

Peyfuß, Max Demeter: Die Druckerei von Moschopolis, 1731-1769. Buchdruck und Heiligenverehrung im Erzbistum Achrida. 2. verbesserte Auflage. Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung der Universität Wien. Bd. XIII. Wien: Böhlau 1996. 256 pp.

Moschopolis, known in Albanian as Voskopoja and in Aromanian as Moscopole, is now a remote village of some seven hundred inhabitants high in the mountains twenty kilometers west of Korça in southeastern Albania. In the eighteenth century, however, Moschopolis was a large and flourishing centre of trade and urban culture. At its zenith, before the city was pillaged for the first time in 1769, it is *said* to have had a population of ca. 20,000-50,000, greater than Athens, Sofia or Belgrade at the time, with an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 buildings, including 24 churches, a hospital, an orphanage, a library, a centre of learning known as the 'New Academy' or *Hellênikon Frôntistêrion* founded in 1744, and the only Greek printing press in the Balkans, which, as we shall see, published at least twenty-one books.

Between 1769 and 1789 Moschopolis was pillaged several times and came to lose its vitality and significance as a commercial centre on the trading route between Constantinople and Venice. It was finally destroyed in 1916 in fighting during the First World War and, with the exception of four or five beautiful Orthodox churches, the historical buildings which did survive were tragically razed in partisan warfare during the Second World War.

On 11 August 1996, Voskopoja made national headlines in what is perhaps the last episode of its downfall, when three Albanian adolescents, aged 16-18, all of them educated by (non-Albanian) Islamic extremists, broke into the Church of St. Michael's (1722-1725). The boys, on holiday there at a summer camp, took knives to the eighteenth-century frescos and, in true centuries-old Balkan tradition, scarred the faces and scratched out the eyes of twenty-three serene Orthodox saints. This act of cultural barbarism shocked and dismayed the Albanian public, which had up to then believed that such religious intolerance was a thing of the past.

Much has been written on Moschopolis, primarily by Modern Greek scholars, but of all the works published to date, none is more informative and appealing than the present monograph by Max Demeter Peyfuß of the Institute for Eastern and Southeastern European Studies of the University of Vienna. *Die Druckerei von Moschopolis, 1731-1769* was originally published in 1989 but was out of print by 1992. We are thus fortunate that this very pan-Balkan subject: "*die auch die Slavistik betreffende Tätigkeit einer griechischen Druckerei in einer aromunischen Stadt im heutigen Albanien zu osmanischer Zeit*" (p. ix), is once again available in a second, 'amended' edition. By way of interest, with the exception of a two page list of errata at the end of the book, the work does not seem to have been amended at all.

Following a short preface (p. ix-x), Peyfuß begins his monograph with an introduction (p. 1-7), in which he makes brief reference to the legends and misinformation surrounding Moschopolis and to the numerous bibliographical ghosts alleged to have been published at the printing press there. He defines the primary goal of his study accordingly as a review of the activities of the press and its publications.

Section II (p. 8-46) focusses on the town of Moschopolis/Voskopoja itself: 'where it is situated', 'the literature and the sources on the history of Moschopolis', its 'name and the origins of the settlement', its 'economic boom and cultural zenith', followed by its 'fall and destruction'. Peyfuß offers a refreshingly critical review of the town's rise and history, noting that much of the literature on Moschopolis is unreliable and influenced by wishful thinking on the part of mostly nationalist authors from the Balkans. As an historian he relies on the facts as far as they can be determined.

In Section III (p. 47-94) we delve into the core of the monograph on the famous printing press, in which Peyfuß covers the present 'state of research', 'legends and bibliographical ghosts', 'the spread of printing in southeastern Europe', 'the establishment and operation of the Moschopolis press', and the figure of 'Gregorios Hieromachos - author, corrector and printer'.

Section IV (p. 95-165) reviews in meticulous detail each of the twenty-one works known for certain to have been printed in Moschopolis in the period from 1731 to 1769. In their majority, the publications are Greek-language hagiographies and religious texts, some of which, like the Life of St. Clement, are of significance for Church Slavonic literature, others for Albanian and Aromanian studies.

The relations between Moschopolis and the Archdiocese of Achrida (Ohrid) are covered in Section V (p. 166-195) which summarizes the importance of the press for the archdiocese.

Section VI (p. 196-200) offers an appendix of fourteen important bibliographical ghosts still haunting Moschopolis. This is followed by an extensive bibliography in Section VII (p. 201-242), a list of the thirty-two illustrations (prints, maps and tables) which enhance the book as Section VIII (p. 243-245), and an index as Section IX (p. 246-256).

Die Druckerei von Moschopolis, 1731-1769 is a well-researched monograph providing the reader with a wealth of precise and in-depth information on Moschopolis/Voskopoja as a phenomenon of Balkan culture, on its exceptionally significant printing press and on the history of printing in the Balkans.

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