Princely Patronage: The Voevods of the Romanian Principalities as Defenders of Orthodoxy

When the Dositheos II, patriarch of Jerusalem, saw that the printing of his polemical books, and among them the *Panoplia*, would never happen in Russia, he turned again to the Romanian Principalities. Equally talented as theologian and historian, he elaborated on the influences of the imperial tradition of Byzantium on the tradition of rulership in the Romanian Principalities. Indeed, the Byzantine influence on this tradition was visible on many levels—the anointment of the ruler, the titles which he used and the symbols of his power, donations for the Holy Places, Mount Athos and other sacred places, depictions with Byzantine royal symbols, elaboration of genealogies of the ruler—the extent and importance of this Byzantine influence, however, is still subject of discussions among the scholars today.¹

It should be noted that the publication of the anthology happened when the Byzantine ideal in political tradition was gradually beginning to lose influence in the Principalities and rulers and society were turning to the west

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for models taken from modernity. But still the attempt to publish the Panoplia in Russia and the success in the Principalities shows that in the beginning of the eighteenth century the Byzantine models were still strong and attractive for the Principalities. This is a proof for an observation made by Dimitri Obolensky that the idea of Russia as an heir of Byzantium was not dominant at this period, but rather the ideal of the country was to become a “Second Kyevan Rus”. It was the rulers of the Romanian Principalities who claimed the Byzantine legacy at that time. This made it possible that one “modernized” Panoplia Dogmatike, with its old chapters being read against new enemies, was prepared under the patronage of a “modern” ruler and defender of Orthodoxy.

Patriarch Dositheos, perhaps pursuing his own interests, elaborated on the connection between the Byzantine imperial tradition and the tradition in the court of the Principalities. He presented the rulers of Wallachia as pious emperors and direct descendants of the Komnenian family and Alexios I Komnenos.

Already in the preface to the book Manual against the Calvinist Insanity published by Dositheos II in Bucharest in 1690, the Patriarch of Jerusalem presented the ruler of Moldova Basile Lupu (1634–1653) and the ruler of Wallachia Constantine Brâncoveanu as direct heirs of the Byzantine tradition in the battle against heresy. This text of Dositheos is important for understanding why the princes of the Principalities followed the model of Byzantine emperors and became benefactors and supporters for the publication of anti-heretical books, including the Panoplia itself. This is illustrated in the solemn dedication by Patriarch Dositheos to Constantine Brâncoveanu, ruler of Wallachia:

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\begin{align*}
&\text{Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἀπολέσθαι τὰ κακὰ δυνατὸν—ὑπεναντίον γάρ τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἀεὶ εἶναι ἀνάγκη}^5—
&\text{ἐγένοντο ἐν μὲν τῷ πάλαι λαῷ ψευδοπροφῆται, ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ δὲ εἰσφέρησαν [εἰσφέρησαν] ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι, οἵτινες παρείσαξαν αἱρέσεις}
\end{align*}
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3 Obolensky, The Byzantine Commonwealth, 366.
4 Meletios Syrigos and Dositheos Notaras, Κατὰ τῶν καλβινικῶν κεφαλαίων ... κατὰ τῆς καλβινικῆς φρενοβλαβείας. BHellén 11 632, βΡV ι 90. This book contains a refutation of the Confession of Lukaris. Because it contains references to the Panoplia, it will be used later in the study for the theological understanding for the publication of the anthology, see the section References to the Panoplia in Anti-Calvinist Treatises Published in the Romanian Principalities, 119–127.
5 Cf. Plato, Theaetetus 176α.