequently present these considerations in more detail, taking part in anti-democratic action ordinarily made one liable to denunciation in the Assembly through the procedure of *eisangelia*, but in the context of *stasis*, if democracy was overthrown, the same person would have been liable to be killed without trial (especially after 410)^{9 10}.

These kinds of institutions represent the primary focus of this chapter. This is not due to mere descriptive historical interest, though as will be seen many of them raise fascinating historical puzzles, but rather because of the more general lessons we can draw regarding their role in democratic defense. The theoretical framework which grounds this analysis is, therefore, a neo-institutionalist one (see Hall and Taylor: 1996), taking individual action as being of fundamental explanatory value, in a context where such action is shaped to a more or less significant extent by incentives provided by institutions – which are broadly interpreted as (systems of) rules, that can be legal provisions but also informal social norms and practices. I therefore refrain from making strict rationality assumptions as a basis of behavior.¹¹ All that is needed for my purposes is the much less controversial position that some non-trivial sum of individuals sometimes act on the basis of the costs and benefits that they expect to incur or receive if they follow or deviate from formal or informal norms.

4. *Stasis*-preventing Institutions in Classical Athens

I begin with an outline of the basic institutions in use at various times during the timeline of Classical Athens, that can be convincingly interpreted as serving, at least in part, the function of preventing *stasis* and – therefore – ensuring the continuation of the democratic regime without significant

challenges and social conflicts threatening to overthrow it. I will discuss three such institutions, not necessarily in chronological order, skewing some of the historical controversies regarding them and focusing rather on explaining their purpose and the evidence we have of their employment towards the goal of democratic defense.

4.1. Ostracism

Out of all the institutions discussed in this chapter, ostracism is surely the one with which the average reader will be most familiar with, at least terminologically. The word ostracism (deriving from *ostrakismos*) has been preserved in numerous languages, including the one in which this chapter is written (English) and the native language of its author (Romanian). Nowadays it is commonly used to describe a kind of social exclusion, but as we will see in this section this differs from the original meaning of ostracism which referred to a kind of politically-motivated territorial exclusion.

The most extensive description of the institution of ostracism is found in a fragment from the 3rd century attidographer Philochorus who outlines it as a two-stage procedure. In the first stage a vote is taken in the Assembly on whether to hold an ostracism that year. If the vote is affirmative, a second round is to be held in the Agora at a specified time in the future,¹² where willing citizens would write a name on a potsherd (*ostrakon*), designating the person they wished to see ostracized. All potsherds were then tallied up and, if there were at least 6,000 potsherds in total, the person whose name was inscribed on a plurality of them was ostracized, meaning that they would have to leave the city for 10 years (Harding: 2007, F116; see also Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 43.5; and for a modern overview Hansen: 1991, p. 35 and Forsdyke: 2005, pp. 146-149). It is worth highlighting that the nature of the ostracism was strictly political. The property of the exiled was not confiscated, their citizenship rights would be fully restored on return and some retained their political clout once the exile had elapsed (Forsdyke: 2005, p. 152).

The date when the institution of ostracism was first introduced is subject to a minor historical controversy, due to a fragment referencing Androtion's claim that it was enacted just before the first ostracism, i.e. that of Hipparchus – who was a relative of the former tyrant Pisistratus (Harding: 2007, F109). This would put the date of enactment at around 488/487. But this view is contradicted by other sources, including Philochorus in

the fragment referenced above and Aristotle (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 22.1), who maintain that it was enacted as part of the democratic reform package of Cleisthenes, in 508/507, and this is the standard scholarly position in contemporary times as well (see Forsdyke: 2005, pp. 281-284 for a justification). In any case, the date and person subjected to the first ostracism is indeed taken to be Hipparchus, with the last being Hyperbolus, likely in 415 (Forsdyke: 2005, p. 170). Between these, historians are confident of at least eight other ostracisms taking place, usually of major political and military figures.¹³

Both the dates of ostracisms – half are grouped in the 480s and only one takes place after 442 – as well as the persons ostracized are important for reconstructing the aim of this institution. This is, of course, not an easy task since we do not have access either to the reasoning of Cleisthenes when he proposed it, nor to the reasoning of citizens who cast inscribed *ostraka* as part of the process.¹⁴ Consequently, there have been a variety of explanations of its functions, ranging from interpreting it as an instrument against tyranny, to a form of punishment against treason, corruption, or religious offences. Forsdyke (2005), who has undertaken the most in-depth and influential modern analysis of the institution of ostracism, takes a critical view of these explanations, advocating for a pluralist approach whereby ostracism is understood as a collective ritual with “a number of practical and ideological functions for the Athenian democracy”, that evolve over time (Forsdyke: 2005, pp. 158-159). If the first three known uses are probably connected to the very serious threat regarding the restoration of tyranny with Achaemenid support (on this point see Rhodes: 2002, p. 198), from the ostracism of Xanthippus (Pericles’ father) in 484 onwards they almost always target leading political elites that are not perceived as pro-tyrannical. The most plausible explanation offered by Forsdyke, holding in mind the general idea that individual citizens might have specifically inscribed *ostraka* for many different reasons, is that “the fundamental significance of ostracism for the Athenians was its role as a deterrent to violent intra-elite conflict and its symbolic articulation of the power of the people” (Forsdyke: 2005, p. 161). On this view, ostracism worked as a stabilizing force for the democratic regime, in that when severe tensions began to arise between competing political factions, these could be extinguished before spilling into the violent process of *stasis* by simply exiling the leading figure of one of these factions. This *stasis*-preventing function is also in line with Hansen’s (1991, p. 35) interpretation of ostracism, according to which “in the years 510-507 he [Cleisthenes]

had had personal experience of how the rivalries of political leaders could split the state: to obviate such stasis in the future he introduced a procedure by which a leader could be sent into banishment". The practical deployment of ostracism beginning with 484 also lends important support to this view. If we look at the list of factional leaders drawn by Aristotle (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 28.2) for the better part of the fifth century: Xanthippus v. Miltiades, Aristides v. Themistocles, Cimon v. Ephialtes, and Thucydides (son of Melesias¹⁵) v. Pericles, we can notice that at least one of each pair, and sometimes both (i.e. Aristides and Themistocles) were ostracized, ordinarily while at the height of their political influence.

Another interesting aspect, for this chapter, regarding ostracism which is at least worth flagging is that it is the only Athenian institution discussed here whose revival (in a modified form) has been explicitly advocated as part of a contemporary mechanism for democratic self-defense. The proposal, advanced by Anthoula Malkopoulou (2017), would seek the strictly political temporary expulsion of a citizen from holding office, through a popular vote, without recourse to the much more dubious practice of territorial exclusion. The idea has a number of interesting upshots, including the possibility to block anti-democrats from gaining office in a way that could be democratically legitimate, decentering the discourse on democratic defense from the institutional level to that of citizens, and the potentially moderating effects of such a practice on the ideological positions of politicians. However, while acknowledging these possibilities, I've also raised what I believe is a strong (and perhaps decisive) objection against the proposal, which refers to the risk that it poses for the capacity of representatives of persistent minorities for even standing for political office, since alongside broad pro-democratic coalitions, the institution can also result in broad nationalistic, religious, anti-LGBTQ etc. coalitions to be formed, that can politically expel their perceived opponents (Volacu: 2021).

Without delving into a more detailed analysis here, I do think it is important to underline, therefore, that the more beneficial way of engaging with political history for the purposes of contemporary political theory is not to try to pluck out particular institutions from their historical context and advocate for their revival (though sometimes this can make sense), but rather to reconstruct their logic and aims and then – if these are also shared in our contemporary contexts – to see how we can draw on their normative features in order to construct institutions that are aligned with our current values and philosophical commitments.

4.2. The *Graphe Paranomon*

The institution of ostracism fell into disuse in the last century of Athenian democracy, although the question of whether to hold an ostracism was still put in the Assembly every year. This does not mean that the threat of *stasis* generated by intra-elite conflict suddenly disappeared after 415. Rather, alternative institutions started to be employed to similar effects (despite having other purposes as well), the most notorious such institution being the *graphe paranomon*.¹⁶

The term *graphe paranomon* is translatable as “public prosecution for unconstitutional proposal” (Hansen: 1991, p. 174). It was most likely introduced in the reforms proposed by Ephialtes, so in 462, but the first certain instance of its use is recalled to have taken place in 415¹⁷ (Andoc. 1.17), meaning indeed that its popularity arises around the same time that ostracism is no longer used. As part of the political overhaul of 403/402, the *graphe* is split into two versions, following the newly introduced distinction between laws (*nomoi*) and decrees (*psephismata*), with the former continuing to be challenged through a *graphe paranomon* and the latter through a *graphe nomon me epitedeion theinai*. The procedure, however, remained largely the same in both cases. Hansen (1991, pp. 205-208) outlines it as follows: the mechanism is initiated through an oath sworn by any willing citizen, either before the vote on its adoption in the Assembly or after the vote passes (in which case, the decree/law is suspended until the end of the procedure); the accuser then delivers a written charge which could be either procedural (it violated another law or it was proposed illegally) or substantive (i.e. it was damaging to the *demos*); the case is subsequently brought in front of a jury panel (*dikasterion*), which was composed of a minimum of 501 citizens (sometimes double or even more than double in size); the accuser and the proposer of the law then face each other in court; if the former won the majority of votes, the law would be rescinded and the proposer punished, but if the former lost by more than 4/5 of the vote, he would be punished with a fine and partial loss of citizenship rights (*atimia*).

Even with these potential costs for the accuser, the *graphe paranomon* was likely used quite often, suggesting its practical importance for the Athenian *polis*. While we have definite evidence for thirty-five cases for the period 403-322¹⁸, it has been suggested that “jurors must have judged a *graphe paranomon* something like once every month” (Hansen: 1991, p. 209). The question, then, is what was the purpose of the institution? As in

the case of ostracism, it is reasonable to think that the *graphe paranomon* served a variety of functions. Hansen (1991, pp. 208-210) focuses on the epistemic function, since political decisions had to be approved by a separate body when they were challenged through the *graphe*. Another common interpretation is that, seen through our contemporary lens, the two types of public prosecutions performed a judicial review function, since they questioned the “constitutionality” of decrees or laws (Canevaro: 2017).

More important for my present purposes, the *graphe* served a democratic function as well, with Demosthenes famously claiming that giving up these kinds of indictments for illegality would spell the “ruin of [...] democracy” (Dem. 58.34). There are at least two reasons for this. First, the institution prevented the subversion of democracy through legal means, since decrees would be voided if they violated the democratic rules in place, legal reforms could only target specific institutions and not go against the broader democratic system, and, at least in the fourth century, the practice evolved to the point where “breach of the (democratic) principles underlying the law” (Hansen: 1991, p. 206) also represented a valid reason to overturn a decision. Second, since the institution threatened to punish the proposer of a decree or a law if it was established to be unconstitutional, citizens were discouraged from even bringing forth such proposals to begin with, especially as penalties went – at least in one case – as far as execution.¹⁹ Having this punitive potential in mind, the *graphe paranomon* was effectively used as a political weapon throughout the fourth century, especially targeting decrees aiming to confer honors on Athenians or foreign citizens²⁰ (Hansen: 1991, p. 211). The consequences of these arrangements were likely similar in scope to those of ostracism. Political elites were faced with consistent scrutiny by the *demos* and, therefore, needed to placate them in their public stances so that when they were subjected to a vote they retained popular backing. While democracy was in place, the *demos* continued to hold power, so any attempt at anti-democratic overtures in political decision-making, that could eventually lead to *stasis* and the potential subversion of the *demos*, was effectively nipped in the bud.

4.3. *Eisangelia* and the Law Against Tyranny

Ostracism was used, at most, against one person per year. The *graphe paranomon* was not limited in its usage, but could only be deployed against

someone who proposed a law or a decree. Other institutions, however, did not presuppose restrictions of this kind and could be more widely used against political elites that were seen as potentially inimical to democracy. The most important of them was the so-called *law against tyranny*.

The historical evolution of this institution is even more controversial than those discussed in the previous sections. Its origin, according to Ostwald (1955, p. 105) is pre-Solonian, due to a fragment from Plutarch (Plut. *Sol.* 19.3) which mentions an amnesty granted by Solon that included those convicted for the attempt to establish a tyranny. Whether it continued in the same form, was changed, or was newly enacted as part of Solon's reforms in 594, it is clear that Athenians in the fourth century traced some version of it back to this time. According to Aristotle (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 8.4), "Solon [...] appointed the council of the Areopagus to guard the laws [...] In general it watched over most and the greatest of the city's affairs [...] it tried those charged with conspiring to dissolve the democracy, under the law of denunciation which Solon enacted to deal with them". The law was likely in place in a similar form after the reforms of Cleisthenes in 508/507, with the amendment that the Assembly now shared the power to hear political trials and after the Ephialtic reforms of 462 the Areopagus was completely stripped of that power, which was put in the hands of the courts. It was, however, changed at some future point, with Ostwald (1955, p. 118) dating it as most likely to have taken place in the reforms of 403/402, and with another modification taking place a few decades later that removed the Assembly's juridical function completely (Hansen: 1991, p. 159). This is the version of the law for which the contents are known quite well, due to its explicit citation in a speech of Hypereides, who states that liability for impeachment arises "if anyone [...] seeks to overthrow the Athenian people [...] or if he gets together with anyone with a view to overthrow of the people, or assemblies an association; or if anyone betrays a city or ships or an army or fleet; or says things, as a speaker, not in the best interests of the Athenian people and takes money for doing so" (Hyp. 4.7-4.8).

The procedure used was typical for Athenian trials: an *eisangelia* (denunciation) could be made by any citizen in the Assembly against another person on the grounds previously mentioned; a decree was then passed regarding the logistical aspects of the trial (including whether it was to be judged by the Assembly itself or the courts); on the day of the trial the denouncer appeared as an accuser (otherwise he would be fined and suffer partial *atimia*), while the person accused also had the opportunity

to defend herself; following the speeches, the people assembled as jurors voted on whether the accused was guilty and, if so, for the penalty they should receive (Hansen: 1991, pp. 214-215).

The institution was likely used quite extensively. If the main target of the *graphe paranomon* were the *rhetoires*, i.e. the politicians, *eisangelia* was mainly (though certainly not exclusively) directed against the *strategoï*, i.e. the generals. Generalships were peculiar offices in Classical Athens, as they were not occupied through what was thought to be the most democratic way, namely through lottery, but were elected annually, with immediately renewable mandates. A board of only ten generals were elected each year, however, more than a quarter of all known *eisangelia* targeted generals (Hansen: 1991, p. 216). Furthermore, as Hansen (1991 p. 217) suggests, “at least a fifth of all generals were confronted sooner or later by an *eisangelia*; in other words, in every board of ten generals there were probably at least two who, in the course of their military careers, would be denounced by that procedure. And their first *eisangelia* was usually their last, for it usually ended with condemnation and the death sentence – in the light of which many a general preferred to flee into exile and be condemned in his absence”.

This assessment puts the spotlight on the effects of the law against tyranny, and the *eisangelia* procedure more generally. The institution explicitly offered an instrument through which Athenian citizens could dismantle anti-democratic factionalization and could block actions aiming at the subversion of democracy in its infant stages, thereby averting *stasis*. However, the evidence we have concerning its practical use points to a role that is similar to that performed by the *graphe paranomon*, only for another category of political elites, namely those who played a leading role in public life not through their political enterprises but through their military clout. Here, perhaps even more often than in the case of the *graphe paranomon*, the procedure effectively ensured that power was diffused in the *polis*, with elites holding influential offices being constantly rotated either following a successful prosecution or by their forced departure into exile; and, furthermore, the significant threat of being (successfully) prosecuted would have surely weighed significantly in the conduct of these generals towards the *demos* and their ability to control the *polis* through the democratic regime, since it was the *demos* who decided – in the Assembly or in the courts – whether the accused was to be found guilty and, if so, the way in which he should be punished. The dispositions created through such institutions amongst the ranks of political and military

elites, must have been ones that were favorable towards the interests of the *demos*, including those regarding the preservation of democracy and the avoidance of *stasis*.

5. *Stasis*-resolving Institutions in Classical Athens

For approximately 180 years, Athens retained its democratic system while being largely devoid of *stasis*. It is not unreasonable to suggest that a significant reason for democratic stability was in the type of institutional arrangements previously outlined, especially due to their role in subverting elite overreach and maneuvers that would be contrary to popular will. Still, as previously mentioned, this period also saw two periods of *stasis* in Athens, during which the democratic regime was initially overthrown and subsequently restored. The fairly short timeline of survival for the oligarchical regimes and the formidable challenges quickly and effectively mounted against non-democratic rule represent the main reason why we should study these chapters of Classical Athenian history, with an eye to lessons for present times. As with the case for *stasis*-prevention, discussed earlier, here we can also see that Athenians developed institutions that aimed and succeeded to shape individual behavior in a democracy-defending direction, ultimately resolving the *staseis* with a democratic outcome. Subsequently, I will outline four primary institutions that contributed to this situation.

5.1. *The Cult of the Tyrannicides*

Many contemporary societies hold dominant historical narratives regarding their ethnogenesis, or the founding origin for their nationhood or statehood, that often bend historical truth to a more or less severe extent, in order to build a certain positive image about themselves. Athenians, it appears, were no exception when it comes to the foundational story of their democracy (Teegarden: 2014a, p. 32). The core of this story revolved around the public assassination of the tyrant Hipparchus (son of the better-known Pisistratus) by Harmodius and Aristogeiton a few years prior to the Cleisthenic reforms. The two Athenians were commonly assumed to have performed an act of tyrannicide by killing Hipparchus, thereby giving birth to democracy through that act and becoming its original heroes. That this story was widely believed by Athenians can be surmised from Thucydides,

who is adamant about the fact that it represents an inaccurate account, despite being commonly held (Thuc. 6.53.3-6.59.4), but both Herodotus (Hdt. 5.55) and Aristotle (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 18) share the account offered by Thucydides, which is widely accepted in contemporary scholarship. In this more accurate version of events, Hipparchus is indeed assassinated by Harmodius and Aristogeiton, but this is by no means the founding act of democratic Athens. For one, Hipparchus was not the tyrant of the *polis*, but only the brother of the tyrant, Hippias. For another, Hippias is not assassinated but continues to rule tyrannically for four more years until he is ousted through the means of a Spartan intervention under Cleomenes. And, finally, the reasons for Hipparchus' assassination are suggested as having less to do with a democratic aim and more to do with a personal quarrel between him and his assassins.

In any case, it is beyond any doubt that the actions of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were widely acclaimed after the Cleisthenic reforms of 508/507 (thus, less than a decade after the assassination), as statues of them were erected in the Agora as early as 507 (Shear: 2012, pp. 33-34). In time, the public accolades turned into a full-blown cult, with numerous social, political, and religious rituals surrounding it, some of which we can reconstruct from various sources such as speeches and ancient manuscripts. One well-known example is of religious rituals, including the performance of songs at the Panathenaia festival starting from the late sixth century, which were eventually extended, as evidenced by Demosthenes: "[...] will you permit like treatment for the citizen descended from Harmodius and your greatest benefactors, those whom, to mark their deeds on your behalf, you include by law in the festive libations at all your sanctuaries and sacrifices, whom you exalt in song and venerate on a par with the heroes and gods?" (Dem. 19.280). At some point, likely after 410, there was also a law prohibiting the public slander of the tyrannicides, as illustrated by Hypereides: "[...] the people wrote a prohibition in a law, forbidding anyone either to slander Harmodius and Aristogeiton or to sing rude songs about them" (Hyp. 2.3). But perhaps most notorious were the special socio-economic benefits conferred upon the descendants of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, namely *sitesis*, i.e. free meals in the Prytaneion for life, *proedria*, i.e. front row seats at festivals, and *ateleia*, which meant that they were exempt from sharing some public burdens, such as paying for choruses (which was expected from wealthier citizens).²¹

Beyond providing a common narrative as to the foundations of democracy, the evolving cult of the tyrannicides served as an instrument that projected the “paradigm for the good Athenian citizen” (Shear: 2012, p. 40) in a public and perennial manner. The ideal Athenian citizen should cultivate his character and model his behavior by following the example of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, in which case he will be remembered heroically in the future and his descendants will benefit from their actions as long as democracy stands. This meant that such a citizen should not refrain from going even as far as assassination, should the city be in the throes of *stasis* and democracy overthrown. As Teegarden (2014a, p. 32) puts it, “tyrannicide was the act of a committed democrat who was unwilling to wait for others to liberate his fellow citizens”. How effective the cult of the tyrannicides was in resolving *stasis* with a democratic outcome, we cannot know for sure. But it is not at all far-fetched to think that the kind of beliefs instilled by the ideas and practices associated with it were important in the restoration of democracy following the oligarchy of the Four Hundred. The reason for this is that one of the key moments in this process (and perhaps the most salient one) is the assassination of Phrynichus in 411, who was one of the main political figures of the new regime.²² There is a divergence of accounts regarding the actual event, with Thucydides claiming that the assassins were a border-guard and an Argive (Thuc. 8.92.2), and Lysias claiming in a speech made around 398 that the two were in fact Thrasybulus of Calydon and Apollodorus of Megara (Lys. 13.71). Shear (2011, pp. 141-142) makes a compelling case in favor of the latter account, highlighting the fact (also referenced in his speech by Lysias), that the two had received Athenian citizenship with full civic rights, golden crowns and other honors at the City Dionisia festival in 409. Thus, while the pair of tyrannicides contributing to the resolution of the 411 *stasis* did not ultimately receive the same honors as Harmodius and Aristogeiton, likely both because there was no law mandating an identical treatment but also because they were not Athenian citizens, they were greatly honored and received important benefits for their action. Surely, this experience must have made the cult even more potent in shaping attitudes throughout the *polis* and, in a short amount of time, a new institution would be introduced aiming to give a more formal basis for the rewards bestowed upon a tyrannicide. This is the institution I now turn to.

5.2. *The Oath of Demophantus*

The year 411 was an important one in the history of Athenian democracy. Following the catastrophic Sicilian Expedition of 415-413 and the support given by the Achaemenid Empire to Sparta, the Athenians were in a very precarious military situation, which quickly turned into political instability and, eventually in an anti-democratic coup which set up a Council of Four Hundred as the dominant power. A series of events, including a pro-democratic revolt of the Athenian fleet anchored at Samos, the above-mentioned assassination of Phrynichus, the push for moderation from within the coup's members, and the revolt of a section of the army in Piraeus led to a fairly quick restoration of democracy (Thuc. 8.45-8.97). In total, the *stasis* lasted less than four months, from June to September of 411 (Teegarden: 2014a, p. 17).

In the aftermath of these events, the Assembly adopted a decree proposed by Demophantus, with the very clear aim of shoring up citizen mobilization against any future anti-democratic forces, should they succeed in overthrowing democracy again. We have excellent evidence for the contents of that decree due to a speech made by Andocides in 399, where he reads the decree in full from the stele on which it was inscribed (Andoc. 1.96-1.98). The decree comes in two parts. The first outlines that overthrowing the democracy or holding office while democracy is overthrown makes one liable to be killed and his property confiscated, and exculpates the killer from any penalty. The second is an oath, that all Athenian citizens had to swear, which has remained known as the Oath of Demophantus. The oath was as follows:

I shall kill, by word and deed, by vote and by my own hand, if I can, anyone who overthrows the democracy at Athens, and anyone who, when the democracy has been overthrown, holds any office thereafter, and anyone who aims to rule tyrannically or helps to set up the tyrant. And if anyone else kills him, I shall consider that man to be pure in the sight of both gods and spirits, because he has killed an enemy of the Athenians, and I will sell all the property of the dead man and give half to the killer and not keep any back. And if anyone dies while killing or attempting to kill any such man, I shall care both for him and for his children, just as for Harmodius and Aristogeiton and their descendants. And all oaths that have been sworn against the people of Athens, at Athens or on campaigns or anywhere else, I declare null and void (Andoc. 1.97-1.98)

There are several important aspects to point out regarding this institution, even though spatial constraints prevent a more in-depth analysis. First, we should note that in spite of the language couched in terms of tyranny, there is an important shift from earlier institutions such as the law against tyranny (see section 4.3 above), in that the accent is no longer placed on mitigating the threat from a dynastic tyranny but from a broader oligarchy, directing the punishment at anyone who occupies offices during the overthrow of democracy. Second, the focus of the decree is placed on the case where *stasis* is unfolding, undoubtedly based on the experience Athenians had with such a process no more than a year before. Part of the aim must have been to prevent *stasis* altogether by making it publicly known that there will be consequences of the utmost severity for anyone who would engage in it on the anti-democratic side. But the other, likely central, part was to effectively mobilize citizens to defend democracy in case *stasis* was unfolding, through generating “common knowledge²³ of credible commitment to defend the democracy” and solve the coordination problem inherent to situations of this kind, by incentivizing citizens to “take the all-important first step in defense of the democracy - to ‘kill a tyrant’ and thus initiate a revolutionary bandwagon” (Teegarden: 2014a, pp. 52-53), by bestowing upon them honors similar to those reserved for Harmodius and Aristogeiton discussed in the previous sub-section.

As to the practical effects of the Oath on the beliefs and actions of Athenians in future events, we can once again only resort to informed conjectures since we do not have access to their thoughts aside from those made explicit in our surviving sources. But there are still several things to be said. The most immediate effects, discussed at length by Shear (2011) regard the role played by the Oath and its accompanying rituals in restoring social peace and reunifying the *polis*. But the more important ones relate to the next *stasis* that took place at Athens. Following its defeat in the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans forced a regime change in 404 that concentrated all political power in the hands of a board of thirty individuals, commonly referred to as the Thirty Tyrants. This regime was overthrown in less than a year as well, through the successful mobilization of Athenian exiles whose ranks grew increasingly with time and, after they won several victories in the field, through the pressure of those remaining in Athens who deposed the Thirty Tyrants and a subsequent board of ten oligarchs who took their place (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 37-38; Xen. *Hell.* 2.3-2.4). What drove the mass mobilization that was key to democratically resolving the *stasis* of 404/403 is probably a complex of factors, but, as Teegarden

(2014a, pp. 43-52) has extensively argued on a number of grounds, it is quite reasonable to think that the Oath played a significant part in this process.

Furthermore, there is also a case to be made, albeit more difficult one, that “the remarkable stability of the fourth-century Athenian democracy should ultimately be attributed to the fact that all Athenians swore the oath of Demophantus, and to the successful mobilization against the Thirty tyrants that followed” (Teegarden: 2014a, p. 53). Here again, I believe it is more likely that the robustness of democracy can be better explained by the conjuncture of a range of institutions – described in this chapter – rather than the result of a single one, but it is worth noticing that the Oath was still recalled much later during the fourth century and it was imbued with a kind of transgenerational character, as Lycurgus indicates in a speech given in 330: “You have sworn in the decree of Demophantus to kill the man who betrays his country, whether by word or deed, hand or vote. I say “you”; for you must not think that, as heirs to the riches bequeathed by your ancestors, you can yet renounce your share in their oaths or in the pledge your fathers gave as a security to the gods, thereby enjoying the prosperity of their city” (Lycurg. 1.127).

5.3. *The Law of Eukrates*

In the second half of the fourth century Athenian democrats were confronted with a new threat, which did not come from the Achaemenid Empire, nor Sparta, but rather from the rising power of Macedon. This threat was more forceful than ever after the Athenian defeat at the battle of Chaeronea in 338, which left Philip II as hegemon over almost all of Greece through the establishment of what modern historians call the League of Corinth. Even though Philip did not impose regime changes on the more or less reluctant allies that joined the League (including Athens), there was a palpable concern amongst Athenians that their democracy was in danger. These contextual details form the background for the enactment of a new institution in 337/336, called the Law of Eukrates. Luckily, we have unmediated access to the content of this law due to the excavation of a stele on which the law was inscribed, in 1952 (Ostwald: 1955, p. 103). The text reads as follows:

If anyone rises up against the People for a tyranny or joins in establishing a tyranny or overthrows the Athenian People or the democracy at Athens,

whoever kills anyone who does any of these things shall be without guilt; and it shall not be permitted for the councillors of the Council of the Areopagus, if the People or the democracy at Athens have been overthrown, to go up to the Areopagus or to sit in session or to deliberate about anything; but if, when the People or the democracy has been overthrown at Athens, any of the councillors of the Areopagus go up to the Areopagus or sit in session or deliberate about anything, he shall be deprived of citizen rights, both he and his descendants, and his estate shall be public property, and a tithe for the goddess (IG II³ 1 320).

The attentive reader will immediately notice that the first part of this law is very similar to the decree adopted in 410 at the proposal of Demophantus, reiterating that those engaged in the subversion of democracy were liable to assassination and that their assassins would be free from any punishment. The second part, however, completely departs from that decree, focusing on a single institution, i.e. the Areopagus. This has indeed represented a curious emphasis and one which has puzzled many historians up to the present time. Membership in the Areopagus was for life (the only such body in Athens) and it was composed of former archons. Traditionally, the archonships were elected positions and reserved for the top two property classes in Athens, therefore the Areopagus had a decidedly elitist bend. The body was also quite powerful once, acting as “guardian of the laws” and as a court of justice, including for political trials. In the first half of the fifth century it was reformed several times however, culminating in the constitutional revisions proposed by Ephialtes that curtailed the power of the Areopagus, which was now selected by lot and opened to the third property class (the *zeugites*) as well,²⁴ to a single function, i.e. that of a homicide court. Some of its powers were gradually restored throughout the fourth century and by the time of the passage of the Law of Eukrates it was quite an active body in Athenian politics (Hansen: 1991, pp. 288-295).

What was then, the aim of the second part of the Law of Eukrates? Two sets of explanations have been offered. The first, which is more intuitive and traditionally more favored by historians (see Wallace: 1989 for a defense and an overview of positions), is that the Athenians were suspicious of the Areopagus, both perhaps due to some of its recent activities and more generally, due to the fact that it was still perceived to some extent as an artefact of the non-democratic regime. On this view, the law meant to functionally debilitate the Areopagus should democracy be overthrown, so as to make collusion with the new regime impossible. More recently, Teegarden (2014a, pp. 103-105) has compellingly objected to this

explanation, drawing on a number of sources that indicate the Areopagus was in fact quite anti-Macedonian in its actions prior to the passing of the law. Teegarden insightfully builds an alternative view of the aim of Law of Eukrates, which revolves around the idea that the Athenians saw the Areopagus not as an institution which threatened democracy, but rather as one that could contribute to its protection. In particular, he argues that the main problem Athenians faced was not with a sudden overthrow of democracy (as in 411 and 404), but rather a gradual erosion under Macedonian pressure. The point of the ban on meetings by the Areopagus was, in this context, to serve as a “signaling institution”, in that when the Areopagites decided to no longer hold their meetings (which took place on the Hill of Ares, a visible site to the urban population), this was the signal to all other Athenian citizens that democracy was overthrown. Regardless of which explanation turns out to be more plausible, both of them point in a similar direction for the purposes of this chapter, in that both suggest that the Law of Eukrates is meant to play a part in the democratic resolution of the *stasis*, either because it prevents dangerous anti-democratic collusion once the process is unfolding, or because it makes citizens aware of the fact that action is needed in order to restore democracy in the *polis*.

5.4. The Law on Stasis

The final institution discussed in this chapter, which has been sometimes called the *Law on stasis* and other times the *Law against neutrality* is probably the most controversial of all those outlined, not due to its aim²⁵ or dating, but due to the uncertainty of its very existence, even though the wide majority of historical scholars treat it as authentic (Hansen: 1991, p. 298; Rhodes: 2002, p. 189; Ober: 2022, p. 192). The common statement of the law comes from a passage in Aristotle (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 8.5): “Seeing that the city was often in a state of strife, and that some of the citizens through apathy accepted whatever might happen, he enacted a special law to deal with them, that if when the city was torn by strife anyone should refuse to place his arms at the disposal of either side he should be outlawed and have no share in the city”.

To start with, we should note that there is a debate on whether “outlawed” is to mean merely stripped of civic rights (*atimos*), or actually exiled (Forsdyke: 2005, p. 98), with the former interpretation usually preferred. But aside from that, the prescriptive direction is fairly clear:

whenever *stasis* is unfolding in the *polis*, citizens should take one of the sides in the conflict, lest they are to be penalized after its conclusion. In order to understand the aim of the law, we need to place it in the wider context of the Solonian reforms, which are designed with the intent of ensuring political and social stability in the *polis* (see Wallace: 2007 for an overview). In this light, the institution has been ordinarily interpreted as an instrument for precluding civil violence and attempts to upend the constitutional order (e.g. Forsdyke: 2005; Gouschin: 2016). Ober (2022, p. 192) articulates the possible logic behind it as such: “Solon here appears to be driving up the cost of conflict in an attempt to prevent its outbreak. Rather than allowing a matter to be violently contested only among polarized parties with very strong preferences over outcomes, and thus with much to gain or to lose, Solon pushed citizens with weaker preferences into the fray. This might incentivize those ‘in the middle’ to intervene before the conflict was joined, especially if they were a large majority [...] If the likelihood and the costs of losing were both high, the expected value of fighting would fall below the value of the status quo and *stasis* would be avoided”. If this is right, the law should probably be seen more as a *stasis*-preventing institution, than a *stasis*-resolving one, in the framework employed in this chapter. However, it might be argued that in time, the institution evolved into one that neatly fits into the latter category as well. While Solon surely did not have anything like democratic defense in mind, for a *polis* like Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries, in which a high number of citizens were (even if selfishly) committed to democracy, the institutional effects of the law – if citizens indeed felt it was binding – would have been to mobilize them in taking arms for one of the parties in the unfolding *stasis*, and this party would overwhelmingly have been the democratic one.

Of course, this could only have been the case if the institution actually existed in one form or another – otherwise, how could citizens have taken it to have been binding? Without going into the finer details of this dispute – which is one that in any case demands historical not philosophical proficiency – (see Forsdyke: 2005, pp. 98-99; Teegarden: 2014b), I will make one point that I believe is sufficient for my purposes. Probably the strongest argument invoked against the authenticity of this law refers to a speech given by Lysias in the years following the restoration of democracy in 403. The bulk of the speech represents an attack levied by Lysias against Philon for having fled Athens during the *stasis*. The relevant excerpt for the Law on *stasis* is the following: “He argues, so I am told, that, if it was a

crime to absent himself at that crisis, we should have had a law expressly dealing with it, as in the case of all other crimes. He does not expect you to perceive that the gravity of the crime was the reason why no law was proposed to deal with it. For what orator would ever have conceived, or lawgiver have anticipated, that any of the citizens would be guilty of so grave an offence?" (Lys. 31.27). The common interpretation drawn from here is that not taking sides in the *stasis* was not illegal, otherwise Lysias – who was not a citizen but a long-time Athenian resident and a respected rhetor – would have appealed to such a law in order to challenge Philon. There are some reasons to question this interpretation (Teegarden: 2014b, pp. 158-159). But even if we take it at face value, Lysias seems to suggest that while there was no *formal* legal requirement to actively take a side during *stasis*, there was definitely some kind of a binding social norm²⁶ that citizens were expected to do it, to the point where it was almost inconceivable not to do it – and therefore there was no point in legislating such conduct. While not settling the matter of its enactment by Solon, this passage gives credence, in any plausible interpretation, to the idea that there was an effectively binding *institution* – whether formal or informal – that shaped citizen behavior during *stasis*, so that they would take a side in the civil conflict.

6. Conclusion and future research

As explained, the main objective of the chapter was not to argue in favor of any particular position, but rather to outline the principal institutional arrangements Classical Athenians developed in time in order to prevent and respond to *staseis* that were inimical to democracy. The effectiveness of these arrangements can be gauged at if we look at the political situation between 508 and 322, with democracy being remarkably resilient throughout this period. The chapter therefore constitutes a starting point in a broader project, the ultimate aim of which is to develop normative prescriptions – built on the institutional logic we can excavate from the case of Classical Athens – that strive to make contemporary democracies more stable and resilient when faced with autocratic challenges. This, however, remains a task for future works.

NOTES

- ¹ See Daly (2019, p. 11) for an overview of the various labels which have been used to describe what is a fundamentally similar phenomenon.
- ² See Green (2015) for a defence of this type of analysis.
- ³ See Raaflaub (2007, pp. 11-13) for a basic, but convincing, defence of this position. Still, the unpersuaded reader can resort to using the original label of *demokratia* (see Hansen: 1991, pp. 69-711 and Ober: 2008b for an in-depth analysis of the term) as delineated from democracy in order to describe the political regime of Classical Athens, even though I will employ, for simplicity, the term democracy.
- ⁴ All historical dates given in this chapter are BCE.
- ⁵ The latter is less controversial, since the wealth criterion introduced for full enfranchisement marked a clear departure from what was perceived to be a core democratic feature (see Canevaro: 2011 for a discussion of these reforms). The former is more controversial, with another view – most forcefully defended by Raaflaub (2007) – placing the beginning of Athenian democracy in the succession of reforms proposed by Ephialtes in 462/461 and Pericles in 451/450. Two other views, the one likely harboured by most Athenians (at least in the fourth century), i.e. that Athenian democracy begins with the Solonian reforms in 594 (Hansen: 1991, p. 299) and that democracy only begins with the reforms of 403/402 have sometimes been advocated but are outside the scholarly mainstream (see Cartledge: 2007, pp. 163-166 for brief critical accounts of these views).
- ⁶ See Holloway and Manwaring (2023) for a more extensive inventory of definitions.
- ⁷ See Correa (2022) for a discussion on non-violent *staseis* in Athens.
- ⁸ The most vivid depiction of such an event is Thucydides' account of the *stasis* at Corcyra (Thuc. 3.70-3.85).
- ⁹ The claim is based on the evidence we have in respect to the evolution of the law against tyranny (see sec. 4.3 below) and the transgenerational character of the Oath of Demophantus (see sec. 5.2 below).
- ¹⁰ While the kind of contemporary factional struggles for constitutional essentials we are interested in here are importantly different from the ones in Classical Greece, in that they are largely non-violent and gradually autocratizing, the idea that institutional design should track the distinction between *stasis* prevention and resolution (or, in more familiar language, between ordinary democratic institutions and democracy-defending institutions at work during a process of democratic erosion) has been – to my knowledge – largely ignored (however, for an ethical assessment of the differential permissibility of pro-democratic action in the two contexts, see Wolkenstein: 2023).
- ¹¹ There is, however, such a strand of literature that uses rational-choice modeling to explain some of the Classical Athenian institutions that I will have in mind here as well (e.g. Tridimas: 2016; Lyttkens et al.: 2018; Schwuchow and Tridimas: 2022)

- 12 Hansen (1991, p. 35) puts it at around two months.
- 13 Some of which will be named below.
- 14 Although sometimes these *ostraka* contain additional writing alongside a name, the ones excavated ordinarily only reveal personal animosity towards the respective person rather than more abstract justification (see e.g. Forsdyke: 2005, p. 155) as does the well-known anecdote recounted by Plutarch (Plut. *Arist.* 7.6), in which an illiterate Athenian asks Aristides (without knowing his identity) to inscribe his own name on the *ostrakon* for no other reason than that he was fed up with him being called “the Just”.
- 15 A different person from Thucydides, son of Olorus, the much better known historian.
- 16 See Hansen (1991, p. 205) and Lyttkens et al. (2018, p. 397) for a defence of the claim that the *graphe paranomon* functionally replaced ostracism.
- 17 Although the procedure is suggested to have been in use as early as the Mytilenean debate in Thucydides, which means that it goes back at least to 427 (Thuc. 3.43).
- 18 And six for the *graphe nomon me epitedeion theinai*.
- 19 This is the case of Eudemus of Cydathenaeum, mentioned by Demosthenes (Dem. 24.138), who wanted the same capital punishment to be dealt to the subject of his speech, accusing him of having proposed a law postponing the arrest of debtors, ostensibly to the advantage of some of his friends.
- 20 See, for instance, Aeschines’s speech *Against Ctesiphon*, which is directed as much towards Ctesiphon as the proposer of the decree as to the prospective recipient of the honour, i.e. Demosthenes (Aeschin. 3).
- 21 There is epigraphic evidence for the first of these going back to the middle of the fifth century, but it is possible that the latter two were introduced somewhat later, perhaps after the restoration of democracy at the end of the fifth century, but definitely before 389, because Isaios references them in a speech made in that year (Teegarden: 2014a, p. 45).
- 22 See Shear (2011, 19-69) for a detailed account of competing narratives surrounding this *stasis*.
- 23 See Shear (2011) for an ample analysis on the importance of the practical aspects of swearing the oath, the rituals surrounding it, the positioning of the stele where the oath was inscribed in the urban space etc.
- 24 By the fourth century however, even the fourth, and lowest, property class had access to the archonships (Hansen: 1991, p. 88).
- 25 Although here, too, there are conflicting views and even ones which go completely against the grain of mainstream thought (see Van’t Wout: 2010 for an example claiming that the law in fact promoted neutrality rather than discourage it).
- 26 Citing earlier literature, Bers (1975, p. 495) also indicates this possibility, i.e. that the so-called law may have in fact only have been an abstract prescription, an emphatic moral denunciation, or a religious curse.

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Abbreviations of the names and works of classical authors follow common scholarly conventions (in the numbering of speeches) and the Oxford Classical Dictionary, 3rd edition, wherever possible. The following abbreviations are used:

Aeschin. 3	Aeschines, <i>Against Ctesiphon</i>
Andoc. 1	Andocides, <i>On the Mysteries</i>
Arist. [Ath. Pol.]	Aristotle, [Athenaion Politeia], trans. by P.J. Rhodes, Penguin Books, London, 2002.
Dem. 19	Demosthenes, <i>On the False Embassy</i>
Dem. 24	Demosthenes, <i>Against Timocrates</i>
Dem. 58	Demosthenes, <i>Against Theocrines</i>
Hdt.	Herodotus, <i>The Histories</i> , trans. by R. Waterfield, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998.
Hyp. 2	Hypereides, <i>Against Philippides</i>
Hyp. 4	Hypereides, <i>In Defence of Euxenippus</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
Lycurg. 1	Lycurgus, <i>Against Leocrates</i>
Lys. 13	Lysias, <i>Against Agoratus</i>
Lys. 31	Lysias, <i>Against Philon</i>
Plut. Arist.	Plutarch, <i>Life of Aristides</i>
Plut. Sol.	Plutarch, <i>Life of Solon</i>
Thuc.	Thucydides, <i>The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians</i> , trans. by J. Mynott, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (UK), 2013.
Xen. Hell.	Xenophon, <i>Hellenica</i> , trans. by R. Warner, Penguin Books, London, 1979.

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HALYCH AND GALICIA (UNTIL 1772) IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RULERS OF MOLDOVA. EXPERIENCE OF THE SOURCE STUDIES AND PERIODIZATION

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the image of Halych and the Galicia (Halych land) in the pages of written sources primarily of Moldovan origin from the archival and library collections of Romania. The author assumes that Halych and Galicia occupied a significant place in the foreign policy of the rulers of Moldova, first of all due to the so-called ecclesiastical memory. Galician Metropolitan Antony, having consecrated the first Moldovan bishop on the hills of Krylos (ancient Halych) in 1387, contributed to the establishment of the separate Moldovan Metropolitanate of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. That's why, during the crisis of the non-institutionalized Kingdom of Rus' at the turn of the 14th–15th centuries, the representatives of the Moldovan House of Mușat and their successors tried in every possible way to consolidate the neighboring territories of Pokuttia and the Halych land. According to the periodization we can single out four long periods: 12th century – 1359; 1359–1538; 1538–1699 and 1699–1772. The most active is the second period, when a number of Moldovan rulers, first of all Stephen III the Great, actively tried to put their plans in practice. After the defeat of Peter Rareș's troops near Obertyn on August 22, 1531, and subsequent unsuccessful attempts to reverse the situation in skirmishes with the crown troops of Poland (and in fact, the Ruthenian Voivodeship), which took place until 1538, the Princes of Moldova gave up their intentions, eventually turning into the vassals of the Turkish Ottoman dynasty. They took part in the campaigns of their suzerains to Podolia until 1699, for example in 1620–1621 or 1672, but practically could not set independent tasks for themselves. After the conclusion of the Peace of Karlowitz in 1699 and the restoration by the Kings of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of control over Kamianets in Podolia, which had been a part of the Ottoman Porte for 27 years as a separate eyalet, the Halych land de facto ceased to suffer from the enemy attacks from the south. Halych, its monastic centers entered, rather, the times of closer interaction

with the Orthodox monasteries of Moldova. A prominent place among them was occupied by the Great Skete in Manyava – equally revered by the rulers of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Moldova, the Cossack Hetmanate and Muscovy (later – the Russian Empire). A complex of published and unpublished sources from the archives and libraries of Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Suceava, Brașov Botoșani systematically and comprehensively reflects the outlined relationships. Unfortunately, it does not seem possible currently to find the lost fragments of chronicles of Galician provenience in the Romanian collections, which under various circumstances were taken outside the territory of their origin. The largest part of the sources counts various monuments of the church literature – the living witnesses of very close inter-monastic relations of the 14th–18th centuries.

Keywords: Halych, Halych land (Galicia), Moldova, periodization, bilateral relationships, Orthodox church, monasteries, sources.

It is no secret that modern Ukrainian-Romanian relations are at one of the highest points of partnership, mutual understanding and good-neighborliness, caused primarily by Russia's invasion and the beginning of a full-scale war against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Despite the considerable number of problems from the last 30 years or more (lawsuits around the Snake Island, the problem of the Danube River shelf, other cross-border obstacles), both countries managed to achieve qualitative changes in the bilateral relationships. This is not only related to the absence of contradictions around a language (as, for example, inspired by Viktor Orbán's Hungarian government), school education, the status of the national minorities, but also to Romania's comprehensive support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic course, the expansion of a cross-border cooperation in various directions, and after the Russian invasion – to the support of the Ukrainian refugees, aid with the logistics of supplying of Western weapons, medicines, transit of the Ukrainian grain, etc. During the last year, the transport connection between Ukraine and Romania has also significantly improved due to the opening of a small railway traffic on the Rakhiv – Valea Vișeuului – Rakhiv section and the planning of a similar one between Chernivtsi and Suceava. It seems that our countries have never been so close to each other, despite the hostile intentions to weaken this partnership or even break it by the inciting of a military conflict in Transnistria.

At the same time, we must note that this kind of cooperation needs further efforts. It is not only the lack of any connection between Ukraine and Romania on the 40-kilometer section of the common border in the Ivano-Frankivsk region and the Maramureş county, which would significantly simplify a communication and generally improve the standard of living in the adjacent mountainous areas of both countries. The humanitarian component of the bilateral relations, interdepartmental cooperation, and more active academic cooperation need significant improvement, as I've seen during October 2022 – July 2023, while conducting the scientific research in the archives and libraries of Romania.

The formation of the administrative and political background of both Ukraine and Romania is very similar from a historical point of view. It's known that the administrative land division in Ukraine, proposed at the dawn of the 90s of the 20th century by the opposition to the communist majority in the Verkhovna Rada was not implemented (the old division into regions, introduced in 1932, remained). But, in the history of Romania, there are clearly visible contours of several main regions of which it consists – Moldova (including southern Bukovina), Wallachia (Muntenia and Oltenia), Transylvania (in addition – Banat, Crişana, Maramureş) and Dobruja (Dobrogea). Undoubtedly, the historical past of each part of modern Romania is connected with the communities of different identities, languages, cultures, and traditions, the unifying element of which during the 19th–20th centuries gradually became the Romanian language and the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen royal dynasty (1866–1947).

However, in the historical retrospect, bilateral relations often went far beyond the interests of only the ruling dynasties, for example in Moldova, Wallachia or Transylvania, because their foreign policy was influenced by the rulers of the Kingdoms of Poland (after 1569 the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and Hungary, the Crimean Khanate, and the Ottoman Porte, atamans (then – hetmans) of the Sich and Cossacks Hetmanate, Moscow tsars or Austrian emperors. Therefore, during the 12th–18th centuries, we can talk about a regional specificity of the bilateral relations, in which the “Galician component” remained one of the most important.

Its importance is determined by the historical circumstances of the formation of these relations. Halych city, the name of which is still a subject of debate, and hence the delineation of the land (*Галицька земля*, *Galicia*, *Галичина*) and its inhabitants (*галичани*) were formed in a very close interaction with the elites of the neighboring territories, in particular, the middle and lower Dniester and Prut basins. Studying the

history of Halych and the Galician land until 1772 (the First Partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as a result of which the lands of the Ruthenian Voivodeship became a part of the possessions of the Habsburg dynasty¹), we can single out four long important stages in the multifaceted connections of local Ruthenian and not only Ruthenian elites with the elites of the neighboring countries, mainly Moldova, Wallachia and, to a lesser extent, Transylvania.

1. (from the 12th century till 1359)

The mentioned period, which is historically reconstructed primarily due to the letopises of Rus', to sources of Hungarian and Greek provenience, and to archaeological investigations, allows us to clearly establish the expansion of the so-called first Galician Rostislavovid dynasty (1084–1198/9) in the lower reaches of the Dniester and Prut rivers during the middle and the second half of the 12th century. The strongholds of the princes here were Bârlad and Galați². The control over the delineated territories was not permanent due to the frequent threat of the Cumanian invasions, as well as the interests of the Asen family (1187–1280) in the restored Bulgarian state since 1187, which was formed through the close interaction of the Cumanian, Wallachian, and Bulgarian elites. But at the beginning of the 13th century, the sources allow us to record the military expeditions against the Cumans by the Prince Roman Mstyslavovich († 1205)³ – the founder of the Romanid dynasty (1198/9–1323) in Halych land. The so-called Galician Poniattia, which covered a part of the territory of the later Moldovan Principality, remained in the sphere of influence of the Galician Princes at least until the Mongol invasion in Europe in the 13th century. But the defeat of the united Rus'-Cumanian forces on May 31, 1223 in the battle on the Kalka River and the departure of a part of the defeated Cumans to Hungary caused serious changes in the control of the territories adjacent to the southeastern Carpathians. Therefore, the Hungarian Árpáds (895–1301), who received the possibility to use a title of the Kings of Galicia and Lodomeria (*Galitiae Lodomeriaeque Rex*) at the beginning of the 13th century, became in practice and repeatedly the rulers of the Galician land and its southern outskirts⁴. The Teutonic Order knights, settled in Transylvania in 1211 by the Hungarian King Andrew, were the guarantors of the border security in this section until 1225, but after their expulsion, this role was played by the Cumanian troops⁵.

However, the large-scale multi-stage campaigns of the Mongols to Rus' in 1236–1242 and to the countries of Europe caused the transfer of lands of the middle and lower reaches of the Dniester, Prut, and partly of the Danube to the protectorate of the Chingissids. Therefore, the restoration on the Galician throne of the Romanids in the person of Prince Danylo, even after his coronation at the end of 1253, did not give the prospects of very active control over the once adjacent southern lands, which had to maintain a certain ecclesiastical unity with the Galician diocese of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, established in the middle of the 12th century⁶.

The contacts between the Galician and Moldovan elites and bilateral church dialogue were preserved after the move of the Metropolitan of Kyiv Kirill II to Vladimir on Klyazma in the middle of the 13th century, and hence after the decision of the Constantinople Patriarch Athanasius I and Emperor Andronikos II Paleologus in 1302/3 to elevate the Galician diocese to the level of a Metropolitanate⁷. This situation contributed to the more active inclusion of the Moldovan elites in the political life of the non-institutionalized Kingdom of Rus'. These elites were noted from time to time in the first half of the 14th century as witnesses of the conclusion of documents of the last Romanids. We can notice among them, for example, Oleksandr Moldaovych and Borys Krakula, mentioned in the letters of Yuri Boleslav Troydenovych († 1340), which was sent on February 11, 1334 to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order Luther von Braunschweig († 1355)⁸. Borys Krakula was also noted in one of the letters written in Volhynian Volodymyr on October 20, 1335 to another Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Dietrich von Altenburg († 1341)⁹. We are talking about the representatives of the Moldovan elites, which were in very close, probably family, relations with the Romanids, maybe due to the matrimonial ties. They also inherited certain heraldic symbols of power of the Galician boyars, in particular, the image of the jackdaw with folded wings.

In general, a careful analysis of the heraldic symbols of power allows us to record, on the eve of the formation of the Moldovan Principality in 1359, the using by the new elites of the old Galician official symbols (as personal and family coats of arms) of the non-institutionalized Kingdom of Rus', which after 1340 became the object of an inter-dynastic struggle between the Piasts of the Kingdom of Poland and the Principality of Mazovia, the Anjou dynasty on the thrones of Hungary and Poland, the Lithuanian Gediminids, and the nomads and the Moldovan Muşats. The coats of

arms of the local nobility, both of Ruthenian and Moldovan, included the elements of personal and family signs in the Ruthenian tradition, or belonging to the Kingdom of Rus' in general¹⁰. But Muşats did not take part in the struggle for the inheritance of the Romanid dynasty. We can talk only about a certain *translatio imperii* that spread from the Galician territories in the southern direction in the middle and the second half of the 14th century, the details of which can only be guessed.

2. (1359–1538)

The outlined period is marked by an extremely active confrontation between the Principality of Moldova and the Kingdom of Poland over the borderlands known since 1395 as Pokuttia¹¹, which in a broader historical and geographical sense remained a part of the Galician land, later the Galician Starost of the Ruthenian Voivodeship (after 1434). The first border conflicts were practically provoked after the death of the King of Hungary and Poland, Louis I of the Anjou dynasty in 1382, and the division of the inheritance between his daughters – the elder Maria († 1395) and the younger Jadwiga († 1399) who married in 1386 Władysław II Jagiełło († 1434)¹². In Summer of 1387, as a result of the marriage and the Union of Krevo (between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) which was concluded a year earlier, a large Polish army marched into the cities of the Halych land (Yaroslav, Przemyśl, and Lviv), forcing the local Hungarian rulers to surrender. The only one who resisted for some time was the castellan of Halych – Benedict. However, after receiving the appropriate guarantees and land grants, he left the city, having it handed over to the Jagiellonians¹³. Under these circumstances the ruler of Moldova, Peter I Muşat († December 1391), soon took an oath of vassal loyalty to Władysław II Jagiełło on September 26, 1387 in Lviv, and on January 27, 1388, granted him a loan of 4,000 silver rubles. In the case of non-repayment of the debt until 1391, the King of Poland promised to pledge the city of Halych with its *volost*¹⁴, which later will be permanently called Pokuttia and will appear in the inter-dynastic agreements of both parties for quite a long time¹⁵.

The forementioned close contacts developed also due to permanent ecclesiastical ties. So, precisely in 1387, with the blessing of the Galician Metropolitan Anthony († 1391), Peter Muşat achieved the consecration of Jeremiah († 1401) as the head of the Orthodox Church

of Moldova, confirming the tradition of long-standing bilateral relations with the ecclesiastical and secular elites of the Halych land. Despite the excommunication and the attempts of the Exarchs of Constantinople in 1391 to understand the situation, Peter Mușat did not back down, and his successor Alexander the Good († 1432) achieved on June 26, 1401, the official recognition of Joseph as the Metropolitan of Moldova with the residence first in Rădăuți and later in Suceava¹⁶. This event coincided with another crisis in the Metropolis of Halych and its entering in 1401 under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv¹⁷. That's why, all subsequent Metropolitans of Moldova, without exaggeration, continued to cultivate the church traditions of the Krylos Hill in Halych, emphasizing at the same time the Princes' peculiar right of political control over, from their point of view, a sacred land¹⁸. However, under Romanus († 1393/1400) and Alexander the Good, the relations with Władysław II Jagiełło were based on the rulers of Moldova's recognition of themselves as vassals of the King of Poland, in accordance with the oath of vassal loyalty made in 1393 and then on March 12, 1402 (confirmed on August 1, 1404 in Lviv)¹⁹. But after the victories of the Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian-Moldovan army over the knights of the Teutonic Order in 1410 and 1422²⁰ and due to the aggravation of the inter-dynastic relations, in 1431 Alexander invaded Pokuttia and occupied Kolomyia and Snyatyn, supporting the great Lithuanian Prince Švitrigaila († 1452)²¹. This campaign did not have positive consequences for the Moldovan Prince, but it opened up a series of additional opportunities for his successors to capture the border areas.

For example, the son of Alexander the Good from his second wife Anna, Prince Ilya († 1448), having first taken an oath of vassal loyalty to Władysław III († 1444) on June 5, 1433 in Suceava, and then on September 19, 1436 in Lviv, received the Castle of Halych as a separate possession²². His successors, Roman II († 1448) and Alexander II († 1455), the cousins and vassals of Casimir IV († 1492) could count on the King's refuge in the borderland of Kolomyia in the case of losing the Moldovan throne²³. On the other hand, the rival of the mentioned brothers – Bogdan II († 1451) never gave up his predatory invasions into the neighboring lands of the Ruthenian Voivodeship with the aim of countering the same attacks into Moldova²⁴.

Bogdan II's son, Stephen III the Great († 1504), built a foreign policy in an absolutely different way. Having obtained the power after the murder of his father and, as a result, a long internal political crisis, he established relations with Casimir IV, recognizing himself as royal vassal on April 4,

1459, on the condition that the King did not support any other claimants to the throne of Moldova. On March 2, 1462, in Suceava, the King of Poland was declared the sole suzerain of the lands of Moldova, with a prohibition on the alienation of any of its territories and obligations to return the lost²⁵. During the intensification of the Turkish expansion, Stephen III took the oath of vassal loyalty to Casimir IV in 1485 in Kolomyia, as stipulated by the Suceava agreement²⁶. However, as a result of the Polish-Turkish negotiations (including the agreement of 1487) and the invasion to the Ruthenian Voivodeship by the troops of Mukha, provoked by the Prince of Moldova, in 1490–1492, the relations with the King of Poland deteriorated. After the death of Casimir IV and the raising to power of his brother John I Albert († 1501), the provocations from Stephen III triggered a large-scale campaign of the crown army (consisting of units of Poles, Ruthenians and troops of the Teutonic Order) into Moldova in 1497. The campaign led to Stephen's defeat in the Battle in the Kozmin's forest on 26 October and the loss of Pokuttia²⁷. In response, the Moldovan campaign from 1498 ended with the burning of Halych, Terebovlia, Buchach, Pidhaitsi, and as a consequence the new agreement with the King of Poland adopted in 1499 did not mention any vassal obligations from Stephen III. The acquired lands were under his authority until his death on July 2, 1504²⁸.

With the transition of the throne of Moldova to Bogdan III the Blind († 1517) and of the Polish throne to Alexander († 1506), and then to Sigismund the Old († 1548), the Moldovan ruler wanted to consolidate his status with the Jagiellonian dynasty by marrying the youngest sister of King Alexander, Elizabeth († 1517)²⁹. As a sign of goodwill, he even returned to Alexander the border lands of Pokuttia, which during 1498–1506 were under the rule of the Muşats³⁰. However, Alexander died, and Sigismund the Old rejected Bohdan III's proposal, provoking another invasion of the Moldovan, Tatar, and Turkish forces into the Ruthenian and Podolian Voivodeships in 1506 and 1509. The invaders looted Terebovlia suburbs, captured Pidhaitsi, Kamianets, and sieged Halych and Lviv³¹. At the same time, the crown forces invaded Moldova. The war led to the conclusion of an agreement on January 23, 1510, according to which the Muşats were relieved of their vassal obligations to the Jagiellons³². During the rule of Bogdan III's successor – Stephen IV († 1527), in August 1518, Sigismund the Old reached another agreement to stop the Turkish expansion³³. However, the raising to power of Stephen III's illegitimate son, Peter Rareş († 1538) in Moldova, which coincided with the defeat of the Hungarian troops of Louis II († 1526) by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent

(† 1566) at Mohács on August 29, 1526, opened the next stage of the struggle for the lands of Pokuttia and the Halych land.

As a result of the war between 1530–1532, with the key defeat of the Moldovan forces in the Battle of Obertyn on August 22, 1531, a peace treaty was concluded such that Peter Rareș renounced his claims to Pokuttia³⁴. However, he did not abandon the hope of causing a wider Polish-Turkish conflict, for which there was no hope after the conclusion of the agreement between Suleiman I and the King Sigismund in 1533. During the next Turkish-Tatar invasion to Moldova, on the one hand, and the Polish invasion, on the other, Peter Rareș once again confirmed he had no claim to Pokuttia in a peace agreement with the King, on August 28–31, 1538. However, Petru Rareș lost the throne in his homeland³⁵.

Under the sons of Peter Rareș Ilya († 1562) and Stephen IV († 1552), Moldova was under the complete control of the Ottomans. There were no special encroachments to Galicia and Pokuttia from their side. Moreover, in 1547, Ilya, like his father, despite his dependence on the Turks, took the oath of loyalty to Sigismund the Old³⁶.

3. (1538–1699)

After the death of Peter Rareș and his sons, the active phase of the struggle between the rulers of Moldova over the heritage of Halych, Halych land and Pokuttia (sacred to them and economically attractive) practically ended. The throne of Moldova ceased to be the exclusive prerogative of the Mușat dynasty, because the proteges of the Ottomans (from the elites of other countries in the Balkans) could often get the power in the country. Therefore, the situation in the country was far from the intentions of its rulers, to conduct an active foreign policy in the direction of the neighboring starosts of the Ruthenian Voivodeship. The internal political conflicts became frequent in Moldova, as they were increasingly joined by the Sich Cossack units and various types of adventurers and criminals.

At the same time, we should note that other historical territories of modern Romania, in particular Wallachia and Transylvania, remained on the margins of the active contacts with both secular and ecclesiastical elites of the Halych land during the 14th–16th centuries. For the Wallachian Basarab dynasty, which came under the pressure of the Turkish protectorate before the Mușats, the sacred heritage of Halych was of no value. During the reign of the Voivode of Wallachia Nikolae Aleksandru († 1364), the

local Orthodox Church left the Patriarchate of Tirnovo and became the subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, having gained the status of an autonomous Metropolitan³⁷. The situation in Transylvania was even more different, because this vast territory was a part of the Kingdom of Hungary until 1526. Only after the defeat of Louis II at Mohács and until 1541, it existed as a separate, sovereign Principality of actually three “nations” – Magyars, Saxons and Szeklers, with the practicing of Catholicism, the presence of Protestant communities of the Calvinists and, in some places, the Orthodox Church³⁸. Until the end of the 16th and 17th centuries, the local elites did not show anything but a commercial interest in the Halych land from within the Ruthenian Voivodeship³⁹.

In the mid-16th century, the cities of the Ruthenian Voivodeship became a refuge for the Moldovan rulers who fled from the Turkish persecution. They did not seek to conquer these cities by the force of arms. There was, for example Peter Stolnik, who became a Moldovan Prince in September 1552 under the name of Alexandru Lăpușneanu († 1568). Before becoming prince, he had been hiding in the neighboring lands of the Kingdom of Poland⁴⁰. As a vassal of the King, he ruled until his death.

On the other hand, in Lviv, by the order of Sigismund II Augustus, in March 1564, the rival of Alexander, Stephen VII Tomșa, who in August 1563 forcibly won the throne of Moldova, without receiving approval from Istanbul or Cracow, was executed⁴¹. In the capital of the Ruthenian Voivodeship, another Moldovan Prince and Kish ataman – Ivan Pidkova († 1578) was executed. He pretended to have a claim to the Moldovan throne as a brother of one of the successors of Stephen VII's – John III the Terrible († 1574)⁴², also a vassal of Sigismund II. On September 28, 1582, Iancu Sasul, the Lutheran Prince on the throne of Moldova, was also executed in Lviv by the order of King Stephen Báthory († 1586)⁴³.

Other Moldovan Princes, who showed an interest in the occupation of Pokuttia were also subjected to disbelief and imprisonment in the Halych land. Thus, after taking the oath of vassal loyalty to Sigismund II Augustus in 1569, Bogdan IV Lăpușneanu († 1574/7), who as a child grew up at the King's court, fell into prison in the castle of Jezupol, where he spent two months⁴⁴ in the winter of 1572, due to a misunderstanding with the elites of the Galician elders, in particular with the Zborovsky family. Before the accession to the throne of Moldova in 1591, Alexander Lăpușneanu's son Aaront the Tyrant († 1597), who recognized the suzerainty of the King Sigismund, resided from time to time in the Ruthenian Voivodeship⁴⁵. A special attention should be given to Ieremia Movilă († 1606), who

became the Prince of Moldova in 1595 as a vassal of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁴⁶ with the support of its elites, from whom, in fact, he came through the mediation of the Wiśniowiecki, Korecki and Potocki families⁴⁷. With the support of the nobility of the neighboring Ruthenian and Podolia Voivodeships, Simion Movilă († 1607) became the Prince of Moldova in 1595, then Constantin Movilă († 1612) in 1606, Alexander Movilă († after 1616) in 1630, and Moise Movilă in 1630 († 1661)⁴⁸. Princes Constantin Movilă and Miron Barnovschi Movilă († 1633), as well as George III Ducas († 1685) and Stephen Petriceicu († 1690), who died and were buried in Lviv, owned real estate in the neighboring starosts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁴⁹.

During the rule of Movilă family's representatives in Moldova, their support of the Orthodox churches and monasteries in the Ruthenian Voivodeship (in particular, Kolomyia, Lviv, Manyava, Tlumach, Uhornyky etc.) after the Union of Brest in 1596 notably intensified, and was preserved by the following Princes who were no longer related to them with such close family relations: for example, Vasile († 1661), Stephen Lupu († 1661), George Ghica († 1664) Eustratie Dabija († 1665), Iliș Alexandru († 1666), Stephen Petriceicu, Dimitrie Cantemir († 1723), Nicholas Mavrocordatos († 1730), John Mavrocordatos († 1747), Mihai († 1744) and Constantin Racoviță († 1764), Grigore II Ghica († 1752), Scarlat Grigorie Ghica († 1766), Constantin Mavrocordatos († 1769), Grigore († 1769) and John Theodore Callimachi († 1780)⁵⁰. They all used the Romanian language while preserving the Cyrillic alphabet since the 17th century⁵¹. During the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries there was an increasing number of examples of usage of the Ruthenian heraldic elements by Moldovan noblemen (lords of the council, župan etc.), as well as by untitled nobility – domestic servants and minor officials – who, much more willingly than nobles, used old official coats of arms on their seals, rather than the personal and family signs. According to preliminary estimates, the image of a jackdaw, for example, occurs on about 15% of the seals of the Moldovan nobility from the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries. Figures of a double-headed eagle, a lion, an eagle, a lily, a rose, etc. were also very popular.

The preservation of heraldic symbols of power and of the historical memory of Pokuttia and the Halych land could serve as the reason for bringing Turkish proteges on the throne of Moldova, such as Alexandru IV Iliș in 1620–1621, Constantin Cantemir († 1693) in 1673, as well as for their involvement in the campaigns of the Ottomans against the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which passed mainly through Pokuttia and the Galician territories⁵². The peace treaty between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Porte, signed on January 16, 1699 in Karlowitz, concluded this stage in the relationships with the rulers of Moldova. A considerable layer of information about the bilateral relationships, in the form of microfilm copies is available in the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest⁵³.

4. (1699–1772)

The Treaty of Karlowitz and the end of the long war of the European countries against the Ottoman he marked the beginning of the fourth and, in our case, the final stage of the contacts between secular and ecclesiastical elites of the Moldovan Principality, on one hand, and the Ruthenian Voivodeship within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, on the other. One of the results of the Turkish defeat was the withdrawal of their troops from Podolia Eyalet and, in particular, from Nahiyah in Chortkiv, where the Ottoman dynasty ruled from 1672 to 1699⁵⁴.

At the same time, for Moldova, the following long time from 1703 to 1849 was marked by the fact that the Sultan appointed on the throne princes from among the Istanbul Greek Phanariots (representatives of the Greek elites who did not leave Constantinople after its fall on May 29, 1453, but lived in a special quarter, set aside for them). Among the Turkish proteges in Moldova we can notice the Cantemir family (who repeatedly sought the rapprochement with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and after its weakening – with the Russian Empire), the Mavrocordat family, as well as the Ghica family derived from Mavrocordat. The mentioned period is marked by a gradual decrease of inter-family relations at the borderline with the Pokuttia-Galician territories, which became the place of repeated quartering of the Moscow and Swedish forces during the years of the Northern War (1700–1721), and of regular wars of Muscovy (later – the Russian Empire) against the Ottoman Porte in 1710–1713, 1735–1739 and 1768–1774. Starting from 1769, Moldova was controlled by the Russian military administration⁵⁵.

The Moldovan elites, dependent on the Ottomans, but in search for the support of the Russian Romanovs and deprived of independence in making decisions, often invaded the neighboring Sniatyn and Galician Starost, which were under the rule of the Potocki family. Thus, in 1723,

by the order of Joseph Potocki († 1751), the pro-Moscow pretender to the Moldovan throne Demitrie (according to other sources, Constantine) Cantemir was captured and imprisoned in Stanislaviv (now – Ivano-Frankivsk). This caused a scandal between Warsaw and Saint Petersburg, and eventually through the mediation of Augustus III († 1763) Cantemir was released⁵⁶. However, the Moldovan pretender remembered this unfortunate episode of his biography and, in July-August 1739, during the next Russian-Turkish war, while leading a Cossack unit, caused a lot of trouble in the Pokuttia region, between Kutý and Snyatyn. Tysmenytsia was robbed on August 10, and then Stanislaviv was besieged. But the attackers retreated after several unsuccessful assaults⁵⁷.

Inter-church relations, cemented by centuries of previous close ties, developed a little bit differently⁵⁸. In our specific case, the question of the fate of texts with a historical content, which according to the church tradition, were traditionally compiled in Rus' and were given in the scientific literature the title *letopis* is of great interest. The *letopis* tradition, preserved to a certain extent in Volhynia, in the lands of modern Belarus and Russia, due to the systematic rewriting, editing and continuation of the early texts, is practically unknown in the case of the Halych land. The first information about Halych and Halych land in the 11th–12th centuries came from the 13th century, from Kyiv– mostly from Volhynia etc. Sometimes fragments of *letopises* of Galician provenience (possibly from Przemyśl) are present in Polish historiography, for example in the *Annals* of Jan Długosz from the 15th century. Also, we know a few examples of *letopises* of Galician provenience dating from the Early Modern times. Undoubtedly, they are based on oral tradition on early Galician written texts, on the personal experience of the witnesses-compilers or of informants of the writers. However, it has not yet been possible to find authentic original materials of Galician origin that have survived in Rus'. At the same time, the number of monasteries where the *letopises* were made at least since the 12th century remained significant until the end of the 18th century, when the Austrian government closed and dissolved them. After that, as it is known, a huge amount of the liturgical, and sometimes historical literature, often from the neighboring Ruthenian and Podolia Voivodeships, arrived with the monks to Moldova and Wallachia (less often – to Transylvania)⁵⁹.

Therefore, the scientific research in the archives and libraries of Romania should also help to find at least a part of this lost heritage. It is also known that, for Moldova and Wallachia, the *letopises* (and to a

lesser extent the chronicles) remained the main kind of written text with historical content until the end of the 18th century; see, for example, the officially compiled *letopises* from the time of Stephen III the Great in the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century (Moldovan-German, Moldovan-Rus'ian or Moldovan-Polish chronicles) and those from the time of his successors, for example – Peter Rareș (Metropolitan Roman Makariy), Alexandru Lăpușneanu (the Abbot of the Kyprian Assumption Monastery, Euthymius), Peter IV the Lame († 1594) (monk Azariy) etc.⁶⁰, describing the circumstances of the emergence of the Moldovan state in the 14th century. Perhaps the highest level of virtuosity in historiography was reached during the times of Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Nicolae Costin, Ion Neculce⁶¹, Simion Dascalul⁶², Demitrie Cantemir⁶³, etc. This helped to the preservation of historiography until the 18th century. There was also a monastic tradition of historiography (for example, at the Putna monastery). It is well known that individual samples of this type are kept in Saint Petersburg today. At the same time, until the 18th century, *letopises* were written in Old Bulgarian language, which clearly testifies to its origins – from the Kyivan-Galician Christian tradition and the subsequent Bulgarian-Serbian layering. Therefore, considering the close inter-monastery and inter-church ties in general, we kept hoping to find unknown examples of *letopises*, specifically of Galician provenience.

Another important task was to record the volume of the handwritten and possibly printed book production (first of all, the liturgical literature, pomenyks, gospels, church chants, etc.) of Galician origin in a broad sense and which at different times and under different circumstances were outside the boundaries of their origin. The record of what was found should allow to establish the routes of entry and to specify the mechanisms of migration of such a substance. And, finally, the work with the already published sources and with those which are not yet ready for publication, first of all the charters, was supposed to give an answer to the question about the dynamics of the bilateral relations in different planes and at different times.

In accordance with the chronology, periodization and typology of the relationships between the elites of the state of the Rostislavovids and Romanids (including the non-institutionalized Kingdom of Rus'), the Ruthenian Voivodeship as part of the Kingdom of Poland and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Principality of Moldova and to a lesser extent Wallachia and Transylvania, we have focused our efforts on the processing of the funds in the National Library of Romania (Bucharest),

the Library of the National Academy of Sciences (Bucharest), the National Archives with the branches in Botoșani, Brașov, Bucharest, Cluj, Suceava, Iași, as well as the National Art Gallery in Bucharest, the Bucovina Museum in Suceava, etc. At the same time, we have also considered the potential of the archival and library funds of a number of monasteries (Dragomirna, Coșula, Putna, Sucevița, etc.), which were probably in closest contact during the 17th–18th centuries with similar Orthodox monastic centers in the historical Halych land, being in the range of mutual common influences⁶⁴. Unfortunately, it was beyond our capabilities to study the private collections – also known in Romania and available sometimes to the Romanian colleagues.

NOTES

- ¹ Myroslav Voloshchuk, "Galich, was it a real (part of) Rus'?" *Constantine's Letters*. 14/2, (2021), 37–50.
- ² Леонтій Войтович, *Галицько-Волинські етюди* (Біла Церква: видавець Пшонківський, 2011), 409.
- ³ *Лаврентьевская летопись*, in *Полное собрание русских летописей*, 1, (Москва: Языки славянской культуры, 2001), 418.
- ⁴ Myroslav Voloshchuk. *Ruthenians (the Rus') in the Kingdom of Hungary, 11th to Mid-14th Centuries. Settlement, Property, and Socio-Political Role*, translated by Yaroslav Prykhodko, in *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450*, general editors Florin Curta and Dušan Zupka, 76 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2021), 55–66.
- ⁵ Harald Zimmermann. "Hospites Theutonici. Rechtsprobleme der deutschen Südostsiedlung" in *Gedenkschrift für Harold Steinacker (1875–1965)*, herausgegeben von Theodor Mayer (München: Verlag R. Oldenbourg, 1966), 67–84.
- ⁶ Ihor Skoczyas, "Заснування Галицької єпархії в середині XII століття: спроба нової інтерпретації проблеми" in *Studia z dziejow i tradycji metropolii kijowskiej XII–XIX wieku*, red. Andrzej Gil, (Lublin: IEŚW 2009), 151–179.
- ⁷ Ігор Скочилас, "Галицька митрополія XIV – першої половини XV століть: особливості єпископального, правового та суспільного статусу", *Княжа доба: історія і культура*, 4, (2011), 246–279.
- ⁸ Олег Купчинський, *Акти та документи Галицько-Волинського князівства XIII – першої половини XIV ст. Дослідження. Тексти*, (Львів: Наукове Товариство імені Шевченка, 2004), 174–180, № 10.
- ⁹ Ibidem. 180–187, № 11.
- ¹⁰ Олег Однороженко, *Родова геральдика Русо-Влахії (Молдавського господарства) кінця XIV–XVI ст.* (Харків, 2008), 23–121.
- ¹¹ *Грамоти XIV ст.*, упорядник Микола Пешак, (Київ: Наук, думка, 1974), 125–126, № 65.
- ¹² Jarosław Nikodem, *Jadwiga król Polski*, (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 2009), 201–223.
- ¹³ Jan Tęgowski, "Nieznane nadanie Władysława Jagiełły dla Benedykta węgierskiego kasztelana Halicza, i jego braci. Przyczynek źródłowy do dziejów Rusi Halickiej" in *Narodziny Rzeczypospolitej. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych*, 2, eds. Waldemar Bukowski i Tomasz Jurek, (Kraków: Societas Vistulana, 2012), 1341–1348.
- ¹⁴ *Грамоти XIV ст.*, 79–80, № 41.
- ¹⁵ Katarzyna Niemczyk, "Problem Pokucia, spornego terytorium polsko-mołdawskiego w końcu XV i początku XVI wieku", *Studia Historyczne*, LVII/2, (2014), 155–174.
- ¹⁶ Petr Panaitescu, "Hrisovul lui Alexandru cel Bun pentru Episcopia armeand din Suceava (30 Iulie 1401)", *Revista istorică Română*, 4, (1934), 44–56.

- 17 Igor Skochilyas, "Галицька митрополія XIV – першої половини XV століть: особливості еклезіального, правового та суспільного статусу", 273–274.
- 18 On the topic see also: Volodymyr Velykochyi, Myroslav Voloshchuk, "The catholicization of Pokutia: ethno-confessional and historical myth of the Ukrainian historiography", *Codrul Cosminului*, XXIII/2, (2017), 319–342.
- 19 *Грамоти XIV ст.*, 120–121, № 62; Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, (Poznań: Wyd-wo naukowe, 1996), 56, 68, notes 185–187.
- 20 Petr Panaitescu, "Lupta comună a Moldovei și Poloniei împotriva cavalerilor", *Romanoslavica*, IV, (1960), 225–238.
- 21 Iohannis Dlugossi, *Historiae Polonicae*, cura et impensis Alexandri Przedziecki, 4/XI–XII, (Cracoviae: Ex Typographia Ephemeridum „Czas”, 1877), 461–462; Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, 82–88.
- 22 Dlugossii Johannes, *Historiae Polonicae*, 4/XI–XII, 514–515, 573–574; Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, 89, 97.
- 23 Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, 106, note 327.
- 24 Exudoxiu Hurmuzachi, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*, II/2: 1451–1510, (București: Academiei Române, 1891), 10–11, № 6–7; Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, 114, note 361.
- 25 Exudoxiu Hurmuzachi, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*, II/2, 145, № 123; Ilona Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, 127.
- 26 Archiwum Główny Akt Dawnych w Warszawie, *Zbiór dokumentów pergaminowych*, 5405; Șerban Papcostea, "De la Colomea la Codrul Cosminului" in *Portret în istorie*, (Putna: Mușatinii, 2003), 458–495; Liviu Cîmpeanu, *Cruciadă împotriva lui Ștefan cel Mare. Codrii Cosminului 1497*, (București: Humanitas, 2022), 103–113.
- 27 Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, de Dan Horia Mazilu, (București: Editura MondoRO, 2016), 54–57; Katarzyna Niemczyk, "Antemurale Christianitatis? Propaganda antyturecka a wyprawa Jana Olbrachta z 1497 roku w świetle źródeł", *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne*, 146/1 (2019), 43–61; Liviu Cîmpeanu, *Cruciadă împotriva lui Ștefan cel Mare. Codrii Cosminului 1497*, 226–242.
- 28 Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, 59; Katarzyna Niemczyk, "Problem Pokucia, spornej terytorium polsko-mołdawskiego w końcu XV i początku XVI wieku", 160–167.
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- 30 Marek Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska w XVI wieku*, 1: Lata 1500–1548, (Zabrze: Inforditions, 2011), 156; Katarzyna Niemczyk, “Difficult relations between the family of Chodecz and Bogdan III the One-eyed” *Codrul Cosminului*, XXIV/1, (2018), 102–106.
- 31 Katarzyna Niemczyk, “Problem Pokucia, spornego terytorium polsko-mołdawskiego w końcu XV i początku XVI wieku”, 169–172; Katarzyna Niemczyk, “Chodeccy a wyprawa mołdawska z 1509 roku”, 37–41.
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- 33 Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, 87.
- 34 See the list of the relations: Exudoxiu Hurmuzachi, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor. Suplementul II/1 (1510–1610)*, 21–22, № 7, 23–24, № 8, 27–30, № 10, 30–40, № 11, 40–43, № 12, 43–44, № 13, 48–50, № 16, 51–52, № 18, 53–54, № 20, 55–56, № 22, 57–61, № 24, 62–65, № 25; Marek Plewczyński, *Obertyn 1531*, (Warszawa: Wyd-wo Bellona, 1994); *Petru Rareș: 1527–1538, 1541–1546*, ed. Ștefan S. Gorovei, (București: Editura Militară, 1982), 94–98.
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- 42 Grigore Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, 116–119; Alexandru Xenopol, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană*, 5, (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1925), 109–110.

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- 47 Otto Forst, “Contribuție la cea mai veche genealogie a Movileștilor”, *Movilești. Istorie și spiritualitate Românească*, 1, (2006), 31–40; Ștefan S. Gorovei, “Pe marginea unei filiații incerte: Maria Movilă – fiica lui Petru Rareș”, *Movilești. Istorie și spiritualitate Românească*, 1, (2006), 61–68; Nicolae Iorga, “Doamna lui Ieremia vodă”, *Movilești. Istorie și spiritualitate Românească*, 1, (2006), 69–96.
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- 30; Pach V, 19, 34; Pach VII, 8, 14–15, 21, 27; Pach VIII, 2; Pach XI, 3–4, 6; Pach XII, 1–7, 10–26; 525. *Mitropolia Moldovei*; 529. *Mitropolia Moldovei; Arhivele Naționale. Sjan Suceava, Colecția de documente 1411–1997*, Pach I, 83; Pach II, 68; Pach III, 14, 52, 67, 79–80; Pach IV, 19; Pach XII, 66.
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APPROACHING THE SULTAN'S WORD: OTTOMAN *FERMANS*, READING AND PERFORMANCE IN THE EARLY MODERN MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA

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Abstract

Throughout the Ottoman Empire's existence, the circulation of the imperial writs constituted one of the cornerstones of imperial governance, with orders of the sultan continuously circulating between the centre of the provinces, making the will of the sultan known, but also embodying the sultan's authority itself. At the same time, the very physicality of imperial *fermans* has long fascinated scholars of the empire, resulting in the enormous amount of studies devoted to the diplomatics of Ottoman chancellery. The present paper seeks to address the issue from a different perspective, one frequently ignored by the scholarship – namely those of intended addressees of those documents, who remained often not only at a physical, but also cultural distance from the imperial centre. As such, they were frequently unable to access the contents directly due to lack of linguistic or literacy skills in Ottoman Turkish. However, as the paper seeks to demonstrate, these difficulties notwithstanding, the early modern elites of Moldavia and Wallachia nonetheless were able to grasp the meaning conveyed in these lavish documents, but also the documents themselves were intended not as carriers of textual communication, but as part of the multimedia experience in which the presence of the sultan was recreated in a far-away province.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire; Moldavia; Wallachia; diplomatics; literacy; communication

1. Introduction

The Ottoman Empire has inscribed itself in historical memory and much of historiography as the empire of the sword; moments of triumph or defeat, such as the conquest of Constantinople or the disastrous defeat at the Battle of Vienna immediately come up to mind. For a long time,

this martial image has also been the main focus of scholarship and set the parameters of the historiographical discussion, as in the case of the narrative of “Ottoman decline” following the death of Sultan Süleyman (1520-1566) – first used to describe the waning of the empire’s military power and subsequently applied to all aspects of its life.¹ Since the Ottomans emerged from the status of a minor *beylik* on the outskirts of the Islamicate world in the beginnings of the fourteenth century as an aggressive and expansive power, the argument goes, it was this military might that constituted the make and break of the empire, and its declining capacity of waging violence on their neighbours and subjects alike was the key to the empire’s demise.

However, in recent decades, Ottoman historians provided a much-needed corrective to this one-sided image, focusing on a more diffuse, gentler side of the imperial project. As numerous scholars point out, the Ottoman rule over its expansive “Well-Protected Domains” (*memalik-i mahruse*) should not be seen through the lens of the ‘Turkish yoke’ narrative, whereby over six hundred years of the empire’s rule in Southeastern Europe and much of the Middle East effectively amounted to a military occupation, rejected by local population and upheld only by the threat of violence.² The rejection of a long-standing ‘decline’ paradigm that has been gradually chipped away since the 1970s has allowed to inspire novel perspectives in a number of previously unexplored directions, such as cultural history, political thought, identity and the relationship between the imperial elite and their non-Muslim subjects in ways that emphasized connectivity and coexistence rather than the alleged irredeemable antagonism, while at the same time placing the polity on a broader comparative and trans-imperial stage.³ Within this new wave of scholarship, the established image of the empire of the sword is counterbalanced by its long-underappreciated facet – that of an empire made of paper.

As any student of the empire would readily admit, the Ottomans produced an astonishing amount of documents and the challenge for students of the empire is more often that of unmanageable wealth of data rather than scarcity. Within the capital, detailed registers of revenue sources, expenses, *timars* (prebendal grants) and their holders sought to impose legibility of the empire’s resources to the tiniest detail⁴, while a constant flow of imperial *fermans* (sultanic decrees) and *berats* (appointment diplomas), containing orders, responding to petitions, as well as appointing and dismissing officials not only mobilized resources that the empire required to thrive and expand, but also made the authority

of the sultan felt in the farthest corners under Ottoman suzerainty.⁵ From this point of view, paper held the empire together, lubricating the wheels of imperial machinery, while the pen was more important than the sword. The pen's supremacy was precisely the point of one of late-seventeenth century officials and literati, Şa'bānzāde Mehmed Efendi, in his dialogue *The Altercation of the Sword and the Pen* (*Münāẓara-ı Tığ u Kalem*), in which the Pen triumphs in the competition, with Reason as the umpire:

“in truth the pen the felicitous script is in the erudition of the world by the agreement of the people. In all aspects, it is superior and older than you. It is capable of transmitting exegesis and skilled in the knowledge of the old and the new.”⁶

The author of this eulogy obviously was not an impartial judge and the victorious pen was meant to represent the likes of Şa'bānzāde – the *kalemiyye*, scribal class within the Ottoman establishment, whose main duties included managing the empire's complex bureaucracy, as well as drafting documents and letters sent out across the empire and beyond in the name of the sultan, while their main claim to partaking in the elite was extensive training and knowledge of scribal matters and literary tradition of rhymed prose, known as *inşa*.⁷ By the mid-sixteenth century, the scribal class emerged as a self-identified and culturally homogenous group based on similar training and routinized chancellery practice, drawing on Islamicate models and employing Ottoman Turkish as the language of official correspondence, which replaced the eclectic structure and output of the chancellery of Sultan Süleyman's predecessors.⁸ The scribes, or *katibs*, not only held the empire together, but also serve as our main guide for insights into understanding the Ottoman written culture of the early modern era: not only they were the ones responsible for composing the imperial correspondence, but also provided us with commentaries and glossa that help us understand various aspects behind imperial diplomatics. Finally, outside of their duties within the imperial administration, their high level of literacy meant that they were usually composing works of a non-official kind, including poems, rhymed prose, as well as chronicles and treatises on a variety of topics, including art criticism or geography.⁹ Their prominence and centrality as creators and interpreters of the written word in the early modern Ottoman Empire makes it only natural that modern scholars observe the literary and documentary production of the period through the *katib*'s eyes.

However, *kalemiyye* were hardly a representative group to extrapolate their experience onto all subjects of the sultan. As a numerically minuscule group of highly-skilled professionals of the pen, socialized into the imperial administration by years of apprenticeship and practice, they differed significantly from the population of the empire as a whole; many of the sultan's subjects did not know Ottoman Turkish, or at least not at a level sufficient to grasp the ornate language of the sultan's writs. Moreover, even if they were able to speak and understand the spoken language, the sophisticated calligraphy of the documents could prove an unsurmountable obstacle. This did not necessarily mean that those unfortunate recipients were illiterate; they could just as well adhere to one of different traditions of the written word (such as Armenian, Greek, or Slavonic), whose adepts rubbed shoulders with Ottoman *katibs* across the squares and coffeehouses of the empire.¹⁰ Ottoman Turkish remained a language alien to the majority of the population, to some extent even in such Islamicized regions as Bosnia of the seventeenth century.¹¹ Neither was the majority of the imperial subjects able to read and write the Arabic script. Finally, the intimate familiarity with Islamicate literary and scribal tradition that constituted the core of the *kalemiyye's esprit de corps* was alien to the vast majority of even Muslim subjects within the Ottoman graphosphere.¹² To paraphrase an apt expression by Graham Barrett, while Ottoman textuality was ubiquitous, Ottoman literacy was represented by a small minority.¹³ A good example of how taking scribes' experience as a general one could lead us astray can be seen in Mustafa 'Ali's treatise on calligraphy, *Menakıb-ı Hüner-veran*, where he distinguishes two types of people of the pen:

"The first category [includes those] whose beautiful writing is agreeable and, in accordance with the noble hadith, 'Writing is what is legible,' those whose inability to write beautifully is not shameful. [They are] the eloquent authors, tughra-kashs with lofty positions; scribes of the chancery offices (divan) of exalted grandees; and accountants who keep the books of the treasury; above all, the judges and governors of the time; and the able, assiduous [pen holders] who are in need of help."¹⁴

The gist of Mustafa 'Ali's distinction is a juxtaposition between calligraphers and those men of the pen who are engaged in what modern scholars have called "pragmatic literacy", associated with drafting and issuing documents rather than literary or artistic exploits. At the same time, anyone familiar

with the daunting experience of trying to decipher elaborate sultanlic *tughras* or notoriously difficult to read *siyakat* script used by the financial department of the imperial administration cannot help but smile at the notion of those being legible.¹⁵ As a result, whereas their utterances and comments regarding the practices of reading may provide us with some guidelines, the *katibs'* perspective can hardly be a guide as to how the documents were approached and handled by those from outside this culturally elite circle.

In the pages that follow, I will try to find an alternative approach towards unearthing Ottoman subjects' experience with the written word of the sultan. Rather than looking at the *fermans* from the point of view of the *katib* (both metaphorically and physically), I attempt to reconstruct the experience of the intended recipient, whose language and literacy skills did not necessarily afford him the ability to decipher the contents on his own. As I will argue, reading available evidence against the grain demonstrates that in the early modern period, interacting with the sultanlic writs did not require *reading* them *by* the recipient, who did not possess cultural capital to do successfully on his own; instead, he was expected to *interact with* the *ferman* in ways that did not require him to possess linguistic or literacy skills on his own, while the contents of the document were transmitted orally to him by a trained scribe. Moreover, oral delivery constituted only part of the act of communication, which included visual confirmation of the sultanlic origin of the document, as well as the gestures meant to demonstrate the respect accorded to the sultan and, by extension, the document issued in his name. Reframed in this way, the imperial writ no longer appears as an instance of written communication, but rather as an element of a multimedia, sensory spectacle meant to invoke the presence of the sultan, reaffirm his power, and confirm the authenticity of the order itself. As I argue, these parameters for reading *fermans* were not accidental, but rather baked into the very features of the document itself, aligning with both the realities of limited literacy, as well as the concept behind the act of reading itself, which – rather than silent reading dominant in contemporary world – conceived it as a collective activity, which paralleled the experiences of Islamic *majlis*, a social gathering akin to literary salon.

From this point of view, seventeenth-century Moldavia and Wallachia offer an interesting case study: while both principles firmly entered the Ottoman orbit at the beginning of the sixteenth century and were considered by the Porte a conquered territory and their population had a

status of *zimmis* (protected non-Muslim subjects), neither did experience the introduction of the “classical” provincial administration nor the establishment of Ottoman institutional staples, such as *kadi* courts, *timar* system or *madrasas*; instead, both principalities retained their pre-conquest institutional makeup, with voivodes claiming divine sanction, while simultaneously doubling as “tribute-payers” (*haracgüzar*) and slaves of the sultan, as well as Greek Orthodox boyar elite, which retained both their social and political status.¹⁶ The geographical and cultural marginality within the Ottoman Empire that geography and confessional difference conferred meant that Ottoman Turkish was not the language of everyday conversation, even though some boyars were able to hold their own within the conversation. Similarly, sultanic writs arriving from the Porte were a regular but by no means quotidian occurrence – exceptional enough to be mentioned on occasions, but not so rare as to deprive us of meaningful data. With its own tradition of letters, based on Cyrillic script and Slavonic literary heritage that in the course of the seventeenth century increasingly adopted Romanian vernacular¹⁷, both Moldavia and Wallachia stood apart from the Islamicate tradition that had been embraced by the Sublime Porte, but at the same time, frequent contacts provided at least a modicum of familiarity with the practices of the imperial chancellery.

The present paper consists of three parts, which touch on different aspects of the topic. The first section recounts the evolution of the Ottoman chancellery and its output in the early modern period, focusing on the transition from the eclectic and cosmopolitan model promoted by Mehmed II to a more rigid and canonical format that crystallized under Sultan Süleyman in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. As I argue, the transition away from multilingualism towards the full adoption of Ottoman Turkish as the language of the chancellery stands in apparent contradiction with the status of those writs as part of “pragmatic literacy”¹⁸, focused on bureaucratic practice rather than literary achievements. Unwieldy, large, difficult to handle and written in complex calligraphy, the *fermans* were nothing like what we would expect from bureaucratic production. Nonetheless, as I will argue later, the elaborate ornamentation and atypical format of those orders was not a mere pomp, but rather clues as to how they were intended to be read and in what spatial and social context the act of reading was supposed to unfold.

The second section moves from the Ottoman chancellery to Moldavian and Wallachian boyars of the seventeenth century. Whereas in the absence of quantifiable evidence, some scholars have advanced arguments in

favour of a relatively widespread knowledge of Ottoman Turkish among the elites of the principalities, there is relatively little evidence to back up the claim, and even less to assert that a large number of boyars were able to read and write the language. In fact, numerous boyars and even voivodes were even illiterate in Romanian, making it difficult to believe that they would have enough familiarity with the script to write in Turkish. Most importantly, this section examines the extant evidence concerning the reading of sultanic *fermans* in the Danubian principalities, juxtaposing them against visual and textual evidence stemming from Ottoman and Western sources. As I argue, when taken together, this evidence confirms the hypothesis regarding the role of oral delivery, gestures meant to evoke respect and visual confirmation, which – combined – recreate the physical presence of the sultan addressing his subjects.

The third section returns to the field of Ottoman cultural and political history, seeking to unearth the roots of this mode of reading. As I will argue, these can be identified in the social institution of *meclis*, a multi-purpose social gathering that had been established in the Middle East since the medieval period. Appearing in a variety of hypostases and roles, from dispensation of justice through scholarly debates to leisure and literary entertainment, the *meclis* was one of the centers of gravity for the intellectual life of the Ottoman Empire and one of the most important venues for members of the *kalemiyye* to demonstrate their mastery of language and knowledgeability. They also provided one of primary social spaces for reading, understood not as a solitary exercise in front of the book, but rather as a lively social activity that invited engagement and interaction. As I will argue, the *meclis* can be interpreted as a default format of reading envisioned by the literati of the Ottoman Empire and provided a surprising link between the highly-trained scribes of the Sublime Porte and the illiterate boyars of the Danubian principalities, demonstrating the flexibility of the institution, but also the commonality of space and experience shared by two seemingly disparate groups.

2. The Ottoman Chancellery and Its Output: Writing Down the Sultan's Speech

The Ottoman chancellery emerged only gradually under the first rulers of the dynasty; no document is known from Osman I (1299-1326) and only two Persian *vakfiyes* (diplomas establishing pious foundations) date

from the reign of his son, Orhan, the oldest issued in 1324. As Linda Darling points out, indirect evidence suggests that the bureaucratic apparatus was very rudimentary and small in numbers, adapted to limited scope and sophistication of the tools of power employed by both rulers.¹⁹ In the second half of the fourteenth century, however, the administrative expansion picked pace, drawing on the available pool of scribes from western Anatolia, particularly Kütahya, conquered in 1381. In the following period, the growing ranks of the chancellery were supplemented with the massive inflow of men of the pen drawn from among the conquered peoples, particularly Greeks and Serbians, who found employment performing administrative duties, as well as working in the scriptorium of the sultan. Furthermore, following his victory over Uzun Hasan of Aq Quyunlu in 1473, Mehmed II took over the defeated ruler's Persian chancellery and brought it to Istanbul. Apart from forced transfers, the Ottoman expansion also transformed the previous marginal polity into an increasingly attractive employer, particularly for much-appreciated Persian scribes, for whom the Porte offered stability difficult to find in the late fifteenth-early sixteenth-century Iran.²⁰

The result of these accumulation of talent was a broad, albeit admittedly eclectic composition of Mehmed's chancellery and legitimacy, which drew liberally on personnel familiar with pre-Ottoman traditions of diplomacy and also implemented their elements to enhance the legitimacy of the reigning sultan. This accumulation of talent in the chancellery resulted in a particularly multilingual and multicultural milieu composed of sultan's scribes, with the documents issued written in a variety of languages, including Greek, Italian, Serbian, and even Uyghur.²¹ Appropriating this multiplicity of traditions did not mean wholesale borrowing, but rather the development of a hybrid protocol that navigated the middle ground between innovation and established tradition. This much can be discerned from Serbian-language documents, analyzed by Vančo Boškov; according to the scholar, the documents issued in the name of Ottoman sultans shared certain elements of Nemanjići diplomacy of the fourteenth century, while at the same time introduced a number of features shared with contemporary orders issued in Ottoman Turkish.²² Non-Turkic languages were also extensively employed for the contacts with the outside world: of seven *'ahdnames* (known commonly as capitulations, Ottoman unilateral instruments of peace) issued to Venice prior to 1517, only one was composed exclusively in Turkish.²³

The reign of Sultan Süleyman brought a massive shift in the composition and output of the imperial chancellery, as the multilingual, cosmopolitan model embraced by Mehmed II was abandoned in favour of a more streamlined, monolingual (with few exceptions), hierarchical format that no longer catered to the linguistic skills of the recipient, but instead imposed Ottoman Turkish and a distinctively imperial idiom as a means of communication with the outside world.²⁴ This transition caused considerable difficulties in diplomatic communication, since Christian courts lacked staff with linguistic skills to handle such correspondence; for, instance Polish envoys complained about their inability to read the *'ahdnames* received at the Porte and pleaded for the return to the previous practice of composing the documents in Italian or Latin, but to no avail.²⁵ From now on, the Ottoman imperial chancellery ceased to produce official correspondence in languages other than Ottoman Turkish, with small exceptions granted to Persian and Arabic.

This massive paradigm shift, associated with the tenure of *Nişancı* Celalzade Mustafa Efendi (d. 1567), included two main and intertwined components: an evolution of the chancellery staff itself, as well as recalibration of the chancery output. Whereas under Süleyman's predecessors the secretaries originated from different walks of life and intellectual backgrounds, in the sixteenth century their education becomes more homogeneous and reliant on *madrasa* education within the Ottoman domains.²⁶ This in itself provided a stark contrast with the fifteenth century, when a significant part of the bureaucrats had been recruited on an *ad hoc* basis and hailed from abroad, due to the lack of established institutions of learning that would be able to fill the expanding polity's need for men of the pen.²⁷ Massive patronage of Mehmed II and Süleyman and the establishment of official hierarchy of *madrasas* largely resolved this problem and, by mid-sixteenth century, virtually all of *katibs* working in the chancellery boasted similar background, strengthening the group's *esprit de corps* and facilitating both institutionalization and routinization of scribal work.²⁸

Although the transition to Ottoman Turkish as the default language of the chancellery may be interpreted in purely pragmatic terms, it also was part of a much broader process unfolding in the first half of the sixteenth century, whereby Ottoman imperial culture and identity came on its own. As Gülrü Necipoğlu's comprehensive studies of Ottoman architecture and pottery in this period demonstrate, during the reign of Sultan Süleyman, the visual idiom of the empire took shape, detached

itself from its international Timurid models and proclaimed the empire's aspirations to universal, Sunni monarchy.²⁹ In a similar manner, another crucial artistic field – that of illuminated manuscripts – have developed a distinct aesthetic that increasingly juxtaposed itself against Safavid models, emphasizing order, stability and hierarchy within officialdom and the world as a whole.³⁰ Even in a seemingly static realm of Hanafi *madhab*, the Ottoman consolidation brought major changes, with new curriculum that emphasized the role of *Rumi* scholars, association of the learned hierarchy with the dynasty, as well as new legal interpretations, largely codified by Süleyman's influential *şeyhülislam* (chief jurisconsult), Ebu's-Su'ud.³¹ Chancellery staff, with *nişancı* Celalzade Mustafa Efendi at its helm, were deeply involved in this reformulation of Ottoman identity; as early as 1525, Celalzade penned a law-book (*kanunname*) of Egypt, whose preamble laid out the ruler's aspirations to universal monarchy and served as a basis for Ottoman ideological program.³² Presiding over the growing scribal apparatus and as an accomplished historian in his own right, Celalzade in many ways defined both the institution he presided over and also the Ottoman ideology for centuries to come.³³

By the end of Celalzade's life in 1567, the imperial chancellery was very different than it had been at the time of his entry into the ranks of the *kalmiyye*. Apart from the aforementioned shift in training and output, the chancellery staff was also much larger than it had been in the past. Whereas by the 1490s, the number of *katibs* amounted to ca. 25, a hundred years later it quadrupled, divided between the *divan* and treasury (*hazine*).³⁴ The social profile of the *kalemîyye* also changed and the boundaries of the group hardened; whereas most scribes of the early sixteenth century came from *madrasa* background, by the end of the sixteenth century, *madrasa* graduates were perceived as outsiders on the ground of their lack of experience within administration. Instead, the professional formation of the new scribes took place on the job, with the apprentices (*şagird*) learning the trade under the guidance of their masters.³⁵ This tendency was even reflected in the script employed for the imperial documents produced within different branches; whereas the scribes working in the financial department employed a cursive and near-unreadable *siyakat*, their counterpart within the chancellery was *jali divani*:

“this stylized chancery hand is written in widely spaced lines that ascend to the left. The extreme stylization and increasing number of unauthorized connections make it not only challenging to write and read *divani*, but

almost impossible to have words or lines interpolated in it. The script thus insured confidentiality and protected documents from forgery.”³⁶

This new, distinctly Ottoman, idiom came to prominence not only in the matters of script and language, but also in the literary models perused by scribes composing official correspondence. Sixteenth century saw the emergence of original works of rhymed prose (*inşa*) that served as a manual of style for the *kalemiyye*.³⁷ The most influential oeuvre within this genre was without any doubt the *Münşeâtü's-Selatin* of Feridun Ahmed Bey, whose collection of real or purported letters would set the parameters for the literary production for the period to come.³⁸ Although the *inşa* did not translate directly into the language of imperial orders, featuring more prominently within correspondence, its role in shaping the Ottoman cultural identity of the scribes cannot be underestimated.³⁹

While the bureaucracy of the Ottoman chancellery grew, the underpinning concepts of power and authority it served were personalist in nature. The political theory of the early modern Ottoman Empire hinged upon the sultan and the concepts of justice and equity. In this regard, the Ottomans were by no means innovators, but rather drew on a massive tradition of Middle Eastern statecraft, dating back all the way to the Sassanian period. Within this framework, the main role of the ruler was to uphold the established order of the world (*nizam-i 'alem*), primarily by dispensing justice (*'adalet*) and protecting his subjects from oppression (*zulm*).⁴⁰ From this obligation stemmed the power of the sultan over his officials, frequently identified in the sources as the main perpetrators of oppression through violence, extortion, greed and bribery⁴¹; in order to combat these abuses, the ruler was expected to punish the wrongdoers by means of his political authority (*siyaset*), including the right to dispense capital punishment. Thus, the ruler's role as the refuge for the oppressed and dispenser of justice formed the cornerstone of the theoretical model of the world as a whole, frequently taking the form of the “circle of equity”, as represented in the work of Kinalizade:

Justice leads to rightness of the world; the world is a garden, its walls are the state; the state is ordered by the shari'a; the shari'a is not guarded except by the ruler; the ruler cannot rule except through an army; the army is summoned only by wealth; wealth is accumulated by the subjects; the subjects are made servants of the ruler by justice.

What is crucial for the topic at hand is the fact that in political theory the task of protecting the subjects against oppression by the sultan's servants required the existence of open channels of communication between the ruler and the population of the imperial domains. This was realized through what Heather Ferguson has aptly called 'protocols of authority,' which included the means of clarifying the elevated status of the ruler, as well as legitimize him as the apex of human hierarchies and the refuge of the world.⁴² This included ceremonial displays and careful staging of imperial grandeur, while also providing controlled access to the ruler within the space of the palace and the Ottoman capital. The solemn procession that accompanied the ruler on his way to the Friday prayer also provided an opportunity for the subjects not only to witness the sultanic glory, but also to present him their petitions asking for redress.⁴³ The process of petitioning served several important functions: it required the petitioner to formulate a proper address to the sultan, thus acknowledging his sovereignty, as well as involving the central administration into the resolution of the subject's grievance.⁴⁴ The petition was subsequently logged in and evaluated by junior officials before a decision was taken within higher rank of the administration. Subsequently, a *ferman* was drafted and confirmed while its contents before sending were copied to the chancellery registers: either *Mühimme Defterleri* (The Registers of Important Affairs) or *Şikayet Defterleri* (The Registers of Complaints).⁴⁵ Although the sultan himself was usually not directly involved in the process that was handled within the imperial chancellery and the *divan*, both the petition and the response referred to him as the sole decision-maker, with the *ferman* formulated as a direct speech by the sultan in the first person.

Along with ceremonies, the official correspondence constituted another protocol of authority employed to legitimize and uphold the Ottoman polity. For most of the subjects of the far-flung empire unable to observe the sultan during his outings, the *fermans* constituted the only way of interacting with and witnessing the power of their ruler in Istanbul. Unlike Christian rulers, the Ottomans did not propagate the image of the sultan by means of his portraits; although those existed and circulated, their reach was relatively restricted, in many instances to the walls of the palace.⁴⁶ As a result, the imperial document brought to the provinces was the only way the presence and authority of the sultan was projected into all corners of the empire. As I will argue further in the following sections, this constation should inform our understanding of the way those

documents were approached by the contemporaries and the purpose for their distinct format.

The peculiar and immediately recognizable format of the sultanic *fermans* is one of the most distinctive features of the Ottoman diplomatics. Shaped in the form of a vertically oriented scroll, with the symbolic invocation to God in the form of a single word *huve* ('He') placed at the top, followed by the imperial cipher (*tughra*), which formed the visual centre of the document. The *tughra* derived from a long tradition of Islamicate and Turkic signs of authority, displaying similarities in shape and function to the Fatimid and Sicilian '*alama*'.⁴⁷ However, the most obvious precedent for the sultanic monogram came through the Turkic tradition dating back to the Great Seljuks, where we find an official named *tugrag*.⁴⁸ The calligraphic symbol subsequently entered the repertoire of Anatolian *beyliks* and was adopted by the first rulers of the Ottoman dynasty in the early fourteenth century, the first preserved example being the one found atop the *vakıfname* issued by Orhan in 1324.⁴⁹ While originally containing a relatively simple, unadorned composition that contained the name and patronymic (*Orhan ibn Osman*), under the following rulers its contents and complexity increased, reaching its mature form under Sultan Süleyman. Placed below the *invocatio*, the imperial cipher was by far the largest element of the *ferman*, as well as its only means of authentication. From the sixteenth century onward it was also the most lavishly decorated element of the imperial writ, frequently traced in gold or red ink and adorned with floral motifs in *saz* style.⁵⁰ Affixing the *tughra*, which corroborated its status as an official imperial rescript, was delegated to the head of the chancellery, *nişancı*, as well as *tuğrakeş*, whose task it was to produce an aesthetically pleasing and authoritative cipher.⁵¹ The fact that this task was highly prized within the Ottoman establishment can be deduced from the fact that one of the first epigraphic *tughras* that survived to this day was not meant to eulogize the sultan, but rather convey the identity of his chancellor, Nişancı Mehmed Pasha, whose mosque in Istanbul bears the cipher of his master, Sultan Murad III (1574-1595).⁵²

The *tughra*, which in some cases occupied as much as a quarter of the length of the document was followed by the rest of the document, which involved an *inscriptio*, *narratio* and *dispositio*, signalled by standard phrases and formulated as a direct speech of the sultan. The rhetoric of these sections emphasized two crucial aspects of Ottoman political culture: the role of the sultan as the upholder of the established order (*nizam-i 'alem*), as well as his full authority over his subjects and servants. In the

former case, the message was embedded in the structure of the text; most *fermans* recorded in the *Mühimme Defterleri* provide a detailed account of the original petition, presenting the ruler's intervention as a restoration of justice and the proper order of things. At the same time, the extensive quotation of the petition from the subject justified monarchical intervention and provided the venue for the ruler to demonstrate his justice and power, marked by the *dispositio* section, whereby the sultan commanded the addressee to take measures to resolve the matter. While forceful in tone (*buyurdum ki*), these commands were not necessarily specific with regard to the eventual steps to be taken; for instance, eighteenth-century *fermans* responding to petitions over legal disputes usually did not provide the verdict, but rather ordered the officials involved to investigate the conflict in a just and impartial manner.⁵³ Nonetheless, even such unspecific orders provided the platform for disseminating the image of the rulership⁵⁴ as the single protector against oppression, with the message conveyed in the standard conclusion of many of the writs, *baki ferman sultanımındır* ('it is the sultan's sole authority to issue commands').⁵⁵

Finally, another characteristic feature of many imperial *fermans* was their physical format and appearance. Although the length and lavishness of decoration differed from a document to another, they could reach a considerable size of several running meters of densely written vertical scroll, adorned with meticulous calligraphy, ornament and sprinkled with gold. An illustrative example of the size such documents could reach is the deed (*mülkname*) granted by Selim II to Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha in 1567, which measured an impressive 111 cm in length and 30.5 cm in width, filled with a carefully crafted *divani* script, with gold and dark blue illumination.⁵⁶ Once unfolded, these documents are difficult to handle and force scholars to immobilize them on a flat surface in order to consult their contents. Also, their outsize format creates issues with their proper storage.

From the perspective of the Ottoman *kalemiyye*, diplomatics "was an everyday, essentially mechanical and repetitive, task assigned to the scribal bureaucracy", the bread and butter of the daily toil within the chancellery.⁵⁷ As they developed along with the internal culture of the chancellery, as well as the empire as a whole, the *fermans* constituted part and parcel of Ottoman administration, but also main vehicles for projecting imperial presence and legitimacy to the subjects. Their striking physical and textual features, representing the sultan as the protector of his subjects against oppression and dedicated restorer of the proper world

order, they constituted a main means of communication between centre and the periphery, bridging the vast expanses of the empire and making the sultan's authority visible to the population. The format and conventions of those writs, informed by the cultural and professional background of the *kalemiyye* class, signified their status as products of the Ottoman cultural milieu, as conceived by the imperial bureaucracy.

However, as I have pointed out, the *katibs* are not necessarily the most representative sample to examine the Ottoman society's interaction with sultanic writs. Due to their education and professional experience as creators of said documents, they were uniquely positioned to access their contents with ease. However, this was not a standpoint shared by the majority of the sultan's subjects, who lacked training in Islamicate chancellery tradition, as well as literacy and language skills. From their perspective, many of the characteristic features of the *fermans* served as a serious obstacle: unable to decipher Arabic script or understand Ottoman Turkish, they could not 'read' the document as we would expect today. However, as I argue in the following section on the case of Moldavia and Wallachia, they were nonetheless able to interact with and understand their contents; grasping this process, though, requires us to reconceptualize the place of the document within the social and physical space in which they appeared.

3. Moldavia and Wallachia: Reading the Word

Recent decades have brought a growing interest in the history of reading and literacy in the early modern Ottoman Empire. As scholars such as Nelly Hanna, Timothy Fitzgerald and Dana Sajdi point out, literacy among the sultan's subjects was more widespread and variegated than previous generation of scholars had assumed.⁵⁸ Where the received wisdom was that the vast majority of the male population of the empire remained illiterate, this new wave of scholarship has increasingly brought to light a relative abundance of textuality and a not insignificant literacy that cut across social boundaries. For instance, Hanna's research on Cairo merchants has brought to light the existence of a literate middle class, with some individuals possessing quite extensive manuscript collections.⁵⁹ In turn, Dana Sajdi's exquisite study of Ibn Budayr, a Damascene barber-turned-local historian, demonstrates that the ability of reading and writing was by no means the preserve of the cultural and political elite.⁶⁰

These phenomena of what Sajdi calls *nouveau literacy* overlap with the continued presence of administrative textuality, pointed out by Fitzgerald, who emphasizes the role of legal records and *fetvas* as the main locus of interaction between the sultan's subjects and the written word.⁶¹ In short, reading and writing was by no means a preserve of scholars and bureaucrats, but was shared by the broader social base, with Hanna pointing out that we should not consider the situation as a 'great divide' between a narrow circle of literate individuals and illiterate masses.⁶²

As illuminating as these new results are, they require several caveats. First, most of the cases explored by Sajdi, Hanna and Fitzgerald originated from major urban centres in Syria and Egypt, such as Cairo, Damascus or Aleppo, and cannot be easily extrapolated to the empire as a whole. With a long tradition of Islamic learning and hundreds of *vakfs* dedicated to learning established throughout centuries, these cities were uniquely positioned to have a relatively literate population. The elementary school network in Cairo, providing basic skills of reading and writing, consisted of over 300 institutions⁶³; in turn, Ibn Budayr's immersion in the literary culture of Damascus stemmed from his social and physical proximity to the intellectual and religious elite of the Syrian metropolis. However, such experiences were not necessarily replicable in other parts of the empire, less saturated with educational institutions. Moreover, while discussing the level of literacy, the authors frequently refer to the ability of reading and writing alone, without considering which language their protagonists were able to decipher. As Helen Pfeiffer points out, in the sixteenth century, the politics of language in the Arabic provinces were by no means clear cut: whereas Arabic was the established cosmopolitan language of the Qur'an and learning, Ottoman Turkish was only slowly building its prestige, but at the same time enjoyed the advantage of being the language of the new elite with ties to the political centre.⁶⁴ This paradoxical situation led to contradictory incentives for both sides of the linguistic divide among the *ulema*: whereas *Rumi* scholars from Anatolia studied Arabic in order to gain recognition and prestige of their peers in Damascus, their Arabophone counterparts found it increasingly difficult to advance without the mastery of Ottoman Turkish. At the same time, Arabic remained the hegemonic language of the Levant, but played a diminished role within the imperial elite, which increasingly coalesced around Ottoman Turkish. As James Baldwin points out, it is unlikely that most recipients of *fermans* from the Sublime Porte were able to read their contents, even if they were able to make out the letters of the Arabic script.⁶⁵

The limits imposed on literacy by the linguistic and scriptural diversity of the Ottoman Empire can be seen even in such a province as Bosnia, which has undergone a massive process of Islamization and served as a recruiting pool for Ottoman establishment.⁶⁶ As Selma Zecevic points out, despite adopting Islam, the vast majority of the Muslim population was illiterate and knew at most some spoken Turkish, while “there existed a sharp gap between those who could read and write Ottoman Turkish, and the rest of population in Ottoman Bosnia.”⁶⁷ Conversely, knowledge of the script did not necessarily mean that the written language would be Ottoman Turkish; local authors also composed so-called *alhemjado* literature, which employed the Ottoman script to render Slavonic language.⁶⁸ Other scripts were also present within the graphosphere of Bosnia; local officials also employed Cyrillic and Latin scripts to address their counterparts in Venetian Dalmatia and the Republic of Ragusa.⁶⁹ Of course, this does not mean that Ottoman Turkish was absent from the linguistic landscape; however, it was primarily a preserve of those involved in imperial commercial, scholarly or political networks, which on occasions acted as go-betweens mediating contact between the imperial institutions and the local community.⁷⁰

This complexity of languages and script casts doubt on the notion of a single, measurable literacy in the early modern Ottoman domains. Although the Ottomans’ conquest and political hegemony in Southeastern Europe established Ottoman Turkish as a *lingua franca* throughout the empire, it did not bring an end to alternative traditions of the written word. Speakers of different languages and users of numerous scripts, such as Greek, Slavonic or Armenian, rubbed shoulders on the streets and markets throughout the empire, but not necessarily were able to decipher each other’s texts. For instances, a literate Orthodox monk could be considered fully literate in Greek, but would struggle to decipher a text written in Ottoman Turkish. This phenomenon was even more widespread, as the Ottomans did not actively promote Ottoman Turkish beyond the ranks of the elite; unlike Arabic, whose status came from its association with Qur’an, there was no organized system of teaching Turkish, which was acquired through social interaction rather than formalized training beyond the *medrese*, where it served as a language of scholarly education. Thus, rather than a single Ottoman literacy, it is more useful to speak about multiple, not necessarily correlated, literacies that mingled and co-existed within the broader Ottoman graphosphere.

However, if we try to discern how illiterate subjects in Ottoman Turkish approached the imperial writs, arguably the most appropriate case study is provided by the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, whose position within the Ottoman domains largely isolated their elites from day-to-day contact with the imperial cultural idiom. Although both principalities entered the orbit of the Porte by the early sixteenth century, neither experienced the introduction of 'classical' Ottoman institutions, such as provincial administration, *timar* system, *kadi* courts or *medreses*.⁷¹ Instead, both principalities retained their pre-conquest institutional and social framework, with Greek Orthodox voivodes and boyar class retaining the hold on power within the principalities, the former complementing their legitimacy as divinely-ordained Christian rulers with their status as the sultan's "tax collectors" (*haracgüzarlar*). The Muslim population resident in the Danubian principalities was small and overwhelmingly transitory and, while the elites were unable to prevent individuals from embracing Islam, conversion meant exclusion from the political and social arenas of Moldavia and Wallachia and the forfeiture of the convert's properties.⁷² As a result, although deeply embedded within the political structure of the empire, the ruling class of the principalities remained solidly Greek Orthodox and attached to the traditional cultural idiom and ideology of power. This included a chancellery tradition that predated the advent of the Ottomans and drew on post-Byzantine models, employing Slavonic language (Romanian since the seventeenth century) and Cyrillic script, with the model of diplomatics largely inspired by Balkan chancelleries of the late Middle Ages.⁷³ In other words, Moldavian and Wallachian boyars represented within the Ottoman ecumene an interesting case of a double marginality: geographical position at the northern frontier of the empire and a cultural separation from the hegemonic culture of the imperial centre. As such, they provide us with a good sample regarding the ways those unfamiliar with the Ottoman written word interacted with sultanic writs.

The relative deficit of sources burdens our estimates of the level of literacy and knowledge of Ottoman Turkish with a considerable margin of error and in the past has produced contradictory arguments. For instance, in a recent contribution, Mariana Goina has argued that since the principalities' emergence, the reliance on the written word has spread and became a relatively generalized phenomenon by the end of the sixteenth century⁷⁴; in her argument, she relies on Michael Clanchy's methodology, which focuses on the growth of written record and pragmatic

literacy, understood as the “development of literacy for and from practical purposes of day-to-day business rather than creative literature.”⁷⁵ Thus, as she argues, the growth of textuality and documentary sources in the first three centuries of the principalities’ existence suggests a corresponding growth of literacy. While the focus on pragmatic diplomacy fits well with the current framework, there is considerable evidence to suggest that illiteracy even in Romanian letters remained endemic among boyars. For instance, Iancu Costin, the *hatman* under Voivode Miron Barnovschi (1626-1629) and the father of a famous Moldavian chronicler, Miron Costin, clearly could not write, since he was unable to put his signature and had a *diac* write it down for him. In another, somewhat amusing episode, when Constantin Duca dispatched letters ordering his boyars to arrest his adversaries in Moldavia, the messenger handed the letters to boyar Ștefan Cerchez. However, Cerchez being illiterate, passed the letters to one of those whom he was supposed to arrest, giving him time to flee the principality. We find illiterate individuals not only among boyars, but also among voivodes in the late seventeenth century. Constantin Cantemir was the butt of jokes by contemporaries and subsequent chroniclers for his inability to read and write. According to Ion Neculce, Cantemir never learned to write, learning only to draw his signature instead.⁷⁶ According to another chronicler, Alexandru Amiras, Cantemir’s decision to execute one of the most influential boyars of his reign, Velicico Costin, because the latter had made fun of him, calling him a ‘moron’ for being illiterate.⁷⁷ Thus, one could argue that while a number of boyars were literate, some (as Dimitre Cantemir or Miron Costin) even eminently so, the lack of literacy skills in Romanian and Cyrillic script was a constant phenomenon among boyars throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, one could also assume that the level of literacy in Ottoman Turkish, a foreign language and script with which there was little direct contact in Moldavia and Wallachia.⁷⁸ As a result, the boyars in Moldavia and Wallachia had arguably little chance of overcoming the barrier created by language and the writing system that separated them from Ottoman *fermans*. However, neither did reading exhaust the options of interacting with the writs, nor were they intended to be read by the recipient as we would expect. In order to untangle this issue, we have to reconstruct the spatial and social context in which those documents appeared in the public eye.

The most comprehensive description of ceremonies involving an imperial *ferman* is a 1762 *Condica lui Gheorgachi*, a compilation of ceremonial order on the Moldavian court.⁷⁹ In the description of the

investiture of the new voivode, he provides us with a situation that could not be different from our basic assumptions about the act of reading:

“When you arrive [with a ferman], you have to dismount by the stairs and proceed before the voivode to the divan, where the voivode climbs and takes his place on the throne. You have to stand before him, keeping in both hands, the robe of honor and the ferman [in the covering]. Then the voivode stands up, takes the ferman and kisses it, subsequently handing it over to divan efendi to read. You, along with other boyars, stand still, holding the robe of honour until the reading of the ferman concludes. Then, the divan efendi takes the robe in his hands and puts it on the voivode’s shoulders. The voivode, in his turn, bestows robes of honour upon you and the divan efendi, while after the ceremony concludes, you leave. [Subsequently], the treasurer reads the translation at the divan...”⁸⁰

Rather than such public events, our first association with reading is profoundly shaped by silent reading; a solitary exercise performed without distraction. However, the development of this form of interacting with the text is by no means universal throughout history and does not seem to have been the dominant mode of interacting with the written word in Moldavia and Wallachia.⁸¹ At the first glance, the aural delivery by the *divan efendi*⁸² and subsequent reading of the translation by the *vistier* may be associated with the solemnity of the occasion – the confirmation of the ruler. However, there is evidence suggesting that this was not the case; Amiras mentions that in 1714 Abdi Pasha called the exiled Polish king Stanisław Leszczyński and the Crimean khan to his tent in order to read the ferman together.⁸³ He also mentions another ceremonial reading of the *ferman* confirming Grigore II Ghica’s rule in Moldavia.⁸⁴ In a similar manner, Radu Popescu, describes that during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu, „*following the custom*, the voivode entered the grand *divan* and the imperial *ferman* was read, in which there were many words of praise that have never been delivered in the past.”⁸⁵ Thus, one can argue that the way of bridging the linguistic and literacy gaps was the oral delivery, performed by *divan efendi* – an Ottoman scribe at the employ of the voivode – followed by a translation read by one of the boyars. However, while this may seem as a perfectly, if somewhat anticlimactic, explanation, I would argue that reconceptualizing the act of reading not as akin to our modern experience of archives, but rather as a collective activity within a specific social and physical space opens the way for new interpretations of the place of *fermans* within political and

social communication. As I argue, this description corresponds with the intended mode of reading of imperial *fermans*; not as standalone support for the sultanic order, but rather as a prop in a multimedia spectacle meant not only to convey the textual message, but also to recreate the sultan's presence in front of a collective, potentially illiterate audience.

Returning to Gheorgachi's account, it is worth noting that, whereas only the *divan efendi* reads the *ferman*, a larger group of people interacts with it on another level. The first person is of course, the boyar who brings the robe of honour (*hil'at*) and the *ferman* to the throne room; secondly, the voivode who takes the writ into his hands and kisses it before handing in over to the *divan efendi*, who proceeds to deliver the contents in Turkish. Finally, and less obviously, other participants constitute the audience of the act of reading, observing the *divan efendi* and listening to his words. While in isolation this may seem like a rather obvious remark, it actually allows us to reframe the act of reading as a more comprehensive experience, which involves visual (watching), auditive (listening) and tactile (kissing the *ferman*) stimuli. The latter is further enhanced by the other object bestowed by the sultan, the robe of honor, which is put on the voivode's shoulders, thus concluding the process of confirmation on the throne. As has been frequently pointed out, the *hil'at* was a crucial element of the Ottoman court ceremonial and has been interpreted as a powerful symbol of bestowal of power, with the garment received from the sultan bringing his servant into the same space as the ruler.⁸⁶

What is even more interesting is when we try to recreate the point of view of the public observing the act of reading. From the description, it is clear that the *divan efendi*'s position is an elevated one, on the side of the voivodal throne, reading the document in front of his eyes. The format of the *ferman* – a vertical scroll with dense script – imposes a certain way of handling it; as the reader moves his eyes down the page, he is also forced to move his hands accordingly, increasingly shifting the equilibrium of the document downwards. In consequence, at some point of the process, the upper part of the *ferman* cedes to gravity and folds outwards, revealing to the public the ornamental *tughra* that constitutes the most striking visual element of the whole imperial writ. As Rhoads Murphy has argued:

The *tughra* or royal insignia provided one of the principal means by which a new sultan placed his personal stamp on the patrimonial realm inherited from his father [...] The appearance of the imperial insignia on legal

documents and sultanic communiqués was used for practical purposes, as a means of verifying and authenticating a document's contents.⁸⁷

While the importance of *tughra* as an individual sign of a specific Ottoman ruler is definitely valid, it is nonetheless clear that relatively few recipients would be able to decipher the intricate loops of the Ottoman ciphers on their own. Instead, a more plausible interpretation is provided by Hakan Karateke, who argued that rather than individualizing the sultan, the *tughras* for most observers served as a dynastic visual symbol, without necessarily referencing a specific ruler.⁸⁸ The focus on the visual communication embedded within the *tughra* is even more pertinent within the spatial context described in Gheorgachi's account: rather than facing the *tughra*, the observers would rather see it upside down, with the *tuğs* facing downwards. This spatial manipulation would effectively erase access to the textual content for the audience, but would not impede them from identifying it as a visual stand-in for the sultan himself. From this point of view, the *tughra* as observed rather than read would play an auxiliary role, enhancing the authenticity of the oral delivery by the *divan efendi*, whose reading of the *ferman*'s contents, formulated as the direct speech of the sultan, were meant to evoke the ruler's presence through multisensorial experience. At the same time, it also provides an important cue regarding the social and physical context which the *katibs* in the imperial centre had in mind: rather than intended for *reading by* the recipient of the writ, the diplomatic features of the *ferman* suggest that they were meant *to be read to* the recipient by a trained scribe who would have no difficulty deciphering the complex calligraphy.

That this was the case is confirmed by a shift to a different type of source: Ottoman illustrated manuscripts. As Emine Fetvacı pointed out, such works of art served as an important point of reference in shaping Ottoman elite culture, consumed by sultans, officials and pages receiving their education in the palace school.⁸⁹ As she points out, book reading at the imperial court was eerily reminiscent of the model of reading proposed in the context of Moldavian and Wallachian readings of the *ferman*:

"reading in itself was more often than not a group activity, and reading for an audience was as much a part of the norm as silent reading at the Ottoman court. Both the presentation of a text between covers and its vocal performance had their place in Ottoman book culture, and form the background against which I consider the manuscripts in this study.

Books were often read in groups, aloud, and probably then discussed among those present.”⁹⁰

This would suggest that such mode of reading, which emphasized collective activity has been the default option for the elite; however, the miniatures of the manuscripts offer us also additional piece of information that directly concerns the reading of *ferman*. Produced by the members of Ottoman elite culture and frequently focusing on the events involving the administrative activities of the empire, the manuscripts provide an idealized, but nonetheless relatively realistic depiction of the imperial institutions and practices.

NOTES

- ¹ Douglas A. Howard, "Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of 'Decline' of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Asian History* 22 (1988): 52–77; Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4, no. 2 (1997-1998): 30–75.
- ² On the Turkish yoke narrative, see Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "The "Turkish Yoke" Revisited: The Ottoman Non-Muslim Subjects Between Loyalty, Alienation and Riot," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 93 (2006) See also Olga Todorova, "The Ottoman State and Its Orthodox Christian Subjects: The Legitimistic Discourse in the Seventeenth-Century 'Chronicle of Serres' in a New Perspective," *Turkish Historical Review* 1, no. 1 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1163/187754610X494996> For a different perspective, focusing on intellectual medium in the Balkan provinces, Aleksandar Fotić, "Belgrade: A Muslim and Non-Muslim Cultural Centre (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries)," in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Antonis Anastasopoulos (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005).
- ³ By this point, the amount of scholarship within this framework is massive. To name a few contributions: Hakan T. Karateke, "Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis," in Karateke; Reinkowski, *Legitimizing the Order*, 13–54; Alan Mikhail and Christine M. Philliou, "The Ottoman Empire and the Imperial Turn," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54, no. 4 (2012); Antonis Anastasopoulos, ed., *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire* (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005); Suraiya Faroqhi, "Political Activity Among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanate Legitimation (1570-1650)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 35, no. 1 (1992); Suraiya Faroqhi, "Empires Before and After the Post-Colonial Turn: The Ottomans," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 36 (2010) Useful overviews of this major paradigm shift are: Linda T. Darling, "Another Look at Periodization in Ottoman History," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 26, no. 2 (2002); Jane Hathaway, "Problems of Periodization in Ottoman History: The Fifteenth Through the Eighteenth Centuries," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 20, no. 2 (1996).
- ⁴ The level of detail in delimitation of individual *mukata'a* is sometimes higher than in nineteenth century cadastral records, down to a single linden tree near a village of Lastivci mentioned in the 1681 register of Podolia, Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, ed., *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia (Ca. 1681): Defter-i Mufasssal-ı Eyalet-i Kamaniçe* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2004), 471.
- ⁵ A similar argument has recently been raised by Charles Argo with regard to notorious practice of child levy into the janissary corps (*devşirme*), Charles H. Argo, "Ottoman Political Spectacle: Reconsidering the Devşirme in the Ottoman Balkans, 1400-1700" (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2005).

- ⁶ Şa'bānzāde' Mehmed Efendi, *Münāẓara-ı Tığ u Kalem*, Istanbul, Istanbul University Library, MS 895/1, 39r. I have used the translation of Ekin Atiyas, comparing it with the original manuscript, Ekin E. T. Atiyas, "Eloquence in Context: Şa'bānzāde Mehmed Efendi's (D. 1708-1709) *Münāẓara-i Tığ u Kalem* and "The People of the Pen" in the Late Seventeenth Century," *Turcica* 48 (2017): 127.
- ⁷ For the study of Şa'bānzāde's intellectual and social milieu, see Ekin E. T. Atiyas, "Political Literacy and the Politics of Eloquence: Ottoman Scribal Community in the Seventeenth Century" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013) On *inşa* and its role, see Christine Woodhead, "Circles of Correspondence: Ottoman Letter-Writing in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Turkish Literature* 4 (2007): 53–68 Particularly important is also Colin Mitchell study on official correspondence under the Safavids, Colin Mitchell, "To Preserve and Protect: Husayn Va'iz-i Kashifi and Perso-Islamic Chancellery Culture," *Iranian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2003): 485–507; Colin Paul Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran: Power, Religion and Rhetoric* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009).
- ⁸ Mehmet Ş. Yılmaz, "'Koca Nişancı" of Kanuni: Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi, Bureaucracy and "Kanun" in the Reign of Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566)" (PhD diss., Bilkent University, 2006); Cornell H. Fleischer, "Scribal Training and Medrese Education in the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 8, no. 1 (1984): 27–29.
- ⁹ See for instance, Mustafa 'Ali, *Mustafâ Ali's Epic Deeds of Artists: A Critical Edition of the Earliest Ottoman Text About the Calligraphers and Painters of the Islamic World*, ed. Esra Akın-Kıvanç (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011); Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).
- ¹⁰ For an inspiring way to tackle this issue, since Konrad Petrovsky's concept of *osmanisch-orthodoxer Kommunikationsraum*, Konrad Petrovsky, *Geschichte Schreiben im Osmanischen Südosteuropa: Eine Kulturgeschichte Orthodoxer Historiographie des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Balkanologische Veröffentlichungen 60 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 20.
- ¹¹ Kerima Filan, "Turski jezik u Bosni u osmansko doba," *Anali Gazi Husrevbegovoj biblioteci* 43 (2014): 151–78; Selma Zecevic, "On the Margin of Text, On the Margin of Empire: Geography, Identity and Fatwa-Text in Ottoman Bosnia" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2007), 22–23.
- ¹² Simon Franklin, *The Russian Graphosphere, 1450-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 1–2.
- ¹³ Graham Barrett, "The Written and the World in Early Medieval Iberia" (PhD diss., Oxford University, 2015), 269 I have been unable to consult Barrett's book, which was published only in July 2023.
- ¹⁴ Mustafa 'Ali, *Mustafâ Ali's Epic Deeds of Artists*, 163–64.

- 15 On *siyakat* script, see a classic study Lajos Fekete, *Die Siyāqat-Schrift in der türkischen Finanzverwaltung*, Bibliotheca orientalis Hungarica v. 7 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1955).
- 16 For the status of the Danubian principalities, see Viorel Panaite, *Ottoman Law of War and Peace: The Ottoman Empire and Its Tribute-Payers from the North of the Danube*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2019); Viorel Panaite, "The Legal and Political Status of Wallachia and Moldavia in Relation to the Ottoman Porte," in *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (Leiden - Boston: Brill, 2013), 9–42.
- 17 Petre P. Panaitescu, "Les chroniques slaves de Moldavie au XVe siècle," *Romanoslavica* 1 (1958); Virgil Căndeia, "L'humanisme d'Udriște Năsturel et l'agonie des lettres slavones en Valachie," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* 6, no. 2 (1968); Denis J. Deletant, "Slavonic Letters in Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania from the Tenth to the Seventeenth Centuries," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 58, no. 1 (1980); Emil Kałużniacki, "Kirillovskoe pis'mo u rumyn," *Encyklopedija slavjanskoj filologii* 4, no. 2 (1915); Petre P. Panaitescu, "Începuturile istoriografiei în Țara Românească," *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 5 (1962); Petre P. Panaitescu, *Începuturile și biruința scrisului în limba română* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei R.P.R., 1965); Silviu Văcaru, *Diecii Țării Moldovei în prima jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea* (Iași: Junimea, 2006).
- 18 M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066-1307*, 2nd ed. (London: Blackwell, 1993).
- 19 Linda T. Darling, "The Development of Ottoman Governmental Institutions in the Fourteenth Century: A Reconstruction," in *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi, Vera Costantini and Markus Koller, The Ottoman Empire and its heritage 39 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008).
- 20 See for instance, Christopher Markiewicz's work on Idris Bitlisi, Christopher Markiewicz, "Persian Secretaries in the Making of an Anti-Safavid Diplomatic Discourse," in *Diplomatic Cultures at the Ottoman Court, C.1500-1630*, ed. Tracey A. Sowerby and Christopher Markiewicz, Routledge research in early modern history (New York: Routledge, 2021); Christopher Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Kingship in Late Medieval Islam: Persian Emigres and the Making of Ottoman Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019) A similar phenomenon has been described with regard to *ulema* in Abdurrahman Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- 21 Uyghur, associated with Chinggisid tradition, exercised considerable cultural influence in the fifteenth-century Ottoman intellectual life due to the prestige of Timurid learning. For instance, Bayezid II was trying to master Uyghur himself and extended his patronage over Chagathay poets, see Gottfried

- Hagen, "Translations and Translators in a Multilingual Society: A Case Study of Persian-Ottoman Translations, Late Fifteenth to Early Seventeenth Century," *Eurasian Studies* 2, no. 1 (2003): 101.
- 22 Vančo Boškov, "Odnos srpske i turske diplomatike," *Jugoslovenski Istorijski Časopis* 19, 3-4 (1980): 234.
- 23 Yılmaz, "'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni," 173.
- 24 Heather L. Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things: Language, Power, and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* (Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 2018), 57.
- 25 *Instructio in Thurciam magnifico Joanni de Thanczin, castellano lublinensi*, Warsaw, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Libri Legationum, MS 4, 125-128. Andrzej Dziubiński, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne polsko-tureckie w latach 1500-1572*, Monografie FNP (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2005), 72.
- 26 Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World*, Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 22.
- 27 Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, 56-57; Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman*, 215-17.
- 28 Yılmaz, "'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni," 13; Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, 4-5.
- 29 Gülrü Necipoğlu, "From International Timurid to Ottoman: A Change of Taste in Sixteenth-Century Ceramic Tiles," *Muqarnas* 7 (1990): 136-70; Gülrü Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul, 2005).
- 30 Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington - Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).
- 31 Colin Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition*, Jurists--profiles in legal theory (Stanford Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997); Eugenia Kermeli, "Ebu's Su'ud's Definitions of Church Vakfs: Theory and Practice in Ottoman Law," in *Islamic Law: Theory and Practice*, ed. Robert Gleave and Eugenia Kermeli (London, 1997); Snježana Buzov, "The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers: The Role of Legal Discourse in the Change of Ottoman Imperial Culture" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2005); Guy Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
- 32 Buzov, "The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers," 19-45.
- 33 Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman*, 160.
- 34 Yılmaz, "'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni," 24.
- 35 Yılmaz, "'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni," 8-10.
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New Europe College (NEC) is an independent Romanian institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences founded in 1994 by Professor Andrei Pleșu (philosopher, art historian, writer, Romanian Minister of Culture, 1990–1991, Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997-1999) within the framework of the *New Europe Foundation*, established in 1994 as a private foundation subject to Romanian law.

Focused primarily on individual research at an advanced level, NEC offers to young Romanian scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences, and to the foreign scholars invited as fellows appropriate working conditions, and provides an institutional framework with strong international links, acting as a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs that NEC coordinates, and the events it organizes aim at strengthening research in the humanities and social sciences and at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide.

Academic programs organized and coordinated by NEC in the academic year 2022-2023:

- ***NEC Fellowships (since 1994)***

Each year, the NEC Fellowships are open to both Romanian and international outstanding young scholars in the humanities and social sciences.

- ***Stefan Odobleja Fellowships (since October 2008)***

The Fellowships awarded in this program are supported through a grant from UEFISCDI (The Romanian Executive Unit for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding). and are part of the core ***NEC Fellowships*** program. They target young Romanian researchers.

Project number PN-III-P1-1.1-BSO-2016-0003, within PNCDI III

- ***The Gerda Henkel Fellowships (since March 2017)***

This Fellowship Program, developed with the support of Gerda Henkel Stiftung (Germany), invites young researchers and academics working in the fields of humanities and social sciences from Afghanistan, Belarus, China (only Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

- ***The Spiru Haret Fellowships (since October 2017)***

The *Spiru Haret* Fellowships target young Romanian researchers/ academics in the humanities and social sciences whose projects address questions relating to migration, displacement, diaspora. Candidates are expected to focus on Romanian cases seen in a larger historical, geographical and political context. The Program is financed through a grant from UEFISCDI (The Romanian Executive Unit for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding). Project number PN-III-P1-1.1-BSH-3-2021-0009, within PNCDI III

- ***Lapedatu Fellowships (since June 2018)***

Thanks to a generous financial contribution from the *Lapedatu* Foundation, NEC invites to Bucharest a foreign researcher specialized in the field of Romanian Studies, who is conducting research in one of the world's top universities. On this occasion, he/she will spend a month in Romania and work with a young Romanian researcher to organize an academic event hosted by NEC.

- ***Porticus N+N Fellowships (since 2020)***

The 'Nations and Nationalisms' (N+N) Program, developed with financial support from the Porticus Foundation, aims to approach one

of the main challenges faced by societies, mainly in Central and Eastern Europe: a growing tension between nationalizing and globalizing forces in a world dominated by migration, entanglement, digitization and automation. The *Porticus N+N* Fellowships are open to international candidates working in all fields of the humanities and social sciences with an interest in the study of nations, varieties of nationalism and/or populism, and the effects of globalization on national identities.

- ***AMEROPA Fellowships (since 2020)***

Organized with financial support from Ameropa and its subsidiaries in Romania, and with academic support from the Centre for Government and Culture at the University of St. Gallen, this program aims to investigate the conditions and prerequisites for democratic stability and economic prosperity in Romania and the neighboring region. The *Ameropa* Fellowship Program is open to early career Romanian researchers in history, anthropology, political science, economics or sociology. Each year, an annual workshop will be organized in the framework of the *Ameropa* Program.

- ***DigiHum Fellowship Program (since 2021)***

The *Relevance of the Humanities in the Digital Age* (DigiHum) Fellowship Program is proposed jointly by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia and the New Europe College Bucharest, and is developed with the financial support of the Porticus Foundation. The program is intended to accommodate a broad range of themes pertaining to Humanities and Social Science, provided that they link up to contemporary debates about major challenges to the human condition stemming from the technological advances and 'digital modernity'. The program addresses international scholars.

- ***GCE St. Gallen (since 2022)***

The *GCE St. Gallen* Fellowship Program, supported by the University of St. Gallen's Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE), targets Ukrainian and Russian scholars in the humanities and social sciences whose academic careers have been affected by the current war in Ukraine.

- ***TANDEM, Author with Translator – Translator with Author (since 2022)***

TANDEM, Author with Translator – Translator with Author is a program exclusively dedicated to literati, writers and translators, with the aim to promote authors from the Black Sea Region by encouraging the translation of their work into the local languages. The program is supported by S. Fischer Stiftung, Germany.

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