The presented publication includes the edition and translation of a chronicle by George Sphrantzes into the modern Serbian language. The chronicle is one of the most important historiographical sources for the late Byzantine Empire period. The author of the translation and the extensive scholarly commentary is Mladen Stanković – a Serbian legal historian, the author of, among others, the biography of the Empress Helena Dragash, the mother of the last Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI Palaiologos.

The work by George Sphrantzes was included in this paper in its short edition, containing an account of the events of 1413–1477 (the so-called Chronicon Minus). The basis for the edition and translation was the publication: Georgios Sphrantzes, Memorii 1401–1477, ed. V. Greco, București 1966 [= Scriptores Byzantini, 5]. While working on the text, the author of the translation also used two other editions of the source: the classic edition of J.–P. Migne, included in volume 156 of Patrologia Graeca (col. 1023–1080, Paris 1886) and a newer one, prepared by Riccardo Maisano within the series of Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae (vol. 29, Rome 1990).

The original Greek text of the source and its Serbian translation (p. 33–216) are presented in parallel, with an extensive scholarly commentary including, among others, the attempt to identify all the people and places found in the text of the chronicle, the possible exact dates of events, explanations of potentially unclear terms, as well as additional historical information allowing for a more complete reception of the work.

The text of the source is preceded by the editor’s introduction (p. 7–32), presenting the figure of George Sphrantzes and his work. Here we can find the information about the most important facts about the Byzantine author. A lot of attention was devoted to the description of the source and the textological dependence between his short wording, Chronicon Minus, widely recognized as the primary variant of the chronicle, and, at the same time, an authentic work of George Sphrantzes, and the so-called Chronicon Maius – a later historiographic compilation attributed to Sphrantzes, covering the period 1258–1478, which was created most probably in the second half of the 16th century by Macarius Melissenos (Melissourgos), Metropolitan of Monemvasia. Moreover, all manuscripts known to the author containing the text of Chronicon Minus and its modern editions and translations into modern European languages were discussed.

The publication also contains a number of annexes. Without any doubt, the most important of these is the Serbian translation of a fragment of Chronicon Maius (p. 217–264) by Macarius Melissenos (Melissourgos), containing a comprehensive account of the siege of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks, covering the period from 2nd April to 29th May, 1453 (fragments of Book III, 3–13). The text of the source includes a commentary.

In the final part of the book the publisher included a list of 15th-century Byzantine emperors, Turkish sultans, despotst of Morea and the rulers of Serbia, along with the dates of their reigns, a list of the patriarchs of Con-

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The presented book is most likely the last, published postmortem, publication of Jaroslav N. Ščapov (1928–2011). He was a Russian historian and a distinguished specialist in the research of the spiritual culture of Rus’ during the 9th to 14th centuries. The book is the result of several years of the author’s academic interests, focused on the issue of old-Russian law as well as its relationship with Byzantine jurisprudence. It is worth noting that already in the 1970s Jaroslav N. Ščapov published two extensive academic monographs devoted to the legislation of Russian princes in the 11th to 14th centuries. The aim of these so-called ustavs was to establish the legal frames for the functioning of Church organization in Rus’.

The purpose of the publication is to familiarise the reader with the old-Russian translation of the Ecloga – a Byzantine legal code with a strictly secular nature, promulgated – according to the Introduction in the work of Jaroslav N. Ščapov – by Leo III and his son Constantine V in 726 or 741. The Ecloga is widely considered to be the first, after Justinian’s Corpus Iuris Civilis, mediaeval collection of East Roman law.

Taking into account the amount of source material and the specific nature of the existing research on the Ecloga, the author of the book rightly excluded from the scope of his work the so-called Law for Judging People (Законъ сѫдуныи людьмь) – the oldest Slavic collection of secular court law, based on the provisions of

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ЯРОСЛАВ Н. ЩАПОВ, Византийская «Эклога законов» в русской письменной традиции. Исследование, издание текстов и комментарий, Издательство Олега Абышко, Санкт-Петербург 2011, pp. 240.

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4 И. Медведев, op. cit., p. 216.