

DID THE BISHOP OF TOMIS PARTICIPATE IN THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL?*

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ABSTRACT

The clarification of the question of the participation of the bishop of Scythia Minor in the works of the First Ecumenical Council continues to be a challenge for historians, Romanians or foreigners, theologians or lay people alike. Without claiming to issue absolute sentences, the present study proposes that, following the analysis of the main historical sources that provide data on the participants in this council, namely the lists of the signatories of the decisions of the Nicaean council and the information provided by the Byzantine chroniclers in their works of church history about this council, as well as the most important and pertinent studies on this subject so far, to highlight the necessary conclusions and to put forward certain hypotheses.

Keywords: *The Ist Ecumenical Council; Nicaea, Scythia Minor; Tomis; Marcostomes; Tomea/Comea; Kavaris;*

INTRODUCTION

The question of the participation of the bishop of Tomis in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea is still one of the controversial and unelucidated topics of the history of Romanian Christianity. However, unlike other such controversial topics, such as the preaching of the Gospel of the Savior Jesus Christ in Scythia Minor by the Holy Apostles Andrew and Philip or the geographical location of the diocese of Gothia, whose bishop participated in the First Ecumenical Council, which benefited from important studies by researchers in order to clarify them, this theme was most often approached by researchers tangentially. As a result, a final and generally accepted solution has not yet been reached in this regard, and the topic remains open to debate and dispute.

The main causes of this situation lie in the small number of sources that can provide information on the bishops participating in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, on the one hand, and, on the other, in the deplorable state¹ in which are found the copies made of the original list with the signatures of the bishops participating in the council. In fact, these copies, made over a relatively long period of time, constitute a first category of sources for this theme. A second category of sources is represented by the historical writings of the Byzantine chroniclers of the 4th-6th centuries, which recorded the main events of the ecclesiastical life of that period.

* A study with this title was published, in a first form, in 2013 in: *Theology and Education at the Lower Danube*, vol. 12, Annals of the "Lower Danube" University, fasc. XVI, Ed. Archdiocese of the Lower Danube, Galați, ISSN 1843-8660, pp. 383-405, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=727441>. However, the present study presents fundamental differences from the initial version.

¹ Ernest HONIGMANN, "Recherches sur les listes des pères de Nicée et de Constantinople", in: *Byzantion*, t. XI (1936), p. 433.

1. REFERENCES FROM HISTORICAL SOURCES THAT INTEREST THE THEME OF THE PRESENCE OF THE BISHOP OF TOMIS AT THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

From the very beginning, it should be noted that in none of the mentioned sources is recorded the participation of the bishop of Tomis in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, without, however, it follows, as a consequence, that the bishop of Tomis did not participate in this council, because, according to C.-J. Hefele, "it is well known that several bishops whose names are not among the signatures nevertheless participated in the Council of Nicaea".² In our case, however, there is some information, controversial because of unclear terms, with ambiguous meaning, or toponyms that are difficult to identify exactly, which some researchers have considered as evidence of the participation of the Tomitan hierarch in the Nicaean council, interpreting them in this sense.

1.1 References in the lists of signatures of the participants in the First Ecumenical Council regarding the presence at the synod of the bishop of Tomis

The list of bishops participating in the First Ecumenical Council and signatories of the adopted decisions has not been preserved in the original in any copy. On the other hand, several late copies of this original list have been preserved, written in Latin, Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Arabic and Armenian³, which are however incomplete and incongruous with each other, presenting confusion between the names of some bishops and of some bishoprics in some cases or corrupt names in other cases. However, by comparing them and corroborating them with other historical sources that refer to the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, these lists provide a fairly complete and close to reality picture of the number, names of the participants and the dioceses they represented.

The name of Marcus of Calabria and the position in which he appears in the various redactions and classes of lists are important for our topic since some scholars refer to him to explain the presence of the name Marcus Comeensis in the province of Europe, considered, in turn, a corruption of the name Tomeensis, that is, of Tomis.

Two other names that are relevant to this subject, Theophilus of Gothia and Cadmos of Bospor, are found in all variants, they are always the last two, in the same order and representing in all cases the same provinces, Gothia and Bospor.

1.2 References from the Byzantine chronicles that interest the theme of the presence at the First Ecumenical Council of the Bishop of Tomis

The most important news in this regard is considered to be that offered by Eusebius of Caesarea, who participated in the sessions of the Nicaean Council, thus being an eyewitness to the progress of its work.

In *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, referring to the bishops participating in the council, he wrote that "From all the churches which filled all Europe, Libya, and Asia the choicest of the servants of God were brought together; and one place of worship, as if extended by God, took them in all together: Syrians with Cilicians; Phoenicians and Arabians and Palestinians; besides these, Egyptians, Thebans, Libyans, and those who came from between the rivers. Even a Persian bishop was present at the council,

² C.-J. HEFELE, *Histoire des Conciles*, vol. I, p. I, l. II, c. II, Paris, 1908, p. 624.

³ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina Latine Graece Coptice Syriace Arabice Armeniace*, Henricus GELZER, Henricus HILGENFELD, Otto CUNTZ (eds), Lipsiae, 1898; Cuthbertus Hamilton TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris antiquissima*, fasc. I, pars I, Oxonii, 1899, pp. 35-91.

nor was a Scythian lacking from the assembly. Pontus and Galatia, Cappadocia and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia provided their chosen men.

Thracians too and Macedonians, Achaeans and Epirotes, and among them those who lived far up-country, were present; [...]”⁴.

The news recorded by Eusebius of Caesarea regarding the presence of a Scythian bishop among the participants in the Nicaean council was then taken up, with almost the same formulation, by some chroniclers who wrote church histories after Eusebius, such as Socrates Scholasticus⁵ (380-439) and Gelasius (Anonimus) of Cyzicus⁶ (sec. V). The only differences appear in *Tripartite Church History* of Cassiodorus⁷ (485-585) and in *Church history* of Gelasius of Caesarea⁸ (†395), in their writings the reference to the representation of Scythia at the council being in the plural, "Scythians were at the assembly as well".

The use of the plural by the two chroniclers could be relevant in clarifying this issue in the context in which Gelasius of Caesarea and Gelasius (Anonimus) of Cyzicus, developing the lapidary information of Eusebius of Caesarea about the sending by the emperor Constantine of a letter with the decisions adopted at the council "to those who were not present"⁹, records that Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica, through his suffragans, was to send this epistle "for the churches in Macedonia Prima and Secunda along with Greece, all of Europe, both Scythias, and all the churches in Illyricum, Thessaly, and Achaea"¹⁰. From this text, the reference to "both Scythias" is of interest for our analysis. Also helpful is the

⁴ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 7, PG 20:1062A; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 7, Introduction, translation and commentary by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, Oxford, 1999, p. 124; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața fericitului împărat Constantin*, III, VII, în: EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața fericitului împărat Constantin și alte scrieri*, ediția a II-a revizuită și adăugită, studiu introductiv de Emilian Popescu, traducere din limba greacă și note de Radu Alexandrescu, col. *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, vol. 8, s. n., Editura Basilica, București, 2012, p. 171..

⁵ SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, I, 8, PG 67:62AB; SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *The Ecclesiastical History*, I, 8, revised with notes by A.C. Zenos, in: Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds), coll. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, volume 2, *Socrates, Sozomenus: Church Histories*, Hendrikson Publishers, 1995, p. 8.

⁶ GELASIUS CYZICENUS, *Historia concilii Nicaeni*, II, 5.3, PG 85:1230BC; Anonimus Church History (GELASIUS OF CYZICUS), *An Account of the Holy Synod of Nicaea*, II, 5.3, translated by Nathanael Jensen and Robert Read, 2017, p. 10; G. C. HANSEN (ed.), *Anonyme Kirchengeschichte: (Gelasius Cyzicenus, CPG 6034)*, GCS, N. F. 9, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002.

⁷ CASSIODORI-EPIPHANII, *Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita*, II, 1, recensuit Waltarius Jacob, editionem curavit Rudolphus Hanslik, coll. *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. LXXI, Vindobonae, 1952, p. 84; CASIODOR, *Istoria Bisericească Tripartită*, II, I, traducere de Liana și Anca Manolache, introducere și note de Pr. Ștefan Alexe, coll. *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, vol. 75, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1998, p. 82.

⁸ GELASIUS OF CAESAREA, *Ecclesiastical History: The Extant Fragments with an Appendix containing the Fragments from Dogmatic Writings*. GCS, ed. M Wallraff, J. Stutz, and N. Marinides. Translated by N. Marinides, De Gruyter, 2018, p. 73 – "Scythians were at the assembly as well".

⁹ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 16; III, 22, PG 20:1074A, 1083B; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 16; III, 22, pp. 127, 131; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața fericitului împărat Constantin*, III, 16; III, 22, pp. 176, 181.

¹⁰ GELASIUS OF CAESAREA, *Ecclesiastical History...*, p. 117; GELASIUS CYZICENUS, *Historia concilii Nicaeni*, II, 27; II, 36, PG 85:1311A; 1343B; Anonimus Church History (GELASIUS OF CYZICUS), *An Account of the Holy Synod of Nicaea*, II, 28.8, p. 52; II, 38.8, p. 71; GELASIUS DE CYZIC, *Istoria Bisericească*, traducere de Mihaela Paraschiv, în vol. *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, p. 497.

reference to Bishop Protogenes of Serdica, who was to send the same letter to the churches of "Dacia, **Calabria**, Dardania and neighbouring regions"¹¹.

2. THE "SCYTHIAN" OF EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA AND THE LOCATION OF THE PROVINCE REPRESENTED BY HIM

The information according to which the council of bishops gathered at the synod "nor was a Scythian lacking from the assembly" is considered by the majority of Romanian researchers, of theologians especially, but not only, as the most eloquent proof in favor of the presence of the Tomitan bishop at this council, in the opinion of the majority the term "Scythian" designating the bishop of the province of Scythia Minor.

In this sense, Dan Gh. Teodor, for whom the Scythian bishop pastored "obviously in Scythia Minor", interprets the text in question¹², Vasile Itineanț¹³, Liliana Trofin¹⁴, Vasile Mărculeț¹⁵, Fr. Mircea Păcurariu¹⁶, Emilian Popescu¹⁷, Fr. Nicolae Dură¹⁸, Fr. Adrian Gabor¹⁹. The only argument invoked in favor of this opinion, however, is the one according to which, since the time of Strabo, Scythia designated the region of Dobrudja, this was also the case in the first Christian centuries²⁰. The exception is represented by Fr. Ionuț Holubeanu, who argues this statement²¹.

Other scholars, analyzing how Eusebius enumerated the provinces within the Empire and the regions outside its borders that were represented by bishops at the synod, noted "impeccable geographical correctness"²² respected by him, concluding, therefore, that

¹¹ GELASIUS OF CAESAREA, *Ecclesiastical History...*, p. 119; GELASIUS CYZICENUS, *Historia concilii Nicaeni*, II, 27; II, 36, PG 85:1311A; 1343B; Anonimus Church History (GELASIUS OF CYZICUS), *An Account of the Holy Synod of Nicaea*, II, 28.10, p. 52; II, 38.10, p. 71; GELASIUS DE CYZIC, *Istoria Bisericească*, traducere de Mihaela Paraschiv, în vol. *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, p. 497.

¹² Dan Gh. TEODOR, *Creștinismul la est de Carpați de la origini până în secolul al XIV-lea*, Ed. Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, Iași, 1991, p. 54.

¹³ Vasile ITINEANȚ, *Viața creștină la Dunărea de Jos (secolele IV-VI d.Hr.)*, Editura Universității de Vest, Timișoara, 2006, p. 192.

¹⁴ Liliana TROFIN, *Romanitate și creștinism la Dunărea de Jos în secolele IV-VIII*, Ed. Universității din București, 2005, p. 170; Liliana TROFIN, *Istoria creștinismului la nordul Dunării de Jos (secolele I-XIV)*, curs universitar, Ed. Universității din București, 2008, p. 150.

¹⁵ Vasile MĂRCULEȚ, "New observations on the organization of the church in Scythia Minor at the end of 3rd c. and beginning of 4th c.", în: *Istros*, XIV, Ed. Istros, Brăila, 2007, p. 351.

¹⁶ Pr. Mircea PĂCURARIU, *Sfinți daco-romani și români*, Ed. Trinitas, 2007, p. 49.

¹⁷ Emilian POPESCU, "Dobrogea și teritoriile românești nord-dunărene în secolele IV-VI", în: *Symposia Thracologica*, 7, București, 1989, p. 195; Emilian POPESCU, "Dobrogea și teritoriile românești nord-dunărene în secolele IV-VI", în: *Istorie bisericească, misiune creștină și viață culturală, I, De la începuturi până în secolul al XIX-lea*, Ed. Arhiepiscopiei Dunării de Jos, Galați, 2009, p. 58; Emilian POPESCU, "Ierarhia ecleziastică pe teritoriul României. Creșterea și structura ei până în secolul al VII-lea", în: *Studii de istorie și de spiritualitate creștină*, II, Editura Academiei Române/Basilica, București, 2018, pp. 62-63; Emilian POPESCU, "Theophilus Gothiae, episcop în Crimeea ori la Dunărea de Jos?", în: *Studii de istorie și de spiritualitate creștină*, I, Editura Academiei Române/Basilica, București, 2018, p. 578.

¹⁸ Pr. Nicolae DURĂ, "Scythia minor" (Dobrogea) și Biserica ei Apostolică; Scaunul Arhiepiscopal și Mitropolitan al Tomisului (sec. IV-XIV), Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 2006, p. 18.

¹⁹ Pr. Adrian GABOR, *Biserica și Statul în primele patru secole*, Ed. Sofia, București, 2003, p. 214.

²⁰ Alexandru SUCEVEANU, "Contributo alla storia del cristianesimo nella Scizia Minore", în: *Opuscula Scythica*, 14, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2009, pp. 281, 282-283.

²¹ Pr. Ionuț HOLUBEANU, "Dependența canonică a Tomisului în secolul al IV-lea", în: *Cruce și misiune. Sfinții Împărați Constantin și Elena – promotori ai libertății religioase și apărători ai Bisericii*, 2, Emilian Popescu și Viorel Ioniță (eds), Basilica, București, 2013, pp. 624-637.

²² Nelu ZUGRAVU, "Studiu introductiv", în: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, traduceri inedite din latină și greacă de Mihaela Paraschiv, Claudia Tărnăuceanu, Wilhelm Drancă; selecția textelor, studiu introductiv, notițe biobibliografice, note și comentarii, indice de Nelu Zugravu, Ed. Universității "Al. I. Cuza",

the Scythian "did not represent Scythia Minor, nor Gothia in the Crimea, but a territory outside the empire [...] stretching from Ukraine to Central Asia"²³, known as North Pontic Scythia. In support of this assertion, Bolshacov-Ghimpu also invokes another argument in addition to that of the enumeration in geographical order, namely the fact that "in the Balkans from the list of Eusebius, in comparison with the synodal lists, the provinces of Moesia, Dacia, Dardania and Thessaly are also omitted", from which it would follow that "the mention of Scythia in the list, together with other regions outside the empire" does not represent "an error of the author of the geographical location of the province of Scythia Minor, as some researchers have assumed", being therefore "a completely different region"²⁴ of this.

The hypothesis of the geographical location of Scythia represented at the First Ecumenical Council by the "Scythian" bishop mentioned by Eusebius in North-Pontic Scythia, a hypothesis supported by Bolschakov-Ghimpu and Zugravu, raises some rather significant problems. The most important is represented by the fact that in the lists of the names of the participants in the Nicaean council there is no bishop who can be identified as the representative of that region, as in the case of Persia, represented by John²⁵, for example. It also raises the question of how widespread Christianity was at the beginning of the fourth century in those territories and how well organized from an ecclesiastical point of view there was a bishopric and a bishop there and, in the unlikely event, that such an ecclesiastical structure would have existed, where exactly that episcopal see was located.

The opinion that the "Scythian" mentioned by Eusebius in his writing cannot be considered the bishop of Tomis in Scythia Minor is also shared by most foreign scholars²⁶, their opinions regarding the geographical area from which the "Scythian" came differing, however, from that of the Romanian researchers quoted above. Thus, C.-J. Hefele stated that the "Scythian" was bishop of Scythia Maior (Gothia), not of Scythia Minor²⁷. J. Zeiller is of the opinion that the "Scythian" mentioned by Eusebius was one of the bishops of the Crimea, occupied at that time by the Goths, Theophilus of Gothia or Cadmos of Bospor²⁸, an opinion supported by most Russian researchers, but also by other researchers in the West²⁹ and from Romania³⁰.

Iași, 2008, p. 73; Nelu ZUGRAVU, "O notă despre episcopul «scit» participant la Conciliul de la Niceea (325)", în: *Tyragetia*, s. n., vol. II (XVII), nr. 1, 2008, p. 294.

²³ A. A. BOLȘAKOV-GHIMPU, "Episcopul de Tomis a participat la sinodul I ecumenic de la Niceea", în: *Glasul Bisericii*, anul XXXIII, nr. 5-6, 1974, p. 444.

²⁴ A. A. BOLȘAKOV-GHIMPU, "Episcopul de Tomis...", p. 444.

²⁵ E. HONIGMANN, "La liste originale des pères des Nicée", in: *Byzantion*, t. XIV (1939), p. 46.

²⁶ Jaques ZEILLER, "Sur un point de géographie ecclésiastique ancienne. Le prpretend évêché danubien de Comea", in: *Cinquantenaire de l'École pratique des hautes études*, Paris, 1921, p. 107; Georgi ATANASSOV, "Notes and Codicils to the Ecclesiastical Structure of Scythia and Moesia Secunda during the 4th-6th Century AD", in: *Acta musei varnaensis*, VIII-1, Varna, 2008, pp. 298-299; G. ATANASSOV, "Christianity along the Lower Danube limes in the Roman Provinces of Dacia Ripensis, Moesia Secunda and Scythia Minor (4th -6th C. AD)", in: *The Lower Danube Roman Limes*, Sofia, 2012, p. 351.

²⁷ C.-J. HEFELE, *History of the Councils*, vol. I, p. I, l. II, c. II, p. 404.

²⁸ J. ZEILLER, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes de l'Empire romain*, E. De Boccard, Paris, 1918, p. 172, note 1; J. ZEILLER, "Sur un point de géographie ecclésiastique ancienne...", p. 106.

²⁹ J. MANSION, "Les origines du Christianisme chez les Goths", in: *Analecta Bollandiana*, XXXIII (1914), 10.

³⁰ N. ZUGRAVU, "Studiu introductiv", în: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, p. 99; A. A. BOLȘAKOV-GHIMPU, "Episcopul de Tomis...", p. 444.

In the monograph dedicated to the Goths of Crimea, after inventorying the hypotheses regarding the location of the diocese of Gothia represented by Theophilus³¹, corroborating the information from the lists of signatories of the decisions of the First Ecumenical Council and from *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, on the one hand, with those recorded by Socrates Scholasticus regarding the relationship between Theophilus and Ulfila³² and with those in *Life of Saint Nikita*³³, a Gothic Christian converted by Bishop Theophilus, on the other hand, A. A. Vasiliev concluded that Theophilus of Gothia was the bishop of the Goths of Scythia Minor and identified him with the "Scythian" mentioned by Eusebius of Caesarea³⁴.

In his turn, Emilian Popescu demonstrated that "there are more arguments in favor of locating Theophilus in Danubian Gothia than in Crimea", an opinion taken up and supported by most Romanian historians³⁵, but rejected his identification with the "Scythian" mentioned by Eusebius, stating that the "Scythian" was the bishop of Tomis in Scythia Minor, whom he identified as Marcus Comeensis³⁶, a name that appears in the Latin copies of the list of participants in the First Ecumenical Council grouped into grades II and III³⁷.

It seems that this opinion, according to which Theophilus represented Danubian Gothia, is not exactly a novelty, having been affirmed as early as the seventeenth century by the abbot Charles of *St. Paul* from Fuliensi. Not only did he locate the area of activity of Theophilus of Gothia in Dacia Antiqua, but he believed that Theophilus resided in Sarmisegetusa Regia, which would have been the metropolis of the ancient province of Dacia³⁸. Sarmisegetusa Regia is indicated as the residence of Bishop Theophilus of Gothia and in a map of church geography from the same period³⁹.

If regarding the location of Gothia represented by Bishop Theophilus at the First Ecumenical Council the hypothesis supported by Emilian Popescu is, I believe, irrefutable, due to the argumentation that fully confirms it, the same is not the case in the case of identifying the "Scythian" and the location of the province he represented at the council. In order to try to locate the province represented by it and to identify it, we must start our approach from the information provided by the sources.

The first and most important piece of information is that of Eusebius of Caesarea. In relation to this information, observing the enumeration in geographical order of the provinces represented by the bishops at the First Ecumenical Council and the fact that

³¹ A. A. VASILIEV, *The Goths in the Crimea*, coll. *Monographs of The Mediaeval Academy of America*, 11, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1936, pp. 14-17.

³² SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 41, PG 67:349-350; SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *The Ecclesiastical History*, II, 41, p. 72.

³³ H. DELEHAYE, "Saints de trace et de Mésie, 7, Passio S. Nicetae", in: *Analecta Bollandiana*, XXXI (1912), 209-215.

³⁴ A. A. VASILIEV, *The Goths in the Crimea*, pp. 18-20.

³⁵ D. Gh. TEODOR, *Creștinismul la est de Carpați...*, p.54; L. TROFIN, *Romanitate și creștinism la Dunărea de Jos...*, p.171; Pr. A. GABOR, *Biserica și Statul...*, p. 214; Dan RUSCU, "Eusebius' «scythian» bishop and the Ecclesiastical History of «Gelasius» of Cyzicus", in: *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Theologia Catholica*, LV 4, 2010, p. 28; D. RUSCU, "Bishop Theophilus and the Church of Gothia", in: *Acta Musei Napocensis*, 47-48/I, 2010-2011(2012), pp. 229-240.

³⁶ E. POPESCU, "Theophilus Gothiae...", pp. 81; E. POPESCU, "Ierarhia ecleziastică...", pp. 154-158.

³⁷ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, II 202, III 202, pp. 50-51.

³⁸ Carol at Sancto Paulo abbot Fuliensi, *Geographia Sacra sive notitia antiqua episcopatum ecclesiae universae*, Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1641, pp. 24, 204, 212.

³⁹ M. TAVERNIER, *Antiquorum illyrici orientalis episcopatum geographica descriptio*, 1640, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5973252x/f1.item.zoom>.

"Scythian" is mentioned immediately after the representative of Persia, a territory outside the Roman world, after which it returns to the provinces of Roman territory, it means that the province represented by the "Scythian" bishop was from the barbarian territories, as was Persia⁴⁰. The expression used by Eusebius of Caesarea itself pleads in favor of this interpretation, expressing the surprising, somewhat unexpected and exceptional character⁴¹, of the fact that "even Scythian was not absent from the group", in the sense that "even Scythian" was present.

The surprising, unexpected character of the presence of the "Scythian" bishop at the council could be explained both by the fact that he would have represented barbarian populations, if it had been Scythians, or who came into contact with Christianity only in the middle of the third century, if we take into account the Goths, and by the difficulty of traveling from the Crimean area, the road being longer and involving many more dangers, at least until entering the territories under the control of the Empire, regardless of whether the route was sea or land. From this perspective, the presence of the "Scythian" bishop at the council was indeed surprising and exceptional, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, Eusebius' expression would not have suited the bishop of Tomis, a city that was part of the Roman province of Scythia Minor, since he would have benefited from all the facilities of the Roman administration to reach the council, and his presence would not have been surprising.

The second piece of information is provided by the lists of signatures of the bishops participating in the First Ecumenical Council, which also respect the geographical order, in most of these lists the last two signatories being Bishops Theophilus of Gothia and Cadmos of Bospor, the region represented by Cadmos being in Bosporitan Scythia.

This information, corroborated with that in the lists with the signatures of the bishops participating in the Second Ecumenical Council, in Constantinople, in the year 381, in which the province of Scythia appears represented by two bishops, could clarify who was the "Scythian" of Eusebius. The two bishops who in 381 signed as representatives of Scythia were Terentius of Tomis and Aeterius of Khersones⁴². As by the above argumentation I think I have clarified that Eusebius did not mean Scythia Minor and Tomis by referring to "Scythian", then it becomes much more plausible to identify him with Bishop Cadmos of Bospor in the Crimea. An additional argument in support of this hypothesis could also be the fact that in the *Geographia Sacra* of the abbot Charles of Fulienzi the diocese of Bospor is located in *Scythia trans Danubium*, along with those of Kersones and Zicchia⁴³.

Assuming this hypothesis as the correct interpretation of the text of Eusebius of Caesarea does not in any way mean solving the problem of the presence or not at the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea of the Tomitan bishop. On the basis of this interpretation of the Eusebian text, it can only be stated that **the "Scythian" was not the bishop of Tomis**, but not that Bishop Tomitan did not participate in the Council.

In order to clarify this question, the other information provided by the historical sources must also be taken into account, no matter how insignificant, unclear or controversial they may be. We refer first of all to *Church History* of Gelasius of Cyzicus, which completes the news about the council taken from Eusebius with other information concerning Scythia, and of the lists of names and signatures of the participants in the

⁴⁰ J. ZEILLER, "Sur un point de géographie ecclésiastique ancienne...", p. 107.

⁴¹ D. RUSCU, "Eusebius' «scythian» bishop and the Ecclesiastical History of «Gelasius» of Cyzicus», p. 30.

⁴² E. HONIGMANN, "Recherches sur les listes...", pp. 442-443.

⁴³ CAROLO in Sancto Paulo slaughters Fulienzi, *Geographia Sacra...*, p. 235.

Nicaean council which offer another information, much more controversial and difficult to elucidate, which would seem to confirm the presence of the prelate of Tomis at the council.

Gelasius of Cyzicus records the fact that, after the adoption of the agreed decisions, at the initiative of the Emperor Constantine the Great, the synodals appointed from among those who subscribed to the Nicene faith some "holy and apostolic men", through whom letters of acquaintance were sent about what had been established by the council "*ad omnes sanctas sub coelo Dei ecclesias*"⁴⁴. Such letters were sent by "Alexander of Thessalonica, through his subordinates, for the churches in Macedonia Prima and Secunda along with Greece, all of Europe, both Scythias, and all the churches in Illyricum, Thessaly, and Achaia" (II, 27)⁴⁵.

Interpreting this information, Nelu Zugravu states that "if the ecclesiastical historian had in mind here Scythia Maior and Scythia Minor, and not Gothia and Bosphorus, whose holders – Theophilus and Cadmos respectively – appear on the lists of participants in Nicaea, then there is no doubt that the representative of the diocese between the Lower Danube and the Black Sea had not taken part in the council, since the Thessalonian prelate had sent him an epistle notifying him of the decisions of the episcopal assembly" and concludes by concluding that "the 'safety' of those who support the presence of the bishop of Scythia Minor at the first ecumenical council of Nicaea is seriously undermined"⁴⁶.

However, it does not appear from the text of Gelasius of Cyzicus that these letters were sent exclusively to bishops who did not participate in the council, as Zugravu asserts, an opinion that he did not argue in any way. It is equally true, however, that this passage from the writing of Gelasius of Cyzicus cannot be interpreted as proof of the presence of the Tomitan bishop at the synod, as Emilian Popescu does⁴⁷.

Eusebius of Caesarea and Bishop Theodoret of Cyrus also mention such letters of notification of the decisions adopted at Nicaea, sent to bishops who were unable to participate in the council⁴⁸. However, the information provided by Eusebius is not very clear in this regard. First, he writes that "He transmitted the record of this Council also to those who were not present"⁴⁹, and he concludes by stating that "The Emperor sent out a text to the same effect as this letter to each of the provinces"⁵⁰. It is unclear whether the letter referred

⁴⁴ MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collection*, Leipzig, 1901, 2, 927.

⁴⁵ GELASIUS CYZICENUS, *Historia concilii Nicaeni*, II, 27; II, 36, PG 85:1311A; 1343B; Anonimus Church History (GELASIUS OF CYZICUS), *An Account of the Holy Synod of Nicaea*, II, 28.8, p. 52; II, 38.8, p. 71; GELASIUS DE CYZIC, *Istoria Bisericească*, traducere de Mihaela Paraschiv, în vol. *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, p. 497; GELASIUS OF CAESAREA, *Ecclesiastical History*..., p. 117.

⁴⁶ N. ZUGRAVU, "Studiu introductiv", în: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*..., p. 74; N. ZUGRAVU, "O notă despre episcopul «scit» participant la Conciliul de la Niceea (325)", p. 294.

⁴⁷ E. POPESCU, "Theophilus Gothiae...", p.81, note 47.

⁴⁸ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 16-20, PG 20:1074A-1079B; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 16-20, pp. 127-130; EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *The Life of Constantine*..., III, 16-20, p.132-135; THEODORETUS, CYRENSIS EPISCOPUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, I, 9, PG 82:931C; THEODORET, *The Ecclesiastical History*, I, 9, Translated with Notes by Blomfield Jackson, in: Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds), coll. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, volume 3, *Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, and Rufinus: Historical Writings*, Edinburgh/Michigan, 1892, p. 47; TEODORET, episcopul Cirului, *Istoria Bisericească*, I, 10-11, traducere de Pr. Vasile Sibiescu, în: *Scrieri, partea a doua, col. Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, vol. 44, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, București, 1995, pp. 48-50.

⁴⁹ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 16, PG 20:1074A; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 16, p. 127; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața lui Constantin*..., III, 16, p. 132.

⁵⁰ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 20, PG 20:1079B; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 20 (3), p. 130; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața lui Constantin*..., III, 20, 3, p. 135.

to all bishops who did not attend the council or to all bishops in the empire, both those who did not attend and those who attended the council. Taking into account the clarification made at the end, namely that the letter has been sent "to each of the provinces", after initially stating that it was written for those who did not participate in the synod, it seems more plausible that the second variant, otherwise that "all" no longer has its logic in the quoted context. Theodoret of Cyrus also remembers this letter, according to which it was addressed "to the absent"⁵¹.

This letter, composed by the Emperor Constantine at the feast given by him in honor of the twenty years of reign (vicennalia), after the conclusion of the work of the synod⁵², a second was followed, written after the departure of the bishops from the council and addressed to those who had not taken part in it⁵³.

Regardless of whether these letters were addressed only to bishops who did not participate in the council, as follows from the *History* Theodoret of Cyrus, or both those who did not participate and those who participated in the council, as seems to emerge from Eusebius' references to the first epistle, it is certain that they were composed by the emperor Constantine personally, not by the synodals at the initiative of the emperor, as Gelasius mentions.

Returning to Gelasius, his formulations "*omnibus sub coelo sanctis Dei ecclesiis*" and "*Ecclesiis in...*", by their general character seem to refer to all the churches in the provinces of the empire, not only to those that were not represented by bishops at the council. We note, moreover, that Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica sent such epistles to the churches in provinces that had been represented at the council, such as Macedonia and Achaia, represented by two bishops each, and Europe and Thessaly, by one, according to the lists of signatures⁵⁴. Therefore, the fact that Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica also wrote to the churches of the two provinces of Scythia does not necessarily mean that they were not represented at the council.

Zugravu's interpretation of the text of Gelasius of Cyzic and the conclusion drawn on the basis of this interpretation are refuted by information transmitted in the paragraphs immediately following that concerning Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica. In one of these paragraphs it is recorded that Bishop Protogenes of Sardica wrote such epistles, among others, for the bishop of Calabria/Calabria⁵⁵, or he appears among the participants in the council, signing with the name Marcos de Calabria/Calabria⁵⁶ and in another that Bishop Pistos of Marcianopolis had sent such an epistle to the church of Athens⁵⁷, or it was represented at the synod by a bishop of the same name, Pistos⁵⁸.

⁵¹ THEODORETUS, CYRENSIS EPISCOPUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I, 10, PG 82:938A; THEODORET, *The Ecclesiastical History*, I, 10, p. 48; TEODORET, episcopul Cirului, *Istoria Bisericească*, I, 11, 1, p. 50.

⁵² EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 15, PG 20:1071AB; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 15 (1), p. 127; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața lui Constantin...*, III, 15, 1, p. 131; THEODORETUS, CYRENSIS EPISCOPUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I, 10, PG 82:938A; THEODORET, *The Ecclesiastical History*, I, 10, p. 48; TEODORET, episcopul Cirului, *Istoria Bisericească*, I, 11, 1, p. 50.

⁵³ EUSEBIUS PAMPHILI, *De vita Constantini*, III, 22, PG 20:1083B; EUSEBIUS, *Life of Constantine*, III, 22, p. 131; EUSEBIU DE CEZAREEA, *Viața lui Constantin...*, III, 22, p. 136.

⁵⁴ E. HONIGMANN, "La liste originale...", p. 48.

⁵⁵ MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum...*, 2, 882, 927.

⁵⁶ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I 204, II 204, p. 50, III 212, p. 55; .C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris antiquissima*, fasc. I, pars I, I 205, III 205, IV 205c, pp. 84-85.

⁵⁷ MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum...*, 2, 882, 930.

⁵⁸ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I 209, II 209, III 209, IV 193, pp. 54-55; C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris...*, I 210, II 210, III 210, IV 210, V 210, pp. 86-87.

It was natural, after all, that the bishops who participated in the council should also receive an official act with the decisions of the council, as a testimony of what the council decided and for the churches to which they returned. In this context, the letters sent by the emperor represent not so much a confirmation and reinforcement of those adopted by the synod, but above all they express and transmit the emperor's will that those decisions be received and respected.

As for the identification of the two Scythians, there can be neither of the two variants expressed by N. Zugravu, namely Scythia Maior and Scythia Minor or Gothia and Bospor, nor the one proposed by D. Ruscu, who identifies them with "Dobrogea (Scythia Minor) and Gothia of Bishop Theophil"⁵⁹. N. Zugravu, as we have seen above, on the basis of the identification he gave to the two Scythians, claimed that the bishop of Tomis did not participate in the council, while D. Ruscu, on the basis of the identification of the two Scythians, tried to prove that the "Scythian" of Eusebius is Bishop Theophilus of Gothia. As we have seen above, neither N. Zugravu's argumentation stands, nor that of D. Ruscu. Considering that, as shown above, at the Second Ecumenical Council, the Bishop of Tomis and the Bishop of Khersones also signed the Province of Scythia, from the information of Gelasius of Cyzicus we can conclude that the two Scythians can be identified as Scythia Minor and Scythia trans Danubium/Crimea. Also, from the fact that one of the epistles was sent to the bishop of Scythia Minor, we can assume that the see of Tomis was not vacant, otherwise, to whom would it have been addressed? The question therefore arises: did he participate or not in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea?

3. RELIGIOUS LIFE IN SCYTHIA MINOR AROUND THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The fact that the Tomitan bishop does not appear in the lists among the signatories of the decisions of the Nicaean council does not constitute an indisputable proof of his non-participation in the council. It would not be, in fact, the only case of a bishop who does not appear in the lists although he participated in the synod. Nor does "Scythian" appear explicitly in the lists, although his presence at the council is affirmed by Eusebius of Caesarea.

In an attempt to clarify the question of the participation of the bishop of Tomis in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, perhaps the data on the religious situation in Scythia Minor in the period before and after the council are not unimportant.

The importance of the province of Scythia Minor, located on the border of the Empire with the barbarian peoples north of the Danube, both from a strategic-military and from an ecclesiastical-missionary point of view, required the participation of the bishop of Tomis in the council. An argument in this regard is the presence of Bishop Terentius of Tomis at the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381)⁶⁰ and his election as guarantor of the observance of the decisions of that synod, along with nine other participating bishops.

On the other hand, it should be emphasized that the province of Scythia Minor was not represented at the councils held in Sardica in 343⁶¹, and Sirmium, between 348 and

⁵⁹ D. RUSCU, "Eusebius' «scythian» bishop and the Ecclesiastical History of «Gelasius» of Cyzicus», p. 33.

⁶⁰ E. HONIGMANN, "Recherches sur les listes...", pp. 442-443; *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, XVIII, p. 227.

⁶¹ Pr. Ioan RĂMUREANU, "Sinodul de la Sardica din anul 343. Importanța lui pentru istoria pătrunderii creștinismului la geto-daco-romani", în: *Studii Teologice*, XIV, nr. 3-4, 1962, pp. 146-182.

358⁶², which raises the question of the presence of a hierarchy in the episcopal see of Tomis between 324 and 368, when Bishop Betranion is attested.

Given the importance of the province of Scythia Minor for the Empire from a political and ecclesiastical point of view, as well as the subsequent involvement of the hierarchs of Tomis in the conduct of the ecumenical councils, the vacancy of the episcopal see would be the most plausible, if not the only, cause that would explain the absence of the Tomitan hierarchy from the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

Archaeologist I. Barnea opines, based on a fragment of a funerary inscription discovered in Tomis/Constanta and the account from *Acta Sanctorum* about the passion of Bishop Titus or Philus on January 2, that it could be a bishop of Tomis, martyred during the persecution of Licinius between 319-320⁶³. N. Zugravu admits the existence of a bishop of Tomis "sometime between 308 and 324, when Scythia Minor entered the domain controlled by Licinius", without, however, attributing to him the name Titus/Philus since he considers that the account from *Acta Sanctorum* on the basis of which some scholars have called it that it would be grammatically misrepresented in martyrologies, except for *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, in which the text refers to the son of this bishop – "pueri christiani filii episcopi", and not to his name – Fili/Titi/Phili episcopi⁶⁴.

As for the identity of this bishop and his son who suffered a martyr's death, things are far from being clarified. Those who claim that this bishop of Tomis suffered under Licinius and was called Titus or Philus invoke the information in the martyrology of Notkerius Balbulus, which places among the martyrs who suffered at Tomis together with the three brothers Argeus, Narcissus and Marcellinus, and Bishop Philus of Tomis – "Item Tomis Phili Episcopi"⁶⁵. Based on the similar text in *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, „[...]in the city of Tomis, the 'feast day' of Claudio, Eugenius, Rodus and their three brothers, Argeus, Narcissus and Marcellinus, the young Christian, the son of the bishop, who, taken among the recruits under Licinius [...]"⁶⁶, Zugravu states that it is not about any bishop of Tomis with the name Philus, but about the son of a bishop⁶⁷. It should also be noted, however, that in the other martyrologies the reference to the "son of the bishop" does not appear at all⁶⁸.

Moreover, even in the text of the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* presented by *Acta sanctorum* the expression "filii episcopi, qui sub Licinio inter tyrones comprehensus" is missing. The text, quoted from the oldest manuscript of the martyrology of St. Jerome⁶⁹, records that on January 2 "in civitate Tomis Claudonis, Eugenius, Rhodi, trium fratrum, Argaei, Narcissi et Marcellini pueri christiani et Diogini, Eugenti, Rodonis, Primae"⁷⁰.

⁶² Pr. Ioan RĂMUREANU, "Sinoadele de la Sirmium dintre anii 348 și 358. Condamnarea lui Fotin de Sirmium", în: *Studii Teologice*, XV, nr. 5-6, 1963, pp. 226-316.

⁶³ Ioan BARNEA, "Inscripții paleocreștine inedite din Tomis", în: *Pontica*, 7, 1974, pp. 377-379.

⁶⁴ N. ZUGRAVU, "Studiu introductiv", în: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, p. 82.

⁶⁵ *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii ex latinis et graecis, aliarumque gentium monumentis, servata primigenia veterum scriptorum phrasi*, tomus I, Antverpiae, 1643, 4, p. 83.

⁶⁶ *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, LII, Martirologiul hieronimian, p. 403.

⁶⁷ N. ZUGRAVU, "Studiu introductiv", în: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, p. 82.

⁶⁸ *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis*, XCI, Bede Venerabilis, 2, Martyrology, p. 649; CV, Adon of Vienna, 2, Martyrology, p. 697; 3, The Old Roman Martyrology, p. 703; CVI, Usuardus, Martyrology, p. 707; CXV, 2, The Martyrology of the Church of Antissiodorensis, p. 755; CXX, The Roman Martyrology, p. 775.

⁶⁹ "vetustissimum ms. Martyrologium S. Hieronimi" - *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarius...*, tomus I, p. 135.

⁷⁰ *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, 5, p. 83; p. 135.

With regard to these martyrs mentioned by *the Martyrologium Hieronymianum* as jointly suffering with the three brothers, the editor of the text expresses doubt about their passion at Tomis, stating about them that, "ut plurima alia in eo Martyrologio, obscura sunt ; fortassis etiam transposita, ut legendum sit"⁷¹. Supposing that the names of these martyrs appear in the text rather as a result of a later addition, and that the text is therefore altered, the editor rightly asks, "deinde an *Christiani* coniungendum est *pueri*? an nomen Sancti est?"⁷²

There is therefore the possibility, noted by the editor of this oldest version of the text, that "pueri christiani" does not refer to Marcellinus, but to another martyr, whose name is not specified, but who in other variants is called "filii episcopi", and who was recruited into the army of Licinius and refused to serve.

And yet, beyond the remarks of the editor of the text of the martyrology of St. Jerome in the *Acta sanctorum*, one can observe a similarity between two of the names of the last four martyrs mentioned, Diogini and Primaie, with the names of two of the martyrs commemorated the next day, on January 3, Primus and Theogenis. Given the similarities between these names, we can suspect the existence of one of the countless situations in which the corrupt names of some martyrs appear on the day before or after the day in which they are celebrated, transcribed by mistake or inadvertently by copyists.

Of the two names, that of Theogenis is striking, for whom the martyrologies and minations offer a great deal of information that, although contradictory, are not totally irrelevant, and even a "passio".

According to such martyrologies, St. Mc. Theogenis was the son of a bishop of Tomis and was enlisted in the imperial army among the recruits, being thrown into the sea and drowned because he refused to serve in the army of Licinius, together with another martyr, Peter⁷³.

According to the Minaions, St. Mc. Theogenis was bishop of Parium in the Hellespont, being tried and sentenced to death by the tribune Zelicinthus (with the variants Telicentius and Licentius) for persistence in confessing the Christian faith. After being kept in prison for forty days, during which time the angels sang hymns of glory to God with him, Theogenis was finally thrown into the sea and drowned. His body, washed ashore by the waves, was lifted by four Christians, Eutychus, Eustachius, Zoticus and Germanus, and laid to rest⁷⁴.

In the *Acta* of St. Mc. Theogenis there is information that differs in part from that of the martyrologies and minations. According to this document, Theogenis was the son of a bishop, was enrolled among the recruits in Phrygia and from there was transferred to the Hellespont, in the city of Cyzicus, where the legion Secunda Traiana was stationed, being tried and condemned for his refusal to serve in the army of Licinius by the tribune Zelicinthus and the officer Possidonius. Suffering a martyr's death by drowning, his body was washed ashore by the waves, being picked up by Eutychus, Eustachius and Zoticus, together with several brothers, and deposited in the household of Adamantius for honor⁷⁵.

⁷¹ *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, p. 135 - "are obscure, like many others in this martyrology; maybe even transferred, so that they can be read".

⁷² *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, p. 135 - "then is a Christian linked to a young man? Is the name of the Saint?"

⁷³ *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, 2, p. 133.

⁷⁴ *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, 6, 8, p. 134.

⁷⁵ *** *Acta S.Theogenis Martyris*, in: *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii...*, tomus I, pp. 134-135.

Although the information presented by the *Acta* gives the facts related an air of historicity and authenticity, the very great similarities with the passion of St. Theodore Tiron (February 17) led David Woods to the conclusion that the latter was the model after which the one attributed to St. Theogenis was copied⁷⁶. Woods also believes that the author of the passion of St. Mc. Theogenis placed his martyrdom on January 3 and during the time of Licinius being influenced by the cult of St. Mc. Gordius, honored on the same date⁷⁷.

However, even if the evaluation of the information reported shows that "there can be no doubt that the passion of Saint Theogenis is a fiction",⁷⁸ it does not follow that "Theogenis is a fictitious martyr", as Woods believes⁷⁹.

In this context, perhaps it would not be wrong to pay more attention to the martyrologies that place the passion of St. Mc. Theogenis in Tomis, being able to suppose that he could be the son of the bishop of Tomis or perhaps even the bishop of Tomis martyred by Licinius.

V. Pârvan is of the opinion that in the almost complete line of bishops of Tomis there is "a void" between the bishop of the time of Licinius and the bishop Betranion in the time of Valens⁸⁰, emphasizing, however, that this lack of names of the bishops does not necessarily mean that the see was not occupied, but only that there is no news about those bishops, a situation also encountered in the case of other episcopal sees⁸¹.

So, if the bishop of Tomis attested by the fragment of tombstone discovered at Tomis suffered a martyr's death under Licinius, sometime between the years 319-324, does it mean that at the time of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea the episcopal see of Scythia Minor was vacant? Rather not! First, between the date of the defeat of Licinius, in September 324, at Chrysopolis, and that of the beginning of the First Ecumenical Council, in May 325, nine months passed, enough time for another bishop to ascend to the episcopal see of Tomis.

Secondly, the interpretation of the information of Gelasius of Cyzicus about the two Scythians, as we have shown above, pleads for the existence of a bishop in the episcopal see of Tomis during the period of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

Last but not least, it should not be neglected that in Scythia Minor the Nicene faith was received and respected without syncope, given that in other Danube provinces, some bishops, whose predecessors had subscribed to the condemnation of the Arian heresy at Nicaea, embraced Arianism, like Domninus of Marcianopolis⁸², the successor of Bishop Pistos, who had signed the acts of the First Ecumenical Council⁸³. Regarding the reception and faithful preservation of the Nicene faith by the Christians of Scythia Minor, we have a testimony from the ecclesiastical historian Sozomen. In a preamble to the episode in which

⁷⁶ David WOODS, "The Origin of the cult of St. Theagenes of Parium", in: *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 44 (1999), p. 388.

⁷⁷ D. WOODS, "The Origin of the cult...", p. 411

⁷⁸ D. WOODS, "The Origin of the cult...", p. 417

⁷⁹ D. WOODS, "The Origin of the cult...", p. 412

⁸⁰ Vasile PÂRVAN, *Contribuții epigrafice la istoria creștinismului daco-roman*, Ed. Libra, București, 2000, p. 89.

⁸¹ V. PÂRVAN, *Contribuții epigrafice...*, p.69-70

⁸² PHILOSTORGIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, IX, 8, PG 65:575A; PHILOSTORGIUS, *Church History*, IX, 8, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Philip R. Amidon, coll. *Writings from the Greco-Roman world*, vol. 23, 2007, p. 127; J. ZEILLER, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes...*, pp. 164, 419, 453.

⁸³ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I 205, II 205, III 204, V 200, VIII 206, IX 209, XI 199.

he recounts the firm attitude of Bishop Betarion (368-369) of Tomis, the first documented Tomitan bishop after 325, to oppose the attempt of Emperor Valens to impose Arianism by force in Tomis, Sozomes noted that "in all the churches that were governed by brave men, the people did not deviate from their former opinions. It is said that this was the cause of the firmness with which the Scythians adhered to their (Nicene) faith."⁸⁴

This fidelity of the Christians of Scythia Minor to the Nicene profession of faith and their resistance to the offensive of Arianism can be explained precisely by the fact that they received the Nicene faith directly from one of the participants in the council, the bishop of Tomis. Therefore, these events indirectly plead for the presence of the bishop of Tomis at the council.

4. MARCOS TOMEON/COMEENSIS, BISHOP OF TOMIS AT THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL?

Another piece of information that has aroused the interest of researchers, while creating other controversies in relation to the presence of the Tomitan bishop at the Nicaean council, is provided by the lists of the names of the bishops participating in this council.

Although the number of sources that transmit these lists is quite important considering their age, however, due to the negligence of the copyists, they present many gaps, corruption of the text, confusion, and, last but not least, late interpolations. All these inconveniences have made some news items confusing and therefore difficult to elucidate or not receive an irrefutable explanation even now. This is also the case of a bishop Marcos, who in some documents appears signing Marcos Tomeon⁸⁵, Marcostomes⁸⁶, in others by Qoumeon⁸⁷, by Komeon itoi Kavaris⁸⁸ or Comeonsis/Comeensis⁸⁹. The confusion is created not only by the name of the ward he represented, but also by the province in which this ward is located in the lists in question. Some sources locate this bishopric in the province of Dacia⁹⁰, others in the province of Europe⁹¹, so that in others this bishopric and its holder are completely absent⁹².

⁸⁴ SOZOMENUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI, 21, PG 67:1343C; SOZOMENUS, *The Ecclesiastical History, comprising a History of the Church, from A.D. 323- 425*, VI, 21, translated from greek, revised by Chester Hartranft, in: Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds), coll. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, volume 2, *Socrates, Sozomenus: Church Histories*, Hendrikson Publishers, 1995, pp. 358-359; SOZOMEN, *Istoria Bisericească*, VI, 21, in: *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae*, II, Haralambie Mihăescu, Gheorghe Ștefan, Radu Hîncu et alii (eds), Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1970, pp. 224-225.

⁸⁵ E. HONIGMANN, "La liste originale...", p. 48.

⁸⁶ C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris...*, Appendix II, p. 98; E. HONIGMANN, "The original list ...", p. 39; A. A. BOLSHAKOV-GHIMPU, "The Bishop of Tomis...", p. 443.

⁸⁷ MICHEL LE SYRIEN, *Chronicle*, trans. Chabot, vol. I, l. VII, c. II, Paris, 1899, p. 252.

⁸⁸ E. HONIGMANN, "Sur les listes des évêques participant aux conciles de Nicae, de Constantinople et de Chalcédoine", VII, no. 29, in: *Byzantion*, t. XII (1937), p. 336.

⁸⁹ MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum...*, 2, 696, 701; *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, II 202, III 202, pp. 50-51; C.H.TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris...*, III 205b, IV 205b, pp. 82-83.

⁹⁰ MICHEL LE SYRIEN, *Chronicle*, p. 252; E. HONIGMANN, "Sur les listes des évêques...", VII, no. 29, p. 336; Is. HOHIGMANN, "La liste originale...", p. 48; *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, VI, 2, p. 173, 5a, b, p. 175.

⁹¹ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, II, III, pp. 50-51 ; C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris...*, III 205b, IV 205b, pp. 82-83; *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, VI, 4, p. 173.

⁹² *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I, IV, pp. 50-51; C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris...*, I, II, V, pp. 82-83; *Sources Historiae Daco-Romanae Christianitatis...*, VI, 1, p.171, 3, p. 173, 6, p. 173, 7, p. 177.

Based on the toponym Tomeon, some researchers⁹³ identified the bishopric that Bishop Marcos represented at the synod with that of Tomis, considering that the toponyms Komeon/Comeensis are the corrupt ones of Tomeon/Tomeensis caused by the negligence of some copyists. According to Ch. Auner, the confusion would have been caused by the wrong reading and transcription of the letter τ (hand tav) with C instead of T, so Tomeensis became Comeensis⁹⁴. J. Zeiller independently confirms Auner's statement and reinforces it with a similar example, found in *The Passion of the Holy Martyr Susanna*, where the location of the deportation of her companions appears as the locality Chomos/Comos instead of Tomos, Tomis' accusative⁹⁵. In his turn, E. Honigmann⁹⁶ would identify a similar case of corruption of the name of the metropolis Tomis by replacing T with C, in *Miscellaneous History* by Landulfus Sagax⁹⁷. In the writing of this Lombard historian of the sixteenth century, who took over the text of the writing *Ecclesiastical History* by Anastasius the Librarian⁹⁸, the name of Tomis appears corrupt in the form *They ate urbem*, although in all other sources, Greek or Latin, the form appears correctly *Tomeam*. In fact, in two works of ecclesiastical geography, *Sacred Geographia*⁹⁹ and *Lexicon Geographicum*¹⁰⁰, there is no locality with the name Comea. On the other hand, in a map of church geography, Comea is inscribed in the province of Moesia Inferior, but this alleged bishopric was not located, unlike the others, whose geographical location is indicated¹⁰¹.

In the first instance, on the basis of the Latin lists grouped into class II and class III, Honigman had stated that the correct lesson of the toponym in question was Tomea, not Komea/Comea, but he located the settlement in question in the province of Dacia Mediterranea¹⁰², in support of his statement by citing some passages from the writings of Theophylact Simocata¹⁰³ and Theophan the Confessor¹⁰⁴. In fact, the identification of this

⁹³ Ch. AUNER, "Dobrogea", in: *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, t. IV/I, col. 1241, n.1; E. POPESCU, "Dobrogea și teritoriile românești nord-dunărene în secolele IV-VI", p. 195; E. POPESCU, "Hierarhia ecclesiastică pe teritoriul României...", pp. 62-63; E. POPESCU, "Theophilus Gothiae, bishop in Crimea or at the Lower Danube?", p. 578; L. TROFIN, *Romanity and Christianity...*, p. 170; L. TROFIN, *The History of Christianity North of the Lower Danube...*, p. 150; Fr. A. GABOR, *The Church and the State...*, p. 214; Fr. M. PĂCURARIU, *Daco-Roman Saints...*, p. 49.

⁹⁴ Ch. AUNER, "Dobrogea", in: *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, t. IV/I, col. 1241, n.1.

⁹⁵ J. ZEILLER, "Sur un point de géographie ecclésiastique ancienne...", p. 105.

⁹⁶ E. HOHIGMANN, "La liste originale...", p. 40.

⁹⁷ Landulfus SAGAX, *Historia Miscella*, XIX, 37, Franciscus Eyssenhart recensuit, 1869, p. 411.

⁹⁸ ANASTASIUS BIBLIOTHECARIUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica ex Theophanes*, PG 108:1287A.

⁹⁹ CAROLO in Sancto Paulo slaughters Fuliensi, *Geographia Sacra...*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Antonius BAUDRAND, *Novum Lexicon Geographicum*, I, Venetiis, 1738, p. 172.

¹⁰¹ M. TAVERNIER, *Antiquorum illyrici orientalis episcopatumum geographica descriptio*, 1640, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5973252x/f1.item.zoom>.

¹⁰² E. HOHIGMANN, "La liste originale...", pp. 39-40.

¹⁰³ THEOPHYLACTUS SIMOCATTA, *History*, VII, 13; VIII, 3, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Bonnae, 1834, pp. 293, 319; *The History of Theophylact Simocatta*, II, 10, 12; VII, 13, 1; VIII, 3, 15, An English Translation with Introduction and Notes by Michael and Mary Whitby, Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 57, 196, 213; THEOPHYLACT SIMOCATA, *Byzantine History*, II, 10, 12; VII, 13, 1; VIII, 3, 15, translation, introduction and index by H. Mihăescu, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1985, pp. 48; 147; 160 – in the Romanian translation Tomis appears in all three places, although only in the case of II, 10, 12 and VII, 13, 1 can it be called Tomis, in no case in VIII, 3, 17, where it can only be called Tomea.

¹⁰⁴ S. THEOPHANES ABBAS AND CONFESSOR, *Chronographia*, PG 108:555A, 590B; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, Translated with Introduction and Commentary by Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, pp. 380, 403; TEOFAN THE CONFESSOR, *Chronography*, translation, introduction and notes by Mihai Țipău, Basilica, Bucharest, 2012, pp. 263, 280. In both cases invoked by Honigmann, however, it is Tomis.

alleged Tomea bishopric aroused quite a lot of interest, but the answers were not clear and convincing.

Thus, in a study on the very issue of the toponyms Tomis and Tomea, Gh. Ștefan¹⁰⁵ confirmed, based on the information from *the Byzantine History* of Theophylact Simocata to which Honigmann also referred¹⁰⁶, the existence of a locality with the name Tomea (Τόμες), located in the region of the Remessiana fortress¹⁰⁷ in Mediterranean Dacia.

In writing *Of aedificiis*, Procopius of Caesarea makes the distinction between Τόμες (Thomas), from the land of Remesiana¹⁰⁸, and Τόμις (Tomis), which it locates in the province of Moesia¹⁰⁹. In addition, the writing of Procopius of Caesarea shows that Thomas was a garrison (φρούρια/castellum), or at most a simple civilian settlement formed around a military camp¹¹⁰, therefore the question of the existence of an episcopal residence in such an insignificant settlement must be regarded with great reservation, knowing that the diocese corresponded to a *Civitas*, an administrative unit of the Roman provinces that included the city-fortress, in which the bishop's residence was located, and the surrounding region, and that "there were rare cases when another bishop appeared in a more important fair in the territory"¹¹¹. However, in *Index nominum* at the 1964 edition of *Of aedificiis* of Procopius of Caesarea, next to Tomis appears the indication "chaste."¹¹² - *castellum*, as in the case of Tomea, indicating the quality of garrison (φρούρια), but this could only be an error of the editor.

Hierocles, who between 527-528 composed a *Travel Guide*, confirms the existence of five cities in the province of Dacia Mediterranea, Sardica, Pautalia, Germany, Naissus and Remessiana¹¹³. Even if the author aimed at the civil geographical division of the empire and not the ecclesiastical one, in view of the above, only in the five cities could there be an episcopal residence, not in a garrison (φρούρια) as Tomea seems to have been.

The confusion created between the two localities, Tomis and Tomea, made it *Lexicon Geographicum* Baudrand to identify Tomiswar as both *Tomi, urbs Mysiae Inferioris* and, in the continuation of the column, as *Tomea, oppidum*¹¹⁴, but without locating it.

In fact, it would seem that the entire dispute created around this bishopric of Comea/Tomea is a false one, in reality its existence cannot be confirmed either in Moesia inferior, or in Dacia Mediterranea, despite the statements of J. Bingham¹¹⁵, J. Coletto¹¹⁶ and J. E. T. Wiltsch¹¹⁷, which support its existence without being able to prove it. Moreover, as

¹⁰⁵ Gh. ȘTEFAN, "Tomis et Toméa, à propos des luttes entre byzantines et avars à la fin du VI siècle de notre ère", in: *Dacia*, t. XI, Bucharest, 1967, pp. 253-258.

¹⁰⁶ see note 103.

¹⁰⁷ Today, the town of Bela Palanka in Serbia.

¹⁰⁸ PROCOPIUS, *De aedificiis*, IV, 4, in: *Opera Omnia*, IV, editio stereotypa correctior, addenda et corrigenda adiecit Gerhard Wirth, ed. I. Haury, Lipsiae, 1964, p. 123, r. 22.

¹⁰⁹ PROCOPIUS, *De aedificiis*, IV, 11, p. 149, r. 17.

¹¹⁰ A. SUCEVEANU, "Contributions à la connaissance du village de la Dobroudja à l'époque romaine", in: *Opuscula...*, 11, p.211

¹¹¹ A. A. BOLSHAKOV-GHIMPU, "The Bishop of Tomis...", pp. 438-439.

¹¹² Gerhard WIRTH, "Index nominum", in: PROCOPIUS, *De aedificiis*, p. 318.

¹¹³ HIEROCLES, *Travel Guide*, in: *Fontes Historiae Dacoromanae*, II, p. 353.

¹¹⁴ Michael Antonius BAUDRAND, *Lexicon Geographicum*, II, Parisiis, 1670, p. 471.

¹¹⁵ Joseph BINGHAM, *Origines Ecclesiasticae or the Antiquities of the Christian Church and Other Works*, III, London, 1843, p. 118.

¹¹⁶ Jacobo COLETO, *Illyrici sacri*, t. VIII, *Ecclesia Scopiensis, Sardicensis, Marcianopolitana, Achridensis et Ternobensis earum suffraganeis*, Venetiis, 1819, p.112.

¹¹⁷ Johann Elieser Theodor WILTSCH, *Handbuch der Kirchlichen Geographie und Statistik von den Zeiten der Apostel bis zu dem Anfange des sehszehnten Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1846, p.175, mentions between the

Gh. Ștefan is keen to point out, Tomea, as a settlement, has not been identified from an archaeological point of view¹¹⁸.

A few years later after the publication of the work in which he located Tomea in Mediterranean Dacia, returning to this question, Honigmann changed his position, stating that in the list of the names of the bishops participating in the First Ecumenical Council reconstructed by him in the study published in 1939, between the names of Protogenes of Sardica (no. 187) and Marcos Tomeon/Tomis (no. 188), the name of the province of Scythia Minor, which this Marcus represented, must be inserted¹¹⁹. However, he identified Marcos de Tomis as the "Scythian" mentioned by Eusebius¹²⁰, a hypothesis which, as we have shown above, cannot be substantiated.

The hypothesis supported by Honimann is also shared by Ian Mladjov, who, in the list of signatories of the decisions of the synod that he recently presented, lists Marcos of Tomis at no. 129, in the province of Dacia, leaving however in question his location in Scythia Minor¹²¹.

Returning to Zeiller, it should be noted that initially he had also supported a radically different hypothesis, stating that the presence of the name of Marcus Comeensis in some Latin manuscripts is caused by an error of some copyists, an error caused by the presence at the end of the lists of bishops Marcus Calabriensis¹²² and Marcus Euboensis¹²³. According to him, in the family of Latin manuscripts grouped by H. Gelzer under the number II Marcus Comeensis "precedes by a single line Marcus Calabriensis, whose proximity certainly contributed to the error".¹²⁴ This hypothesis is also found in H. Gelzer, who was of the opinion that Marcus Comeensis, who appears only in the Latin manuscripts that he grouped in the second and third grades, "ex Marco Calabro repetitus esse videtur",¹²⁵ and in the Index of the Sees of the Episcopians participating in the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, explained the toponym Comeonsis/Comeensis as nomen *corruptum*¹²⁶.

The same J. Zeiller, on the grounds that "in the family of Latin manuscripts which Gelzer has grouped in his edition in the third grade, Marcus Comeensis, inscribed in the province of Europe, precedes by two lines Marcus Euboensis, inscribed, by a very visible error, in that of Moesia", ¹²⁷also offers a second possible explanation for the appearance of this bishop in the lists, stating that "the alleged Marcus Comeensis is a deformed doublet of Marcus Euboensis".¹²⁸ This opinion seems to be supported by some sources in which, after the name of Bishop Marcus de Tomea/Comea, the name of the bishopric of Euboea appears,

bishoprics of the province of Moesia Inferior and the bishopric of Comea, as a suffragan of the metropolis of Marcianopolis, taking care to specify however that, in the source he used, next to the bishopric of Comea there is a marginal note referring to "Euboea".

¹¹⁸ Gh. ȘTEFAN, "Tomis et Toméa...", p. 257.

¹¹⁹ E. HONIGMANN, "The Original List of the Fathers of Nicaea", p. 22.

¹²⁰ E. HONIGMANN, "The Original List of the Fathers of Nicaea", p. 24.

¹²¹ Ian MLADJOV, "Appendix I, The Signatories", in: *The Cambridge Companion to The Council of Nicaea*, Young Richard Kim (ed), Cambridge University Press, 2021, p. 374.

¹²² *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I 204, II 204, III 212, IV 189, V 199, XI 198, VIII 205, IX 208.

¹²³ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, I 210, II 210, III 205, XI 203, VIII 212, IX 214, V 205.

¹²⁴ J. ZEILLER, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes...*, note 10, p. 168.

¹²⁵ H. GELZER, "Ordo patrum Nicaenorum restitutus", in: *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, p. LIX.

¹²⁶ *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, p. 237.

¹²⁷ J. ZEILLER, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes...*, note 10, p. 168.

¹²⁸ J. ZEILLER, *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes...*, p. 168.

sometimes as an apposition¹²⁹, sometimes as a marginal note¹³⁰. However, according to Honigmann, the presence of this Marcos of Euboea would represent an interpolation, which is why the Λ V list, to which he gave a higher value, considering that it derives directly from one of the original lists of signatures¹³¹, is missing¹³².

As for J. Zeiller's first hypothesis, it would seem to be confirmed by the expression 'Komeon itoi Kavaris'¹³³, which can be translated either "Komeon or Kavaris" or "Komeon i.e. Kavaris". If "itoi" (ἴτοι) is translated by the conjunction "or", this indicates the copyist's indecision, probably caused by the ambiguity of the sources used, in indicating whose locality this Marcos was actually bishop. Being an adversative conjunction, this "or" (itoi) necessarily excludes one of the variants. From this perspective, given the fact that there is no single argument that pleads for the existence of any bishopric of Komeon/Tomea, the correct version would be Kavaris and, according to E. Honigman, Ka[at]varis is a mistranscription of the name of the Calabria episode¹³⁴, which he identified with the locality of Kalivri/Gelivri, located 12 km from Selimvria¹³⁵. If, on the other hand, 'itoi' (ἴτοι) is translated by the adverb "that is", then, having an explanatory role, this adverb puts the sign of identity between Komeon/Tomeon and Ka[at]miscellaneous /Calabria. Following this hypothesis, then it would mean that Tomis, whose corrupt would be Komeon/Tomeon, was confused for some reason with Calabria and that, as Fr. I. Holubeanu also states¹³⁶, rather Marcos Calabriensis/Calabriae appeared in the lists due to a scribal error, as a duplication of Marcus Comeonsis/Comeensis, not the other way around.

The answer to this question could be deciphered from the synoptic presentation of the Latin editorial lists that Turner makes in five classes (see table):¹³⁷

	I	II	III	III	V
203 205b?	Europis Pederus eraclias	Europae Praederus heraclae	Europae Foederus heracliae Marcus comeonsis	Europe Pedorus heracliae Marcus comeensis	Europe Pederus
204	Dacia Protogenes sardicensis	Daciae Protogenes sardicensis	Daciae Protogenes sardicensis	Daciae Protogenis sardicensis	Daciae Protogenis syrdica
205	-	Calabriae			- Marcus

¹²⁹ Petrus CRABBE, *Concilia omnia, tam generalia, quam particularia*, t. I, Coloniae, 1538, p. 205 – Marcus Comeensis alias Euboea; Eusebio AMORT, *Elementa juris canonici veteris et moderni*, t. II, chap. V, col. binio, Ulm, 1757, p. 263, – Marcus Comeensis al. Euboea.

¹³⁰ *Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta*, t.II, ab anno CCCXXV ad annum CCCCI, studio Philip LABBEI et Gabr. COSSARTI, curator Nicolao COLETI, Venetiis, 1728, col. 59.

¹³¹ E. HONIGMANN, "La liste originale...", pp. 44-45; E. HONIGMANN, "The Original List of the Fathers of Nicaea", in: *Byzantion*, XVI/1, 1942-1943, p. 22.

¹³² E. HONIGMANN, "La liste originale...", p. 41.

¹³³ E. HONIGMANN, "On the Lists of Bishops Participating in the Councils of Nicaea...", p. 336.

¹³⁴ E. HONIGMANN, "On the lists of bishops participating in the councils of Nicaea...", p. 337.

¹³⁵ E. HONIGMANN, "On the lists of bishops participating in the councils of Nicaea...", p.339; today the town of Silivri in Turkey, on the shore of the Sea of Marmara, 60 km from Istanbul.

¹³⁶ Fr. I. HOLUBEANU, "The Canonical Dependence of Tomis in the Fourth Century", p. 631.

¹³⁷ C. H. TURNER, *Ecclesiae occidentalis monumenta iuris antiquissima*, fasc. I, pars I, pp. 82-88.

205c	Marcus metropolitanus	-	Calabriae Marcus calabriensis	-	-
	-	-	-	Calabriae Marcus Calabriae	

We observe, in the lists of classes III and IIII¹³⁸, in the province of Europe, after Pederos of Heraclea, the signature of a Marcus Comeonsis/Comeensis, a toponym that, as we have seen, some researchers consider a corruption of the name of the fortress of Tomis in Scythia Minor. In the other variants, however, grouped in classes I, II and V, Marcus Comeensis no longer appears in the province of Europe. On the other hand, we notice that, after the province of Dacia, for which only Protogenes Sardicensis signs, with the Syrdica lesson in the lists of class V, follows the diocese of Calabria, for which Marcus Calabriensis signs. The name of the diocese appears only in the lists of classes II, III and IIII, in the lists of class III being inscribed much towards the end, after the province of Thessaly, and the name of Bishop Marcus appears in the lists of classes I, as Marcus the metropolitan, without indication of the diocese, is missing in those of class II, appears in those of classes III and IIII with the indication of the name of the diocese of Calabria, similar to the way it appears in Gelzer's presentation, and finally in the lists of class V it appears without indication of the diocese. It is obvious that this Marcus in the lists of class V in Turner's presentation, which appears without indicating the diocese, although the diocese of Calabria should have been indicated, as appears from the synoptic table, appears in the lists of class IV in Gelzer's presentation to the province of Dacia, his name being erroneously copied to the province of Dacia and attached to the metropolis Syrdica, where Protogenes was shepherding. This error in the inscription of this Marcus in the province of Dacia instead of Calabria explains, most likely, that Marcus of Calabria appears after Protogenes of Sardica and in the Greek, Syriac nitriensis and Syriac Ebediensu.

From Turner's presentation it emerges, without any doubt, that in the source lists from which those of Latin edition were copied, after the diocese of Dacia was inscribed the diocese of Calabria, omitted in the lists of classes I and V, but nevertheless implied, whose bishop was Marcus, who appears in four of the five classes of lists, with or without

¹³⁸ For comparison, the table in *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina...*, pp. 50-51, here the lists being classified only into four classes:

I	II	III	IV
XXX Europe Pederos	XXX Europe Pederos Heraclea Marcus Comeonsis	XXX Europe Pedorus Marcus Comeensis	XXX Europe Pederos
XXXI Dacia Protogenes	XXXI Dacia -	XXXI Dacia -	XXXI Dacia Protogenes Marcus
XXXII - Marcus metrop	XXXII Calabriae Marcus Calabriensis	XXXII Misiae Marcus Euboensis	Syrdica -
		XXXVI Calabriae Marcus Calabriae	

indicating the diocese he pastored, but also implied in those of class II, in which the name of the diocese appears, not Marcus's.

It follows from the foregoing that the hypothesis that Marcus Calabriensis appeared in the lists due to an error of copyists, as a doublet of Marcus Comeensis, is not true. However, even if we suppose that the name of Bishop Marcus of the province of Europa could have been reduplicated due to an error of copyists two headings below in the lists, it is difficult to explain how Tomeensis metamorphosed into Calabriensis, because there are neither phonetic nor morphological similarities between the two proper names to explain this phenomenon. Nor can the intermediaries Tomea/Comea be invoked as elements of transition from Tomeensis to Calabriensis.

In view of the above, it follows, as a consequence, that the inscription of the diocese of Calabria and Marcus Calabriensis in the lists of participants in the synod was not the result of an error of the copyists, but reflected reality. In turn, Marcus Comeensis, as many researchers have argued, is actually Marcus Tomeensis, the episcopo of Tomis, the metropolis of Scythia Minor.

As for the inscription of Marcus of Tomis in the province of Europa, not in that of Scythia Minor, and the absence of the latter from all the lists, Fr. I. Holubeanu, analyzing the available information and the interpretations given to it by Honigman and Schwartz¹³⁹, concluded that Marcus of Tomis was a suffragan of Metropolitan Heraclea of Thrace, Scythia Minor being at that time only a civil province, not an ecclesiastical one. This would explain the absence of the province of Scythia Minor from all the lists of participants in the synod and the signature of the representative of Scythia Minor, Matcus of Tomis, in the province of Europe, after Metropolitan Heraclea¹⁴⁰.

CONCLUSIONS

Following the presentation and analysis of the sources known so far, some conclusions are necessary regarding the question of whether or not the bishop of Tomis participated in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in the year 325.

First of all, we can affirm that the "Scythian" bishop mentioned by Eusebius of Caesarea was not the bishop of Scythia Minor but, most likely, as we have shown above, Cadmos of Bospor. Also, beyond any doubt, Bishop Theophilus of Gothia, whom some have identified with the Eusebian "Scythian", was bishop of north-Danube Gothia.

Secondly, the alleged bishop Marcus Comeensis was in reality the eprp of Tomis in Scythia Minor, with the name Marcus Tomeensis/Marcos Tomes, and not of the alleged bishopric of Comea, in Mediterranean Dacia, a locality that was only a *castellum* and could not, therefore, be the seat of a bishopric.

Therefore, if in the initial form of this study we stated that the presence of the Tomitan bishop at the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, in the year 325, cannot be sustained, now, following the reanalysis of the available sources and the interpretations that researchers have given to the information provided by these sources, I think it can be said without fear of being wrong that Scythia Minor was represented at the Nicaean Council by Bishop Marcus Tomeensis/Marcos Tomes, suffragan of Metropolitan Pederos of Heraclea.

¹³⁹ Ed. SCHWARTZ, "Über die Bischofslisten der Synoden von Chalcedon, Nicaea und Konstantinopel", in: *Abhandlungen der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München*, Philos. Hist. Abt., Neue Folge, Heft XIII, München, 1937, pp. 70, 76.

¹⁴⁰ Fr. I. HOLUBEANU, "The Canonical Dependence of Tomis in the Fourth Century", pp. 632-633.

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