

**Contributions to the Early History  
of the St. Spyridon Monastery of Iași**  
(Abstract)

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Hidden behind the massive brick gate tower amongst the trees in the yard, the church of the former St. Spyridon monastery goes almost unnoticed by passers-by. Few know it is the church of the monastery under whose patronage the oldest and largest hospital establishment in Moldavia ran for a century and a half. We might expect to find out more about it in history books, of all places – a dashed hope, for even historians, distracted by the hospital's social importance, forsook the monastery in their studies, despite its fundamental role in the hospital establishment's existence. This is why the monastery's history is quasi-unknown, while what we do know is often warped by wrong interpretations of the sources. Our goal in the present study is to re-discuss the stereotypes regarding the monastery's founding history. Most of these stereotypes were started by the hospital's administrative staff and the clergy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and were supported by Gh. Băileanu, the author of the first monograph on St. Spyridon's monastery's hospital establishments.

Upon critical examination, the documents clearly show, no pedantic explanations needed, that Ștefan Bosie was not the only monastery founder and that his foundational plans were no older than the spring of 1750, when he promised Constantin Racoviță to build a church dedicated to St. Spyridon on the Zlodica estate. The monastery's patron saint was not borrowed from a pre-existing chapel or place of worship, but was chosen by Ștefan Bosie himself the year *St. Spyridon's Canon* was printed in Iași, probably at Constantin Mavrocordat's suggestion, as the prince apparently had a penchant for this healing saint. Moreover, Ștefan Bosie cannot be considered the hospital founder – this is the work of several Moldavian princes, starting with Constantin Racoviță, who

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founded it, continuing with Ioan Th. Calimah and Grigore III Ghica, who built and opened it. The hypothesis of the existence of a plague lazaretto at the Pietrărie Hill outside Iași (Tărățâ's skete) earlier than its foundation in 1761 by Ioan Th. Calimah is also not confirmed. Last but not least, the author shows that the hospital was founded on St. Spyridon monastery grounds while its construction was still underway (only the church had been erected) due to the fact that it was the only Iași monastery not dedicated to the Holy Places.