

REVIEWS

Spotlight on the Peripheries: The Changing Face of European Latinity
Some Ideas Sparked by Tsvetan Vasilev's Critical Edition of *Petrus Deodatus: De Antiquitate Paterni Soli et de Rebus Bulgaricis*

Petrus Deodatus/Петър Богдан. *De antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis/За древността на бащината земя и за българските дела.*

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This review is going to zoom in on a recently published commented edition of a mid-seventeenth-century Neo-Latin text which I believe can be of great interest to all those researching the history of Central and South-Eastern Europe on the one hand and to Neo-Latin philologists on the other. The edition prepared by classical philologist Dr. Tsvetan Vasilev (University “St Kliment Ohridski”, Sofia) comprises two volumes, of which the first contains a critical edition of the original text with facing Bulgarian translation, while the second is dedicated to a detailed commentary covering the material and philological aspects of the edited manuscript. The second volume, however, comes only in Bulgarian. Therefore, it is the Latin part of the first volume that is likely to attract the attention of the majority of international scholars.

Let me begin with a personal memory that inevitably comes to my mind in connection with this and similar editions. When attending a Neo-Latin congress in Vienna in 2015, I met a prominent Neo-Latin scholar from Ukraine who had brought with him some of his publications on Ukrainian Latinity with the intention to donate them to the library of the institute responsible for the event's organization. I can still remember this scholar's profound disappointment when his donation was received with the words: “*Hier liest man Kyrrillisch nicht*” [We do not read Cyrillic hear]. Among eastern Slavs, it is a matter of course that every educated person, be it a bank clerk or an expert in nuclear physics, is capable of reading both the Cyrillic and the Roman alphabet. And now, this scholar from Ukraine was struck by the naked reality that western philologists (i.e., scholars with a particular interest in language and literature) based in an institution located at the very threshold of the Slavonic world were not able to read Cyrillic (and, consequently, were totally ignorant of the languages using that kind of script). This awkward event is symptomatic of how deep a divide there is between the West and the East, at least when it comes to humanities research. This deplorable state of affairs is, methinks, to a great extent due to the one-sided language barrier between the two halves of Europe. This can

give us reason to fear that Vasilev's edition will not be internationally received with such enthusiasm as it definitely deserves.

While the importance of Latin for the history of the West is generally recognised, it still may come as a surprise for many that Latin culture also played a not insignificant role in the sphere of *Slavia Orthodoxa* – that is, among the Slavs adhering to the Byzantine-Slavonic rite (in what is today's Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Eastern Slovakia, Serbia and Bulgaria). This is also attested to by current scholarship: The last twenty years or so has seen the publication of two monographs offering a synthesis of Neo-Latin literature in Ukraine (2013 and 2014)¹ and two books on the role of Latin prose and poetry in sixteenth- to nineteenth-century Russia (2000 and 2015),² not to mention other, more specialised studies or works dealing broadly with classical reception in Eastern Europe. Neo-Latin studies are being actively pursued also in Belarus and in Serbia.³ To borrow a term from medical science, we could perhaps characterise this part of European cultural heritage as atypical Latinity; atypical in the sense of its formation and existence in a non-Latin environment. When viewed in its entirety, the Latin heritage of the space *Slavia Orthodoxa* (where Church Slavonic was the dominant literary language) poses a challenge to historians and philologists, since it disturbs the traditional patterns of the eastern and western cultural horizons.

It seems to me there is a significant difference in how Neo-Latin literature is approached in western and eastern scholarship respectively. In the West, the emphasis traditionally lies on the *litterae renatae* (“reborn letters”) and the imitation of classical models, and western scholars tend to view European Latinity as a lingering continuation of the ancient Roman tradition. On the other hand, what usually comes to the fore in the East is the role Latin played in the formation of modern nations; Latin culture is here looked upon as a preliminary stage of modernity. I could illustrate this with a number of quotations taken from the works of recent Slavonic scholars.⁴ The edition of Bogdan's

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- 1 ШЕВЧЕНКО-САВЧИНСЬКА, Людмила. *Латиномовна українська література: Загальний огляд*. Київ: Медієвіст, 2013, 217 pp. ISBN 978-1494313241; ТРОФИМУК, Мирослав С. *Латиномовна література України XV–XIX ст.: Жанри, мотиви, ідеї*. Львів: ЛНУ імені Івана Франка, 2014, 380 pp.
 - 2 ЛИБУРКИН, Д. Л. *Русская новолатинская поэзия: материалы к истории, XVII – первая половина XVIII века*. Москва: Российский государственный гуманитарный университет, 2000, 278 pp. ISBN 5-7281-0460-6; ВОРОБЬЕВ, Ю. К. *Латинский язык в России – первой трети века (культурологический аспект): монография*. Саранск: Изд-во Мордов. ун-та, 2015, 140 pp. ISBN 978-5-7103-3092-0.
 - 3 With Zhanna Nekrasevich-Karotkaya and Nenad Ristovich being the most representative scholars in Belarus and Serbia respectively.
 - 4 E.g., VRATOVIĆ, Vladimir and Veljko GORTAN. The Basic Characteristics of Croatian Latinity. In: VRATOVIĆ, Vladimir. *Croatian Latinity and the Mediterranean Constant*. Zagreb; Dubrovnik: Most/The Bridge, 1993, p. 67: “The Latin language not only did not estrange Croatian writers from the essential problems of their people and the literature in the modern tongue, but even acted, especially after the seventeenth century, as a firm link between individual writers and whole regions...” And VRATOVIĆ, V. Croatian Latinity, p. 9: “Thus the ground was being prepared for the National and Cultural Revival effected by Lj. Gaj and his

De Antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus bulgaricis is also a telling example of this trend. Bulgarian scholars usually interpret the works and activities of the seventeenth-century Catholics in Bulgaria, and in particular those of Petăr Bogdan, as manifestations of their national proto-revival. According to Krasimir Stanchev, Bulgarian Catholic literature, albeit marginal for the East and peripheral for the West, foreshadows the model of later Bulgarian development.⁵ This is significant. We can see that according to Stanchev Latin actually lies at the core of modern Bulgarian national identity. And it must be remembered that Stanchev expressed this idea before the discovery of the full manuscript of Bogdan's history.

In 2017, Lilia Ilieva, professor of linguistics at the South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria, discovered, in the university library of Modena, a seventeenth-century manuscript of Petăr Bogdan's (1601–1674)⁶ *De antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus*

collaborators in Zagreb in the eighteen thirties. In all this the Croatian writers in Latin played a very considerable part." ЖЛУТКА, Алесь. Лацінская літаратура як феномен беларускай культуры. In: *Спадчына*, 1993, no. 2, pp. 13-21 [accessed on 2022-11-14]. Accessible at: https://pawet.net/library/history/bel_history/articles/zhlutka/жлутка_алесь_лацінская_літаратура_як_феномен_беларускай_культуры.html: "Лацінская мова, адчужаная ад свайго этнічнага караня, у значнай меры была пазбаўленая асіміляцыйнай патэнцыі, характэрнай для новых і палітычна дамінуючых моваў (як, напрыклад, польскай, а пазней расейскай на Беларусі). Гэтая асаблівасць рабіла лаціну найбольш прымальным «адзеннем душы» для новых нацыянальных арганізмаў." [The Latin language, estranged from its ethnic roots, was to a great degree destitute of the assimilating power so characteristic of the new and politically dominant languages (such as, e.g., Polish and, later on, Russian in Belarus). This feature made Latin the most convenient "garment for the soul" of the new national organisms.] ШЕВЧЕНКО-САВЧИНСЬКА, Людмила. *Давна літаратура з поlonу стереотипів*. 2-ге видання. Київ: Медієвіст, 2014, p. 107: "... латиномовна літаратура, маючы низку специфічних рис, залишається версією національної..." [Latin literature, which has a number of specific features, is a language variant of national literature...] AXER, Jerzy. «Latinitas» jako składnik polskiej tożsamości kulturowej. In: AXER, J., ed. *Tradycje antyczne w kulturze europejskiej. Perspektywa polska*. Warszawa: Ośrodek Badań nad Tradycją Antyczną w Polsce i w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej, Uniwersytet Warszawski, 1995, p. 77: "Wobec znacznie dłuższego niż na Zachodzie utrzymania się łaciny jako żywego języka w Rzeczypospolitej i wobec uzyskania przez nią rangi języka narodowego 'narodu szlacheckiego', mogła ona pozostać tutaj językiem literackim w takim sensie, w jakim na Zachodzie przestała być już w początkach XVI wieku." [Since in the Rzeczpospolita Latin remained a living language considerably longer than in the West and since it acquired the status of the national language of the Rzeczpospolita's 'noble nation', it could here become a literary language in the sense in which it ceased to be so in the West as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century.]

- 5 СТАНЧЕВ, Красимир. Литературата на Българите-католици: Маргинална за изтока, периферна за запада, но индикатор за бъдещия модел на българското развитие. In: КУНЧЕВА, Рая, ed. *Маргинално в/на литературата/Marginality in/of Literature*. София: Издателски център Боян Пенев", 2011, pp. 192–207. ISBN 95-48712-76-8.
- 6 Petăr Bogdan was a Roman-Catholic Archbishop of Sofia (Serdica) and a leading personality of the seventeenth-century national proto-rival in Bulgaria, together with Iliya Marinov, Petăr Parchevich, Franchesco Soymirovich, and others.

Bulgaricis [On the antiquity of the paternal soil and the Bulgarian affairs], a manuscript which until then had long been believed to be lost. Before that, only a few initial pages of Bogdan's treatise – namely, those found by historian Bozhidar Dimitrov in the collections of the Vatican archives in 1977 – had been known to the scholarly public.⁷

Ilieva's discovery, followed by Tsvetan Vasilev's edition of this *codex unicus*, may be considered an epoch-making event. Until recently, the *Istoriya Slavyanobologarskaya* [Slavonic-Bulgarian History] written in Church Slavonic by Paisius of Hilendar (1762) was looked upon as the earliest preserved Bulgarian account of the history of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian nation. Paisius's history is regarded as the symbol marking the beginning of the Bulgarian national revival. Although Petăr Bogdan's historical thought was previously known through his numerous reports (*relationes*) sent to Rome, as well as from the initial pages of his historical treatise brought to the attention of scholars by Dimitrov, Ilieva's recent discovery in Modena opens up a wholly new perspective: researchers now have at their disposal Bogdan's history *in extenso*. And, what is remarkable, it was written one century earlier than Paisius's work, not in Church Slavonic, but in Latin. The earliest native account of Bulgarian history – that is, the history of a nation belonging to the sphere of *Slavia Orthodoxa* – was written in Latin. I regard this as a remarkable fact, one that, in my view, is capable of prompting new research ideas and, together with other works of East and South-East European Latinists, of changing the face of European Latinity.

Shortly before her discovery in the *Biblioteca Estense Universitaria* of Modena, Ilieva reported that she had been able to identify the first Latin printed book authored by a Bulgarian: a collection of theological theses published in 1679 in Prague by Franciscan friar and priest Marko of Chiprovtsi.⁸ Petăr Bogdan was also a native of Chiprovtsi, the centre of Catholicism located in the north-eastern corner of Bulgaria.

The third important figure of early modern Bulgarian Latinity is Krăstyo Peykich (1666–1730), an ardent missionary of the Danube region, who published his works in Latin and in Slavonic both in Venice and Trnava (today's Slovakia), again a native of Chiprovtsi. Despite his prolific literary production, mostly written in Latin, Peykich is not even mentioned in the standard manuals of Neo-Latin Studies.⁹ This, again, is symptomatic of how little known the Latinists of this part of Europe are even to specialists

7 ИЛИЕВА, Лилиа. Открит е първият трактат върху българската история: Петър Богдан, за древността на бащината земя и за българките неща. In: *Balkanistic Forum*, 2018, no. 1, pp. 98–103. ISSN 1310-3970.

8 ИЛИЕВА, Лилиа. Непозната в науката печатна книга от 1679 година на Българина Марко Чипровски. In: *Български език/Bulgarian Language*, 2017, vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 114–117. ISSN 0005-4283.

9 IJSEWIJN, Jozef. *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies. Part I: History and Diffusion of Neo-Latin Literature*. Second entirely rewritten edition, Leuven: Leuven University Press – Peeters Press Louvain, 1990, 371 pp. ISBN 90-6831-224-3; FORD, Philip, BLOEMENDAL, Jan and Charles FANTAZZI, eds. *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World. Micropaedia*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. xv + 920–1245. ISBN 978-90-04-26572-1; KNIGHT, Sarah and Stefan TILG, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 614 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-994817-8.

in Neo-Latin philology. However, the works of Krăstyo Peykich have already been well-researched by Iva Manova.¹⁰ The three figures – Marko of Chiprovtsi, a Franciscan friar and priest; Petăr Bogdan, Archbishop of Serdica (Sofia); and Krăstyo Peykich – all of them natives of Chiprovtsi – are the authors of the earliest known literary works written in Latin by Bulgarians.

Bogdan's history (*De antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis*) is not a history of Bulgaria, certainly not one we might imagine based on its title. Rather, it is a history of the Catholic Church in Bulgaria, and more specifically, a historical demonstration of the merits of the Catholics in Bulgaria and a historical defence of their rights with respect to their native soil inherited from their ancient predecessors. As Petăr Bogdan puts it, his work is a history, a chronology, and a defence (apologeticum in Latin). As advertised by him at the beginning of his treatise, he sets his focus exclusively on Church, purposely avoiding any discussion of political affairs. Yet, as we know from other historical sources, Bulgarian Catholics cherished a political vision of liberating and uniting the country under a Catholic ruler, which eventually fell to pieces after the fierce suppression of the Chiprovtsi Uprising in 1688.

In the edited manuscript, there are a number of passages containing vivid and catchy descriptions, of which the most entertaining ones are those depicting events that Petăr Bogdan either witnessed in person or heard from his predecessor in bishopric, Ilya Marinov. Also very interesting is to read Bogdan's own characterisation of Catholics in Bulgaria:

It is evident to all wise men, and in particular to those familiar with our forefathers' land, that our ancient ancestors were not of the same ethnicity as the Bulgarians whom Pope Nicolaus induced to embrace the faith; for our Catholics, following the footprints of their ancient forefathers in everything, do not in any way associate with the schismatic Bulgarians, either regarding rites, or mores, or other ways of acting. Nor are they similar to each other in any other thing. And though they speak the same language, they nevertheless differ greatly in how they pronounce the words. And there is not, and cannot ever be, any affection between them [i.e., the Catholics and the Bulgarians]. Our side [i.e., the Catholics] detests them [i.e., the Bulgarians] as alien schismatics torn away from the true Church, and as being foul and uncultered. On the other hand though, they, for their part, call our Catholics filthy Latins. What agreement, then, can there be between them and us? The difference between them and us can also be seen in that whenever the name Bulgarian gets mentioned here in our region, it is unambiguously understood as meaning schismatic.¹¹ (XIII.3.1-15)¹²

10 MANOVA, Iva. Historico-Philosophical Studies on Krastyo Peykich of Chiprovtsi (1666–1730): An Overview of the Literature and Some Critical Remarks. In: *Philosophia: E-Journal for Philosophy & Culture*, 2012, no. 4, pp. 61–74. ISSN 1314-5606. [Accessed on 2022-11-14]. Accessible at: <<https://philosophia-bg.com/philosophia-4-2012/>>.

11 This and all subsequent quotations from *De antiquitate paterni soli et de rebus Bulgaricis* are my translations from Latin.

12 Numbers in parenthesis refer to chapter, paragraph, and lines in Vasilev's edition (Vol. 1).

It is noteworthy that in this passage, when speaking of the Catholics not associating with “the Bulgarians”, Bogdan used the biblical (non-classical) Latin expression “*coutuntur*” (XIII.3.5) which occurs in the Gospel of John, chapter four, verse nine, where Jesus’s encounter with the Samaritan woman is narrated and where it is written that “*Jews do not associate with Samaritans*”. Bogdan’s choice of the word may be an indicator of how strongly he wanted to emphasise the difference between “Catholics” and “Bulgarians” in Bulgaria.

The above passage from Bogdan’s treatise is also remarkable for two other reasons. Although it strikes us oddly that in this text Bulgarian Catholics are depicted as having no association with ethnic Bulgarians, it seems obvious that what really happens here is that ethnic and religious identities become confused and mixed up. Both identities overlap and are conceived of as interchangeable. An analogical case is that of Ruthenians in the historical Kingdom of Hungary. They were so intimately bound with the Byzantine-Slavonic rite that all the adherents of that rite in historical Hungary were called Ruthenians regardless of their actual ethnic identity. Indeed, the name “Ruthenian” was in the past synonymous with “*a believer of the Byzantine-Slavonic rite*”. The other thing that seems strange in this passage is the author’s accentuation of the linguistic otherness of the Bulgarian Catholics: although they speak the same language as “the Bulgarians” do, they nevertheless pronounce it in a different way. I guess this might have been due to various influences: the religious influence of Bosnian Franciscan missionaries in Bulgaria, the cultural influence of the Catholic books published in the “Illyrian” language, and the economic influence of the Catholic Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik). Perhaps it would be inspirational to inquire whether there could be a parallel between the language of the Bulgarian Catholics and the language used by Slovak Lutherans in early modern northern Hungary (today’s Slovakia), which has already been thoroughly studied. The Slovak Lutherans’ linguistic consciousness was strongly influenced by the liturgical use of the Czech Kralice Bible. Nevertheless, the Czech language, as they used it, contained a number of Slovak traits. But what is most important is that they, despite of their use of the language, did not in any way consider themselves to be Czech. Here, we can see that language is not necessarily bound up with any specific nationality. Both my parallels (the religious and the linguistic) may be wrong, but reading Bogdan’s historical treatise, I somehow could not help but think of the above described cases as analogical.

Another passage worthy of being adduced in this place is the one in which Petăr Bogdan writes about the beginnings of the conversion of Bulgarian Paulicians to Catholicism under bishop Iliya Marinov in the early seventeenth century. This is how it reads:

Once, on the occasion of the feast of St Stephen the Protomartyr, the bishop had been invited to dinner by one of the Catholics . . . And during the dinner party, as is usual among people, those present conversed about different things, and in particular they listened to the bishop and Eliah who were talking about the magnificence of the City of Rome, the supreme power of the Pontiff, and the beauty and splendour of the churches . . . Among the guests, there were two Catholic merchants present who distributed their goods in the Nikopol region

alongside the Danube . . . These . . . hearing the Bishop talk about the Roman Church . . . said to him: “*Most Reverend Bishop, there are several villages around Nikopol, whose inhabitants call themselves Paulicians; they are people of our tongue. They do not observe either the Latin or the Greek rite; and we visit them rather frequently. When asked about their faith, they cannot give any explanation except saying: ‘We have this way from our fathers, who lived in like manner and died in the same faith.’ And they add: ‘The fundament of our faith is in the City of Rome,’ where they also believe the Apostles Peter and Paul are buried. Nonetheless, they cannot at all imagine that some one of the mortals of the present time has seen the Fort of Rome . . . And we cannot convince them to believe that there are some among us who have seen the City of Rome.*” And Niculinus added: “*Most Reverend Bishop, there is an old man in one village, a man of great authority; hearing there were some among us who had been to Rome, he, as if just awakened from sleep, was suddenly overtaken by a desire to see those men, repeatedly asking with admiration: ‘Is it really true what I hear you say? Indeed, if you make one of those men come here to us, I and my house will be the first to obey all that they tell us to do.’*” (XXVIII.3.1–XXVIII.4.28)

It seems to me this passage is of great value in the context of research already done on Bulgarian Paulicians.¹³ The description of the old man eager to see someone who has been to Rome is really an interesting authentic testimony nicely fitting in with other historical accounts.

Finally, let me put in here one more excerpt from Bogdan’s *De antiquitate paterni soli*. This time, it deserves quotation because it testifies to the fact that in the early seventeenth-century Kingdom of Hungary there was a practice of singing parts of the Roman liturgy in the vernacular language. Writing about the monastery and school established in Chiprovtsi, Bogdan goes on as follows:

The fame of its pleasant odour was heralded throughout the surrounding regions. And when it reached the ears of a certain master of philosophy, Michael by name and Hungarian by nationality, the latter came to Chiprovtsi and brought with him a Croatian guy called George. While he [Michael] was there [in Chiprovtsi], he saw people of different nationality and of a different language and, above all, he saw that the regions had been subdued by the Turks, and so he feared to take on a monk’s habit, for he had come for this purpose. And when he was about to leave, the elders of the people asked him to stay. And so, receiving material support from the community, he then, for some time, was in charge of the grammatical classes held in the old parish house of Chiprovtsi, teaching boys to read and write. And his companion, George from Croatia, **taught them how to sing masses and vespers and spiritual hymns at the offertory and the elevation of the most sacred host in the vernacular language, like the Hungarians do** [emphasis mine], and so to instigate devotion among the people. (XXVIII.2.10-23)

13 Cf. РАДЕВА, Донка. Павлиякнството между легендите и историята VII – XVII век. In: *Пловдивски исторически форум*, 2017, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 53–56. ISSN 2535-0935.

This is a very precious testimony, all the more because it is wholly casual and certainly was not written with any particular intention in mind. Nevertheless, it perfectly corresponds with what Hungarian Jesuit Benedict Szőlősi wrote in the dedication of his 1655 Catholic hymn-book: he informs us that in the beginning of the seventeenth century a part of the Canon of the Mass was in some churches of the Hungarian Kingdom conducted in the vernacular language, and in his own day (i.e., in the mid-seventeenth century) Kyrie, Gloria, and Credo were still sung in the vernacular in a number of places.¹⁴

Now, let us turn our attention to Tsvetan Vasilev's editorial principles. In this critical edition, the editor has chosen to follow the middle path: while mostly keeping the original spelling and capitalisation, he has omitted diacritics and introduced changes in punctuation, in addition to making some minor emendations in orthography in order to facilitate the reading of the text by those unfamiliar with Neo-Latin usage. This is a standard approach among Neo-Latin editors, yet by far not the only one. The current editorial practices range from the most faithful preservation of the original text down to its thorough transformation according to a chosen norm.¹⁵ The latter approach has the advantage of providing the reader with an easy-to-read text (which, however, is not a good option in a case of *codex unicus*). On the other hand, the purpose of faithful transliteration is to produce a machine-readable text suitable for linguistic analysis without need of returning to the original. Anyone with experience in transliterating an extensive Neo-Latin text knows what a risky task that can be. It is just too easy to overlook a peculiar spelling here and there, and it seems you can never be one hundred percent sure your transliteration is absolutely identical with the original. There will always be the human factor of making mistakes. In addition, there are other pitfalls lurking along the way: As regards Neo-Latin orthography, inconsistency seems to be the rule, and there is no standardised spelling or punctuation. Many editors become so overwhelmed by the orthographical irregularities that they decide to completely change the formal appearance of the text, with a view towards "making up" for the author's "slovenliness". Yet, as has been convincingly shown by Thorsten Burkhard and others, Neo-Latin punctuation is in no way arbitrary.¹⁶ Although it sticks to no particular norm, it nevertheless tends to follow certain rhetorical and syntactical principles. As such it is a significant linguistic feature of a historical text. If original punctuation is changed, this linguistic information (i.e., information valuable for historians of language) gets lost, not to mention the fact that a change in punctuation can at times effectuate a change in meaning.

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- 14 KAČIC, Ladislav, ZAVARSKÝ, Svorad and Peter ŽEŇUCH. *Cantus Catholici (1655): The First Slovak-Latin Catholic Hymnbook*. In: *Slavica Slovaca*, 2013, vol. 48, no. 1, p. 77. ISSN 0037-6787.
- 15 DENEIRE, Tom. *Editing Neo-Latin Texts: Editorial Principles; Spelling and Punctuation*. In: *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World. Micropaedia*. Eds. Philip Ford, Jan Bloemendal and Charles Fantazzi. Brill: Leiden-Boston, 2014, pp. 959–962. ISBN 978-90-04-26572-1.
- 16 BURKHARD Thorsten. *Interpuktion und Akzentsetzung in lateinischen Texten des 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. Ein kurzer Überblick nebst einer Edition von Leonhard Culmanns De Orthographia, des Tractatus de Orthographia von Joachim Camerarius und der Interpungendi Ratio des Aldus Manutius*. In: *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch*, 2003, Vol. 5, pp. 5–58.

In his edition of the Latin text, Vasilev claims to have preserved the “mediaeval” (i.e., non-classical) phonetic features of Bogdan’s Latin (vol. 1, p. 17). Yet he has systematically replaced double i’s with single i’s in prefixed derivatives of the verb *iacio* (e.g., *proiici* has thus become *proici*), and he has also restored double consonants where Bogdan has a single consonant (so that *perexit* has become *perrexit*, *interogant* has been corrected to read *interrogant*, etc.). Are these not phonetic features? It can be seen throughout the edited text that Vasilev has not absolutely consistently stuck to his editorial principles. This is understandable, given the difficult decisions the editor had to make, oscillating between remaining faithful to the original and providing the reader with a smooth text.

However, there are a few problematic places that either escaped the editor’s attention or have not been resolved by him in the best possible way. As an example of the first, let me refer to a passage on p. 44: *vos nobis non ut petitis, sed ut provectę ętatis convenire opus melius existimastis* (I.A.1.14). If we check the participle *petitis* in the original manuscript (the facsimile of the page is luckily displayed in the second volume of the edition), we can actually read *petitis* there. Notwithstanding though, I would rather suggest amending *petitis* and replacing it by *peritis* (which I believe is what the author had originally in mind), thereby giving the text a much more natural flow. As for a not quite successful emendation made by the editor, I can point out a passage on p. 86 which reads as follows: *milites Europeos Urumeli Ascher appellat, id est militię gratia*. The phrase *militię gratia* is the editor’s emendation of the original *militia gratię* (VII.7.12). I think a simpler, and better, emendation would be *militia Graecię* (or *Gręcię*), i.e. the army of Greece, which also corresponds to the Turkish phrase *Urumeli Ascher*. Finally, I cannot omit commenting on the editor’s change of *castigatur* to *fastigatur* in a verse from Silius Italicus’ *Punica* (p. 70, VI.2.18). Following the modern critical editions of Silius Italicus, the editor has replaced Bogdan’s original spelling despite the fact that *castigatur* was the standard reading in Bogdan’s time. I consider this a philological mistake.

Petăr Bogdan’s Latin is distinguished by a number of peculiar features. It would be interesting to know how much his native linguistic consciousness interfered with his usage of the Latin language. Conspicuous, for example, is his swapping of the accusative and ablative cases in denoting location and direction, or the employment of unusual prepositional phrases. I have even noticed Bogdan’s use of a nominative absolute in a position where the ablative absolute would be expected in standard Latin: *Peracta igitur Paschalis Solemnitas, . . . Pater Benignus . . . vocat fratrem Eliam* (XLI.1.1–3, p. 336). There are also a number of phonetic peculiarities in the manuscript, the most conspicuous among them being the frequent interchange of the vowels *e* and *i* (*famis* for *fames*, *pistefera* for *pestifera*, as well as *o* and *u* (*compotum* for *computum*, *torris* for *turris*), and the odd use of *e caudata* (*ę*) in unexpected positions (e.g., the spellings *Michęlem*, *ęęmunt* instead of *Michaęlem*, *coęmunt*). It is a pity that in his commentary (the second volume of the edition) Vasilev has confined himself to merely describing/ enumerating some of these features without at least attempting to give an explanation of them. Bogdan’s Latin, representing the language used by the seventeenth-century Bulgarian Catholic elite, certainly deserves a more detailed study.

One final comment: Vasilev’s *apparatus fontium* is in Bulgarian and is placed on the right-hand page of the edition below the translation. It would be much more convenient

if it were placed on the left and written in Latin. The editor obviously had a Bulgarian reader in mind, not fashioning his edition for an international audience, which is a pity and a considerable drawback.

I know it is just very easy to inspect a fellow-philologist's work with a critical eye. The above comments are not at all meant to detract from Tsvetan Vasilev's editorial accomplishment – rather, they are intended to reflect on some common challenges faced by editors of Neo-Latin texts, with a view towards raising awareness about the need to preserve the linguistic information of which the respective texts are carriers. All too often, philologists tend to focus on the contents of a historical text while neglecting the importance of its linguistic form. Naturally, such an attitude then has an impact on the choice of editorial principles.

Through Tsvetan Vasilev's edition, Petăr Bogdan's historical work is now available to the scholarly public. The first and fundamental step has thus been taken. The edition, however, will serve its purpose only if it stimulates further explorations. Therefore, the text should now be interpreted in the broad context of seventeenth-century European politics where it undoubtedly belongs,¹⁷ despite Bogdan's eschewing political topics.

Svorad Zavarský, PhD.
(Historický ústav SAV, v. v. i., Bratislava)

17 Cf. ВАСИЛИЕВА, Елмира. Българско участие във францисканските мисии в югоизточна Европа през XVII в.: Павел от Петокладенци. In: *Societas Classica*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 464–482. ISSN 978-619-208-128-7.