

**NARRATING NATIONAL UTOPIA.**  
**THE CASE MOSCHOPOLIS IN THE AROMANIAN NATIONAL**  
**DISCOURSE**  
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Utopias have unfolded primarily as chosen places by the human mind to fulfil the desire of daydreaming to the perfect world and to keep hoping for a new and best human society. Academically, this type of imagining a new world trespassed its initial purpose and became an object of analysis as a distinct field in humanities, especially as a clear literary genre. From a larger range of the utopian varieties (like dystopias/ black utopias/ anti-utopias, regressive utopias, or religious utopias/ chiliasms),<sup>1</sup> I shall analyse that particular type of one's utopian way of living, namely, the national utopia which, as the most common utopian discourse has never been separated from psychological human aspirations, cannot be circumscribed outside authors' period in which he lived in. The highest aim of any utopia was to reach harmony or order; around these ideals, it also emerged the type of the national regressive utopia. As its original archetype, the national regressive utopia seeks to arrange human society as an isolated place in which individuals live perfectly with other individuals and environment.<sup>2</sup> Most usual explanations for the indefatigable endeavour of utopian discourse to compose a parallel milieu for human beings claimed that this feeling has its roots in a deeply strong desire to overcome all unfulfilled bad things from one's ordinary life and has a deep relationship with one's feelings and attitudes toward the material surrounding world.

The national metaphysics and the nation-building ontology have not neglected the huge potential for mobilizing masses and voluntarily involved attitudes, which is represented by general utopian belief. Judith Shklar noted that "the political utopia, with its rational city-planning, eugenics, education, and institutions, is by no means the only vision of a perfect life."<sup>3</sup> The intention of this approach is to treat utopia as a national construction, in which the nation is actor and spectator as well as author of such a drama through the usage of language, history, and political propaganda. This endeavour focuses on the utopian mind, as an oasis designed not for the general happiness of human beings, but for the general happiness of nation. The case to which this approach will be applied is Moschopolis, the imaginary lost paradise of its inhabitants, and to the cultural matrix, which has been producing the Moschopolitan national saga, namely, the Aromanian national discourse within the larger framework of the Romanian self-introspection.

The most two favorites places of utopian discourse are the island and the city.<sup>4</sup> It is the field of intellectual history, as the other branches of the historical discourse that ordains the periodical career of any concept in its various stages of change in meaning. Starting with Romanticism and its the nation-building project, that is largely speaking the nineteenth century, a new category of generalization developed inside of human mind of thinking on community as a distinct group on linguistic criteria, namely the homogeneity of speakers. Such a growth of the national ideology developed myths and stories on national past that conferred to the city a greater role in the "awakening" of national

feeling; thus, the national ontology often reaches the utopian discourse proportions, but to a much higher emotional degree. The connection between concepts like "utopia" and "nation" resulted in considering perfect place as a collective dream for the perfect living of nation; in analytical terms, it was meant to be an unconscious exercise on how to imagine and to construct a narrative on a hypothetical reality. Such an intellectual construction on a real basis is represented by Moschopolis<sup>5</sup> during the second half on the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Due to its dramatic and symbolic death, Moschopolis remained the most powerful myth of the Aromanian epic national chronicle and became the utopian self-definition of Aromanians. The stimulation of national imagination concerning the bygone eminence of Moschopolis and rendering its glorious memory to descendants have become mainly the task of literature<sup>7</sup> as its material and prosperity existence was the task of historical research. Unlike the typical utopian texts, as presented in classical models, which are hypothetical narratives "out of this world", the Moschopolitan utopia has a real core. Two words encompass the entire set of attitudes that flow through the heart of narratives and narrators on Moschopolis: depression and nostalgia. Mourned and admired, Moschopolis is a unique form of literary and historical product of the Romanian culture, which sometimes incorporates Aromanian cultural writings. This uniqueness of the Moschopolitan epopee has permanently stirred its fabulously interchangeable being from a real urban unit towards a reclusive space of unlimited wealth. This vagrant notion that continuously vacillates is best known as the so-called "regressive utopia". It is the language that studies the construction of the Moschopolitan utopia and has been perpetrated in thinking on the city. Here, Hayden White's theory of "emplotment" ("the important point is that every history, even the most "synchronic" or "structural" of them, will be emplotted in some way") classifies the kind of narration by which the historian finds the meaning of a particular "plot". For White "the historical work is a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse", so Moschopolis primarily is, and thus the usage of the tropes ("modes of historical consciousness" or "literary strategies") like Metaphor, Synecdoche, Metonymy, and Irony set the stage for the story:

"each of these modes of consciousness provides the basis for a distinctive linguistic protocol by which to prefigure the historical field and on the basis of which specific strategies of historical interpretation can be employed for 'explaining' it ... These questions have to do with the structure of the *entire set of events* considered as a *completed* story and call for a synoptic judgment of the relationship between a given story and other stories that might be 'found,' 'identified,' or 'uncovered' in the chronicle. They can be answered in a number of ways. I call these ways (1) explanation by emplotment, (2) explanation by argument, and (3) explanation by ideological implication."<sup>8</sup>

The theory of tropes conceived by White stated four basic categories of tropes used for the analysis of poetic or figurative language and they are usually designated to assemble any sort of historical narration:

"They are especially useful for understanding the operations by which the contents of experience which resist description in unambiguous prose representations can be prefiguratively grasped and prepared for conscious apprehension. In Metaphor (literally, "transfer"), for example, phenomena can be characterized in terms of their similarity to, and difference from, one another, in the manner of analogy or simile, as in the phrase "my love, a rose." Through Metonymy (literally, "name change"), the name of a part of a thing may be substituted for the name of the whole, as in the phrase "fifty sail" when what is indicated is "fifty ships." With Synecdoche, which is regarded by some theorists as a form of Metonymy, a phenomenon can

be characterized by using the part to symbolize some *quality* presumed to inhere in the totality, as in the expression "He is all heart." Through Irony, finally, entities can be characterized by way of negating on the figurative level what is positively affirmed on the literal level. The figures of the manifestly absurd expression (catachresis), such as "blind mouths," and of explicit paradox (oxymoron), such as "cold passion," can be taken as emblems of this trope."<sup>9</sup>

As the tropes were the vehicle of conveying the Moschopolitan utopia from reality into nation's mind, there will follow its historical and intellectual origins and projects, which resulted in its actual configuration.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Mannheim classifies utopias into four types: the orgiastic chiliasm of Anabaptists, that is, the idea of restoration of the purity of Christianity, movement appeared in the age of Reform and led by Thomas Münzer, the liberal-humanitarian idea ("the idea . as a formal goal projected into the infinite future whose function it is to act as a mere regulative device in mundane affairs" (p. 197), the conservative utopia ("conservative mentality as such has no predisposition toward theorizing . they tend . to regard the environment as part of a natural world-order" (p. 206), and the socialist-communist utopia, which is the radical form of "the liberal utopia" as a reaction against the conservative utopia (p. 215). See Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London - New York: Routledge, 1991). For my purpose, see especially the chapters devoted to "Ideology and Utopia", pp. 49-96, and "The Utopian Mentality", pp. 173-236.

<sup>2</sup> "The idea of perfect order was born in the same atmosphere of ferment that gave birth to the idea of moral order . Moral order . is essentially subjective, dependent on a sustained conflict within man . Perfect order . is by definition static, the creation of divine authority, and must have a spatial location. The city has therefore never been identified with moral order, and the birth of the latter as an idea to some extent jeopardises the moral worth of city's identification with social order . In the Greek as in Judaic tradition moral tinkers took a highly derogatory attitude toward the city both as a actual community and as claiming high status over other places through standing in a superior degree of social order, because in both capacities it necessarily embodied what they perceived to be evil as well as good. As a community the city concentrated in itself the best professional skill of the day regardless of the moral level of the profession - star prostitutes and confidence men as well as high priests and the best lawyers." See Sylvia L. Thrupp, "The City as the Idea of Social Order", Oscar Handlin, John Burchard, eds., *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge - Massachusetts & London: The MIT Press, 1963), pp. 123-124.

<sup>3</sup> Judith Shklar, "The Political Theory of Utopia", Frank E. Manuel, ed., *Utopias and Utopian Thought* (London: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> By its location, the island is available for conferring a paradisiacal cultural content due to its mysteries and difficulties in penetrating it by the human civilization. Even from its first mentioning, amid the word and the theme of island was established an intimate relationship. The first appearance of the word "utopia" is directly related to the island as the best place to live in, also considered as "nowhere" or "noland" just because of the physical impossibility to materialize it. The British Lord Chancellor and Catholic martyr Sir Thomas More invented the word "utopia" in the second decade of the sixteenth century combining two Greek words: *ou* (not) and *topos* (place) and the word and the title of his book, *Concerning the highest State of the Republic and the new Island Utopia*, displays that the most perfect place for human beings to dwell and the most perfect form of government is such a place like an island. The second favorite theme of utopian discourse is the city, which is even older than the island is, and its first appearance as of the best city can be found in one of Plato's dialogues, namely *Republic*. Considered as the first utopian text in history of ideas, *Republic* is also the first rational arrangement over the entire human aspects of life: leaders, institutions, social status and behavior, economic activities and political customs.

<sup>5</sup> Mainly inhabited by Greeks and Aromanians and having a certain economic degree of importance of the region, Moschopolis was the case on which the Aromanian nationalism concentrated and transformed it from an urban entity into a utopian dream. Devastated and destroyed by two waves of violent confrontations in 1768 and 1788, Moschopolis became the Golden Age of Aromanians' past.

<sup>6</sup> Since the Ottoman Empire gradually lost its political authority over the Balkan Peninsula, the newly established national states began to fight for territorial expansion and for taking-up on their behalf on as much broader geopolitical space as possible. The former Ottoman administration left behind it a combined population, Christians and Muslims, Slavs and non-Slavs, and the national conflicts were typically the fruit of confrontations among different nations, precisely by fighting mythological discourses.

<sup>7</sup> One of the key-names in this purpose shall be that of Nida Boga, author of a poem on Moschopolis during the 1950s, signals the most complex form of literary construction of the Moschopolitan utopia.

<sup>8</sup> Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore - London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. IX-XII.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 31.

## 1. THE ORIGINS OF THE MOSCHOPOLITAN UTOPIA. AN ENLIGHTENMENT-ROMANTIC PROJECT

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, more precisely in 1774, Johann Thunmann, professor of philosophy at Halle University, published *Ordentlichen Lehrers des Beredsamkeit und Philosophie auf der Universität zu Halle Über die Geschichte der Östlichen Europäischen Völker* [Orderly Lessons of Eloquence and Philosophy held at University of Halle on the History of East European People], in which he had included brief considerations on the history and the language of Vlachs. Thunmann was eagerly stimulated by a list of Vlach words, composed by his contemporary fellow Theodoros Anastasiu Kavalliotis<sup>10</sup> and published four years earlier, under the title *Protopiria. Das dreisprächige Wörterverzeichnis von Theodoros Anastasiu Kavalliotis aus Moschopolis, gedruckt 1770 in Venedig: albanisch-deutsch-neugriechisch-aramunisch/ neu bearbeit, mit dem heutigen Zustande der albanischen Schriftsprache verglichen* [Protopiria. Three Lists of Words in Three Languages made by Theodoros Anastasiu Kavalliotis from Moschopolis, printed in 1770 in Venice: Albanian-German-New Greek-Aromanian/ New edition, with the today's Situation of the Albanian written Language]. What did Thunmann urge and all those who would follow him to study these populations and to pay a special attention to this region, which Karl Emil Franzos called "halb-Asien"?<sup>11</sup> Even Thunmann himself thought that the whole Eastern Europe was "an immense and wildly uncultivated cropland" and he denounced historical circumstances as the main causes for such a deplorable situation of peoples who had been living within the region.<sup>12</sup> According to scholars who studied the economic and cultural backwardness in civilization of eastern nations,<sup>13</sup> the presence of many active merchants from the Ottoman Empire in Central Europe provoked scholars to pay attention and to study peripheral populations on their history and culture, chiefly of those from the Southeastern Europe. The study of ancient history, language and cultural patterns of the ancient Greek world whipped also Westerners curiosity to examine the present cultural patterns and especially the nature of habits, differences, and mentalities as compared to Western model, of merchants' milieu that came from the Balkans. Within groups of Balkan merchants, the Greeks were perceived as the most economically active and they bore an unconfused mark of their culture. Studies proved that those who were generally considered "Greeks", were actually not only "Greeks", in the ethnical and language-speaking sense of the term, but also "Vlachs" or "Aromanians"<sup>14</sup> who declared themselves as "Greeks", in religious and confessional meaning.<sup>15</sup> Thunmann's printed lists of words were probably taken of Greek-Aromanian speakers from Central Europe. It was a certainty for Thunmann that the richest segment of Balkan merchants came from Moschopolis, an economically animated urban settlement, with links, which spread out from Northern Europe toward the Near Orient.<sup>16</sup>

Apart from its real existence, which is not my focused object to analyze but an indirect aspect, Moschopolis is nowadays better known for its stormy disappearance. On this exceptional bloody event from its blurred history I shall concentrate onwards which is the major reason that gave birth to the Moschopolitan utopia. On larger and various series of theories and fiction bases, from Thunmann to Boga, Moschopolis unfolds its mind-blowing existence. The British historian Tom J. Winnifrith gathered archaeological artifacts and pieces of discourse on Moschopolis<sup>17</sup> and tried to offer an interpretation of these sources:

"Moschopolis in Eastern Albania rose to being the second city in the Balkans well before 1769 when it was sacked by Albanians for the first time. This sack was followed by a second wave of destruction in 1788, and Ali Pasha in the early nineteenth century merely completed the process, compelling at the same time the Vlachs in the area to flee eastwards and northwards. In the time of Leake, and of Wace and Thompson a century later, Moschopolis was still a byword for a great city greatly fallen, and they were able to record the building of the monastery church in 1632, the building of vast numbers of other churches between 1700 and 1766, and mention an unknown historian, whose manuscript, was to be found in the monastery, recording the great days of the town in the seventeenth century."<sup>18</sup>

The first and immediate question, which might be raised concerns the causes of those two waves of savage violence. One might ask himself on causes that generated such a climate of general animosity and let me to enter historical studies and political actions in order to have a complete picture of practical reasoning of transforming a city into a narrative. The provided explanations on Moschopolis' decease have an important political bias and they might be regarded as interpretations and classified into two groups of theories. The first theory consists of explanations<sup>19</sup> on the outcomes of the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire from 1768 to 1774. Due to an increasing sympathy for Russia among Greeks, that war was the subterfuge by which the Ottoman administration wanted to punish Greek's Rusophilia. Max Demeter Peyfuss created the second theory<sup>20</sup> and it consists of a group of three hypotheses. According to the first, there is a possibility that Moschopolis was the victim of fights among different Muslim local elites, which speculating the weakness of the Turkish central authority tried to strengthen their own authority over the region.<sup>21</sup> The second hypothesis states that "gangs of outlaws, formed, at that time, by Christians" crushed Moschopolis.<sup>22</sup> The third possible answer envisaged Moschopolis as a powerful centre of the Greek nationalism which tried to get rid of the Ottoman control and to set free all Orthodox nations from the Balkans.

According to the Aromanian national canon, Moschopolis symbolizes the highest degree attained in the material and spiritual civilization of Aromanians and it is the ideal model of living the nationness, which all national references must include. At the same time, Moschopolis is a reference for both Aromanian and Romanian national discourses.<sup>23</sup> Referring to what Sorin Antohi noticed notably that "the ideal scene of Plato's utopia is *polis*, an urban island in natural and rural picture, a structure of the built-up urbanity, assaulted by barbarity",<sup>24</sup> it is to be said that Moschopolis has precisely that function in the Aromanian national mythology. The suitable mechanism for producing "the Aromanianness" is that of "nationalism at a distance" (Benedict Anderson), according to whom a social human group, which migrated from an area, in certain historical circumstances, would develop a form of national consciousness. After the final wave of vandalism from 1788, the majority of the Moschopolitan economical elite migrated towards Central Europe.<sup>25</sup> Abroad from their *heimat* and under Romantic influences, Aromanians with Moschopolitan origins built up three dimensions of their utopian national ontology: "the city", "the nation", and "the paradise", with an enormous impact over national character. Through the lenses of the Moschopolitan outstanding achievements, Aromanians became an urban elite,<sup>26</sup> with a strong national consciousness. The Habsburg exile of Moschopolitan elites and their encounters with the Latinist theory enounced by the Romanian scholars grouped in *Școala Ardeleană* [The Transylvanian School],<sup>27</sup> gave the ideological support for national revival. Starting with 1810, the Aromanian national historiography nationalized Moschopolis, as Rogers Brubaker conceptualised his theory of "nationalizing state",<sup>28</sup> and most of the produced texts

contributed to the formation of the ongoing and common image of Moschopolis as a city. Despite this tendency, which moulded the historiography of the nineteenth century on Moschopolis, it is important to accent those views, which deviated from the standardized formula of writing history. Ioan Arginteanu is one of those few examples and in spite of his nationalistic feelings; his accounts on the Aromanians' past were not so dogmatic. In the case of Moschopolis' he expressed a shocking statement for a nationalist: he was almost happy for Moschopolis' wreck, because "the Byzantine cultural centre of Moschopolis had wholly Hellenised all Moschopolitan people and, perhaps, all Romanians from the surrounding area, if it would not have been destroyed by Albanians".<sup>29</sup> The historian of those years, much closer to an oral tradition and to collections of documents than a contemporary one, was aware of the fact that Moschopolis was most likely a bilingual city unless it was completely a Greek one. And, for the sake of the future of his own nation, he is happy that his nation was "saved" even that "salvation" engendered sighs and nostalgia. C. Constante, who noticed that in Moschopolis functioned "a Greek printing press", where those printed publications "were very rarely circulated in the Aromanian language" also expressed the same idea of a "positive destruction".<sup>30</sup> As regards to the alphabets and the language of contents of the Moschopolitan books, Arginteanu also stated that there were very few printed books with Latin characters and fewer books in the Latin language, and those books printed with Latin characters were highly used by local intellectuals.<sup>31</sup> Conversely, A. Wace and M. Thompson manifested their serious doubts regarding the existence itself of such a printing press functioning in Moschopolis.<sup>32</sup>

As I have tried to indicate heretofore, Kavalliotis' book includes four languages, and for one of them - the Albanian one - there is a special mention. What are the reasons of the other's presence? Surely, the German version was included for the Western scholars' usage and particularly for the German-speakers. Otherwise, it must have been a French version, as French was the language of intellectual texts in the eighteenth century; the Greek version was naturally that of the intellectual language of the Balkans. The mysterious presence is that of the Aromanian language among the others. The most common explanation, whether one simply guides on those earlier affirmations, is that the Aromanian language was in the same situation as the Albanian did: intellectually undeveloped and without written standards. Surveying the written sources, one can barely find a significant amount of any type of written evidences referring to any intellectual usage of Aromanian. The oldest texts, written in Aromanian, are dated to 1731<sup>33</sup> and this is a quite good enough reason to affirm that those virtually educated Aromanians elites used all their intellectual skills practising the Greek language, meanwhile the illiterates developing an oral type of culture.<sup>34</sup> This dichotomy which had persisted in Aromanian culture did not generate a national of sentiment of any kind, and Arginteanu stressed it very categorically noting that "during the Middle Ages, the Macedo-Romanians did not have any form of consciousness about their linguistic kinship with Romanians from the Northern Danube" and "their vague consciousness of their Romanian origins" was established on "oral tradition, unsupported by any historical testimony."<sup>35</sup> Searching for an interpretation to explain Kavalliotis' reason for his linguistic undertaking, Peyfuss considers that those lists of words were set up in order to disseminate the Greek language neither on behalf of Aromanian, nor any other Balkan idiom,<sup>36</sup> and Victor Papacostea, who also worked on Kavalliotis' dictionary, sustains this opinion. Papacostea's

conclusions undoubtedly confirm Peyfuss' assumption by discovering of three texts written in Greek by Kavalliotēs,<sup>37</sup> which have never been translated into Aromanian. By and large, Kavalliotēs might be set in a longer tradition, which was involved in the propagation of the Greek language, which started with Daniel of Moschopolis, a priest, who published around 1760 a successful dictionary.<sup>38</sup> Commenting on Daniel's earlier work, Arginteanu noticed that Daniel had printed in 1802 in Venice a dictionary in four languages for the study of the Greek language whose task was to spread Greek, motive clearly revealed even from the very beginning of the dictionary:

"Be happy, you Albanians, Aromanians and Bulgarians/ And be all prepared to become Greeks/ Leave your barbarian language, dialect, and tradition/ Which will seem legends to your descendants."<sup>39</sup>

The Moschopolitan tradition in making the Greek nation was hijacked by Constantin Oukoutas, an Aromanian priest who used to live in Poznan, to where he came from Moschopolis as an emigrant after the city's sacks. He published in 1797 at the Aromanian brothers Markides Pouliou's printing press from Vienna a booklet for abecedarian children.<sup>40</sup> Starting with Oukoutas, who might be considered the first generation of Aromanian nationalists, the Moschopolitan Aromanian elites underwent a program of "nationalizing" the newly Romantic tendency causing linguistic cleavages and national separations between Aromanians and Greeks on one hand, and among all Balkan nations on the other hand. This is the first stage of the Moschopolitan Aromanian elites towards a new identity, namely the cultural emancipation from the Greek model and from now onwards there was a desire to promote Aromanian and to remove any professional name or negative connotations.<sup>41</sup> The second generation was represented by two Aromanians known as Latinists, both of them were born in the Habsburg Empire and having Moschopolitan ancestors, namely Constantin Roja and Mihail G. Boiași, who were active in the first two decades of the nineteenth century as a part of the Latinist discourse. Roja used to think on himself as being a *Vallachus Voscopolitanus*,<sup>42</sup> and in 1808 he published *Cercetări asupra românilor sau așa-numiților vlahi care locuiesc dincolo de Dunăre* [Researches concerning Romanians or the so-called Vlachs, who live beyond the Danube] written in Greek. To prevent any possible objection, Roja writes:

"Probably some of those readers of mine will seem very shocked: what is the explanation for the presence of a text written in Greek? We need to be understood by nationalists from Hungary, by those from Turkey and by all from surrounding countries, finally, by all the others. It is not possible to write only in Romanian, not because of the weakness of language, but because I also want to do a favour to all others who understand and read only the common Greek."<sup>43</sup>

By such harsh stances, Roja was known as a radical adherent to Latinism which was the chief paradigm for the majority of Romanian scholars at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and one of his stiff confidence was that endlessly preached "the national evolution", to which was possible to give an impulse only learning Latin; all non-Latin words from Romanian were considered by Roja as "foreign impurities" and they urgently had to be liquidated. In the next year, Roja published *Măiestria ghiovăsirii românești cu litere latinești, care sînt literele românilor ceale vechi* [The Art of Writing in Romanian with Latin characters, which are the oldest Characters of Romanians] in which he pleaded for the use of Latin characters in the territories inhabited by Romanians, and his headstrong goal was the rebirth of the Romanian language from the mixture between

Romanian and Aromanian.

The second exponent of Aromanian Latinism was Mihail G. Boiagi, having a doubtful and unclear Moschopolitan genealogy,<sup>44</sup> who kept working on philology as a good follower of the Moschopolitan tradition inaugurated in the second half of the eighteenth century: he published the first scientifically conceived Aromanian grammar as such, and also included Greek and German versions. In addition, he composed a Bulgarian grammar and a Serbian one, as well as a textbook for teaching Greek, his polyglot skills affording him to try a standardization of those languages, which theretofore had not had an impressively written culture. His strong opinion for the plurality of languages urged him to record that

"any language is a hypostasis of the human spirit; the more languages someone learns, the more things he knows. But someone does not gain these things only by a single language, if that language were the most perfect in the world. The desire of those who moan for a single language is both useless and foolish from a practical point of view."<sup>45</sup>

It may be noticed that Moschopolitan elites from the Habsburg Empire had launched a double project based on both Enlightenment and Romanticism co-ordinates, but to a smaller scale: to disseminate knowledge among ordinary people - culture and education, two of the most forceful ideals of Enlightenment - and to make them conscious of their destiny both as men and as citizens<sup>46</sup> and to prepare them act like citizens of a resurrected nation. Arginteanu unequivocally emphasized this overwhelming role played by exiled Moschopolitans

"the truly cultural movement, as a purely national tendency, was produced by those Macedo-Romanians who emigrated to Austria and Hungary, where they reified the science and classical civilization from Moschopolis. Being in contact with the great patriots from Transylvania. Moschopolitan scholars themselves shone with patriotism and published valuable texts that manifested a powerful and enlightened national consciousness."<sup>47</sup>

That febrile activity of Moschopolitan elites seemed not to pay much attention to the lost greatness of the city and proved a relative weak presence of it within the collective memory after its demolition. At least the sources cannot describe clearly such a persistent sentiment among former inhabitants. The lack of a "moaning and groaning" attitude is indeed a mystery after such a terrifying catastrophe like that of vanishing of an imposing settlement.<sup>48</sup> It is sure that the exiled Moschopolis had remained silent for a couple of decades and its mourning appeared later on. This uncanny situation may influence one in guessing that Moschopolis, as presented in today's discourse, is the creation of nationalist ideology. Conversely, the real Moschopolis, which has not existed on national bases, through its ruins, its dead, and its ecstatic story as a blessed place, has never been ceasing to persuade any reader. The entire history of Vlachs became a history of Moschopolitan brave deeds combined with mournfully unfulfilled aspirations and most of its features, usually those positive, were unfolded over all individuals and writing on Moschopolis was the new type of narrating national history viewed as the main burden of intellectuals.

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<sup>10</sup> The biographical data regarding Teodoros A. Kavalliotis' life is unsure and many lacunae shade his existence. These lacunae do not allow one to give exact information on his life. It seems to be that he lived in Moschopolis somewhere during the second half of the eighteenth



century until around 1800.

**11** Klaus Heitmann quotes Franzos in his works on the image of Romanians in the German linguistic sphere. Hence, the quotes shall be taken from the Romanian version as *Imagina românilor în spațiul lingvistic german* (The Image of Romanians in the German linguistic Space) (București: Ed. Univers, 1995), p. 41.

**12** Idem, p. 54.

**13** This theme has a recent career, mainly after 1989, when the totalitarian regimes of East-Central Europe inevitably collapsed. Two of the authors got the greatest fame: Larry Wolff, for his study devoted to the region, and Maria Todorova whose book on the Balkans fitted in with the questions linked to the wars from former Yugoslavia. Searching the history of the concept of Eastern Europe and showing that the West-East division is relatively new, Wolff thought "it was Western Europe that invented Eastern Europe as its complementary other half in the eighteenth century, the age of Enlightenment". See Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of Enlightenment* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 4.

**14** Mentioned for the first time in a Byzantine chronicle from the tenth or the eleventh century, Vlachs or Aromanians are a Latin-speakers group of people who were spreading predominantly over the Southeastern part of actual Bulgaria, islands in today's Macedonia, Eastern Albania, Northern Greece, and Southern Serbia.

**15** It was a usual sense to name the Orthodox Church, "the Greek Church", and the Catholic Church as "the Roman Church". The confusion of terms was typical of the Early Modern period and the change of it started after the national idea reshaped the debate on identity.

**16** Today's Voskopoje, Moschopolis was located in the Western part of the Ottoman Empire (the South-East of today's Albania). Travelling through Balkans, Tom J. Winniffrith observes hitherto the presence of Vlachs in that area: "Voskopoje, formerly Moschopolis, is the most famous Vlach settlement and indeed in the eighteenth century was one of the largest towns in the Balkans. Reduced to a shadow of its former greatness by Ali Pasha, it suffered heavily again in the Second World War." See Tom J. Winniffrith, *The Vlachs: The History of a Balkan People* (London: Duckworth, 1987), p. 35.

**17** Winniffrith's second book on Aromanians is less scrupulous and more based on his travels throughout the Balkans. I utilise only his first book, which is cited above, but for supplementary details on Aromanian aspects I also indicate T. J. Winniffrith, *Shattered Eagles: Balkan Fragments* (London: Duckworth, 1995).

**18** Winniffrith, *The Vlachs*, p. 130.

**19** Ioan Arginteanu, *Istoria românilor macedoneni* (The History of Macedo-Romanians) (București, 1904), p. 233. Here, I want to eliminate a possible misunderstanding: "Aromanians", "Vlachs", "Macedo-Romanians" are many names used to designate the same ethnic group; also they call themselves "Armâni". Turning back to Arginteanu's interpretation on Moschopolis' sack, he advances a number of 50,000 "Greeks" killed by Muslim Albanians. He also affirms that Greeks, Aromanians and the Christian Albanians inhabitants of the city and its hinterland were massacred by the Turkish army and by the Muslim Albanian paramilitary forces.

**20** Max Demeter Peyfuss, *Chestiunea aromânească. Evoluția ei de la origini pînă la pacea de la București (1913) și poziția Austro-Ungariei* (The Aromanian Issue. Its Evolution from Origins until the Peace from Bucharest (1913) and the Stance of Austria-Hungary) (București: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1994), p. 123.

**21** One of those cases was Ali Pasha, the blamed notable for Moschopolis' devastation, who, although he manifested both ambitions of ruling by himself in central and southern Albania and northern Greece and imperial ambitions (the French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte intended to set Ali on the throne of the Ottoman Empire), he maintained his loyalty to the sultan. See Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 267-271.

**22** Peyfuss, *loc. cit.*, p. 123.

**23** Sometimes perceived as an imperialistic discourse, which suffocates the other versions of "Romanianness", the Romanian national discourse has constantly engulfed all other Balkan versions, which claim Latin origins. The Aromanian national canon has admitted the Romanian supremacy, only recently has it manifested independence in standardizing the language and in writing history. One of the hottest debates, which have been lasting for a couple of years, divided some of the Aromanian intellectuals into two groups. The first one is radical and considers Aromanian and Aromanians as separated language and nation, which infers, in their opinion, which a new national canon has to be built. The second one is moderate and thinks that Aromanian and Aromanians is a distinct facet of a greater Romanian language and Romanian nation.

**24** Sorin Antohi, *Utopica. Studii asupra imaginarii sociale* (Utopica. Studies on Social Imaginary) (București: Ed. Științifică, 1991), pp. 61-62.

**25** The refugees from Moschopolis founded many colonies in Vienna, Buda and Pest. There were some "Greek companies" mentioned before 1788, but after that date many new colonies were set up, especially in the Habsburg Empire. The first conflict between Greeks and Aromanians, which concerned the edifice of the Orthodox parish from Pest, is mentioned around 1802.

**26** Theodor Capidan considers that Moschopolitans were the elite of Aromanians; they were "beautiful, urbanized, educated". See Theodor Capidan, *Aromânii. Studiu lingvistic* (The Aromanians. A Linguistic Study) (București: Imprimeria Națională, 1932), p. 35.

**27** Appeared in the beginning of the nineteenth century and developed by the Romanian intellectuals from the Habsburg Empire, the Latinist theory stated that Romanians are the direct descendants of the Roman Empire. The actions of Latinists were concentrated on linguistics and history and they were the promoters of the standardized Romanian language as a Neo-Latin one.

**28** See Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

**29** Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

**30** C. Constante, *Macedoromânii* (The Macedo-Romanians) (București, 1943), p. 30. Arginteanu also considers that printed materials from Moschopolis were released in the Greek language. See Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

**31** Constante, *loc. cit.*, p. 30.

**32** A. Wace, M. Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans* (London, 1914), quoted by Winniffrith, *The Vlachs*, p. 131. In this particular detail, Wace and Thompson's reservations have a deductive support; it may be noticed that Kavalliotis published his dictionary in Venice. Either this proves that Wace and Thompson's doubts are well-founded or at least it can be discussed, or other reasons made Kavalliotis choose to print his book elsewhere. The existence or the non-existence of a printing press in Moschopolis was a very important detail since it revealed the cultural function of the city throughout the region, and it was a testimony for national discourse to support an active presence of the Aromanians during the historical times. If this printing press was a real enterprise then we could surmise that it was a source for Greek books.

**33** There are two pieces of linguistic artefacts: the first is a lithography found in the village of Ardenica and the second is an undated inscription from a jar (See Peyfuss, *op. cit.*, p. 23). Interpreting these poor evidences, Hristu Cândroveanu is a very good example of the so-called "protocronism". For a better understanding of what follows hereunder, it must be add that the oldest text written in Romanian is a letter, which was dated in 1521. Cândroveanu states that the Aromanian writer Leonida (Nida) Boga said to him that ". in the Aromanian village of Linotipi from Greece, there is the church devoted to Saint Zechariah, whose frontispiece bears an inscription written in Aromanian which was decrypted as follows: "Whoever will enter this church and cross himself piously, may God help him." See Nida Boga, *Voshopolea* (The Moschopolis) (București: Ed. Fundației Culturale Aromâne "Dimândarea Părintească", 1994), p. 191. According to Boga, the inscription is dated at 1426, therefore almost one hundred years before the first known document printed in Romanian.

**34** Theodor Capidan stated that the Aromanian language was standardised by Franz Miklosich and Gustav Meyer towards the end of the

eighteenth century. See Capidan, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

35 Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

36 See Peyfuss, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

37 Those texts are three writings concerning logic, physics and metaphysics. For a complete analysis of them, see Victor Papacostea, *Civilizație românească, civilizație balcanică* (The Romanian Civilization as a Balkan Civilization) (București: Ed. Eminescu, 1983), p. 368.

38 In Peyfuss' book, (p. 24) one finds the title "Lexikon Tetraglosion", while in Winnifrith's (*The Vlachs*, p. 137) the title is "Eisagogiki Didaskalia". Winnifrith considers that Daniel of Moschopolis "gives words and phrases in Greek, Albanian, Vlach, and Bulgarian, but the latter three languages are all written in Greek characters. Dimitrios Darvaris from Klisoura published a simple Greek grammar for Slavs and Vlachs, only mentioning incidentally that he was a Vlach, although he did write in Roman characters."

39 Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261. The translation made by Capidan is slightly different: "Albanians, Romanians, Bulgarians and other speakers be happy/ and be all prepared to become Greeks/ By leaving your barbarian language, voice, and habits". (Capidan, *op. cit.*, p. 61, note 1).

40 That booklet is considered the first Aromanian book for abecedarians and it was entitled *Noua pedagogie sau Abecedar ușor spre a învăța pe copiii tineri carte românească în deobște întrebuițare la Aromâni (Româno-Vlahi)* (New Pedagogy or Basic Abecedar for teaching young Children the Romanian Language, especially for the Usage of Aromanians or Romanian-Vlachs) (Posen - Wien, 1797).

41 The main sense of the word "Vlach" was "shepherd", with no national connotations. This fact was recognised by the majority of all scholars who studied the problem of Vlachs. Winnifrith writes that "the word *blachos* in Greek can mean merely a shepherd, and this has resulted in confusion between Vlachs and other nomads . and a reluctance to admit that Vlachs could be anything other than nomadic shepherds, when in fact they have risen to positions of wealth and distinction as merchants and craftsmen. The word can also have a derogatory connotation, and perhaps this is one reason why most Vlachs . do not call themselves by this name, though they recognise it." (Winnifrith, *The Vlachs...*, p. 1).

42 Actually, he came from Monastir (today's Republic of Macedonia) to the Habsburg Empire and studied medical science in Buda.

43 See Peyfuss, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

44 About Boiagi's place and year of birth there are quite different opinions. While Peyfuss thinks that Boiagi was born in Buda in 1780, Căndroveanu considers that Boiagi was born in Moschopolis in 1770. See Peyfuss, *op. cit.*, p. 26, and Hristu Căndroveanu, *Antologie de proză aromână* (Anthology of Aromanian Prose) (București: Ed. Univers, 1977), p. 195.

45 Mihail G. Boiagi, *Gramatică română sau macedo-română* (Romanian or Macedo-Romanian Grammar) (București: Tipografia Curții Regale, 1915), p. X.

46 This is one of the most debated dichotomy of Enlightenment, made by Moses Mendelssohn in article "On the Question: What is Enlightenment?" in James Schmidt, ed., *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions* (Berkeley - Los Angeles - London, University of California Press, 1996), p. 54.

47 Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

48 The area of Moschopolis and how big it was actually as a city is another subject of investigation. Quoted by Neagu Djuvara, the unbiased historian Peyfuss advances the figure of 20,000 inhabitants. According to Pouqueville, the French consul in the Ottoman Empire during the assault on Moschopolis, the settlement had between 40,000 and 60,000 inhabitants. Peyfuss considers Pouqueville's estimation exaggerated but the nationalist discourse adopted enthusiastically Pouqueville's testimony. See Peyfuss' study in Neagu Djuvara, ed., *Aromânii. Istorie. Limbă. Destin* (Aromanians. History. Language. Destiny) (București: Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1996), p. 101.

## 2. A PERFECT CITY FOR NATIONAL INTERESTS

Until the outbreak of the 1848 revolution in the Habsburg space,<sup>49</sup> the Moschopolitan Aromanians had proceeded to write new books, especially grammars and dictionaries<sup>50</sup> working on national project. We have no had yet evidences which allow us to conceive an interpretation of what Moschopolis acted as a city, particularly after the Muslim sacks, but it seems that the settlement decreased slightly and became a rural and played a peripheral role, taking into account the massive emigration of elites towards Central Europe. In the second half of the nineteenth century the interest concerning the Aromanians' past increased significantly among Romantic intellectual of the newly created Romanian state (1859/1862). As long as Moschopolis remained within the Habsburg Empire its memory retained an urban and ethno-cultural missionary feature and only was it dragged out from its original cultural context, the discourse on Moschopolis became more and more obviously a national lamentation. The process of identification of Moschopolis' inhabitants with a single nation<sup>51</sup> was a venture made by historians and national activists in spite of the fact that the economic and cultural functions refuse to confer Moschopolis any sharp national mark. After the transfer to Romanian geopolitical and cultural space, the Moschopolitan discourse became a militant one, having a powerful desire to expand over the entire territories dwelled in by Vlachs. Turning into a regressive utopia, Moschopolis lost its specificity and became a part of national heroic past and in itself lost its supremacy in national dissertations on national specific; it was not anymore a subject for study but a "given truth", which did not need any supplementary research.

Some of the 1848 Romanian revolutionists either wrote on the Vlach history and language or gathered simple impressions on the topic<sup>52</sup> and one the most popular texts of the Romantic age belonged to Dimitrie Bolintineanu, who, during his travels throughout the Balkans, was exalted by the mutual understanding between Romanians and Aromanians.<sup>53</sup> Later on, as the minister of education in Romanian government, Bolintineanu initiated a special policy of the Romanian state devoted to the protection of Vlachs from abroad. Romania took upon itself a double task: the integration of Vlach national discourse into Romanian state policies and the promoting of national symbols among Vlachs in order to annihilate the strongly remaining vestiges of Graecophilia. The latter also included the utopian re-creation of Moschopolis. In accomplishing of this twofold mission, Romania settled massively upon cultural policies, using instruments and terms of the process of the cultural revolution, which went hand in hand with education and schooling.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the demarcation between the cultural revolution and utopia seemed indistinctively and only the presence of physical violence around 1900's stops one from considering that the national idea was immediately accepted. It is not the uniqueness of Romania but all states, which had to build up the national consciousness of their own citizens, the so-called process of "nationalizing the nation". The birth of Moschopolis as an utopian construction has been possible due to the process of cultural revolution, which meant in practical terms, adopting decisions of the state's bureaucracy and disseminating them by its agents. In the analysis of the cultural revolution, at least one question must be raised: who does it decide which will be the promoted elements as national treasure?<sup>55</sup> The national state discovered the violence as the essential dimension of the city, the sensibility for brutal way of sharing and disseminating national beliefs. In its national stage of existence, Moschopolis got a predominantly violent meaning, which

is still the best-known part of its history. In Paul Cornea's analysis on Romanian Romanticism "the concept of 'nation' tends, after 1821, to become much more embodied in history, becoming a strong idea, and at the same time, a 'shocking-image', which illustrates the ideal of its contemporaries and gathers all available energies."<sup>56</sup>

For the Romanian foreign policy in the Balkans, the Vlach question was an important objective to solve, and inside this policy there was even individualized a clearer trend called "the propaganda for Macedonia". In order to raise effectively the outcomes of propaganda, the cultural initiatives of the Romanian state agents were sustained vigorously by political initiatives in order to gain influence. The writer Costache Negri, the Romanian envoy to the capital of the Ottoman Empire after the 1859 union, demanded improvements for Aromanians concerning their national rights as minorities. In 1860, it was constituted the Macedo-Romanian Committee, formed by Aromanian and Romanian national activists, which had as its main goal to guide the cultural politics for Aromanians from abroad making an agreement with the government of the United Principalities (Romania) and Committee's actions were focused on Macedonia,<sup>57</sup> where the most Vlachs or Aromanians dwelled in. Responding to critiques on the government's policy regarding the legal and national statuses of Aromanians from the Balkans, Mihail Kogălniceanu, the Romanian Prime Minister, declared in 1864 in front of Chamber of Deputies:

"Every human being needs to raise his thoughts and his national aspirations toward an ideal. If we were not interested in the Macedonian agitation, our compatriots would pay their attention on the national status of Romanians from Transylvania. But our relationship with the Habsburg Empire would be too troubled because of this affair, something we must completely avoid. Thus, it is necessary at this moment to pay our compatriots' attention to the Macedonian question."<sup>58</sup>

Twelve years after Kogălniceanu's intervention, in the external political orientation of Romanian government<sup>59</sup> towards the Vlach population was perceived as a hostile attitude toward Greece, which counter-attacked powerfully. Two Aromanian parties fought each other, the Romanian nationalists and the Graecophiles and the gradually accumulated tensions outbroke in violent confrontations in 1891 and 1905 between those two groups.<sup>60</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century and in the first four decades of the twentieth century, historical writings on Aromanians might be classified into three groups: the first group is those texts which make a positive image of them, often they were written as a part of national propaganda, the second group are collections of historical sources, and the third group is formed by negative texts written by other national propagandas, especially the Greek one. As a general overview, the historical works might be characterized as non-theoretical, written within national paradigm, and haunted by a complex of inferiority and self-victimisation. The references to Moschopolis are sporadic, referring primarily to its tragedy, which was similar to a "national trauma". Along with the Macedo-Romanian Committee, some publications were founded to spread the Aromanian national idea and most of them wrote lamentations for Moschopolis' end.<sup>61</sup> In the cultural and political edifice of Greater Romania these features were strongly stressed by the influence of political ideologies, namely by the right-wing ideological model promoted by the Iron Guard. Many intellectuals were engaged in nationalist projects, even they were not very active from a political point of view, but some of them wrote exaltingly pieces of Aromanian history and were influenced by the political edifice of

Greater Romania.<sup>62</sup>

The decisive step in the intellectual transformation of Moschopolis from a real city into a utopian place was made by the Aromanian literature. The utopian emergence of Moschopolis must be viewed related to the birth of the Aromanian literature, mainly by those publications where many young Aromanians educated in Romanian schools from the Balkans started to write articles, poems, and stories in Aromanian. Bucolic and lyrical themes are predominant, linked to the traditional handicrafts; they reflect feelings like love, nostalgia, superstitions, but also dauntless deeds, humorous situations, social kinships, mentalities, emotions, ordinary and daily aspects of life, and so on. The most difficult obstacle for this literature to express as such was the language itself, more precisely the intellectual usage of the language. This was both typical for the Romanian language and the Aromanian one. An example is Sergiu Hagiadi, who translated Roja's first book, moans about his disagreements with the other literate people concerning the Romanian orthography and his linguistic urge for Romanian philologists was to adopt quickly the French orthography to make Romanian more comprehensible.<sup>63</sup> This reality was still present four years after the establishing of the Latin alphabet and all efforts, which were guided to standardize the Aromanian language. Be that as it may, the Aromanian literature continued to possess a very rural character concerning its themes for artistic and intellectual mode of expression. The efforts made by the Romanian established schools for Aromanians in some places of Macedonia and the work of propaganda through nationalist press resulted in a process of de-nationalising Aromanians, in a sense of depriving Aromanian speakers of their local features, and re-nationalising them with Romanian and national ideology. Nowadays, the literary works in Aromanian are the results of this type of educational system, where the most important role was played by the Romanian high school from Bitola. The Aromanian literature has not reached yet a strong stage of elevation in order to become an idiom for larger usage, to express different tendencies, and to offer various models of creation. Within such a unique way of narrating the past, the only discourse which has been developed on Moschopolis was the nationalist one, and, as Sorin Antohi codified the utopian tendency of narrating the perfection, Aromanian elites wrote in Aromanian having an exalted feeling of finding of a "magnetic beauty and without any imperfection of a brilliant city" which "evokes a dreamlike image."<sup>64</sup>

A virtual author of the history of the Aromanian historiography would barely observe important changes between the manner of the nineteenth century of narrating the past and one hundred years later (1850-1950). In the first half of the twentieth century, Moschopolis and the history of Aromanians<sup>65</sup> have constantly remained the same. The writers who wrote particularly on Moschopolis were Nicolae Batzaria, Kira Iorgoveanu and Nida Boga; the latter's work being a one hundred-fifty sonnets epic poem, which gave birth to the Moschopolitan utopia. The period after the Second World War represents actually the intellectual reconstruction of Moschopolis, its utopian meaning. As I added heretofore, the Aromanian literature has developed as following traditional paradigms and it has constantly retained an isolated and militant character, haunted by traditional and nationalist marks. Shy attempts to change the manner in writing literature were made after the 1960s, especially in the field of poetry. But nobody has effectively tried to revisit either scientifically or literally the utopian facet of Moschopolis.

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49 In spite of the Romantic project of national emancipation, Aromanians were actively engaged in Greek organisations, which fought for the independence of Greece. Narrating the upheaval from 1821 (Romanian historiography names it "the national revolution"), Arginteanu classifies it as a "Greek revolution", neglecting completely the role of Tudor Vladimirescu, the Romanian leader of the upheaval ("a Wallachian peasant then beginning his own peasant revolt against the nobles" as it was considered in Stanford J. Shaw & Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Arginteanu also considers that the conspiracy organised by the Greek secret society *Philiki Hetairia* ("Society of Friends") was conceived as such by an important number of Aromanians, who became active members of this association. Arginteanu overstates considering that Rigas, the author of the Greek revolutionary anthem was Aromanian. See Arginteanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-247.

50 These educational actions were encouraged by the suitable climate of the issued decree by the Habsburg Emperor Francis I, in 1811, which gave Romanians the possibility of constituting schools in Romanian.

51 The same situation took place in the Greek national canon, which deprived Moschopolis of all its Aromanian tenants claiming that Muslims attacked and destroyed a Greek city.

52 In the 1840s, the Romanian historians and participants at the 1848 revolution Mihail Kogălniceanu, Nicolae Bălcescu, Timotei Cipariu, Eftimie Murgu commented on Vlach's status within the Balkan countries and the Vlach question became one of the directions of the Romanian foreign policy.

53 Dimitrie Bolintineanu, *Călătorii* (Travels) (București: Ed. Minerva, 1987), pp. 217-267.

54 The Romantic program of Romanian national awakening stipulates that moving toward increasing the national consciousness was meant to be a set of radical claims, which consisted of making educational system accordingly. The main task of the newly established educational system was mainly the revival of national historical myths and the codifying the Romanian language. See Mirela-Luminița Murgescu, *Între "bunul creștin" și "bravul român". Rolul școlii primare în constituirea identității naționale românești (1831-1878)* (Between "the good Christian" and "the brave Romanian". The Role of the Primary School in the Formation of the Romanian National Identity, 1831-1878) (Iași: Ed. A'92, 1999), 262 p.

55 To put the relationship between utopia and violence in the terms of Karl Popper, a question to which the most difficult answer to give is "how can a decision be reached?" Popper's answer is mainly related to two possible ways: either by argument or by violence. As he declared himself an enemy to any form of violence, Popper thinks that these two notions are intermingled and although propaganda uses arguments too, there is a difference between the argument, which counts for a decision, and the argument, which ends up in violence. The difference "lies rather in an attitude of give and take, in a readiness not only to convince the other man but also possibility to be convinced by him." This urges one to reflect on this relation between utopia and violence, and the attitude of "give and take" belongs to the urban and cosmopolitan settlement. See Karl R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations. The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 356.

56 Paul Cornea, *Originile romantismului românesc* (The Origins of the Romanian Romanticism) (București: Ed. Minerva, 1972), p. 469.

57 Macedonia and the whole part nowadays known as Northern Greece was a territory with important number of Aromanian inhabitants. The actual Voskopoje built on the old area of Moschopolis is located close to the Albanian-Macedonian border. Today, Aromanians but more by Albanians dwell in that area.

58 Peyfuss, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

59 Internationally recognized as an independent state after the treaty of Berlin (1878), Romania intensified its foreign policy over the Balkans lands dwelled by Aromanians, at that time some of those territories being under the Greek administration. This generated political and diplomatic tensions, which culminated in mutual recall for diplomatic missions from one another.

60 To these tensions were added those generated by Romanian activists in the Balkans who were paid to constitute Romanian schools in Macedonia. The Ottoman police expelled some of those Romanian activists, considered spies, after complaints of the Greek Patriarchate in 1878. Supplementary tensions were raised in 1892, when the Graecophile Aromanians disapproved of the appointment of an Aromanian bishop, nominated by the Ottomans. The bilateral relationships between Romania and Greece remained very troubled and confused until around 1910.

61 The review "Lumina" ("The Light") of the Romanian high school from Bitola (Macedonia) published the main texts on national mourning of Moschopolis.

62 The presence of Aromanians in the structures of the Iron Guard was very active. Constantin Papanace, one of them, was a leader of the Iron Guard in his western exile and he wrote some pieces on both Romanian and Aromanian histories.

63 Gheorghe Constantin Roja, *Cercetări despre românii de dincolo de Dunăre* (Craiova, 1867), p. X.

64 Antohi, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

65 In order to summarize one hundred-fifty year of Aromanian historical studies, still the cliché constitutes an important and widespread belief of many Aromanians on their national past, with special applications to the Moschopolitan utopia. I take as an example the case of Matilda Caragiu-Marioțeanu, a Romanian scholar having Aromanian origins. Her study, "Un dodecalog al aromânilor sau 12 adevăruri incontestabile, istorice și actuale asupra aromânilor și asupra limbii lor" (A Dodecalogue of Aromanians or 12 Incontestable Truths, Historical and Actual on Aromanians and on their Language), was included in Djuvara, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 168-183. Briefly, she strongly believes that her article has to be a set of national commands, "a dodecalogue for any Aromanian", and this is as paradigmatic as for all myths and commonplaces of any national insight on the past. The author witnesses for a "scientific creed" linked to her ethno-psychological existence as "an Aromanian being" and she codifies "twelve eternal truths" concerning the Aromanians past, in fact a collection of national stereotypes, most of them related to language as the essential element of Aromanian ethnic ontology. Matilda Caragiu-Marioțeanu considers the Aromanian nation as an ethnic individuality within the larger notion of "Romanianness". On the contrary, Max Demeter Peyfuss denies the usage of "Romanian" as a general term for all Balkan varieties of Romanic language. For him "there are Vlachs who do not show any form of Romanic self and they must not be treated like a sort of Romanian." See Max Demeter Peyfuss, "Romanitatea balcanică: perspective de cercetare," (The Balkan Romanity: Perspectives of Research) *Luceafărul* ("The Morning Star") 5/105 (1992), pp. 8-9.

### 3. IMAGINING MOSCHOPOLIS

"Moschopolis is a utopian projection, a space of fabulous abundance and of common happiness, which provokes neighbours' envy, and finally, from a paradisiacal place it becomes a place of depressing memory",<sup>66</sup> noted Constantin Sorescu, a literary critic who closely examined the poem "Moschopolis" written by Leon T. Boga.<sup>67</sup> This appreciation seemed to be an encouraging attempt to define the city as a utopian state of mind but with realistic support and to revisit Moschopolis as literary presence inside of people's minds. Disappointedly, this portion taken from Sorescu's text is mere a remark which intends to stress additionally city's grandeur as the rest of his study passes over any attempt of analysing Moschopolis only as a utopian creation, within the context in which Moschopolis appeared as a literary work. Conversely, the literal sense of Sorescu's comment suggests the greatness of Boga's enterprise and he pleaded for the recognition of Boga as the great restorer of the Aromanian dialect.<sup>68</sup> As it was restored at the middle of the twentieth century, Moschopolis has some features, which allow us to situate it in larger group of the utopian genre. Concisely, Moschopolis has typical utopian features like order, happiness (virtues), religion, social equality, self-sufficiency, and communion among all inhabitants, and all these highlights are expressed differently.

The literary texts which had gradually invented the Moschopolitan utopia were mainly poems,<sup>69</sup> this genre of literature being preferred by various authors because they have thought that the symbolic "death" of the city and the deeply-rooted trauma which was generated have to be expressed more sensitive and they have to be disseminated with larger amount of emotional tension through verses into the Aromanian collective consciousness. Equally important is to add that much more than the artistic value of utopian-writers texts, the meanings of their work became collective knowledge of how Moschopolis looked like, and what is indeed an outstanding and particular feature of the Moschopolitan utopia is that common Aromanians think that the real city resembled to as it was presented in writer's poems, the majority of ordinary readership has never read those poems. The literary tendencies of epochs in which writers have repeatedly recomposed Moschopolis were slightly different one from another, hardly might those works be considered as very original and it might be noticed that they are anachronistic in a quite higher degree but their force and their transformation into a real scientific hypothesis reside in a non-critical reading and approach of them by specialists. Besides Boga, among other Aromanians authors who sporadically wrote on Moschopolis the most important names are Nicolae Velo, Nicolae Caratana, Kira Iorgoveanu and Oani Foti<sup>70</sup> and, furthermore, there is also a "popular" type of literature on Moschopolis, but nobody can tell more about this type of literary genre. All of them were writing within the national state paradigm and this is to the utmost importance for understanding the mechanism of transformation of Moschopolis from a certain theme of scholar interest into a national utopian discourse. Analysing its paradigm, Moschopolis is an example of a conflicting discourse in which the utopian standard is breached by national paradigm of conflict and a place of eternal harmony and perfection becomes a commonplace to live in where conflict, disorder, and affliction represent its essence.

Conceptually speaking, there are seven main particularities which define Moschopolis as a utopian project. The first feature of Moschopolis is its extraordinary geographical place that it occupies and Velo designated a mystical and indeterminate location for such an exceptional city; in order to reach Moschopolis one must cross seven hills and six

valleys.<sup>71</sup> The natural environment is a very important factor of the national paternalistic universe where God, nature, irrationality, and all non-human agents set the stage of building the perfection in order that special entity to become the exponent of God's will. It is a usual aspect in utopian constructions that the perfect place is designated for the perfect city, or the perfect isolated place was given by divinity in order to be dwelled by utopian inhabitants. Thomas More set the island, once a peninsula, as the ideal place since its quasi-isolated habit is proper for building the best place in the world to live in, and this isolated and far away settlement is the place for perfect society to cope with bad things of human existence. It is also common in More's utopia like in other utopian texts that the natural habitat is a very important element of utopian edifice, because the given configuration of such a place, with no reasonable explanation on the origins of that natural unit, urged man to build up the perfect community. For all authors who intended to describe Moschopolis, it is situated in a mountainous area, which is considered by Aromanian discourse as being the natural dwelling of Aromanians. For Velo, Moschopolis is set in the middle of "that damned country called Albania", more precisely, in the middle of "those Tosk thievish people",<sup>72</sup> that is in the middle of enemies. Notwithstanding, this unpleasant vicinity envies and appreciates the prosperous Moschopolis for its capacities to be the leader in all economic, moral, political, and cultural aspects. Nida Boga, whose epopee is considered the superior form of intellectual expression on Moschopolis and the main creator of the utopian image on Moschopolis, imagined the city in a geographical depression "obscured by mountains and hidden by rapacious sights."<sup>73</sup> The same author narrates the founder-myth of the settlement: the city was founded by Aromanian shepherds, who built up the future city on their behalf and his imagined founders of Moschopolis were gifted with the most traditional profession of Aromanians who has to be the basis for the city.<sup>74</sup> We do not know either this myth of the founder shepherd was an imaginative and element of defining Moschopolis, in order to emphasize the Aromanian background of the city even from its very beginning, or whether he used it as an intentionally forced cultural parallelism in order to stress the unity between Romanians and Aromanians. This first element of the Moschopolitan utopia is an archetypal location on which the narrated plot occurs: isolated, very suitable to be dwelled and having a good fate. Also, it is important to notice the presence of God's help in founding and developing the city, whose protection inundates the city's dwellers:

"Moschopolis rises more and more/ As if God help it with His hands/ Because it is a prosperous town."<sup>75</sup>

In traditional utopias, the relationship between man and divinity will is considered as a *sine qua non* element. Religion is an active presence in utopians' lives even starting with Plato's *Republic*. In the chapter devoted to the education of the future citizens of *Republic*, the discussion between Adeimantus and Socrates reached the problem of what knowledge about the Gods of city should be taught to children and what should be avoided, for the sake of the future of the city:

"No young person is to hear stories which suggest that were he to commit the vilest of crimes, and were he to do his utmost to punish his father's crimes, he wouldn't be doing anything out of the ordinary, but would simply be behaving like the first and the greatest gods ... The stories which have gods fighting and scheming and battling against one another are utterly unsuitable too, because they're just as untrue ... The point is that a young person can't tell when something is allegorical and when it isn't, and any idea admitted by a person of that age tends to become almost ineradicable and permanent. All things considered, then,



that is why a very great deal of importance should be placed upon ensuring that the first stories they hear are best adapted for their moral improvement."<sup>76</sup>

Thus, the role of religion is very important in the city's life. As Thomas More imagined the religion of utopians, firstly they are models for a moderate and moral life and secondly to expel the origins of any sin:

"The religious principles they invoke are of this nature: that the soul is immortal, and by God's beneficence born for happiness; and that after this life, rewards are appointed for our virtues and good deeds, punishments for our sins. Though these are indeed religious principles, they think that reason leads us to believe and accept them ... To be sure, they think happiness is found, not in every kind of pleasure, but only in good and honest pleasure. Virtue itself ... draws our nature to pleasure of this sort, as to supreme good ... They define virtue as living according to nature; and God ... created us to that end. When an individual obeys the dictates of reason in choosing one thing and avoiding another, he is following nature."<sup>77</sup>

In Moschopolis there are not so many religious or civic notions to be debated as they are expressed in this quote from More's Utopia. No one from Moschopolis debates religious commands or elements of religious doctrine: either God is omnipresent, or He is invoked for different reasons. God must be Christian-Orthodox and he accompanies Moschopolis even from its very beginning; God is working along with its human servants in building the city and there were mentioned seventy churches built for God's glory. Also God is good and in huge his care for the nation gave such an abundant place. An important part of Boga's utopia is devoted to description of the religious rituals, the missions of priests, all religious manifestations took place on the national background. In this parade of national feeling, it is natural for Boga to express that the language of priests and of the Church was Aromanian, but with a lot of Greek, Turkish and Slavic words. While the Moon watches Moschopolis as in Velo's poem, in Kira Iorgoveanu's verses there is the Star, which guards Moschopolis, mourning for Moschopolis' end.<sup>78</sup>

The second feature of the Moschopolitan utopia and one of its most stressed one is the general welfare that may be noticed throughout the city. Moschopolis is an island of prosperity and general happiness and this prosperity was the main reason that urged enemies to overthrow and deprive it for all its material goods. Even from the very beginning of his epopee, Boga describes the gargantuan progress of economic life of founder shepherds. The founder shepherds initially had only a few material goods but by their own work the development of settlement progressively increased:

"They all came only with their clothes . / As weapons just sticks in their hands/ Bringing just a few sheep cotes."<sup>79</sup>

The picture of a labour intensive Moschopolis is suggested by detailed descriptions where people work a lot, especially handicrafts, and this type of image coincides somewhat to a image on how Byzantine city would has resembled to. In this respect, the urban model for Moschopolis was the Byzantine one:

"The Byzantine was distinguished by highly developed handicrafts and commerce. Small-scale artisan production of commodity character was prevalent. Large artisan shops belonged to the state. A guild organisation existed with elaborate rules pertaining to the variegated activities of its affiliated producers."<sup>80</sup>

The effervescent activity of Moschopolis is pictured by various handicrafts and merchants and everywhere the richness captures the attention of reader, as a fruit of industrious days of work; Velo's image displays a rich Moschopolis with great palaces, tall houses, and impressive buildings. By this exhibited richness, Moschopolis breaks the rules of utopian construction, which glorifies frugality. The utopian-makers did not think to provide a virtuous sense of wealthy Moschopolis in this sense of continence and austerity, but they merely consider that the wealthy of Moschopolitans is a deserved outcome, as a reward for their laboriousness.

The third feature consists of the city's exteriority. Despite its prevalence toward the isolated life, Moschopolis had an important exchange with the external environment. There is a distinct aspect in Boga's image on the prosperity of shepherds: they became richer and richer by external relationships and built up houses for themselves and for their families and their wealth increases by trade, the latter being considered another Aromanian "traditional" profession. Thus, Moschopolis is not a purely closed unit but with some exchanges, but this specificity is also present in More's utopia where the inhabitants of the island fight and make some connections with the exterior world. First of all, the origins of its fabulous richness are located in exteriority. Many merchants and purchasers came from the surrounding area to buy material goods from Moschopolis and the city gained money from trade with external partners as in Boga's text where rich people come from Athens just to spend their money. Secondly, the external factors influenced Moschopolis in all its aspects of life. When Boga describes the prosperity of inhabitants materialised in building houses, he indicates that the Austrian skilled workers built up edifices and houses in the city. Also, raw materials were brought from abroad for the building of the city. Thirdly, the external presences in the Moschopolitan life were obvious in cultural actions and there is an important alien presence in the Moschopolitan utopia of Greek culture bearers: "there come the scholars from Athens."<sup>81</sup> These external influences seem to undermine the utopian character of Moschopolis; in fact, that particularity is permanently maintained through reiterations of its uniqueness in the region. Boga did not forget to allocate the city only for Aromanians or Christians, in which "there is no trace of Turkish or Muslim presence". In fact, authors according to national mythology give the cleavages that separate Moschopolis from the rest of the world and alien presences are ambiguous. On the one hand, the alien presence is evoked when that acts "proper" to national clichés (i.e. the presence of all Christians is very pleased), but on the other hand it is blamed when is not on the same side with hypothetical Aromanian aspirations (i.e. one of the most important plan which resulted in the attacking of Moschopolis was attributed to the Greek Church's intrigues). But the most important element of utopian reclusion towards aliens is given by the verses that show that Turks "are expelled from Moschopolis". Forcefully, the symbolical death of Moschopolis and the main attributed guilty go against Muslims, the bad alien as such: "Neither Turk is in the city/ Nor those old people nor those younger/ Nor Turk policeman patrolling around/ Because they are disliked by Vlachs/ There is no any turban on any head/ Throughout this wholly Aromanian city."<sup>82</sup>

The fourth feature is that of a very weak representation of the landscape of the city itself and also there is no general plan of Moschopolis, either the Greek model of circle or the Roman archetype of square. The city is not charted in any way and it is not well defined in architectonic and geometric terms as a utopian body. There is no sign of urban

symmetry, or notions that prove the presence of an urban unit. Inside of Moschopolis any indication of disposed buildings, network of streets, public places and squares is missing, the functions of elements from internal area and buildings are modest pictured and they are almost absent. There is no a rigorous description of the city and there is no idea of "visual effect"; Moschopolis' beauty could hardly be guessed. The archaeological artifacts did not provide any trace of fortress, towers for guarding, ditches, fortified walls, mobile bridges, and so on. No sign was discovered which could testify the double function of the city: civil and military. Moschopolis' detail is very fragile contoured and the physiognomy of urban area is enigmatic. Nicolae Velo's landscape of Moschopolis is so vague that any further account might be considered out of any rational understanding. Velo describes illusionary palaces and dreamlike gardens and he mourns that the language does not help him in describing the whole beauty of the city. Notwithstanding, Boga's text remains the most complex source for a broader utopian image of Moschopolis, but also conceived in very vague terms. As Velo did, but in a much more modest manner, Boga imagines pharaonical palaces, huge churches which "impales the sky", the building of Academy, the cathedral church, the building of printing press, hospitals, orphanages, and so on. Boga's delirious imagination builds on all those Moschopolitan ascertained ruins public institutions only in order to provide an imposing image of the city.

The fourth feature concerns the social structures of Moschopolis and only Boga's text helps us in decrypting the social relationships among people. The traditional conception regarding utopia, namely the old people are respected and they rule the city, is not linked to national program but it is present in More's book. Due to the traditionalist view on the Aromanian "self", this coincidence was possible and it was so because the same patterns were used for imagining societies. In More's text,

"dishes of food are not served down the tales in order from top to bottom, but all the old persons, who are seated in conspicuous places, are served first with the best food, and then equal shares are given to the rest. The old people, as they feel inclined, give their neighbours a share of those delicacies which were not plentiful enough to go around. Thus due respect is paid to seniority, yet everyone enjoys some of the benefits."<sup>83</sup>

In Boga's Moschopolis, the traditional way of life states that not only the old persons are respected but also the laws given by seniors govern the city itself. The old people have their certain place in churches, they are respected by their sons-in-law/daughters-in-law or nephews/nieces. The thieves are punished according to laws and, unfortunately, this is the only specification of the Moschopolitan law that is not enough to determine principles, institutions, the amount of written-laws or their categories. Also, the social structures are rigorously determined. There are guilds with their internal hierarchy, ecclesiastical ranks and built hierarchies upon the richness. It is important to notice that, unlike the other utopias where there is mentioned the name and the personality of the ruler of city (and by this particular feature, no individuality is mentioned in More's utopia, only the leader of it, the King Utopus, seems that utopia is designated to be a totalitarian state), no name is given as a leader of the city in the Moschopolitan utopia. As the classical utopian texts, Moschopolis possesses a depersonalised mass of citizens, in which one might find only a few individualities: Theodoros A. Kavalliotis, the president of Academy, some local elites (Emanoil Gojdu), metropolitan bishop of Moschopolis.

Much better are represented those two characters that planned Moschopolis' havoc: Ali Pasha, the governor of Thessaly, and his Greek mistress. The author infers that these people are the leaders of the city and the main moments of the Moschopolitan everyday life were linked to their will.

The fifth feature of the Moschopolitan utopia is its character of a mimetic utopia. In itself, the city could not exist as an independent entity and it permanently needs models to which it must be compared. In order to be contemplated at least as great as the other urban models are, Velo compares Moschopolis' richness to Constantinople and Moschopolis' greatness is pictured only when the beholder contemplates Constantinople's greatness. Moschopolis needs Constantinople as a material presence, in order to rebuild its own physiognomy as the greatest urban unit in the area. The peak of mimetic utopia character of Moschopolis is attained by Boga who imagined that even from its very beginning, the founding shepherds tended to build a big city (from the initial village for herds), which had catch up the greatness of Thessaloniki (Salonika). This was the first invoked model. The second model follows the religious utopia: thanking God for their prosperity, Moschopolitans wish to build up as many monasteries and churches as they could and their scope was to attain the monastic complex from the mountain Athos, the spiritual centre of Christian-Orthodox. The third model is given by Athens, whose intellectuals came to Moschopolis and developed it culturally. The fourth model is Constantinople, as I stated hereinabove, and the capital of the Ottoman Empire is simply named "*Polea*" [The Polis]. The other models had lesser impact but they are mentioned in order to reveal the links of Moschopolis with the rest of the world: Leipzig, as one of the most renowned centres of leather-industry, Venice, Jerusalem and Gomorrah. The latter was used to emphasize the evil plan that presented Moschopolis as the New Gomorrah that deserves to be annihilated. The desire to compare Moschopolis with another cities seems to be an inconsistency of the Aromanian utopian mind, namely, by that the feeling of urban uniqueness is seriously damaged by this comparisons: Moschopolis is no longer an exceptional creation of nation but a mimesis of classical urban paradigms, with not any specific improvement.

The sixth particularity of Moschopolis is its assumed task of being an irradiative centre of culture. As we have seen hereto, Moschopolis gathered a sum of intellectuals from Athens; at this detail, Boga's imagination seemed to function on real grounds and this assumption might receive a scientific answer that Moschopolis had overcome Athens, but in the terms of Greek culture. The main cultural institutions of Moschopolis were Academy, the Church<sup>84</sup> and the printing press. As an exponent of a spreading-culture metropolis, Boga endows to the printing press the most important role but the imaginary construction of them often reaches the terms of a ridiculous picture. Academy, first of those two cultural institutions, was supposed to host conferences given by foreign scholars, detail without any evidence from an archaeological point of view. Concerning the printing press, Boga reached the peak of derision in presenting the activity of it in enlightening large masses of inhabitants and visitors. The book, as a symbol of Enlightenment and Romanticism, was the bearer of the Aromanian national "soul" and the cultural primacy of Moschopolis is given by books and it seemed that it was a national duty for every citizen to read as many books as one needs to be educated in the Aromanian national dialect. Thus, the general image of Moschopolis' education is a huge mass of people reading and learning: children, old people, women, merchants, and so on: "everybody has a book in his hand/

And the whole city is an Aromanian school."<sup>85</sup>

The last specific feature of the Moschopolitan utopia is the end of the city and the causes that made this end possible. It is a usual feature that utopias are to be imaginary places with happiness and perfection, but in the national mythology, Moschopolis is an unfinished drama.<sup>86</sup> It is construed in a Homeric and epic mode, and like a collective empathy for its collapse.<sup>87</sup> It had a glorious past but conspiracies defeated it. At this point, the conspiracy theory denies any neutral endeavour to search reasonable explanations for a fact that belongs to political history and it exceeded the utopian narrative and is a part of a larger nationalist conviction. In the Moschopolitan utopia, the main conspirators are Greeks, the Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy and the tool of materializing the conspiracy is the rebellious Ali Pasha, governor from Ianina, his Greek mistress, and Albanian guerrillas. This theory of conspiracy is present in all literary creations on Moschopolis and it is taken for granted by many scholars. The climax of the theory of conspiracy is the final battle between the "goods" and the "evils" in which Moschopolis perished heroically but, according to mythology, Moschopolitans have remained conscious of their nationality in their exile as being the elite of Aromanians. By analyzing Moschopolis I have tried to show the main features which characterize the discourse on the city from its beginning to nowadays. At the end of the analysis and of what means the city of Moschopolis in the collective imagination of Aromanians, a confusion between different levels of understanding remains and a narrative set up for a national purpose and its place is still ambiguous, namely between literature and history. The common feature of both of them is the lamentation on Moschopolis' "grave", a general wailing which block any rational understanding. To put in another words, the scientific knowledge of Moschopolis' past must be entirely based on the separation of these two fields. But the demarcation between the two is not the case of treating it nowadays as a utopian narrative. The separation of the two approaches could undermine the utopian essence that was given to it, and show that the real Moschopolis was more an opened city rather than an isolated and pure area, that is an ordinary city. Interpreting Moschopolis as an urban utopia, literature, history, and architecture intermingled and its theoretical lacunae conferred it a higher degree of utopianism which come closer to utopian categories of Gabriel Liiceanu<sup>88</sup>. He pleaded for the dichotomy between "utopia of philosophy" and "utopia of the intellect" by stating that the essence of utopia is the quality to be "nowhere", neither in time nor in space, the property to transcend the real. Any attempt to locate utopia is not the ideal type of utopia itself but the type of "utopia of the intellect", a heresy of the essence of the concept itself; then, the essence of utopia is "utopia of philosophy" because only a purely speculative construction fits in philosophy. Thus, the classical model of utopia is Plato, with his absolute "out-of-this world" space. From this philosophical point of view, Moschopolis is a body without any consistency. Currently, Moschopolis is an emotional contemplation and its fate is abandoned to the divine will; because it is strongly focused on its final battle - most of the literary writings reveal as a supreme drama the moment of the final battle in which the city heroically perished. For those writers who have moaned and groaned, Moschopolis will rise from its own ashes - and Boga used the myth of the Phoenix bird - but until then, Moschopolis is contemplating as the New Jerusalem, the entire creation of God.

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66 See Nida Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

67 Leonida (Nida) T. Boga (1886-1974) was born in Veles (today's Republic of Macedonia). He was initially educated in the Greek language, and when schools for Aromanians were opened in the Balkans, at the beginning of 1880s, he was transferred to the Romanian high school from Bitola. He was graduated in history and geography at Bucharest University and was appointed as teacher. He took part in the second Balkan War (1913) and in the First World War (1916-1918). He was hired as teacher in Chişinău, the capital of Bessarabia and also was manager of National Archives of Chişinău. He edited twenty volumes of documents regarding the history of Bessarabia, two volumes on the history of Wallachia' seventeenth century, and as a writer wrote stories and poems in the Aromanian dialect. After the end of the Second World War, he was questioned and harassed by the Romanian communist secret police (the Securitate) as a former functionary of the Romanian administration in Bessarabia. The poem "Moschopolis" was written between 1947-1950 and it was an older project of the author. Boga died in 1974, in Vaslui (Eastern Romania).

68 Sorescu considers that so great was Boga's work in the field of the Aromanian dialect that he considers Boga as a potential winner of the Nobel Prize, as Frederic Mistral received it for restoring the provençal dialect from southern France at the nineteenth century. See Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

69 Nicolae Batzaria (1874-1952) wrote a story entitled "Din vremuri de obidă", which is a short story about imagined sufferings of Moschopolitans after their flee from the devastated city. Batzaria's story was published in Hristu Căndroaveanu, ed., *op. cit.*

70 The writer Oani Foti (1887-1940) was educated in the same high school of Bitola and in Bucharest. Nicoale Caratana and Kira Iorgoveanu are writers who are still active.

71 Nicolae Velo, "Moscopolea" (The Moschopolis), published by Hristu Căndroaveanu and Kira Iorgoveanu, eds., *Un veac de poezie aromână* (One Hundred Years of Aromanian Poetry) (Bucureşti: Ed. Cartea Românească, 1985). Nicolae Velo (1882-1924) also wrote a poem dedicated to another overthrown settlement, Gramoste (today's northern Greece), which was destroyed in the same period as Moschopolis was. Entitled "Şana şi arderea Gramostei" (Şana and the Burning of Gramoste), the poem was reprinted by Hristu Căndroaveanu, ed., *Antologie lirică aromână* (An Aromanian Lyrical Anthology) (Bucureşti: Ed. Univers, 1975). This is another example of Aromanian national mythology, with an historical event that was hyperbolized in literature. According to this legendary version of the poem, Gramoste was burnt because of a very beautiful girl who was desired as a mistress by the Ottoman governor Ali Pasha. Being refused, Ali ordered to Albanian guerrillas and Turkish troops to crush down the settlement.

72 Boga placed Moschopolis next to the Gheg populated area in the northern Albania, which is quite opposite to the southern part of Albania where the Tosk population lives in and where were found archaeological traces of the settlement.

73 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

74 It seems that the myth of the founder shepherd exists within the entire area of northern and southern Danube; the legendary foundation of today's Romanian capital is considered to be the act of the shepherd Bucur, and the name of the city might be translated "the settlement of Bucur's descendants".

75 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

76 Plato, *Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 72-73.

77 Thomas More, *Utopia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 162-163.

78 Nicolae Caratana's poem *Bocet pentru Moscopole* [Bewailing Moschopolis], is a long row of sighs over the city. He wants to cry but he cannot do it and he pleases God to heal the injuries of Moschopolis. See Căndroaveanu, Iorgoveanu, *op. cit.* In her *Antologie de poezie populară aromână* (Anthology of Aromanian popular Poetry) (Bucureşti: Ed. Minerva, 1976), Kira Iorgoveanu included a popular poetry on Moschopolis' end. The doubts originate in the fact that this poetry has many common features of nationalist paradigm, and the doubts are amplified by the lacunae of detailed explanations of the author regarding the circumstances in which this popular creation was discovered.

79 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

80 Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City 1400-1800* (Seattle - London: University of Washington Press, 1983), p. 6.

81 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

82 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

83 More, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

84 In Boga's opinion the Church played an important role being considered as a pillar of national education. The Church's implication in public sphere is stressed by the holy service in Aromanian, and the mission of working in printing books in national language was given to the Orthodox monks (See Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 45). As if being aware of its importance, monks defended Moschopolis' printing press until the last moments of city's existence.

85 Boga, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

86 In Iorgoveanu's poem dedicated to Moschopolis, the city is considered an "opened injury" which never will be healed.

87 The ancient Greek poet Homer and his poems were real cultural obsessions for Aromanian writers. Căndroaveanu qualifies Boga as being "un poet homerid" [a Homeric poet], the same label being applied to other Aromanian writer, George Murmu (1868-1957), the translator of Homeric poems into the Romanian language.

88 Antohi, *op. cit.* pp. 64-67.