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Emperor Theodosius II: a Model of a Christian Ruler in the Light of Ecclesiastical Historiography of the 5th Century

STRESZCZENIE

Cesarz Teodozjusz II – wzór chrześcijańskiego władcy w ujęciu historiografii kościelnej V wieku

Sokrates z Konstantynopola, Teodoret z Cyru, Sozomen Bethlei wykreowali w swoich *Historiach kościelnych* różniący się w szczegółach, ale bardzo pozytywny obraz cesarza Teodozjusza II. Pierwszy z nich kładł nacisk na jego łagodność, drugi na jego wiarę, a trzeci na jego pobożność. Każdemu przyświecały jednak różne oczekiwania związane z władzą. Liczyli najprawdopodobniej na zdobycie za pomocą swych dzieł jego poparcia dla siebie samych i popieranym przez siebie ugrupowań w łonie Kościoła. Jak się wydaje, nieprzypadkowo wszyscy trzej skupili się na pierwszym okresie panowania Teodozjusza II, gdyż ostatnia dekada sprawowania przez niego władzy obfitowała w szereg nieszczęść, jakie spadły na wschodnią część cesarstwa rzymskiego, których uwzględnienie zaprzeczałoby tezie o wspieraniu wspomnianego władcy przez Boga za jego przynioty, dzięki którym Bóg miał zapewniać mu zwycięstwa militarne nad wrogami wewnętrznymi i zewnętrznymi. Wszyscy trzej pisali jednak swoje dzieła w latach czterdziestych V w., a więc wtedy, kiedy wspomniane nieszczęścia spadały na cesarstwo. Fakty te były więc wówczas powszechnie znane. Najprawdopodobniej zatem przekaz historyków skierowany był do samego cesarza. Wszyscy trzej chcieli pokazać, że w jego postępowaniu, w ich odczuciu, nastąpiła niekorzystna zmiana, której konsekwencją był gniew Boga i klęski, jakie spadły na państwo.

Słowa kluczowe: Sokrates z Konstantynopola, Teodoret z Cyru, Sozomen z Bethlei, cesarz Teodozjusz II



ABSTRACT

IN their *Ecclesiastical Histories*, Socrates of Constantinople, Theodoret of Cyrus and Sozomen of Bethelia created a picture of emperor Theodosius II that differed in detail but overall was very positive. The first of them emphasised his meekness, the second one stressed his faith, and the third one focused on his piety. However, each of them had different expectations towards the ruler. They most likely hoped to gain – through their works – his support for themselves and the groups they supported within the Church. It seems to be no coincidence that all three of them focused on the first period of the reign of Theodosius II, as the last decade of his reign was fraught with a series of misfortunes that befell the eastern part of the Roman Empire, the inclusion of which would contradict the thesis that the above-mentioned ruler was supported by God for his qualities, thanks to which God was supposed to grant him military victories over both internal and external enemies. However, all three wrote their works in the 440s, when the aforementioned calamities befell the empire. These facts were therefore widely known at that time. Most likely, the historians' message was addressed to the emperor himself. All three wanted to show that, in their opinion, there had been an unfavorable change in his behavior, the consequence of which was God's anger and the disasters that befell the state.

Keywords: Socrates of Constantinople, Theodoret of Cyrus, Sozomen of Bethelia, emperor Theodosius II

Three fifth-century church historians, namely Socrates of Constantinople, Sozomen of Bethelia and Theodoret of Cyrus, who were continuators of Eusebius of Caesarea, created their works during the reign of emperor Theodosius II, who ruled the eastern part of the Roman empire for several decades from 408¹ to 450. It was a time full of manifold tensions for not only the state, but also for the Church. They were caused, on the one hand, by external wars with Persia² and the Huns³, which led

¹ He was eight years old at the time, see Socrates, HE, VI, 22, p. 491; VII, 1, p. 497.

² See F. Millar, *A Greek Empire. Power and Belief under Theodosius II*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2006, pp. 66–76; B. Dignas, E. Winter, *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity. Neighbors and Rivals*, Cambridge 2007, pp. 34–36.

³ The threat to the empire's eastern part from the Huns was particularly acute in the 440s; see K. Dąbrowski, *Hunowie europejscy*, [in:] idem, T. Nagrodzka-Majchrzyk, E. Tryjarski, *Hunowie europejscy, Protobugarzy, Chazarowie, Pieczyngowie*, Wrocław 1975, p. 50; L.A. Tyszkiewicz, *Hunowie w Europie. Ich wpływ na Cesarstwo Wschodnie i Zachodnie oraz na ludy barbarzyńskie*, Wrocław 2004, pp. 119–128; F. Millar, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–83; D. Brodka, *Attila und Aetius. Zur Priskos-Tradition bei Prokopios von Kaisareia*, [in:] *From Antiquity to Modern Times. Classical Poetry and Its Modern Reception. Essays in Honour of S. Stabryła*, ed. J. Styka, Kraków 2007, pp. 149–158; M. Rouché, *Attila i Hunowie. Ekspansja*

to serious internal perturbations, and, on the other, the spread of heterodoxy⁴ and religious conflicts that forced the emperor to convene two general councils in Ephesus in 431⁵ and 449⁶, with the latter assembly losing its council status shortly, but already after the death of Theodosius II. The emperor thus faced many challenges, failing to rise to some of them, which makes the evaluation of his deeds in the *Ecclesiastical Histories*, which depict him as a model Christian ruler, all the more astonishing. This raises some questions: firstly, about the way the various authors portrayed the emperor and any similarities and differences in their view of the ruler, and secondly about the reasons why they promoted a particular image of the emperor, especially when it deviated from the truth. The article attempts to answer these questions.

Socrates of Constantinople appears to have been the first one to write his work, most likely between 439–446⁷. Researchers are not unanimous about the other two historians. Some argue that it was Theodoret of Cyrus who was the second to write his work between 444 and 450⁸, and Sozomen wrote his account last

barbarzyńskich nomadów, trans. J. Jedliński, Warszawa 2011, pp. 102–113; E.A. Thompson, *Hunowie*, trans. B. Malarecka, Warszawa 2015, pp.150–175.

⁴ R. Flower, “The insanity of heretics must be restrained”: Heresiology in the Theodosian Code, [in:] *Theodosius II. Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Kelly, Cambridge 2013, pp. 172–194.

⁵ Th. Graumann, *Theodosius II and the Politics of the First Council of Ephesus*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp.109–129.

⁶ K. Iłski, *Sobory w polityce religijnej Teodozjusza II*, Poznań 1992, *passim*.

⁷ The aforesaid issue is discussed by Peter Van Nuffelen (*Un héritage de paix et de piété. Étude sur les histoires ecclésiastiques de Socrate et Sozomène*, Leuven 2004, pp. 10–14) suggesting that the publication took place shortly after the turn of 439–440. Some scholars have advocated two editions of Socrates’ *Ecclesiastical History*, see T. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople, Historian of Church and State*, Michigan 1997, pp. 61–65; F. Winkelmann, *Die Kirchengeschichtswerke im oströmischen Reich*, “Byzantinoslavica” 1977, vol. XXXVII, p. 173. Hartmut Leppin (*Von Constantin dem Grossen zu Theodosius II. Das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret*, Göttingen 1996, pp. 274–278) suggested dating the edition of Socrates’ work to 444–446. This proposal was rejected by Martin Wallraff (*Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates. Untersuchungen zu Geschichtsdarstellung, Methode und Person*, Göttingen 1997, p. 211, annot. 14).

⁸ In the opinion of Glenn F. Chesnut (*The Date of Composition of Theodoret’s Church History*, “Vigiliae Christianae” 1981, vol. XXXV, p. 250), Theodoret’s *Ecclesiastical History* was written three or four years after Socrates had finished his work. See also B. Croke, *Dating Theodoret’s Church History and Commentary on the Psalms*, “Byzantion” 1984, vol. LIV, pp. 59–74.

between 439/440 and 450⁹, while according to others the bishop of Cyrus wrote after Sozomen¹⁰. In any case, the works of Socrates and Sozomen covered the years 324–439 whereas those of Theodoret covered the years from 324 to 428, when Theodore of Mop-suestia died.

Socrates

Socrates referred to the son of emperor Arcadius not only as the most pious emperor but also the good Theodosius (ὁ ἀγαθὸς Θεοδοσί-στος)¹¹. He described him as the now happily reigning emperor. It is extremely interesting to note the introduction made by Socrates before a kind of encomium in honor of Theodosius II¹². Indeed, the historian stressed that he wrote it not to be discovered by the emperor or to demonstrate his mastery of words¹³. He insisted that in evaluating the ruler he was guided not so much by flattery as the pursuit of truth¹⁴. Moreover, he was to be motivated only by the desire to preserve the memory of the emperor's uplifting virtues for future generations. Socrates also announced that he would show these glorious virtues of the ruler without any embellishments¹⁵.

⁹ See Ch. Roueché, *Theodosius II, the Cities, and the Date of the Church History of Sozomen*, "Journal of Theological Studies" 1986, vol. XXXVII, no. 1, pp. 130–132. In my view (S. Bralewski, *Obraz papieżstwa w historiografii kościelnej wczesnego Bizancjum*, Łódź 2006, pp. 269–278), Sozomen was writing his work after *Latrocinium Ephesianum* (449) until the death of emperor Theodosius in August 450.

¹⁰ According to Noel Lenski (*Were Valentinian, Valens and Jovian Confessors before Julian the Apostate?*, "Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum" 2002, vol. VI, p. 265), "it remains probable that Theodoret wrote after Sozomen and made use of his work". The fact that Theodoret made use of Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History* is also supported by Peter Van Nuffelen (*op. cit.*, pp. 60–61). According to Günther C. Hansen (*Theodore Kirchengeschichte*, eds. L. Parmentier, G.C. Hansen, Berlin 2009, pp. LXXIII–XCVIII), Theodoret did not use Sozomen's text but an unidentified source common to both. Peter Van Nuffelen (*Gélase de Césarée. Un compilateur du cinquième siècle*, "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" 2002, vol. XCV, pp. 621–639) argued that it was *Ecclesiastical History* by Gelasius of Caesarea since in the belief of this researcher he wrote his work after Theodoret.

¹¹ Socrates, HE, VI, 6, 40.

¹² See L. Gardiner, *The Imperial Subject: Theodosius II and Panegyric in Socrates' Church History*, [in:] *Theodosius II. Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Kelly, Cambridge 2013, pp. 244–268.

¹³ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 1.

¹⁴ Socrates, HE, VII, 42, 5.

¹⁵ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 1.

In doing so, he invoked common knowledge of the emperor's qualities as everyone had already managed to notice them¹⁶. The historian was clearly aware that his account of the then-reigning emperor would not be credible. Hence, he made some stipulations to reassure his readers of his impartiality and lack of interest in any benefit he could derive from it.

Socrates stressed that Theodosius had been born and raised in the majesty of imperial power, which, however, did not warp his character with mindless arrogance or high-handedness. He was distinguished not only by his common sense but also by physical toughness, enduring frost and heat equally well.

He was characterised by godliness and piety (εὐσέβεια)¹⁷. In an effort to follow the regulations of the Christian religion, he would fast, especially on Wednesdays and Fridays¹⁸. As Socrates noted, the emperor likened the palace to a monastery and worshipped God from the dawn of the day by singing antiphonal hymns together with his sisters¹⁹. He was also able to persuade the citizens of Constantinople gathered at the hippodrome to pray together in a raging storm. As Socrates stressed, all those gathered at the time sang hymns in unison, making supplications to God so that the entire city became one temple. In the historian's account, "and the emperor himself, laying aside his imperial robes, went into the midst of the multitude and commenced the hymns. Nor was he disappointed in his expectation, for the atmosphere suddenly resumed its wonted serenity"²⁰. Socrates also associated with this prayer of the united population the wonderful harvest following a period of grain scarcity, which was provided for all by, as he stressed, God's gracious generosity²¹. Hence Socrates saw

¹⁶ Socrates, HE, VII, 42, 5.

¹⁷ The meaning of this term is quite broad ranging from a sense of duty in secular matters to giving due reverence to God; see *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G.W.H. Lampe, Oxford 1961, s.v. εὐσέβεια, p. 575.

¹⁸ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 3. See S. Bralewski, *Praktykowanie postu w świetle historiografii kościelnej IV-V wieku*, "Vox Patrum" 2013, vol. XXXIII, pp. 359–378.

¹⁹ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 4.

²⁰ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 16–17 (359). All the quotations from Socrates' work were taken from the following translation from Greek into English: Socrates, *The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, Surnamed Scholasticus, or the Advocate: Comprising a History of the Church in Seven Books*, London–New York 1892. Page numbers from the English translation are given in brackets in the corresponding footnotes [translator's note].

²¹ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 18.

the emperor as an intermediary between God and imperial subjects²². This was not an isolated case where, at the initiative of the emperor, the entire city became one temple. In Socrates' account, after overthrowing the usurper John in the West, the races taking place in the hippodrome were brought to a halt, and the citizens of the capital who had gathered there intoned prayers of thanksgiving addressed to God "by whose hand the tyrant has been overthrown", and then went to the temple and spent the whole day there praying²³. According to the historian, "this event afforded the most devout emperor Theodosius an opportunity of giving a fresh demonstration of his piety towards God"²⁴. Socrates had no doubt that the omnipotent God had bestowed on the most pious Theodosius the support he had also given to the righteous in former times²⁵. For his part, the ruler was to offer prayers of thanksgiving to God for the blessings he had received, "reverencing Christ with the most special honours"²⁶ as Socrates puts it. The historian also viewed the sending of the emperor's wife Elia Eudokia to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage as the emperor's gesture of thanksgiving to God²⁷.

Theodosius' piety was also manifested in the respect he showed to all priests who dedicated themselves to divine service. In turn, he even bestowed veneration on those surrounded by the nimbus of sanctity as was the case with the bishop of Hebron, after whose death the ruler sought to clothe in his heavily soiled robe in the hope that some particle of the deceased's sanctity would descend upon him²⁸. In another passage, Socrates argued that Theodosius resembled true priests of God, and with his meekness even surpassed them²⁹. Undoubtedly, therefore, the dominant character trait of Theodosius, according to Socrates, was piety. It amounted to trust in God, thanksgiving to Him for the graces received,

²² See P. Janiszewski, *Żywoty w służbie propagandy, czyli po czyjej stronie stoi Bóg. Studium kłesk i rzadkich fenomenów przyrodniczych u historyków Kościoła w IV i V wieku*, [in:] *Chrześcijaństwo u schyłku starożytności. Studia źródłoznawcze*, vol. III, eds. T. Derda, E. Wipszycka, Kraków 2000, p. 145.

²³ Socrates, HE, VII, 23, 11–12 (361).

²⁴ Socrates, HE, VII, 23, 11 (261).

²⁵ Socrates, HE, VII, 42.

²⁶ Socrates, HE, VII, 47, 1 (286).

²⁷ Socrates, HE, VII, 47, 2–3. See also E.D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312–460*, Oxford 1982, pp. 221–248.

²⁸ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 14.

²⁹ Socrates, HE, VII, 42.

respect shown to priests, or finally Christian asceticism based on observance of the prescriptions of the Christian religion, frequent prayer and fasting.

Wisdom

Piety, in turn, led to fondness for wisdom, namely true philosophy practised not in word but in deed. It was based on thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and represented the highest level of education³⁰, which according to Socrates was achieved by emperor Theodosius, who in his knowledge of the Holy Bible was equal to experienced priests, quoting its text from memory³¹. He could therefore discuss theological issues even on a par with the bishops³². In Socrates' view, the emperor's fondness for books surpassed that of Ptolemy Philadelphus, patron of the famous Library of Alexandria, yet it applied only to inspired books and their interpretation. The ruler was considered superior to all people in patience and benevolence, in which the historian saw his true wisdom. The historian noted that Theodosius practised philosophy by deed³³, which was manifested in his control over anger, irritation or sensual pleasure, and in his humanitarianism, the highest manifestation of which was his pardon of people sentenced to death³⁴. Thus, the love of wisdom led the emperor to the virtue of meekness, which was very important to God, in Socrates' view (πραότης – clementia).

³⁰ See S. Bralewski, *Symmachia cesarstwa rzymskiego z Bogiem chrześcijan (IV–VI wiek)*, vol. I (*“Niezwykła przemiana” – narodziny nowej epoki*), Łódź 2018, pp. 149–154.

³¹ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 5.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ See S. Bralewski, *Zagłada filozofów helleńskich w Imperium Romanum – obraz mędrców w relacji Sokratesa z Konstantynopola i Hermiasza Sozomena*, “Vox Patrum” 2012, vol. LVII, pp. 59–72.

³⁴ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 9–11. Socrates was wrong here as evidenced by the example of Paulinus, a friend of Theodosius II, who was suspected of having an affair with the empress Eudocia and was sentenced to death by the emperor as reported by Marcellinus Comes (A.C. 440), *Chronicon Paschale* (s.a. 444), John Malalas (356–357), Teophanes (AM 5940) or Zonaras, XIII, 23, 28–35. See *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. II, ed. J.R. Martindale, Cambridge 1980 [hereinafter: PLRE II], pp. 846–847 (s.v. Paulinus 8); K.G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1982, pp. 190–193, 258–277; A. Cameron, *The Empress and the Poet: Paganism and Politics at the Court of Theodosius II*, “Yale Classical Studies” 1982, vol. XXVII, pp. 258–277; M. Wallraff, *op. cit.*, pp. 210–211.

Indeed, this virtue displayed by the emperor was pivotal, in Socrates' view, for securing the emperor's military victories. As the historian wrote, "in meekness he surpassed all those who have ever faithfully borne the sacerdotal office"³⁵, as was proven by the fact that he knowingly did not make use of his imperial powers against the accused³⁶. It was because of this very virtue that God subjected his enemies to him without battle³⁷. Socrates repeatedly stressed that Theodosius, in the event of armed conflicts, completely entrusted himself to God, "knowing that He is the disposer of battles"³⁸. He likened the emperor to the biblical David, who would look to God for rescue in such situations³⁹. The historian went on to conclude that it was through prayer that Theodosius emerged victorious from oppression⁴⁰. As an example of this, he cited the war with the Persians⁴¹, during which, as the historian pointed out, the ruler was immediately rewarded for his trust, receiving help from God⁴². This was preceded by the announcement of victory made by angels⁴³. God was then to sow unimaginable fear in the ranks of the Persian-supporting Saracens, who, numbering a hundred thousand men, found annihilation in the currents of the Euphrates⁴⁴. Thus Socrates was in no doubt that the emperor was victorious due to divine intervention⁴⁵. At the time, a number of eminent speakers, including the imperial wife Eudokia, dedicated speeches to the emperor delivered in public

³⁵ Socrates, HE, VII, 42, 2 (382). Socrates here compared Theodosius to Moses, who, according to the Book of Numbers, was the humblest of all the people who had ever lived on Earth; see L. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

³⁶ Socrates, HE, VII, 41, 7.

³⁷ Socrates, HE, VII, 42, 3.

³⁸ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 19 (359): εἰδὼς αὐτὸν τῶν πολέμων εἶναι ταμίαν.

³⁹ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 19.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*: καὶ εὐχῆ τούτους κατάρθου.

⁴¹ Socrates, HE, VII, 18, 18. The historian was referring here to the conflict of 421–422. According to Kenneth G. Holm (*Pulcheria's Crusade A.D. 421–422 and the Ideology of Imperial Victory*, "Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies" 1977, vol. XVIII, pp. 153–172) it was the emperor's sister Pulcheria's crusade against Persia. The author expressed his belief that "the unwarlike Theodosius II made war not to defend the Empire but to become «master of victory»" (p. 153).

⁴² Socrates, HE, VII, 18, 16.

⁴³ Socrates, HE, VII, 18, 17. The angels of God were to show themselves to travelers to Constantinople, instructing them to tell the fearful inhabitants of the capital to pray and hope in God for the victory of the Romans over the Persians.

⁴⁴ Socrates, HE, VII, 18, 23.

⁴⁵ Socrates, HE, VII, 21, 7.

and presumably in his presence⁴⁶. As it seems, the ruler was in the habit of listening to literary works since Socrates also mentioned that the poet Ammonios had written a poem on Gainas' revolt, which he read out in the emperor's presence, winning his high praise⁴⁷.

According to Socrates, Theodosius, having placed his hope in God, defeated the usurper John, who attempted to reach for power in the western part of the empire after the death of emperor Honorius. God's intervention on behalf of the troops sent by Theodosius was so spectacular, according to the historian, that he likened it to the passage of the Jews through the Red Sea in Moses' time⁴⁸. Socrates provided an account of Aspar, a commander of Theodosius' troops, who – not knowing how to capture Ravenna, where the usurper was hiding – was led with his army by an angel of God in the shape of a shepherd through the nearby marshes, and captured the city by complete surprise thanks to the prayers of the emperor⁴⁹. As Socrates concluded, "God rendered that passable, which had hitherto been impassable". Thus, he stressed that the army sent by Theodosius crossed a swamp "as if going over dry ground" and "seized the tyrant"⁵⁰, having found the gates of Ravenna open. In Socrates' view, God also intervened on Theodosius' behalf when the usurper John called the barbarians to his aid. As Socrates noted, the ruler became immersed in prayer the moment he learned of their planned attack on the imperial territory and, as usual in such situations, entrusted his concern to God, who soon helped him. Ruga, the barbarian leader⁵¹, lost his life struck by lightning. The plague ravaged the ranks of the barbarians, and most of them were to fall prey to it. The cause of the annihilation of many more was the fire that fell from the sky. In the wake of these events, immeasurable trepidation seized the hearts of the barbarians as they realised in all its fullness that it had been the mighty God himself who supported the emperor⁵².

⁴⁶ Socrates, HE, VII, 21, 8.

⁴⁷ Socrates, HE, VI, 6, 37.

⁴⁸ Socrates, HE, VII, 22, 21; VII, 23, 10.

⁴⁹ Socrates, HE, VII, 23, 10.

⁵⁰ Socrates, HE, VII, 23, 10 (360–361).

⁵¹ It was about Rua, the leader of the Huns. His name took various forms in the sources, see PLRE II, p. 951 (s.v. Rua). The fact that Rua supported John the Usurper, was also reported by John of Nikiu (*Chronicle* 84, 85, 81). This took place at the turn of 424 and 425.

⁵² Socrates, HE, VII, 43, 3.

The image of Theodosius II created by Socrates may be seen to refer to the theory of the unity of virtues already propagated by his namesake from Athens, the great philosopher, who argued that one cannot possess a particle of a virtue without possessing its entirety as it is impossible to possess one particular virtue without possessing them all⁵³. According to Socrates of Constantinople, piety, dominant in the features of Theodosius, led to the virtue of wisdom, and at the same time was wisdom itself, and this in turn led to the virtue of meekness, and it was itself this virtue. And meekness resulting from piety and wisdom crowned all the virtues, and God rewarded the emperor for it with military victories and prosperity in private life⁵⁴.

Theodoret of Cyrus

Sketching a picture of emperor Theodosius II, Theodoret drew attention to his piety (εὐσέβεια), which he was to inherit beside his name from his grandfather Theodosius I⁵⁵. The pious upbringing of the prematurely orphaned emperor was, according to the historian, taken care of by God himself⁵⁶. Notably, in the opinion of the bishop of Cyrus, the ruler did not inherit piety from his parents, guilty of sentencing bishop John Chrysostom to exile. Bringing the relics of the said cleric to Constantinople, the emperor was to ask God to forgive them for their injustice towards the bishop⁵⁷. Although Theodoret stressed that they had done this unknowingly, their deed did not comport with piety. The bishop of Cyrus gave an account of the emperor's piety consisting in worshipping God the Benefactor and singing hymns to Him, in which he was supported by his sister not mentioned by name, who preserved her virginity, studied the Scriptures and supported the needy⁵⁸. In addition, Theodosius obeyed God's law, which obliged him, according

⁵³ See R. Legutko, *Sokrates*, Poznań 2013, pp. 406–447.

⁵⁴ Socrates (HE, VII, 43, 7–44, 1–3) wrote about it explicitly, describing the circumstances of the marriage to Valentinian the Younger by the emperor's daughter Licinia Eudoxia. The aforesaid wedding was mentioned by, among others, *Chronicon Paschale* (s.a. 437) or Marcellinus Comes, A.C. 437.

⁵⁵ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 1.

⁵⁶ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 3.

⁵⁷ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 2.

⁵⁸ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 4.

to Theodoret, to order the destruction of the remains of pagan temples to erase any traces of “former errors”⁵⁹.

And when the historian decided to list the qualities of the emperor, among many other qualities adorned him with benevolence or philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία)⁶⁰, meekness (πραότης), uninterrupted peace of mind (γαλήνη ψυχῆς), but they were crowned with pure (ἀκραιφνής), confident, infallible, excellent and proven (δόκιμος) faith⁶¹. Clearly, therefore, the bishop of Cyrus placed emphasis on it, and it seemed most important quality to him. This should be seen as a conscious effort of the clergyman who was involved in the doctrinal disputes of the time. For him, the theological position taken by the emperor was extremely important. After all, it was ultimately up to his imperial decisions which of the promoted doctrinal views would be recognised as officially valid in the Roman Empire.

Similarly to Socrates, Theodoret pointed to the support from God that the emperor received as a reward for his deeds. He reaped, as the bishop of Cyrus put it, the fruits of his sowing and, as a consequence, “so graciously did the Almighty Ruler of the universe watch over the welfare of the faithful emperor”⁶². Thus, God intervened on behalf of the Romans during the invasion of Thrace by Roilas, a Scythian leader who threatened Constantinople⁶³. The storm and lightning sent from the Heavens destroyed the enemy armies completely. Likewise, when the Persians broke the peace agreement, God was said to have sent torrential rain and violent hail which halted the advance of enemy armies. And during the Persians’ siege of Theodosiopolis, God inflicted many losses on them, and the leading role in the defense of the city was to be played by

⁵⁹ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 8 (340). All the quotations from Theodoret’s work were taken from the following translation from Greek into English: Theodoretus, *Ecclesiastical History. A History of the Church in Five Books, from A.D. 332 to the Death of Theodore of Mopsuestia A.D. 427*, London 1843. Page numbers from the English translation are given in brackets in the corresponding footnotes [translator’s note].

⁶⁰ Understood as love for people, grace or mercy shown to others; see *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. φιλανθρωπία, pp.1475–1476.

⁶¹ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 5.

⁶² Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 9 (341): Τούτων δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν σπερμάτων διηνεκῶς δρέπεται τοὺς καρπούς· τὸν γὰρ τῷ ὄλων δεσπότην προμηθούμενον ἔχει.

⁶³ It was about the leader not of the Scythians, but of the Huns in 434.

the holy bishop Eunomius. For when one of the barbarian kings blasphemed against God, a large stone was fired at the command of Eunomius from a throwing machine which bore the name of the apostle Thomas and which was placed on the walls so as to kill the godless man⁶⁴. In Theodoret's account, the event made a strong impression on the besiegers and led to the conclusion of peace. At the end of his argument, the bishop of Cyrus observed that in this way the Ruler of the whole world (παμβασιλεύς) took care of the affairs of the deeply believing (πιστότατος) emperor⁶⁵. Hence, the bishop of Cyrus, concluding his argument about Emperor Theodosius II, once again indicated that the most important thing in the eyes of God was the unshakeable faith of the ruler.

Sozomen of Bethelia

Sozomen was the only one of the three historians in question who dedicated his *Ecclesiastical History* to Emperor Theodosius II⁶⁶. In the preface to his work, he included a catalogue of virtues that he attributed to the emperor, proving that piety is the true adornment of imperial dignity. In turn, addressing the emperor directly, he pointed out: "But thou, O most powerful Emperor, hast gathered together all the virtues, and hast excelled every one in piety [εὐσέβεια], philanthropy [φιλανθρωπία], courage [ἀνδρεία], prudence [σωφροσύνη], justice [δικαιοσύνη], munificence [φιλοτιμία], and a magnanimity [μεγαλοψυχία] befitting royal dignity"⁶⁷.

It was no coincidence that Sozomen listed piety (εὐσέβεια) as the first among all the virtues of Emperor Theodosius II. For it was the key to a right relationship with God and guaranteed prosperity through His blessing, which corresponded to the mentality of the Romans. In Sozomen's view expressed in his *Ecclesiastical*

⁶⁴ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 14.

⁶⁵ Theodoretus Cyrensis, HE, V, 39, 15.

⁶⁶ Peter Van Nuffelen (*Un héritage de paix et de piété...*, p. 54) treats the address as a masterful encomion.

⁶⁷ Sozomenus, HE, *Dedicatio*, 15. Apart from the Address to the Emperor Theodosius, which was quoted after <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/26020.htm>, all the fragments from Sozomen's work were taken from the following translation from Greek into English: Sozomenus, *The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen: Comprising a History of the Church from A.D. 324 to A.D. 440*, trans. W. Walford, London 1855. Page numbers from the English translation are given in brackets in the corresponding footnotes [translator's note].

History, it was God who showed through the example of Emperor Theodosius II that “piety alone suffices for the safety and prosperity of princes; and that without piety, armies, a powerful empire, and political resources are to no avail”⁶⁸. Sozomen was convinced that it was enough for the emperor to zealously worship God to retain power⁶⁹. The historian indicated that God, foreseeing the emperor’s supreme piety, appointed his elder sister, Pulcheria, as his guardian. It was she who was to guide him on the path of piety⁷⁰. This, in turn, according to Sozomen, consisted in the habit of constant prayer and visiting churches, giving votive gifts and jewels to temples, respecting priests and other noble people as well as monks and Christian ascetics, and finally, in defending the faith against false dogmas⁷¹.

Philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία) ranked second among the virtues attributed to emperor Theodosius II. The aforementioned preface to *Ecclesiastical History* distinguished between the outward signs of imperial power, which included a purple robe and a crown, and the genuine imperial garb adorning the ruler’s interior (ἐνδοθεν αἰετὸν ἀληθῆ κόσμον τῆς βασιλείας ἠμφίεσαι), which consisted of piety and philanthropy. Hence, once again the historian lists philanthropy directly after piety. In this case, however, he treats it almost on a par with piety.

Sozomen subsequently attributed the virtue of courage (ἀνδρεία) to Theodosius⁷². As it seems, all the examples of courage given by Sozomen in his *Ecclesiastical History* were related to faith in Christ and amounted to enduring suffering for Christ including giving one’s life for Him⁷³. Thus, Sozomen saw heroism related to faith in Christ in the emperor’s conduct, although this time he did not give any justification, or he used a scheme related to the cardinal virtues, among which ἀνδρεία occupied an important place.

⁶⁸ Sozomenus, HE, IX, 1, 2 (450): ἡ μοι δοκεῖ μάλιστα τὸν θεὸν ἐπιδειξαι μόνην εὐσέβειαν ἀρκεῖν πρὸς σωτηρίαν τοῖς βασιλεύουσιν, ἄνευ δὲ ταύτης μηδὲν εἶναι στρατεύματα καὶ βασιλέως ἰσχύον καὶ τὴν ἄλλην παρασκευήν.

⁶⁹ Sozomenus, HE, IX, 16, 1: ὡς ἂν ἔχοιμεν εἰδέναι ἀρκεῖν βασιλεῖ πρὸς φυλακὴν τοῦ κράτους ἐπιμελῶς τὸ θεῖον πρεσβεύειν, ὁποῖος καὶ οὐτοσὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐγένετο.

⁷⁰ See K. Iłski, *Die weibliche Frömmigkeit am Hofe von Theodosius II*, [in:] *Geschlechterrollen in der Geschichte aus polnischer und deutscher Sicht*, hrsg. K.H. Schneider, Münster 2004, pp. 77–90.

⁷¹ Sozomenus, HE, IX 1, 9.

⁷² *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. ἀνδρεία, pp. 129–130.

⁷³ Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, II, 9, 13; V, 4, 6.

Sozomen also equipped Theodosius with the virtue known as σωφροσύνη, which is usually translated as prudence, common sense, caution, restraint, moderation, temperance, modesty or a moderate form of government⁷⁴. The term is difficult to render into modern languages. For the Greeks, σωφροσύνη represented fullness of humanity. It involved good discernment of man, which entailed the realisation of high moral criteria. It also implied discipline and self-restraint. It pointed to man's harmony and integration as well as his self-control. It seems that the σωφροσύνη attributed by Sozomen to Emperor Theodosius II also referred in his case to sexual restraint, in his address to Theodosius, the historian contrasted him with the biblical Solomon, pointing out that the latter had become a slave to pleasure and had not kept his piety⁷⁵. The historian also related it to the emperor's general outlook on life, stating that he put this temperance of reason above the ease of entertainment⁷⁶, and his nature was to be in control of himself (φύσιν ἔχειν νομίζῃ τὴν ἐγκράτειαν)⁷⁷. It seems, however, that in the case of Theodosius II, σωφροσύνη was primarily a reference to the emperor's characteristic moderation in the way he exercised power as Sozomen stressed that his reign was unique, the only one "that ever existed": unstained (ἀνάιμακτος) and pure from murder (καθαρὰν φόνου)⁷⁸, and therefore free from violence. The emperor was supposed to give his subjects joy and teach them noble-mindedness (σπουδαίτης). This stemmed from the ruler's desire that his subjects should show support not only for him, but also commitment to state affairs not out of fear, but love and respect (ἔνυοία τε καὶ αἰδοῖ)⁷⁹.

The historian ranked δικαιοσύνη, translated as justice or integrity, on the fifth place of the aforementioned catalogue⁸⁰. This virtue was rarely referred to by Sozomen throughout his *Ecclesiastical History*. It is perplexing why the historian did not place the virtue of justice before the fifth place since δικαιοσύνη was extremely important to the ancient Greeks, who considered it a fundamental

⁷⁴ *A Greek-English Lexicon*, eds. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, Oxford 1996, s.v. σωφροσύνη, p. 1751; *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, s.v. σωφροσύνη, p. 1370.

⁷⁵ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 10.

⁷⁶ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 11.

⁷⁷ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 12.

⁷⁸ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 16.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁰ *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. δικαιοσύνη, p. 369.

moral principle organising the world, society and human life⁸¹. Sozomen noted that Theodosius II spent the day mainly arranging the affairs of his subjects “by giving judicial decisions, and by making note of what is necessary, and by observation, both in public and private, of the things which ought to be done”⁸². He therefore dealt with justice in practice. He also did justice to his subjects by organising literary displays when he sat as a judge (λόγων κριτής) and passed judgment in a clean and clear manner (είλικρινῶς βραβεύεις)⁸³.

The sixth place in Sozomen’s list was occupied by φιλοτιμία understood as munificence, which was to characterise Theodosius⁸⁴. According to the historian, the emperor showed it in various situations: he rewarded literary men with unparalleled generosity⁸⁵; he also showed munificence to other subjects, especially pilgrims and the poor; he also generously supported the Church and even certain forms of Hellenic culture. And in his address, Sozomen directly implied that Theodosius II emulated in this regard the Heavenly King, who would send reviving rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous, and with the rising of the sun rejoice every man, without sparing various other gifts to all people either⁸⁶.

Sozomen listed μεγαλοψυχία, a term that should be translated as magnanimity, nobility, munificence or generosity, as the last of the virtues attributed to Theodosius II⁸⁷. From the context of Sozomen’s account, it appears that μεγαλοψυχία was among the qualities of a true ruler, demonstrating his eminence predestining him to the dignity of emperor. Thus, it seems perfectly understandable that the historian placed it as the last among the virtues adorning Theodosius II since it was the logical completion of the above scheme of the ruler’s qualities. In this way, the historian outlined a model of the ethical and moral mirror of the ruler.

In this context, it should be noted that although Sozomen did not include either φρόνησις or σοφία in his list of virtues, he wrote

⁸¹ See R. Legutko, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

⁸² Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 8: καὶ τὰ τῶν ἀρχομένων διατάττειν πράγματα, δικάζοντά τε καὶ ἄ χρῆ γράφοντα, ἰδίᾳ τε καὶ κοινῇ τὰ πρακτέα διασκοποῦντα.

⁸³ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 4.

⁸⁴ *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. φιλοτιμία, p. 1484.

⁸⁵ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 7.

⁸⁶ Sozomenus, *HE Dedicatio*, 9.

⁸⁷ *A Greek-English Lexicon...*, s.v. μεγαλοψυχία, p. 1088; *A Patristic Greek Lexicon...*, s.v. μεγαλοψυχία, p. 836.

about the extraordinary prudence of Theodosius II. The historian pointed out that Theodosius' day was filled with various state duties, while at night the ruler avidly devoted himself to reading books. The historian also directly mentioned erudition (πολυμάθεια) of Theodosius, who was said to have studied the nature of stones, the hidden powers of roots, and even the effects of medicines no worse than Solomon famous for his wisdom. Sozomen emphasised that it was Solomon's piety that was the source of this wisdom and prosperity⁸⁸. Further on, in the final part of the dedicatory speech addressed to the ruler, the historian equated piety with wisdom. Complementing Theodosius II, he indicated that he not only "knows all things" (ὅ̃ πάντα εἰδώς), but also possesses "every virtue" (πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἔχων), involving piety (εὐσέβεια), which the Bible calls the beginning of wisdom (σοφία)⁸⁹.

In presenting the qualities of a ruler, Sozomen equated piety with wisdom and made both the major, leading virtues. They were the ones that conditioned the subsequent qualities. Thus, one can also find in Sozomen's account the aforementioned theory of the unity of virtues already distinctive of Socrates of Athens⁹⁰. It seems that the set of virtues attributed to the emperor by Sozomen was heavily influenced by the scheme of the four cardinal virtues, namely wisdom (φρόνησις), fortitude (ἀνδρεία), temperance (σωφροσύνη) and justice (δικαιοσύνη)⁹¹, extended to include the following ones: piety (εὐσέβεια), philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία), munificence (φιλοτιμία) and magnanimity (μεγαλοψυχία)⁹². Interestingly, in his *Ecclesiastical History* Sozomen used an identical set of virtues both to depict the

⁸⁸ Sozomenus, HE *Dedicatio*, 11.

⁸⁹ Ps. 110, 10. Sozomenus, HE *Dedicatio*, 18.

⁹⁰ See R. Legutko, *op. cit.*, pp. 406–447.

⁹¹ Plato (*Politeia*, 429 c 5 – 430 b 5) defined them in the fourth chapter of his *Republic* (σοφία, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη). Plato's teacher, Socrates of Athens, paid considerable attention to the virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνη), piety (εὐσέβεια), prudence (σωφροσύνη) and courage (ἀνδρεία). In doing so, he considered the first of these, justice, to be a more general category than the other virtues, since it encompassed, in his view, all major moral behaviors. According to Socrates of Athens, piety was closely related to justice; see R. Legutko, *op. cit.*, pp. 410–420.

⁹² They were similarly extended by Plato's disciple, Aristotle of Stagira (Aristoteles, *Reutorica*, 1366b), who included justice (δικαιοσύνη), courage (ἀνδρεία), prudence (σωφροσύνη), dignity (μεγαλοπρέπεια), magnanimity (μεγαλοψυχία), generosity (ἔλευθεριότης), prudence (φρόνησις) and wisdom (σοφία) among the individual virtues, but he considered the greatest of these to be justice (δικαιοσύνη) and courage (ἀνδρεία) listed first as most useful to others. Justice fulfills such a role in wartime and peacetime, and courage in wartime.

qualities of the ruler he held in high esteem, namely Theodosius II, and to characterise the ascetics and monks he admired, i.e. the new sages, living, in his view, under the principles of the best philosophy⁹³.

Similarly to Socrates and Theodoret, Sozomen was convinced of God's intervention for the sake of Emperor Theodosius II. The historian believed that God was fond of his reign, even when he was still a child. The part of the empire governed by him was free of invaders, and law and order was to prevail there. Indeed, God himself made the course of wars favorable to him⁹⁴. Describing the Huns' aggression on the territory of the eastern part of the empire when their king Uldes⁹⁵ with numerous troops ravaged Thrace and demanded a high tribute for peace guarantees, and the situation seemed beyond solution, Sozomen pointed out that it was God himself who had shown how much he cared about imperial power. According to the historian, many of the invaders' previous allies switched to the side of the Romans by the will of God, and Uldin himself, with the remnants of his army, barely managed to save himself⁹⁶.

Conclusion

An analysis of the three *Ecclesiastical Histories* leads to some interesting insights. Socrates of Constantinople exposed three essential qualities in his depiction of Emperor Theodosius II: piety, wisdom and meekness. At the same time, one can clearly see the theory of unity of virtues in his considerations. In the case of his portrait of Theodosius, piety led to the virtue of wisdom, being itself a virtue, and the virtue of wisdom led to the virtue of meekness, being itself a virtue as well. The crowning achievement of all virtues was, in turn, meekness derived from both piety and the virtue of wisdom. It was, according to Socrates, that the emperor's meekness

⁹³ See S. Bralewski, *The Catalogue of Virtues in the Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen of Bethelia*, "Vox Patrum" 2022, vol. LXXXIV, pp. 44–47.

⁹⁴ Sozomenus, HE, IX, 16, 4.

⁹⁵ Various forms of this ruler's name are noted in PLRE, vol. II, p. 1180.

⁹⁶ Sozomenus, HE, IX, 5, 5. This took place in 408. See O. Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1973, pp. 64–66; P. Heather, *The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in the Western Europe*, "The English Historical Review" 1995, vol. CX, p. 20; M. Rouche, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

was rewarded by God with military victories and blessings in private life. This observation was not accidental, but thoroughly thought out for Socrates wanted to convince the readers of his work of the need for religious tolerance within Christianity. Concluding his work, he assured of his prayer not only for peace for the churches, but also for cities and peoples around the world⁹⁷. He was convinced of the organic bond uniting the events happening in the bosom of the Church and *Imperium Romanum*⁹⁸, and belonging to the schismatic Novatian community⁹⁹, he may have feared persecution, and was particularly interested in tolerance, as his own and his co-confessors' prosperity depended on it. It also seems that by creating a kind of encomium in honor of Theodosius II, he hoped to win the favor of the ruler despite denying it. Theodoret of Cyrus also created an extremely positive picture of the emperor, emphasising his philanthropy, meekness, self-control, but above all his pure and firm faith, for which God was to reward him by assisting him in his fight against his enemies. Given the theological disputes of the time and the involvement of the bishop of Cyrus in them, it can be assumed with high probability that he too was not disinterested, but was hoping to win Theodosius to the doctrinal views which he supported. The image of the emperor created by Sozomen of Bethelia is also very positive. Sozomen seems to have created it to some extent to counter the message of Socrates of Constantinople, on whose work he largely based his *Ecclesiastical History*. In a similar way, he identified piety with wisdom, but made both of them the major, leading virtues, conditioning the subsequent qualities, in which we can also find the aforementioned theory of the unity of the virtues. It is most likely that Sozomen, in creating a catalog of Theodosius' qualities, modelled them on the four cardinal virtues: wisdom, fortitude, temperance and justice, which he expanded to include piety, philanthropy,

⁹⁷ Socrates, HE, VII, 48, 6.

⁹⁸ Socrates, HE, V, Introduction. See on the topic: G.F. Chesnut, *Kairos and Cosmic Sympathy in the Church Historian Socrates Scholasticus*, "Church History" 1975, vol. XLIV, pp. 161–166; P. Nowakowski, *Pogańska teoria kosmicznej więzi (sympatheia), krytycznego momentu (kairos) i losu (Tyche) w chrześcijańskiej Historii kościelnej Sokratesa Scholastyka*, "Teki Historyka" 2007, vol. XXXII, pp. 7–29.

⁹⁹ See M. Wallraff, *op. cit.*; idem, *Socrates Scholasticus on the History of Novatianism*, "Studia Patristica" 1997, vol. XXIX, pp. 170–177; M. Stachura, *Heretycy, schizmatycy i manichejczycy wobec Cesarstwa Rzymskiego (lata 324–428, wschodnia część Imperium)*, Kraków 2000, pp. 44–45.

generosity and magnanimity. Sozomen applied almost the same set of virtues to the description of the monks he admired, proving that he had developed a model of the Christian ideal. However, the most significant revision made by Sozomen to the message of his predecessor was to make the emperor's piety a virtue that assures him of favor from God. Thus the Almighty, according to Sozomen, granted military victories to the ruler due to his piety rather than his meekness as Socartes argued. It seems that there was no coincidence in this one either. Why did Sozomen not attribute meekness to the emperor? Apparently, this was not a quality with regard to Theodosius desired by the historian. An analysis of the Sozomen narration in the work titled *Obraz papiestwa w historiografii kościelnej wczesnego Bizancjum* (The image of the papacy in the ecclesiastical historiography of early Byzantium) may indicate that the historian in question was involved in the conflict within the bosom of the Church at the time, which was particularly dramatic at the Robber Council of Ephesus in 449. He wrote his version of the events of the history of the Church in order to convince the emperor of the rationale of the camp which he supported, associated with Flavian, bishop of Constantinople or empress Pulcheria. Defying their opponents required the ruler's decisiveness, not his meekness. Consequently, all three authors of *Ecclesiastical Histories* have created a picture of emperor Theodosius II that differ in detail but is very positive. Socrates of Constantinople stressed his meekness, Theodoret of Cyrus highlighted his faith, and Bethelia emphasised his piety. However, each had different expectations of the ruler. They most likely hoped to gain, through their works, his support for themselves and the groups they supported within the Church. As seems no coincidence that all three historians focused on the first period of Theodosius II's reign. Socrates and Sozomen assumed that they would bring their account to the year 439, while Theodoret ended his account with the year 428. The last decade of Theodosius' reign was fraught with a series of misfortunes that befell the eastern part of the Roman empire. Between 441 and 449, the empire suffered numerous defeats and humiliations from the Huns led by Attila¹⁰⁰, and it was hit by a very strong earthquake in 447, which resulted, among other things, in the

¹⁰⁰ Priskos, *Fragmenta*, [in:] *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, ed. R.C. Blockley, Liverpool 1983, pp. 221–377. See also M. Rouche, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–113.

collapse of much of Constantinople's defensive walls¹⁰¹. Taking the aforementioned facts into account would contradict the thesis that Theodosius was supported by God for his meekness, faith or piety, whereby God was to ensure his military victories over internal and external enemies. However, all three wrote their works in the 440s, which is when the aforementioned misfortunes befell on the empire. These facts were therefore widely known since they were happening at the time. Socrates, Theodoret or Sozomen could not remain silent in order to hide them as it was impossible to do so. Clearly, therefore, their intentions were different. Their message was most likely addressed to the emperor himself. All three sought to show that there had been an unfavorable change in his behavior, which they felt had resulted in God's wrath and the calamities that had befallen the state. Therefore, they drew his attention to the fact that earlier the ruler's mere trust in God was sufficient for Him to surround the emperor with His protection.

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¹⁰¹ *Chronicon Paschale*, s.a. 447; Marcellinus Comes, A.C. 447. According to Marcellin, 50 towers within the capital's walls collapsed at the time. See G. Downey, *Earthquakes at Constantinople and Vicinity, A.D. 342–1454*, "Speculum" 1955, vol. XXX, p. 597.

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