

BYZANTINA LODZIENSIA

XXXIV

The Bulgarian State in 927–969 The Epoch of Tsar Peter I

edited by

Miroslaw J. Leszka
Kirił Marinow



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Series of the Department of Byzantine History of the University of Łódź



Founded by

Professor Waldemar Ceran

in

1997

Nº XXXIV

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Edited by
Miroslaw J. Leszka, Kiril Marinow

Translated by
Lyubomira Genova
Marek Majer
Artur Mękowski
Michał Zytka

Mirosław J. Leszka, Kiril Marinow – University of Łódź
Faculty of Philosophy and History
Institute of History, Department of Byzantine History
27a Kamińskiego St., 90-219 Łódź (Poland)
bizancjum@uni.lodz.pl

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Published by Łódź University Press & Jagiellonian University Press

First edition, Łódź–Kraków 2018
W.088620.18.0.K

ISBN978-83-8142-115-7 – paperback Łódź University Press
ISBN 978-83-233-4545-9 – paperback Jagiellonian University Press
ISBN 978-83-8142-116-4 – electronic version Łódź University Press
ISBN 978-83-233-9933-9 – electronic version Jagiellonian University Press

Łódź University Press
8 Lindleya St., 90-131 Łódź
www.wydawnictwo.uni.lodz.pl
e-mail: księgarnia@uni.lodz.pl
phone: +48 (42) 665 58 63



Distribution outside Poland

Jagiellonian University Press
9/2 Michałowskiego St., 31-126 Kraków
phone: +48 (12) 631 01 97, +48 (12) 663 23 81, fax +48 (12) 663 23 83
cell phone: +48 506 006 674, e-mail: sprzedaz@wuj.pl, www.wuj.pl



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Foreword



Tsar Peter I (927–969) had not previously been the subject of a monograph. This is despite the fact that he was the longest reigning monarch in the history of mediaeval Bulgaria, and being counted among the saints by the Bulgarian Church. There had been, however, works discussing the reigns of his two predecessors – Boris I and Symeon I – his grandfather and father, and also the life of the most popular anchorite living in his times, St. John of Rila.

On the one hand it appears to be understandable, since the scarcity of the sources relating to his reign does not allow constructing a full image of either Peter himself, nor of his reign. Despite the appearances, however, the silence of the sources from his era did not shield this ruler from numerous negative judgements about him, formulated by generations of scholars. They spoke of his lack of character, torpid governance and his focus on religious over political matters. He was accused of being a protégé of Constantinople and serving the Byzantine cause, and leading the state into a social breakdown, which manifested itself through, i.a., the Byzantinisation of the court and the development of the Bogomilist heresy. Finally, counted amongst his failures was the political disintegration which resulted in the state's downfall – under Rus' and Byzantine

pressure – near the end of his reign and during the reign of his son and successor, Boris II.

These evaluations suffered from a one major methodological fault – assessing Peter primarily from the perspective of the accomplishments of the aforementioned two great predecessors. Boris-Michael led to Bulgaria's Christianisation and an instilling among his subjects a new literary and liturgical language with which they could express their faith and through which they adapted the grand cultural achievements of the Christian Byzantium for their own use. These two elements had a powerful influence on the final consolidation of the state and the subjects of the Bulgarian rulers. Symeon, who not only contributed to the great cultural growth of Bulgaria, but was primarily remembered on the pages of history as an able and ambitious ruler who led Bulgaria to the apex of military might, establishing the country as a power at the international arena and in the political sphere. In comparison with them, the reign of their descendant appeared indistinct at best, or outright decadent – devoid of any great territorial gains or major cultural developments.

On the other hand, from the mid-twentieth century, there had been burgeoning attempts at re-interpreting the reign of this ruler, rightly questioning the portrayal of Peter's reign fixed by the classic Bulgarian mediaevists (and others), while the research into (widely understood) material culture is providing increasingly more information about Bulgaria of his time. For these reasons it seems to be fully justified to finally undertake larger scale research into Peter's portraiture and the country he ruled. In other words, to fill the existing gap in historiography regarding this matter, and at the same time restore Peter to his rightful place in history.

This task, realised within the framework of the National Science Centre (NCN), Poland, research grant was undertaken on the following pages by an international team of scholars: employees of the Department of Byzantine History and the Ceraneum Centre of the Łódź University (Poland) and of the Department of History of Bulgaria of the St. Clement of Ohrid University of Sofia (Bulgaria), with the minor participation of the Department of Old and Medieval History of the St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo (Bulgaria). In our research we made two fundamental assumptions – that the original sources required

a new reading taking into account the most recent achievements of the worldwide Byzantine and mediaeval Bulgarian studies, and that the portrayal of Peter and his reign would be presented in fullest against the backdrop of the Bulgarian state between 930s and the 960s.

We hope that this monograph is going to contribute to the preservation of a more balanced and generally positive evaluation of Peter I's role in the history of mediaeval Bulgaria.

* * *

We would like to thank our Colleagues from *Ceraneum* and from the Department of Byzantine History and the Department of Slavic Studies, all of University of Łódź (Poland), for the supportive attitude towards our work: Prof. Maciej Kokoszko, Prof. Georgi Minczew, Prof. Teresa Wolińska, Prof. Sławomir Bralewski, Prof. Ivan Petrov, Dr. Paweł Filipczak, Dr. Agata Kawecka, Dr. Andrzej Kompa and Dr. Małgorzata Skowronek. We thank Professor Jarosław Dudek from the University of Zielona Góra for the meticulous and positive editorial review. We thank Dr. Michał Zytka for editing and proofreading the English text. We would also like to give thanks to Elżbieta Myslińska-Brzozowska for providing the illustrations (drawings) for this volume.

* * *

This book was written as part of a research project financed by the National Science Centre (Poland). Decision number: DEC-2014/14/M/HS3/00758 (*The Bulgarian State in 927–969. The Epoch of Tsar Peter I the Pious*).

The Editors



Zofia A. Brzozowska
Mirosław J. Leszka, Kiril Marinow

Sources and Modern Scholarship



1. Sources

1.1. Foreign Sources

The sources that constitute the basis for the considerations presented in this volume have predominantly been penned by the Byzantine authors¹. Crucially, many of the accounts which we are going to examine here were

¹ The Reader will find a thorough overview of the Byzantine sources that include information about Peter and Maria in the following work: Т. Тодоров, *България през втората и третата четвърт на X век: политическа история*, София 2006 [unpublished PhD thesis], pp. 19–17, 150–152. See also, i.a.: В. Гюзелев, *Значението на брака на цар Петър (927–969) с ромейката Мария-Ирина Лакапина (911–962)*, [in:] *Културните текстове на миналото – носители, символи, идеи*, vol. I, *Текстовете на историята, история на текстовете. Материали от Юбилейната международна конференция в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. д.и.н. Казимир Попконстантинов, Велико Търново, 29–31 октомври 2003 г.*, София 2005, p. 32; А. Николов, *Политическа мисъл в ранносредновековна България (средата на IX – края на X в.)*, София 2006, pp. 233–236; Т. Тодоров, *Владетелският статут и титла на цар Петър I след октомври 927 г.: писмени сведения и сфрагистични данни (сравнителен анализ)*, [in:] *Юбилеен сборник. Сто години от рождението на д-р Васил Хараланов (1907–2007)*, Шумен 2008, pp. 94–95.

written during tsar Peter's life, or soon after his death. The most detailed description of the developments of 927, i.e. the negotiations leading to the conclusion of peace between the Empire and Bulgaria (the guarantee of which was to have been the marriage between Peter and a granddaughter of Romanos I Lekapenos), we find in a narrative written down in the 10th century in Constantinople. It was created by authors from the so-called 'circle of Symeon Logothete': Continuator of George the Monk (Hamartolos), Symeon Logothete, Leo Grammatikos and Pseudo-Symeon Magistros².

The output of the anonymous Continuator of George the Monk includes the description of events from 842 onwards – from the point at which George's narrative ended. The fragments devoted to Peter and Maria are practically identical with the relevant passages in the *Chronicle of Symeon Logothete*. The text is known in two variants. Redaction A, older, written down prior to 963, describes the events prior to 948, i.e. the death of Romanos I Lekapenos. The later redaction B includes the history of Byzantium up to 963 (enhanced with certain additional details). The older version of the *Chronicle of Symeon Logothete* is highly similar to redaction A of the *Continuation of George the Monk*, while the newer version closely resembles redaction B. In this monograph, we are not going to differentiate between the redactions A and B, as the passages relating to Maria Lekapene and Peter in both variants are identical. They include first and foremost an unusually extensive and detailed narrative of the events of 927, the beginning of Peter's reign, the description of his brothers'

² On the subject of Symeon Logothete and the works associated with his name, see: В.Н. Златарски, *Известията за българите в хрониката на Симеон Метастраст и Логотет*, [in:] *Идеи, Избрани произведения в четири тома*, vol. I, ed. П. Петров, София 1972, pp. 359–573; А.П. Каждан, *Хроника Симеона Логофета*, ВВ 15, 1959, pp. 125–143; W. Swohoda, *Kontynuacja Georgiosa*, [in:] *SSS*, vol. II, p. 468; М.Каймакова, *Българска средновековна историопис*, София 1990, pp. 170–171; J. Howard-Johnston, *Byzantium, Bulgaria and the Peoples of Ukraine in the 890s*, [in:] *Материалы по археологии, истории и этнографии Таврии*, vol. VII, ed. А.И. Айбабин, Симферополь 2000, pp. 343–345; S. Wahlgren, *Autor und Werk*, [in:] *Symeon Logothete*, pp. 3–8; A. Brzótkowska, *Kroniki z kregu Symeona Logotety*, [in:] *Testimonia*, vol. V, pp. 64–67; W. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, New York–Basingstoke 2013, pp. 197–224.

actions against him³ as well as a mention of the Bulgarian tsaritsa's visits to Constantinople in the later period⁴.

Textologically separate, but related in content, are the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon Magistros* and the *Chronicle of Leo Grammatikos*. Their descriptions of the developments of 927 are similar to the ones discussed above, but presented more concisely⁵.

The second, later redaction of the *Chronicle of Symeon Logothete*, completed ca. 963, most likely served as the basis for the anonymous author of the first part of book VI of the *Continuation of Theophanes*, written at roughly the same time⁶. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that this work's

³ Continuator of George the Monk, pp. 904–907; Symeon Logothete, 136. 45–51.

⁴ Continuator of George the Monk, p. 913; Symeon Logothete, 136. 67.

⁵ Leo Grammatikos, pp. 315–317; Pseudo-Symeon Magistros, 33–34, pp. 740–741.

⁶ *Continuation of Theophanes* encompasses the period between 813 and 961. Books I–IV have been written by an anonymous author on Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos' orders. Book V (*Life of Basil*) is often attributed to the emperor himself, while book VI most likely had two authors. Its first part, covering the period after 886 until the death of Romanos I Lekapenos (948) was written by an anonymous author, most likely during Nikephoros II Phokas' reign (963–969). As some scholars think, it is dependent on one of the editions of Symeon Logothete's work, in the version of Continuator of George the Monk (edition B). The second, describing years 948–961, is associated with the person of Theodore Daphnopates and was created – it is thought – prior to 963. On the subject of authorship, source basis and the message of *Continuation of Theophanes*: A. П. К а ж д а н, *Из истории византийской хронографии X в., I, О составе так называемой "Хроники Продолжателя Феофана"*, ВВ 19, 1961, pp. 76–96; A. Markopoulos, *Théodore Daphnopatés et la Continuation de Théophane*, JÖB 35, 1985, pp. 171–182 (he considers the association of Daphnopates with *Continuation of Theophanes* as exceedingly problematic); J. Signes Codoñer, *Algunas consideraciones sobre la autoría del Theophanes Continuatus*, Ery 10, 1989, pp. 17–28 (he ascribes the authorship of books I–V to Constantine VII himself); J. Ljubarskij, *Theophanes Continuatus und Genesisios. Das Problem einer gemeinsamen Quelle*, Bsl 48, 1987, pp. 45–55; idem, *Сочинение Продолжателя Феофана. Хроника, история, жизнеописания?*, [in:] *Продолжатель Феофана, Жизнеописания византийских царей*, ed. idem, Санкт-Петербург 1992, pp. 293–368; J. M. Featherstone, *Theophanes Continuatus VI and De Cerimoniis I*, 96, BZ 104, 2011, pp. 115–123 (he supposes that the source's compilation was done by *parakoimomenos* Basil, son of Romanos I Lekapenos, during the reign of Nikephoros II Phokas); I. Ševčenko,

account of the circumstances in which the Bulgarian-Byzantine peace treaty of 927 was concluded is also highly similar to the descriptions mentioned above. It also includes a strikingly close depiction of the marriage between Maria and Peter, as well as a record of the tsaritsa's several journeys to Constantinople, where, accompanied by her children, she paid visits to her relatives⁷.

Some information on Peter's times was also included in the works of later Byzantine chroniclers: John Skylitzes⁸ and John Zonaras⁹. Both of these authors included a description of the facts of 927, based on the above-mentioned earlier accounts but presented in a more condensed form¹⁰. Moreover, they also noted an event that, for obvious reasons, could not have been mentioned by the authors of the earlier historiographical works (concluded in the early 960s) – i.e. the death of Maria¹¹ and the

Introduction, [in:] *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber que Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. i d e m, Berlin 2011, pp. 3–13; J.M. Featherstone, *Theophanes Continuatus: a History for the Palace*, [in:] *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat*, ed. P. O d o r i c o, Paris 2012, pp. 123–135.

⁷ Continuator of Theophanes, VI, 22–23, 35, pp. 412–415, 422.

⁸ *Synopsis historion* encompasses the period between 811 and 1057. It was most likely written during the 1070s. For more information about John Skylitzes and his work, see i.a.: H. Thurn, *Ioannes Skylitzes, Autor und Werk*, [in:] John Skylitzes, pp. VII–LVI; W. Seibt, *Johannes Skylitzes: Zur Person des Chronisten*, JÖB 25, 1976, pp. 81–85; J. Bonarek, *Romajowie i obcy w Kronice Jana Skylitzesa. Identyfikacja etniczna Bizantyńczyków i ich stosunek do obcych w świetle Kroniki Jana Skylitzesa*, Toruń 2003, pp. 15–24; C. Holmes, *The rhetorical structure of Skylitzes' Synopsis Historion*, [in:] *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. E. Jeffreys, Aldershot 2003, pp. 187–199; J.-C. Cheynet, *John Skylitzes, the author and his family*, [in:] John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057*, transl. J. Wortley, Cambridge 2010, pp. IX–XI; B. Flusin, *Re-writing history: John Skylitzes' Synopsis historion*, [in:] John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis...*, pp. XII–XXXIII.

⁹ This work encompasses the history from the creation of the world until 1118, and was written soon after that year. On John Zonaras and his chronicle: K. Ziegler, *Zonaras*, [in:] *RE*, vol. X.A.1, 1972, col. 718–732; I. Grigoriadis, *Linguistic and literary studies in the Epitome Historion of John Zonaras*, Thessaloniki 1998; T.M. Banchich, *Introduction*, [in:] *The History of Zonaras from Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*, transl. i d e m, E.N. Lane, New York 2009, pp. 1–19; W. Treadgold, *The Middle...*, p. 388sqq.

¹⁰ John Skylitzes, pp. 222–224; John Zonaras, pp. 473–475.

¹¹ John Skylitzes, p. 255; John Zonaras, p. 495.

final years of Peter's reign¹². Another, particularly significant, source for the final years of Peter's reign is the *History* of Leo the Deacon¹³.

The works of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos¹⁴ deserve particular attention. He was of a similar age to Peter and his spouse and was married to her aunt – Helena Lekapene; he also participated in the events of 927 and most likely knew Maria personally. However, the 'purple-born' author is not objective: he is unsympathetic to our heroine's family and does not conceal his outrage that she, a granddaughter of emperor Romanos I Lekapenos, married a foreign, Slavic ruler. Constantine included an evaluation of this marriage in chapter 13 of the treatise *On the Governance of the Empire*¹⁵.

¹² John Skylitzes, p. 255sqq; John Zonaras, p. 495sqq.

¹³ Leo the Deacon was born ca. 950, and received a thorough education. As a clergyman, he was associated with the patriarchate of Constantinople and the imperial court. He participated in the disastrous expedition of Basil II against the Bulgarians in 986. His work was written after that event. On the subject of life and works of Leo the Deacon, see i.a.: С.А. Иванов, *Пolemическая направленность Истории Льва Диакона*, ВВ 43, 1982, pp. 74–80; О. Јуревіч, *Historia literatury bizantyńskiej*, Wrocław 1982, pp. 181–182; М.Я. Сюзюмов, *Лев Диакон и его время*, [in:] Лев Диакон, *История*, transl. М.М. Копыленко, ed. Г.Г. Литаврин, Москва 1988, pp. 137–165; *The History of Leo the Deacon. Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*, ed. A.-M. Talbot, D.F. Sullivan, with assistance G.T. Dennis, S. McGrath, Washington 2006, pp. 9–52; A. Kazhdan, *History of Byzantine Literature (850–1000)*, ed. Ch. Angelidi, Athens 2006, pp. 278–286.

¹⁴ On the subject of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos: P. Lemerle, *Byzantine Humanism: the First Phase. Notes and Remarks on Education and Culture in Byzantium from the Origins to the 10th Century*, transl. H. Lindsay, A. Moffatt, Canberra 1986, p. 310sqq; A. Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World*, London 1973; T.E. Gregory, *The Political Program of Constantine Porphyrogenitus*, [in:] *Actes du XV^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines*, vol. IV, Athènes 1985, pp. 122–133; G. Tanner, *The Historical Method of Constantine Porphyrogenitus*, BF 24, 1997, pp. 125–140.

¹⁵ Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, *On the Governance of the Empire*, 13, pp. 72–74. This work was created between 944 and 952, although some of its parts may have been written earlier. А. Максимовић, *Структура 32. поглавља снуца De admistrando imperio*, ЗРВИ 21, 1982, p. 31 – believes that chapter 32 was written between 927/928 and 944). A detailed analysis of the work: Константин Багрянородный, *Об управлении империей*, ed. Г.Г. Литаврин, А.П. Новосолцев, Москва 1989, pp. 276–457 (a list of academic literature – pp. 460–468). Cf. also: T. Živković, *De conversione Croatorum et Serborum. A Lost Source*, Belgrade 2012. For the opinion of Constantine Porphyrogennetos

Another of his works, the *Book of Ceremonies*¹⁶, may also prove a valuable source. While it would be futile to search the pages of this text for direct remarks on Maria, it does provide us with some important information about the official status and titulature of the mid-10th century Bulgarian ruler¹⁷.

Peter and Maria Lekapene are also mentioned, although very rarely, by the western European sources. A particular role in this is played by the contemporary to the tsar couple Liutprand of Cremona, who came to Constantinople on a diplomatic mission twice (in 949 and in 968)¹⁸. The person of Maria and the circumstances of her marriage with the Bulgarian ruler drew Liudprand's attention during both of his stays in the Byzantine capital. In 968, the reasons were obvious – the goal of his visit to Constantinople was, after all, to negotiate Nikephoros II Phokas's agreement to marry a 'purple-born' Byzantine woman to the son of Otto I. The Byzantine-Bulgarian marriage of 927 may have been an important argument during these negotiations, in that the rule according to which a woman from the imperial family could not marry a foreign ruler was

on the Bulgarians, as well as on the causes of this ruler's negative attitude towards the Lekapenos family and their dynastic marriage of 927, see: Г. Л и т а в р и н, *Константин Багрянородный о Болгарии и Болгарах*, [in:] *Сборник в чест на акад. Димитър Ангелов*, ed. В. В е л к о в, София 1994, pp. 30–37; F. T i n n e f e l d, *Byzantinische auswärtige Heiratspolitik vom 9. zum 12. Jahrhundert*, Bsl 54.1, 1993, pp. 21–22; Т. Т о д о р о в, *Константин Багренородни и династичният брак между владетелските домове на Преслав и Константинопол от 927 г.*, ПКШ 7, 2003, pp. 391–398; В. Г ю з е л е в, *Значението...*, pp. 30–31; A. P a r o Ń, "Trzeba, abyś tymi oto słowami odpart i to nie-dorzeczne żądanie" – wokół *De administrando imperio* Konstantyna VII, [in:] *Causa creandi. O pragmatyce źródła historycznego*, ed. S. R o s i k, P. W i s z e w s k i, Wrocław 2005, pp. 345–361; А. Н и к о л о в, *Политическа...*, pp. 269–279.

¹⁶ It was created near the end of Constantine VII – likely during the years 957–959. On the subject of this source – J. B. B u r y, *The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogenitus*, EHR 22, 1907, pp. 209–227; 417–439; A. M o f f a t t, *The Master of Ceremonies' Bottom Drawer. The Unfinished State of the De cerimoniis of Constantine Porphyrogenetos*, Bsl 56, 1995, pp. 377–388; M. M a n i n i, *Liber de Caerimoniis Aulae Byzantinae: prosopografia e sepulture imperiali*, Spoleto 2009.

¹⁷ Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, II, 47, pp. 681–682.

¹⁸ Liudprand of Cremona, *Retribution*, III, 38, p. 86; Liudprand of Cremona, *Embassy*, 16, 19, pp. 194–195.

not strictly adhered to at the Constantinopolitan court¹⁹. Curiously, Liudprand is also the only author to mention that, upon entering into marriage, Maria adopted a new name (Irene, i.e. 'Peace'), symbolically underscoring the role she was to play in the Byzantine-Bulgarian relations after 927²⁰.

1.2. Native Sources

Regarding times of Peter and Maria, the native sources primarily serve a complementary role. These are largely works that have been translated from Greek, with minor authorial additions. Entirely original works are less common. It is worth noting that tsaritsa Maria, aside from sphragistic material, does not appear at all in sources of Bulgarian origin. Among the Old Bulgarian texts that include mentions of tsar Peter, of particular interest are: *Sermon against the Heretics* of Cosmas the Priest and *Tale of the Prophet Isaiah*.

The *Sermon against the Heretics* may be considered as the first Slavic heresiological treatise. It was written by Cosmas the Priest. This work was most likely created either directly after tsar Peter's death, or during the 1040s. It is the fundamental source for learning about the Bogomilist heresy and – from a broader perspective – about the religious life in the contemporary Bulgaria²¹. *Tale of the Prophet Isaiah* (previously referred to as *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*) is in turn an excellent testimony of the mediaeval Bulgarian historical and 'national' identity, which in recent times became the basis for the study of the political ideology in Bulgaria during the period being examined here. This semi-legendary

¹⁹ T. Wołińska, *Konstantynopolitańska misja Liudpranda z Kremony (968)*, [in:] *Cesarstwo bizantyńskie. Dzieje. Religia. Kultura. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Waldemarowi Ceranowi przez uczniów na 70-lecie Jego urodzin*, ed. P. Krupczyński, M. J. Leszka, Łask–Łódź 2006, pp. 208–212.

²⁰ J. Shepard, *A marriage too far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria*, [in:] *The Empress Theophano. Byzantium and the West at the turn of the first millennium*, ed. A. Davids, Cambridge 1995, pp. 126–127; B. Гюзелев, *Значението...*, p. 30.

²¹ *Średniowieczne herezje dualistyczne na Bałkanach. Źródła słowiańskie*, ed. G. Minczew, M. Skowronek, J. M. Wołski, Łódź 2015, pp. 19–20, 67–70 (see there for further literature).

vision of history was created either during the latter half of the eleventh century or – what is more likely – during the twelfth century²².

In a study that requires the analysis of native sources (such as, e.g., research into the titlature of the Bulgarian rulers), the historian needs to seek additional information by examining the Slavic translations of Byzantine chronicles. From among the above-mentioned Greek historiographical texts, both versions of the *Continuation of George the Monk* as well as the work of John Zonaras were certainly translated into the language of the Orthodox Slavs²³.

The Slavic translation of the *Continuation of George the Monk* was completed in Bulgaria in the late 10th early 11th century, and it was based on the newer, expanded redaction of the text (B), written after 963. Therefore, the Slavic translation dates back to merely several decades later than the original Greek version (i.e., incidentally, soon after Maria's death). According to numerous scholars, the Slavic translation is unusually faithful to the original, preserving a version of the text that is closer to the protograph than some of the extant Byzantine copies²⁴.

²² On the subject of this work, see: K. Marinow, *Kilka uwag na temat ideologiczno-eschatologicznej wymowy "Bułgarskiej kroniki apokryficznej"*, FE 4.6/7, 2007, pp. 61–75; D. Češmedžiev, *Buľgarska tradycja państwowa w apokryfach: car Piotr w "Buľgarskiej kronice apokryficznej"*, transl. Ł. Mysielski, [in:] *Biblia Slavorum Apocryphorum. Novum Testamentum*, ed. G. Mińczew, M. Skowronek, I. Petrov, Łódź 2009, pp. 139–147; M. Каймакамова, *Значението на български апокрифен летопис (XI в.) като извор за ранносредновековната българска култура*, [in:] *Stephanos Archaeologicos in honorem Professoris Stephae Angelova*, ed. К. Рабаджиев, София 2010, pp. 593–612; И. Билярски, *Сказание на Исаия пророка и формирането на политическата идеология на ранносредновековна България*, София 2011 [= I. Bilarsky, *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, Leiden–Boston 2013]; M. Каймакамова, *Власт и история в средновековна България (VII–XIV в.)*, София 2011, pp. 183–216; V. Таркова-Заимова, A. Милтенова, *Historical and Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria*, Sofia 2011, pp. 274–300.

²³ Д. И. Полювынный, *Царь Петр в исторической памяти болгарского средневековья*, [in:] *Средновековният българин и "другите". Сборник в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. дин Петър Ангелов*, ed. А. Николов, Г. Н. Николов, София 2013, p. 139.

²⁴ А. П. Каждан, *Хроника Симеона...*, p. 126; W. Swoboda, *Kontynuacja Georgiosa...*, p. 468; M. Каймакамова, *Българска...*, pp. 170–171; A. Brzóstkowska, *Kroniki...*, pp. 64–66.

Interestingly enough, another translation of the *Chronicle of Symeon Logothete* (vel *Continuation of George the Monk*), entirely independent from the translation discussed above, was produced in the 14th century in the South Slavic area. It was based on the older redaction of the Byzantine chronicle (A), covering events until 948. In the manuscripts of this translation, the work is unequivocally ascribed to Symeon Logothete²⁵. Again, the fragments of the source referring to Peter and Maria Lekapene were rendered particularly faithfully, free from abbreviations or editorial interpolations²⁶.

The Bulgarian translation of the *Chronicle of John Zonaras* (from the second half of the 12th century) and especially the 14th century Serbian redaction can hardly be considered complete. In the manuscripts containing the most extensive version of the Slavic text, we encounter a lacuna between the reign of Leo VI (886–912) and that of Basil II (976–1025)²⁷. Looking for direct references to Peter's times, therefore, we would be searching them in vain. Interestingly, some information about Peter and Maria was included into the synopsis of John Zonaras' work by the anonymous author of the manuscript PHБ, F.IV.307, containing a fourteenth-century Slavic translation of the chronicle of Symeon Logothetes²⁸.

Remarks about Maria Lekapene and Peter can also be found in several Old Russian historiographical sources which were dependent content-wise, and sometimes even textologically, on Slavic translations of Byzantine chronicles. Thus, the highly detailed description of the events of 927 as well as the passage on Maria's later visits to Constantinople – *de facto* re-edited fragments of the *Continuation of George the Monk*

²⁵ Г. Острогорский, *Славянский перевод хроники Симеона Логофета*, SK 5, 1932, pp. 17–37; А.П. Каждан, *Хроника...*, p. 130; W. Swoboda, *Symeon Logotheta*, [in:] SSS, vol. V, pp. 506–507; М. Каймакова, *Българска...*, pp. 187–188; Т. Тодоров, *България...*, pp. 155–156; idem, *Владетелският...*, p. 98; A. Brzostkowska, *Kroniki...*, p. 66.

²⁶ Symeon Logothete (Slavic), pp. 136–137, 140.

²⁷ О.В. Творогов, *Паралипомен Зонары: текст и комментарий*, [in:] *Летописи и хроники. Новые исследования. 2009–2010*, ed. О.А. Новикова, Москва–Санкт-Петербург 2010, pp. 3–101.

²⁸ John Zonaras (Slavic), pp. 146, 156, 159.

– were weaved into the text of the *Hellenic and Roman Chronicle* of the second redaction²⁹. The latter is a monumental relic of Rus' historiography of the late Middle Ages, compiled prior to 1453 on the basis of native accounts as well as Byzantine sources acquired in the East Slavic area (e.g. the *Chronicle of George the Monk* and the *Chronicle of John Malalas*)³⁰. Three short notes about Lekapene and her husband, based i.a. on the Bulgarian glosses to the Slavic translation of the *Chronicle of Constantine Manasses* (14th century)³¹, can also be found in two (interrelated) 16th-century Russian compilations which contain an extensive history of the world: the *Russian Chronograph* of 1512 and the *Nikon Chronicle*³².

In the context of examining the titulature of Peter and Maria, as well as of the position of the tsaritsa at the Preslavian court, the sphragistic material may provide us with important information. It is beyond any doubt that, during the period 927–945, tsar Peter was depicted on official seals accompanied by his spouse. A relatively high number of artifacts of this kind have survived to our times. Ivan Yordanov, a specialist in medieval Bulgarian and Byzantine sigillography, divided them into three types³³:

- I. *Peter and Maria – basileis/emperors of the Bulgarians* (after 927)
 - a depiction of Peter and Maria is found on the reverse. The tsar is shown on the left-hand side of the composition, the tsaritsa

²⁹ *Hellenic and Roman Chronicle*, pp. 497–498, 501; Z. A. Brzowska, *The Image of Maria Lekapene, Peter and the Byzantine-Bulgarian Relations Between 927 and 969 in the Light of Old Russian Sources*, Pbg 41.1, 2017, pp. 50–51.

³⁰ Т. В. Анисимова, *Хроника Георгия Амартола в древнерусских списках XIV–XVII вв.*, Москва 2009, pp. 9–10, 235–253; Т. Вилкул, *Літопис і хронограф. Студії з домонгольського київського літописання*, Київ 2015, pp. 372–387.

³¹ *Среднеболгарский перевод Хроники Константина Манассии в славянских литературах*, ed. Д. С. Лихачев, И. С. Дуйчев, София 1988, pp. 232, 237.

³² М. А. Салмина, *Хроника Константина Манассии как источник Русского хронографа*, ТОДРА 32, 1978, pp. 279–287; А. А. Турилов, *К вопросу о болгарских источниках Русского хронографа*, [in:] *Летописи и хроники. Сборник статей*, Москва 1984, pp. 20–24 [= *Межславянские культурные связи эпохи Средневековья и источниковедение истории и культуры славян. Этюды и характеристики*, Москва 2012, pp. 704–708].

³³ There are also some atypical artefacts. Cf. И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните български печати*, София 2016, pp. 269–271.

on the right (from the viewer's perspective). Both are portrayed in the official court dress of Byzantine emperors: Peter wearing stemma and divitision, Maria wearing stemma of female type, divitision and loros. The Bulgarian rulers are holding between them a double-crossed patriarchal cross, which ends with a small globe at the lower end. They are grasping it at the same height. The inscription presents them as the *basileis* of the Bulgarians: Πέτρος καὶ Μαρίας βασιλεῖς τῶν Βουλγάρων³⁴.

- II. *Peter and Maria – autocrators/augusti and basileis of the Bulgarians* (940s) – the depiction of the tsar and his spouse on the reverse does not differ fundamentally from the one described above. Peter's crown has clearly visible plates on the front hoop and pendants; the divitisions are different; the hands of two rulers are represented below the globe at the end of the patriarchal cross. Because of the poor state of preservation of all specimens of this type, the accompanying writing can be reconstructed in several ways: Πέτρος καὶ Μαρίας ἐν Χριστῷ αὐτοκράτορες Βουλγάρων (*Peter and Maria in Christ Autocrators of the Bulgarians*); Πέτρος καὶ Μαρίας ἐν Χριστῷ αὐγουστοὶ βασιλεῖς (*Peter and Maria in Christ augusti and basileis*); Πέτρος καὶ Μαρίας ἐν Χριστῷ αὐτοκράτορες βασιλεῖς Βουλγάρων (*Peter and Maria in Christ autocrators and basileis of the Bulgarians*). According to numerous scholars, the second interpretation should be considered correct; on the other hand, in his most recent publications, Ivan Yordanov is inclined to accept the third reading³⁵.

³⁴ И. Йорданов, *Корпус на печатите на Средновековна България*, София 2001, pp. 58–59; В. Гюзелев, *Значението...*, p. 27; И. Божилов, В. Гюзелев, *История на средновековна България. VII–XIV в.*, София 2006, p. 275; И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните...*, pp. 86–89. All seal inscriptions in this book quoted as reconstructed by Ivan Yordanov.

³⁵ J. Shepard, *A marriage...*, pp. 141–143; Г. Атанасов, *Инсигниите на средновековните български владетели. Корони, скиптри, сфери, оръжия, костюми, накити*, Плевен 1999, pp. 98–99; И. Йорданов, *Корпус на печатите...*, pp. 59–60; В. Гюзелев, *Значението...*, p. 27; И. Божилов, В. Гюзелев, *История...*, pp. 275–276; Т. Тодоров, *България...*, pp. 156–159; idem, *Владетелският*

III. *Peter and Maria, pious basileis/emperors* (940–50s) – on the reverse of the *sigillum*, we find a depiction of Peter and Maria, portrayed similarly as in the previous types. There are also certain differences: in Peter's crown, which has pendants again; in the details of the divitisions. The couple is holding a cross – the tsar from the left, the tsaritsa from the right side. However, contrary to the seal images of type I and II, the hands of the monarchs are placed at different heights. In the majority of cases, the tsar's hand is higher; however, there are also examples in which it is Maria who is holding the cross above her husband's hand. This is the largest group of seals of a Bulgarian ruler. Over eighty-eight specimens struck with unknown number of boulloteria, but in any case more than a dozen, are documented. One of specimens (No 142) in the blank is silver and therefore the seal is an argyrobulla. The most characteristic feature of this group is that Peter and Maria are represented, but the inscription refers only to Peter, calling him a pious emperor: Πέτρος βασι[λεὺς] εὐσ[εβ]ής³⁶.

Three other types of seals exist (IV–VI); these depict and mention in the inscription the tsar alone. According to some scholars, the sphragistic material of this type was created already after Maria Lekapene's death, i.e. during the 963–969 period:

IV. *Peter, emperor of the Bulgarians* (Πέτρος βασιλεὺς Βουλγάρων) – bust of the ruler facing. On his head, a low crown (stemma) surmounted with a cross and pendants hanging from it ending with three large pearls. He wears divitision and loros and holds (r. hand) a globus cruciger.

статут..., pp. 99–101; С. Георгиева, *Жената в българското средновековие*, Пловдив 2011, pp. 313–315; M. J. Leszka, K. Marín, *Carstwo bułgarskie. Polityka – społeczeństwo – gospodarka – kultura, 866–971*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 159–160; И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните...*, pp. 90–95.

³⁶ J. Shepard, *A marriage...*, pp. 143–146; И. Йорданов, *Корпус на печатите...*, pp. 60–63; В. Гюзелев, *Значението...*, p. 27; И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните...*, pp. 95–110.

- V. *Peter, despotes* (Πέτρος δεσπότης) – facing bust of the ruler. On his head, a low crown surmounted with a cross and pendants hanging at either side. All facial features are visible. The ruler has a rounded beard and wears divitision and loros. The new unusual elements in this type of seals are the mirror-reversed inscription, the incomplete (abbreviated) name of the ruler and his title despotes. This type falls into two groups.
- VI. *Peter, tsesar [i.e. emperor] of the Bulgarians* (Петръ цисаръ Българомъ) – facing bust of the ruler. On his head, stemma surmounted with cross and pendants hanging at either side of his face. He wears divitision and loros and holds (r. hand) globus surmounted with double-crossed patriarchal cross. The seals fall in two groups: an original bronze die and lead seals³⁷.

The relics characterised above do not exhaust the source material in which we may find information about our protagonists. Other, not yet mentioned here accounts and artefacts will be presented later in this volume.

2. Literature on the Subject

Due to lack of space, we will omit the overview of the academic literature, and only draw attention to several works that have been particularly useful in writing of this monograph. Among these, the works of Todor R. Todorov³⁸ occupy a special place, as the newest and the most original take on the political history of Bulgaria in Peter's times. Of considerable

³⁷ И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните...*, pp. 110–119.

³⁸ Т. Тодоров, *България...* (regrettably, this work is not available in print); *иде м, Владетелският...*, *passim*; *иде м, Вътрешнодинастичният проблем в България от края на 20-те–началото на 30-те години на Х в.*, *Истор* 3, 2008, pp. 263–279.

interest are the works of Vassil N. Zlatarski³⁹, Vassil Gyuzelev and Ivan Bozhilov⁴⁰, Plamen Pavlov⁴¹, Angel Nikolov⁴², Ivan Yordanov⁴³ or John V.A. Fine⁴⁴. The texts of Jonathan Shepard⁴⁵ and Vassil Gyuzelev⁴⁶ in particular are of fundamental importance for the study of the history and role of Maria Lekapene. Regarding the religious matters, including ecclesiastical organisation, the most crucial were the works of Bistra Nikolova⁴⁷. Regarding matters of culture, one should point at the very least to the works of Riccardo Picchio⁴⁸, Dimitri Obolensky⁴⁹, Miliana Kaymakamova⁵⁰, and the monumental works *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедия*⁵¹ and the *История на българската средновековна литература*⁵², which include papers by the most outstanding scholars;

³⁹ В.И. Златарски, *История на българската държава през средните векове*, vol. I/2, *Първо българско Царство. От славянизацията на държавата до падането на Първото царство (852–1018)*, София 1927.

⁴⁰ И. Божилков, В. Гюзелев, *История...*, *passim*.

⁴¹ П. Павлов, *Векът на цар Самуил*, София 2014; *idem*, *Година на мир и "ратни беди" (927–1018)*, [in:] Г. Атанасов, В. Вачкова, П. Павлов, *Българска национална история*, vol. III, *Първо българско царство (680–1018)*, Велико Търново 2015, pp. 403–479.

⁴² А. Николов, *Политическа...*, *passim*.

⁴³ И. Йорданов, *Корпус на средновековните...*, *passim*.

⁴⁴ J.V.A. Fine, *A Fresh Look at Bulgaria under Tsar Peter I (927–69)*, *ByzS* 5, 1978, pp. 88–95; *idem*, *The Early Medieval Balkans: a Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century*, Ann Arbor 1983.

⁴⁵ J. Shepard, *A marriage...*, *passim*.

⁴⁶ В. Гюзелев, *Значението...*, *passim*.

⁴⁷ Б. Николова, *Православните църкви през българското средновековие (IX–XIV)*, София 2002; *е а d e m*, *Монашество, манастири и манастирски живот в средновековна България*, vol. I, *Манастирите*, vol. II, *Монасите*, София 2010; *е а d e m*, *Устройство и управление на българската православна църква (IX–XIV в.)*, ²София 2017.

⁴⁸ See the collected papers of this author in a Bulgarian translation: *Православното Славянство и старобългарската културна традиция*, transl. А. Джамбелука-Коссова, София 1993.

⁴⁹ D. Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1453*, New York 1971.

⁵⁰ М. Каймакова, *Българска...*

⁵¹ *Кирило-методиевска енциклопедия*, vol. I–IV, София 1985–2003.

⁵² *История на българската средновековна литература*, ed. А. Милтенова, София 2009.

for military matters, the books of Dimitar Angelov, Stephan Kashev and Boris Cholpanov are of the greatest interest⁵³. Regarding the characterisation of the geographic location and the resulting conditions for the development of the historical Bulgarian state during the discussed period, we relied on the two largest monographs devoted to the physical geography of Bulgaria: the work edited by Kiril Mishev⁵⁴, and the newest encyclopaedia by Svetlin Kiradzhiev⁵⁵. Where the matters of economy and relics of material culture are concerned, we have made use of the numerous studies presenting the results of archaeological research⁵⁶. We will limit ourselves to mentioning only the general works – multi-author monograph edited by Dimitar Angelov⁵⁷ and Lyuben Berov⁵⁸, and the works by Nikola Mavrodinov⁵⁹, Krastyu Miyatev⁶⁰, Stanko Vaklinov⁶¹, Totyu Totev⁶²,

⁵³ Д. Ангелов, С. Кашев, Б. Чолпанов, *Българска военна история от античността до втората четвърт на Х в.*, София 1983; Д. Ангелов, Б. Чолпанов, *Българска военна история през средновековието (Х–ХV в.)*, София 1994.

⁵⁴ *География на България в три тома*, vol. III, *Физико-географско и социално-икономическо*, ed. К. Мишев, София 1989.

⁵⁵ С. Кираджиев, *Енциклопедичен географски речник на България*, София 2013.

⁵⁶ See also some of the general works – Т. Тотев, *Тридесет години археологически разкопки в Преслав*, Архе 16.3, 1974, pp. 48–60; С. Ваклинов, *Плиска за тридесет години*, Архе 16.3, 1974, pp. 28–38; Г. Джингов, *Археологически проучвания на поселищния живот в средновековна България*, Век 8.3, 1979, pp. 48–56; Р. Василев, *Проучванията на славянските археологически паметници от Северна България от края на VI до края на Х в.*, Архе 21.3, 1979, pp. 12–22; Д. Овчаров, *Българската средновековна археология през последните десет години (1974–1984)*, Архе 26.4, 1984, pp. 46–61; А. Роров, *La ville médiévale bulgare d'après les recherches archéologiques*, BHR 12.1, 1984, pp. 63–73, specifically pp. 63–66.

⁵⁷ *История на България в четиринадесет тома*, т. II: *Първа българска държава*, ed. Д. Ангелов, София 1981.

⁵⁸ *Стопанска история на България 681–1981*, ed. Л. Беровет al., София 1981.

⁵⁹ Н. Мавродинов, *Старобългарското изкуство. Изкуството на Первото българско царство*, София 2013 (a new edition of the 1959 book).

⁶⁰ К. Миятев, *Архитектурата в средновековна България*, София 1965.

⁶¹ S. Waklinow, *Kultura starobulgarska (VI–XI w.)*, transl. K. Wierzbicka, Warszawa 1984.

⁶² Т. Тотев, *Преславската култура и изкуство през IX–X век. Студии и статии*, София 2000; idem, *Great Preslav*, Sofia 2001.

Liliana Simeonova⁶³, Rasho Rashev⁶⁴, and Deyan Rabovyanov⁶⁵, or the newest take on the development of the Bulgarian economy in the early mediaeval period by Ivan Biliarsky and Plamen Pavlov⁶⁶. The research series *Pliska–Preslav*, *Corpus Preslav* and *Preslavian Literary School*⁶⁷ are also of great importance.



⁶³ Л. Симеонова, *Пътуване към Константинопол. Търговия и комуникации в Средиземноморския свят (края на IX – 70-те години на XI в.)*, София 2006.

⁶⁴ Р. Рашев, *Българската езическа култура VII–IX в.*, София 2009.

⁶⁵ Д. Рабовянов, *Извънстоличните каменни крепости на Първото българско царство (IX – началото на XI век)*, София 2011.

⁶⁶ И. Билиарски, *Фискална система на средновековна България*, Пловдив 2010; П. Павлов, *Стопанско развитие на Първото българско царство*, [in:] И. Тютюнджиев, М. Палангурски, А. Костов, И. Лазаров, П. Павлов, И. Русев, *Стопанска история на България*, Велико Търново 2011, pp. 14–21.

⁶⁷ ППРЕ 1–12; Пр.Сб 1–7; ПКШ 1–17.