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BETWEEN THE PENCHANT FOR STUDY AND SERVING SOCIETY:  
CONSTANTIN ERBICEANU'S THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT ATHENS  
(1865-1868)  
(Summary)

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Both theologian and historian, Constantin Erbiceanu came into the public attention with his investigation on the Phanariote regime that had long been criticised especially by the historians of the 1848. He is a pioneer of professional studies dedicated to that exotic epoch of the Romanian Principalities and the first scholar who partially refused his predecessors' ideological redundancy.

Constantin Erbiceanu had graduated in 1858 from the Socola Theological Seminary (Iași) and then from the Faculty of Theology of the local university (1860-1864). At the end of 1864, he was leaving to Athens with a scholarship granted by the Romanian State to specialize in the field of theology at the University of Athens, so that, at his return home, he could contribute to the progress of the local society.

At the University of Athens, Constantin Erbiceanu proved to be a model student, very patient, at the same time, with the new environment he joined, a complicated and not very effective one. He heard, among other classes in Theology, the Greek history and literature classes of Professors K. Paparrigopoulos and K. Asopios, who drew him nearer to the topics of modern Hellenism, but at the same time he improved his Greek, the essential instrument for his later undertakings, where he neutralized most of the ideological load we can find at his contemporaries as far as the Phanariote regime was concerned.

This historiographical approach that Constantin Erbiceanu undertook cannot be imagined without taking into account the experience he acquired in the field of the Greek letters on the occasion of that scholarship. Though C. Erbiceanu minimized the influence of the studies pursued in Athens on his historiographical results, one cannot deny the part that his training in the Hellenic environment and his studies in the fields of the Greek language, literature and history played, granting him a clear advantage over other Romanian researchers of such a complicated period, when the usage of the Greek language was almost entirely lost.

In our paper, we will try to approach the stage of his studies in Athens, synthesizing, as much as possible here, the aspects of his training with all component stages: the educational background in the country, the obtaining of the scholarship, the attempts to extend the grant, and the finality of his studies in Athens.

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