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Preface

The 13th issue of *Icoana Credinței (Icon of Faith), International Journal of Interdisciplinary Scientific Research (IFIJISR)* encompasses a group of articles on various subjects, dedicated to the areas of Theology, History and Religion.

The opening paper is: *ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN AND HIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF SEEING THE DIVINE LIGHT*, by Fr. PhD. Ioan CHIRILĂ, Ph.D. Stelian PAȘCA-TUȘA, Ph.D. Bogdan ȘOPTERAN. Authors present the personality of Saint Symeon, one of the most representative Eastern theologians and mystics. Saint Symeon has been perceived as a renewer of the tradition of spiritual life and a restorer of the lost or rather neglected spiritual life. The central idea of study is the experiences of the sight of divine light. The next paper belonging to Rev. Prof. PhD. Charles NDHLOVU, is *GOD'S SELF-COMMUNICATION IN HISTORY*. God's communication in history finds fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

Fr. Prof. Ph.D. Leontin POPESCU signs the paper: *DEATH IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD*. The author presents the contemporary problem of death, illness, and suffering that are experienced as danger: a threat to one's own physical, psychological, and social identity. And what accompanies all these, particularly paralyzing from a spiritual perspective, is fear; the dread that all is lost, that things cannot be controlled by means of medicine, only to reach the greatest angst: the fear of death. The subsequent paper signed by Fr. Prof. PhD. Mădălin-Ștefan PETRE, bears the title: *A FUNDAMENTAL LANDMARK OF ESCHATOLOGY: THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE UNCREATED AND CREATED, EXCEPT INCOMPATIBILITY OF THEIR COMMUNION*. Orthodox eschatology is based on the one hand, on the affirmation of the clear distinction between the uncreated nature of God and the created nature of His creatures, and, on the other hand, on the possibility of their union through divine Grace. The next article unfolded by Ph.D. Candidate Florin ȘTEFAN, is entitled: *THE PURPOSE OF THE WILDERNESS AND CELL IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SHAPING OF THE MONK*. In fact, the main purpose of this article is to present the psychological and practical significance of the retreat of anchorites in the desert and in the cell, respectively, proving, at the same time, that loneliness is for the Fathers of the desert, the element without which it would not have achieved so much spiritual performance in the inner space.

Adjunct lecturer PhD. Vasileios TSIOTRAS, signs the research novel paper: *EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN IAKOVOS ARGEIOS'S ORATION ADDRESSED TO CONSTANTINE BASSARABA (1708)*. Iakovos Argeios, authored in 1708 a lengthy encomiastic oration in honour of John Constantine Bassaraba Brancoveanu, the prince of Wallachia. This oration remained almost totally unknown to researchers. The main purpose of the article is to edit this interesting text, to give the opportunity for studying not only its content but also its connection with the political situation and the educational program of the Patriarchal Academy. Lastly, PhD. Elena GHEORGHE signs the paper *ROMANIAN RELIGION AND CUSTOMS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 19TH CENTURY IN THE VISION OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS*. Abundance of travelogues and testimonies on the Romanian Lands of this period represents the consequence of the international reactivation of the struggle for emancipation and national liberation of peoples from Balkans.

All the studies presented in this issue 13/2021 of *Icoana Credinței* have a major focus for our academic life and explore different items on contemporary spiritual life.

January 2021,

Fr.Prof.PhD. Marian BUGIULESCU

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ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN AND HIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF SEEING THE DIVINE LIGHT

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ABSTRACT

Saint Symeon is one of the most representative Eastern theologians and mystics. His speech on God and the knowledge of heavenly realities through direct, unmitigated experience would gain him the title of “the New Theologian”, which, until him, had only belonged to Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. Therefore, his writings have greatly influenced the Christian East. Saint Symeon has been perceived as a renewer of the tradition of spiritual life and a restorer of the lost or rather neglected spiritual life. In this study, we aim to highlight his experiences in which he partook of the sight of divine light. These mystical episodes marked his life and decisively influenced the way he related to God and to the spiritual life to which Christians must adhere. We will first present these experiences of heavenly light from a chronological point of view, starting with those from the period when he was a layman and culminating with those from Saint Mamas Monastery. Our main aim is to see how each of these mystical experiences has marked his spiritual evolution. We will see that these experiences have helped Saint Symeon reach deeper within the mystery of communion to the One Who is Light and Who is calling everyone to be like Him.

Keywords: divine light; Symeon Studite; mystical experience; unmitigated sight; communion; theologisation;

INTRODUCTION

From Niketas Stethatos' biography, we find out that Saint Symeon the New Theologian came from a noble family and that, ever since he was a child, he was drawn towards meditation. While the other children of his age were playing, he preferred to engross himself in his studies. He thoroughly studied tachygraphy and grammar, without attaching much importance to profane Hellenic culture or rhetoric, as he was searching for other things. His family was foreseeing a great destiny for him in various positions at the palace, but he was striving toward a monastic life ever since he was a child. Therefore, at only fourteen, he tried to retire to the Monastery of Stoudios and settle under the guidance of Symeon the Pious, the advanced spiritual father who would mark his entire life. Bearing in mind his youth and the experience he had gained during his years of spiritual guidance; the old spiritual father recommended the young Symeon to wait a little longer.

Even if he was not accepted, he obeyed, went back home, and followed a monastic lifestyle, while still living in the world. From the night to end, until dawn, he would pray fervidly to God and he would restrain his body to resist temptations. He also started to see the results of his perseverance in this askesis. His soul was freed from the material and was imbued with a strong love for God. The young man started to feel the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit in his life and understood that the Spirit was helping him understand the unintelligible.

Each of his mystical experiences helped him climb up the ladder of knowledge and get acquainted with God's depths. The first moment of partaking of divine glory opened his eyes towards a world he had heard of from his spiritual father, but which he had not yet seen. Embraced by the light of God's glory, he achieved a state of peace, in which the Spirit soothed him. Then, with each experience of seeing the heavenly light, he settled down in a state of unmitigated communion with God, in which he partook of numerous gifts of the Spirit. The apogee was reached during his life at Saint Mamas Monastery. After seeing the godly light, he acquired the gift of theologisation, through which Saint Symeon made God known and offered to those who longed to get closer to Him the necessary reference points for living in the light of His heavenly grace.

Therefore, in our research, we aim to highlight Saint Symeon's ascension towards Light, indicating the stages he goes through in each mystical experience in which he sees the uncreated light shining forth from God's Being. The source texts we will use in our endeavours belong to Saint Symeon¹ and his disciple, St. Niketas Stethatos². Most of the time, we will analyse them side by side to capture their complementarity.

When we deal with the description of the same mystical experience, we will also explain the differences, which are mostly influenced by the context in which these testimonies were written. Besides these main sources, we will also use secondary sources, in which famous theologians such as Ioan I. Ică jr.³, Ilarion Alfeyev⁴ or Basil Krivocheine⁵ underlined aspects which are related to Saint Symeon's theology and mystic. As far as the structure of our research is concerned, we would like to mention that we will present his mystical experiences from a chronological point of view, starting with two experiences from his period as a layman, then continuing with the sight of the light during his life at the Monastery of Stoudios and with his experiences at Saint Mamas Monastery.

¹ ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scriveri I. Discursuri teologice și etice* [Writings I. Theological and Ethical Discourses], transl. by Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis publishing house, Sibiu, 2001; ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scriveri II. Cateheze* [Writings II. Catecheses], transl. by Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis publishing house, Sibiu, 2003.

² ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon Noul Teolog* [The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian], transl. by Ilie Iliescu, Herald publishing house, Bucharest, 2003; ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, "Viața și conduita Sfântului Simeon Noul Teolog" [The Life and Conduct of Saint Symeon the New Theologian], in ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scriveri IV. Viața și epoca* [Writings IV. The Life. The Epoch], transl. by Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis publishing house, Sibiu, 2006.

³ Ioan I. ICĂ jr., "Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog și provocarea mistică" [Saint Symeon the New Theologian and the Mystical Challenge], in ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scriveri I. Discursuri teologice și etice* [Writings I. Theological and Ethical Discourses], transl. by Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis publishing house, Sibiu, 2001.

⁴ HILARION ALFEYEV, *Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog și tradiția ortodoxă* [Saint Symeon the New Theologian and Orthodox Tradition], transl. by Ioana Stoicescu and Maria-Magdalena Rusen, Sofia publishing house, Bucharest, 2010.

⁵ BASIL KRIVOCHINE, *În lumina lui Hristos. Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog (949-1022). Viața – Spiritualitatea – Învățătura* [In the Light of Christ. Saint Simeon the New Theologian (949-1022): Life, Spirituality, Doctrine], transl. by Vasile Leb, Gheorghe Iordan, the publishing house of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1997.

1. THE FIRST EXPERIENCE OF SEEING THE GODLY LIGHT DURING HIS PERIOD AL LAYMAN

Saint Symeon had his first experience of seeing the godly light one night when he was a layman. God revealed Himself to Symeon in the darkness of the night, enveloping him in the light of His grace. The event and the state in which the young Symeon entered were later described by his disciple, St. Niketas Stethatos, to whom he recounted in detail what happened when he saw God in that bright light which enveloped him: “One night, while praying and while his pure mind was connected to God, Symeon saw a light from above, suddenly shining down on him from heavens – a strong and pure light, overflowing everything and shining as if in broad daylight. He too was illuminated by this radiance and it seemed [to Symeon, the translator’s emphasis] that the entire house, along with the room in which he was standing, had vanished in the blink of an eye and that he was being lifted into the air, completely forgetting about his body.”⁶ [our translation]. Saint Symeon would later confess to his dear ones that, in that state, he was overwhelmed with infinite happiness, one which he had never felt before on earth. This thrill of happiness overwhelmed him to such an extent that he could no longer contain the tears which were continuously flowing down his face. Saint Symeon was not used to this way of experiencing heavenly light. For this reason, he had been astounded and did not know how to properly react in such situations. The first urge he felt was that of incessantly saying a short prayer, which was being used by monks who were striving to acquire the Jesus Prayer: *Lord, have mercy!*⁷. In such circumstances, when the mystic is overwhelmed by the sight of the divine, he utters words which are meant to maintain him in communion with God and within this wonderful vision. As the Heavenly Kingdom is a kingdom of sight, words are superfluous. The mystic who delights in divine light advances in knowledge, letting himself enveloped in light and remaining silent.

Saint Symeon realised he was uttering these words only after he had come to his senses, as, in the beginning, he was completely overwhelmed by the sight of divine light. “Therefore – according to St. Niketas Stethatos – in this light, he was able to see and behold, a sort of very bright cloud, without any form or outline, full of God’s ineffable glory, appeared high, in the sky. To the right of this cloud, he saw his spiritual [translator’s emphasis] father, Symeon Eulabes, standing in the clothes he usually wore, gazing intently at

⁶ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 18-19.

⁷ This short prayer is the synthesis of Hesychastic prayer (*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner*), which has two well-defined structures. The former summons God’s name and the latter asks for His mercy. Kallistos WARE, *Puterea numelui. Rugăciunea lui Iisus în spiritualitatea ortodoxă* [The Power of the Name: The Jesus Prayer in Orthodox Spirituality], transl. by Gabriela Moldoveanu, Christiana publishing house, Bucharest, 1992, pp. 26-27. Monks did not have to say the entire prayer. Everyone was free to utter only those words which suited their soul. Jean GOUILLARD, *Mica filocalie a rugăciunii inimii* [Small Philokalia on the Jesus Prayer], transl. by Ilie and Ecaterina Iliescu, Herald publishing house, Bucharest, 2008, pp. 44-45, 52, 94, 120. But it was important not to omit the first part of the prayer. The last part could miss, but the first one under no circumstances. The act of summoning the name was essential to reach an ecstatic state. Stelian PAȘCA-TUȘA, “Numele lui Dumnezeu semn al prezenței personale și acțiunea sa mântuitoare (sotirică)” [God’s Name as a Sign of His Presence and Saving Action], in *Studia Universitatis Babeș Bolyai. Theologia Orthodoxa*, No. 1 (2010), pp. 23-24. In their mystical ecstasy, some monks would only utter the name *Jesus*. Oliver CLÉMENT, *Rugăciunea lui Iisus* [The Jesus Prayer], transl. by Măriuca and Adrian Alexandrescu, the publishing house of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1997, p. 26. The second structure of the Jesus Prayer (invoking mercy) was necessary for the shunning of passions. As soon as the fallen man acknowledges his mistakes, God’s grace descends upon him, cleanses him of sin and prepares him to partake of the divine. For details, see Stelian PAȘCA-TUȘA, “Mila dumnezeiască și reînnoirea spirituală a regelui David” [Godly Mercy and King David’s Spiritual Renewal], in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Theologia Orthodoxa*, No. 2 (2011), pp. 51-66.

that divine light and praying serenely. Being in this state of ecstasy for a long time, Symeon could not tell whether, at that time, he was in his body or out of his body, as he later claimed.”⁸ [our translation]. This experience finds resonance in St. Paul’s confession to the Corinthians concerning the *man* who had been caught up in the third heaven. Just like the apostle, Saint Symeon was unaware of how his mystical ecstasy had occurred. Whether in the body? Whether out of the body? Only God knew! However, it is not this detail that is most important, but the experience of seeing the godly light. It is worth mentioning that, in his vision, he saw his teacher, who was partaking in the same vision. He too was overwhelmed by the sight of that light, which is why he was incessantly praying to remain in that state of communion⁹.

We would like to mention that Saint Symeon also relates this event to one of his catecheses. Choosing a pseudonym (George), the Saint speaks about himself in the third person. Unlike St. Niketas Stethatos, who claims that the vision occurred at the age of fourteen, Saint Symeon says that the *victory bearer* experienced it at the age of twenty. Before recounting this event, Symeon speaks about the moment when he met his spiritual father, who initiated him in the monastic life and practice, by offering him as guidance the writings of Saint Mark the Ascetic. He received this writing as if it were sent by God and he diligently started to apply the advice it contained. He started to persevere in prayer until midnight when he had this mystical experience¹⁰.

In his narration, Symeon provides several details concerning his askesis: “big tears were falling from his eyes every evening and he was kneeling even more often and falling with his face to the ground and, holding his legs close together while standing immobile, he was sobbingly reading his prayers to the Mother of God with so much zeal and, as if God Himself were physically there, he would fall before His most pure feet and, like the blind man, he would ask for compassion and for the ability to see with his soul. However, since the prayer lasted every evening until midnight [...] he did not falter or laze in any way, nor did he move any of his limbs or even turn his eyes or look away, but he would stand motionless, like a pillar or like a bodiless being”¹¹. [our translation]. These efforts were being made to receive the gift of divine sight. Once seen, the heavenly light which shines forth from God’s Being sows in man an endless yearning, leading the body to an unimaginable askesis. One who has partaken of such a sight can no longer find gratification in the light coming from the sun. Divine light can stand no comparison, as with it, the infinite joy of communion, which manifests itself through tears, finds dwelling within the soul.

In one of his discourses on the perception of the grace of the Holy Spirit, Symeon shows that, when one sees the unseen God, he sees Him as light, but does not realise Who the One revealing Himself was. He feels there is an alien presence but does not even dare to

⁸ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, p. 18-19.

⁹ St. Symeon the Studite appeared in the vision of the young ascetic, showing him that it was through his guidance that he had reached that spiritual stage and certifying the fact that his spiritual teacher had reached a high degree of holiness.

¹⁰ We would like to point to a difference between the narration of Saint Niketas and that of Saint Symeon himself. While the former claimed that the prayer and meditation lasted until dawn, the former said that his askesis continued until midnight. In this case, we are faced either with an exaggeration of Saint Niketas, since, as his apprentice, he was seeking to convey the best image of his spiritual father, or with a proof of humility on the part of Saint Symeon. Nonetheless, it is possible that this is a real confession, as Saint Symeon presented his experiences, without suggesting that he is the person concerned.

¹¹ ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scrieri II. Cateheze...*, pp. 238-239.

ask who it is; instead, he is amazed, contemplating what he sees. In the end, one who has had such an experience goes to a more seasoned person, to the one who has experienced such feelings and tells that person what he has seen. And that person confirms that it was God that he has seen, thus showing him that he is on the right track. And, receiving such words from the spiritual father, when one sees God again in the light, he dares to humbly ask Him: “My Lord, is that You?” And He answers: “Yes, it is Me, the God Who became a man for you; and I have made you as you see, and you shall become a god”¹². [our translation]. Most likely, here, Saint Symeon the New Theologian alludes to the first moments when he saw the uncreated divine light. The narration suggests that the spiritual father who guided him could confirm to him that it was a vision from God because he had previously experienced such visions.

2. THE SECOND MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE OF HIS YOUTH

Faith, hard askesis and the state of repentance made Symeon worthy of seeing the divine light. The Saint’s hard askesis prepared him both spiritually and physically for other mystical experiences. Through prayer and askesis, man sharpens his feelings and rises above the materiality of the world and takes care of most of the spiritual. However, the experience of seeing the divine light is not conditioned by these efforts; this can be seen only when God wishes so. Even if Saint Symeon prayed, exercised long rigorous self-discipline, and did not reduce the intensity of his askesis, he was surprised each time by the moment when God made him partake of His glory. The second vision of divine light followed the same pattern: “One day, while standing¹³ and uttering more with the mind than with the mouth: «God, have mercy on me, a sinner!», he was suddenly crowned by a divine radiance coming from above and filling up the entire place. And, when this happened, the young man no longer knew whether he was inside the house or under a roof. From everywhere he could see only light and he did not know whether he was still walking on earth. And, inside him, there was no longer the fear of falling, nor the care for the world, nothing of that which overcomes the people who have a body troubled his mind, but, being fully connected to the immaterial light and feeling that he had become light, he was flooded with tears of happiness and unspeakable joy. Then, his mind soared to heaven and he saw another light, clearer than the one which was close to him. And standing close to that light, that holy, angel-like elder [Symeon the Pious, emphasis added]¹⁴ who had given him the commandment and the book revealed himself to him.”¹⁵ [our translation].

During this new experience of seeing the heavenly light, we notice that Saint Symeon utters a prayer like the one from the first mystical ecstasy. From this, we can infer that the

¹² ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Cartea discursurilor etice...*, p. 245.

¹³ The saint narrates his experience in the third person.

¹⁴ After he became a hegumen at Mamas, every year Saint Symeon piously commemorated his spiritual master, even if the latter was not canonised or included in the calendar. Saint Symeon’s attitude can be understood if we bear in mind the fact that it was, he who had guided him towards such a spiritual level, he himself having a lot of experience, but especially if we think that God revealed to him that he was a saint. The first time he saw the divine light, he also saw him next to that cloud of light. From this, Symeon understood that his spiritual father was dwelling next to God, with the saints. These are only a few of the reasons why Saint Symeon organised a great ceremony to commemorate his spiritual father, Symeon the Pious. How could he not have venerated him when he saw him in the uncreated divine light, when he heard from God that he was an apostle of Christ while he was writing that letter to his father? ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața și conduita Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 295-307.

¹⁵ ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scrieri II. Cateheze...*, p. 239.

practice of the Jesus Prayer had an essential role in such experiences. These episodes of seeing the heavenly light could only be attained through considerable spiritual efforts. Even if there were exceptions concerning the first visions, in the case of the following ones, the saints had to make considerable efforts. We would like to mention once again that these experiences could not be acquired because of human askesis. The one offering these partaking of light to the mystic was God.

In the same catechesis, Saint Symeon would later insist on the fact that the partaking of light is the fruit of faith, confirmed through good deeds. The Saint confessed that he did not seek to partake of this kind of experience at all costs. He was striving to keep his conscience clean. However, his striving and his zeal for spiritual struggle would earn him great divine gifts. God does not consider the age, nor the fact that a longer period is necessary to make the faithful worthy of such mystical experiences. A short but very intense vigil is enough to attract God's mercy, to make Him pour down the grace of the Holy Spirit and to find the one who honestly seeks Him worthy of things which are so advanced.

The man struggles to reach communion with God, and He reveals Himself to him in light and gives him strength in this communion. As a result of this experience, in the light of divine glory, man no longer feels the materiality of the body, he becomes translucent¹⁶ and thus unites himself with God¹⁷.

When we have in mind the experience of divine light, it is necessary to consider the stage preceding it, the stage of ascetic practice, and the stage right after the light withdrew, when we can see. In this respect, St. Niketas Stethatos underscores the spiritual state which marked his spiritual guide, stating the following: "Much later, this light gradually faded, and he saw himself again in his body and his room, his heart full of unspeakable joy, while he was loudly calling out: «Lord, have mercy». His whole being was filled with a divine shudder and his face was soaked with tears which were sweeter than honeycomb and honey. From then on, he felt that his body became thinner and lighter, like a spiritual body, and this feeling lasted for a long time afterwards."¹⁸ [our translation]. Also, we determine from Saint Symeon what happened after he came back to his bodily senses and what happened right after that. The effect of seeing the light endured in his heart and gradually faded.

During this time, due to the joy he was feeling, he kept on shedding tears of happiness, which soothed his soul. When he fully came back to his senses, he sat on the bed and heard the rooster sing. He understood that it was already midnight and, no longer intending to go to sleep, he started to read the Psalms at Matins. These experiences provide both the soul and the body with a clear spiritual vigour. The body is awake, endowed with renewed strength to continue the ascent towards heaven through askesis. The fatigue, which often overwhelms monks, vanishes as if it had never existed so that the strength endowed upon him gives him the necessary framework to re-enter the state of communion with God¹⁹.

¹⁶ Translucence indicates the transparency of a person and reveals that person's union with God. The term indicates a level of spirituality in which the hypostases do not intermix. Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă* [Orthodox Dogmatic Theology], vol. 3, the publishing house of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1997, p. 16.

¹⁷ See ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scrieri II. Cateheze...*, p. 240.

¹⁸ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁹ ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scrieri II. Cateheze...*, pp. 239-240.

3. THE ROAD TO THE MONASTERY OF STODIOS AND HIS PAULINE EXPERIENCE

St. Niketas Stethatos continues by saying that, after this experience, young Symeon expressed again his desire to enter the monastery. He was once again advised to wait. This waiting ended six years after his first experience of seeing God's light, when his spiritual father, St. Symeon the Pious, assented to the young man entering the monastery. Although he had fully decided to embrace a monastic life, his entering into the congregation of the Monastery of Stoudios did not occur at that time. St. Symeon first returned home to Galatia in Paphlagonia, to give up the office he had received at the palace and to say goodbye to his parents. The events occurred in a time of fasting, during which he intensified his struggles and his praying schedule. Once back home, young Symeon searched for a book which could be useful for that period in his family's library and found Saint John Callimachus' *Ladder*, from which he retained the following teaching in particular: "Insensitivity is the demise of the soul and the death of the intellect before the death of the body"²⁰. Saint Symeon would not show indifference, nor insensitivity. On the contrary, he would deepen his spiritual preoccupations and grant them the place they deserved in his life.

During this time, St. Symeon faced temptations and fierce confrontations with demons. One night before his admission to the Monastery of Stoudios, he was home in his chapel. Suddenly, he heard a great number of demons rushing and slamming on the door of the chapel to get in and attack him. Seized with fear, young Symeon stretched up his hands to heaven and put his whole faith by being saved in God. After standing still in this position for a few hours, he was greatly surprised to see that the doors of the chapel had remained closed and that the demons could not get in. After this victory against the demons, Symeon started to dedicate his entire time to reading and praying. In moments of acedia or agitation, to remind himself of the importance of prayer, he would go near tombs and try to think about the nothingness of human life and thus get out of the state of insensitivity and laziness which threatened him²¹.

Before going to the monastery, Saint Symeon's father tried to convince him to give up this thought, but he failed. His love for God was much stronger than his love for his natural father. He left everything behind and headed towards the Monastery of Stoudios and towards his spiritual father, Symeon the Pious. On the road to the monastery, he had another experience of seeing the divine light. He was in the mountains, when "he was suddenly enveloped from above by the radiance of the grace of the Spirit, as if by fire, just like it happened with Paul before, and he felt overwhelmed with a joy and peace he had never felt before, which strengthened his love for God and his faith in [Symeon the Studite] his spiritual father"²². [our translation]. We notice that Saint Niketas compares the experience of his father with that of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus when he was halted by a dazzling light. It is worth mentioning that the light Saul saw was meant to make him realise his mistake of persecuting the Christians. On the other hand, the light Saint Symeon saw was meant to help him. After this mystical experience, he understood that the road he had set off on was the one blessed by God. The resemblance consists more of the fact that the two saints of the Church were travelling when they experienced the divine light.

²⁰ See ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 21-22.

²¹ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 20-23.

²² ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, p. 25.

4. THE SIGHT OF DIVINE LIGHT DURING HIS TIME AT HE MONASTERY OF STOUDIOS

The period when he stayed at the Monastery of Stoudios was full of trials, but also full of joy. By entering under the direct observation of his spiritual father, St. Symeon the Pious, he became aware of the fact that it was necessary to fully obey, to give up his own will and to fulfil that of the one guiding him towards perfection. And it was not easy for him. First, he was advised to act like a stranger, to be reluctant towards talking to other monks, and to rather seek to keep his mind clear away from external thoughts. Then, he was made to do exhausting work, which made his body feel tired. He did it all with a lot of devotion. After a while, seeing him persevere in his obedience and fulfil the tasks he received, the elder made him obey things which were contrary to fasting and vigil, to subjugate his will. He asked him to eat and sleep, which to Saint Symeon was against the vocation to which he had been called. Nonetheless, he fully obeyed his spiritual father's commandments. As he was going up this spiritual ladder, the devils were seeking ways to make him fall into sin. However, the saint was protected both by his spiritual father's prayer and by his struggles and his full obedience²³.

Yet great trials started to arise when several monks from the Monastery of Stoudios began to feel envious of Saint Symeon. This struggle was redoubled by his father's and his family's attempts to make him leave the monastery. However, he was helped by Saint Symeon the Pious, who encouraged him, telling him that, under those difficult conditions, it was necessary to maintain his soul pure and clean, for only in such a soul did God's grace dwell. While going through such difficult moments, Saint Symeon asked his spiritual father to pray so that he would receive the divine grace. His spiritual father told him that God would give him the double grace he had received. Symeon was astonished to hear such words and, at the moment, he did not understand what his guide had meant to tell him. However, God would prove to him that his spiritual father's words were true as soon as they parted around the third hour of the night.

In those early hours of the morning, Saint Symeon was once again found worthy of pretesting communion with God and of seeing the uncreated light. At first, Symeon had the impression that it was dawning earlier, but soon, he felt it was something else and he realised he was "surrounded by a light coming from somewhere above, enveloping him in a radiance resembling that of the sun. [This light] penetrated his mind, took hold of it, and made him feel immense joy. It lifted his soul even more towards the divine love and, with his troubled spirit and his contrite heart, he knelt before God, confessing, and giving thanks. Then, while lying on the ground and shedding tears, an unseen miracle happened: right now, when he was worshipping God, a bright cloud appeared, descending towards him, and making him feel his soul full of joy, peace, and godly love, as the earthly burden of thoughts related to bodily pleasures was starting to disappear."²⁴ [our translation].

This bright cloud marks the unmitigated presence of God²⁵, Who, nonetheless, hides. In this respect, the scriptural episodes in which the cloud of divine glory shows itself are relevant. We would like to recall, in this regard, the pillars of the cloud which led the Jews through the desert. By day, it protected them from the heat, and, by night, it turned into a

²³ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 26-30.

²⁴ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 34-35.

²⁵ Ioan CHIRILĂ, "Kavod și Şekina – Slava lui Dumnezeu pre luminarea creaturii" [Kavod and Shekinah – God's Glory for the Enlightenment of the Creature], in *Anuarul Facultății de Teologie Ortodoxă* [Annual of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology] (2013-2014), tome 17, Renașterea publishing house, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, p. 24.

pillar of light, that divine light giving warmth to the Israelites²⁶. This cloud would dwell above and within the Holy Tabernacle²⁷. Through this visible sign, God made the sons of Israel aware of His presence among them. Manifesting Himself under similar conditions during the consecration of Solomon's Temple, by filling the sanctuary with smoke²⁸, God reassured them that He was there beside them. Then, on Mount Tabor, God reminded the three Apostles that He was the God of their fathers, making them partake of an experience which only the two leading figures of the Old Testament (Moses and Elijah) had had²⁹. In this context, we would also like to point to the fact that, while seeing the godly grace, Saint Symeon also noticed other persons, just like God's Apostles³⁰.

This experience is also narrated by Saint Symeon in his catecheses, where he provides further details: "thus entering the place where I usually prayed and starting with «Holy God», remembering the Saint's words, I was so moved to tears and to yearn for God that I cannot put into words the joy and delight I was feeling. For I suddenly fell with my face to the ground and behold, an abundance of light spiritually flooded me, taking with it my entire intellect and my soul, so that the unexpected miracle filled me with astonishment, and I was as if outside myself [in ecstasy]. However, not only that, for I even forgot where I was standing and who I was and where I was, calling only «Lord, have mercy!», as I found myself saying when I came to my senses; but, the father, who the one speaking or moving my tongue was I do not know – he said –, only God does. For whether in the body, whether out of the body [2 *Corinthians* 12: 2-3], I was speaking to that light, a fact known by that light which scattered the fog from my soul and the earthly thinking and which chased away all thick matter and my soul's burden, which had been brought to my limbs by lethargy and sleepiness. For, oh, frightening miracle! Therefore, much tensed and invigorated my relaxed articulation and muscles, due to my great effort that I felt as if the vestment of death had been pulled off me; but not only that, also a lot of joy, spiritual feeling, and sweetness above anything I had seen before mysteriously flooded my soul and freedom and forgetting of all earthly thoughts and even the manner of getting out of this life were miraculously given to me and made known to me. For the senses of my intellect and of my soul connected only to that unspeakable joy of light"³¹. [our translation].

We considered it important to present the entire experience, as it captures the essential moments of such a mystical experience. First, the Saint prays, then he is filled with heavenly light and, without knowing whether he is in the body or out of the body, he utters the prayer *Lord, has mercy* to remain in the state of communion. Unlike other narrations, here, Saint Symeon mentions the fact that he felt a new sensation, in which he managed to get detached from the weaknesses of human nature and to understand the rationales God put in His creatures. In those moments, the Saint fathomed the meaning of man's freedom and what happens when a man passes from this world to the heavenly one. His progress in knowledge

²⁶ Edmond JACOB, *Théologie de l'Ancient Testament*, Delachaux & Niestlé, Paris, 1955, p. 63.

²⁷ Thomas WAGNER, *Gottes Herrlichkeit: Bedeutung und Verwendung des Begriffs kabod im Alten Testament*, Brill, Lieben, 2012, p. 98.

²⁸ Giovanna Maria PORRINO, *Le poids et la gloire, gloire de Dieu, gloire de l'homme – La racine 722 spécialement dans les livres des Proverbes, de la Genèse, de l'Exode et des Psaumes*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 2016, p. 436.

²⁹ R. T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Matthew*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co, Grand Rapids, 2007, p. 645.

³⁰ Stelian PAȘCA-TUȘA, Claudia-Cosmina TRIF and Ioan POPA-BOTA, "The Iconic Representation of the Taboric Light", in *European Journal of Science and Theology*, No. 1 (2021), p. 32.

³¹ SAINT SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Scrieri II. Cateheze...*, pp. 190-191.

by unmitigatedly seeing the divine glory allowed the New Theologian to understand man's mystery³². Shortly after this event, because of the accusations of envious monks, the hegumen of the monastery tried to separate Saint Symeon from his spiritual father. He was envious of Symeon the Pious. Seeing that Symeon did not obey him, he expelled him from the monastery.

5. MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES AT SAINT MAMAS MONASTERY

Although short, his life at the Monastery of Stoudios was essential for Saint Symeon's spiritual life. During that period, he could live in direct obedience to his spiritual father, which was a spiritual level much above the one acquired during his period as a layman, when he only met him from time to time³³. It was also due to the intervention of his spiritual father that Symeon was received at Saint Mamas Monastery by its hegumen, Antony. Symeon would spend most of his life in this monastery: here, he would be tonsured as a monk, receiving the name Symeon, after his spiritual father, and, here, he would also lead the congregation as its hegumen for 25 years³⁴.

Saint Symeon escaped the envy of the monks from the Monastery of Stoudios, but his family and in particular his natural father continued to pressure him to leave the monastery. Under these conditions, after entering Saint Mamas Monastery, Saint Symeon wrote a letter to his father, showing him how he should address his son, who had a monastic vocation. And, while he was writing this, Saint Symeon experienced once again the sight of divine light. This shone down from heaven into his room and filled his soul with joy. It was at night, the candle burning in the candlestick went out, but the whole room was full of light. Just like a voice was heard from the cloud on Mount Tabor (*Matthew 17: 5*), now the Saint heard a voice from that strong light, telling him: "To the apostles and disciples of Christ, to our mediators and ambassadors to God". These are the words which should be used when addressing a letter to one's spiritual father. In those moments of mystical ecstasy, Saint Symeon felt an alien force moving his hand to writing, while a divine voice was telling him what to write³⁵.

After this vision of the uncreated light, Saint Symeon became even more ardent in his love for God, he intensified his schedule of askesis and praying, and he dedicated long hours to meditation on the scriptural text. He ate and slept little and the physical work he was doing was that of copying texts from the holy books, as he had unbelievably beautiful writing due to his calligraphy studies. Meanwhile, he had been tonsured as a monk and was about to be ordained, priest. Patriarch Nicholas Chrysoberges (980-992) and the congregation of Saint Mamas Monastery assented to that and Saint Symeon was ordained. It is important to mention that, while being ordained, when he was kneeling in front of the patriarch, he had a new vision: The Holy Spirit was coming down "as an infinite, pure, simple and shapeless light", covering his head. [our translation]. This vision from the beginning of his ordination would repeat itself during every Divine Liturgy he celebrated as

³² Both narrations complete each other and offer us an unseen image of a special mystical experience. Bearing in mind the dialogue which took place between the spiritual father and his disciple before this episode, we can notice that what Saint Symeon experienced does nothing else but to support what his spiritual father had told him before going to his cell: "you'll be given double the grace I have from Him". ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, p. 34.

³³ Hilarion ALFEYEV, *Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog*, p. 21.

³⁴ Ioan I. ICĂ, *Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog...*, p. 13.

³⁵ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 37-38.

a priest³⁶. The Holy Spirit enlightened his mind and offered him sensitive eyes to be able to see God's unseen mysteries...

As hegumen of Saint Mamas Monastery, Symeon embarked on an ample program to reorganise it. He started the restoration of the buildings of the monastery and continued by reorganising the congregation and the liturgical schedule, proposing at its centre the daily Communion with God's Flesh and Blood, not with indifference, but with tears and a pricked heart. However, the monks he was guiding proved to disagree with him. Many of them were outraged and even left the monastery. Symeon wanted to show them what the conduct of monks should be and how they should fully dedicate themselves to Christ, but they failed to understand him. Even if his activity as hegumen was taking up more time, even if he had greater responsibilities, Saint Symeon was careful not to neglect his askesis and prayers. Due to this perseverance, God offered him the gift of being pricked in the heart. The hegumen dedicated three moments of his day to prayer, to the dialogue with God: at dawn, after Matins, during the Divine Liturgy, and at dusk, after the evening services. The latter prayers would last until late in the night. One night, while fervently praying to God, the divine light and the voice speaking from within, which he had heard before, revealed themselves again. A state of unspeakable joy overwhelmed him while he carefully listened to that voice, revealing to him mysteries which surpass human reason and offering him teachings which were unheard of. The light gradually withdrew, but the grace lingered in Saint Symeon's heart, making him wiser. This vision of divine light offered the hegumen the charisma of theologisation. From then on, he would speak about God with great wisdom and mastery, not only in a speculative way but also as one speaking from his own experience³⁷.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Saint Symeon got to theologise, speaking about God just like the Apostles or the great Church Fathers. In this context, Saint Niketas Stethatos compares Saint Symeon with John the Evangelist himself. This comparison would later be reinforced by the appellative Saint Symeon would receive. In Orthodox Tradition, three personalities received the appellative of "theologian" *par excellence*: St. John the Evangelist, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and Saint Symeon. While the first two are called "theologians", by comparison, Symeon is considered "the New Theologian", that is, a renewer of the tradition of spiritual life, a restorer of the lost spiritual life³⁸. This gift of theologisation gave Saint Symeon a strong urge to write theological treatises, exegetical and catechetical discourses, or letters through which he was teaching the readers about divine mysteries or guide them in their spiritual life³⁹.

After this experience, there was a revolt of the monks. Thirty of them, outraged by Saint Symeon's attitude and requests tore their cloaks and left the monastery. Patriarch Sisinnios (996-998) wanted to exile them, but the hegumen forgave them and allowed them to return to the monastery. Indeed, Saint Symeon's words were hard to accept and

³⁶ Saint Niketas mentions the name of a certain Meletios, who claimed that he often saw how a luminous cloud completely enveloped Saint Symeon during the Divine Liturgy. ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 44-46. See also ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața și conduita Sfântului Simeon ...*, pp. 262-263. ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, p. 48.

³⁷ We would like to mention that Symeon did not seek to study in detail the profane Hellenic culture of the art of rhetoric, so that we cannot call him a scholar of that time.

³⁸ Dan ZAMFIRESCU, "Probleme teologice și hagiografice legate de supranumele Sfântului Simeon Noul Teolog" [Theological and Hagiographic Issues with Respect to the Appellative of Saint Symeon the New Theologian], in *Ortodoxia* [Orthodoxy]. No. 3 (1958), pp. 46-61.

³⁹ ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 51-52. See ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața și conduita Sfântului Simeon ...*, p. 268.

understand. The monks often heard their hegumen sharply tell them that the mystery of baptism was useless to those who did not feel God's grace working in their hearts, that it was pointless for those who did not see Christ in the eyes of their souls to receive the Holy Communion and that none of them could be saved if the slightest passion still lingered in their lives. It was, therefore, difficult to be a part of the congregation shepherded by Saint Symeon. However, he wanted to rise his flock to perfection; to show them that there should be no trace of insensitivity in their spiritual life and that all their thoughts, words, and deeds should be directed towards Christ⁴⁰.

In old age, before dying, Saint Symeon fell seriously ill. He had passed almost thirteen years in exile in the city of Paloukion, in the Monastery of Saint Marina, where he had founded a true monastery⁴¹ and where he was preparing to die. He called his disciples and predicted when he would die and that, thirty years after his death, his body would be moved to Constantinople. On March 12th, 1022, after receiving the Holy Communion, Saint Symeon asked his disciples to start singing the burial songs. With candles in their hands and tears in their eyes, they started to sing. They accompanied with light the one who had hoped his entire life to dwell in the light. Afterwards, he prayed a little more and said: "Into your hands, Christ the King, I commend my spirit", at which point his soul went to the Lord.⁴²

CONCLUSION

The seven mystical experiences in which Saint Symeon saw the divine light marked the steps he took to enter the state of unmitigated and continuous communion with God. Each experience of light marked a stage in his spiritual fulfilment.

During the first one, which Saint Symeon had during his period as a layman, he experienced a state of happiness he had never felt before. It was still during this mysterious experience that he acquired the gift of tears. During the second episode, which he also experienced in his youth, the Saint felt his ascetic body become spiritual and translucent in the light God was pouring onto him. Simultaneously, the Saint acquired a physical and spiritual vigour which helped him continue his struggle to get close to God. His third experience, which marked his period as a layman, brought to his soul a peace he had never felt before. It was also then that his love for God was established and the faith that his spiritual father was guiding him well was strengthened.

The fourth episode, in which the Saint saw the divine light occurred at the Monastery of Stoudios. There, he was surrounded by a bright cloud, like that described in the Old and the New Testament. The Holy Spirit enveloped him in His grace and offered him the possibility of overcoming his passions. Freed from temptation, Saint Symeon felt the gift of full freedom, which allowed him to know the man's mystery and the telos to which he is called.

The last three experiences of seeing the light occurred in the monastery dedicated to Saint Mamas in Constantinople. During his mystical ecstasy, he understood the importance

⁴⁰ Hilarion ALFEYEV, *Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog...*, p. 51

⁴¹ After he finalised his work and the congregation was organised, Symeon fully dedicated himself to hesychia, to prayer and to askesis. During this time, he reached an extremely high level of spirituality: "inspired by the divine fire, fully becoming fire and light each day, he became god by appointment and, as a son of God, he mysteriously talked to God the Father, with his face uncovered, like Moses." [our translation]. These special mystical experiences were the source of Symeon's important writings, such as his hymns or his apologetical and antirrhetic discourses⁴¹. ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 129-139, 139-140. See also Basil KRIVOCHINE, *În lumina lui Hristos*.

⁴² ST. NIKETAS STETHATOS, *Viața și conduita Sfântului Simeon...*, pp. 333-334

of the spiritual father before God and he experienced how the Spirit inspires and guides people towards the knowledge of God's rationale. The sixth episode occurred during his ordination. Then, he saw how God's Spirit descended above his head in the shape of a bright cloud, which remained there. Some of his close ones saw how the Spirit surrounded him while he was celebrating the liturgy, filling everything around with light. His experiences at Saint Mamas Monastery would culminate in the one when God's voice spoke to him from the cloud, revealing to him the hidden mysteries of the Godhead. During this episode of seeing the light, Saint Symeon would be endowed with the gift of theologisation and with the capacity to reach God's unapproachable depth to know teachings which were unheard of.

Therefore, the mystical experience of seeing the uncreated light offered Saint Symeon the possibility of knowing infinite happiness, the gift of tears, the translucence of the body, freedom from passions, spiritual peace, love for God, faith in his spiritual father, man's mystery, the work of the grace of the Holy Spirit and the gift of theologisation.

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GOD'S SELF-COMMUNICATION IN HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

God's communication in history finds fulfilment in Jesus Christ. The refusal of God's self-communication diminishes the right use of freedom and in the final analysis, the person becomes what he should not become. This is what actually happened to Adam and Eve after eating the forbidden fruit – and we have all inherited that defect – that potency to sin. This situation can be compared to that of hereditary defect in which a defect is passed on from one person to the other. In this case, we can analogously say that all the descendants of Adam have inherited the possibility that we could abuse freedom – by choosing wrong things and this abuse of freedom was redeemed by Jesus Christ.

Keywords: God's communication; Jesus Christ; Christians;

INTRODUCTION

It is clear that over the years it has been difficult to unify into one single and clear direction the interpretations of transcendental experiences in different histories and religions. This is the case because different religions may differently interpret the religious and transcendental events that have taken place in history.

However, of special note is the fact that these histories have a direction – they have a movement – they point to some definite point – they move towards a particular centre and Christians and theologians generally identify these histories as moving towards Jesus Christ as the Absolute self-communication of God. This basically means that the different histories and the different events that preceded Jesus, eventually lead to the revelation and coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the definitive and absolute self-revelation and self-communication of God in Jesus Christ.

1. GOD'S COMMUNICATION IN HISTORY

God's communication in history finds fulfilment in Jesus Christ. That is why; we can say that the Old Testament history is a preparation of the coming of Jesus. For example, the wonderful and appreciable work of Moses and the prophetic tradition in general is a big preparation of the fulfilment of God's self-communication in Jesus.

The Old Testament history and communication prepared the ground for God's final communication in Jesus. If we understand Jesus Christ in this way, then we will be able to comprehend that he is the basis and foundation of biblical history and biblical communication. This communication is dialogic in the sense that God, dialogues with the human person so that he or she can be saved. God in Jesus has brought to fulfilment this objective. That is why biblical and secular history are both a communication of God's love

for the human person fulfilled in the person of Jesus – for God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son so that all who believe in him may be saved.

The history of revelation has taken place in all the peoples because it is history of the guilt, of the fall, and rejection of God and this has happened among all peoples. People of all ages, people of all nations and people of all places have all come to fall, to rise up, have accepted God but have at times also rejected God. The cycle of falling and rising up, going up and down in the spiritual life, accepting and denying God – are all universal manifestations that have taken place in biblical history but also in secular history.

That is why the dichotomy between secular and biblical history is at times rejected because basically God has revealed himself not only in biblical history but also in secular history. There are people that were clearly called from a pagan background and straightaway brought into Christian history. This shows that God does not only work in Christian history but also intervenes in secular history.

It is in this context and case that we can say that the Old Testament is a preparation of the Christ event. The Old Testament is the immediate and proximate prehistory of Jesus. It is in the Old Testament that God started giving his communication to the human person and this communication reached its peak and height in Jesus Christ – the fullness of God's communication to the human being.

It is in this context that we can say that the history of salvation and the history of revelation have been a progressive history in which each generation has somehow participated. Both histories, namely the history of salvation and the history of revelation have progressively led us to the God-man event. Jesus is the absolute self-communication of God. In Jesus, God communicates himself to the human person. In Jesus the history of revelation and the history of salvation reach their climax. In addition, in the God-man, human beings reach their final goal – that is, being given the offer of salvation.

It is in this context that we can say that the history of salvation takes place within the history of the human person. That is why, it is unthinkable to develop a theology that is divorced from not only the transcendental but also the anthropological. That is why some theologians talk about theological anthropology or existential theology. The idea is that the history of the human person is the context in which God has revealed himself – the historical is not divorced from the theological – they are both contexts in which God has revealed himself – in both the history of the human person and in the history of salvation.

Incarnation is the locus and event in which God has become human. In Jesus, the self-communication of God to the human person has reached an irreversible and irrevocable point in history. It is through the acceptance of death on the cross, that Jesus has fully accepted God's self-communication.

We can therefore say that Jesus is the fullness of God's self-communication to the person. He is the fullness of man's acceptance of God's self-communication. It is through Jesus that God has fully revealed himself and has fully revealed his plans for the human person. It is also through Jesus Christ that God's communication to the human person has been fully accepted through Jesus' death on the cross. All this has taken place in history – in salvation history, in the history of revelation but also in the history of the human person.

However, even with this assistance, human beings can refuse not only the idea of God but can also refuse God. When human beings refuse God and the very idea of God;

through their lives and existence – their lives become an expression of the God-denial. Nevertheless, the denial of God, regardless of whatever form it takes, is self-contradictory.¹

One may think that they are asserting themselves by saying “no” to God but they actually find themselves affirming an absolute categorical position that leads them to miss everything. The truth of the matter is that humans ought to give themselves to God unconditionally otherwise by denying God definitively – they end up putting themselves in a contradictory situation of actually denying who they really are – that they are human beings created in the image of God and called to live with God.

All this then shows the seriousness of the decision that human beings make in their acceptance or rejection of God. The choice that human beings make in freedom, whether for or against God, decides their final and definitive fate and destiny. In this case, when humans finally and definitively reject God – they become destitute – and this is well-presented by tradition and scripture, which uses images and stories to show the destitution and problems that accrue from the rejection of God.

That is why, when we read eschatological literature, one does not have to look for anything more than the presentation of the intrinsic contradiction that exists when “freedom decides finally and definitively *against* the structures of the reality of the world established by God.”² We thus note here that the decision for God or against God is important and crucial. It is the context in which humans as created subjects establish their own final and definitive self and destiny. Human freedom does not imply a limitation for the sovereignty of God because God Himself created human autonomy and human freedom and it is God who established the creator-creature radical difference. “For this difference is not something that happens to Him, but rather he alone makes it possible. He establishes it, he allows it, he grants it the freedom of its own self-actualization of this differentiation.”³

The freedom of humans is actualized in history and in the world of persons where man and woman are free subjects. They act freely in a situation that they find constructed by others – philosophically referred to as the – givenness of the situation.

The freedom of humans is co-determined among other things by the free history of other persons. This means that the objectification of human freedom has the stamp of the objectification of freedom by other persons in the world.⁴ In fact, a person “finds himself already with the other of the world, hence that the other as such is his proper object, that his being-present-to self is thus a being-with-the-other, and that he wants to understand himself in all his potentialities from this basis [...]”⁵

This means that some objectification of the personal guilt and sin of other people may have an influence on others thereby making the process of - free decision making - difficult and painful. An experience in which a person is co-determined by the guilt of others is original, universal, but also permanent.⁶

However even amidst the pessimism that human freedom is co-determined, there is enough optimism that humans are responsible before God for their choices and actions. While both realities are true and cannot be disguised – but we can still maintain that each

¹ Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith, An introduction to the idea of Christianity*, translated by William V. DYCH, London, Darton Longman and Todd, 1978, 100-101.

² RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 102.

³ RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 105.

⁴ RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 107.

⁵ Karl RAHNER, *Spirit in the world*, New York, Continuum publishing company, 1957, 77.

⁶ RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 107-109.

person is unique and responsible for his or her actions and decisions. Therefore, in Catholic Theology when we speak about the sin of Adam as being our sin, we do so only analogously and not univocally – that is to say – we inherited from Adam and Eve the potency to sin and this leaves us with space of freedom whether to actualize that potency or not.

The refusal of God's self-communication diminishes the right use of freedom and in the final analysis, the person becomes what he should not become. This is what actually happened to Adam and Eve after eating the forbidden fruit – and we have all inherited that defect – that potency to sin. This situation can be compared to that of hereditary defect in which a defect is passed on from one person to the other. In this case, we can analogously say that all the descendants of Adam have inherited the possibility that we could abuse freedom – by choosing wrong things and this abuse of freedom was redeemed by Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSIONS

The story of the original sin is a clear example of aetiological inference from human's present experience of sin and freedom to the origins and primeval beginning of the human history. While the story of Adam and Eve is representational⁷ but it gives us important lessons about the human race – we ought to live in unity – because whatever happens to one person can affect the entire human race – what happens in one part of the world can have an influence in the other part of the world - that we are different but we are all human beings – our ways of looking at things may differ but we have a common destiny, one Lord, one God and this unity is well manifested in our common descent – Adam and Eve. The human species is regarded and treated as a concrete unity, not only in the natural order but also in the order of salvation – namely – the salvation of all people in Christ.⁸

It is in this context that we can hereby indicate that human beings are free subjects. They are responsible for their actions. Nevertheless, human freedom was abused by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when they chose to do what they were forbidden. Jesus chose to obey. The choice of disobedience in the Garden of Eden was redeemed by Jesus' choice for obedience – to die on behalf of humanity on the cross. Through Jesus we have received the grace of God to make good choices – to choose well – and this is called the redemption of freedom or the freedom of freedom. Although our freedom has been freed but due to our sinfulness and the historical circumstances in which we live, we at times make mistakes and choose wrongly. We have to continue to purify our intentions and our choices. That is why, we can submit that the project for the 'freedom of freedom' is a lifetime task!

⁷ Cf. RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian faith*, 114.

⁸ Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Membership of the Church*, in Karl RAHNER, "Theological investigations, Volume 2, London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1963, 78-79.

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THE BISHOP AND/OR THE ECCLESIAL RECEPTION OF THE CATHOLICITY (ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΗ) OF THE CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

In the Symbol of Faith, we profess that the Church is Catholic. Therefore, we can understand this catholicity in several ways. First of them, the Church is catholic because it proclaims the apostolic faith in its entirety; she is the place where we meet Christ in his sacraments and receive the spiritual gifts needed to grow in holiness together with our brothers and sisters. The Church is also catholic because its communion embraces the whole human being, and she is sent to bring to the entire world the joy of redemption. Not eventually, the Church is catholic because it reconciles the wonderful diversity of God's gifts to build up His People in love, unity and harmony.

Keywords: Church of Christ; hierarchy; episcopate; bishop; catholicity; universality;

INTRODUCTION

The teaching on the Church can rightly be considered the most *neuralgic* part of inter-Christian dialogues, which has created, and certainly will create more tensions between the members of the interdenominational area of all times and all places. This present study aims to be a detailed presentation of terms and concepts that compose the dogmatic *architecture* of Orthodox ecclesiology.

1. THE BISHOP AND THE EPISCOPACY OF THE CHURCH

Nulla ecclesia sine episcopo (No church without a bishop) is the *sine qua non* condition of ecclesial realism.

Bishops (from the Greek *ἐπίσκοπος*¹ and the Latin *episcopus* = overseer, guide, respectively), form the highest step of the hierarchy of the Church of the post-apostolic period. The bishop is *chosen and delegated*, by ordination, to exercise the role of a leader of the Eucharistic synaxis, that of a teacher of the Gospel and that of a coordinator of the activities of the local church – the eparchy.

In the New Testament, the notion of a *bishop* is mentioned five times: in *I Peter* 2, 25, where Jesus Christ is called „shepherd and bishop”, then in the *Acts of the Apostles* 20, 28; *Philippians* 1, 1; *I Timothy* 3, 2; *Titus* 1, 7; where the bishops who were active in the Apostolic Church are mentioned. In the terminology of the Apostolic age, the same honor was given multiple names, although the steps of the hierarchy were different amongst themselves. One of the most frequent changes was made between the terms „elder” and „bishop”. Thus, in several places (*Philippians* 1, 1; *I Timothy* 3, 2; *Titus* 1, 7), the notion of

¹ The word comes from the verb *ἐπισκοπέω* = to watch, to oversee (See *Hebrews* 12, 15 and *I Peter* 5, 2).

„bishop” does not seem to point toward the first step of Church hierarchy. In two typical places, which indicate the qualities of the one who enters the clergy, the terms *elder* and *bishop* are applied to the same step, which is *priesthood*². In these cases, the terms refer to the same step, and they can be switched. Elder-priests were also called bishops when their function as overseers of the Christian communities. This does not mean that there were not bishops as a standalone superior step, but this title of bishop was not given to all elders, but only to those who have a unique position (that of leaders of church life, having received a special ordination).

Timothy and Titus are successors of Saint apostle Paul. Although they were active in a certain ecclesial community – Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete – they oversaw several communities, not being linked to one in any particular manner: „For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you (*Titus* 1, 5). Timothy was ordained as a bishop by Saint apostle Paul (*I Timothy* 4, 14) and had the power to judge elders³. Titus receives the responsibility of ordaining priests in every city, as a bishop of the community of Crete. In this way, the succession between the apostles and the first leaders of the Christian communities, who had all the authority of priestly mission, is established.

In the early period of Christianity, every local establishment which was ecclesiastical in nature was led by a group of priests. Such is the case of the Christian community outside the Holy City: „Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question”⁴; „So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed”⁵. Nevertheless, if there were several priests in a city, the main responsibility came to an elder-bishop. The distinction that was made amongst priests was honorific, not hierarchical. Saint Apostle Paul recalls „elders who rule well”⁶ and „shepherding elders”⁷, the *προϊσταμενος*, meaning „he who leads”⁸ and the *ηγούμενος*, meaning „ruler”⁹. In time, these rulers of local communities in which there were several elders turned from shepherding priests to bishops. Therefore, it follows that amongst all of the priests of a church, only one was a bishop, invested with special prerogatives, although he could be named with both names: bishop and elder.

In the beginning of the second century, we find a bishop in every local church, as its main ruler. This development could not be explained if, early on, all of the elders were bishops.

The orthodox theology differentiates between apostolate and episcopate. This succession should not be understood as a line of historical continuity from apostle to bishop in the communities that were founded by the apostles, or from bishop to bishop in the

² According to *Acts of the Apostles* 20, 17 and 28, *Titus* 1, 5 and 7.

³ *I Timothy* 3, 19.

⁴ *Acts of the Apostles* 15, 2.

⁵ *Acts of the Apostles* 14, 23.

⁶ *I Timothy* 5, 17.

⁷ *Acts of the Apostles* 20, 17 and 28.

⁸ *Romans* 12, 8. The term comes from the Greek verb *προϊσστημι* = to lead, to guide, to administer, to govern (according to *I Thessalonians* 5, 12; *I Timothy* 3, 4; 5, 17), to lead, to be in charge of, to preside (according to *Romans* 12, 8).

⁹ From the verb *ηγείμαι* = to lead, to guide, to govern (according to *Matthew* 2, 6; *Luke* 22, 26; *Acts of Apostles* 7, 10; 15, 22; *Hebrews* 13, 7).

communities that were founded later on. The apostles ordained the first bishops, but they were not called bishops and did not exercise this responsibility, because they had their own authority and mission. They acknowledged, in the person of the bishop, through the act of ordination, a special charisma for that particular church. Thus, succession begins after the apostles.

The Church does not have its origins in the episcopate, but the episcopate has its origins within the Church. But the community cannot acknowledge itself as a Church without a bishop, who is the face of Christ. Therefore, the Church designates a bishop from amongst its own priests. Because the local Church cannot ordain its own bishop, it asks bishops of neighboring churches, to gather in order to invoke the gift of the Holy Ghost for the purpose of publicly confirming its bishop.

The authority of the bishop in leading the local Church is not legal in nature, but is grounded upon charisma: „And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers”¹⁰.

Any act of service is exercised in the unity and reciprocity of the Church of Christ, because personal charisma has a dimension that is grounded in community. The service of the bishop is accepted by the *body* of the Church in the act of ordination. The bishop is not imposed from without, but he has authority because his service is received from within the Church. The bishop cannot exercise his functions without the *body* of the Church. He is only a bishop if he celebrates together with the priests and deacons, in the presence of the right-worshipping people *λαός του θεοῦ*. The church is in apostolic communion through its bishop, who immutably confesses and teaches the doctrine of apostolic faith. The charisma of the bishop is not an individual possession, transmitted through ordination, but the expression of the will of the Church. For this reason, one cannot speak of the infallibility of the bishop in matters of faith, but of the infallibility of the church.

The bishop is the representative person at an ecclesiastical level, of a certain geographical area. Under his leadership are the clergy and the laypeople of said territory. Bishops are the main factors through which the grace of the Holy Ghost is spread within the Church, and their decisions stand directly under His assistance. In this regard, Christian history reveals the fact that bishops have expressed their truth of faith in the ecumenical synods. They took their decision-making pattern from the Holy Apostles, making decisions in matters of faith. Also, the bishop is the person who transmits, through ordination, to priests and deacons, the power to officiate the Holy Sacraments and hierurgies. The step of the episcopate is mentioned in several texts within the New Testament, of which we mention: „Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer”¹¹.

In the history of salvation, „truth and grace”¹² are shared with us not just in a linear manner via *Christ-apostles-bishops*, but also as a sustained *Pentecost* which transform the path of Grace-filled *delegation* of grace in a sacral present. From this perspective, the ordination of the high priest only takes place during the Eucharistic Liturgy. In the Christian East, the feast of Pentecost is remembered at any *ordinatio episcopii*. This is why the *circle* of bishops that accomplishes the ordination of the bishop represents the apostolic *college*.

The two dimensions of ecclesial substantiality, uniqueness and multiplicity, must be interwoven in an establishment that entails a double service: service to the *first* (πρώτος) and

¹⁰ *Ephesians* 4, 11.

¹¹ *Acts of the Apostles* 20, 28.

¹² *John* 1, 17.

service to the many (πολύπληθεια)¹³. There is a fundamental mutuality between the bishop and the community. In other words, there can be no bishop without a community, and neither can the community manifest itself in its sacramental dynamic without the bishop. For this very reason, there is no ordination of a bishop outside of the community, for ordination is the act of *birth* for a bishop, in his mission as an *archpastor* linked to the community as a part that constitutes the Church. There are a few fundamental reasons regarding the life of church, dogmatically and canonically:

a. The Church cannot exist, pan-globally speaking, without the assistance of the bishop, and, particularly, as a local community, without the presence of a bishop: „All of you shall follow the bishop, as Jesus Christ follows the Father... No one should do anything that pertains to the Church without a bishop. Where a bishop can be seen, there shall also be a multitude of the faithful, as, where Jesus Christ is, the Universal Church shall be”¹⁴.

b. From a sacramental point of view, one cannot admit the accomplishment of the Holy Sacraments, because the bishop is the main condition for the charismatic life of the Church: „Let that Eucharist which is performed by the bishop or the one whom the bishop has allowed be deemed as good... without the bishop, there can be no baptism, no agape; for that which the bishop approves is well-pleasing to God, for all that is done shall be done certainly and with good cause”¹⁵.

The first to be *remembered* in Orthodox liturgies is the diocesan bishop, in his quality as the *first in line* of that diocese, but also as the *president* of the Liturgy, with the community praying that he be *given* unto the church in his jurisdiction „in peace, whole, long for days”¹⁶ and most of all, steadfast in keeping the unity of the dogmatic truth of the Church. One capital mission of the *one* bishop is that of *encompassing* into himself the multitude of the faithful. Found upon the highest *pedestal* of priestly service, the *first* amongst servants has the power of consecrating the Eucharist of the Church to God, raising the pleasant aroma of the sacrifice of the Son of God to the very throne of the Holy Trinity¹⁷. There are a few elements which compose, within the bishop, the unity of the Church and the Eucharist: one *Feast* of salvation, one *Body* of Christ, one *Grail* of Life, one *table*, and, of course, only one bishop: „Seek, therefore, to take part in one Liturgy; for one is the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one is the cup for the union with His blood; one is the Sacrifice, as the Bishop is also one”¹⁸.

2. THE CATHOLICITY (κατ-ὅλον) OF THE CHURCH OR „THE FULLNESS OF HIM WHO FILLS ALL IN ALL” (EPHESIANS 1, 23)

„Only the divine-human being of the Church can embrace all through itself; she alone can be catholic, total, conciliatory (...) Actually, the divine-human reconciliation of the Church represents a ceaseless Christ like transfiguration through grace and through virtues: it is all summed in Christ, the God-Man, to have lived through Him, as His, as a divine-human organism, one, indivisible, for life within the Church is a human-divine conciliation”¹⁹.

¹³ Saint Ignatius of ANTIOCH (Theophorus), *To the Tralians*, I, Migne, PG 5, 675 B.

¹⁴ Idem, *To the Philadelphians*, VIII, Migne, PG 5, 704 B.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ *** *Liturghier (Missal)*, EIBMBOR, Bucharest, 2000, p. 168.

¹⁷ Ioannis ZIZIOLAS, *Ființa Bisericii (The Ecclesial Being)*, translated by Aurel Nae, Bizantină Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 161.

¹⁸ Saint Ignatius of ANTIOCH (Theophorus), *To the Philadelphians* VIII, Migne, PG 5, 699 B.

¹⁹ Iustin POPOVICI, *Philosophie Orthodoxe de la verité. Dogmatique de l’Eglise Orthodoxe*, tome quatrième: „L’Age de l’Homme”, Lausanne, 1987, pp. 182-183.

The catholicity²⁰ of the Church depends upon the orthodoxy of the faith²¹. Terminologically speaking, in Romanian, the word was rendered as „sobornicească”, having been grounded upon an element of vocabulary which comes from the Slavonic language (*sobornost*), which designates the synod-grounded or conciliatory character of the Church. Thus, the communion which exists between different parts of the church, regarding matters of faith and the decisions about them which are made in common – the Greek word *Σύνοδος* (meaning *way together*, or *together upon the way*), which is to say together in Christ, who is The Way²². But here, it is very important to notice a nuance that may surprise many of our readers: the word in the Creed translates the original Greek word *καθολική*, which means the orthodoxy and the catholicity of the Church are not at all opposites of one another, as we have grown accustomed to opposing the two notions, catholic and orthodox. But in the Romanian language, to avoid the confusion, the Greek word *καθολική* was translated with „sobornicească” after the Slavonic one²³.

The meaning that catholicity has always had for the conscience of the Church was that of the orthodoxy of faith, the two being complementary, and sometimes even considered synonymous. Although we have become accustomed to translate the word *catholic*, generally speaking, as „universal”, the meanings of this word are multiple, as it is revealed by its etymology as well. The word *catholic* comes from the Greek *κατ-ὅλον*²⁴, which, word-by-word, is translated as „after the whole, according to the whole or in accordance with the whole. „When it refers to the faith of the Church it refers to the particular faith of every part (community) of the Church and which is Catholic, meaning, in accordance with the whole, with the whole of the Church (as every piece of Holy Communion includes Christ as a whole within it, and at the same time, every piece together constitutes the entirety of the Body of Christ), which is why Communion or Eucharist is constitutive of the Church, also being conditioned by the right faith, which is why before the transubstantiation or consecration of the gifts, the members of the church utter the Symbol of Faith in common, and those who partake of communion publicly declare, before the act, a confession of faith. Basically, the orthodoxy and catholicity of the faith condition and complete one another.

Therefore, when we speak of the Church, it is both catholic and orthodox in regard to its faith at the same time. Basically, the Church confesses the same orthodox faith

²⁰ The quality of the Church of being „sobornicească” – term that comes from *sobornost* or *gathering*. In Greek, *Ekklesia* means „gathering”.

²¹ Saint Maximus the Confessor affirms that the *Catholic Church* is the right confession of faith in Jesus Christ. In most of the texts in which Saint Maximus uses the term *the Catholic Church*, the context is that of the understanding of the right faith from a position that is superior, opposed to heretical teachings (see Jean-Claude LARCHET, *Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul, mediator între Răsărit și Apus (Saint Maximus the Confessor, mediator between Orient and Occident)*, translated by Daniela Cojocariu, Doxologia Publishing House, Iași, 2010, pp. 199-2015).

²² *John* 14, 6.

²³ „In older documents, the term *ἐκκλησία καθολική* was never used quantitatively, to refer to the geographical expansion of the Church: rather, it referred to the integrity of the faith or the doctrine, the fidelity of «The Great Church» to the entirety of the Primary Tradition in opposition to the sectarian tendencies of heretics, who have separated themselves from this initial fullness, each following their specific line of thought, meaning more orthodox than universal (according to George FLOROVSKY, *Le Corps du Christ Vivant, Cahiers theologiques de l'actualite protestante*, HS 4, 1948, p. 24).

²⁴ From the preposition *κατά*, meaning, in the context, *on the surface of, in, on, along, toward, near, in front of, in the direction of, according to* *Luke*, 8, 39; *Acts*, 2, 10; 13, 1; 15, 23; 27, 7 and 12, where: that which concerns, as far as smith is concerned, that which refers to, according to *Romans*, 1,15, *Ephesians*, 1,15, and the noun *ὅλος, η, ον* = entire, complete, whole (according to *Matthew* 5, 29; 16, 26; *Mark*, 6, 55; *John*, 4, 53; *Acts* 11, 26; *Romans* 8, 36 and *Titus* 1, 11).

everywhere, always, and by everybody, wherever it may gather, thus being in accordance with the whole and wholly catholic. Thus, it is the conscience of some people, a few consciences, that make the Truth conquer within the entirety of Church, for they are pure of any subjectivity: for the conscience of those who do not speak in their own name, but speak in the name of the Church, is the one that speaks, making the Church the unique personal subject of multiple consciences. If we wish to apply the notion of conscience to the reality of the Church, we will, therefore, need to find several personal consciences, but one object of conscience, one self-conscience, which is the Church. In this regard, the Fathers of the Church, and all those who keep their pace, freeing themselves from their individual limitations, are the fathers of the conscience of the Church”²⁵.

As we know, catholicity represents one of the characteristics of the Church in the Creed, mentioned in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol²⁶. To explain the overwhelming importance of this characteristic, we add the following statement: „In what follows, however, we shall underline that until lately, the Church has never characterized itself using the attribute *orthodox*, it only called itself *catholic*”²⁷. But how can „catholicity” be understood in relation to catholicity? Catholicity, in relation to universality, is affirmed in a much more pronounced manner. Although the Catholic Church is universal, its universality is not a geographical universality, nor is it a jurisdictional and authoritative one, but a universality that encompasses, in space and time, the sum of redeeming truths that constitute the orthodox faith at any time and any place, as well as those who, at any time and any place, continue to confess this faith. Only through the common confession of the same faith in the Holy Trinity – God, and the same Christ – real God and real human being – the local churches and their members are united within the same catholic Church; we are looking at a confession that brings together Christians from all places and all time²⁸.

„The Church is called catholic because it spreads over the entire world, from one end to another, because its teaching is catholic and complete: it gives man all the required teachings to know both that which is seen and that which is unseen, both the heavenly and the earthly; for it subjects all of humankind to faith in God, both rulers and subjects, both the learned and the unlearned, for it heals and soothes at the same time all sorts of different sins that are committed through body and soul, and it has in its power all sorts of virtues in words and deeds and shares all sorts of spiritual gifts”²⁹.

A thoughtful approach toward this text shows a quantitatively extensive image of catholicity, which regards the total number of believers of all places and times. This accentuation of the spatial universality of the Church is thought to be essentially specific to the Roman-Catholic Church. On the other hand, the quoted passage underlines the fact that the Church is the owner of the fullness of truth, of the redeeming dynamic and the holiness of grace.

²⁵ Vladimir LOSSKY, *După chipul și asemănarea lui Dumnezeu (In the Image and Likeness of God)* translated by Anca Manolache, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 185-187.

²⁶ Article IX of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: „Πιστεύομεν εἰς μίαν, ἁγίαν, καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν” (meaning «We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church») represents the synodal-ecumenical ecclesiology of the Church Fathers of the 4th century.

²⁷ Vassily KRIVOȘEIN, *Biserica Sobornicească – texte ecleziologice (The Catholic Church – ecclesiological texts)*, translated from Russian by Nicolae Crețu, Sophia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, p. 118.

²⁸ Saint Cyril of JERUSALEM presents these multiple directions of orthodox ecclesiology in the definition that he gives to the Catholic Church (see *Catecheses*, XVIII, 23, Migne, PG 33, 1044 A).

²⁹ Saint Cyril of JERUSALEM, *Cateheze (Catecheses)*, EIBMBOR, Bucharest, 2003, p. 33.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude with, within the Church, understood as committed communion as well as life experience, the relationships between person and community, both locally and universally, are fulfilled in the meaning of the mysterious body of Christ. Thus, in the Grace-filled, sacramental area of the *ecclesia* of Christ, the Lord, we live what the *apostle of the gentiles called*: „the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (*Ephesians* 1, 23).

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DEATH IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, death, illness, and suffering are experienced as danger: a threat to one's own physical, psychological and social identity. And what accompanies all these, particularly paralyzing from a spiritual perspective, is fear; the dread that all is lost, that things cannot be controlled by means of medicine, only to reach the greatest angst: the fear of death. And, in this respect, we can say that pain, suffering and the fear of death make up the anthropological foundation of the most profound religious concept of life, in the sense that these realities show man his limitations, his finite build, that of a creature, and, consequently, determine him look beyond his limitations. The fear of death brought about angst, anxiety, passion, hatred, and despair in man's life. His need to escape death made him look for even more material elements to render him oblivious to it. The solution against despair is God: faith vanquishes despair because, by faith, man acknowledges his dependence on God, but turning within himself, at the same time.

Keywords: death; medicine; man; fear; life;

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of time, every individual, both religious, and less spiritual, who instinctively felt the inevitable approach of death, meditated on it. All, to a smaller or a greater extent, question the sacrament of death and wonder what lies beyond it.

What is death? What happens when you die? What lies beyond death? Is there an afterlife, once you've crossed the threshold of death? What evidence do we have in this respect? How is this afterlife? What can we find out about the departed? Who is wrong: those who believe or those who do not?

What is certain is that death is inevitable for man. By definition, man is mortal, and, from this point of view, he resembles any creature on Earth. Nevertheless, man is still human even when facing death, as he is aware, and therefore experiences this perspective¹. Man does not die as an animal, but tends to place this event in a universe coordinated by values and norms, where the very experience of death as humanity's most dreaded problem can find its meaning. Death presented as an inexorable ending makes man ask himself questions about his own existence. The objective answer that he can provide himself with, when facing this reality which haunts him since birth, must be sought for in a set of various thinking patterns: philosophical, psychological, theological, historical, etc., but also in the concrete behavioural pattern.

¹ Dionigi TETTAMANZZI, *Dizionario di Bioetica [Dictionary of Bioethics]*, Casale Monferrato, PIEMME, 2002, p. 292.

Man's attitude towards death expresses one of those ancestral feelings that leave a profound mark on a civilization. The history of religions testifies, during each epoch, to man's concern and worry when facing death. Only from this perspective of the religious experience can we talk about an answer to this great and frightful sacrament²: death. Particularly if we tackle Christianity, where this experience has a profound nature of getting ready not for the physical disappearance, but for the state of bliss or torment in the eternal life. According to the worship of Christian martyrs, the dead will enter the cities and villages that had cast them out for centuries. Initially, martyrs were buried in outskirts necropoleis, that Christians and pagans shared. Yet, worshipping martyrs' burial places entailed, in their turn, funerals. Such places witnessed churches and cathedrals being built. The *ad santos* burial, i.e. close to the saints to be protected, became the fundamental reason for interring the dead in churches or in the space around them (cemeteries)³. The purpose of creation, according to Oriental Christianity, is rendering man and the universe divine. The whole economy of redemption, Christ's salvation work, the holy action of the Holy Spirit, aim at leading the fallen humanity back to the end it was created for, towards the wholesome experience of becoming divine. According to the Holy Fathers, only by Parousia will people fulfill the purpose they were created for, and the final state of many will be decided only at the time of the Final Judgement. Until Resurrection, the saints themselves, although close to Christ, are in a state of perpetual wait.

1. THE CONTEMPORARY OUTLOOK ON DEATH

The manner in which the old Church imagined the situation of various categories of the dead waiting for Parousia could be summed up as follows: Christian thinking is absolutely unanimous in stating that our earthly existence is unique. Christian faith cannot reconcile this with any other concept related to successive lives and reincarnation. Such concepts can often be found with non-Christian philosophical and religious trends, especially of far Oriental origin, and are entirely alien to Christianity. It is a fundamental belief of faith that earthly life is unique and that man's fate is at stake during this unique earthly existence.

After death, the soul remains equally alive, equally aware, equally active as during its earthly existence, but in a different way. However, man/soul, after death, can no longer do anything for his/its own redemption, he/it cannot even communicate with the living, unless upon receiving divine permission, and, thus, any magical conjuring of the dead, as a psychic-mystical form of communication and spiritism was condemned both by God's Word in the Old Testament, and by the Christian Conscience over the centuries: "*Let me not find among you those who put their son or daughter through fire, or oracles, or fortune-tellers, or wizards, or spell-casters, or exorcists, or apparition-whisperers, or magi, or those who talk to the dead. For everything they do displeases God, and such horridness banishes God away from you*" (Dt 18, 10).

² Pr. prof. dr. Ioan C. TEȘU, "Taina morții în spiritualitatea ortodoxă" ["The Sacrament of Death in Orthodox Spirituality"], in: *Teologia și Viața [Theology and Life]*, no. 5-8, May-August, (2010), p. 5-33, here p. 6; also see Ierom. Savatie BAȘTOVOI, "Invitație la moarte" ["Invitation to Dying"], in: John Breck & com., *Ce este moartea? [What Is Death?]*, Cluj-Napoca, Patmos, 2006, p. 49-58, here p. 51.

³ cf. Jacques LE GOFF, *Il cielo sceso in terra. Le radici medievali dell'Europa [The Sky Descended on Earth. The Medieval Roots of Europe]*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2007, p. 68.

Modern and post-modern society is marked by the cultural rejection of death. Death is no longer a part of the real experience, it cannot be visible, having all its sign hidden, *ante* and *post mortem*⁴.

The origins of the phenomenon must be identified in the cultural transformation resulting from the process of appropriating culture and from the prevalence of anthropocentric visions, incapable of comprehending the spiritual-sacred dimension of existence beyond any value created by man, who only assesses parameters meant to evaluate the quality of life. The emergence, in particular, of some values, such as happiness, beauty, youth, physical and economical efficiency, and, at the same time, the development of biomedical techniques and technologies, which support the illusion that there are no barriers in man's control over nature, determines a change in the paradigm where death is conceptualized and experienced. Man, the absolute master of his own life, can escape the implicit limitations of the human existence. Death thus becomes an absurd, tragic event⁵. The contemporary man is trying to live his life to the maximum, wanting to have a taste of most of its pleasures, if not all of them, without giving too much thought to a possible future life⁶. A new idea of death – reversed, censored death⁷ – replacing everything that people believed or experienced in the past, replacing the idea of death as passing from one life to another, serenely accepted and experienced, with a wide array of relations typical of the romantic age, which exalts and dramatizes the lover's death, rendered acceptable by the idea of continued existence in the memory of family members, fed, ceaselessly, by worshipping graves and cemeteries. Nowadays, death should not be mentioned in language, in feelings or in habits. It must be forgotten, a private, individual fact, and, if it happens, it must be assigned to funeral homes.

Atomizing death by means of logical reasoning does not succeed in reducing it to a case of demythologized life, which is "implicit": it is not by murdering death in a logical manner that one achieves serene life.

The 20th century frees itself from ("the obsession of") death, by hiding it, according to the moral duty of preserving man's happiness.

Hypocrisy, lies and secrets surround death and the dying, reduced to the captivity of the hospital. In fact, we can identify various forms of denying the event, such as giving up or shortening the period of wearing mourning clothes, the corpse's make-up, the most emblematic being the medication of the terminal stages of life. Even the dying voluntarily embraces this lie about the reality of death, protecting himself and being shielded by his own emotions when facing death, by the so-called formula: out of love, out of pity, he does not want to be told about his actual life status⁸. Moreover, after the moment of death, mourning signs are also abolished at an individual and social level. This profile also includes keeping children away from any contact with the dead and protecting them from any other sign that would remind them of death⁹. This attitude originates in the fear that facing this moment

⁴ Max SCHELER, *Il dolore, la morte, l'immortalità* [Pain, Death, Immortality], Turin, ElleDiCI, 1983, p. 75-130, here p. 95.

⁵ Metropolitan ANTONIE OF SUROJ, *Despre lucrurile de pe urmă* [On Final Things], Bucharest, Sofia, 2021, p. 78.

⁶ I. C. TEȘU, *Taina morții...* [The Sacrament of Death...], p. 6.

⁷ D. TETTAMANZZI, *Dizionario di Bioetica* [Dictionary of Bioethics], p. 294.

⁸ Maurizio CHIODI, *Etica de la Vita* [The Ethics of Life], Milan, Edizioni Glossa, 2006, p. 181.

⁹ Guido DAVANZO, "Morte/ risurrezione" ["Death/ Resurrection"], in: *Nuovo Dizionario di Spiritualità* [The New Dictionary of Spirituality], Milan, San Paulo, 1985, p. 144 -1055, here p. 1043.

may end up in final failure, a catastrophe¹⁰ that affects man body and soul, true for everybody in a different manner. This is why, irrespective of the cost, it is necessary to run away, so as to diminish all feelings of anxiety, of tensed waiting, in a word, of all angst that arises around that moment calculated as possible failure¹¹. No matter how sublime this running away is, it can turn into trivializing life and death. On the contrary, accepting death, even if not so serenely done, may lead to an honest communication on both parts: doctor – patient, patient – doctor. We can say that a new science has emerged: *mortuary science*. It aims at finding the most convenient means of stripping all feelings related to death and mourning¹². This way of contemplating death is certainly not new in the history of mankind, but it is new in the manner of bringing up this event. Similarly, freeing oneself from this difficult challenge – death – used to be expressed by some attempts at intellectual-philosophical trends, represented by some Antiquity and modern personalities such as Epicurus, Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Nietzsche, Camus and Malraux – with some, being a natural fact, with others, a refuse, a revolt, an exaltation, or an absurdity of the human condition¹³.

Contemporary society, incapable of expressing a cultural image of life aware of the moment of death – understood as the natural end of a possible existence – best hides the end of life in the hospital; formally, in order to provide better medical care for terminally ill patients, essentially, so as to escape the psychological and emotional burden. And here, in the hospital, an accord is reached with the empire of technology, with the bureaucracy of the medical practice and the concepts of organizing medicine, and, eventually, with health care workers, ill-prepared to deal with death and its general needs. Thus, death, devoid of meaning, also loses its nature as a human experience, constitutively relational and all-encompassing.

Nowadays, society responds to the present experience of death by using the quality-of-life¹⁴ criterion, according to which life and death are dignified only when individuals fully assume direct and personal management. The value expressed by contemporary society is no longer that of the sacrality of life, which, at an absolute level, is sacred for the individual and for third parties, but that of the quality of life which assesses life according to criteria of quantity, efficiency, dependent on the principle of proportionality, so as to make the best decision in applying care to the ill¹⁵. In this context, the way of living is subjected to a different and positive assessment, that of moral and legal justifiability, as a consequence of a qualitative evaluation of life, and, therefore, of rendering relative the value of life itself. For example, the proliferation of the so-called centres for palliative care, also known as medical residences, is a positive manifestation of the enhanced preoccupation with the contemporary

¹⁰ M. SCHELER, *Il dolore*,... [*Pain*, ...], p. 95.; also see † ANTONIE OF SUROI, *Despre lucrurile de pe urmă* [*On Final Things*], p. 54.

¹¹ Klaus DEMMER, “Eutanasia” [“Euthanasia”], in: *Nuovo Dizionario di Teologia Morale* [*The New Dictionary of Moral Theology*], Milan, San Paulo, 1990, p. 394-406, here p. 398.

¹² Amilcare GIUDICI, “Morte” [“Death”], in: *Nuovo Dizionario di Teologia* [*The New Dictionary of Theology*], Milan, San Paulo, 1988, p. 954-967, here p. 956.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ Sandro SPINSANTI, “Vita fisica” [“Physical Life”], in: Tullio GOFFI-Giannino PIANA, *Corso di Morale* [*A Course in Morale*], vol. 2, Brescia, Queriniana, 1990, p. 127-281, here p. 205.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 206; also see D. TETTAMANZZI, *Dizionario di Bioetica* [*Dictionary of Bioethics*], p. 295; also see Victor PAJARES, “La qualità di vita nel paziente terminale: valido criterio di giudizio?” [“The Quality of Life with Terminal Patients: Valid Judgment Criterion?”], in: *Studia Bioethica* [*Bioethics Studies*], vol. 3, no. 1-2, Rome, Italy, (2010), p. 93-96, here p. 95.

sensitivity towards the quality of the patient's life during the final chapter of his existence. As we all know, palliative medicine does not claim to cure, but by undertaking such a task or mission belonging to medicine, truth be told, utilitarian, and according to others, hedonistic in respecting the quality of life, it cares for the person facing death at any moment, when there is no chance for a patient to be cured¹⁶.

Modern society is terrified of death. And for a good reason.

Once human life has been denied any transcendental meaning, reduced to the biological life of a *machine-body*¹⁷, death can only be defined as the trivial interruption in the functionality of a machine and the non-recurring end, meaningless for each man. Hence, this end must be hidden, with all the its reminders, starting with the cemetery. In this grasp of "metaphysical relaxation"¹⁸, the phenomenon of death, reduced to the biological fact, is timed, quantified, measured with precision. Death thus acquires a technological dimension, where the sole competence pertains to the doctor¹⁹, whereas the dying becomes an isolated "something"²⁰. Consequently, the close connection between life and death is lost and individualism enhances the isolation of the person suffering; death is ultimately understood as *desocializing*²¹.

In fact, culturalizing the phobia of real deaths is ostentatiously accompanied by a sort of panic of fictitious deaths: celebrating, on TV and in cinemas, the cruel rite of deaths, both numerous and fake and horrible, represents an obsessive effort of stripping real deaths, without special effects, but endowed with that natural effect of radically asking the question about significance, at the same time excluding any partial, fictitious or evasive answer. The spectator is not called upon to answer the questions that the dying individual is asking himself – and the *magna quaestio* that he himself has become²² – but, on the contrary, he feels freed facing fictitious deaths.

One of the most important methods used for cover-up nowadays, deceiving the experience of facing death is surely hospitalizing and medicalizing it: the so-called "terminal" patient – one of the numerous linguistic strategies employed to hide the reality of death and that of "passing away, dying" – is isolated from the rest of the community, frequently abandoned by family and friends, and entrusted solely to the care of the medical personnel. Doctors and – above all – nurses, silently invested with authority by a society that flees from death and from any of its meanings, end up having to manage the majority of deaths, bearing the heavy burden of answering the questions of those they care for: why am I

¹⁶ V. PAJARES, "La qualita di vita..." ["The Quality of Life..."], p. 93.

¹⁷ Cf. Lorenzo CANTONI, "La Carta degli Operatori sanitari. Una presentazione" ["The Charter of Health Care Workers. A Presentation"], in: *Cristianità [Christianity]*, year XXIII, no. 239, May (1995), pp. 6-10.

¹⁸ Martin HEIDEGGER, *Esere e tempo [Being and Time]*, translated by Pietro Chiodi, Milan, Longanesi, 1976, p. 308.

¹⁹ M. CHIODI, *Etica de la Vita [The Ethics of Life]*, p. 182.

²⁰ Renato ZANCHETTA, "L'evento della morte nella realtà e nella cultura odierna. Aspetti antropologici e sociologici" ["The Event of Death in Contemporary Reality and Culture. Anthropological and Sociological Aspects"] in: *Rivista Liturgica [Liturgical Magazine]*, no. 5, September-October, Messagero, Padua, (2006), p. 673-684, here p. 677.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 679.

²² Cf. Stanislaw GRYGIEL, "La salvezza e la salute" ["Salvation and Health"], in: Ermanno Pavesi (ed), *Salute e salvezza. Prospettive interdisciplinari [Health and Salvation. Interdisciplinary Perspectives]*, Milan, Di Giovanni - San Giuliano Milanese 1994, p. 17-36 here p. 27: "When facing death, man begins to wonder about the significance of his being who is born and dies, that is the truth about himself. When facing death, any meaning of death conceived and created by man bears no importance. In other words, before dying, the 'magna quaestio' arises".

alone now, why now, what will happen to me, but also that of fulfilling the need and request for affection, compassion, and warmth. What is more, modern medicine so much multiplies its specialized fields and technologizes its manner of curing, that it tends to forget the human-spiritual dimension of caring for people's health²³.

The members of the medical personnel, whose wide-spread culture allows them to perceive themselves only as "*health care technicians*" for the machine-bodies, have to face and run away from the complete and final failure of their activity. Health care workers are called upon to be in the service of death, and this comes as an obligation meant to respond to other people's rights. Doctors, nurses, pharmacists should consider, as their duty and responsibility, a prompt collaboration in favour of a "*culture of death*". Their work, implicitly meant to protect physical life, should preferably peacefully coexist with their work of procuring death. Without a shadow of a doubt, a doctor's duty of warranting life cannot be questioned, but there are plenty of questions regarding the exact determination of the limitations of his actions, especially in borderline situations²⁴.

This antinomy is obvious when one states that: the medical and health care activity relies on an interpersonal relationship of a certain nature; that it represents the convergence of trust and conscience. "The 'trust' of a man marked by suffering and illness, and he must, therefore, entrust himself to the 'conscience' of another man who can take over the burden of his need and who meets him half way in order to help him, cure him."²⁵ Here, at least beginning with Hippocrates' oath, the only genuine profile of health care workers is that of being the organs of a culture of life. Unfortunately, their duties and responsibilities have been moving in the opposite direction for quite some time. Certainly, the perspective of death, no matter how difficult notifying people about it may be, does not absolve us from telling the truth. The medical and health care activity reveals itself here, relying on the convergence of trust and conscience, in its crucial moment. The trust of a man marked by death becomes an appeal to the conscience of the health care worker rather than to science. The individual's right to be informed about his life state inevitably places health care workers on the path of their specific duty and responsibility. This obviously requires insight and great finesse. It is all about establishing a solidarity relationship with the terminally ill patient, where it is not that necessary to communicate clinical data to him, but to focus on revealing meanings that would lead to good communication and honesty. The patient must not feel alone in his illness, but understood in the true state of his condition and a part of his fellow-men's love. Without a Christian dimension to it, medicine fails its purpose and its place within culture is at great risk of being severely distorted²⁶. Without orienting itself towards God's Kingdom, it is in danger of becoming a practice ill-shaped by politics and economic power, a reality in itself and for itself²⁷, insisting on the biological part of man, without taking into consideration an individual's dichotomic and mystical constitution. It is true that medicine as an institution, and not as charity or therapy, has taken time to reach its

²³ S. SPINSANTI, "Vita fizica" ["Physical Life"], p. 204.

²⁴ K. DEMMER, "Eutanasia" ["Euthanasia"], p. 394.

²⁵ Pontificio Consiglio della pastorale per gli operatori sanitari 1995 [Pontifical Council of the pastoral for health care workers], *Carta degli Operatori sanitari* [The Charter of Health Care Workers], no. 2.

²⁶ H. Tristram ENGELHARDT JR., *Fundamentele Bioeticii creștine* [The Fundamentals of Christian Bioethics], Sibiu, Edit. Deisis, 2005, p. 411.

²⁷ Jean-Claude LARCHET, *Teologia bolii* [The Theology of Illness], Sibiu, Edit. Oastea Domnului, 1997, p. 9.

current level, from Hippocrates and that *miserium fascinosum et tremendum*, to Cartesius (Descartes) with “*maitres et possesseurs de la nature*”²⁸.

If the contemporary situation of medicalizing and hospitalizing death constitutes one of the most important historical conditions meant to help us frame the current debate on death, then mention must be made here: death no longer has any sacrament, in other words, its transcendental meaning has been tampered with. It is a sort of “checkmating” death, achieved by a permanently institutionalized medicine, and, why should we refrain from saying it, constantly politicized, even from this perspective of scientific noblesse²⁹.

Nowadays, people talk about “humanizing medicine” – which consists in acknowledging the individual’s dignity, that of each human being, starting from the moment of conception, up to the moment of death, being aware of his spirituality and immortality. Each individual, by his own unique way of being, is not only made up of the body, but also of the soul, so that the body is given, according to Christian Teaching, at the moment when the souls comes in as well, forming what is called, from a Christian perspective, the human being. Respecting somebody’s dignity entails saving and defending this body-and-soul dichotomic identity³⁰. No doctor can logically claim, as a result of his scientific competence, that he can decide man’s origin or fate. This rule can also be particularly applied to problems raised by sexuality, or procreation, where man and woman apply the fundamental values of love and life. Physical life definitely does not exhaust an individual’s value, nor does it represent the ultimate good for man, which means that man has a fundamental part that moves the biological and which remains hidden to medical science, but which can be disrupted from performing well by therapeutic persistence³¹.

CONCLUSION

Confronted with the trauma of death, human behaviour reacted socially with mourning rituals, which do not attempt to remove death, but rather to achieve a realistic acceptance of it and to promote getting over the shock, looking both for the meaning both of death and of the life which goes on. Thus, there is community conscience of being part of the living and of the dead; the relationship with those who are no longer with us continues after death and there is a feeling of their presence and actions. Therefore, the dead are still alive. The Proskomedia and the Holy Liturgy, the Saturdays of Souls in Orthodox spirituality, as well as the Sunday of All Saints both with the Orthodox, and with the Catholics, transform fear of death into a celebration of the sacrament of death and of the hope for eternal life: “*And if they preach that Christ became resurrect, how can some of you say that there is no such thing as resurrection? And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ did not become resurrect either. And if Christ did not become resurrect, in vain is then our preaching, in vain is your faith, as well*” (I Cor. 15, 12-14). Orthodox experience, founded on revelation and the testimonies of the Western or Eastern Holy Fathers, assures man that death is not a *fiasco*, a failure, but a wide gate, through which man enters another life and another world, happy or sad, according to his deeds in his earthly world and life³².

²⁸ Sandro SPINSANTI, “Salute, malattia, morte” [“Health, Illness, Death”], in: *Nuovo Dizionario di Teologia Morale [The New Dictionary of Moral Theology]*, Milan, San Paulo, 1990, p. 1134-1144, here p. 1141.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ Pr. Leontin POPESCU, *Bioetica și perspectiva creștină [Bioethics and The Christian Perspective]*, Brăila, Istros, 2009, p. 48.

³¹ D. TETTAMANZZI, *Dizionario di Bioetica [Dictionary of Bioethics]*, p. 291.

³² I. C. TEȘU, “Taina morții...” [“The Sacrament of Death...”], p. 7.

“Nor can we excuse that kind of impatience (when losing our loved ones), – says church writer Tertullian – where a certain share of grief can be accepted. We must first consider the Apostle’s words, which say: ‘Do not be sad about somebody’s passing away, like pagans are, for they lack hope.’ And rightfully so. For those of us who believe in Christ’s resurrection also believe in our own resurrection, of those for whom He died and became resurrect. So, where there is resurrection of the dead, there is no pain in death, no impatience in grief. Why should you feel grief if you do not believe that you perished? Why should you be impatient that the one who will come back has gone away for a while? What you perceive as death is just departure”³³.

The Christian proposition regarding the victory over the reign of death comes out of the Easter experience, when the God of life, and loving life, unites mankind to the point of vanquishing the reign of their mutual enemy, but exceeding it by Christ’s resurrection, who becomes an archetype for the entire humanity (1 Cor 15). This is magisterially said by Saint John Chrysostom in his homily against those who get drunk on Easter night: “The Lord has become resurrect, and with Him, the whole world has become resurrect; He has become resurrect, shattering the bonds of death. Adam made a mistake and died, but Christ made no mistake and still died. This is a wonderful thing beyond the natural: that one was wrong and died, but this One was not wrong and also died. What for? So that the one who was wrong and died could be freed from the bonds of death by the One who was not wrong and died”³⁴.

The faith in resurrection bestows meaning upon this great Sacrament of life: namely that death is not destruction, disappearance, but meeting again.

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³³ Quintus Septimius Florens TERTULLIANUS, “De Patientia”, in: JP. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*. vol. 1, col. 1359-1386, here col. 1374C-1375A: “*Ne illa quidem impatientiae species excusatur in amissione nostrorum, ubi aliqua doloris patrocinatur affectio. Proponendus denuntiationis Apostoli qui sit (Thess.IV): ne contristermini dormitione cuiusquam sicut nationes quae spe carent. Et merito. Credentes enim resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos ille et obiit et resurrexit. Ergo cum constet de resurrectione mortuorum, vacat dolor mortis, vacat et impatientia doloris. Cum ergo doleas si periisse non credis? Cur impatienter feras subductum interim, quem credis reversurum? Profectio est, quam putas mortem.*”

³⁴ S. JOANNES CHRYSOSTOMUS, “Adversus Ebriosos et De Resurrectione, sermo habitus in sancta et Magna Dominica Paschae”, in: JP. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 50, col. 433-442, here col. 438: “*Resurrexit enim Dominus secumque suscitavit orbem terratum, ipse siquidem disruptis mortis vinculis resurrexit. Peccavit Adamus et mortuus est: at non peccavit Christus, et mortuus est. Novum est hoc et admirabile; elle peccavit, et mortuus est; hic non peccavit, et mortuus est; quid ita? Quo is qui peccavit et mortuus est, eius opera qui non peccavit quidem, mortuus est autem, mortis nexus possit evadere*”.

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A FUNDAMENTAL LANDMARK OF ESCHATOLOGY: THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE UNCREATED AND CREATED, EXCEPT INCOMPATIBILITY OF THEIR COMMUNION

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ABSTRACT

Orthodox eschatology is based, on the one hand, on the affirmation of the clear distinction between the uncreated nature of God and the created nature of His creatures, and, on the other hand, on the possibility of their union through divine Grace. Towards this eschatological union creation is called ontologically, through the divine reasons based on Reason-Christ, Who draws to Himself man and the universe, because He is at the same time Cause and Target, Alpha and Omega. The Church is working and preparing for the Feast of the Great Union, which will take place at the Second Coming of the Lord.

Keywords: Orthodox Eschatology; Uncreated; Created; Church;

INTRODUCTION

Orthodox eschatology cannot be reduced to an annexation of Dogmatics that describes the "last events", because it represents a "theological space" in which all the other articles on our doctrine of faith intersect¹. It is necessary, therefore, to admit the validity of the concept of *inchoate eschatology*², meaning it is about to be realised, because it fully indicates the reality that is happening in the Church and in the world, linking the three events of human history, the Creation, the Incarnation and the Parousia, in the Same Christ. Redesigning the way of creation to the Kingdom through His entire economy, Christ, even ascended to Heaven, is still the man's fellow-traveler to the Jerusalem Above³.

¹ George Florovsky, *Biserica, Scriptura, Tradiția [Bible, Church, Tradition]*, Editura Platytera, București, 2005, p. 159; Nikolai Berdiaev, *Essai de métaphysique eschatologique*, Aubier, Paris, 1946, p. 6; Petre, Pr. dr. Mădălin Ștefan, *Eshatologia ortodoxă. Raportul dintre eshatologia inaugurată la Cincizecime, eshatologia incoativă și eshatologia finală sau realizată a Cetății ce va să fie [Orthodox eschatology. The relationship between the eschatology inaugurated at Pentecost, the inchoate eschatology and the final or accomplished eschatology of the City that will be]*, Editura Mitropolia Olteniei, Craiova, 2019, pp. 130-131. See the misunderstanding of the term *eschatology* at Henry George Little, Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexikon*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 699

² Henri-Irenée Marrou, *Theologie de l'histoire*, Cerf, Paris, 2006, pp. 81-83

³ „Eschatology means finality, meaning, but also a dynamic teleological relationship between the beginning and the end of creation” (Assistant PhD. Mădălin Ștefan Petre, „The Actuality of Deism. An Analysis from the Perspective of orthodox eschatological Theology”, in *International Journal of Theology, Philosophy and Science*, No. 7, Year 4/2020, p. 108)

If eschatology "facilitates our mystical knowledge on the first and last things"⁴, thus rendering a complete vision of this subject, we can speak of eschatology even from the dawn of creation or from the moment when the Holy Trinity calls all flesh from nothingness into existence, a calling that stays ontologically active throughout the entire creation and which is constantly updated through Revelation and Church until the end of the centuries. Indeed, "the Holy Scripture begins with the creation of the world and ends with the promise of a new creation. Thus we can feel the dynamic tension between these two moments, between the first divine '*fiat*' and the one to come"⁵. It is noteworthy here that God also wanted a human *fiat*, the one pronounced by the Blessed Virgin Mary, to occur between His two *fiat*-s, as an expression of the will of the entire humanity ("Let it be to me according to Your word"). In this regard, the various studies of theology that have appeared in the last decades, highlighting the relationship between the books of *Genesis* and *Revelation*⁶, are explainable not only at typological level or from the prospect of there being an absolutely natural teleological process that links the two moments in the history of creation, but also from the one that brings to light the ontological and eschatological dynamism of creation in Christ-Logos, as the one "Who is, Who was and Who is to come" (Revelation 1:4), "the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 21:6).

Eschatology or the mystery of the creation's pathway to its fulfilment in the Holy Trinity therefore implies the mystery of the relationship between God and man and all the visible creation. From ancient times to the present day, man understood and defined this relationship not uprightly according to the truth. The prophets in the Old Testament and particularly the Holy Apostles and the Fathers of the Church were confronted with some erroneous points of view. The main misconceptions in this regard manifested in three ways: the first consisted of God's impersonality which consequently meant falling into the absolute immanentism of divinity, thus in pantheism, the second one was (and is still) based on the deistic vision, so on the absolute transcendentality of God, in the absence of any communication with the creation, and the third one refers to the relationship of God, the individual and the world, through His being. All those misconceptions of man were due to the confusion and the lack of a clear demarcation of what represents, on the one hand, the absolute distinction between the created and the uncreated, and, on the other hand, the being of God, His works and His will.

1. THE RELATIONSHIP AND ESCHATOLOGICAL TENSION BETWEEN THE UNCREATED AND THE CREATED

These issues listed above have been cleared up from the very beginning of the Holy Scripture, which describes how God created man and the entire world. The first Bible verse settles matters from the outset: "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth"⁷; Therefore, the distinction Moses feels like he has to do it *ab initio* is that the heaven and the earth are *created*, which means they are made by *Someone*, and God is the One who creates, so, in other words, He is the *uncreated* One. The difference between the uncreated and the

⁴Paul Evdokimov, *Ortodoxia [Orthodoxy]*, traducere de Dr. Irineu Ioan Popa, Arhiereu vicar, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1996, p. 64.

⁵Georges Florovsky, *Biserica, Scriptura, Tradiția* p. 159.

⁶See chapter II, *Genesis and Revelation*, written by Father Ioannis Skiadaresis, in *Apocalipsa Sfântului Ioan Teologul. Cele dintâi și cele de pe urmă în dialog [The first and last in Dialogue]*, traducere de Nicolae Burăș, Doxologia, Iași, 2014, pp. 91-141.

⁷*Genesis* 1:1.

created indicates, first of all, the creature's dependence on its Creator, so the ontological, natural limits of creation, from which stems a full range of other characteristics. The fact that the Hebrew and Christian tradition of the Bible testify the creation of the world from nothing, and not from a preexisting material, is crucial in asserting this distinction between God and creation. The Church Fathers have always argued before the heathen philosophy that creating the world from something would indicate a weakness of God, so it would still place Him in the area of the creatures defined by limits. However, to create from nothing means not being conditioned, being out of any constraint, so being out of the created or, in other words, being *uncreated*. God shapes man from dust not because He is powerless, but to show that man is *bound to this material environment by the nature of his body, and, by the breath of God, he rises over this materiality and sets his mind on the things above*.

Therefore, the creation can never, in its essence, by its nature, be like the Creator. "There is absolutely no resemblance between God and creation. So, when we say the created differs from the uncreated, we are not talking about a scientific or philosophical difference (that is, concerning a certain particular difference), but about an absolute difference"⁸. We tend to believe that we can circumscribe God with our mind, that we understand Him, but, in fact, we lower Him, by our judgements, to our level. Even the Bible teachings are *lowered, adapted* to the level of the created being, which is bounded by limits of all kinds. Thus, "all the meanings that Scripture uses, without exception, are taken from what was created, from the world, as subject to limit. There is not even a created reality that is not circumscribed"⁹. The paradox is that it is precisely those who personally know God, namely the saints, are those who assert this, because "when someone reaches the experience of deification, he notes that God has *no name!*"¹⁰.

In the Fathers' theology, regarding the relationship between the two natures, a balance has been maintained between the assertion of a total difference or gap between them and the possibility of their communication and union. For instance, Saint Gregory of Nyssa speaks clearly about the obvious difference of the two natures: "Everything that exists is divided into two: in what is created and in what is uncreated, and the uncreated nature is stable and unchanging, and the created one is unstable and changeable"¹¹. The same is stated by Saint Basil, except that he shows, at the same time, the possibility for the nature created to share from the energy of the uncreated: "We say that there are two things: divinity and creation, domination and service, sanctifying power and what is sanctified, what is virtuous-natured and what is headed, by free choice, towards it"¹².

By creating the visible world, God did not want it to be foreign to Him, but He decided, in His love for humans, that the distance between the created nature and Him would gradually become as small as possible and blur. This purpose was not attained by the early man, but by the incarnation of the Word, the antinomy between the two natures was converted into a symphony, as Saint Maximus asserts: "Even before all ages, God pondered

⁸ Pr. Prof. Ioannis Romanidis, *Teologia patristică [Patristic Theology]*, traducere de pr. Dr. Gabriel Mândrilă, Editura Metafrază, București, 2011, p. 150.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 151.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 151.

¹¹ Sfântul Grigorie de Nyssa, *Despre suflet și înviere [About Soul and Resurrection]*, traducere de pr. Grigore Teodorescu, Ed. Herald, București, p. 197

¹² Sfântul Vasile cel Mare, *Împotriva lui Eunomie* (PSB 4, serie nouă), în *Scrieri dogmatice și exegetice*, traducere de pr. Dumitru Fecioru și revizuită de ierom. Policarp Pîrvuloiu, Ed. Basilica, București, 2011, p. 174.

and appointed the union between what is limited (definite) and unlimited (indefinite), measurable and unmeasurable, bound and boundless, stable and mobile, between the Creator and the creature. And this mystery was fulfilled in Christ, Who was finally revealed over time, bringing with it the fulfillment of the former judgment of God"¹³.

With regard to the second issue, that is the distinction between the four notions concerning God: person, being, will and work, it must be said that such a correct distinction is absolutely necessary to outline or describe God's relationship with the world created by Him. In the book of Genesis we have strong indications for mankind to intuit both truths about the One who created him and the environment of his whole existence, as well as the about way in which he can connect with his Creator.

The fact that God *says* and *does* in the first chapter of *Genesis*, then He *consults* before creating man and, finally, He *talks* to him, is as clear as possible that God is a *Person*, and He confers this personal character to man as well, with whom He *communicates*. Therefore, God cannot be identified with any impersonal energy of the Universe, nor with any of the material ones, but with *Someone* who communicates, so He *responds* to the man who worships Him and calls Him in prayer. In idolatrous, pantheistic religions, this answer of God did not exist, because there was not a conscious *Person* who would listen to man and answer him. Thus, the various signs of nature or history were interpreted as a response to false divinity precisely because of man's need to be heard, understood, to be answered, not to feel alone. Man, even if he were surrounded by an infinite amount of other people with whom he can communicate, deep inside his being it is a space dedicated exclusively to God. Without filling it with the personal presence of the real God, the soul of man, even surrounded by thousands of people, as I said, feels alone.

Regarding the being or nature of God, the Holy Fathers emphasized, based on the biblical revelation, but also on their own spiritual experience, the transcendentality of the divine being or the impossibility of man to know what God represents in His nature. So, there can be no relationship between God and the world created through His divine nature, but through the works of His grace and through His will. Consequently, the created world does not originate from the being of God, because it would be like God, it would have the attributes of an uncreated being, but it is the result of His creative word and will. Everything is born and sustained through the will of God and through the uncreated work or energies of His grace. Therefore, the teaching about the creation of the world *from nothing* is crucial, because there are a lot of distorted visions deriving from it, that ultimately impede man's actual relationship with God. This is also the reason why "the basic condition of the whole life and thought of the early Church is the biblical teaching on the creation of the world from nothing, in accordance with the absolutely positive and fully free work of God"¹⁴: "First of all, believe that there is only One God, the One who created all things and framed and made all things out of nothing, the One who is able to contain the whole, but Himself cannot be contained"¹⁵. This pedagogy of preaching Christ in the first centuries was aimed at breaking the shell in which the human mind was imprisoned by the distorted perception of the

¹³Sf. Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Răspunsuri către Talasie*, in *Filocalia*, Volume III (electronic edition), Apologeticum, 2005, pp. 358-359.

¹⁴ Pr. Prof. Ioannis Romanidis, *Păcatul strămoșesc [Ancestral Sin]*, traducere de protoprezbiter dr. Gabriel Mândrilă, Ed. Sophia/Metafrază, București, 2017, p. 57.

¹⁵ „Păstorul lui Herma” [„The Shepherd of Hermas”], Porunca I, in *Scrierile Părinților Apostolici*, PSB vol. 1, traducere de Pr. Dumitru Fecioru, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1979

relationship between God and man. Firstly, there was a clear boundary between Creator and creation, considering that God is separated from the creation and not immanent in it, eliminating from the outset the perspective of absolutising the creation. Secondly, it was revealed the unique and personal character of God, because He alone, by His will, meaning He did want so, without a necessity, created everything from nothing. Creating the world and man by His will, so by an outpouring of His love, the same God, the tripersonal Love Itself, wants man and the world to be restored in the condition and communion with their Creator through Jesus Christ, God created by *His will and power*, Man while remaining God. In this way, through the connection between Creation and Son's Humanisation, the Apostles laid a path for accepting Christ, as a legitimate God, which is not an invention of man like all the other gods. Therefore, they also connected the Resurrection of Christ with the Father, generically called God, teaching that "God raised Him from the dead"¹⁶.

The creation of the world from nothing, as well as the confession of Christ, as a *mediator* between Creator and creation, indicates the same impossibility of uniting man and the material world with God through His being. However, the gap between man and God given by the intangibility of the divine being is overcome, by the will of God and by his loving condescension, only with the help of divine energies, which raises man to a familiar dialogue with his Creator. The reality of this creative, sustaining and deifying energy is seen only by the saints or the deified, which appears to them as an ineffable light. So, between the uncreated and the created, there is this light of divinity that penetrates the whole creation, and only in this respect can we understand the expression "God is everywhere" or "heaven and earth are filled with Your glory"¹⁷. This deifying light now seen only by the pure ones will fully reveal its work on the Second Coming of the Lord. On the other hand, the deified body of Christ became that "ring of connection"¹⁸ between creation and God-Trinity, the Fathers always confessing that Christ is "consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood"¹⁹.

This connection between the Creation of the world and the Incarnation of the Son made by the early Church and then by the Fathers for the purpose shown above is deeply eschatological, because they opened, by default, the horizon into which man and the rest of creation may *fulfill*, so they let the others sense Christ as their only way of salvation, because if He created us, became man, suffered, died, rose, ascended to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit into the world for us, then only in Him we can find our fulfillment as beings created in His image. Therefore, seeing Him as a deified and ascended man to heaven, it means that we must also become like Him and get where He is, but only with His help. Man can achieve deification by grace, not by essence. In other words, "although time and, in general, material phenomena have begun, by the grace of God, they can gradually become endless. Only God is immortal by nature. The created things become immortal not by ascending above matter

¹⁶ "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts, 4:10)

¹⁷ Ioannis Romanidis, *Teologia patristică*, p. 147

¹⁸ Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă [Orthodox Dogmatic Theology]*, vol. II, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2003, p. 215

¹⁹ The definition on the two natures of Christ, at the Fourth Ecumenical Council-Chalcedon, in Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, vol. II, p. 36

and time, but by putting on the imperishable, through the grace of God"²⁰. So, according to the role model of Christ, man deifies not by removing or obliterating time and matter, but by gaining this immortality and turning into grace within these created conditions open to the reception of the uncreated divine power and energies. This is, actually, the Church of Christ, the one in which the union between the uncreated and the created is dynamically maintained, with the purpose of deifying the latter. This theandric nature of the Church is defined by a strong eschatological character, as Father and Professor Dumitru Stăniloae also shows: "The church is the union of all that exists, or is meant to encompass all that exists: God and creation. It is the fulfillment of God's eternal plan: all-unity. In the Church we find the eternal and the temporal, the latter - destined to be overwhelmed by eternity; the uncreated and the created, the latter - destined to be overwhelmed by the uncreated, to deify; the spiritual of all categories and the matter, the latter - destined for spiritualisation; the sky and the earth penetrated by the sky; the non-spatial and the spatial; *me* and *you*, *me* and *us*, *us* and *you*, united in the divine 'You', or in direct dialogical relationship with Him. *The church is a human me communal in Christ as You, but at the same time its self is Christ.* The church is the self of the prayer of all conscious beings: the humans, angels and saints, the prayer effectively having a great unifying role"²¹.

Speaking of the Church, we cannot fail to refer to the Day of Pentecost, so to the work of the Holy Spirit, which fits together and, actually, unites the members of the Church into a mystical body with the Head-Christ. From now on, Christ the humble and hidden in the earthly life under the veil of human nature and under the patience of powerlessness and death, is revealed by His Spirit as God consubstantial with the Creator and the Father Almighty. The Spirit draws people to the Kingdom opened by Christ and, in order to enter where He is, the same Spirit turns or makes people become like unto Christ, because otherwise, that is, remaining only flesh and blood, without the Spirit, no one can be in the Kingdom of God, which "is not food and drink, but justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"²². Moreover, Pentecost discovers in advance the transfiguration of the world that will occur at the end of the age. The descent of the Holy Spirit on the head of each apostle shows His will that through man God may work on the transfiguration, the entry of grace into the entire universe²³. In this way, the Day of Pentecost also links Genesis, when the Spirit was hovering over the waters, with the meta-event of the renewal of creation, when "there will be new heaven and new earth"²⁴. More precisely, like Christ, the Spirit does not descend to the world to build an "enduring city"²⁵ for it, but to help it see the true eschatological City.

The church is not the Kingdom itself, but only its image or environment in which we breath the fragrance of God's Kingdom and which draws us, by this fragrance of the Spirit, to its springs. In the Church we have all the Truth, all the abundance of grace and all the Revelation and we need nothing more, because the economy of the Holy Trinity has been perfect, so God has done everything for us, so we could, after Pentecost, do something for us in order to share of His gift. This means that "**the history of the Church, from Pentecost, is**

²⁰ Pr. Prof. Ioannis Romanidis, *Păcatul strămoșesc*, p. 73

²¹ Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, p. 214.

²² Romans 14:17.

²³ See the inspiring icon of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, at the base of which the Universe, symbolically painted as a human being, is waiting for the communion of the Holy Ghost through people, "for the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed" (Romans 8:19).

²⁴ Revelation 21:1.

²⁵ Hebrews 13:14.

already the last age, the eschatology inaugurated (highlight belongs to the author)²⁶ or, as another Russian theologian asserts elsewhere, "if the Old Testament was headed towards Messiah, after the Day of Pentecost the ecclesial time changed in the direction of those parusial **novissima**, leading man to the perfection of the **new creature** - a real novelty, for God Himself becomes new Man - **ecce Homo**, absolute Man - being followed the whole world"²⁷.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, after fulfilling the entire work made for us through Christ, God humanised, the work whose highlight is the birth of the Church at Pentecost, we could say that the world and man are coming in a straight line to their endless End. In the Church of Christ, which has maintained unchanged the truth of faith and the fullness of grace from the Day of Pentecost, one experiences under various aspects and in different intensities that antinomian reality expressed in a prayer at the Divine Liturgy: "And You granted us Your Kingdom which is to come". Thus, the presence of the Church in the world is a delicate but firm testimony to the truth of the invisible, perfect world, in which man is called to find rest after his troubled existence, full of contradictions, experiences of failure and, generically speaking, full of the inadequacy of life in our world diverted from its original ideal. In the Church, so in a life in Christ, man finds his "home" because he finds his Father, who leads man. This is why Paul Evdokimov states, in a very appropriate manner, that "knowing God means *recognising Him*", that is, seeing again a loved and long-lost person, but whose memory you keep in the depths of your soul.

However, man has always wandered in different directions, and yet so far away from that "home"! And today man is presented with an infinity of paths that would lead him to fulfillment, but, we must say, there is only one way, the way the apostles of the first centuries pointed to the pagan world, which is on the same line with the Creation, the Incarnation, the Pentecost, the Second coming of the *Same* Lord, who, arriving, will recognise as His Bride only the one who has been faithful to Him, throughout the history, in teaching, in faith and in living. Thus, if in the old parable Peter asked Christ: *Quo vadis, Domine?*, today, it is necessary to ask otherwise: *QUO VADIS, HOMINE?*

²⁶ Paul Evdokimov, *Ortodoxia*, p. 333.

²⁷ Paul Evdokimov, *Iubirea nebună a lui Dumnezeu [L'amour fou de Dieu]*, [*The foolish Love of God*], traducere de Teodor Bakonsky, Editura Anastasia, București, 1999, p. 69.

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THE PURPOSE OF THE WILDERNESS AND CELL IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SHAPING OF THE MONK

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ABSTRACT

Anachoreism is a fascinating feature of Eastern monasticism. Many of the ascetic treatises, and especially the philocal collection, come from the heroic world of the anchorite monks who lived in uninhabited territories, wild but, above all, desert places. From the first centuries of the Christian Church, there are emblematic figures of the anchorite monk in the Egyptian space, who retreated to the desert, such as St. Paul of Thebes, the first Egyptian hermit known by name. The premise from which our study starts is that the geographical places chosen by the Christian anchorites, in this case the desert, the mountain, the forests, the isolated places, the caves, etc., predispose them to some psychospiritual transformations that they do not it could acquire (easily, or ever) in a very populated and stirred space. We have chosen for analysis and interpretation two habitats very common in the writings of the Desert Fathers: the desert (desert) and the cell. These two "special" spaces denote some characteristics that imprint special features in the psychology and personality of the needy. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to present the psychological and practical significance of the retreat of anchorites in the desert and in the cell, respectively, proving, at the same time, that loneliness is for the Fathers of the desert, the element without which it would not have achieved so much spiritual performance in the inner space.

Keywords: anchorage; Fathers of the wilderness; psychic and spiritual transformations; loneliness; spiritual performances;

INTRODUCTION

The man who has reached the high steps of prayer can also pray in the middle of a public square without feeling disturbed, but, in contrast, the one with the scattered mind cannot pray even in the middle of the desert, where he does not see or hear any man. However, vigilance and prayer are practices that require both psychophysical training and a favorable spatial framework. To enter a deep inner state, the prayer needs a specially arranged place, sheltered from bustle of the world. Otherwise, what would be the point of Christ's exhortation: "But when you pray, enter into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father"¹. Although the space of the place of worship, the church, remains the holiest place on earth because on the table of the Holy Altar is celebrated even daily (in monasteries and some parish churches) the Divine Liturgy, in which the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, however, we can note that, in the history of Christianity, the anchorites chose, with

¹ Mt. 6, 6

predilection, certain geographical places, such as the desert, mountain, forests, isolated places, caves (from here we have so many localities or eponymous places), and even cemeteries (St. Antony the Great stayed in a tomb for many years), the garden, the pillar, etc., looking for the Hesychia, the prayer of the mind, severe asceticism, all from the desire to unite with God and to transfigure his psychosomatic function.

Assaulted both by the bustle and the noise of the world and by the sins of the society in which they lived, some Christians came out of the midst of the cities, looking for "special" places to devote themselves entirely to the real and profound intimacy with God. These, called anchorites, monks, loners, Hesychasts, "arranged" (we could say they sanctified) more "special" places, sometimes near the places of origin, but, most often, far from them, in the desert, in uninhabited territories and wild places. Because the human foot had not stepped on "dead leather shoes" in those spaces, they had a "cleaner" air, less poisoned by people's words, habits, and evils. The Grace descended through the prayers and asceticism of the hermits, made these places desolate, a heavenly Jerusalem, filled with the fragrance and presence of God. This spiritual reality led Benedicta Ward to state, in the *Introduction* to her prestigious work, *Historia Monachorum*, that anchorites can be compared to trees that purify and oxygenate the atmosphere, through their presence and prayers².

The Christian ascetic literature highlights the desert and wilderness as scenes on which they are transposed into metaphysical dramas and psychological experiences difficult to intuit. The purpose of this article is to discover the psychological and practical significance of the retreat of anchorites in the desert, respectively in the cell, proving, at the same time, that loneliness is for the Fathers of the desert, the element without which it would not have achieved so much spiritual performance in the inner space. The desert, the cell, the mountain, and the other places mentioned are cataloged as spaces favorable to ascetic work and inner spiritual evolution. In association with contemplative practices, these places are appreciated as life generators³.

1. THE WILDERNESS

From the beginning, we must emphasize that the desert does not only designate empty places, unfit for life, but it means, in general, all those places uninhabited by people, "wild" places. Even though anachronistic Christian monasticism has its origins in the desert of Egypt, yet when we speak of the Desert Fathers and Christian anchorites, we do not think that they lived only in places full of sand, unfavorable to life. In this sense, the Egyptian desert was for Christians in North Africa, oppressed by wars, persecutions, etc., which were the forests and mountains for Romanians in times of hardship, a place of refuge, rescue⁴. But in our study, we will analyze the characteristics of the desert wilderness and the psychological implications of Christian anchorites.

The desert or wilderness holds a special place in biblical, Old, and New Testament history. Hebrew books treat this space as a totally unsuitable habitat for crops⁵. In the *ibrī*

² Benedicta Ward, *Lives of the Desert Fathers: The Historia Monachorum in Aegypto*, London and Oxford: Mowbray, 1980, p. 12.

³ Cf. Meredith McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*, NY: Oxford, New York, 2008, p. 52.

⁴ Pr. Vasile Răducă, *Monahismul egiptean. De la singurătate la obște*, Ed. Nemira, București, 2003, p. 69.

⁵ The Hebrew words 'midbar', 'arabah', 'tsiyah', 'tohu', 'chorbah', 'yeshimon', 'eremia' and 'eremos' have a common meaning in opposition to the land arranged and worked. (George Williams, *Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought: The Biblical Experience of the Desert in the History of Christianity and the Paradise Theme in the Theological Idea of the University*, Harper and Bros, New York, 1962, p. 12)

conception, the desert had a dual connotation: on the one hand, it was considered an evil space, and on the other hand, a space of the revelation of the epiphanies and the divine covenant⁶. The children of Israel did eat manna in the wilderness for forty years. Some of the prophets, such as Elijah, Elisha⁷, or John, the Forerunner of the Lord⁸, went into the wilderness to worship the Lord. Also in the New Testament, there is talk about the Savior's exits into the wilderness, sometimes accompanied by disciples⁹, sometimes led by the Holy Spirit, where he lived "with wild beasts"¹⁰ and was "tempted by the devil"¹¹. Episodes of exorcism are told in the Gospels, the demons being cast out by the Savior in the desert or in desolate places¹². Thus, the desert still appears like an empty territory, harassed by demons and evil energies, "a place of trial"¹³. The wilderness is frightening not so much by the fact that it's the equivalent of the ocean on land, but especially by the fact that it conveys great loneliness and desolation, being considered a "land of death"¹⁴. The Arabic word used (dry valley) suggests very well what the desert lands were like¹⁵.

In classical pre-Christian literature, the figure of the hermit can be associated with the legend of the Truth that flees from corrupt cities and the imposture of the people, preferring solitude in the desert¹⁶. Authors such as St. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, St. Basil the Great, St. John Cassian, etc. would talk about the contrast between the purity of the air, the life in the deserted places, and the moral misery of urban life¹⁷. But early Christian asceticism, inspired by the Holy Scriptures and threatened by the social realities of the time, manages to give the desert special importance and a special significance,¹⁸ so that the uncultivated, sandy, rocky and uninhabited desert becomes an extremely valuable space for

⁶ Associated with the curse, exile or death (Num. 20, 4-5; Deut. 1, 19; Is. 21, 1; Jer. 2, 6), wilderness is also a place of refuge, purification, divine alliance and the birth of a people (Ieș. 3, 2; 19, 1-20; Deut. 32, 10; Cânt. 3, 6; Ps. 55, 7; Jer. 9, 1).

⁷ IV Reg. 2, 25

⁸ Cf. Matei 3, 3

⁹ Lc 9, 10.

¹⁰ Mc. 1,12-13

¹¹ Mt. 4, 14.

¹² Mt. 12, 42.

¹³ Andrei Pleșu, *Despre îngeri*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2003, p. 144.

¹⁴ Since ancient times, the fertile land of the Nile Valley was attributed to the god of life, Osiris and Horus, his son, and the endless desert, devoid of any potential of existence, on both sides of the valley of this river, was considered to belong to Seth, the god death (Lucien Regnault, *Viața cotidiană a Părinților deșertului in Egiptul secolului IV*, trad. diac. Ioan I. Ică jr, Ed. Deisis, Sibiu, 2013, p. 31). In fact, classical Greek and Roman culture identified piety with the cult service of the city and invested the places in the wild with a negative connotation, which lacked the presence and protection of the gods: "The important gods were the patrons of urban settlements, and exile threatened to loss the relationship with these deities, rather than promise it" (Adler, Judith, „Cultivating Wilderness: Environmentalism and Legacies of Early Christian Asceticism”, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XLVIII (2006), 1, pp. 4-37, p. 11).

¹⁵ Jean Brémond, *Părinții pustiei*, introducere și comentarii traduse, din limba franceză, de Marinela Bojin, Nemira, București, 2010, p. 141.

¹⁶ André-Jean Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, vol. 1, Librairie Lecoffre, Paris, 1950, pp. 45-66; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, ed. A. Robert Caponigri, Regnery, Chicago, 1969, p. 48.

¹⁷ The association of the desert with hermit peace had a well-marked place in the ascetic traditions of South Asia, known to Roman Egypt (vezi Olivelle J. Patrick, "Village vs. Wilderness: Ascetic Ideals and the Hindu World", in: Austin Creel, Vasudha Narayan (eds.), *Monastic Life in the Christian and Hindu Traditions*, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, 1990, pp. 125-161).

¹⁸ For more details on this topic, see: Antoine Guillaumont, Claire Guillaumont, „La conception du désert chez les moines d'Egypte”, in: *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, CLXXXVIII (1975), pp. 3-21.

Christian hermits¹⁹, they create a truly spiritual and intellectual universe (thousands of manuscripts and countless pages have been written here containing a deep spirituality).

In the middle of the third century, during Decius persecution, many Christians fled to the desert of Egypt to escape martyrdom and save their lives. For these Christians, nourished by the spirit of Scripture and the example of the martyrs, the desert was not so frightening, on the contrary, they considered their experience to be similar to one of the Jewish people in the time of Moses, who was led by God out of Egyptian bondage in the desert and later taken to the Promise Land²⁰. Primary Christian literature identifies the empty space, the wilderness in general, with a framework out of the normality of human existence, where, on the one hand, the animal, the irrational, and the demonic appear, and on the other hand, the sublime, the suprarational and the angelic²¹. Judith Adler argues that from the 4th to the 7th century, the desert received new meanings²². Thus, the meaning of the wilderness came to equate less with "the nature of the earth than with the general concept of ascetic retreat"²³. With the migration of Christians to these unknown and repulsive places, the word desert begins to be associated, not so much with a geographical space difficult to access and unfavorable to life, but especially with "a space of spiritual experience, change, and transformation of the ascetic"²⁴.

The desert territories had a uniform and homogeneous appearance, shapes stretched linearly to the distances of the horizon and monotonous colors, black-reddish or yellow²⁵, which invaded the entire retina of the eye, favoring a deepening of the spiritual life. Looking for an arid space, bare and empty of any landscape, the Desert Fathers imprinted these features on their own minds: clarity, homogeneity, the emptiness of the imaginary. The "empty" wilderness was indicated as an ideal place to explore and cultivate the "inner" spaces of the soul. In this sense, the observation of Judith Adler takes shape: The saints and deserts of hagiographic literature mirror one another: "pure", "rugged," "terrible," "mountainous" wilderness offers the very image of the mind of a holy man, whose ascribed qualities, in turn, sanctified real geographical spaces"²⁶.

¹⁹ From the Greek "eremia" - empty place; loneliness (see James E. Goehring, "The Encroaching Desert: Literary Production and Ascetic Space in Early Christian Egypt", in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, I (1993), 3, pp. 281-296, p. 281).

²⁰ "Wilderness was a foundational premise of Israel's cult [...] The Lord of the Jews reveals His name, shows His face, dictates His laws, performs His acts in the desert; His chosen people wander in the wilderness for a generation; His prophets withdraw from sinful cities, returning to the desert to renew their relationship with Yahweh" (J. Adler, "Cultivating Wilderness...", p. 13).

²¹ "On the one hand, the desert is a place of beauty, [...] on the other hand, the desert becomes a continuous challenge on the edge of the inhabited world, a place of extreme experience" (Pr. Daniel Benga, "Tipuri de spații teofanice. Câteva schițe de fenomenologie", în: Adrian Lemeni, Adrian Sorin Mihalache (eds.), *Realitatea și Semnificația spațiului*, Ed. Basilica, București, 2014, pp. 261- 275, p. 267).

²² "Between the fourth and seventh centuries, desert, until very recently simply synonymous with empty, uncultivated wild lands, became established as a principal character, [...] in human metaphysical dramas. [...] as sanctity's distinctive habitat: penitential, sacramental, redemptive, self-re-creative space of the first order" (J. Adler, "Cultivating Wilderness...", p. 10).

²³ Tim Vivian, *Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt and the Life of Onnophrius*. Cistercian Publ., 2000, pp. 18-26, *apud* James E. Goehring, "The Dark Side of Landscape: Ideology and Power in the Christian Myth of the Desert", in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, XXXIII (2003), 3, pp. 437-451, p. 446.

²⁴ Pr. D. Benga, "Tipuri de spații teofanice...", p. 267.

²⁵ The visible and sharp separation between black (fertile land) and red (desert) in the Egyptian landscape provides the natural ingredients of this natural ecological division, with reflections in the spiritual separation of the ascetic from the world. (cf. J. E. Goehring, "The Dark Side of Landscape..", p. 439).

²⁶ J. Adler, "Cultivating Wilderness..", p. 17.

The Desert Fathers showed, par excellence, the deep meaning of the wilderness in Christian spirituality. They highlighted this wild space as an arena of spiritual struggle, as an experiment of human limits, as a space of interference between human and other forms of being.

The demons who had taken refuge in the wilderness were totally uncomfortable with the presence of the ascetic saints, who stormed the entire wilderness of Egypt²⁷. Monks often took refuge in the "deep" desert (for example, the Sketis desert) out of a desire to climb the not at all gentle steps of asceticism and spiritual struggles. In this regard, the wilderness was the "limit test" of the monastic, hermit vocation. Therefore, the concept of "wilderness" was increasingly synonymous either with the space possessed by demons and evil forces, or with the privileged, clean space in which the divine epiphanies were revealed. Alistair McGrath testifies to this fact when arguing that "a world without wilderness might be one whose demons had been routed from their last stronghold by enterprising Christian pioneers, or one in which the empty spaces, chosen by God for epiphany and alliance, or by men for penitential purification, self-recreation and communion, had been irreparably destroyed by sin"²⁸. In the natural setting of the desert, there appears, with the presence of the monks, a separation, a rift in the ontic space, as "the material desert becomes a paradise of the spirit"²⁹.

The Philocalys, writings with a pronounced ascetic character, describe the desert as that experiential spiritual laboratory where the Fathers came intending to empty themselves and with the intention of spiritual struggle. St. Isaac the Syrian reveals to us that the holy angelic powers are seen by the worthy, and bring them discoveries (visions), in places more desolate and more distant from people³⁰. St. Isaac also claims that God's work is shown mainly in the wilderness, the "land of peace"³¹, a fact confirmed in the 14th - 15th century, by Calise and Ignatius Xanthopol Fathers, who would argue that God's work is obviously felt in the "peace land" and, in general, in places away from the disturbance of living with people³². St. John the Ladder talks about the great battles that the hermits endure from demons, in the places of peace, emphasizing the fact that the latter were driven out into the wilderness by the Lord and they like to spend time in these arid places. Therefore, the

²⁷ Satan complained to Antony that the territory he ruled had diminished greatly because of the Christians: "So I have no place, no arrow, no city. They have become Christians everywhere. Finally, the desert was filled with monks" (Sf. Atanasie cel Mare, *Viața Cuviosului părintelui nostru Antonie*, trad., introd. și note Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, în *PSB*, 16, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1988, p. 217).

²⁸ Alistair McGrath, *The Reenchantment of Nature: The Denial of Religion and the Ecological Crisis*, New York: Doubleday, 2002, *apud* J. Adler, "Cultivating Wilderness...", pp. 29-30

²⁹ Eucherius din Lyon, *De laude eremi*, 39, *apud* J. E. Goehring, "The Dark Side of Landscape...", p. 447; The desert becomes, in fact, a heaven on earth, a place that "holds [the saints] as in their mothers' laps," that protects them from Satan as a strong-walled sheepfold guards the sheep, that dispenses with the need of civil laws because "the obligations of eternal life are observed more exactly," where "no sound is heard . . . save the voice of God" (Eucherius din Lyon, *De laude eremi*, 34-37, *apud* J. E. Goehring, "The Dark Side of Landscape...", p. 447). Translations of this writing: Eucherius of Lyon's *De laude eremi* este editat de Karl Wotke, *Sancti Eucherii Lugdunensis Epistula de laude heremi*, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Prague, 1894, pp. 178-94; and Salvator Pricoco, *Eucherii De laude eremi*, Catania: Centro di Studi Sull'Antico Cristianesimo, 1965; It is translated into English by Charles Cummings, "Praise of the Desert: A Letter to Hilary of Lérins, Bishop, by Eucher of Lyons", in: *Cistercian Studies*, XI (1976), pp. 60-72.

³⁰ Sf Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoia, Despre deosebirea lacrimilor, în *Filocalia*, vol. X, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2008, p. 396.

³¹ Idem, Cuvinte despre nevoia, Cuv. XIX, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 93.

³² Calist și Ignatie Xanthopol, Cele 100 de capete, 85, în *Filocalia*, vol. VIII, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2009, p. 165.

demons are terribly at war with the monks to make them return to the world³³. It is very relevant, in this regard, the moment when Antonie the Great came to the desert when he was greeted with hostility by demons who were trying with all their might to get him out of this territory: "Leave these places that belong to us. What is between you and the wilderness? You do not receive our temptations"³⁴. Most of the monks came to the desert armed with an extraordinary spiritual force. Known as the realm of demons, the unseen war had become much more open and with much stronger bursts. If in society the demon worked through human relations, in the desert the monk fought face to face with him.

Nevertheless, the monks believed that they could more easily acquire virtues and redemption if they left the middle of the world and fled into the wilderness because here they could dedicate themselves to prayer and serve God³⁵. Thus, the refugees in the deepest desert felt comforted by its harshness, considered the most appropriate environment in which they can detach themselves from the body and life pleasures. In this regard, the conversation between avă Avram and avă John Cassian is relevant: "We could have placed our cells on the Nile riverbed, to have water for flowers, so we won't be forced to bring it on our shoulders from a distance of four thousand steps; [...] in which there is no lack of trees laden with fruits, beautiful gardens and we would all be in abundance [...] But turning our face from all this and despising all the pleasure of this world, we feel delighted by the harshness of the wilderness, [...] and the eternal comforts of the Spirit"³⁶. Therefore, from the hermits perspective, the desert is the perfect place where they can practice their human virtues and limits to imitate Christ the Savior. They were willing to resist fearlessly from hunger and distress, considering their temptations much easier to bear compared to those in cities and towns³⁷. Just the thought that they could become imitators of Christ (before they began the mission of preaching in the Jordan, they retreated into the wilderness for forty days and nights) unleashed in them a feeling of sublime joy³⁸.

The longing to spend with God and the search for union with Him in the contemplation mysteries were the motivations that aroused the anchorites to leave far from the world, in the "Peace Land". Thus, when St. Gregory of Sinai asks the Pious Maximus Cavsocalivitus whether he was entitled, as a result of Jesus' prayer, to receive any ekstas, any "self-denial" or at least a divine pretense, he replied, "O Father, that's why I went to a deserted place"³⁹.

These living people of the experience of Christ came to the wilderness to empty themselves, rejecting any imprint of things in the world. Thus, the desert environment became the pure mind archetype, emptied of passions. The pious Nichita Stithatul associated the neglecting of one's own will and the abandonment of bodily wills with a "leaving into the wilderness of passions"⁴⁰, and Ilie Ecdicul would say that not working for passions is a "stay

³³ Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Cartea despre nevoițe, Cuv. XV, 59, 60, în *Filocalia*, vol. IX, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2011, p. 215

³⁴ Sf. Atanasie cel Mare, *Viața Cuviosului Părintelui nostru Antonie*, XIII, în *PSB*, 16, p. 200.

³⁵ Cf. Monahul Augustin, Prolog la prima ediție, în *Filocalia*, vol. XII, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2009, p. 11, p.15.

³⁶ Sf. Ioan Casian, Convorbiri duhovnicești, Partea a III-a, XXIV, Convorbirea Pr. Avraam. Despre mortificare, II, în *PSB*, 57, trad. prof. Vasile Cojocaru și prof. David Popescu, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1990, p. 725.

³⁷ Sf. Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, Cuv. XXVI, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 132.

³⁸ St. Isaac the Syrian compares the feeling of joy of hermits who go to deserted places with the feelings of the bird Herodius, who lives in deserted areas, protected from the presence of people (Cf. Sf Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, Cuv. LXXIII, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 331).

³⁹ *Apud* Teofan, *Viața Cuviosului Maxim Cavsocalivitul*, în *Filocalia*, VIII, p. 471-472.

⁴⁰ Nichita Stithatul, *Cele 300 de capete despre făptuire*, 75, 76, în *Filocalia*, vol. VI, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2008, p. 213.

in the wilderness"⁴¹. This philocaly author also states that entering the wilderness would be equivalent, in terms of contemplative prayer, to the first two steps, which have as their objective the reason feeling⁴². The fact that the desert offers the mind a therapeutic framework for healing the passions, is strengthened, much later, by the Vasile monk from Poiana Mărului († 1767), who, interpreting the writings of St. Gregory of Sinai, specifies that the mind will taste the sweetness much more spiritual when he closes it in the wilderness (in solitude, isolation)⁴³. Commenting on this text, Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae states that the desert outside is a face of thoughts emptying⁴⁴. Then the very human heart becomes an "inner land of peace"⁴⁵.

From what has been said so far, we understand that the desert appears to the spiritual man as a world revealed by the "deceptive ornamentation of its social «adornments»"⁴⁶, but precisely this extreme ambiance, of uninhabited, uncultivated, arid, dry, wild space, makes it face to face with himself. The frightening expanse and silence, intrinsic qualities of a kid, have a wholesome effect on the mind. In a setting devoid of many outside stimuli (the desert), the hermit only has to dive into himself and create inside a "sanitized" environment, purified and free from disorder, a proper environment leading to contemplative calm. Descended into the deserted space of the heart, the anchorite is "compelled to go deeper and deeper on the path of purification of the heart, and [...] to gradually discover all the secrets of God's ways"⁴⁷. According to Fr. Ioan Teșu, in order "to become «spiritual», the Christian needs to live the «experience of the wilderness», to experience in his life this dimension of the spiritual, whether it is an external or an internal desert"⁴⁸. "Emptiness" means, therefore, detachment, despair and stripping off everything that has "grounded" us.

The hermit has a fascinating dose of courage compared to the ordinary man, for the latter, the desert being "the territory of a great loneliness", especially when he remains with himself⁴⁹. In addition to courage and spiritual strength, the hermit also has a great inner power of conversion, through the very severe ascetic discipline he assumes in the uninhabited and unfavorable places of life. It is a struggle for life, but it is not limited to biological life. Referring to the ascetic life in the desert, Andrei Pleșu resembles it to military training and techniques, and even more, to the alarm state, specific to the state of war⁵⁰. Paul Evdochimov will say that the desert is a real "anthropological laboratory"⁵¹. We are fascinated by the multitude of people transfigured in the wilderness, in this city of angels⁵²,

⁴¹ Ilie Ecdicul, Culegere din Sentinețele înțelepților, Capete despre cunoștință, 125, în *Filocalia*, vol. IV, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2009, p. 269.

⁴² Ilie Ecdicul, Culegere din Sentinețele înțelepților, Capete despre cunoștință, 125, în *Filocalia*, IV, p. 269.

⁴³ Preacuviosul Vasile de la Poiana Mărului, Cuvânt înainte sau călăuză, în *Filocalia*, VIII, p. 515.

⁴⁴ *Filocalia*, VIII, nota 1023, p. 515.

⁴⁵ *Filocalia*, VIII, nota 420, p. 165.

⁴⁶ Cf. *L'Ermitage. Spiritualite du Desert...*, pp. 4-5, apud A. Pleșu, *Despre îngeri...*, p. 144.

⁴⁷ L. Regnault, *Viața cotidiană a Părinților...*, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁸ Pr. Ioan C. Teșu, *Teologia necazurilor și alte înțelesuri*, Ed. Christiana, București, 1998, p. 19.

⁴⁹ Cf. *L'Ermitage. Spiritualité du Desert...*, pp. 4-5, apud A. Pleșu, *Despre îngeri...*, p. 143.

⁵⁰ "The asceticism of the fighter in the desert [...] aims to ensure the human aggregate a front condition. Control of physical and mental energies, reduction of "consumption", perfect mastery of the body and emotions are the minimum endowments of an effective "fighter" (A. Pleșu, *Despre îngeri...*, p. 146).

⁵¹ Paul Evdokimov, *Femeia și mântuirea lumii*, prefață de Olivier Clément, trad. Gabriela Moldoveanu, Asociația filantropică medicală creștină Christiana, București, 1995, p. 66.

⁵² Sf. Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, Cuv. V, în *Filocalia*, X, , p. 46.

where they became gods by grace⁵³. For the philocaly man, the kid remains that *stadium* in which he always spends flaming, ready for battle, like a true soldier of Christ, who achieves amazing metaphysical victories⁵⁴.

2. THE CELL

In the conditions of the desert population, the monk's requirement to dedicate himself to prayer and spiritual life no longer seemed achievable⁵⁵. For example, Nitrian monasticism would expand its community to the deep desert, which will be called *Kellia*, because many monks had come to Nitria and there was no peace. Under these conditions, one of the requirements of the rulers and advisors was that their disciples remain in the cell⁵⁶. The monks received this obedience, to remain in the cell for days, weeks, or even longer periods of time. The cell in the sketic desert (Sketis, in Greek) designated, as today on Mount Athos, a house with at least two rooms, surrounded by a brick wall. Many times, in the courtyard of the cell, a fountain, and a vegetable garden was arranged. In a cell, several brothers usually lived, in which case the cell had several rooms⁵⁷. But we know the case of St. Macarius the Alexandrian, who, eager to try many forms of asceticism, built several types of cells in the desert, of different sizes. Some of the cells had no windows, and one was so narrow that he could not stretch his legs⁵⁸. In the following lines, we want to emphasize, especially, the importance of the cell space for the psychology and spiritual evolution of the anchorites.

Staying in the cell fulfills, in a concrete way, the advice: "Enter your pantry..."⁵⁹, proving to be the most suitable place for prayer. In this small and dimly lit cell space, the ascetic's lifestyle includes ritual activities that sanctify him. Certainly, the essential activity of the monk in the cell was prayer. She accompanied and crowned any activity. Therefore, Ava Isaiah summarizes, in a few words, the main activities that the monk performs inside the cell: the hands work (rucodelia), meditation and prayer⁶⁰. Therefore, most of the time spent in the cell was dedicated to these few activities. The limited space of the cell encloses the mental space of the prayer. This closure, censorship of the body in the cell becomes an exercise in the protection of thoughts of the mind. About this fact St. John Cassian says: "No one can avoid this waste of thoughts and worries if he has not closed his body and soul

⁵³ "For in the wilderness many fathers lived the life of angels. [...] prophets who have reached a divine state" (B. Ward, *Lives of the Desert Fathers...*, p. 49)

⁵⁴ Cf. Sf. Ioan Casian, Despre așezămintele mănăstirești și despre tămăduirile celor opt păcate principale, Introducere. Viața ascetului e o luptă, în *PSB*, 57, p. 61.

⁵⁵ "In the depths of the wilderness, about ten miles from *Nitria*, was the place called *Kellia*, because it was full of cells far apart from each other, at such a distance that they could not recognize each other, nor be seen with their eyes, not even to hear their voices clearly" (J. Brémond, *Părinții pustiei...*, p. 142).

⁵⁶ "Close the door of the cell and the door of the tongue to the body, and the door of the spirit (evil) inside" (Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Carte despre nevoințe, Cuv. XXVII, 17, în *Filocalia*, IX, p. 337. This text is also taken over by Calist and Ignatie Xanthopol Fathers (Cele 10 de capete, 47, în *Filocalia*, VIII, p. 96). Another well-known text, which emphasizes the power of wisdom conferred by retreat into the cell, is rendered by St. Simeon the New Theologian and later by Peter Damaschin, of ava Moise: "Sit in your cell and it will teach you all of you" (Sf. Simeon Noul Teolog, Metoda Sfintei rugăciuni. Despre al treilea fel de rugăciune, în *Filocalia*, VIII, p. 464; see also, Sf. Petru Damaschin, Învățătură duhovnicești, în *Filocalia*, vol. V, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2009, p. 65).

⁵⁷ Pr. Vasile Răducă, *Monahismul egiptean. De la singurătate la obște*, Ed. Nemira, București, 2003, p. 110.

⁵⁸ More details about the life of St. Macarius the Alexandrian, see Paladie, *Istoria Lausiacă (Lavsaicon)*, 18, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1993.

⁵⁹ Mt. 6, 6.

⁶⁰ Isaia Pustnicul, Douăzeci și nouă de cuvinte, IX, 2, în *Filocalia*, XII, p. 94.

eternally between the walls of his cell"⁶¹. In this sense, Ava Filimon confesses that, since he came to the Hermitage, he hasn't allowed the thought to leave the cell and had no other form of thought, apart from the fear of God and future judgments⁶². St. Isaac the Syrian also prescribes the monks' manner to spend time in the cell solitude⁶³. This cell space was a mind shell in which he protected his purity in relation to the deeds, the words, the things of the world in general. St. Isaac argues the need to remain alone in the cell because, by not making contact with the evil deeds of men, his perception of men will become so optimistic and spiritual that he will consider all of them saints⁶⁴. In addition, Calise and Ignatius Xanthopol recall that staying in the cell has a well-defined role in the monk's conduct; inside the cell, he guards his life in the spirit of discoveries (contemplations)⁶⁵. These words are reminiscent of what St. John the Ladder had confessed long before, namely, that inside the cell is the house of knowledge (contemplation)⁶⁶ and that he who rests in the cell, closes the nonphysical body in the body house⁶⁷.

For most of the Philocaly Fathers, staying in the cell involves taking care of one's own repentance, being mindful of prayer, and shedding many tears⁶⁸. When it comes to meditation, the subject is quite broad, as shown by Theodore of Edessa, when he urges the monk to first gather his mind and imagine the moment of death, than to meditate on the ephemerality and vanity of the world and on the judgment of the Savior, where he will receive accusations from the demons, who here on earth have instilled temptations in his thoughts and words⁶⁹. Peter of Damascus urges that meditation starts from what surrounds him. For example, seeing the darkness in the cell, associate it with the darkness of the deep⁷⁰.

However, staying in the cell for an indefinite period has whole psychology in the substratum. The most experienced ascetics (the elders of the wilderness) knew that many of the disciples who had come very enthusiastically to this hardship place to find God were leaving in a very short time when they saw what a struggle it must be in this environment. The elders knew that for monks tempted by spatial freedom and fellowship, staying in the cell was a hard test to pass. Rare were the hermits, such as Ava Isaiah, who, founding a monastery in Gaza, locked himself in the house and didn't want to see anyone but Peter, the disciple's leader, through whom he communicated various answers to others⁷¹.

This exercise of staying in the cell involves many downs, as the hermit experienced periods of anxiety, boredom, and disgust, and the desire to get out of the cell took shape inside him, finding seemingly very well-intentioned reasons to go out and visit other brothers. The isolation required was, in this case, an antidote to "vagrancy" that tortured the hearts of many who came to the wilderness. This impediment makes Evagrie the Ponticus say that the lust for wandering spoils the wicked mind and that the only means of correction

⁶¹ Sf. Ioan Casian, Convorbiri duhovnicești, Partea a III-a, XXIV, Convorbirea Pr. Avraam. Despre mortificare, III, în *PSB*, 57, p. 726.

⁶² Ava Filimon, Cuvânt foarte folositor, în *Filocalia*, IV, p. 158.

⁶³ "... in your cell [...] always deal with the contemplation of tropes and catechisms and with the thought of death and the hope of the future" (Sf. Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoință, Cuv. LXVII, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 311).

⁶⁴ Sf. Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoință, Cuv. LVIII, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 273.

⁶⁵ Sf. Calist și Ignatie Xanthopol, Cele 100 de capete, 28, în *Filocalia*, VIII, p. 64.

⁶⁶ Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Cartea despre nevoințe, Cuv. XXVII, 10, în *Filocalia*, IX, p. 336.

⁶⁷ Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Cartea despre nevoințe, Cuv. XXVII, 5, în *Filocalia*, IX, p. 335.

⁶⁸ Simeon Evlaviosul, Capete morale, 17, în *Filocalia*, VI, p. 91.

⁶⁹ Teodor al Edessei, Una sută capete, 57, în *Filocalia*, IV, p. 197.

⁷⁰ Sf. Petru Damaschin, Învățătură duhovnicești, Cuv. 22, în *Filocalia*, V, p. 222.

⁷¹ Monahul Augustin, Prolog la ediția întâi, în *Filoclaia*, XII, p. 31.

is to stay in the cell⁷². St. John the Ladder points out that the unsaturated desire of some to blow the door of the cell predisposes them to lose everything they have gathered inside them, because, opening it, "closed birds fly"⁷³. That these "birds" are a metaphor for naming the virtues, convinces us in the text of a footnote, which talks about the possibility of losing the virtues, acquired during peace, due to exits from the cell⁷⁴. St. Isaac the Syrian says that the needy should not make a habit of receiving friends in the cell for the reason of kindness⁷⁵. Other philocaly authors believe that time spent too much outside the cell becomes a very damaging behavior for those who want to calm down, having ontological effects: it takes away his grace, darkens his judgment, becomes insensitive to the divine⁷⁶. Those who fell into such traps very often were the beginners of hardships. They were asked to stay in the cell and to avoid, as much as possible, any conversation and even any glance⁷⁷.

"Staying in the cell" was more a disposition of the steadier soul, very determined in its ascetic effort. Therefore, the austerity of the cell involved a set of pre-established rules, which the ascetic imposed and strictly followed. For example, one of the rules was to eat as much as he could to fulfill his service, and as long as he didn't have to go out⁷⁸. Ava Isaiah urges the monk to have a measure and a specific time when it comes to food⁷⁹. As for other things, the ascetics were urged not to agonize over goods to bring to the cell, but to spend in poverty and lack of everything, lest they arouse any lust "for peace"⁸⁰. Also, the pious Simeon, the teacher of St. Simeon the New Theologian, tells the Hesychasts to not keep anything outside in the cell, but the only objects they can have are a basket, a straw mattress and a coat⁸¹. By the fact that, inside the cell, the most common object is the matting, on which the ascetic prayed or slept⁸², it is necessary to interpret that the cell poverty represents the emptying of the "world spirit", the surrender of the material things that the monastic pretender assume.

On the other hand, staying in the cell was also a quintessential way *to meet yourself*. The monk had a frame that allowed him to introspect all the contents of his heart. Under the aegis of attention, he researches himself and knows his weaknesses, including the fact that he is not a formidable fighter with the devil⁸³. The autogenic exercises of discipline represented for the monks locked in the cell a real ascetic school, they looking every day to better define their objectives in the spiritual evolution. In this sense, they searched every day, evaluating themselves concerning God and their fellow men⁸⁴.

⁷² Evagrie Ponticul, Schiță monahicească, 6, în *Filocalia*, vol. I, trad., introd. și note de Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2008, p. 47.

⁷³ Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Cartea despre nevoiță, Cuv. XXVII, 16, în *Filocalia*, X, , p. 346.

⁷⁴ *Filocalia*, IX, nota 873, p. 346.

⁷⁵ Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, XXIII, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 118.

⁷⁶ Teodor al Edessei, Una sută capete, 56, în *Filocalia*, IV, p. 197.

⁷⁷ Calist Angelicude, Meșteșugul liniștirii, în *Filocalia*, VIII, pp. 333 – 334.

⁷⁸ Isaia Pustnicul, Douăzeci și nouă de cuvinte, 4, în *Filocalia*, XII, p. 55.

⁷⁹ Isaia Pustnicul, Porunci sau sfaturi ale lui Avva Isaia, 54, în *Filocalia*, XII, p. 245

⁸⁰ Sf Isaac Sirul, Cuvinte despre nevoiță, Cuv. LXXXV, în *Filocalia*, X, p. 385.

⁸¹ Simeon Evlaviosul, Capete morale, 15, în *Filocalia*, VI, p. 91.

⁸² Sf. Ioan Casian, *Așezăminte mănăstirești*, Despre rânduielile celor ce renunță la lume, Cartea a patra, 13, în *PSB*, 57, trad. prof. Vasile Cojocaru și prof. David Popescu, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1990, p. 147; vezi și Ava Agathon, 1, în *Patericul Egiptean*, Ed. Episcopia Ortodoxă Romană a Alba Iuliei, Alba Iulia, 2003, pp. 21-22.

⁸³ The words of avva Apollo, *apud* Sf. Ioan Casian, Cuvânt plin de mult folos. Către egumenul Leontie, în *Filocalia*, I, p. 134.

⁸⁴ "When we return to our cells, let us examine ourselves and find out what we have used or damaged" (Ava Dorotei, *Diferite Epistole*, 2, în *Filocalia*, IX, p. 553).

Irénée Hausherr is absolutely impressed by the Parents' patience who resisted and endured the conditions of a chamber, sometimes small, and by the courage with they faced the demon of akedia, which impelled their minds with instability, murmuring and disobedience⁸⁵. One of those who sought solitude in modern times was Thomas Merton, who says that in the solitary crucible of the hermitage, he discovered other ways of being, another intimacy of his soul. He felt a new being reconfigured. He discovered a new "dwelling place of the self" in God⁸⁶. Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, the author of a *Treaty on life in solitude*, associates, through wordplays, *cella* (cell) and *caelum* (sky), both coming from "celo" - to hide⁸⁷. Hence, since the small size of the cell isolates, closes, deprives of contact with the outside world, obstructs the area of relationship, drastically restricts freedom of movement and physical freedom, the gaze of the anchored ascetic goes more to heaven, where he finds infinite freedom for his spiritual ascension. More than likely, these characteristics of the cell (cell) were understood and lived by the saints of the prisons in the communist prisons, who made their way to heaven, following the patristic and philocaly model. Although they were forcibly isolated, they appropriated their anchoritic lifestyle and, thus, the gifts and charisms of old times have been seen in our actual times.

Therefore, characterized by complete silence and tranquility, the cell becomes the face of assumed loneliness, the shell in which man mortifies his bodily senses, to sharpen his spiritual ones. The cell was very well associated with a tomb⁸⁸, from where the mind takes flight in the air of contemplation. It was the limited dimensions of the cell that allowed the monk to transcend into unlimited spiritual space.

CONCLUSION

The Christian anchorite or hermit chose the empty or wild places, the uninhabited places of people, out of the desire to dedicate himself to uninterrupted prayer and full communion with God. Of course, this choice was often based on additional reasons, such as the need for loneliness, the need to get away from the hustle, the chatter, the bad habits and the evils of people, and the compulsion to flee in the face of the persecutions to which the early Church has been under in the first centuries of its existence. The bare landscape or the unfavorable conditions of the wild, of the emptiness, become a mirrored image of the inner habitat of the ascetic. Outer hermitage is neither sufficient nor effective in the absence of inner loneliness. Poor landscape and fading colors of the wild environment can express the state of simplicity, modesty and authenticity to which the anchorite must adhere. The austerities of hermit life in the wilderness and in the cell do not suit everyone, so, we have highlighted some psychological aspects that these spaces propose them directly to those who decided to seek, firstly, loneliness and then the inner kingdom. The deep wilderness or the places of hermitage correspond to our intimate depth, where it is necessary to settle the hesychia, the peace of thoughts and the absence of passions.

The philocal texts draw our attention to the fact that, due to the ascetic life, angels that the Christian hermits have acquired through loneliness and prayer, the desert itself undergoes

⁸⁵ Cf. Irénée Hausherr, "Direction spirituelle en Orient autrefois", in: *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, CXLIV (1955), 1, Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, Rome, p. 78.

⁸⁶ Cf. Thomas Merton, "Dancing in the Water of Life", in: *The Journals of Thomas Merton 5/1963-65*, ed. Robert E. Daggy, HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1997, p. 298.

⁸⁷ Marie-Madeleine Davy, „Le moine et l'ange en Occident au douzieme siecle”, in: *L'Ange et l'Homme*, col. *Cahiers de l'Hermetisme*, Ed. Albin Michel, Paris, 1978, pp. 107-127, p. 112.

⁸⁸ Sf. Ioan Scărarul, Cartea despre nevoințe, Partea a II-a, 38, în *Filocalia*, IX, p. 352.

ontological transformations, so that this wild space, unwelcome and unfavorable to life, becomes an oasis of angelic life, a city of monks, a home of angels. As the desert metamorphoses, man's inner darkness gives way to the revelation of the Tabor light. Therefore, the man who receives rich grace from God, spiritualizes, in addition to his nature, the space in which he lives. Hence the popular expression that "the man blesses the place". The spiritual man needs a particular space, different from the profane space, in which he can glimpse the landmarks of *the future age* and the mystery of *the Kingdom of God*. His existential imprint enters deep into the physical structure of the world, transfiguring itself with it.

Both the wild and the cell express a lonely, poor and "sanitized" place, a laboratory in which the anchorite creates the conditions for his own transfiguration. The demands of the environment predispose the mind and body of the monk to self-discipline, asceticism, concentration and contemplation. These spaces denote ontic and psychological implications that only those who experience them can understand. But from the descriptions of the Fathers, we deduce that such places, as they seem devoid of delight and bodily comfort, are so rich and nourishing to the soul.

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EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN IAKOVOS ARGEIOS'S ORATION ADDRESSED TO CONSTANTINE BASSARABA (1708)

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ABSTRACT

Iakovos Argeios (ca 1660-1736), dean of the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople, authored in 1708 a lengthy encomiastic oration in honor of John Constantine Bassaraba Brancoveanu, the prince of Wallachia. This oration remained almost totally unknown to researchers. The main purpose of the present article is to edit this interesting text, in order to give the opportunity to study not only its content but also its connection with the political situation and the educational program of the Patriarchal Academy. It is delivered by three manuscripts, but only one is accessible: cod. Beinecke ms 295 (XVIII ce.), which was cautiously and diligently copied by the Phanariot Scholar Nikolaos Karatzas (1705-1787). Iakovos Argeios taught rhetoric theory and practice, a course that was introductory to the upper course of philosophical studies. As it emerged through the text analysis, the speech is written in the context of the rhetorical lecture and therefore had to implement all the principles of the literary genre of encomium, as mentioned in the handbooks of ancient and contemporary rhetoricians (Hermogenes, Aphthonius and Korydalleus). Yet, there is a basic difference: the present oration is a royal oration, which means that Iakovos had to use additional sources (Menander the Rhetor and Synesius). Furthermore, the existence and the content of the speech allows us to draw conclusions about Bassaraba's involvement in the administration and financial support of the Patriarchal Academy and Iakovos's political ideas on the ideal ruler, the skills and qualities he must possess in order to exercise effective administration. This oration is not a slavish praise, full of flattery; it is an excellent example of the rhetorical eloquence of the famous Aristotelian professor. Iakovos gives us an ideal picture of Wallachia, as seen through the eyes of Constantinopolitan Greeks: the country of Constantine Bassaraba was the refuge for all the Orthodox.

Keywords: encomium; rhetoric theory and practice; royal oration; Patriarchal Academy; ideal ruler; Iakovos Argeios; Constantine Bassaraba; Wallachia; Targoviste; education;

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1708, Iakovos Argeios (ca 1660-1736), dean of the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople and a close associate of Alexandros Mavrokordatos (1641-1709), the chief security councilor of the Sublime Porte, authored a lengthy encomiastic oration in honor of

John Constantine Bassaraba Brancoveanu (1654-1714), the Prince of Wallachia.¹ This oration was composed at a time when the relations between prince Bassarava and the Phanariotic elite, of which Mavrokordatos and Iakovos Argeios were distinguished members, seem to have been excellent. It is known that this relation was later worsening, when Mavrokordatos tried to impose the eldest of his sons as ruler to one of the Romanian Principalities. The encomiastic oration was not abundantly transmitted by the manuscripts, as only three copies of it survive. This fact may indicate that the Phanariots probably wanted to forget this incident of praise of their opponent, especially after the Greeks had undertaken the hegemony in Romanian lands by the year 1716. The oration remained almost totally unknown to researchers, as were many other aspects of Iakovos Argeios's life and teaching activity at the Patriarchal Academy. It is not mentioned at all by the older biographers of Iakovos, such as Demetrios Prokopiou.² In the eighteenth century Kaisarios Dapontes (1713/4-1784) was the first historian to mention this encomium, emphasizing that it had not been printed yet.³ Manuel Gedeon (1851-1943) and Konstantinos Sathas (1842-1914), the main Greek historians of the history of Ideas during the Ottoman era, are unaware of its existence.⁴

Among modern scholars, Tasos Gritsopoulos and Athanasios Karathanasis knew the existence of the speech and mentioned the manuscripts that deliver it.⁵ More important is the research of Georgios Papazoglou, who located in the Beinecke library at Yale University another manuscript of the same work, copied by the famous Phanariot scholar and bibliophile of the 18th century, Nikolaos Karatzas (1705-1787).⁶ None of these scholars,

¹ For his life and reign see Ion I. Croitoru, *Ορθοδοξία και Δύση στην πνευματική παράδοση των Ρουμάνων. Η ενότητα της ορθοδοξίας και η υπεράσπιση της ορθόδοξης πίστωσης έναντι της προτεσταντικής προπαγάνδας κατά τον ΙΖ' αιώνα*, vol. I, Athens, 2011, pp. 561-576 (= Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*), and Athanasios Karathanasis, *Οι Έλληνες λόγιοι στη Βλαχία (1670-1714). Συμβολή στη μελέτη της ελληνικής πνευματικής κίνησης στις παραδουνάβιες ηγεμονίες κατά την προφαναριωτική περίοδο*, Institute of Balkan Studies 194, Thessaloniki, 1982, pp. 69-81 (= Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*).

² Demetrios Prokopiou, a disciple of Iakovos at the Patriarchal Academy, authored in 1721 under the guidance of Prince Nikolaos Mavrokordatos and for the sake of the German philologist Johannes Albertus Fabricius a biographical catalogue of Greek scholars of his time (*De eruditiss Graecis*), in: Johann Albert Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Graeca*, vol. XI, Hamburg, 1722 (Greek text with Latin translation); The Greek text *Ἐπιτετυμημένη ἐπαρίθμηση τῶν κατὰ τὸν παρελθόντα αἰῶνα λογίων Γραικῶν, καὶ περὶ τινῶν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ἀνθούτων*, in: Konstantinos Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη ἢ Συλλογὴ ἀνεκδότων μνημείων τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ἱστορίας*, vol. III, Venice, 1872, (= Sathas, *Bibliotheke*).

³ In his *Historical catalogue of the noble Romans of modern era (Κατάλογος ἱστορικῶς ἀξιόλογος τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς χρηματισάντων ἐπισήμων Ρωμαίων καὶ τινῶν μεγάλων συμβεβηκότων καὶ ὑποθέσεων, ἀρχόμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ χιλιοστοῦ ἑπτακοσιοστοῦ ἔτους, ἕως τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος ὀγδοηκοστοῦ τετάρτου)*, in: Sathas, *Bibliotheke*, p. 190: καὶ ἕτερον λόγον εἰς Κωνσταντῖνον τὸν Μπραγκοβάνον· τοῦτος δὲν ἐτυπώθη.

⁴ Manuel Gedeon, *Χρονικά τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Ακαδημίας. Ἱστορικαὶ εἰδήσεις περὶ τῆς Μεγάλῃς τοῦ Γένους Σχολῆς 1455-1830*, Constantinople, 1883, pp. 136-139 (= Gedeon, *Chronicles*), K. N. Sathas, *Νεοελληνικὴ Φιλολογία. Βιογραφίαι τῶν ἐν τοῖς γράμμασι διαλαμπάντων Ἑλλήνων ἀπὸ τῆς καταλύσεως τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Αυτοκρατορίας μέχρι τῆς ἐθνεγερσίας (1453-1821)*, Athens, 1868, pp. 430-431 (= Sathas, *Philologia*).

⁵ T. Gritsopoulos, *Πατριαρχικὴ Μεγάλῃ τοῦ Γένους Σχολῆ*, vol. I, Βιβλιοθήκη Φιλεκαπαιδευτικῆς Ἐταιρείας, Athens, 1966, p. 297, note 3 (= Gritsopoulos, *Patriarchal School*); Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 77, note 7.

⁶ G. Papazoglou, "Κωνσταντῖνος Ραφαήλ Βυζάντιος, ἀγνωστος γραφέας κωδίκων, καὶ ὁ Φαναριώτης λόγιος Νικόλαος Καρατζάς", in: *Από Φωνῆς*, No. 2 (2002/2004), pp. 9-32 (= Papazoglou, *Raphael*); idem

however, have read the text of the oration, but they are content with external information, either from the catalogs of the manuscripts or from the manuscripts themselves. In other words, they did not know the exact content of the oration. In my study that will be published in the coming months (in Greek), I had the opportunity to examine and reconstruct all the existing testimonies and evidence that I found on the life and work of Iakovos Argeios, “the supreme of the philosophers of the Great Church”.⁷ The present article is part of my wider research and its aim is to edit this interesting text, in order to give the opportunity to study not only its content but also its connection with the political situation and the educational program of the Patriarchal Academy. On the other hand, the very existence of the speech allows us to draw conclusions about a) the relationship that Iakovos Argeios had with the Romanian countries and their rulers, especially Wallachia and Constantine Bassarava, before the rise of the Phanariots, b) Bassarava’s involvement in the administration and financial support of the Patriarchal Academy, c) Iakovos’s political ideas on the ideal ruler, the characteristics, skills and qualities he must possess in order to exercise effective administration.

II. THE MANUSCRIPTS

The oration bears in the manuscripts an extensive title, which provides information on the type of speech, its composition time and its cultural context: “*Encomium addressed to the excellent and most pious ruler and prince of all Wallachia Joannes Constantine Bassaraba voevod, written by the most honorable and erudite teacher Iakovos Manas Argeios (originated from Argos/Peloponnese) for his students at the Constantinople’s Patriarchal Academy in 1708*”. It is delivered by three manuscripts:

1. *cod. Athous gr 6288, Monastery of S. Panteleimon 781 (XVIII ce.), 20,5x15,5, f. 17r:* Title: *Ἐγκώμιον πρὸς τὸν ἐκλαμπρότατον καὶ εὐσεβέστατον αὐθέντην καὶ ἡγεμόνα πάσης Οὐγγροβλαχίας κύριον κύριον Ἰωάννην Κωνσταντῖνον Βασσαράβαν βοεβόδαν ἐγκώμιον, ἐκδοθὲν ἐν λόγῳ προγυμνάσματος παρὰ τοῦ τιμιωτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου ἡμῶν καθηγουμένου κυρίου Ἰακώβου Μάννα τοῦ Ἀργείου τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν λόγῳ προγυμνάσματος ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν Πατριαρχικῇ Σχολῇ κατὰ τὸ ,αψη’ ἔτος τὸ σωτήριον.*⁸
2. *cod. University of Yale, Beinecke ms 295 (XVIII ce.), 14,9x10,9, f. 5r-41r:* It contains only this oration under the title: *Πρὸς τὸν ὑψηλότατον καὶ εὐσεβέστατον αὐθέντην καὶ ἡγεμόνα πάσης Οὐγγροβλαχίας κύριον κύριον Ἰωάννην Κωνσταντῖνον Βασσαράβαν βοεβόδαν ἐγκώμιον προσφωνητικὸν ἐκδοθὲν παρὰ τοῦ ἐντιμοτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου διδασκάλου κὺρ Ἰακουμῆ Μάννα τοῦ Ἀργείου τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν λόγῳ*

“Χειρόγραφοι κώδικες του Νικολάου Καρατζά στην Beinecke Library του Πανεπιστημίου του Yale”, in: *Από Φωνής 2* (2002/2004), pp. 33-74 (= Papazoglou, *Codices Beinecke*).

⁷ Vasileios Tsiotras, “Ο Ιάκωβος Αργεῖος (ca 1660-1736) στην Πατριαρχική Σχολή: Νέα στοιχεία και απαντήσεις για έναν παλιό γρίφο”, in: the journal of the Greek Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (OMED), *Ho Eranistes/The Gleaner*, No. 30 (2021), where I examine all the new evidence and manuscript testimonies on Iakovos’s teaching activity at the Patriarchal Academy.

⁸ Spyridon Lampros, *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts on Mount Athos*, edited for the syndics of the University Press, Cambridge, 1900, vol. II, p. 432: the manuscript is written by various scribes; Gritsopoulos, *Patriarchal School*, p. 297, note 3; Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 77, note 7.

προγυμνάσματος ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν Πατριαρχικῇ Σχολῇ κατὰ τὸ , αψη' ἔτος τὸ σωτήριον.⁹

3. *cod. Odessa, Hellenic School* (XIX ce.).¹⁰

Of these three codices, only the Yale University codex is accessible and it has been studied and described thoroughly by Barbara Shailor and Georgios Papazoglou. The latter, in searching for manuscripts constructed by Nikolaos Karatzas, located some of them in the Library of Yale University and managed, by examining the graphic character and the way of organizing manuscript content, to attribute it to the scholar Phanariot.¹¹ Karatzas's manuscript, after the dissolution of his library, passed into the possession of Lord Guilford at the Ionian Academy in Corfu and afterwards it was sold by his heirs.¹² On the first folia of the manuscript, Karatzas wrote some text excerpts with biographical information about Iakovos Argeios. The excerpts come from the work of Demetrios Prokopios, *De eruditiss Graecis*, from the *Epitaph* of Iakovos about Alexandros Mavrokordatos (1716), and from a Sapphic poem written in his honor by one of his disciples Konstantinos Raphael. In other words, the manuscript contains all the information that Karatzas was able to collect (in the middle of the 18th century) about the former dean of the Patriarchal Academy, in which he himself had studied. This is a cautiously and diligently written manuscript, without spelling errors, with a length of 46 sheets in small format, on which the present edition is based.¹³

III. CONTENT AND SOURCES OF THE ORATION: RHETORICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE

At the Patriarchal Academy Iakovos Argeios was the scholarch, the senior philosophy professor in the higher course of philosophy and science. His philosophical perspective was on the one hand Aristotelian and classicistic and on the other Christian, orthodox and patristic. He taught the philosophy of Aristotle (*Physics, On Generation and Corruption, Logic, On the Soul*) by the commentaries of Theophilos Korydalleus (1570-1646), the leader of New-Aristotelianism in South-East Europe.¹⁴ He also taught rhetoric

⁹ See Barbara Shailor, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library -Yale University*, vol II: MSS 251-500, Binghamton-New York, 1987, pp. 73-75 (= Shailor, *Catalogue*).

¹⁰ Sp. Papageorgiou, "Κατάλογος μετὰ περιγραφικῶν σημειώσεων τῶν κωδίκων τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Σχολῆς Ὀδησσοῦ", in: *Ἐπετηρίς Παρνασσού*, No. 8 (1904), p. 153; Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 77, note 7.

¹¹ According to Papazoglou, *Raphael*, pp. 9-29, idem, *codices Beinecke*, pp. 52-54, Constantine Raphael, the finance secretary of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, was not the scribe of that manuscript, but only the author of the Sapphic poem in honor of Iakovos Argeios in 1729, ff. 3r-4v: *Εἰς ὀφειλομένης εὐεργεσίας τεκμήριον ὁ λογοθέτης γενικοῦ τῆς Μεγάλης Ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ἐλάχιστος τῶν μαθητῶν, Κωνσταντῖνος Ῥαφαὴλ Βυζάντιος, ἀγκθ'*; Shailor, *Catalogue*, p. 74, misread the dedicatory note of Raphael.

¹² See Vasiliki Mpomprou Stamati, "Ἡ βιβλιοθήκη τοῦ λόρδου Guilford" in: *Ὁ Ἐραμιστής/The Gleaner*, No. 20 (1995), pp. 97-162.

¹³ Thanks are due to Prof. Dr Vasileios Foukas (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and to the staff of Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, and especially Ms. Yasmin Ramadan, who overcame the coronavirus lockdown problems and willingly provided me with excellent digital photos of Beinecke ms 295.

¹⁴ See Cleobule Tsourkas, *Les débuts de l'enseignement philosophique et de la libre pensée dans les Balkans. La vie et l'oeuvre de Théophile Corydalée*, Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, ²1967; Vasileios

theory and practice, a course that was introductory to the upper course of philosophical studies. Rhetoric was taught on the basis of the treatises of the major ancient Greek rhetoricians, Aristotle (*Rhetoric*), Hermogenes (*Art*) and Aphthonius (*Progymnasmata*). Nevertheless, Iakovos used books of contemporary authors, especially Theophilos Korydalleus's *Art of Rhetoric* (*Ρητορική τέχνη*) and Alexandros Mavrokordatos's *Concise Art of Rhetoric in Question and Response form* (*Σύννομις τέχνης ῥητορικῆς κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν*). Those two handbooks epitomized all the existing knowledge on rhetoric, which could be in use for the future, mainly, church orators or preachers. The information about Iakovos's teaching books comes from Antonios Byzantios, one of his diligent disciples, who copied the two rhetorical treatises in *cod. Theological School of Chalki 187* in November 1702.¹⁵ Furthermore, according to the Curriculum of the Academy (1691) the students had the obligation to produce and perform speeches in public, under the guidance of their teachers, as proof of their skills and of the knowledge they had acquired through the study of rhetoric.¹⁶ In this context, Iakovos Argeios authored two addresses to Ecumenical Patriarchs Kallinikos (1698) and Gabriel (1703) on the occasion of the Easter celebration.¹⁷

The encomiastic oration of Prince Constantine Bassarava was written in 1708, when Iakovos was at the peak of his teaching career; a few months later he received the highly honorary title and the office of “the supreme philosopher of the Great Church” (*ὑπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων τῆς Μεγάλης Ἐκκλησίας*) as a sign of recognition of his prestige by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox community. The oration falls into the category of praise/*encomium*, for which Iakovos had much to say to his students based not only on the theoretical treatises he taught, but also based on the encomiastic tradition of the Byzantine orators.¹⁸ In the title of the speech there is a mention to *Progymnasmata*

Tsiotras, *Η εξηγητική παράδοση της Γεωγραφικής Υφηγήσεως του Κλαύδιου Πτολεμαίου. Οι επώνυμοι σχολιαστές*, Cultural Institution of National Bank (MIET), Athens, 2006.

¹⁵ See Matthaios Paranikas, “Περί της εν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Πατριαρχικής Σχολῆς”, in: *Περιοδικόν Ἑλληνικῆ Φιλολογικῆ Συλλόγου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, No. 27 (1900), pp. 313-314; Gritsopoulos, *Patriarchal School*, p. 307.

¹⁶ The text of that very important Patriarchal decree is published by Athanasios Komnenos Ypselantes, *Εκκλησιαστικῶν καὶ Πολιτικῶν τῶν εἰς δώδεκα βιβλίον Η' Θ' καὶ Ι' ἦτοι Τα Μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν (1453-1789)*, (*Ἐκ χειρογράφου ἀνεκδότου τῆς ἱεράς μονῆς τοῦ Σινά*), εκδιδόντος αρχιμ. Γερμανοῦ Αφθονίδου Συναΐτου, Constantinople, 1870, pp. 204-208 (= Komnenos Ypselantes, *Τα μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν*); in p. 207: *ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ὀφείλουσιν ἀποφέρεισθαι καρπὸν τινὰ τῶν πόνων αὐτῶν, συγγράφειν δηλαδὴ λόγους τινὰς καὶ ἐγκώμια εἰς τὴν τιμὴν καὶ μνημόσυνον τῶν συστησάντων καὶ τῶν ἀμφιπονούντων καὶ διακυβερνώντων τὴν σχολήν, δὸς δ' εἰπεῖν καὶ πρὸς ἔνδειξιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν προκοπῆς*; see Gedeon, *Chronicles*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁷ These addresses were published *To Patriarch Gabriel* by Manuel Gedeon, “Ἰακώβου Μάνου τοῦ Ἀργεῖου Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν πατριάρχην Γαβριὴλ τὸν ἀπὸ Χαλκηδόνας”, in: idem, *Ἀρχεῖον ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἱστορίας*, vol. 1, Constantinople, 1911, pp. 193-206; *To Patriarch Kallinikos* by Vasileios Mpakouros, “Ἡ ρητορική παιδεία στὴν Πατριαρχικὴ Σχολή. Τὸ Προσφώνημα τῶν σπουδαστῶν τοῦ 1698 στὸν Πατριάρχη Καλλίνικο Β' τὸν Ἀκαρνάνα”, in: *Η Μελέτη*, No. 4 (2008), pp. 207-259.

¹⁸ In one of his letters to the students of the School of Patmos, who composed an encomium as *progymnasma* in his honor, Iakovos epitomized the main characteristics of this genre: *ἐμμεθόδως καὶ κατὰ λόγον τοῦ ἐγκωμίου ἡ τάξις προχωρεῖ τῶν κεφαλαίων, γένος μὲν πρῶτον ἄμυχόν τε καὶ ἔμυχον προτάττοντες, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀνατροφήν καὶ παιδείαν καὶ τὰς πράξεις εὐφημίζετε, ὅπερ νόμος ἐστὶν ἐγκωμίου. [...] ἐγκώμιον πρὸς ὄντων μὲν ἔστι ἀγαθῶν αὐξήσεις, μὴ πρὸς ὄντων δὲ οἰκείωσις, ἀμφοτέρω δὲ οὕτω μεμετρημένως ὥστε μὴ τὰ μέτρα τῆς πειθοῦς ὑπερβάλλειν τῇ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἀμετρία, ἵνα μὴ ὁ λόγος εἰς ψυχρολογία ἀμειψῶν ἀφαιρεθεῖ τὸ*

(“preliminary rhetorical exercises”), which refers directly to the well-known book of Aphthonius of Antioch and also to the *Art of Rhetoric* of Theophilus Korydalleus, which introduce students to basic rhetorical concepts and strategies.¹⁹ The speech is written in the context of the rhetorical lecture and therefore had to implement all the principles of the literary genre of encomium, as mentioned in the handbooks of Hermogenes, Aphthonius and Korydalleus. Yet, there is a basic difference: the present oration is a royal oration, addressed to an acting ruler, which means that Iakovos had to use other texts in addition to the above mentioned.

According to Hermogenes (2nd/3rd century AD) an encomium is the exposition of the good qualities of a person and its main topics are: race and city, family, events at birth, upbringing, education, physical and mental qualities, accomplishments, actions, length of life and manner of death, posthumous fame and children.²⁰ The subject was treated more analytically by Aphthonius (late 4th/early 5th century AD), who points out that an encomium contains origin, divided into nation, city, ancestors and parents, upbringing divided into accomplishments and skills, actions, physical and mental virtues.²¹ Iakovos is very well aware of these basic topics, but it is clear that the broader structural plan of his speech is different due to the subject, which required the use of more specialized textbooks. Indeed, for the writing of this oration the scholar relied mainly on two additional sources, Menander the Rhetor’s theoretical book *On the Panegyrics* (*Περὶ τῶν ἐπιδεικτικῶν*), which deals with the characteristics of the royal or imperial oration (*Basilikos Logos*) and secondly the oration of Synesius from Cyrene *On kingship* (*Peri Basileias*) to the emperor Arcadius (395–408).²²

πειθήνιον. [...] οὕτω γὰρ ἐν ταῖς λογικαῖς πραγματεῖαις μεμαθήκετε, τὸ τοῦ Πορφυρίου συνταγμάτιον τῶν Κατηγοριῶν προηγουμένον, ὃ ἐν γένει συλλογισμὸς τῆς ἀποδείξεως καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἀφθονίου Προγυμνάσματα, τῶν κατὰ ῥητορικὴν τελείων λόγων; see Naukratios Tsoulkanakis, “Ἰακώβου Μάνα του Ἀργείου ἐπιστολαὶ πρὸς τον διδάσκαλον της Πάτμου Μακάριον Καλογεράν”, in: *Μνήμη Μητροπολίτου Ἰκονίου Ἰακώβου*, vol. I, 1984, pp. 133-155 (= *epistle* 13).

¹⁹ See George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1994, pp. 202-208 (Kennedy, *A New History*): Exercises in composition that were “progymnastic” or “preparatory” to the writing and delivery of declamation; Aphthonius describes the following fourteen preparatory exercises: *fable, narrative, anecdote, maxim, refutation, confirmation, commonplace, praise, invective, comparison, personification, description, argument, introduction of a law*. Praise or encomium is the eighth *progymnasma*. Theophilus Korydalleus authored an extensive *Art of Rhetoric* based on ancient rhetoricians (Aphthonius, Hermogenes), which contains five parts: I. *Εἰς τὴν ῥητορικὴν τέχνην προοίμιον*, II. *Περὶ προγυμνασμάτων καὶ πόσα εἰσὶ*, III. *Βιβλίον Α΄. Περὶ στάσεων*, IV. *Βιβλίον Β΄. Περὶ διαθέσεως, ἧτοι περὶ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν*, V. *Βιβλίον Γ΄. Περὶ ἐρμηνείας*. In Korydalleus’s treatise (part II) *encomium* is the thirteenth *progymnasma*: *Τὸ δὲ ἐγκώμιον πανηγυρικοῦ λόγου περιοχὴν κέκτηται*.

²⁰ See D. A. Russel – N. G. Wilson, *Menander the Rhetor. A commentary, Edited with translation and commentary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1981, pp. xxvii-xviii (= Russel – Wilson, *Menander*). The standard Greek text is Hugo Rabe, *Hermogenis Opera*, Teubner, Leipzig 1913; English translation of the Hermogenic treatise by Charles Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400) Interpreted from Representative Works*, Macmillan, New York, 1928, pp. 23–38.

²¹ See Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, pp. xxviii; Kennedy, *A New History*, p. 205.

²² The standard Greek text is Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, pp. 77-95: Treatise II. *The imperial oration* (*Basilikos logos*); L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*, 1856, (reprint 1966), vol. III, pp. 368-377. For Synesius’s *De regno*: Jacques Lamoureux - Aujoulat Noël, *Synésios de Cyrène, Opuscules*, 3 vols. Belles Lettres, Paris, 2008; Nicola Terzaghi, *Synesii Cyrenensis opuscula*, Rome, 1944. Chapter numbers are based on Terzaghi’s edition, line numbers are drawn from the current TLG enumeration.

Undoubtedly, Menander gives detailed instructions on what the orator should write in each part of his speech, as the purpose of the royal encomium is to exalt all the good things pertaining to the ruler in a manner appropriate to the majesty of the person.²³

Iakovos accurately applies this structural plan to the speech for Bassarava: in the *preface/prooemium* (§§1-5) the orator emphasizes the extreme splendor of the person and the necessity to praise him worthily and properly. He also points out that this task is very difficult, “it is hard to match”, and exceeds his own rhetorical abilities.²⁴ However, he believes that the mere fact that he praises such a person offers fame to him, but also provides other people with a role model. In the *narration* he praises Prince’s *homeland, native country* (§§6-8: Constantinople, Targoviste), his *origin* (§§9-11: his *ancestors*, the Wallachian prince Mattheus Bassaraba [1632-1654] and the Byzantine emperor Joannes VI Cantacuzenus [1292-1383], and his *parents*).²⁵ After *country* and *family* the third heading is *birth, upbringing and education* (§§12-13). Then the orator speaks of the Prince’s “nature” and appearance, as well as of his temperate character in his *youth* (§§14-15). Next to accomplishments comes the topic of the Prince’s *deeds and actions in adulthood* (§§16-40), which are praised on the basis of the fourfold *virtues: courage, justice, wisdom, temperance*. The deeds of his reign are examined in comparison with others, in order to prove and illustrate the importance and superiority of the praised person.²⁶ The praise of *deeds and actions* is divided into two parts: a) *actions before assuming the hegemony* (§§16-22: marriage, noble wife, legitimate offspring, deeds and state offices) and b) *actions after the ascension to the throne of Wallachia* (§§23-40: election to the throne, virtues, deeds, moral character, comparison to his predecessor Serban Cantacuzenus [†1688]). Finally, in the first part of the *epilogue* (§§41-42) the rhetor speaks of the prosperity of Wallachia during Bassaraba’s reign and of the good fortune of the cities, of the markets that are full of goods, the cities of feasts and festivals and of the piety towards God which is increased.²⁷ Prince Constantine Bassaraba is presented as the protector of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. In the *conclusive part* of the speech (§§43-45) he utters a prayer, beseeching God that prince Constantine Bassaraba’s reign may endure long, and the throne be handed down to his children and his descendants till the end of time.²⁸

On the other hand, the oration *On the kingship* (*De regno*, chapters 7-11) of Synesius gave Iakovos the opportunity to draw topics and motifs for the presentation of the achievements and deeds, and also the virtues of the Prince (§§32-38), since Menander the

²³ Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, p. 77 (= Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 368, 3-6): “The imperial oration is an encomium of the emperor. It will thus embrace a generally agreed amplification of the good things attaching to the emperor, but allows no ambivalent or disputed features, because of the extreme splendor of the person concerned”.

²⁴ For citation in the edition of the oration (*Laus Bass.*), I use paragraph (§) and line numbers.

²⁵ See Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, p. 561, note 243, 244, 245; his father Papa Brancoveanu was murdered in 1655 by rebel soldiers; Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 69; Joannes Abramios (1709), in his book *Ἀπανθίσματα ποιητικά*, also glorified the royal ancestors of Constantine Bassaraba: ἀπὸ τὸ Μητρῶων γένος ἀριθμοὶ πέντε σεβαστοὺς αὐτοκράτορας (τοὺς Καντακουζηνούς) καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ Πατρικὸν τόσους Ἀθθέντας καὶ Ἡγεμόνας.

²⁶ Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, p. 92-93 (= Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 376,31-377,10).

²⁷ Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, p. 92-93 (= Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 377,10-14).

²⁸ Russel – Wilson, *Menander*, p. 94-95 (= Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 377,28-30).

Rhetor's handbook did not provide sufficient details in some cases. The encomiastic description of Prince Constantine Bassaraba's virtues follows the model of Synesius, where the first and foremost virtue is considered piety and faith in God (§§32-33),²⁹ which is closely associated with the love (*eros*) of philosophy and the enthusiasm for education (§34).³⁰ So in Bassaraba's case we could speak of a "philosopher king" according to Plato (*Politeia, Respublica*): the Prince is characterized by his love of philosophy, he constantly takes care of philosophical education and spares no money for the progress of the Academy of Bucharest.³¹

Πάλαι μὲν Ἀθῆναι κλεινὸν ὄνομα καὶ μέγα παρὰ πᾶσιν ἤραντο κλέος διὰ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς μουσεῖα, [...], νῦν δὲ τὸ Λύκειον καὶ ἡ ποικίλη Στοὰ καὶ Ἀκαδημία τῇ αὐτῆς σπουδῇ καὶ προθυμίᾳ καὶ ἀφειδίᾳ χρημάτων κατὰ τὸ Βουκορέστιον ἔδονται συνεστηκότα.³²

"In the old days Athens had gained fame and great glory for its institutions, [...] but now the Lyceum, the Stoa and the Academy thanks to Prince's care, zeal and generosity are celebrated as having been established in Bucharest."

Then, his actions and deeds are praised according to the model of the four virtues of Menander, according to which the first and most important is wisdom, while the other three follow, namely courage, temperance and justice (§§35-38). The texts (*Letters, Speeches*) of Synesius were taught consistently at the Patriarchal Academy in the course of rhetoric and epistolography since the 17th century, by erudite professors such as Sevastos Kyminetes. He himself, as a professor later at the Academy of Bucharest, included the oration *On the Kingship* in his teaching repertoire by translating it into the spoken, Modern Greek of his time at the request of Bassarava. It is obvious that the Prince was influenced by the Greek literature and education and sought to renew the hegemonic tradition of Wallachia by using Greek political texts that can assist the ruler in the exercise of power by providing useful guidelines and paradigms.³³

IV. PRAISING THE PRINCE: POLITICAL EXPEDIENCIES AT THE PATRIARCHAL ACADEMY

The patriarchal decree (*sigilium*) of 1691 stipulated that the income collected from the churches of Constantinople would be used to finance the needs of the Patriarchal Academy and to pay its professors.³⁴ Yet, because the collected amount was almost never

²⁹ *Laus Bass.* § 32, 356-357, see Synesius *De regno* 10,1-2: *Εὐσέβεια δὲ πρῶτον ὑποβεβλήσθω κρηπίς ἀσφαλῆς.*

³⁰ Synesius's *De regno* is a mirror for princes, based on Plato's *Politeia* and its model of philosopher king. Synesius compares the current political reality with the ideal of the philosopher-kingship, see Michael Schramm, "Neuplatonische politische Philosophie in der Rede Περὶ βασιλείας des Synesios von Kyrene", in: *Elenchos* 38,1-2 (2017), pp. 151-177 (= Schramm, *Neuplatonische Philosophie*), <https://doi.org/10.1515/elen-2017-0008>

³¹ See Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, pp. 73-74; Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 565-566.

³² *Laus Bass.* § 34, 389-394.

³³ Constantine Bassarava is one of the rulers who ponders and reflects on the character of monarchy, under the influence of the professor of the Academy Sevastos Kyminetes, see Ariadna Camariano-Cioran, *Les Académies princières de Bucarest et de Jassy et leurs professeurs*, Institut for Balkan Studies, Thessalonique, 1974, pp. 164-166 (=Camariano-Cioran, *Les Académies*); Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, pp. 86-87; Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 563-565.

³⁴ Komnenos Ypselantes, *Τα μετὰ την Ἀλωσιν*, p. 206.

enough, money was sought from other sources: those who could afford it were the Princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, but also the major hierarchs of the Ecumenical Throne.³⁵ In this sense, the Prince of Wallachia was directly involved in the financing of the higher educational institution of the Patriarchate, which was a model institution for the whole Orthodox East as it trained executives, who later held high positions and undertook senior offices in the Orthodox Church and in the elite of the Greek Orthodox community. Therefore, it was logical for the senior professors or the dean of the Academy to compose encomiastic orations not only for the Patriarchs but also for the rulers of the Danubian Principalities, who were the major financial supporters of their Foundation. It is also known that Bassarava himself sought to create a Greek-speaking intellectual circle in the capital of the Ottoman State. A circle of Greek scholars, who praised him in various occasions, such as Antonios Spandonis, Iakovos Argeios, Antonios Byzantios³⁶ and his brother Chourmouzios.³⁷ Those professors of the Patriarchal Academy dedicated epigrams in Homeric dialect to him and his son Stefanos, praising their contribution to Orthodoxy and Greek education.³⁸ Furthermore, Bassarava encouraged Greek scholars in his court in Bucharest to compose orations to praise him and his sons or to dedicate books written or printed in Wallachia to him.³⁹ All this activity, of course, took place within the framework of the so-called “enlightened despotism”, which was initially represented by Prince Constantine Bassarava. The composition of these speeches was known to Iakovos, as it is deduced from the comparison of his speech with the older rhetorical production: these speeches, according to Iakovos, were oral praises, written by famous philosophers of his time, who failed to express the greatness of the grandeur of the Wallachian ruler.

Καίπερ εἰδὼς πολλοὺς τῶν ἐπὶ φιλοσοφία ὄνομα ἐσχηκότων πολλαῖς καὶ καλαῖς εὐφημίαις τὴν ὑμετέραν ὑψηλότητα διὰ γλώττης μόνης κοσμήσαντας, ἐπεὶ δὲ μηδεὶς ἐς δεῦρο καὶ γραφῇ παρατίθεσθαι τοὺς ἐπαίνους ταύτης ἐπικεχείρηκε πρὸς τὸ ὕψος, οἶμαι, τῆς ὑποθέσεως ἀντοφθαλμῆσαι δεδιὼς καὶ τὸ ἐργᾶδες ταύτης ἐκκλίνων, ἐτόλμησ’ αὐτὸς πρὸς τουτοὶ ἐπαποδύεσθαι τὸν ἀγῶνα.⁴⁰

“Yet, I know that many of the famous contemporary philosophers have decorated Your Highness with many beautiful oral eulogies; since none of them has tried up to now to put those praises in writing, due to their fear to deal straightforward, as I

³⁵ Komnenos Ypselantes, *Τα μετὰ την Ἀλωσιν*, p. 209; Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 76, note 2, argues that Bassarava together with the Moldavian Prince Antiochus Cantemir helped financially the reorganization of the Patriarchal Academy, perhaps mainly the operation of the higher course.

³⁶ See Perikles Zerlenti, “Προσθήκαι εἰς τα περὶ Ἀντωνίου τοῦ Βυζαντίου”, in: *Δελτίον Ἱστορικής Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας* No. 8,28 (1918), pp. 478-479; Nadia Miladinova, *The Panoplia Dogmatike by Euthymios Zygadenos, A study on the first edition published in Greek in 1710*, Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 4, Brill, Leiden, 2014, p. 84.

³⁷ In cod. Metochiou St. Sepulchri 82, see Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 77, note 4.

³⁸ See Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 76-77; Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, p. 564, note 257. Iakovos Argeios wrote an epigram for Constantine Bassaraba, which has been copied in cod. Beinecke ms 295, f. 42r by Nikolaos Karatzas: *Πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν γαληνότατον αὐθέντην Οὐγκροβλαχίας καὶ ὑψηλότατον ἡγεμόνα ἐπίγραμμα τοῦ αὐτοῦ*, see Papazoglou, *Codices Beinecke*, p. 52-53, note 54.

³⁹ See Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 73-74; Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, p. 564, note 257; Mihail Caratasu, “Scrieri si encomioane inchinate voievodului Constantin Brancoveanu”, in: *BOR* No. 107/7-10 (1989), pp. 170-174.

⁴⁰ *Laus Bass.* § 3, 27-31.

presume, with the height of the project and by avoiding the difficulty of it, I had the courage myself to enter into this contest.”

The reason for the composition of Iakovos’s encomium in honor of the ruler of Wallachia is not known. However, it raises reasonable questions, because Iakovos is not only a professor at the Patriarchal Academy, but he is primarily a man of the Mavrokordatos’ family. For many years he was a home teacher for the children of Alexandros Mavrokordatos, he frequented his mansion, and often discussed various topics with him. He was his trusted secretary, as there are letters of Mavrokordatos written by the hand of Iakovos in the Metochion of the Holy Sepulcher in Constantinople.⁴¹ On the other hand, since the end of the 17th century there was coldness and rivalry between the noble families of Bassarava and Mavrokordatos for sovereignty over the Romanian countries.⁴² It seems, therefore, that the speech for the Prince, that presents him as a model of good and efficient administration, and also a man of a virtuous character, and above all the prayer for his longevity on the throne, was plainly an indication of courtesy of the dean of the Patriarchal Academy to the main financial supporter of his Institution. It is practically a sign of diplomatic recognition of the significant role of the Wallachian ruler in the Orthodox East,⁴³ but it doesn’t involve the scholar in political controversies and conflicts. In such a complicated political situation, Iakovos could distinguish the interest of the Academy from the interest of the Mavrokordatos family, thus risking receiving critical comments from the latter.

Following the instructions of Menander, Iakovos argues in his *proemium* that it is difficult to present accurately the greatness of the person being praised. The oration is addressed personally to the Prince as a royal *eulogy*, but we do not know whether it was ever sent to Bassarava or performed before him by Iakovos himself during a visit to Wallachia before the rise of the Phanariots. From a letter (dated in 1702) of Iakovos to Andreas Likinios, doctor and physician of Dimitrios Cantemir, Agamemnon Tselikas conjects, due to its warm and friendly style, that the two men had met in Bucharest in previous years.⁴⁴ However, this conjecture needs to be adequately substantiated, given that Likinios had previously been in Constantinople in the early 1690s, when Iakovos had already taken on the role of Mavrokordatos’s sons’ private tutor.⁴⁵ Of course, in the encomiastic oration there are

⁴¹ See Gritsopoulos, *Patriarchal School*, pp. 294-297.

⁴² Bassarava owed Alexander Mavrokordatos his retention to the throne of Wallachia in 1691, but after the treaty of Karlowitz (1699) Mavrokordatos showed his ambitions, although apparently he continued to cooperate with the Wallachian ruler. After the death of the mighty Phanariot (1709), Bassarava was relieved that he had been freed “from such a man who was the guide and the light of the Pagans and the traitor of Christianity,” as he wrote to Russian officials, see Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 78, note 3.

⁴³ Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, p. 74, 77; Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 564-568.

⁴⁴ Agamemnon Tselikas, “Νέα στοιχεία για την προσωπικότητα του διδασκάλου Ιακώβου του Αργείου, σύμφωνα με άγνωστες επιστολές του”, in: *Πρακτικά Β΄ Τοπικού Συνεδρίου Αργολικών Σπουδών (Argos 30 May-1 June 1986)*, Athens, 1989, pp. 390, 396-397 (*epistle 7: Τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ καὶ σοφωτάτῳ ἐμοὶ δὲ προσφιλεστάτῳ κυρίῳ Ἀνδρέῳ Λικινίῳ τῷ ἐξοχοτάτῳ ἀκέστορι εἷ πράττειν*). The noble Andreas Likinios studied at the University of Padua and exercised medicine in Moldavia and in the Ottoman capital, see Sathas, *Philologia*, pp. 443-444.

⁴⁵ Likinios in the late seventeenth century corresponded with Joannes Karyofylles, the Great Logothete of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, see Manuel Gedeon, “Ἀνέκδοτοι ἐπιστολαὶ ἀρχαίων διδασκάλων τοῦ Γένους”, in:

indications that allow us to support the speculation about a previous visit to Wallachia, insofar as Iakovos seems to know many details about the life and accomplishments of the Wallachian ruler. Much information, of course, could have come from the oral testimonies of people who knew him, that is, the Greeks of the milieu of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.⁴⁶ However, some passages and quotes in the speech could support a previous visit of Iakovos to Wallachia, such as the detailed reference to Targoviste (§ 7), the metropolis of Upper Mysia. For the city and its area, Iakovos reports that it is in an excellent location, the land has fertile soil, which produces many fruits of best quality. Its climate is temperate; the atmosphere is healthy, without excessive cold or heat. It's an excellent place for people to live. He even makes a paretymological correlation of the Hellenized name *Trygoviston* (*Τρυγόβιστον*) with the Greek word *trygos* (*τρύγος*, vintage, grape harvest), stating that the word Trygoviston/Targoviste means the city that has many and rich in grape production vines.

Προσεχῶς δὲ ἡ τῆς ἄνω Μυσίας γνωρίζεται μητρόπολις τὸ Τρυγόβιστον, ἐν καλῶ κειμένη τῆς τε χώρας καὶ τοῦ περιέχοντος ἀέρος. Ἡ τε γὰρ πέριξ ἅπασα χώρα ὀργὰς πέφυκε καὶ τοῖς γεωργοῖς ἄνετος καὶ ἐξηλωμένη πρὸς ῥαδίαν αὔλακος σχίσιν καὶ μηδέποτε τοῖς ἐργαζομένοις ἀχαριστοῦσα, ἀλλὰ πολύχουν καὶ εὐσταχυν ἀποφέρουσα καρπὸν· καὶ τέρπει γε τοὺς γεηπονήσαντας πολλαπλάσιον ἀεὶ τοῦ καταβληθέντος παρεχομένη τὸ ἐκφυέν. Δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐξ ἀρχῆς τοῖς ὀνοματοθέταις εὐφυῶς τεθὲν ὄνομα τὴν εὐκληματοῦσαν σημαῖνον πόλιν. Ὁ τε ἀῆρ τῶν ὑπερβολῶν ἀπηλλαγμένος τοῦ ψύχους καὶ τῆς θερμότητος καὶ τούτων ἔχων τὸ εὐκρατον εὐσθενεῖν παρέχει τοῖς σώμασι καὶ μὴ ῥαδίως ἀλίσκεσθαι νοσήμασι· ὅθεν κουροτρόφον ἂν τις ὑμῖν τὴν χώραν ἀληθέστερον εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ μηλοτρόφον.⁴⁷

“His homeland is the well-known metropolis of Upper Mysia, Targoviste, which is located in a beautiful part of the country and of the environment. Its land is by nature fertile, comfortable for farmers, spread out for easy plowing; it is never ungrateful to those who cultivate it, but produces many fruits and good quality grain. It also delights those who work hard to provide products far beyond their toil. The name given to it intelligently from the beginning by its namers indicates the city that has rich vineyards. Its atmosphere is free from excessive cold and heat, its climate is temperate and ensures physical well-being and resistance to diseases. That is why one could say that it really is a country that feeds people and not sheep.”

V. REFLECTIONS ON POLITICS AND THE IDEAL LEADER

Reading the speech of Iakovos Argeios about the ruler of Wallachia, one realizes that it does not only describe the characteristics and skills of a specific person, but it also elaborates on the qualities required in the paradigmatic ruler and the relations between the

Εκκλησιαστική Αλήθεια No. 3 (1882-1883), pp. 423-425; he also signed the Synodic Letter for the re-establishment of the Patriarchal Academy (1691) as a high-ranking patriarchal official, see Komnenos Yspelantes, *Τα μετά την Αλωσιν*, p. 208: *Λικίνιος ἀκέστωρ*.

⁴⁶ For the Constantinopolitan Greeks in the Court of the Prince, see Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 564-565; Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, pp. 28-39, 69-81.

⁴⁷ *Laus Bass.* § 7, 60-70.

sovereign and his subjects.⁴⁸ Of great importance is the noble origin (*τὸ βασιλικὸν αἷμα*, 113-114) of the ruler and of his ancestors, on which the nobles and the subjects must widely agree.⁴⁹ On the other hand, the ideal ruler should have exceptional and praiseworthy abilities, in order to gain the confidence of his people. The ideal leader is expected to summarize superior leadership virtues, such as courage (*ἀνδρία*), wisdom (*φρόνησις*), temperance (*σωφροσύνη*), and justice (*δικαιοσύνη*).⁵⁰ Furthermore, he must give the impression that he is driven only by his desire to promote the public welfare and the common good.⁵¹ Thus, in order to depict more clearly how the sovereign must deal with his subjects, Iakovos employs the well-known metaphor of the sun, which, even when it is far away, illuminates the universe with its rays.⁵² Thus, the ruler with his abilities and exceptional character stands out from afar, being the model for his subjects.⁵³ The pious ruler is chosen by God (“by divine will”, *θεία βουλήσει*, 121; “he accepted the scepter of power from the King of kings”, *παρὰ τοῦ τῶν βασιλέων βασιλεύοντος τὰ σκῆπτρα τῆς ἀρχῆς*, 298-299), and for this reason he rules according to the law of God, and no one is justified in resisting his authority.⁵⁴ Of course, in order to cultivate bonds of trust with his subjects, he must avoid arrogant behavior, show modesty (*μετριοφροσύνην*, 298) and treat everyone with meekness (*ἠπίως καὶ εὐνοϊκῶς*, 300-301) and grant them favors (*δωρεαῖς*, 301), showing by deeds that he is a benefactor (*εὐεργέτης*, 302) and lord (*δεσπότης*, 302), a savior (*σωτήρ*, 311) and a guardian (*φύλαξ*, 312) for his subjects, and not a tyrant.⁵⁵ The ruler adopts a just system of collecting taxes taking into account his subjects’ ability to bear those burdens lightly, so that they have a relaxed life without poverty.⁵⁶ Using modern terms of leadership and political power, the ideal ruler should employ less of his “hard” power, that is, the methods of coercion and violence that he

⁴⁸ The issue of the ideal ruler is a key-point in the political theory of the eighteenth century, see Vasileios Syros, “An early modern South Asian thinker on the rise and decline of empires: Shah Wali Allah of Dehli, the Mughals and the Byzantines”, in: *Journal of World History*, No. 23,4 (2013), pp. 802-805.

⁴⁹ *Laus Bass.* § 15, 152-156: ἀπάντων αἱ γινώμαι εἰς ταῦτὸν ἔφερον καὶ τὴν τῆς πατρίδος ἡγεμονίαν αὐτῇ προσυνηφίσαντο καὶ ἡγεμονεύεσθαι πρὸς αὐτῆς εὐκταῖον ἐτίθεντο καὶ τῆς κατ’ αὐτὴν ἀπολαύειν κηδεμονίας ἐν μοῖρα εὐχῆς ἐποιούνητο, ὡς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως τὰ κατ’ αὐτοῦς σχοίη καλῶς, εἰ μὴ παρ’ αὐτῆς ἡγεμονεύόμενα.

⁵⁰ *Laus Bass.* § 15, 150-152: τοῖς δ’ ἔξω πᾶσι θαυμαζομένη τῆς τε φρονήσεως καὶ ἀνδρίας καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ τῆς πρώτης τούτων δικαιοσύνης.

⁵¹ *Laus Bass.* § 25, 292-293: Οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτῆς εἵνεκεν, ἀλλὰ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν ὠφελείας τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἐδέξατο; § 38, 448-451: οὐχ ὅπως ὅτι πλείστον αὐτῇ χρημάτων ἐγκρατῆς γένηται, ἴν’ ἔχη τὸ ἠδόμενον τῆς ψυχῆς θεραπεύειν ἐντεῦθεν, ἀλλ’ ὅπως ἐν εὐπορίαις καὶ ἀνέσει διαβιῶη τὸ ὑπήκοον καὶ μὴ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἀπορία πιέζεται. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι οὐς ἴσμεν τῶν ἡγεμόνων τοῖς τῶν ὑπηκόων πρὸς τὸ ἴδιον κέρδος.

⁵² The “Sun-King” metaphor glorifies the superior virtues of the ruler, *Laus Bass.* § 18, 191-193; § 24, 275-277; § 39, 464-467; § 40, 473-474.

⁵³ *Laus Bass.* § 5, 50-52: Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἀρετῆς ἐπαινουμένης μέγα γίνεται κέρδος, οὕτω σιγωμένης αὐτῆς ζημία παρομαρτεῖν ἔοικεν οὐχ ἢ τυχοῦσα μηδενὸς εἰς μίμησιν ἐρεθιζομένου.

⁵⁴ *Laus Bass.* § 24, 282-284: ὃν ὁ Θεὸς εἰς ἄρχοντα λαοῦ προχειρίζεται καὶ ἡγεμόνα ψηφίζει κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ εὐρίσκων καρδίαν ὡς ἄλλον Δαβὶδ, τοῦτον οὐδεὶς ἀποψηφίζειν ἰσχύει. Monotheistic religions have influenced the concept of a ruler chosen by God in medieval Eurasia; see Aziz Al-Azmeh - Janos M. Bak, eds., *Monotheistic Kingship: The Medieval Variants*, Budapest, 2004, pp. 9-29.

⁵⁵ *Laus Bass.* § 26, 297-303; § 27, 310-314: φίλους μὲν ταυτὸν εἰπεῖν ἀγαθοῦς τέρπουσα, τοὺς δὲ πονηροῦς καὶ βασκάνους καταπλήττουσα.

⁵⁶ *Laus Bass.* § 38, 449-453: ὅπως ἐν εὐπορίαις καὶ ἀνέσει διαβιῶη τὸ ὑπήκοον καὶ μὴ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἀπορία πιέζεται [...], ὅπως ἂν ἐκεῖνοι τὸν βίον ἀνευδεδῶς ἐν ἀνέσει διάγωσιν; § 41, 490-493.

has at his disposal, and more of the “soft” power.⁵⁷ Soft power is based on his ability to charm others, to inspire them and influence their choices. In other words, he is a charismatic personality who can charm and inspire loyalty to his subjects.⁵⁸ A leader is a person with self-confidence and enthusiasm, and this power comes from an inner source of energy, which is faith in God (ἡ μετ’ εὐσεβοῦς συνειδήσεως πίστις, 358) and his mission. That is why a Christian leader supports the church, its representatives and especially the supreme authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch.⁵⁹ A key part of Iakovos’s exposition of the principles of effective leadership is devoted to the criteria for selection of friends by the ruler.⁶⁰ Undoubtedly the ruler needs dedicated people to assist him in the fulfillment of his tasks but also in the administering of public affairs. These are people who can be capable and trustworthy administrators and will protect the public interest and the interest of the ruler at the same time. The ruler must have the ability to distinguish those who are able and suitable for his friendship, those who are genuinely willing to support him. The ruler acts like the wise bee (σοφῆ μέλιττα).⁶¹ To substantiate this point, Iakovos uses the metaphor of doctors (οἱ τῆς υἰγείας λόγον ὅτι πλεῖστον ποιούμενοι, 323), who urge people to eat healthy instead of pleasant food, to consume products that help maintain good health, instead of more delicious but potentially harmful and unhealthy alternatives. The ruler does not need adulators but genuine friends, who support as state officials his rule with their diligence and love. Devoting special attention to the ruler’s relationship with his friends, Iakovos points out that friends are the eyes of the sovereign, an extensive network of informers, who effectively protect him ensuring domestic stability and order.⁶²

VI. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the sources and the finding of the texts that Iakovos employed to compose the oration for the Prince of Wallachia allow us to enter the rooms of the Patriarchal Academy at the time of writing the text. Handbooks and treatises of rhetoric theory on the one hand, rhetorical texts of late antiquity and the Byzantine era on the other, - which are all recorded in detail in the *apparatus fontium* of my edition-, but also rich oral

⁵⁷ According to Joseph S. Nye Jr, *The Powers to Lead*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, p. 29 (= Nye, *Powers to Lead*), who introduced the distinction “hard” and “soft” power: police power and financial power are examples of hard power that can be used to get others to change their position. But sometimes one can get the outcomes one wants by attracting others without threat or payment. This is soft power: It co-opts people rather than coerces them. For the implementation of this model in the medieval Islamic political thought see Vasileios Syros, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought and Modern Leadership* (in Greek), Papazisis, Athens, 2020, pp. 28-35.

⁵⁸ *Laus Bass.* § 16, 172-176: τοῖς τότε τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἡγεμονίας διέπουσιν ὑπεραγαπᾶτο [...] καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαιρεσίαις ἀεὶ τῶν συναρχαιρεσιαζόντων προετιμᾶτο; on charismatic leadership in modern terms see Nye, *Powers to Lead*, pp. 54-61.

⁵⁹ *Laus Bass.* § 33, 369-372.

⁶⁰ *Laus Bass.* § 28, 321-323: οὐ γὰρ ἀνεξετάστω, ἀλλὰ διὰ χρόνου καὶ πολλὰ δοκιμάσασα τὰς διαθέσεις τὴν αὐτῶν ἐταιρίαν ἠσπάσατο, καὶ τούτων αὖ τοῖς δοκιμωτέροις καὶ χρησιμωτέροις ἤδεται μᾶλλον συνοῦσι;

⁶¹ *Laus Bass.* § 29, 327-328: καὶ οἷα σοφῆ μέλιττα πανταχόθεν σπεύδειν συλλέγειν τὰ τε πρὸς ἔπαινον αὐτῆς καὶ ὄνησιν συντείνοντα.

⁶² *Laus Bass.* § 29, 331-332: Ἰτα γὰρ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰπὼν τις τοῦ βασιλέως τοὺς γνησίους τῶν φίλων οὐκ ἂν πόρρω βάλοι τῆς ἀληθείας.

testimonies about the Prince Constantine and his country have formed a speech, which in no case can be considered a slavish praise, full of flattery and exaggeration. It is an excellent example of the rhetorical eloquence of the famous Aristotelian professor of Constantinople, who has influenced decisively the course of the Patriarchal Academy with his long lasting and constant teaching activity. The authentic biographical material, contained in this speech, has a special value, as it comes from a contemporary author of the ruler and is generally aligned with what we know today from modern Romanian historians.⁶³ During the reign of Bassarava, Wallachia is presented as a prosperous, ideal state, where ruler and subjects progress in social peace and cooperation. The ruler does not impose unbearable taxes on his subjects, but favors the development of their economic activities. Compared to his predecessors, Bassarava does not seek his personal gain but the welfare of his subjects: prosperity and tranquility prevail in towns and villages, households have plenty of goods, markets are full of produce, locals and foreigners easily obtain the necessities of life.⁶⁴ Despite the obvious exaggerations of his description, Iakovos gives us today a visionary picture of Wallachia, as seen through the eyes of Constantinopolitan Greeks in the early 18th century, who were oppressed by the authoritarian rule of the Ottomans: the country of Constantine Bassaraba was the refuge and shelter for all the Orthodox who suffered mistreatment and abuse in other countries.

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⁶³ Croitoru, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 561-570, who summarizes the Romanian historiography on Bassaraba; Those historians have also examined Bassaraba's work and actions mainly through the perspective of his martyrdom: he is a martyr of the Faith, a national hero. On the other hand, Karathanasis, *Greek Scholars*, pp. 69-81, emphasizes the political and cultural aspects of his work as a sign of the rising of “enlightened despotism” in South-Eastern Europe.

⁶⁴ *Laus Bass.* § 42: *κῶμαι καὶ πόλεις εὐθηνίαις καλύπτονται, οἰκίαι τοῖς ἐπιτηδεῖσις ἀφθόνοις περιρρέονται καὶ τούτων αἱ πρῶται πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς κομῶσι πολυκτῆμονες οὖσαι καὶ εὐκτῆμονες. Αἱ ἀγοραὶ πλήρεις ὀνίων καὶ πάντες ἄλλοδαποὶ τε καὶ αὐτόχθονες ῥάδιον καὶ ἱκανὸν τὸν πόρον τῆς ζωῆς εὐρίσκουσι καὶ ἐν εὐθυμίαις διάγουσιν· ἑορταὶ τε καὶ πανηγύρεις μετὰ πολλῆς συγκροτοῦνται θυμηδίας.*

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Appendix 1:

IACOBI MANNAE ARGEI

RECTORIS ACADEMIAE PATRIARCHALIS CONSTANTINOPOLITANAE

LAUS IOANNIS CONSTANTINI BASSARABAE

PRINCIPIS WALLACHIAE

Editio critica

cum apparatu fontium

IACOBI ARGEI LAUS CONSTANTINI BASSARABAE

**Πρὸς τὸν ὑψηλότατον καὶ εὐσεβέστατον αὐθέντην καὶ ἡγεμόνα
πάσης Οὐγγροβλαχίας κύριον κύριον Ἰωάννην Κωνσταντῖνον
Βασσαράβαν βοεβόδαν ἐγκώμιον προσφωνηματικὸν ἐκδοθὲν
παρὰ τοῦ ἐντιμοτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου διδασκάλου κὺρ Ἰακουμῆ
Μάννα τοῦ Ἀργείου τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν λόγῳ
προγυμνάσματος ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν
Πατριαρχικῇ Σχολῇ κατὰ τὸ ,αψη' ἔτος τὸ σωτήριον**

1 Καλὸν μὲν καὶ ἀπὸ γλώττης γεραίρειν ἀρετὴν θ' ἐκάστην ἰδίᾳ καὶ καθόλου, καὶ τοὺς ἀρετῆς ἀντιποιουμένους, ἡγεμῶν κράτιστε, πολλῶ δὲ κρεῖττον καὶ λυσιτελέστερον τὰς τούτων εὐφημίας γραφῆ παραδιδόναι. Ὁ μὲν γάρ τοι προφορικὸς λόγος ἅμα τε λέγεται καὶ πέπαυται καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ῥημάτων ἀνεπαισθήτως τῶν φιληκῶν τὰς ἀκοὰς διατρέχει, μὴ δυναμένης οὕτως ἐν βραχεῖ τὸ ὕψος συνάψαι καὶ διασῶσαι τῶν λεγομένων εἰς μίαν ἐντελῆ διάνοιαν διὰ τὸ ῥευστὸν καὶ ἀτύπωτον τῆς τοῦ διηχοῦς φύσεως, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ταῖς ἀκοαῖς τὰς φωνὰς διαπορθεύοντος, ἐφ' ὅσον παρὰ τοῦ λαλοῦντος λαμβάνει τὸ ἐνδόσιμον· καὶ διακονεῖ μὲν τῇ κινήσει τῆς γλώττης τῇ φωνῇ τῇ ἐνάρθρῳ συσχηματιζόμενος, μετὰ δὲ τὴν φωνὴν οὐδὲν παρ' ἑαυτῷ τοῦ λόγου σύμβολον δείκνυσι καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπέοικεν ὁ λαληθεὶς λόγος τῷ μηδέπω λαληθέντι, μνήμην οὐδεμίαν τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις ἐγκαταλείπων. **2** Οἱ δὲ γ' ἐν δέλτοις ἐγγραφέντες λόγοι καθαπερὶ στήλαις ἐγχαραχθέντες καὶ ὑπόστασιν εἰληφότες τῇ παρατάσει τοῦ κόσμου συμπαρεκτείνονται καὶ δολιχεύειν τὴν μνήμην καὶ συνδιαιωνίζειν τῷ παρόντι ποιῶσιν αἰῶνι διαπρύσιοι κήρυκες ἀλαλήτῳ φωνῇ τῶν ἐπαινουμένων ἐς αἰὶ καθιστάμενοι καὶ παντὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ παρέχοντες ὡς ἐν πίνακι θεᾶσθαι τῶν κατορθωμάτων τὴν ποικιλίαν ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ καὶ τόπῳ, μόνον εἰ μὴ τις ἀφιλόκαλος εἶη, νωθρός τε καὶ φθονερός καὶ παντάπασιν ἀβέλτερος.

3 Διὰ τοι τοῦτο καίπερ εἰδὼς πολλοὺς τῶν ἐπὶ φιλοσοφία ὄνομα ἐσχηκότων πολλαῖς καὶ καλαῖς εὐφημίαις τὴν ὑμετέραν ὑψηλότητα διὰ γλώττης μόνης κοσμήσαντας, ἐπεὶ δὲ μηδεὶς ἐς δεῦρο καὶ γραφῆ παρατίθεσθαι τοὺς ἐπαίνους ταύτης ἐπικεχείρηκε πρὸς τὸ ὕψος, οἶμαι, τῆς ὑποθέσεως ἀντοφθαλμησαι δεδιὼς καὶ τὸ ἐργῶδες ταύτης ἐκκλίνων, ἐτόλμησ' αὐτὸς πρὸς τουτονὶ ἐπαποδύεσθαι τὸν ἀγῶνα, ὃν πάλαι μὲν ὄδιον, καὶ τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους ἐφήδρευον («κωφὸς γάρ, φησιν, ὃς Ἡρακλεῖ στόμα μὴ παραβάλοι», τοὺς μὴ τὰ καλὰ θαυμάζοντας ἀναισθήτους τοῦ λόγου ἀποφαίνοντος), ἀνεδύομην δὲ καὶ ἀνεβαλλόμεν ὥσπερ ἐχίνος τὸν τοκετὸν καὶ ὠκνοῦν ἐπιβαλέσθαι τηλικούτῳ πράγματι ἀφορῶν πρὸς τὸ ἀνέφικτον τοῦ ἐγχειρήματος, οὐχ ὅπως ἔμοιγε ἀλλὰ καὶ οἵτινες ἐς ἄκρον ῥητορείαν ἐξήσκηνται καὶ¹

¹ Hunc titulum praebet cod. Beinecke ms 295; Ἐγκώμιον πρὸς τὸν ἐκλαμπρότατον καὶ εὐσεβέστατον αὐθέντην καὶ ἡγεμόνα πάσης Οὐγγροβλαχίας κύριον κύριον Ἰωάννην Κωνσταντῖνον Βασσαράβαν βοεβόδαν ἐγκώμιον, ἐκδοθὲν ἐν λόγῳ προγυμνάσματος παρὰ τοῦ τιμωτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου ἡμῶν καθηγουμένου κυρίου Ἰακώβου Μάννα τοῦ Ἀργείου τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν λόγῳ προγυμνάσματος ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν Πατριαρχικῇ Σχολῇ κατὰ τὸ ,αψη' ἔτος τὸ σωτήριον habet cod. Athous gr 6288

33-34 Pindarus *Pythia* 9, 87: κωφὸς ἀνὴρ τις, ὃς Ἡρακλεῖ στόμα μὴ περιβάλλει; Synesius *Epistulae* 150, 4: Κωφὸς ἀνὴρ ὃς Ἡρακλεῖ στόμα μὴ περιβάλλει || 36-37 τὸ ἀνέφικτον τοῦ ἐγχειρήματος] Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 368, 8-11: λήψη τοίνυν ἐν τούτῳ τὰ προοίμια δηλονότι ἀπὸ τῆς αὐξήσεως, μέγεθος περιτιθεῖς τῇ ὑποθέσει, ὅτι δυσέφικτος, καὶ ὅτι καθῆκας ἐαυτὸν εἰς ἀγῶνα οὐ ῥάδιον κατορθωθῆναι λόγῳ.

μελέτην τοῦ βίου τὸν λόγον ἐπεποιήκεσαν, καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν ἔλεγον· τίς σὺ ὁ τηλικούτων ἄθλον ὑποδυσόμενος, ὃν πάντες οἱ μέχρι τοῦδε διαθλήσαντες τῆ ἥττη γ' ἐχρήσαντο καὶ ἐσυρίχθησαν τοῖς θεαταῖς; **4** Καὶ τοσαῦτα καὶ τηλικαῦτα πελάγη τῶν λαμπρῶν ἔργων ὀλκάδι μικρᾷ τοῦ λόγου περάσαι διανοούμενος καὶ λόγῳ περιβαλεῖν φιλονεικῶν τὰ πάντα λόγον καὶ τῷ πλήθει καὶ τῆ λαμπρότητι ὑπερπαίοντα προτερήματα, ὧν ἢ θ' Ὀμήρου φιλοσοφία πολλῶ κατόπιν λείπεται καὶ ἡ τοῦ Δημοσθένους ἰλιγγιᾶ δῆπουθεν εὐγλωττία καὶ τὸ στωμύλον αὐτοῦ πάντως ἂν ἀφωνίαν ἐνταῦθα κατεδικάσθη. **5** Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ τοῦ λόγου πατὴρ κατὰ γε τὴν ἐμὴν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῦ προκειμένου εἰς ἔπαινον ἐξισῶσαι τοὺς λόγους οὐ δύναται. Καὶ οὗτοι μὲν οἱ λογισμοὶ τῆς γραφῆς με διωθοῦντο καὶ ἀπῆγον οὐ μάλ' ἐκόντα, τὸ δ' ἐκ τῆς σιωπῆς βλάβος ἐπὶ πλεῖον μ' ἐπώτρυνε πρὸς τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ γράφειν τὴν εὐφημίαν καὶ πλέκειν τὸν στέφανον καὶ ταινιοῦν τῷ τοῦ λόγου διαδήματι τὴν θεόστεπτον καὶ θεοφρούρητον κορυφὴν ὑπερεθέρμαινεν. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἀρετῆς ἐπαινουμένης μέγα γίνεται κέρδος, οὕτω σιγωμένης αὐτῆς ζημία παρομαρτεῖν ἔοικεν οὐχ ἢ τυχοῦσα μηδενὸς εἰς μίμησιν ἐρεθιζομένου. Καὶ δὴ τοῦ δευτέρου γενόμενος ἀπέσεισα μὲν τὸν ὄκνον καὶ τὴν δειλίαν, καλάμου δ' ἠψάμην πρὸς τὴν γραφὴν πολλὰ τῷ κρείττονι πρότερον ἐπευξάμενος προστήσασθαι μοι τῆς ἐν γράμμασιν εὐφημίας.

6 Τοιγαροῦν πατρίδα τῆς ὑμετέρας θεοφιλεστάτης ὑψηλότητος ἐπιζητοῦντες ἄνωθεν μὲν τὴν πασῶν τῶν πόλεων εὐρίσκομεν βασιλίδα τὴν προκαθημένην ἀνατολῆς τε καὶ δύσεως, ἄρκτου καὶ μεσημβρίας, ἣν καὶ μικρὰν τις εἰπὼν οἰκουμένην οὐκ ἂν πόρρω βάλοι τῆς ἀληθείας, ἐκ τοῦ κυριωτέρου μέρους τὸ πᾶν ὀνομάζων· ὃν γὰρ ἔχει λόγον ὀφθαλμὸς πρὸς τὸ σῶμα καὶ νοῦς πρὸς ψυχὴν, τὸν αὐτὸν ἡ Κωνσταντίνου πρὸς πᾶν τὸ οἰκούμενον. **7** Προσεχῶς δὲ ἡ τῆς ἄνω Μυσίας γνωρίζεται μητρόπολις τὸ Τρυγόβιστον, ἐν καλῷ κειμένη τῆς τε χώρας καὶ τοῦ περιέχοντος ἀέρος. Ἡ τε γὰρ περίξ ἅπασα χώρα ὀργὰς πέφυκε καὶ τοῖς γεωργοῖς ἄνετος καὶ ἐξηπλωμένη πρὸς ῥαδίαν αὐλακος σχίσιν καὶ μηδέποτε τοῖς ἐργαζομένοις ἀχαριστοῦσα, ἀλλὰ πολὺχουν καὶ εὐσταχυν ἀποφέρουσα καρπὸν· καὶ τέρπει γε τοὺς γεηπονήσαντας πολλαπλάσιον αἰεὶ τοῦ καταβληθέντος παρεχομένη τὸ ἐκφυέν. Δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐξ ἀρχῆς τοῖς ὀνοματοθέταις εὐφυῶς τεθὲν ὄνομα τὴν εὐκληματοῦσαν σημαῖνον πόλιν. Ὁ τε ἀῆρ τῶν ὑπερβολῶν ἀπηλλαγμένος τοῦ ψύχους καὶ τῆς θερμότητος καὶ τούτων ἔχων τὸ εὐκρατον εὐσθενεῖν παρέχει τοῖς σώμασι καὶ μὴ ῥαδίως ἀλίσκεσθαι νοσήμασι· ὅθεν κουροτρόφον ἂν τις ὑμῖν τὴν χώραν ἀληθέστερον εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ μηλοτρόφον. **8** Ἀλλὰ ταῦτά γ' οἷον ἐπεισόδιον εἰρήσθω τῷ λόγῳ. Τούτοις μὲν γὰρ κοσμεῖν φιλοῦσιν οἱ τεχνῖται τῶν λόγων, οὓς μὴ ἔχωσιν ἂν ἰδίους σεμνῶναι κατορθώμασιν, ἐμοὶ δ' ἐν τούτοις διατρίβειν παρέλκον ἐστίν, ἵνα μὴ τοῦ ἔργου προτιθέναί φανῶμεν τὸ πάρεργον καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔξωθεν καλλωπισμοῖς προκαταναλώσαντες τοῦ λόγου τὴν ἰσχὺν ἐν τοῖς οἰκείοις τῆς ψυχῆς κάλλεσιν ἀπαυδήσωμεν.²

² 40-43 Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 369,7-9: λήψει δὲ δευτέρων προοιμίων ἐννοίας, ὅταν αὐξήσεως ἔνεκα παραλαμβάνηται, ἢ ἀπὸ Ὀμήρου τῆς μεγαλοφωνίας, ὅτι ταύτης μόνης ἐδεῖτο ἢ ὑπόθεσις || 55 cf. Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 369,18: μετὰ τὰ προοίμια ἐπὶ πατρίδα ἤξει || 55-58 Pseudo-Martyrius *Oratio funebris in laudem Joannis Chrysostomi* 23,4: πόλεως τοσαύτης ἐπιστατῶν, ἣν οὐκ ἂν ἀμάρτοι τις προσειπὼν καὶ μικρὰν οἰκουμένην || 70-71 Synesius *Epistulae* 5,278-279: τὴν Ἄμμωνος γῆν οὐ μᾶλλον εἶναι μηλοτρόφον ἢ κουροτρόφον ἀγαθὴν.

9 Τοσαῦτα τοίνυν καὶ τοιαῦτα τῇ πόλει παρεχομένη αὐχήματα ἢ ὑμετέρα σύνεσις ἐξ ἀγαθῶν τ' ἔφν καὶ τοὺς πρώτους οὐ μόνον τῆς πόλεως, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἔσχε γεννήτορας, κάκείνους τοσοῦτον τῇ ἀρετῇ καὶ τῇ φρονήσει παρήλασεν, ὅσῳπερ ἐκεῖνοι τοὺς λοιποὺς ἀνθρώπους ὑπερηκόντισαν. Πρὸς μὲν γὰρ πατρὸς πρὸς τὸν ἀξιάγαστον ἐκεῖνον καὶ χριστιανικώτατον ἡγεμόνα Ματθαῖον βοεβόδαν τὸν Βασσαράβαν τὴν χρυσοῦν τοῦ γένους ἀνάπτει σειρᾶν, οὗ τὸ μὲν γενναῖον καὶ ἡγεμονικὸν φρόνημα τοὺς κατ' ἐκεῖνον καιρὸν πάντα ἐξέπληξε, τό τε εὐνοϊκὸν καὶ περὶ τοὺς φίλους μεγαλόδωρον καὶ τῆς γνώμης τὸ εὐπρόσιτον ἐν θαύματι τοῖς τότε ἦν, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τῶν ἐναντίων τρόπαια καὶ ἀνδραγαθήματα καὶ τῶν νῦν καταυλεῖ τὰ ὅσα καὶ θάμβος ἐμποιεῖ τοῖς ἀναπολοῦσι ταῦτα καὶ τῇ μνήμῃ συμπεριφέρουσιν. Ὡν οὐδεὶς τυγχάνει πάντως ἀνήκοος, ὡσπερ οὐδὲ τοῦ ἡλιακοῦ φωτὸς ἀθέατος ὁ μὴ πηρὸς τὰς ὄψεις. Τῆς δ' εὐσεβοῦς αὐτοῦ πίστεως καὶ τῆς περὶ τὰ θεῖα σπουδῆς μνημεῖα κάλλιστα καὶ μάρτυρες ἀληθέστατοι τυγχάνουσιν αἱ πολλαχοῦ τῆς χώρας τῶν ἱερῶν σηκῶν οἰκοδομαίαι καὶ τὰ σεμνεῖα τῶν μοναζόντων καὶ τὰ εἰς αὐτὰ μεγαλοπρεπῆ ἀναθήματα.

10 Ἐκ δὲ μητρὸς βασιλικῆς ἐστὶν ἄρματος καὶ βασιλεῖς αὐχεῖ τοὺς προγόνους· Ἰωάννης γὰρ ὁ Καντακουζηνὸς ὁ τῶν Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτωρ τῇ σεμνοτάτῃ σου μητρὶ τὴν διαδοχὴν τοῦ γένους διέδωκεν, οὗ τὰς κατὰ τῶν βαρβάρων νίκας καὶ ὅσα κατ' αὐτῶν ἐστήσατο τρόπαια, τὴν τε βασιλεῖ πρέπουσαν ὀρθοδόξῳ τῆς ἀρχῆς διοίκησιν, τὰ τε πρὸ τῆς ἀναρρήσεως καὶ τὰ μετὰ τὴν τῆς βασιλείας περιζῶσιν εὐσεβῆ κατορθώματα οὔτε τοῦ παρόντος καιροῦ οὔτε τῆς νῦν ἐστὶν ὑποθέσεως. Ἄλλως τε καὶ βίβλων πολυστίχων ταῦτα διατόρως κηρυττουσῶν, τοῦτο μόνον ἡμᾶς εἰπεῖν ἄξιον, ὅτι τὰ τῶν Ῥωμαίων εἰς γόνου τότε γ' ὀκλάσαντα καὶ μείζονος ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ἐπικουρίας δεόμενα μόνος οὗτος ὁ ἀοίδιμος ἐν βασιλεῦσι τῇ πίστει καὶ τῇ ἄνωθεν συμμαχίᾳ τεθωρακισμένος χεῖρά τε τοῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ὄρεξε πράγμασι καὶ ἀνῶρθωσε μονονομὸν εἰς παντελεῖ ἀφανισμόν κεκλικότα, καὶ ἔργῳ τοὺς βαρβάρους ἐδίδαξε μὴ καταφρονεῖν Ῥωμαίων μηδ' εἰσβάλλειν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν χώραν ἀνέδην, ἀλλ' ἀγαπᾶν τῇ ἑαυτῶν μηδὲ στέλλεσθαι ἐκστρατείας ὑπερορίους, ἀλλ' ἀτρέμας ἔχειν τῶν οἰκείων ἐντὸς ὄρων. **11** Ἐκ τοιούτων ἄρα τὸ γένος ἔλκουσιν ὃ τε πατὴρ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ – ἡ μὲν ἐκ βασιλέων ἄνωθεν, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἀρίστου τῶν ἡγεμόνων. Καὶ ἦν ὁ μὲν μηδὲν παραχωρῶν τῶν πρωτείων ἐν πάσῃ ἀρετῇ ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος, ἡ δὲ τῶν πόποτ' ἐπὶ τε σωφροσύνη καὶ σεμνότητι καὶ τῇ τῶν ἡθῶν εὐκοσμίᾳ περιβοήτων γυναικῶν πολλῶ τῷ μέτρῳ διενεγκοῦσα. Νόμῳ δὲ γάμου συναφθέντες τὴν ἀρίστην ὄντως ἀπετέλεσαν ζυωρίδα καὶ καθάπερ Ἰσαὰκ ὁ θαυμάσιος καὶ ἡ σωφρονεστάτη Ῥεβέκκα τοῦ Θεοῦ προμνηστευσσαμένου συνοικήσαντες ἐν Χριστῷ μᾶλλον διεγένοντο βιοῦντες ἢ τῇ ματαιᾷ δόξῃ προσέχοντες, καὶ οὐχ οὕτω τῇ τῶν σωμάτων ἐτέρποντο κοινωνία ὡς τῇ κατὰ ψυχὴν ὁμογνωμοσύνην διέχαιρον. Καὶ ἡ μὲν ἐν τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς κάλλει καὶ τῇ τοῦ ἥθους σταθερότητι καὶ τῷ τοῦ προσώπου εὐγενεῖ καταστήματι τὸ βασιλικὸν ἐνεδείκνυεν αἶμα, ὁ δὲ πατὴρ τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν ἔτρεφε φρόνημα μεγαλοουργὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ καὶ μεγαλόνομος, καὶ εἰ μὴ τὸ πεπρωμένον τοῦ βίου τοῦτον ἀπῆγεν ἐν μέσῃ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ³

³ 109-110 τοῦ Θεοῦ προμνηστευσσαμένου] *Genesis* 50-51: Παρὰ κυρίου ἐξῆλθεν τὸ πρόσταγμα τοῦτο· οὐ δυνήσομεθα οὖν σοὶ ἀντεπεῖν κακὸν καλῶ. ἰδοὺ Ῥεβέκκα ἐνώπιόν σου· λαβὼν ἀπότρεχε, καὶ ἔστω γυνὴ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ κυρίου σου, καθὰ ἐλάλησεν κύριος.

τῆς προθεσμίας ἐπιστάσης, οἷς κρίμασιν οἶδεν ἡ θεία πρόνοια, ἥς ἄτερ οὐδὲ θριξὶ ἡμῶν πεσεῖται τῆς κεφαλῆς, εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ τῶν θείων ἄψασθαι κριμάτων, ὅτι μακροὺς ἐν ὀλίγῳ πεπλήρωκε χρόνους καὶ ἀρεστή αὐτοῦ γέγονεν ἡ ψυχὴ τῷ Κυρίῳ, πολλὰς ἂν ἡμῖν ἱστορίας πολλῶν κάγαθῶν κατορθωμά<των> ἀπέλιπεν ἄν.

12 Νῦν δὲ τοσοῦτον αὐτῷ συνεχωρήθη περιεῖναι τῷ βίῳ, ἐφ' ὅσον πατέρα γεγονέναι τῆς ὑμετέρας πραότητος, ἥτις θεία βουλήσει προώριστο ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς αἰῶσι φανῆναι τῷ βίῳ· καὶ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ τῶν πραγμάτων φορὰ τῆς ὑμετέρας πάντως ἔχρηζε κηδεμονίας, ὡς οὐκ ἦν ἄλλως τό γε νῦν εἶναι τὰ τῶν Μυσῶν συμφερόντως διευθετεῖσθαι ἢ ταύτης τὴν ἀρχὴν διαπρεπούσης. Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν τοιοῦτος καὶ τηλικούτος ὑπάρξειν ἡμελλεν ὁ τεχθησόμενος καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἔδει προκαταβληθῆναι μεγάλας, ἴν' ὥσι γε μεγάλα μεγίστου πράγματος καὶ τὰ αἴτια, καὶ τοῦτό σοι προωκονόμεται παρὰ τῆς πάντα σοφῶς διοικούσης προνοίας, ὃ Θάλληστρις ἢ τῶν ἀμαζόνων βασίλισσα τῇ ἑαυτῆς πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Μακεδόνα συμπλοκῇ γενέσθαι νουεχῶς ἐστοχάσατο καὶ τῷ τοῦ Φιλίππου δεδήλωκεν. «Εἰκὸς γάρ φησι τὸν ἐκ δυοῖν γονέων πρωτεύοντων γεννώμενον ὑπερέξειν ἀρετῇ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων». **13** Τοιούτοις οὖν χρησαμένη γεννήτορσιν ἡ ὑμέτερα θεοσέβεια ἐκ πρώτης (ὃ φασί) τριχὸς ἦθεσι χρηστοῖς ἀνετρέφετο καὶ ἐν ἀπαλῷ τῷ σώματι ἀγκάλαις μητρικαῖς ἐποχομένη εὐγενικοῖς ἀνεσκίρτα σκιρτήμασι καὶ κατὰ ψυχὴν ἀνεπλάττετο τοὺς λαμπροὺς χαρακτήρας τῆς εὐγενείας καὶ ὡς κηρὸς εὐμάλακτος τοὺς τύπους ἐνετυποῦτο τοῦ κάλλους τῆς εὐσεβείας καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν ιδέαν κοσμιότητος ἐρρυθμίζετο καὶ σεμνότητος. Καὶ ἦν «παιδίον (ὃ περὶ τοῦ Μωυσέως φησὶν ἢ γραφῇ) ἀστεῖον καὶ χαρίεν», ἐν ἄνθει τῆς ἡλικίας, ἐν ἀκμῇ τῆς ὥρας γλυκὺ θέαμα τοῖς γεννησαμένοις, εἰς ὥραν ἐπιδιδούν, εἰς ἀκμὴν προϊόν, τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ὠραιότητας συναυξῶν τῷ κάλλει τοῦ σώματος καὶ τοὺς φύντας ταῖς χρῆσταῖς ἐπιτέρπον ἐλπίσιν.

14 Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἄλλοις παρείσθω τὰ διηγήματα, ἡμῖν δ' ἐπὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς μεταβατέον τοῦ λόγου βιάζοντος. Τὴν γοῦν πρώτην ἡλικίαν παραλλάξασα καὶ εἰς τὸν μείρακα παραγγείλασα, ἡνίκα συμβαίνει τοὺς νεωτέρους ἀκαθεκτοτέρους ἑαυτῶν γίνεσθαι καὶ ὑπὸ σφριγώσης τῆς νεότητος εἰς τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα συνωθεῖσθαι, οὐ καθὰ τοὺς πολλοὺς αὐτῆ τῶν νέων (οἷτινες, ἐπειδὴν τοῖς παρὰ τῆς τύχης εὐροοῦντες τύχῳσι, πόνου μὲν οὐδενὸς ἐπὶ τοῖς βελτίστοις ἀνέχονται, πᾶσαν δ' ἡδυπάθειαν ἀσπάζονται) εἰς ῥαστώνας ἐξέκλινεν, οὐδὲ τρυφαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις παιδιαῖς ἔχαιρεν, ἀλλὰ τούτοις ἅπασιν οἷς οἱ πολλοὶ σεμνύονται κακῶς κρίνοντες, ἐρρῶσθαι φράσασα τῶν σεμνῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἀντείχετο καὶ τοῖς περὶ εὐσεβείας ἐσχόλαζε λόγοις καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνης καὶ σεμνότητος ἐπετηδεύετο ἔργα καὶ ἡγεμονίας θεοφιλοῦς ἄξια πράττουσα διετέλει. **15** Καὶ ἦν τοῖς μὲν γειναμένοις διὰ ταῦτα τὸ φίλτρον πλεονά- ζουσα, τοῖς δ' ἔξω πᾶσι θαυματομένη τῆς τε φρονήσεως καὶ ἀνδρίας καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ τῆς πρώτης τούτων δικαιοσύνης, ἀνθ' ὧν τῶν ὁρώντων ἀπάντων αἰ γινῶμαι εἰς ταῦτὸν ἔφερον καὶ τὴν τῆς πατρίδος ἡγεμονίαν αὐτῇ προσυνηφίσαντο καὶ⁴

⁴ 119 κατορθωμά<των> supplevi

121-122 θεία βουλήσει] Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 370,21-23 τῆ δ' ἀληθεία παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ κατάπεμπονται καὶ εἰσιν ἀπόρροια ὄντως τοῦ κρείττονος 129-131 Diodorus Siciliota *Bibliotheca* 17,77,1-4 || 131-136 Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 371,15-16: ἐξέλαμπεν ἐξ ὠδίνων εὐειδῆς τῷ κάλλει || 136-137 *Epist. Ad Hebraeos* 11,23 151-152 || Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 373,5-8: διαίρει γὰρ ἀπανταχοῦ τὰς πράξεις ὧν ἂν μέλλῃς ἐγκωμιάζειν εἰς τὰς ἀρετὰς (ἀρεταὶ δὲ τέσσαρές εἰσιν, ἀνδρεία, δικαιοσύνη, σωφροσύνη, φρόνησις).

ήγεμονεύεσθαι πρὸς αὐτῆς εὐκταῖον ἐτίθεντο καὶ τῆς κατ' αὐτὴν ἀπολαύειν κηδεμονίας ἐν μοίρα εὐχῆς ἐποιοῦντο, ὡς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως τὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς σχοίη καλῶς, εἰ μὴ παρ' αὐτῆς ἡγεμονεούμενα, τοῖς ἔξωθεν πλεονεκτήμασι πρὸς τὴν ἔνδοθεν ἀγλαΐαν καὶ σταθερότητα τεκμηρίοις χρωμένων καὶ διὰ τοῦ σωματικοῦ κάλλους ὡς δι' ἐσόπτρου διειδεστάτου τῆς ψυχῆς ἐνοπτριζομένων τὸ κάλλος. Καὶ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ σώματος εἰς μέγεθος περιβλεπτον ἀναδρομὴ καὶ ἡ τῶν μελῶν μετ' εὐχροίας ἀρμονία καὶ σύμπηξις καὶ τὸ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀρχῆς ἄξιον εἶδος τὴν ἔνδοθεν τῆς ψυχῆς παρίστησιν εὐγένειαν, καὶ τῶντι καλλίστη ψυχῇ κάλλιστον ὁ Θεὸς παρέσχε τὸ ὄργανον, ἵν' εὐμαρῶς δι' αὐτοῦ τὰ δοκοῦντα τῷ συζεύξαντι διαπράττηται.

16 Τίς γὰρ τῆ ρώμη τοῦ σώματος οὕτω πρὸς ἀγαθὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ὑπηρεσίας ἐχρήσατο, ὡς ἡ ὑμετέρα μεγαλειότης; Πολλοῖς μὲν ἡ τοῦ σώματος εὐεξία κακίας μᾶλλον ἢ ἀρετῆς παραίτιος γίνεσθαι τοῖς τῆς φύσεως δωρήμασιν οὐ καλῶς κεκηρημένοις, αὐτὴ δὲ τῆ τε ρώμη καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῦ σώματος πλεονεκτήμασι πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς μεγαλοουργίαν καὶ πρὸς ἀγαθοεργίας ἀεὶ φαίνεται κεκηρημένη, «τὸν νοῦν ὡσπερ τινὰ κυβερνήτην ἄνω καθημένον τῶν παθῶν ἔχουσα καὶ οἰονεὶ πλοίου τῆς σαρκὸς ἐπιβάντα ἐμπείρως τοὺς λογισμοὺς οἷον οἴακας περιστρέφειν καὶ καταπατεῖν μὲν γενναίως τὰ κύματα, ὑψηλὸν δ' ἀεὶ διαμένειν καὶ ἀνένδοτον εἶναι τοῖς πάθεσι», καὶ δυσχερέστερον ἂν τις αὐτὴν τῆς πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν παρατρέψοι ῥοπῆς ἢ τῆς συνήθους πορείας τὸν ἥλιον. Ἄνθ' ὧν καὶ τοῖς τότε τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἡγεμονίας διέπουσιν ὑπεραγαπᾶτο (τῆς γὰρ ἀρετῆς εἰ καὶ μὴ πάντες ἀντιποιοῦνται, ἀλλ' εἰσὶν οἱ καὶ κακίας μετέχοντες, οὐδεὶς μὲντοι ταύτης ἀνέραςτος καὶ τοὺς ταύτην μετιόντας ἐν μομφῇ τιθέμενος) καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαιρεσίαις ἀεὶ τῶν συναρχαιρεσιαζόντων προετιμᾶτο καὶ ἀξίαις ἐκοσμοῦτο ταῖς ὑπερεχοῦσαις. Ἐν αἷς ἀπάσαις εὐδοκίμει καὶ ἐνέπρεπε πρὸς εὐποίας μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἑαυτῆς κέρδος τὴν ἀρχὴν κληρουμένη καὶ φίλτρον τοῖς πᾶσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ δέος ἐνέσταζε φιλανθρωπία ὅτι πλείστη καὶ συμπαθεία χρωμένη. **17** Διὸ θέαμα ἦν τοῖς ὀρώσιν εὐκταῖον καὶ κάλλιστον, καὶ χρηστὰς εἶχον ἅπαντες ἐπ' αὐτῇ τὰς ἐλπίδας τὴν ἀρίστην αὐτῆς ἡγεμονίαν ἐκ τῆς ἀρίστης τῶν δευτέρων ἀρχῶν διοικήσεως τεκμαιρόμενοι. Τῆς γὰρ μεγίστης ἀρχῆς αἱ ἐλάττους δοκίμια τυγχάνουσι, καὶ ὁ ταῖς δυνάμεις τῆς ψυχῆς τὸν νοῦν ἐπιστήσας μονάρχην τὴν ὀγκλοκρατίαν τῶν παθῶν καταλύοντα καὶ τὰς ἀλόγους τῆς ψυχῆς μοίρας τιθασσοὺς καὶ τῷ λόγῳ παρασχῶν κατηκόους, οὗτος καὶ οἰκίας μεγάλης λυσιτελῶς προστήσεται πάντως. Ὁ δὲ τὴν οἰκίαν κάλλιστ' οἰκονομήσας καὶ δούλων δεσπότης ἐπιεικῆς γενόμενος, οὗτος καὶ πόλεως ἄρχων ἀγαθὸς γενήσεται· ὁ δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἄρξας ἐνόμως, οὗτος καὶ ἔθνους παντὸς ἡγεμονεύσει ἐνομώτατα, ὥστε τῆ κατὰ φύσιν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἡγεμονίας ἄριστα χρησάμενον ἀφ' ἐστίας τὸ ἡγεμονεύειν κεκτησθαι.

18 Τοιαῦτα ἐνορῶντές σοι τῆς ἡγεμονίας προοίμια καὶ οἷον προκαταβλήσεις τῆς ἀνωτάτω ἐξουσίας εὐέλπιδες ἦσαν, ὡς οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν τοῦ ποθουμένου τευξόμενοι. «Καθάπερ γὰρ ἥλιος καὶ μηδέπω τὰς ἀκτῖνας δείξας πόρρωθεν τῷ φωτὶ καταυγάζει τῆς οἰκουμένης τὸ πλεόν», οὕτω καὶ ἡ σὴ γαληνότης καὶ πρὸ τῆς⁵

⁵ 167-171 S. Basilus *Homilia in principium Proverbiorum* 15, PG 31,420 || 182-184 Synesius *De regno* 10,15-21: ἦν νοῦν καλοῦμεν, ὃν ἀξιῶ βασιλεύειν ἐν τῇ τοῦ βασιλέως ψυχῇ τὴν ὀγκλοκρατίαν τε καὶ δημοκρατίαν τῶν παθῶν καταλύσαντα. ἀφ' ἐστίας γὰρ ἂν οὗτος βασιλεύσειε τῇ κατὰ φύσιν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἡγεμονίας χρησάμενος· ὡς ὅστις γε τὰς ἀλόγους τῆς ψυχῆς μοίρας τιθασσοὺς καὶ χειροῆθεις ποιήσας κατηκόους τῷ λόγῳ παρέσχετο || 191-192 Johannes Chrysostomus *Homilia in Matthaem* IV, 4, PG 57,44.

ἡγεμονίας τὰς μαρμαρυγὰς τῶν οἰκείων ἀρετῶν ἐνείσα ταῖς ψυχαῖς τῶν ὀρώντων πρὸς ἑαυτὴν εἴλκε τὰς αὐτῶν διανοίας· καὶ τῷ μὲν ἀφανεῖ τῆς ψυχῆς καταστάματι κοινῇ τὴν προβολὴν αὐτῆς σπουδάζοντες καὶ πρὸ τῆς προθεσμίας γενέσθαι παρὰ τῆς θείας προνοίας ἠτοῦντο λιπαρῶς (οὐκ οἶδε γὰρ καιροὺς ἀναμένειν ἢ φιλοῦσα ψυχὴ καὶ πάντες φύσει μὴ παρὰ πολὺ ἐν χῆτει τῶν ὠφελούντων φιλοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ προεντυχεῖν ὀρεγόμεθα κερδαίνειν τὸν χρόνον τῆς προαπολαύσεως νομίζοντες, ἣν δὲ βραδύνωσι παραγενέσθαι ζημίαν ἡγούμεθα τὸν τῆς στερήσεως χρόνον), τῷ δὲ φαινομένῳ τὸν τότε κρατοῦντα θεραπεύοντες τὴν ἄνωθεν προσεδέχοντο ψῆφον μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς ἐφέσεως.

19 Ἀλλὰ ταύτης μὲν περὶ κατωτέρῳ γ' εἰρήσεται, νῦν δ', ἴν' ὁ λόγος καθ' ὁδὸν προῖη, τὰ περὶ τῆς συναφείας γάμου ῥητέον. Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν καὶ γάμου ταύτη κατὰ γε τὸ φυσικὸν καὶ θεῖον ἐμέλησε θεσμόν, ἢ τὰ πάντα καλῶς πρυτανεύουσα καὶ πρὸ γενέσεως ἡμῶν τὰς τε γνώμας καὶ διαθέσεις προορωμένη ἀλήστοις ὄμμασι θεῖα προνοία κατάλληλον αὐτῇ τῇ τ' εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σωφροσύνῃ καὶ τοῖς τρόποις συνώκισε τὴν σύνευνον κατὰ γε τὸ «Κύριος κατοικίξει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ», ἥτις λαμπρὰ μὲν ἦν καὶ περιφανὴς ἐκ τοῦ γένους ἡγεμονικοῦ τ' ὄντος καὶ τὰ πρῶτα φέροντος, λαμπροτέρα δὲ καὶ περιφανεστέρα γέγονεν ἐκ τῆς πρὸς αὐτὴν συνοικήσεως. Καὶ ἐγένετό σοι βοηθὸς οὐ μᾶλλον πρὸς παίδων γνησίων γονὰς ἢ πρὸς ἀρετῆς ἐπίδοσιν, σύμφρων οὔσα καὶ τῶν καλῶν συνέριθος καὶ ἰσότημιος τὴν ἀρετὴν, πρὸς εὐποιίας ἐνάμιλλος, πρὸς εὐεργεσίας σύμψηφος, πρὸς ὁμόνοιαν ὁμόψυχος, ἐν οὐδενὶ τῶν πρὸς δόξαν φερόντων καὶ ψυχῆς ὄφελος προσισταμένη, ἀλλ' ὅλη σου τῶν νευμάτων ἐξηρητημένη καὶ σοι μᾶλλον ἢπερ ἑαυτῇ ζῆν προθυμουμένη· καὶ οὐχ ὡς πολλὰ τῶν γυναικῶν τῷ ἔξωθεν κόσμῳ καλλωπιζομένη καὶ τοῖς ἐντρίμμασιν, ἀλλὰ τῇ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀγλαΐᾳ σεμνυνομένη, τοιαύτη τις οὔσα, οἷας Σολομῶν ὁ σοφώτατος τὸ ἐγκώμιον πλέκει καὶ τὸν στέφανον. Εἰ γὰρ τῶν αὐτῆς ἀρετῶν ἄψασθαι βουλευθῆμεν, πολλὰς ἂν ἐγκωμίων ὑποθέσεις ἀπαρτίσαιμεν.

20 Ἐκ ταύτης τοιγαροῦν πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ πραότητι ἄρρενά τε καὶ θήλεα γεγένηται τέκνα, εὐγενεῖς καὶ λαμπροὶ κλάδοι ἐκ ρίζης λαμπροτάτης καὶ μεγαλοφουεστάτης ἐν ἧθεσι σεμνοῖς ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν σπαργάνων ἀνατραφέντες καὶ ἐκ βρέφους τὴν περὶ τὰ θεῖα καλῶς διδαχθέντες εὐλάβειαν, τὴν τε πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας εὐπείθειαν καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ πρὸς τοὺς τῶν προσηκόντων τῷ γένει πρεσβυτέρους. Διδασκάλοις τε φρονήσει καὶ παιδεῖα εὖ ἤκουσι παραδοθέντες ἐπὶ συντάξεσιν οὐκ εὐκαταφρονήτοις τάχει τε φύσεως καὶ φιλοπονία ἀτρύτω χρησάμενοι τὰς τε λογικὰς τέχνας καὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος χρόνου μὴ πολλοῦ δεηθέντες ἐξέμαθον. Οὕτω τοίνυν ἐκ πρώτης εἰς τὸν βίον εἰσόδου καλῶς καὶ ἑναρμονίως ἤχθησαν, ὥστε πρὸς τῇ οἴκοθεν ἐπιτηδειότητι καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἀγωγῆς καὶ παιδείας προσλαβόντας ἰσχύν, οἷς μὲν τὸ νέον ἡδέεται, τούτων ἔχειν ὀλιγῶρος καὶ μηδὲνα λόγον ποιεῖσθαι, τῶν δ' ἅ καὶ γηράσκουσι φέρει κόσμον ἐνόητα καὶ αὔξειν πέφυκε τὴν σύνεσιν, ἐνθύμως ἀντέχεσθαι καὶ σπεύδειν γενέσθαι τοῖς τρόποις πρᾶπλησίους τοῖς γεννήσασιν, καὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς τῆς ἀρετῆς καρποὺς ἀποφέρειν στείχοντας ἀεὶ κατ' ἴχνος ὑμῶν καὶ πρὸς τὸ πατρικὸν ἐξομοιουμένους παράδειγμα, καὶ ταῖς ἑαυτῶν ψυχαῖς οἷα καρποῖς ἀπαλοῖς τὰς πατρώας ἀρετὰς ἐναπομάττοντες καθ' ἑκάστην καὶ τὰς παρὰ τοῦ διδάσκοντος διδασκαλίας ἐναποτυποῦντες τῇ μνήμῃ μονιμώτατα.⁶

⁶ 207 *Psalmi* 67,7 : ὁ Θεὸς κατοικίξει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ | 210-211 cf. Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 376,10-12: ἡ βασιλῆς, [...] ἦν θαυμάσας ἠγάπησε, ταύτην κοινωνὸν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ βασιλείας πεποιήται.

21 Καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἡδὺ τοῖς πατράσι θέαμα καὶ γλυκὺ καὶ πρᾶγμα καὶ ὄνομα, τὸ τοὺς υἱεῖς ὄραν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ συνεπιδιδόντας πῆχσει τὸ τοῦ λόγου πρὸς πᾶν εἶδος ἀρετῆς καὶ μαθήσεως, καὶ εἴ γε δυνατὸν μὴ ὅτι γε τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἑαυτῶν κρείττους ἰδεῖν τοὺς παῖδας ἐν εὐχῆς μέρει τέτακται· ὅπερ Ἐκτωρ περὶ τοῦ υἱέως Ἀστυνάκτος ἠΰξαστο πατρὸς ἀμείνω γενέσθαι –πατέρες γὰρ μόνοι κρείττους τῶν ὀδόντων τοῦ φθόνου. Καὶ πᾶς τις ὢν αὐτὸς ἀγαθῶν ἠτύχησε, τούτων ἐγκρατεῖς τοὺς υἱοὺς γενέσθαι περὶ πλείονος ποιεῖται καὶ τὴν αὐτῶν βελτίωσιν οἰκείαν εἶναι νομίζει, καθάπερ καὶ διδάσκαλοι τῶν ὁμιλητῶν τὰς ἐπιδόσεις δειγμάτων τυγγανούσας τῆς αὐτῶν περὶ τούτους ἐπιμελείας, καὶ μάλα γ' εἰκότως.

22 Ἐπεὶ τῶν θύραθεν ἀγαθῶν, ἃ καὶ ὀργανικὰ τῷ Ἀριστοτέλει καλεῖται καὶ Πλάτωνι, τὴν πρώτην εἴληχεν τάξιν ἢ εὐτεκνία καὶ ταύτη τὰ πρεσβεῖα παρέχουσιν ἅπαντες, αὐτῇ μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ θησαυροῖς ὁ Κροῖσος σεμνυνόμενοι, ὡς οὐδὲν κέρδος τοῦ πολυταλά<v>του πλούτου κατὰ τὸν δημῶδη λόγον παιδῶν αὐτοῖς μὴ ὑπόντων σωφροσύνη καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ παιδείᾳ κεκοσμημένων. Τοιγαροῦν τοὺς αὐτοὺς πολὺπαιδας καὶ εὐπαιδας μῦθοι μὲν ἴσως πλάττοντες παραδίδασιν οὐ τάληθές, ἀλλὰ τὸ παράδοξον τοῦ λόγου διώκοντες καὶ θαυμαστά γ', ἀλλ' οὐ πιστὰ φθεγγόμενοι, ἐπ' αὐτῆς δὲ τῇ πείρᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦτο μεμαθήκαμεν· καὶ ὁράται γε τοὺς υἱεῖς καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τούτων υἱωνοὺς ὡς νεόφυτα ἐλαιῶν ἔχουσα κύκλω τῆς ἡγεμονικῆς τραπέζης πάντας σεμνοὺς, πάντας συνέσει εὐ ἤκοντας καὶ τὸ εὐγενὲς τῆς φύσεως καὶ τὴν ἀρίστην ἀγωγὴν τῇ εὐρυθμίᾳ τοῦ ἤθους ποιοῦντας κατάδηλον, τῇ πρὸς τοὺς γεννήσαντας αἰδοῖ καὶ στοργῇ καὶ εὐπειθείᾳ τοὺς Ἰακῶβ παῖδας ἀποκρύπτοντας καὶ τὸν μακαρισμὸν ὑμῖν ἀληθῆ παρεχομένους. Οὐκ ἔλαττον δὲ εἰς μακαρισμὸν ἢ κατὰ τοὺς παῖδας εὐκληρία κατὰ τὸ «μακάριος, ὅστις εὐτύχησεν εἰς τέκνα» καὶ Σολομῶν ὁ θαυμάσιος στέφανον πατρὸς ἀποκαλεῖ τούτους ἐν Παροιμίαις. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν μέρει εὐδαιμονίας οἱ τοιοῦτοι τῶν παιδῶν παραλαμβάνονται καὶ ἡ τούτων ἀρετὴ καὶ σεμνότης εἰς τοὺς θρέψαντας καὶ τὰ ἦθη τούτων ρυθμίσαντας ἀναφερομένη δικαίως πολλῶν αὐτοῖς ἐπαίνων γίνεσθαι πρόξενος, καθὰ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν ἢ ἐπίδοσις δίδωσι τοῖς διδασκάλοις ἀπολαύειν ἐπαίνων.

23 Ἀλλὰ τί ταῦτ' ἂν τις φαίη τῶν λίαν ἐφιεμένων τὰ ἐξῆς ἀκοῦσαι τοῦ λόγου; Τί τὸν λόγον ἐκτὸς διατρίβεις τοῦ προκειμένου καὶ περὶ τὴν παιδῶν εὐφημίαν ἐμφιλοχωρεῖς τῷ λόγῳ παρέλκων τῶν φιληκῶν τὰς ἀκοὰς γλιχομένας ἀκοῦσαι τῶν εὐφημιῶν τοῦ ταύτης αἰτίου; Πρὸς ὃν ἂν αὐτὸς εἴποιμι, τοῦτο δὴ καὶ μάλ' αὐτίκα ποιήσω μετὰ τὴν ἐκείνων ἀφήγησιν. Τὰ γὰρ περὶ ἐκείνων λεχθέντα τῆς τοῦ αἰτίου σεμνότητος καὶ ἀρίστης οἰκονομίας ἐστὶν ἐγκώμια καὶ ἐπαινετῆς ἡγεμονίας προοίμια κάλλιστα καὶ ἀκριβέστατα δειγμάτων ὡς ἐξ ὄνουχος δεικνύντα τὸν ἐσόμενον λέοντα, ὅτι τὸν ἄλλους σοφίζοντα πολὺ πρότερον τοῦτον εἶναι δεῖ σοφὸν καὶ σωφρονεῖν μᾶλλον τὸν μέλλοντα σωφρονίζειν ἑτέρους καὶ κόσμιον εἶναι τὸν ἐθέλοντα ποιεῖν κοσμίους.⁷

⁷247 πολυταλά<v>του scripsi: πολυταλάτου cod.

239-240 Homerus *Ilias* VI 479: καὶ ποτὲ τις εἶποι “πατρός γ' ὅδε πολλὸν ἀμείνων” || 244-245 Synesius *De regno* 8,9-11: τὰ γὰρ θυραῖα τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἅπερ ὀργανικὰ καλεῖν ἔθος Ἀριστοτέλει καὶ Πλάτωνι || 247-248 Gregorius Nyssenus *De vita Mosis* 1,19 τοῦ πολυταλάντου πλούτου τιμωτέραν || 252-253 *Psalmi* 127,3 ἡ γυνὴ σου ὡς ἄμπελος εὐθηνούσα ἐν τοῖς κλίτεσι τῆς οἰκίας σου· οἱ υἱοὶ σου ὡς νεόφυτα ἐλαιῶν κύκλω τῆς τραπέζης σου || 258 Menander *Sententiae* 489; cf. Euripides *Orestes* 542: ζηλωτὸς ὅστις εὐτύχησεν ἐς τέκνα || 258-259 *Proverbia* 1,8-9 ἄκουε, υἱέ, παιδείαν πατρός σου καὶ μὴ ἀπόση θεσμούς μητρός σου· στέφανον γὰρ χαρίτων δέξῃ σὴ κορυφῇ || 270 Macarius Chrysocephalus *Paroemiae* 3,95.

ὄθεν τῶν παίδων τὸ πεπαιδευμένον καὶ κόσμιον, καθὰ καὶ τάναντία, πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας οἱ πλείους ἀνατιθέασι. **24** Τούτων δὲ προληφθέντων τῷ λόγῳ ἀφ' ἑστίας αὐτῆ φανεῖται τὸ ἡγεμονεύειν ἀρχόμενον καὶ ὕλης πρὸς ἕκτασιν δεόμενον μείζονος, ἵνα καὶ τὰ τῆς ἰσχύος καὶ τὰ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας καὶ ἀγαθῆς προαιρέσεως καθάπερ ἀκτῖνες ἡλίου ἐν σταθερᾷ μεσημβρίᾳ μὴ ἐπιπροσθουμένου νέφεσι διαλάμψωσιν. Ὅποταν τοίνυν ἡ τῆ θεῖα βουλήσει προορισθεῖσα τοῦ κράτους ἐνέστηκε προθεσμία (πρὸ γὰρ τῶν μητρικῶν ὠδίνων αὐτὴν ὁ Θεός, καθὰ καὶ Παῦλον τὸν μακάριον ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός, πρὸς διοίκησιν τῆς πατρίδος ἐξελέξατο καὶ ἡγεμόνα προανείπε τοῦ ἔθνους), τότε δὴ, τότε ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν καταφανῆς γέγονε βούλησις καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἅπαντες ὡς ὄν ὁ Θεός εἰς ἄρχοντα λαοῦ προχειρίζεται καὶ ἡγεμόνα ψηφίζει κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ εὐρίσκων καρδίαν ὡς ἄλλον Δαβίδ, τοῦτον οὐδεὶς ἀποψηφίζει ἰσχύει, μηδ' ἀνθίστασθαι τῆ θεῖα δύναται ψήφῳ, ἀλλὰ πάντες γίνονται τῆς ἀναρρήσεως σύμψηφοι καὶ ἀνακηρύττουσι καὶ πειθηνίως κλίνουσι τὸν αὐχένα μηδενὸς προσισταμένου.

25 Καὶ γὰρ οὕτω ῥαδίως καὶ κατὰ ῥοὺν τὰ τῆς ἡγεμονίας αὐτῆ προὔχρησε καὶ προὔβη, ὥστε καταφανῆς γεγονέναι τοῖς πάσι παρὰ τοῦ τῶν βασιλέων βασιλεύοντος τὰ σκῆπτρα τῆς ἀρχῆς λαβεῖν τὴν ὑμετέραν μεγαλοργὸν σύνεσιν καὶ ἄθλον ἀρετῆς τὴν ἀξίαν διαζώσασθαι, μᾶλλον δ' εἰπεῖν ὄργανον ἐγχειρισθῆναι πρὸς μείζονας ἀγαθοεργίας καὶ μέσον τῆς πρὸς τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν ἀπλήστου προθυμίας, ἵν' ὅτι πλείστους ἔχη τοὺς πρὸς αὐτῆς εὖ παθόντας. Οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτῆς εἵνεκεν, ἀλλὰ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν ὠφελείας τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἐδέξατο· οὕτως οὖν τὸ θεῖον μεγάλοις τοὺς μεγάλα διαπραξαμένους κατὰ τὸ αὐτῶ δοκοῦν οἶδεν ἀμείβεσθαι καὶ τιμᾶν τοὺς τιμῶντας. **26** Ἐπειλημμένη δὲ ἤδη τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ τοῦ ὑψηλοτάτου καὶ θεοβραβεύτου ἐπιβεβηκυῖα θρόνου μῶν τῆς προτέρας τι καθυφείκεν ἀρετῆς καὶ μετριότητος ἢ τοῦ καθήκοντος ἀπέκλινε τῆ τύχῃ καὶ τὸ ἦθος συμμεταβαλοῦσα; Οὐ μὲν οὖν, ἀλλὰ τῆ ἀξία καὶ τὴν ἐπιείκειαν συνηύξησε καὶ τὴν μετριοφροσύνην συνεπέτεινε, οὐδ' ἐπήρθη μετέωρος ὑπ' ἀλαζονείας, οὐδ' ἀνασπᾶν τὰς ὀφρῦς ἠθέλησεν ἀπειροκάλως καὶ τῶν ὑπηκόων καταθρασύνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐς δεῦρο διατελεῖ φερομένη πρὸς ἅπαντας ἡπίως καὶ εὐνοϊκῶς καὶ ταῖς δωρεαῖς μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ φόβῳ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτὴν συνέχουσα καὶ εὐεργέτης αὐτῶν καὶ δεσπότης αἰρουμένη καλεῖσθαι καὶ μονουχὶ ταῦτά Τίτῳ τῷ Καίσαρι φάσκουσα «σήμερον οὐκ ἐβασίλευσα, ἐπεὶ οὐδένα εὐηργέτησα». **27** Καὶ ὅπερ ἡ Λιβία τῷ Αὐγούστῳ μετὰ πολλὰ ἔτη τῆς μοναρχίας ὑποτίθεται νουνεχῶς πρὸς τὸ ἀπηνέστερον τῆ ἀρχῆς κατὰ τῶν ἀρχομένων βουλομένῳ χρῆσασθαι, τοῦθ' ἡ ὑμέτερα μεγαλόνοια τῆ χρηστῆ προαιρέσει διδασκάλῳ χρωμένη διεπράξατο. Καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος μὲν μόλις πεισθεὶς τῆ Λιβία λεγούσῃ «φιλεῖν τινὰ τὸ ξίφος πείσαι ἢ ἀναγκάσαι μὴ δύνασθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν κολαζόμενον ἀπολλύναι, τὰς δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ψυχὰς⁸ ἄλλοτριῶν τοῦ κολάζοντος, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ φιλοῦσιν, ὅτι ἐδικαιώθησαν ἕτεροι, ἀλλ' ἀπεχ-

⁸ 279-280 *Epistula Pauli ad Galatas* 1,15-16: ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ || 282-283 *Acta apostolorum* 13,22: καὶ μεταστήσας αὐτὸν ἡγειρεν τὸν Δαβὶδ αὐτοῖς εἰς βασιλέα, ᾧ καὶ εἶπεν μαρτυρήσας, Εὐρον Δαβὶδ τὸν τοῦ Ἰεσσαί, ἄνδρα κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν μου, ὃς ποιήσει πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου || 302-303 *Joannes Zonaras Epitome Historiarum* 3,57, 4-5: Τούτου ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ ἀοιδίμος ἐκεῖνη φωνὴ εἰπόντος “σήμερον οὐκ ἐβασίλευσα, ἐπεὶ οὐδένα εὐηργέτησα” || 306-311 *Joannes Zonaras Epitome Historiarum* 2, 450,8-15: “οὐ γὰρ πείθειν ἢ ἀναγκάζειν” ἔφη φιλεῖν τινὰ τὸ ξίφος δεδύνηται, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν κολαζόμενον ἀπόλλυσι, τὰς δὲ δὴ τῶν ἄλλων ψυχὰς ἄλλοτριῶν τοῦ κολάζοντος, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ φιλοῦσιν ὅτι ἐδικαιώθησαν ἕτεροι, ἀλλ' ἀπεχθάνονται μᾶλλον ὅτι φόβος καὶ αὐτοῖς ἐντεῦθεν ἐπήρτηται.” τοιαῦτα πολλὰ τῆς Λιβίας εἰπούσης ὁ Αὐγούστος ἐπέισθη αὐτῆ.

θάνονται μᾶλλον, ὅτι καὶ τοῖς ἐντεῦθεν ἤρτηται δέος», πρὸς τὸ ἠπιώτερον τὸ αὐστηρὸν μετέβαλεν, αὐτὴ δὲ φύσει κεκτημένη τὸ πρᾶον τοῖς ἀρχομένοις σωτὴρ καὶ φύλαξ καθίσταται περιπόθητος γαλήνην ἔνθεον καὶ μέχρι τοῦ προσώπου παρεμφαίνουσα, φίλους μὲν ταυτὸν εἰπεῖν ἀγαθοὺς τέρπουσα, τοὺς δὲ πονηροὺς καὶ βασκάνους καταπλήττουσα. **28** Καλῶς γὰρ οἶδεν ὡς ἐκεῖνος ἂν ἀδεέστερον ἡγεμονεῖοι καὶ ἀνεπιβουλευτότερον, οὐχ ὄν δεδίασιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ οὗ δεδοίκασι τὸ ὑπήκοον· περὶ δὲ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς φίλους ἀκριβοῦς διαγνώσεως καὶ εὐεπιβόλου κρίσεως αὐτῆς τί χρὴ καὶ λέγειν; Τοὺς γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων ἀρετὴ καὶ φρονήσῃ καὶ πίστει πρὸς τὸν φιλοῦντα διαφέροντας τῇ ἑαυτῆς εὐνοίᾳ τιμήσασα, τοῦτοις ὅσαι ὄραι συνδιατρίβειν καὶ ὁμιλεῖν εἶωθεν, ὥστε καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον αὐτὸν τὸν Μακεδόνα τῇ κτήσῃ τῆς φιλίας νενικηκέναι καὶ θαρρούντως λέγειν τοὺς θησαυροὺς ἐν τοῖς φίλοις κεκρῦφθαι· οὐ γὰρ ἀνεξετάστως, ἀλλὰ διὰ χρόνου καὶ πολλὰ δοκιμάσασα τὰς διαθέσεις τὴν αὐτῶν ἑταιρίαν ἠσπάσατο, καὶ τούτων αὐτῶν τοῖς δοκιμωτέροις καὶ χρησιμωτέροις ἤδεται μᾶλλον συνοῦσι, καθάπερ οἱ τῆς ὑγείας λόγον ὅτι πλεῖστον ποιούμενοι τοῖς ὑγιεινοτάτοις, ἀλλ' οὐ τοῖς ἡδίστοις χαίρουσι τῶν σιτίων. **29** Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ πού τινα τῶν ἄριστα συμβουλευεῖν τῶν ἱκανῶν καὶ παρὰ τοῖς αὐτοκράτορσι δυναμένων αἰσθοῖτο καὶ πρὸς φιλίαν ἐπιτηδεῖων, τοῦτον προσεταιρίσασθαι καὶ οικειώσασθαι καὶ ἀπόντα γε πάντα κάλων κινεῖ τὸ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ οἷα σοφὴ μέλιττα πανταχόθεν σπεύδειν συλλέγειν τὰ τε πρὸς ἐπαινον αὐτῆς καὶ ὄνησιν συντείνοντα γινώσκουσα καλῶς ὅτι πλέον ἄνθρωποι τῆς ἀλλήλων ἐπικουρίας δεόμεθα, ἢ ὅσον ἀτέρα ταῖν χεροῖν τῆς ἐτέρας, καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον ὅσῳ περ καὶ ἀξίας τετύχηκε μείζονος καὶ πλεόνων ἔλαχεν ἄρχειν. Ὡτα γὰρ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰπὼν τις τοῦ βασιλέως τοὺς γνησίους τῶν φίλων οὐκ ἂν πόρρω βάλοι τῆς ἀληθείας. Οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' Ἡρακλῆς αὐτὸς τοὺς ἄθλους ἐκεῖνους δίχα τῆς φίλου συμμαχίας ἠγωνίσασατο, ἀλλ' ἐδέησεν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τούτοις τοῦ Ἰόλεω· καὶ Πυλάδης τῷ Ὀρέστη μέγα γέγονε βοήθημα. Κατὰ γὰρ τὸν σοφὸν Σολομῶντα ἀδελφὸς ὑπ' ἀδελφοῦ βοηθούμενος ὡς πόλις ὠχυρωμένη.

30 Ἀλλὰ μέχρι μὲν τοῦδ' ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν εὐδρομος καὶ ἀγαθὴν ἐλπίδα προὔβαλλετο διανύσαι τε τὸν δίαυλον οὐ χαλεπῶς καὶ λαβεῖν τὸ βραβεῖον, τούντεῦθεν δὲ ναρκᾶν καὶ ὀκλάζειν ἤρξατο τοῖς ὑπὲρ δύναμιν ἐγχειρῶν ἠσθημένος καὶ ὠκεανὸν ὄλον κυάθῳ μετρεῖν ἐπιβαλλόμενος καὶ ὄθεν τῶν ἐξῆς ἄρξατο τοῖς ὅλοις ἀμηχανῶν καὶ τὴν ἦτταν ἀνερευθριάστως ὁμολογῶν, ἦν πάντα λόγον ἀνάγκη παθεῖν ἐπὶ τῶν σῶν ἐγκωμίων. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ὄψις πολυανθεῖ προσβαλοῦσα λειμῶνι τὴν θέαν οὐκ ἔχει γ' ἐφ' ὅτου μονιμωτέραν ταύτην ἐπαφίεμαι τῆδε κἀκεῖσε μεθελκομένη καὶ παρ' ἐκάστου πρὸς τὴν οἰκίαν ἐστίασιν προκαλουμένη καὶ τέρψιν, οὕτω καὶ τὸς πρὸς τὸν πολυανθέστατον τῶν ἀρετῶν τῆς εὐαγοῦς σου ψυχῆς λειμῶνα τὴν νοερὰν ἐπαφείς ὄψιν ἐν ἀπόρῳ γέγονα καὶ ὅλως ἀμηχανῶ τίνος μὲν πρῶτον τίνος δ' ἐξῆς καὶ τίνος ὕστατον ἄψωμαι, οἷά τισι νιφάσι χειμερήσιν ἢ ἐπαλλήλοις ἀστραπαῖς ἀθρόως ταῖς⁹

⁹330 χεροῖν scripsi: χαιοῖν cod.

319 καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον] cf. Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 377,7-9: βασιλείαν ὄλην ἀθρόως καὶ ἐν κεφαλαίῳ πρὸς ὄλην βασιλείαν συγκρίνομεν, οἷον τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου πρὸς τὴν παροῦσαν || 319-320 Gregorius Nyssenius *Epistulae* 8,1-4: Ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα παρὰ τῶν σοφῶν ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Μακεδόνων θαυμάζεται—θαυμάζεται γὰρ οὐ τοσοῦτον τοῖς Μηδικοῖς τροπαίοις οὐδὲ τοῖς Ἰνδικοῖς τε καὶ περὶ τὸν Ὀκεανὸν διηγῆμασιν, ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ εἰπεῖν τὸν θησαυρὸν ἐν τοῖς φίλοις ἔχειν || 331-332 Synesius *De regno* 11,23-27: συνοουσιῶται τοῖς φίλοις τὴν δύναμιν ἑαυτῷ πολυπλασιάζων. οὕτω γὰρ τοῖς ἀπάντων μὲν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄψεται, ταῖς ἀπάντων δὲ ἀκοαῖς ἀκούσεται καὶ ταῖς ἀπάντων γνώμαις εἰς ἐν ἰούσαις βουλευσεται || 347 Homerus *Ilias* 3,222-223: καὶ ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν εὐκότα χειμερήσιν, / οὐκ ἂν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆϊ γ' ἐρίσσειε βροτὸς ἄλλος.

τῶν εὐφημιῶν αὐτῆς ἀγλαΐαις καταλαμφθεῖς. **31** Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὸ σῶφρον προτάξασθαι βουλευθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ταῖς τοῦ δικαίου ἀκτῖσιν ὑπεραστράπτομαι, ἢν δ' αὐτῇ ταύτῃ τὴν πρώτην χώραν ἀποδοῦναι θελήσω ταῖς τῆς ἀνδρίας μαρμαρυγαῖς προκαταλάμπομαι, εἰ δ' αὖ τὸ ἀνδρεῖον πρότερον ἐν ἐπαίνοις τιθέναι προθυμηθεῖν, ἢ πάσας κοσμοῦσα καὶ σώζουσα φρόνησις πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστρέφει με μηδεμιᾶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν πρεσβείων παραχωροῦσα. Τούτων γὰρ μίαν ἐκάστην καὶ ἄλλους ἔστιν ἰδεῖν τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐπιτηδεύοντας, ὃν μὲν τήνδε, ὃν δὲ τήνδε, πάσας δ' ὁμοῦ τῇ ὑμετέρα μεγαλοφυεστάτῃ ψυχῇ καθορῶμεν ἐγκωροῦσας τὴν θεοτερπῆ χορείαν, καὶ οὕτω πάσας ἐς ἄκρον διαλάμπουσας, ὡς οὐδεμίαν τούτων τινὶ τῶν ἀπάντων.

32 Πρὸ πασῶν δ' ἢ πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν κρηπὶς καὶ βάσις, μεθ' ἧς καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν ἀγαθῶν τὸ σεμνὸν ἔχει, καὶ χωρὶς ταύτης οὐδ' ἐν μοίρᾳ τὰγαθοῦ, τακτέα τυγχάνει ἢ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς συνειδήσεως πίστις τὴν πρώτην ἔδραν, οἷα θεμέλιος ἐπ' οἰκοδομίας μεγαλοπρεποῦς καὶ χρυσορόφου οἰκίας λαβεῖν τὸν λόγον ἐκβιάζεται· ταύτης τοίνυν ἐκ γενέσεως τῇ εὐσεβεῖ σου ψυχῇ προκαταβληθείσης παγίως, συνανατραφείσης τε συναυξηθείσης ὀρθότατα, διὰ σπουδῆς ἐπιγενόμεναι καὶ προθυμίας, ἃς τὸ πρὸς Χριστὸν σέβας ἀπαιτεῖ πράξεις, οἷόν τι χρυσοῦν ἀγαλμα καὶ διάλιθον ἀνδριάντα καὶ ἐκμαγεῖον τῶν καλῶν ἀπάντων ταύτην ἀπειργάσαντο καὶ κανόν' ἀρετῆς καὶ στάθμην χριστιανικῆς πολιτείας καὶ αὐθεντίας ἀπεφάναντο. Καὶ δὴ μέγας μὲν Ἀβραάμ ἐκ πίστεως, οὐχ ἦττον δὲ καὶ ἡ ὑμετέρα θεοσέβεια ἐκ ταύτης θαυμάζεται· δι' ἣν καὶ τὴν εὐλογίαν τοῦ Ἀβραάμ παρὰ Θεοῦ κεκλήρωται. **33** Καὶ δηλοῦσί γε αὐτὴν οἱ ταύτην ἐκφύσαντες καὶ ἀεὶ βλαστάνοντες καρποί, προσευχαὶ μετὰ πολλῆς προσοχῆς καὶ ἐν κατανύξει καρδίας, στάσεις μεθ' ὅσης πλείστης εὐλαβείας ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἀγιστείαις καὶ τελεταῖς, ἢ περὶ τὰ θεῖα θεοπρεπῆς εὐλάβεια καὶ ἢ περὶ τοὺς ἱερούς λειτουργοὺς τιμὴ καὶ αἰδώς, ἢ μεθ' ὅσης πλείστης ἀποδοχῆς πρὸς τοὺς παραγενομένους αὐτῇ σεβασμιωτάτους Πατριάρχας μεγαλοπρεπῆς περιποιήσις καὶ ἢν περὶ αὐτοὺς μετὰ πάσης τιμῆς καὶ εὐλαβείας δείκνυσι δεξίωσιν, καὶ ὁ περὶ τοὺς σεβασμίους καὶ θεοβαδίστους τόπους ἔνθεος ζῆλος καὶ ἢ περὶ τοὺς θεῖους νεῶς καὶ εὐκτηρίους οἴκους σπουδὴ καὶ ἐπιμέλεια, ὧν οἱ πλείστοι ἀναλώμασιν αὐτῆς καὶ προθυμίαις ἀνεπηγευμένοι τὸν αὐτῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἔρωτα κηρύττουσιν, οἱ μὲν ἐξ αὐτῆς κρηπίδος ἀνεσταμένοι, οἱ δὲ μέχρι βάθρων διὰ σαθρότητα διαλυθέντες καὶ ἀνακαινισθέντες φιλοτιμότερον, οἱ δὲ μετασκευασθέντες εἰς τὸ μεγαλοπρεπέστερον, εἰσὶν οἱ καὶ εἰς μέγεθος ἀρθέντες μείζον καὶ κάλλιον, οἱ δὲ τῶν ἔνδοθεν μορφωμάτων τὴν καλλονὴν καὶ τῶν καλλωπισμάτων τὴν ποικιλίαν ἀπειληφότες, ἀφειδησάσης χρημάτων περὶ τὰς τοιαύτας δαπάνας. Ἄπερ ἀποτελέσματα πάντως ἐστίν, ἐξ ὧν ἡ θερμωτάτη πίστις αὐτῆς ἀντικρυσ δείκνυται. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν αὐτῆς τὰ περὶ τὴν ἱερὰν ἐπιστήμην φιλοσοφήματα.

34 Πῶς δὴ καὶ περὶ τὴν θύραθεν ἔσχηκε φιλοσοφίαν; Ἡ δὴλον ὡς οὐκ ἀνέραστος οὐδὲ ταύτης, ἀλλὰ καὶ διάπυρον τρέφει τὸν ἔρωτα καὶ ὅσον αὐτῆς ἀνήκε τῇ προαιρέσει καὶ μάλα κατώρθωται. Φιλοσοφητέον γὰρ ἢ τιμητέον τὴν φιλοσοφίαν,¹⁰

¹⁰383 Ἡ scripsi: Ἡ cod.

356-357 Synesius *De regno* 10,1-2: Εὐσέβεια δὲ πρῶτον ὑποβελήσθω κρηπὶς ἀσφαλῆς || 364-366 *Epistula Pauli ad Galatas* 3,6-11: οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοί εἰσιν υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ || 385 Plato *Respublica* D1-3: Ἐὰν μὴ, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ἢ οἱ φιλόσοφοι βασιλεύσωσιν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἢ οἱ βασιλεῖς τε νῦν λεγόμενοι καὶ δυνάσται φιλοσοφήσωσι γνησίως τε καὶ ἰκανῶς, καὶ τοῦτο εἰς ταῦτόν συμπέση, δυνάμις τε πολιτικὴ καὶ φιλοσοφία | cf. Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 371,29-30: κἂν μὲν ἐν λόγοις ἦ καὶ φιλοσοφία καὶ λόγων γνῶσις, τοῦτο ἐπαινέσεις.

καὶ διὰ τὸ δεύτερον φιλοσοφίας τις γνωρίζεται τρόφιμος, καίπερ τὸ πρῶτον παρὰ τῶν καιρῶν καὶ τῆς τύχης ἀφηρημένος. Τίς γὰρ οὕτω φιλοσοφίαν ἐτίμησεν ὡς ἡ ὑμετέρα φύνησις; Τίς οὕτω πρὸς αὐξήσιν αὐτῆς καὶ πολλοὺς γενέσθαι τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντας ἐσπούδακε καὶ χρημάτων ἀφειδῶς ἔσχεν ὡς ἡ ὑμετέρα πραότης; Πάλαι μὲν Ἀθηναί κλεινὸν ὄνομα καὶ μέγα παρὰ πᾶσιν ἦσαντο κλέος διὰ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς μουσεῖα, καὶ μυριοὶ πρὸς αὐτὰς ἔρωτι φιλοσοφίας καὶ ἐφέσει τῆς Ἑλλάδος φωνῆς ἐκ τε τῶν ὑπερβορείων, ἐκ τε μεσημβρίας αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς μεγίστης Ἀσίας συνέρρον, νῦν δὲ τὸ Λύκειον καὶ ἡ ποικίλη Στοὰ καὶ Ἀκαδημία τῆ αὐτῆς σπουδῆ καὶ προθυμίας καὶ ἀφειδίας χρημάτων κατὰ τὸ Βουκορέστιον ἄδονται συνεστηκότα. **35** Τοῦτου δὲ τί ἂν φιλοσοφικώτερον ἢ μυρίων ἐπαίνων ἄξιον; Τοῦτο φρονήσεως ὀρθῶς κρινούσης ὡς ἀληθῶς δεῖγμα σαφέστατον καὶ ψυχῆς φιλοσόφου τεκμήριον, τὴν φρόνησιν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς τε λεγομένοις τοῖς τε πραττομένοις ἐσχηκίας προηγουμένην καὶ τίνα μὲν ἡγεμόσι πιστοῖς πρακτέα, τίνα δὲ μὴ πρακτέα διατάττουσαν, ὡς εἶναι πάντα κατὰ λόγον τὰ παρὰ τῆς ὑμετέρας ὑψηλότητος γιγνόμενα καὶ ἀνεπιλήπτως ἔπεσθαι τὴν τριτὴν τῆ πρεσβυτέρᾳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν. Ταύτης γὰρ ἄνευ τοῦ μέσου τυγχάνειν ἀδύνατον, ἐν ᾧ τὴν ἔδραν ἐσχηκεν ἡ ἀρετὴ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς τὰς ὑπερβολὰς καὶ ἐλλείψεις οἱ πλείους ἐκπίπτουσιν οἱ μὴ τὴν φρόνησιν πρόεδρον ἐσχηκότες καὶ πολλακίς ἀντὶ τοῦ σώφρονος τὸ ἀκόλαστον, ἀντὶ τοῦ δικαίου τὴν ἀδικίαν καὶ τὸ δειλὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀνδρείου προεἶλοντο καὶ τῷ δύνασθαι κακῶς κέχρηται· ἰσχὺς γὰρ φρονήσεως ἔρημος ἔμπληκτος φέρεται, ἀντὶ τοῦ εἶ ποιεῖν τὰ μάλιστα βλάπτουσα, καθάπερ καὶ φρόνησις ὑπὸ δυνάμεως μὴ ὑπηρετουμένη καθέστηκεν ἄπρακτος. Ἀτελὲς γὰρ εἰς ὠφέλειαν πολλῶν θάτερον παρὰ θάτερον· καὶ τοῦτο γ' οἱ σοφοὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων αἰνιττόμενοι διπλῆν ποιούσι τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ τὴν ἰδέαν νέον ἰδρύνοντες παρὰ πρεσβύτη –ἄλκιμόν τε εἶναι δεῖ καὶ εὖνουν τὸν καλῶς ἐφορεύσειν μέλλοντα. Ἐπὶ τῆς σῆς δὲ ψυχῆς ἔνεστιν ἰδεῖν τὰς μὲν ἀρετὰς τὸν οἰκεῖον λόγον σωζούσας ἐν μεσότητι μὲν καθεστηκέναι, τῶν δ' ἐναντίων ἀπηλλάχθαι, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν κατὰ λόγον ἀεὶ καὶ πρὸς εὐπορίας κινουμένην, ἅτε τῆς φρονήσεως αὐτῆ παρεχούσης τῶν πρακτέων τὰ συνθήματα.

36 Καὶ δὴ τὸ μὲν σῶφρον αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ δίκαιον, τοῖς πᾶσιν ὄντα κατάδηλα καὶ ἡλίου φαιδρότερα τοῖς σχολῆν ἄγουσι τῶν ῥητόρων, ἐπαινεῖν παρήμι, τοσοῦτον μόνον ἐπειῶν ὡς κὰν τούτοις οὐδὲ εἰς δευτερεῖον τοῖς τε πρὸ αὐτῆς ἡγεμονεύσασι καὶ τοῖς νῦν ὅσοι σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης ἀντέχεσθαι μνημονεύονται, μεθ' ἑαυτὴν εἴασε τόπον. Τῆ μὲν γὰρ σωφροσύνη τῷ Ἰωσήφ τῷ διὰ ταύτην τῆς Αἰγύπτου προστατεύσαντι παρεξετάζεται, τοῖς δὲ δικαίοις τοὺς πάλαι διαθρυλλουμένους ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνη Μίνων ἐκεῖνον καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν καθάπερ ἀστέρας ἥλιος ἀπέκρυψεν ἀδεκάστους ποιούσα τὰς κρίσεις καὶ κρείττων οὐσα λημμάτων μηδὲ προσώποις χαριζομένη, ἀλλὰ τὰς ψήφους δικαιοτέρας σταχάνης ἐπιφέρουσα τοῖς πρὸς τὸ δικαστήριον¹¹

¹¹ 399-400 Synesius *De regno* 7,24-26: κόσμος μὲν οὖν βασιλέως ἀρεταὶ πᾶσαι· φρόνησις δὲ ἀπασῶν βασιλικώτερα. ταύτην μοι ποιῆσαι παρέδρον· ἔσεται γὰρ ἡ τριττὴ τῆ πρεσβυτέρᾳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν || 404-409 Synesius *De regno* 7,12-18: διαληφθεῖσαι δὲ ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, ῥώμη τε ἀμαθῆς καὶ φρόνησις ἀσθενῆς, εὐχείρωτοι γίνονται. καὶ ἐγὼ τοῦτο τῶν σοφῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἐθαύμασα· τὸν Ἑρμῆν Αἰγύπτιοι διπλῆν ποιούσι τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ δαίμονος, νέον ἰσάντες παρὰ πρεσβύτη, ἀξιοῦντες, εἴπερ τις αὐτῶν μέλλοι καλῶς ἐφορεύσειν, ἔνουν τε εἶναι καὶ ἄλκιμον, ὡς ἀτελὲς εἰς ὠφέλειαν θάτερον παρὰ θάτερον; *ibid.* 7,21-23: ἰσχὺς τε γὰρ, ἔρημος ἡγεμονίας ἔμφορος, ἔμπληκτος φέρεται, πάντα μινύσα καὶ ταραττούσα πράγματα || 422 δικαιοτέρας σταχάνης] cf. Libanius *Epistulae* 1363,2-3: ἦκει γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξέτασιν δικαιοτέρος, φασί, σταχάνης.

αὐτῆς ἀπαντῶσι, τὴν δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀνδρίαν καίτοι καὶ αὐτὴν τοὺς μὲν φίλους ἐκπλήττουσαν, τοὺς δ' ἐχθροὺς καταπλήττουσαν ἐν τῷ παρόντι περιγράψομαι λόγῳ, ἵνα μὴ μόνον οἱ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωποι ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐσομένων οἱ ἀναγινώσκοντες ἔχωσι θαυμάζειν τὸ ταύτης μεγαλόψυχον καὶ μεγαλόφρον. **37** Ἐν γὰρ τοσαύταις καὶ τηλικαύταις τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ περιστάσεσι καὶ ἀνωμαλίαις, καὶ ταῖς τῶν κρατούντων ἀνυποίστοις ἐπιηρείαις καὶ ἀλλεπαλλήλοις ἀπαιτήσεσιν οὐδὲν καθυφεῖκε τοῦ φρονήματος, οὐδὲ δειλὸν τι καὶ ἀνανδρον ὑπεδείξατο, μήτε μὴν τῆς μεγαλοπρεποῦς τι διαθέσεως ἠλάττωσεν ἢ τῆς μεγαλοψύχου γνώμης ἐπελάθετο, ἀλλ' ἴσταται μεγαλοφρονοῦσα διὰ παντός, εὐθαρσῆς, μεγαλοπρεπῆς τε καὶ τὸ εὐψυχον ἀεὶ δεικνυμένη. Τοῖς τ' ἀντιπνεύουσιν ἀνέμοις ἀνευδότης ἀντιπνεύουσα σφοδρότερον καὶ τούτους πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς συγγέουσά τε καὶ ῥᾶστα διασκεδάζουσα καὶ γαλήνην ταῖς τῶν ἀρχομένων ψυχαῖς προμνηστεύουσα. Τῷ γὰρ θεῖῳ φόβῳ παγίως εἶπερ τις ἄλλος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐστοιχείωται καὶ τῇ θεῖᾳ συνάρσει πάντοθεν περιπέφρακται, καὶ τῷ περὶ τὸ ὄντως ἐφετὸν ἔρωτι καλῶς καὶ ἐδραίως ἐρήριστα καὶ τούτοις καθωπλισμένη τοῖς ὄπλοις, καθάπερ ὁ προφητᾶναξ Δαβὶδ τῷ ἀλλοφύλῳ Γολιάθ, φοβερὰ τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἔστι καὶ τούτους, ὡσπερ ἐκεῖνος τὸν γίγαντα εὐμαρῶς καταπαλαίει, καὶ πάντων τῶν χαλεπῶν περιγίγνεται καὶ ῥᾶστα κατακρατεῖ τῶν ὀπωσοῦν αὐτῇ θελώντων ἀνταίρειν, καὶ καθάπερ σκοπέλῳ θαλάττης προβεβλημένῳ προσβαλλόντα τὰ κύματα λυμήνασθαι μὲν ἢ ὅλως διασεῖσαι τοῦτον οὐκ ἴσχυσε, πρὸς ἑαυτὰ δὲ στραφέντα εἰς ἀφρόν διαλέλυται καὶ μάτην ἐφάνη φρίσσοντα, οὕτως ἢ ὑμετέρα στερότης τῷ θεοφρουρήτῳ θῶκῳ μονιμώτατα καὶ ἀστεμφῶς ἐγκαθιδρυμένη δέχεται μὲν πολλὰς τοιαύτας κυμάτων βολὰς, πασῶν δ' ὑπερνήχεται καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὰς συρραγῆναι καταναγκάζει τὴν ἄλλως ἀποφαίνουσα καὶ εἰκῆ κατ' αὐτῆς κινήσεως. **38** Τούτων τοιγαροῦν ὑπερκειμένη καὶ κρείττων ἀεὶ οὔσα τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐν πάσῃ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἐπιεικείᾳ καὶ οἰκτῷ τῶν ὑπὸ χεῖρα διατελεῖ διέπουσα, καὶ πάντα ποιεῖ καὶ πάσχει, οὐχ ὅπως ὅτι πλείστων αὐτῇ χρημάτων ἐγκρατῆς γένηται, ἵν' ἔχη τὸ ἠδόμενον τῆς ψυχῆς θεραπεύειν ἐντεῦθεν, ἀλλ' ὅπως ἐν εὐπορίαις καὶ ἀνέσει διαβιώῃ τὸ ὑπήκοον καὶ μὴ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἀπορία πιέζηται. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι οὕς ἴσμεν τῶν ἡγεμόνων τοῖς τῶν ὑπηκόων πρὸς τὸ ἴδιον κέρδος καὶ οἰκείαν ἀσφάλειαν κέχρηται σμικρὰ τῆς ἐκείνων εὐπορίας φροντίζοντες, ἢ δὲ τὰ οἰκεία προῖεται, ὅπως ἂν ἐκεῖνοι τὸν βίον ἀνευδεῶς ἐν ἀνέσει διάγωσιν. Ἀλλὰ καὶ εὐεργεσίαις αὐτοὺς κατακλύζειν οὐ διαλείπει καὶ πάσιν ἀφθόνους ἐπιρρεῖ τὰς εὐποιίας καὶ καταρδεύει τὰς ἐξηραμένας καρδίας τοῦ ἐλέου<ς> τοῖς χεύμασι, καθάπερ ὁ Νεῖλος τῇ πλημμύρᾳ τὴν γῆν τὴν Αἰγύπτου. Τὴν ἡγεμονίαν σωτήρα καὶ φύλακα καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ εὐημερίαν τοῖς ἀρχομένοις ἔχουσα καὶ πᾶσι φιλανθρώπως ἐκ τῶν πλησίων πηγῶν τὰ τῆς εὐποιίας μετοχετεύει χρυσόρρειθρα νάματα.

39 Ὅσοι μὲν οὖν ἀπ' αἰῶνος ταύτην ἤρξαν παρὰ Μυσοῖς τὴν ἀρχὴν, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ παρ' ἑτέροις ἔθνεσιν οἱ μὲν τῷ γένει μόνον ἐφάνησαν ἐνδοξοί, οἱ δὲ φρόνησιν μόνην προὔβαλοντο, ἐπὶ σωφροσύνῃ δ' ἐθαυμάσθησαν ἕτεροι, ἄλλοι δὲ τοῦ δικαίου μᾶλλον ἐπεμελήθησαν κἀντούτῳ τῶν ἄλλων ἔσχον τι πλεον, οἱ δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρία φρονούντες ὠφθησαν μεῖζον· καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλου πρὸς μίαν τῶν ἀρετῶν διενήνοχεν, ἢ δὲ σὴ γαληνότης συλλήβδην εἰπεῖν ἐν πάσι τούτοις τὰ πρωτεῖα πάντων φέρει τῶν πρὸ αὐτῆς ἡγεμόνων καὶ τῶν νῦν, οἶμαι δέ, καὶ τῶν ἐσομένων ἀπάντων, εἴ τι στοχαστῆς ἐγὼ τῆς ἀληθείας, τῷ μὲν γένει κρείττων πάντων ὀφθεῖσα καὶ λαμπροτέρα καθάπερ¹²

¹² 454 ἐλέου<ς> scripsi: ἐλέου cod.

ἀστέρων ἥλιος, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις ἀρεταῖς καὶ ταῖς ἡγεμόσι προσηκούσαις πράξεις πάντας πρὸς αὐτὴν παρεξεταζομένους παῖδας τρώντι ἀποφίνασα. **40** Εἰ γὰρ τοὺς ἄλλους παραλιπὼν διὰ τὸ μῆκος τοῦ λόγου πρὸς ὃν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀρχῇ διεδέξατο, Σεμπάνον λέγω τὸν πάνυ, παρεξετάσαιμι τὴν ὑμετέραν θεοφρούρητον καὶ θεόστεπτον ὑψηλότητα, οὗ παρὰ πᾶσι μέγα πεφοίτηκεν ὄνομα καὶ τὸ ἡγεμονεῦειν ἐκπληξίς ἦν τοῖς εἰδόσι, τοσοῦτον αὐτόν φημι παρῆλθεν, ἐν οἷς ἡγεμόνας θαυμάζοντας καὶ αὐχοῦσιν, ὅσπερ ἀργύρου χρυσὸς ὑπερέχει ἢ νυκτὸς ἡμέρα διαφέρει ἢ τῆς σεληνιακῆς λαμπηδόνας ὑπεραυγάζει τὸ μεθ' ἡμέραν φῶς τοῦ ἡλίου· καὶ ἴσασι ὁ λέγω οἱ κακείνον εἰδότες καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου ἀπολαύσαντες προστασίας, εἴ τινες εἶεν, καὶ ἐν μνήμη τάκεινον περιφέροντες, εἴ γε μὴ καθάπερ ὑπὸ τοῦ μείζονος τὸ ἔλαττον φῶς ἡμαυρώθησαν τέλεον, καὶ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν μνήμης ἐξίτηλα γέγονεν. Ὡςπερ γὰρ ὀφθαλμὸς, ἐπειδὴν τὴν ὄψιν ὑπερβάλλοντι προσβάλλῃ φωτὶ, τοῦ ἐλάττονος οὐκ ἔτι γ' ἀντιλαμβάνεται καὶ ἀκοὴ μείζονι ὑπερηγουμένη ψόφοις τῶν ἡττόνων οὐκ αἰσθάνεται, οὕτω τοὶ καὶ μνήμη τῶν θαυμαστοτέρων, ὧν τε παρὰ τῆς ὀράσεως, ὧν τε παρὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐδέξατο τοὺς τύπους ἐπι<μ>πλαμένη, τῶν ἐλαττόνων μνημονεῦειν οὐκ οἶδε.

41 Μακάριοι τοίνυν οἱ ταῖς ὑπουργίαις τῆς ὑμετέρας γαληνότητος ἐνασχολούμενοι καὶ πρὸς πᾶν αὐτῇ πρόσταγμα προθύμως ὑπηρετοῦντες. Μακάριοι οἱ τὸν θεόδοτον καὶ θεοφρούρητον αὐτῆς θρόνον περιστάμενοι μετ' εὐλαβείας καὶ οἱ ταύτῃ μετ' εὐπειθείας δουλεύοντες καὶ τοῖς νεύμασιν αὐτῆς προσέχοντες τὸ νοῦν· καὶ ἵνα συνελὼν εἴπω, μακάριοι πάντες οἱ τῆς ἐπωφελοῦς αὐτῆς προστασίας ἀξιοθέντες καὶ τῆς ἡγεμονικῆς οὐχ ἦττον δὲ φιλανθρώπου καὶ σπλαγχνικωτάτης ἐπαπολαύοντες ὁσημέραι κηδεμονίας. Δι' ἦν τὰ μὲν δυσχερῆ καὶ χαλεπὰ τῶν ὑπὸ τὴν κραταιὰν αὐτῆς χεῖρα πάντων ἀπελήλαται, ἀρπαγαὶ καὶ βίαιοι τῶν φόρων ἀπαιτήσεις ἐκ μέσου γεγένηται, κατήφεια πᾶσα καὶ δέος ἀνήρηται, φυγαδεύσεις καὶ δημεύσεις ἄδικοι παντάπασιν ἐκωλύθησαν· οὐκέτι τινὲς δι' ἐπήρειαν καὶ τελῶν βάρος δυσβάστακτον ἀστατοῦσι καὶ τόπους ἐκ τόπων ἀμείβουσι, οὐδ' ἀλλαχόσε μεταβαίνουσι, ἀλλ' ἀλλαχόθεν μύριοι πρὸς τὴν αὐτῆς ἐπικράτειαν μετοικίζονται πολλὴν ἐνταῦθα ἄνεσιν καὶ δεινῶν ἀπαλλαγὴν εὕρισκόμενοι καὶ κρησφύγετόν ἐστι πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπηρεαζομένοις τῶν ὀρθοδόξων τὸ ὑμέτερον κράτος, ἀντεισηκται δὲ τὰ χρηστότερα καὶ τοῖς ὑπηκόοις τό γε νῦν ἔχον ἐμφιλοχωρεῖ τὰ ἡδύτερα. **42** Τὴν χώραν ἅπασαν, Θεοῦ τὴν αὐτῆς ἀρετὴν τιμῶντος καὶ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν αὐτῆς ἀγαμένου, εὐετηρίαὶ κατέχουσι, κῶμαι καὶ πόλεις εὐθηνίαις καλύπτονται, οἰκίαι τοῖς ἐπιτηδεῖοις ἀφθόνοις περιρρέονται καὶ τούτων αἱ πρῶται πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς κομῶσι πολυκτῆμονες οὔσαι καὶ εὐκτῆμονες. Αἱ ἀγοραὶ πλήρεις ὠνίων καὶ πάντες ἀλλοδαποὶ τε καὶ αὐτόχθονες ῥᾶδιον καὶ ἱκανὸν τὸν πόρον τῆς ζωῆς εὕρισκουσι καὶ ἐν εὐθυμίαις διάγουσιν· ἑορταὶ τε καὶ πανηγύρεις μετὰ πολλῆς συγκροτοῦνται θυμηδίας καὶ τέρψεως, ἢ περὶ τὸ θεῖον εὐλάβεια προσεπέδωκεν, ἢ εὐσέβεια διὰ τῶν ἀναλώμασιν αὐτῆς ἐκτετυπωμένων βιβλίων τῶν ὀρθῶν δογμάτων ἐστήρικται. Ζήλον γὰρ ἐφάμιλλον ἔσχε τῷ τοῦ πρώτου τῶν Χριστιανῶν βασιλέως καὶ ἰσαποστόλου Κωνσταντίνου φημι τοῦ μεγάλου περὶ τὴν τῆς¹³

424 Synesius *De regno* 10,28-29: φίλους μὲν, ταῦτόν δὲ εἰπεῖν, ἀγαθοὺς ἐκπλήττων, τοὺς δὲ ἐχθροὺς τε καὶ πονηροὺς καταπλήττων.

¹³481 ἐπι<μ>πλαμένη scripsi

464-465 ἐν πάσι-ἀπάντων] cf. Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 376,31-377,2: ἤξεις δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν τελειοτάτην σύγκρισιν, ἀντεξετάζων τὴν αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν πρὸς τὰς πρὸ αὐτοῦ βασιλείας, οὐ καθαιρῶν ἐκείνας (ἄτεχρον γάρ) ἀλλὰ θαυμάζων μὲν ἐκείνας, τὸ δὲ τέλειον ἀποδιδοὺς τῇ παρουσίᾳ || 498-504 Menander *Περὶ*

εὐσεβείας πῆξιν τε καὶ ἔκτασιν. Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα Θεὸς ὁ τὸ θέλημα ποιῶν ἀεὶ τῶν φοβουμένων αὐτὸν χορηγεῖ τῆς ἀρετῆς αὐτὴν ἀμειβόμενος· τὴν γὰρ τῶν ἀρετῶν ὑπερβάλλουσαν κἀνταῦθα Θεὸς ἀγέραςτον οὐ παρίησιν.

43 Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους μακαρισμοῦ τούντεῦθεν οὐκ ἐκτὸς ἡγοῦμαι, τῶν αὐτῆς εὐφημιῶν καὶ ὕμνων ὅσον ἦν αὐτοῖς ἐφικτὸν ἀψαμένους καὶ τιμηθέντας ἐντεῦθεν. Τὸ γὰρ κατ' ἀξίαν καὶ αὐτοῖς ἀνεφικτὸν τοῖς τοῦ ῥήτορος, μὴ ὅτι γε τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀποδοχῆς καὶ συγγνώμης ἀποτυχεῖν αὐτοὺς δέδοικα παρὰ τῆ θεοκοσμῆτῳ σου πραότητι κρείττονι μὴ οὔση συγγνώμης, ἀλλ' ἐπισταμένη καλῶς, ὅτι καὶ Θεῶ φίλον τὸ κατὰ δύναμιν.

44 Ἦν ὁ τῶν βασιλευόντων βασιλεὺς καὶ τῶν κυριευόντων κύριος καὶ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας πρῦτανις, ἡ μόνη πηγή τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ παναιτία καὶ πανσθενεστάτη τριάς, ἡ ἐν τρισὶν ιδιότησι καὶ οὐσίᾳ μιᾷ γνωριζομένη θεότης, Πατὴρ ὁ ἀναίτιος, κύριος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἀπαθῶς γεννηθεὶς Υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Πατρὸς ἀχρόνως καὶ ὑπὲρ αἰτίαν ἐκπορευόμενον τελεταρχικὸν πνεῦμα, ὁ εἷς Θεὸς καὶ πάσης ἀγαθωσύνης πάροχος εἶη διαφρουρῶν ἀπείροις ἐτῶν εἰρηνικαῖς περιόδοις, εὐφραينوμένην λαμπρῶς ἐκ ἀδιακόποις εὐδαιμονίαις καὶ λαμπρυνομένην ἐν ἀκλονήτοις εὐθυμίαις, κατευμεγεθοῦσαν τῶν ἐναντίων ἀπάντων, καὶ διατηροῖη ὡς κόρην ὀφθαλμοῦ ἐρρωμένην ἐς γῆρας λιπαρὸν καὶ βαθύτατον, ἀρετῆ πάση κεκοσμημένην καὶ λαμπροτέροις καὶ μείζουσιν εὐσεβείας ἐμπρέπουσαν ἀεὶ κατορθώμασι, καὶ τὴν συνήθη τῆς ἡγεμονίας ἐπιδεικνυμένην φιλάνθρωπιαν ἐπειλημμένος ἀεὶ τῆς αὐτῆς δεξιᾶς, ἔτι τε κρατύνων εἶη καὶ συντηρῶν αὐτῆ, ὃν αὐτὸς αὐτῆ λαμπρότατον δεδώρηται θρόνον ἀνεπιβούλευτον, τοῖς ἐποφθαλμιῶσιν ἀνεπίβατον, ἀτάραχον, ἀστεμφῆ, ἀμετακίνητον, εἰρηνικόν, ἐν ἀκυμάντῳ γαλήνῃ καὶ εἰς ἄπειρα κύκλα αἰῶνων ἀδιάδοχον καὶ χαριζόμενος αὐτὴν τοῖς τε περὶ αὐτὴν καὶ τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτὴν, τοῖς τε φιλάτοις καὶ χριστιανοῖς ἅπανσι καύχημα παναίσιον, πάντα κατὰ ῥοῦν αὐτῆ φέρων καὶ διεξάγων τὰ πράγματα καὶ χορηγῶν τὰ θυμῆρη δι' αἰῶνος αὐτὴν τε καὶ παιδᾶς καὶ σύνευνον, καὶ γένος ἅπαν θάλλειν διδούς τῆς αὐτῆς ἀεὶ λαμπρότητος ἐπειλημμένους καὶ δόξης καὶ εὐδαιμονίας. **45** Μετὰ δὲ χρόνον ἐπιμήκιστον καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατον αὐτῆς γῆρας ἐν τῷ θεοφρουρητῳ θρόνῳ καὶ βαθύτατον ἀπειρία σχεδὸν συνεξεταζόμενον δῶη ὁ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἡγεμονίας βραβευτῆς καὶ πρῦτανις σπέρμα τὸ σόν, ἡγεμῶν κράτιστε καὶ φιλοχριστότατε καὶ σπλαγχνικώτατε, παιδᾶ παρὰ πατρὸς διαδεξάμενον τὴν ἀρχὴν παραπέμπειν τῆ τοῦ κόσμου συστάσει μέχρις αἰῶνων τερμάτων, μηδέποτε ἄλλοτρίῳ γένει διαλαμβανομένης τῆς κατὰ διαδοχὴν συνεχείας.¹⁴ Ἀμήν.

ἐπιδεικτικῶν 377,10-14: ἐν τούτοις ἐρεῖς τὰς εὐετηρίας, τὰς εὐδαιμονίας τῶν πόλεων, ὅτι πλήρεις μὲν ὠνίων αἱ ἀγοραί, πλήρεις δὲ ἑορτῶν καὶ πανηγύρεων αἱ πόλεις, γεωργεῖται μετ' εἰρήνης ἡ γῆ, πλεῖται ἡ θάλασσα ἀκινδύνως, εὐσέβεια δὲ ἡ περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἠϋξῆται.

¹⁴537 ἡγεμῶν scripsi: ἡγεμῶν cod.

510-539 Menander *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 377,28-30: τιμωτέρας ὕλης. ἐπὶ τούτοις εὐχὴν ἐρεῖς αἰτῶν παρὰ θεοῦ εἰς μήκιστον χρόνον προελθεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν, διαδοθῆναι εἰς παιδᾶς, παραδοθῆναι τῷ γένει.

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ROMANIAN RELIGION AND CUSTOMS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 19TH CENTURY IN THE VISION OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS

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ABSTRACT

The notes of foreign travelers represent a major source of interest for the reconstruction of Romanian society in the middle of the nineteenth century. Although they were not "professional" historians, most often curiosity or diplomatic missions brought them to these lands, their visits led them to numerous political, economic, cultural and psychological observations. Abundance of travelogues and testimonies on the Romanian Lands of this period represents the consequence of the international reactivation of the "oriental problem" and of the intensification of the struggle for emancipation and national liberation of the peoples of the Balkans. of the culture from which they came, foreign travelers projected, consciously or not, their own light on the realities they presented. In no other historical source will we find anything more picturesque and full of life than in the events and descriptions presented by them.

Keywords: Romanian Principalities; foreign travellers; religion; clergy; churches; monasteries; ritual customs;

INTRODUCTION

Foreigners have always looked at the Carpatho-Danubian-Pontic geographical area with a certain curiosity. According to Western travels, this derives from two reasons: one - that in a south-eastern European world, dominated by completely different elements, in which the Slav is highlighted, a different people live by origin and language, and the second - that this people of Latin origin had embraced the Orthodox confession, instead of the Western Catholic one, as was normal¹. Moreover, in the church and in the royal chancelleries, the Romanian elite used the Slavic language, accepted, since the middle of the ninth century, as a sacred language, along with Greek and Latin. The use of the Slavic language also required the use of the Slavic alphabet, called Cyrillic, instead of Latin, used by all Romanesque peoples, especially those of the Catholic faith.

¹The Dominican John, archbishop of Sultanieh, who was sent, in the early fourteenth century, by Timur Lenk on several trips to conclude anti-Ottoman alliances, noted in his memoir to him that "they (ie Romanians) follow the Greeks in their faith, at least that we also have several places of the order of Preachers and Minorities and we have many Germans living in these parts" (*Foreign travelers about the Romanian Lands*, vol. I., Volume edited by Maria Holban, Scientific Publishing House, Bucharest, 1968, p. 39)

A few centuries later, when the Latinity, continuity and spiritual unity of the inhabitants of the northern Danube area returned to the discussions of the great European powers against the background of the ideal of national unity of Romanians, travel literature mentions that Wallachian and Moldovans "belong to the Orthodox Romanian people, they have the same customs and laws, they speak the same language, which is true with a few small and insignificant changes. These differences consist only in certain <vocal> peculiarities and in the way of pronouncing certain terms. A Wallachian always understands a Moldovan, as the roots and grammatical structure of the two <languages> are unique. The Romanian nation is nothing but one of the branches of the Romanian people. The Romanians consider themselves, in one voice, as descendants of the ancient Romans. This, it seems, corresponds to the truth, because the Roman emperors sent here, to populate the area, a lot of people from all classes (...). The lords of Rome transferred to the lands of the Danube huge displaced masses (...) And so the descendants of the Roman exiles, (...) gradually constituted the population of the Danube principalities and finally formed a single people, with a distinct form of leadership. It has retained, both in its customs and in its traditions, some features of its ancestors."²

1. ROMANIAN RELIGION AND EDUCATION IN THE VISION OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS

Curious for all foreign travelers of this period is the attitude of Romanians towards religion. From their point of view, this attitude does not contain that feeling of respect, "with which we, the Orthodox, have always become accustomed to think and talk about the high goals of our church, as well as the main dogmas of the holy Orthodox faith."³ Joseph Caillat⁴ speaks in his notes about the soul satisfaction of the Romanians acquired when they arrive in front of the icons, making the sign of the cross, kissing them and lighting candles.⁵

The historical reality in the Romanian Lands in the middle of the 19th century presents us with a completely different perspective on education, being known the fact that the reform of this field was vehemently requested in all the Pasoptist revolutionary programs. For example, the "Islaz Proclamation", which became the Constitution of Wallachia under the

² Piotr Jadovski, in "Foreign travelers about the Romanian Lands in the 19th century", New Series, Vol. VI (1852-1856), Coordinator of the volume Daniela Bușă, Romanian Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, p. 166 (will quote "Foreign travelers ...") Russian officer traveling through the Romanian Principalities in the conditions of crossing this territory by Russian troops, at the beginning of the Crimean War. In 1853-1854 he served as "stage chief" and military commander of the city of Buzau, a quality that offered him the possibility of direct and longer contact with Romanians, materialized in the elaboration of an interesting account of social and political realities of the time. His work, "Moldova and Wallachia in contemporaneity. From the notes of an officer", was printed in 1856 in St. Petersburg.

³*Ibidem*, p. 167

⁴A French doctor, awarded the Legion of Honor, he stayed in Bucharest between 1845 and 1848, following the recognition of his diploma after a clinical examination held at Colțea Hospital. The accounts of his journey appeared in the publication "L'Union Medicale" in Paris in March-May 1854. The doctor confessed what were the purposes of this trip to a lesser known region of Europe: first to restore health, then his curiosity and desire to enrich his knowledge regarding the various diseases specific to these places. His travels, especially in Wallachia, allowed him a detailed knowledge of various aspects of Romanian civilization.

⁵Joseph Caillat, in "Foreign travellers...", p. 517

revolutionary government, decreed "equal, progressive, integral education for all, as far as possible, according to the faculties of each and without any payment", forcing political factors to set "public education establishments" so that "no son of a citizen of those who are 12 years old and many who will be born from now on will remain outside of education, because this is the base for the future of the country and for employment, as well as the true guarantee of the homeland's settlements."⁶

Regarding theological education, it was held in Wallachia, in the four seminars (Bucharest, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Buzău and Curtea de Argeș) reopened in 1851. The future priests studied according to an elementary curriculum for grades I and II, reading and the writing, singing, and ordinance of the church, the explanation of the gospel and the Apostle, "the measure of the lands, and the duties of the jurors," the rhetoric, theology, geometry, and "all parts of grammar".⁷ A few years later, in 1858, a new syllabus was developed in which, in addition to theological knowledge - church history, "moral theology, pastoral and dogmatic theology, church songs", authorities provided it with grammar, arithmetic, principles of geometry, geography of Europe, the history of the homeland, the physical-natural sciences".⁸ The seminar in Socola with seven years of study continues its activity in Moldavia. In the lower course, for four years, in addition to theological knowledge, lessons in grammar, geography and the history of the homeland, the Russian language and the Greek language are taught. The curriculum of the upper classes also provided for moral theology, canon law, logic, psychology, philosophy, Latin and French.⁹

In 1851, the "Legislation for the organization of church teachings in Moldavia" was issued, through which religious education was organized on three levels: the two-year church schools -in Roman and Huși-, the first section of the Seminary, lasting four years, for the lower clergy and the second section of the seminary, every four years, for the high clergy. Priests were to be made only of those with theological studies, but graduates of four years of study could also become priests. At Socola, 100 students were to be received, of which 25 in the upper course, and at Huși 40 and Roman 70, all boarders. The ambitions of the law were to transform the Socola Seminary into a university-level school.¹⁰

In Transylvania, on November 1, 1849, the Seminary of Sibiu was reopened, with one year of study, furthermore, starting with 1852/1853, it turned into a two-year course. In the first year, grammar, church history, pedagogy, popular physics and rural economics were taught. For the second year of study the curriculum provided exegetics, the general part of theology, morals, "pastoral and the elaboration of church language, the interpretation of the Gospel"; from the school year 1853/1854 new disciplines were added - arithmetic, geography, canon law, rhetoric and the polemic.¹¹ In 1852, the Theological Institute of Arad and the Seminary of Blaj were reopened. The quality of education of the rural population

⁶ Anghel Manolache, Gheorghe Pârnuță (coordinators), *History of education in Romania*, vol. II (1821-1918), Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993, p.140

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 179

⁸ *Idem*

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 179

¹⁰ Dragoș Bahrim, Adrian Timofti, *"Veniamin Costachi" Seminary (1803-1848)*, Iași, 2003, p.36

¹¹ Anghel Manolache, Gheorghe Pârnuță, *op. cit.*, p. 180-181

was proportional to that of the priests because they were entrusted with the education of children. Some knowledge of writing, reading and counting was taught to them, in the good old days, in the cemetery, in the shade of the acacias, where “the little ones, often half-naked, lie on the graves, in the middle of the <orthodox> Greek rite crosses, strangely painted, while an old priest, who is made to look like all the teachers in all the countries, falls asleep under the shade of the moving branches.”¹²

The same hastily conceived travel descriptions, with disparate information, containing superficial impressions can be found regarding the Romanian secular education from the middle of the 19th century. "The establishment for the reorganization of public education in the Principality of Moldavia" issued in 1851, stated that "public education is free and open to all Romanians" and provided three categories of schools: primary, secondary and higher.¹³

As primary schools, organized for a period of four years, were considered to be girls' and trades or military schools in the barracks. Girls' schools were to be established in all the residences of the lands, according to a syllabus that included a specific program for primary schools (religion, reading, writing, the four arithmetic operations, practical compositions, practical knowledge of agriculture, measuring the land and the barrels) at which a foreign language was added (for the Central School from Iași), elements of physics, morals, vocal music, hand-work, “drawing flowers and persays”, “keeping household expenses calculations”, and their duration was of five years.¹⁴

Secondary education included technical schools, agricultural school¹⁵ and middle schools. Higher education, lasting three years, was taught in the Academy of Iasi, consisting of the philosophical faculty (with the department of philosophical sciences, mathematical and physical sciences), law, theological sciences, the school of midwives and that of surgery.¹⁶

The 1850 “settlement” in Wallachia, after establishing that education is a “necessary requisite”, established the following cycles of education: primary school, beginner, in all county residences, lasting four years, college classes - lasting six years and special (higher) teachings. The "faculty of law" was established, the faculty of exact sciences was divided into three sections: for surveyors, bridge and road engineers and architects, there was also a school of agriculture and home economics.¹⁷ In Brașov, on September 1, 1850, the Central Orthodox School was opened,¹⁸ which had "four classes for boys and two classes for girls." The 4th grade of the boys' school was organized so as to be considered as a preparatory class for the gymnasium. In this class the following matters were studied: Religion, Latin, Romanian, German, Geography, arithmetic and natural history (zoology and botany).

¹² Charles Doussault, in "Foreign travellers...", p.147-148

¹³ Anghel Manolache, Gheorghe Pârnuță, *op. cit.*, p.148

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p.149-150

¹⁵ It lasted three years, during which time they studied: rural economics, botany, forest cultivation, rational cultivation of vineyards, improvement of cattle varieties; those who had completed rural economics courses in the technical schools were also received.

¹⁶ Anghel Manolache, Gheorghe Pârnuță, *op. cit.* p. 150

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p.151

¹⁸ Cristina Tănase, *Aspects regarding the support activity of the Romanian Greek Orthodox central schools from Brașov (1850-1870)*, in "Țara Bârsei", new series, no. 11, 2012, pp. 80-92

2. HABITS AND SUPERSTITIONS IN THE NOTES OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS

The lack of education was compensated by taking refuge in faith and superstition. The possibilities to attend a school were minimal, the children received at home an education that determined them to be deeply attached to the Christian faith and the church, but also to a lot of superstitions related to daily life.

Foreigners who knew Romanians saw this combination of a deep faith, despite a lack of theological knowledge, and a belief in supernatural forces. Most of the Catholic religion practitioners believed that prayers were hampered by the multitude of superstitions, the religious practice being degrading and with the possibility of turning man into a voluntary slave. Although the people believed in all sorts of witches, spirits and phantoms, the days of fasting and celebration, so numerous in the Orthodox calendar, are strictly observed. Fasting lasted for several weeks, during which any animal food was forbidden, and only oil was allowed as fat.

It was also believed that holy water works wonders. It was used as an antidote against witchcraft, plague, and any disease to which man is subjected; at the same time he defended the cattle from the thunder and lightning field, the pest trees, the house of fire and the sinking ship.¹⁹

The sanctification of the water was done after a ceremonial established for centuries, as noted by the French E.N. Flenoque-Melville who transited the territory of the Romanian Principalities during the Crimean War. In the first days of January, he attended the baptism in the water of the river Dâmbovița, at „Boboteaza” and was amazed by the crowd of participants, getting to ask rhetorically if indeed Romanians are very faithful or just curious by nature: the service lasted two hours, while about 3,000 people, clergy, military and civilian authorities waited in the snow for the end of the ceremony to throw a cross into the river; immediately men and women jumped into the water to retrieve the cross.²⁰

Equally curious for foreigners was the habit of Romanians to worship relics. The Austrian Colonel Moritz von Angelli, who was in Iași during the Austrian occupation of the Danube Principalities, is “impressed” by the honor of a saint whose remains dressed in proud robes were placed on a catafalque almost a meter high under the portico. A crowd of believers from all walks of life, from the great nobility to the ragged vagabonds, crowded and pushed around them all day. After short prayers, everyone had to crawl under the coffin and then kiss the saint's forehead, from which he could see through the gold-embroidered clothing a piece of the forehead bone, about the size of a plate.”²¹

Not a few in the literature of foreign travelers are the stories about the customs related to the main moments in the life of Romanians: birth, marriage or burial.

Between 1851 and 1854, Siegfried Kapper, a Serbian doctor, traveled through Banat and had the opportunity to attend a Romanian wedding in Oravița. The joy and happiness of the bride and groom attributed to the lack of culture was contagious, so that our traveler got out of the carriage and followed the procession of hussars and horsemen, gypsy musicians, the knight and bridesmaid, the groom, the bride and many women; the men, led by the

¹⁹Edmund Spencer, in “Foreign travellers...”,p. 430

²⁰E.N.Flenoque-Melville, in “Foreign travellers...”,p. 238

²¹Moritz von Angelli, in “Foreign travellers...”,p. 561

elders, were already gathered at the church. Here the music stopped and “the bride and groom lined up in a semicircle around a round table, covered with a rug, which was placed in the middle of the church, in front of the iconostasis and which was to serve as an altar for the wedding. A simple ebony cross and on each side of it two beautiful flower pots and two beautifully decorated candles with roses formed the entire altar. In front of the cross was a widely used Gospel and on each side of it two paired, thin crowns, in which were woven red-green ribbons, two equally decorated rings. Immediately after entering the <church>, the bride and groom, who, it is said, were not too close in age, went to the iconostasis to begin their prayer (...) After the prayers, the father, as the Romanians call their priests, came out from behind the iconostasis and gave a candle to each of the two bridegrooms, after which he led them around the table. Here, the bride and groom gave candles to the godparents. The father said a long prayer, tied both hands of the bride and groom tightly to each other with a white towel, said another prayer, and then stepped forward to another parent, folded a piece of cloth, which the groom gives to the bride and wrapped them, on the ends of the newly crowned pair, so that they are now bound to each other with body and soul <and> inseparable. At this point, the blessing parent places one of the wreaths on their cloth-covered head, and now the couple finds themselves in a respectful situation where they must <hear> a long line of prayers and songs about them. After being blessed, the pirostries were removed, as well as the wrapped cloth and the handcuffs, and the young man was allowed to kiss his elderly wife to start a sweaty life.”²²

The village elders rewarded the priests' hard work with money. Joseph Caillat gives as a concrete example the case of a lady who, wanting a carefree future, divorces for medical reasons when the Russians enter the country; she marries a Russian officer in the occupation army, but leaves him when his regiment leaves the Principalities.²³

Immediately after death, the body is washed, shaved and wrapped in a shroud for the grave, in depending on how expensive the family can afford it; his legs are directed towards the door, and usually a coin is hidden in his hand or mouth for the dead to pay for their passage into the other world.

The American doctor James Oscar Noyes met a funeral procession in a village near Bucharest: “The rudimentary coffin was supported by half a dozen villagers (...). Before the coffin walked a person with a basket with cookies eaten in honor of the dead ancestors. He also wore a small Arminden pillar decorated with tassel braids like the ones the country bride adorns herself with on her wedding day. Behind the coffin were two village priests, parents and friends, each carrying a candle and then a number of mourners, pale and with their eyes in the back of their heads, hired for the occasion. Finally, they plucked their hair and screamed loudly as if the peace of the deceased depended on their efforts (...) the procession stopped several times before reaching the village church.

Those who carried the coffin left their burden on the ground. Close relatives and mourners gathered around the coffin and addressed the tenderest words to the dead, hugged him and apologized for the slightest insults they had caused him during his life, proving, at the same time, the pain through funeral chants of glory and regret, moans and the tearing of

²²Siegfried Kapper, in “Foreign travellers...”, p. 112-114

²³Joseph Caillat, in “Foreign travellers...”, p. 517

clothes in a terrifying way (...) Leaving the church, the body was taken to a shallow grave in the courtyard of the place called the Garden of the Dead. . After the priest said the last prayer, the dead and the living were sprinkled with holy water. The coffin was lowered into the grave and a coarse wooden cross was left to mark the resting place of the young Romanian."²⁴

On the anniversary of the deceased, there is a custom for the family to distribute money and clothes to the poor, as well as unleavened rolls made of flour, sugar, honey, nuts and cheese; vessels full of water and sometimes food are placed along the way for travelers.

In Moldova, in the case of those with a certain amount of welfare, the notes speak of the luxury of burials. Here the priests came from all areas to the vigil, depending on the rank and wealth of the deceased. Each priest received a certain amount of money and a wax candle with towels, which he carried in his hand during the service. Also, at the end of the ceremony, the last cookies, cakes, wine and brandy also belonged to the priests.²⁵

The village world, the life with the rhythm kept for hundreds of generations, reveals to foreign travelers a true popular calendar in which every day contains an essence. Every day has a story, a piece of advice, a lesson.

The days of the Romanians were divided into splendor and misfortune. In fact, every day has its special activity that could not be left to another time. For example, the Romanians wash on Wednesday and spin on Saturday. Tuesday is the worst of all days of the week. On that day, women rarely wash and comb their hair; no journey is begun and no important activity is undertaken. No peasant woman will take the needle in her hand on Tuesday, for fear that the Savior would feel every sting and thus be crucified again. On certain days of the year they refrain from cutting anything with scissors so that the wolves do not harm the sheep, only the tailors believe that they self-absolve from this tradition. Panicked by the disastrous effects of the frequent epidemics, women in rural areas imagine that they can prevent the plague by burning a shirt that has been spun, woven, and made in less than twenty-four hours. When it starts to thunder and lightning, the superstitious Romanian makes the sign of the cross and falls to the ground.

Speaking of the population, as a number of inhabitants in the middle of the 19th century, it is interesting the note of doctor Caillat who establishes for Wallachia, without including Bucharest, a population of 2,000,000²⁶ inhabitants. The total population of the Principalities in 1854 was considered to be 4,000,000 inhabitants, and in 1859 4,424,961 inhabitants.²⁷ American physician James Oscar Noyes identified, at the same time, a population of 4,000,000 souls, of which 2,500,000 belonged to Wallachia and the rest to Moldova. Very important for our national history is his observation that "Romanians are not limited, however, to the principality, but are spread throughout Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina, numbering more than 7,000,000 people."²⁸

²⁴James Oscar Noyes, in "Foreign travellers...",p. 216-217

²⁵Moritz von Angelli, in "Foreign travellers...",p. 561

²⁶Joseph Caillat, in "Foreign travellers...",p. 531

²⁷C.I.Istrati, *A page from the contemporary history of Romania from the medical, economic and national point of view*, Alesandru A Grecescu Printing House, Bucharest, 1880, p. 60

²⁸James Oscar Noyes, in "Foreign travellers...",p. 216

A picture of the births in Moldavia in 1840 could look like this: Orthodox 21,867 of which 11,796 boys and 10,071 girls, Catholics 1838 of whom 963 boys and 875 girls; to these are added 1,011 Jews (571 boys and 440 girls) and 155 Armenians (78 boys and 77 girls).²⁹ In 1842, Thibault Lefebvre³⁰ counted 6,900 clerical families in Wallachia, 4,800 families of deacons, 3,200 families of teachers and 4,500 monks and nuns.³¹

3. ROMANIAN CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES IN THE LOGS OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS

Travelers who passed through the North-Danube area in the middle of the 19th century also give interesting news about the Romanian church, respectively about its hierarchical organization. For example, the Frenchman Eugene Poujad³² says that Wallachia has a metropolis and three belonging bishoprics, with an annual income of 3 million piastres (almost 1,148,000 francs), and Moldova has a metropolis and two belonging bishoprics, with an annual income of millions of francs (3,976,000 francs). Their income was fixed by the Organic Regulations, as follows: in Wallachia, one-fifth of this income is made available to the holders for alms, personal expenses and their homes; the remaining four-fifths are used for the maintenance of churches, the payment of ecclesiastical courts, the treatment of priests and vicars, seminar fees and religious instruction, and one-tenth of the total amount is considered necessary as a reserve for unforeseen expenses. In Moldova, income is divided as follows: 900,000 piastres for church maintenance, food and housing for their servants; 1,800,000 piastres belong to the state and are intended for charities and public education; more than half of the amount is considered to be kept as a reserve.³³

The large number of churches and monasteries impressed foreigners. The French traveler Adolphe Joanne wrote in 1846 that in the city of Bucharest there could be "10050 houses, 20 hotels, 26 monasteries, 130 Orthodox churches, a Catholic church, an Armenian church, a Reformed church, 5 synagogues, 10 inns, a seminary, a college, 3 boarding houses, 80 schools, 4 printing houses, 1775 horse crews, 7502 carts, 18,930 horses, 70 barges, a foreign theater".³⁴

Charles Doussault believes that St. George's Church is one of the most important in Bucharest and regrets a failed restoration: "Once decorated on the outside with paintings and arabesques, St. George's Church suffered the mutilation of the hope with which German

²⁹ Joseph Caillat, in "Foreign travellers...", p. 532

³⁰ Lawyer at the Court of Cassation and the Council of State, member of the Blois Academy, the Berry Society and the Paris Political Economy Society, one of the French travelers who left precious testimonies about the economic state of the Romanian space. He visited Wallachia in 1853 and 1858.

³¹ Thibault Lefebvre, in "Foreign travellers...", p. 247

³² Eugene Poujad, French consul in Bucharest between 1849-1854, a remarkable connoisseur of Eastern problems, represented the tendency of the Western power to approach our countries. He married, in 1850, a Romanian woman, Maria, the daughter of the great ban Costache Ghica. He became a fighter for the defense of the Romanians' rights. A convinced unionist, he proposed since 1849 the achievement of the union of the Principalities.

³³ Eugene Poujad, in "Foreign travellers ..." p. 495

³⁴ Simona Vărzaru, *Through the Romanian Countries. Foreign travelers from the 19th century*, Sport-Tourism Publishing House, Bucharest, 1984 p. 114

architects are so generous to these unusual monuments. The railing of the church porch, in Byzantine style, full of elegance and originality, still allows us to guess the picturesque appearance that the decoration could produce on the azure sky, often splendid, in these warm lands, now covered with this destructive linen of lime spoilage”³⁵. The interior of the churches has a structure similar to that of the Catholic churches, with the difference that in our country “the walls are equipped with benches (...) on which one sits during the service”³⁶.

In 1854, three monasteries are mentioned near the mountainous area of Buzău: Ciolanu, Valea Mărului and Vintilă Vodă. The traveler is impressed by the beauty of the landscape, especially since the Ciolanu monastery was quite difficult to reach on horseback, so the trip was made on foot. For a start, you enter the first courtyard of the monastery where there is a small building, to receive and host the faithful who came to visit the monastery; then came some warehouses and the monastery kitchen. “The buildings were built of mountain stone and partly of boulders in the river. In the second courtyard were two churches: one with the name of Jesus the Savior, the second with the patron saint of the Holy Trinity. The founder's cells are united with the interior of the patron saint of the Holy Trinity, and the monks' cells begin on the other side of the church and go under the mountain amphitheater. A few trees grow near each cell, and their green crown does not allow the hot glow of the sun to pass through, providing their occupants with a pleasant coolness. From the windows of the cells the view to the surrounding mountains is particularly beautiful. “ Eight monks and the abbot, almost 70 years old, lived here. He was a wise man of Serbian origin, speaking Russian like our traveler, which gave the visit a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. In this context, two very valuable cult objects are revealed that did not adorn the monastery for fear of a possible robbery of the Turks: a cross sent to the monastery by the voivode Mihai Viteazul, as a sign of gratitude after the victory over the Turks and a small Slavonic gospel, plated with silver decorations, about which it is not known how it came into possession of the monastery.”³⁷

Regarding such robberies, Edmund Spencer has the same perplexity, who, being aware of the fact that “the richest monasteries can be found in Moldova and Wallachia” wondered in his memoirs “how they escaped when the country was deserted and robbed, so often, by the armies of Russia and Turkey ”.³⁸ Continuing the series of monasteries in Wallachia, Eugene Poujad successively recalls “Tismana, located in a picturesque pass on a small river with this name; Arnota, founded by an Albanian prince and which served as a refuge for the inhabitants during the Tatar invasions; Polovragi, built on the same track of Oltet, where this river escapes from a deep cave, rich in stalactites; Cozia, built in front of Olt, where this untamed river escapes from the Carpathians to bathe Wallachia; Horezu, the most important of the five monasteries built by Brâncoveni, one of the richest in the whole of Wallachia and whose abbot still has the right to be named by the old princess Brâncoveanu, retired to

³⁵ Charles Doussault, in “Foreign travellers...”, p.151

³⁶ Piotr Jadovski, in “Foreign travellers...”, p.171

³⁷ Ibidem, p.191-192

³⁸ Edmund Spencer, in “Foreign travellers...”, p. 429

Văratice.”³⁹ Impressed was the traveler from the convent of nuns from Ostrov where “every nun has her house under thick secular trees, which hide her from view. A small arm of the Olt, which flows quietly, separates the island from the road and a wide boat leads the passengers here, which is announced by the sound of a bell. The abbess of Ostrov only wears church clothes when she has foreign visitors. She is usually dressed in the latest fashion from Paris and receives her toilets from Bucharest.”⁴⁰

For Moldova, the monasteries from Neamț, Agapia and Văratice are the most frequently mentioned in the travel diaries of foreign travelers.

In Văratice, the older and more devoted nuns lived “in the shadow of the sanctuary. But as each of the nuns has her own house, separated from the others by a garden or trees, the youngest and most fashionable scatter here and there, at the foot of the hills, secluded houses, resembling an English village rather than a cell. Their rules are not very strict, judging by the details: they are said to have the right to offer hospitality to their visitors, but not more than three days. (...) At Agapia, the valley is very narrow, the monastery very isolated, the rules are strict.”⁴¹

CONCLUSION

The interest that the accounts of travelers and consuls show for the reconstruction of life in the Principalities is obvious. In most of them, the mentality, education, daily life, Romanian cities and villages from the first half of the 19th century are described as inferior to the settlements in Western Europe. However, the fact that the territory of the Romanian Principalities was often the theater of the Russian-Turkish and Russian-Austro-Turkish wars must also be taken into account. The travelers registered the consequences of those scourges, which delayed the development process of the Romanian society.

Foreign travelers, coming from noble or bourgeois backgrounds, were critical of Romanian customs and mentalities, considering them much too influenced by the oriental spirit. Forcing the note of interpretations a little, we can say that Saint-Marc Girardin observes, as early as 1836, what Maiorescu would later call “bottomless forms”: taken from Western civilization rather its external aspects.”⁴²

Springed from experience and wisdom of life, from joy or pain, the elements of culture and popular traditions transmitted values and created bridges between generations. Religion, traditions and customs are priceless treasures, which define a people, making it unique, steadfast and immortal; Romania is known for its popular customs, some as if taken from fairy tales. Despite globalization, they have been preserved and passed down from generation to generation.

³⁹Eugene Poujad, in “Foreign travellers...”,p. 494

⁴⁰Ibidem, p.495

⁴¹Edouard Grenier, in “Foreign travellers...”,p. 672

⁴²Simona Vărzaru, *op.cit.*, p.60

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