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## THE HYMNOGRAPHY IN HONOUR OF SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELENA AND ITS CONNECTION WITH IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY\*

**Abstract.** This article presents an overview of published and unpublished Byzantine and post-Byzantine hymnographic texts dedicated to Saint Constantine, founder of Constantinople and first Byzantine emperor, and his mother Saint Helena. Specifically, we cite and comment upon some indicative passages primarily found in canons of the Matins, which refer to historical events from the lives of the saints and attribute to them, especially to Saint Constantine, virtues such as justice, piety, wisdom, and the defense of the true faith. These qualities are directly associated with the imperial political ideology as this was shaped principally by Eusebius of Caesarea in his works *Life of Constantine* and *Tricennial Oration*.

**Keywords:** Byzantine and post-Byzantine hymnography, canons, Menaion, Saint Constantine, Saint Helena, vision of Constantine, foundation of Constantinople, Council of Nicaea, discovery and exaltation of the Holy Cross, Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine*, *Tricennial Oration*, imperial ideology

### Introduction

Byzantine hymnography constitutes the richest branch of Byzantine literature. However, as is known, little of this wealth has been included in the printed editions of the liturgical books of the Orthodox Church. The detection, study and dissemination of these texts is both a desideratum and a challenge for the discipline of philology.

The hymnographic compositions in honor of Saints Constantine and Helena, prominent figures of Christianity and Byzantium, have been researched by a number of scholars in the past. Yet, in the current Menaion of May only one canon for their feast is encountered, although manuscripts contain several more. Some

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of these canons have already been discovered, but the majority of them have not been examined and remain unpublished.

The content of these texts has been clearly influenced by the imperial ideology as this was shaped by the historical works of Eusebius of Caesarea, who was the first to formulate the basic principles of the Byzantine imperial ideology. These principles influenced not only the hymnography for Saints Constantine and Helena but also the much broader hagiological literature related to them. The imperial monarchy is projected in parallel to the heavenly hierarchy. The emperor is pictured as the chosen of God and at the same time as the protector of the Church. Frequent references are also made to the vision of the Cross, the founding of Constantinople and the observance and defense of the dogma against heresies and idolatry. Among other virtues, the piety of Saint Constantine is especially emphasized since it comprises a crucial characteristic of the imperial political ideology.

### Published and unpublished canons

The feast of sovereigns and Equal-to-apostles Constantine and Helena is celebrated on 21 May<sup>1</sup>. In the Eastern version of Christian iconography, the saints are depicted together holding the Holy Cross between them. The Menaion of May contains a full service for their commemoration<sup>2</sup>, which includes only one canon in the Matins<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, almost since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, researchers have detected in manuscripts numerous other hymnographic texts (canons, stichera, kontakia, kathismata, etc.). Most of these compositions are anonymous and are found in Parisian, Sinaitic and Athonian manuscripts as well as in codices

<sup>1</sup> *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. E codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi. Adiectis synaxariis selectis*, ed. H. DELEHAYE, Bruxellis 1902 [= SCP], col. 697–700; M.I. ΓΕΛΕΩΝ, *Βυζαντινὸν Ἑορτολόγιον. Μνήμαι τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Δ' μέχρι τῶν μέσων τοῦ ΙΕ' αἰῶνος ἐορταζομένων ἁγίων ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει*, Κωνσταντινούπολις 1899, p. 106–107, 319; Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Ἄγιολόγιον τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας*, Ἀθήνα 1995, p. 266–267; *ODB*, s.v. Constantine I the Great, p. 499–500, s.v. Helena, p. 909; J.W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta, the Cross and the Myth: Some New Reflections*, *Mil* 8, 2011, p. 128–145; C. MANGO, *Ιστορία του Βυζαντίου*, Ἀθήνα 2006, p. 43–51. The literature on Saints Constantine and Helena is quite extensive. Much of this literature (up to 2005) is cited in: I. PUCCI, *Orientamenti bibliografici inerenti Costantino il Grande*, *Porph* 2.4, 2005. A very important work for Greek research is ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Βίος Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου*, praef., comm. Β. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΣ, trans. Γ.Α. ΡΑΠΤΗΣ, Θεσσαλονίκη 2011 (cetera: ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Βίος*), with rendition into modern Greek and updated bibliography until 2011.

<sup>2</sup> *Μηναῖα τοῦ ὄλου ἑνιαυτοῦ*, vol. V, Ἐν Ρώμῃ 1888–1901 (cetera: MR), p. 134–145.

<sup>3</sup> On the emergence and characteristics of the canon, cf. *ODB*, s.v. Kanon, p. 1102; E. WELLESZ, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, Oxford 1961, p. 198–206; N.B. ΤΩΜΑΔΑΚΗΣ, *Ἡ βυζαντινὴ ὑμνογραφία καὶ ποίησις*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1993, p. 59–66; Θ. ΔΕΤΟΡΑΚΗΣ, *Βυζαντινὴ Ὑμνογραφία*, Ἡράκλειο 1997, p. 69; Α.Σ. ΚΟΡΑΚΙΔΗΣ, *Βυζαντινὴ Ὑμνογραφία*, vol. II, Ἀθήνα 2006, p. 151–153; Π.Ν. ΤΡΕΜΠΕΛΑΣ, *Ἐκλογή Ἑλληνικῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ὑμνογραφίας*, Ἀθήνα 2007, p. 45–53.

of the Patriarchates of Alexandria and Sofia. Apart from these unpublished poetic texts, variations may also be noted in the rest of the hymnography of this feast.

A part of this material has already been published and annotated. For the purposes of this article, we investigated additional manuscripts, different from the ones used by previous scholars. Those codices include newer texts or reflect a textual tradition distinct from that of the codices published. Here is a brief outline of the manuscripts and printed editions consulted:

In 1913, S. Gassisi published kathismata, oikoi, stichera and two (2) canons, all accompanied by short critical notes. For his own edition he used the printed editions of the Roman and Venetian Menaia, Anthologies of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the edition of hymnographic texts of J.B. Pitra and manuscripts found in the libraries of Cryptoferra and the Vatican<sup>4</sup>.

Later on, S. Eustratiades provides in his *Άγιολόγιον τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας* some brief information about some hymnographic texts that were still unpublished in his time, while in the *Ταμείον Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ποιήσεως* (1951) he presents the beginnings (*initia*) of troparia and canons<sup>5</sup>.

In 1993, A. Luzzi in an extensive article deals with hagiological issues, characteristics and attributes concerning the two saints, he comments on editorial issues regarding the texts cited by S. Gassisi and S. Eustratiades and he supplements the catalogue of hymnographic texts<sup>6</sup>.

In 1996, E. Papailiopoulos-Photopoulos records four (4) unpublished canons<sup>7</sup>. D. Stratigopoulos completes Papailiopoulos-Photopoulos's catalogue of manuscripts in an article he authored in 2006, adding a canon for the saints composed by Nikolaos Malaxos<sup>8</sup>. This canon, accompanied by critical notes, an Italian translation and relevant commentary, was published by A. Luzzi in 2010<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca in onore dei SS. Constantino ed Elena*, ReO 6, 1913, p. 56–85. For a critique of the edition of S. Gassisi, cf. A. LUZZI, *Il dies festus di Constantin il Grande e di sua madre Elena nei libri liturgici della Chiesa Greca*, [in:] *Constantin oil Grande dall' antichita all' Umanesimo. Colloquio sul cristianesimo nel mondo antico*, ed. G. BONAMENTE, F. FUSCO, Macerata 1993, p. 593–594. One of those two canons is the canon included in the Menaion of May and was republished by S. Gassisi.

<sup>5</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Άγιολόγιον...*, p. 266–267 (the author mentions codices Parisinus gr. 1566 and Ω 111 of Great Lavra, Mount Athos); ΙΔΕΜ, *Ταμείον Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ποιήσεως*, ΕΦ 50, 1951, p. 154–155.

<sup>6</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il dies...*, p. 585–643. He cites only the beginnings of the troparia by referencing *Initia Hymnorum Ecclesiae Graecae* by H. Follieri and the printed editions of Vouteris.

<sup>7</sup> Ε. ΠΑΠΑΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον ἀνεκδότων ἁσματικῶν κανόνων, seu Analecta Hymnica Graeca e codicibus eruta Orientis Christiani, Κανόνες Μηναιῶν*, Ἀθήναι 1996, p. 202.

<sup>8</sup> Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οἱ ἄγιοι Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ Ἐλένη στήν Ὑμνογραφία*, [in:] *Niš and Byzantium. Fifth symposium, Niš, 3.–5. June 2006*, ed. M. RAKOCIJA, Niš 2007, p. 47–54.

<sup>9</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone di Nicola Malaxos per gli imperatori Constantino ed Elena*, [in:] *“Alle gentili arti ammaestra”*. *Studi in Onore di Alkistis Proiou*, ed. A. ARMATI, M. CERASOLI, Chr. LUCIANI, Roma 2010 [= TSB-N, 18], p. 257–291.

A detailed description of the data on the Matins canons that we obtained from the literature mentioned above and from our personal study of the manuscripts is as follows<sup>10</sup>:

1. A canon in the Plagal Fourth Mode beginning with “Μόνε ἐπουράνιε βασιλεῦ”, and with “Υγρὰν διοδεύσας” as the heirmos of the first ode. This canon appears as anonymous in the printed Menaia of May (of Rome, Venice and Apostoliki Diakonia). The heirmoi of the odes belong to various poets (John the Monk, Kosmas, Germanus). The canon is attributed by some scholars to Theophanes Graptus<sup>11</sup>. The same canon along with other hymnographic texts in honor of the two saints is contained in both editions of G. Vouteris (1899 and 1917)<sup>12</sup>.
2. A canon in the Second Mode, beginning with “Δεῦτε, πιστοὶ ἅπαντες, ἀνευφημήσωμεν”, and with “Δεῦτε λαοὶ” as the heirmos of the first ode. The heirmoi belong to Kosmas and John. This canon is encountered in three (3) codices:
  - In a 15<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript of the Library of Paris (Par. gr. 344, ff. 71r–81r), paper Anthology of the months March–August with the full services of Vespers and Matins and the synaxarion of the saints after the sixth ode<sup>13</sup>. The canon appears as anonymous. This manuscript is mentioned by S. Eustratiades and E. Papailiopolou-Photopoulou<sup>14</sup>.
  - In a 14<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript of the Ecclesiastical, Historical and Archival Institute of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria (EHAI gr. 384, ff. 326–332), paper Menaion of the months March–May, originating from the collection of

<sup>10</sup> The study of the manuscripts was carried out by means of digital photographs. Codices Paris. gr. 344, Paris. gr. 1566, Sinait. gr. 637 and Sinait. gr. 670 were accessed through the *Pinakes* digital database, the codex of the Patriarchate of Alexandria through the Palaeographic Archive of the Educational Foundation of the National Bank (Athens), the manuscripts of Great Lavra and Vatopedi through the microfilm archive of the Patriarchal Foundation of Patriarchal Studies of the Vlatades Monastery (Thessaloniki), the manuscript of Kafsokalyvia (Mount Athos) through photographs sent to us by monk Patapius and the manuscript of Sofia through photographs sent to us by the Ecclesiastical, Historical and Archival Institute of the Bulgarian Patriarchate.

<sup>11</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca...*, p. 76–80; A. LUZZI, *Il dies...*, p. 605–608 (the attribution of the canon to Theophanes is doubtful); A. ΖΕΡΒΟΥΔΑΚΗ, *Θεοφάνης ὁ Γραπτός, Βίος καὶ Ἔργο* (unpublished ThD Thesis, Ρέθυμνο 2002), p. 273.

<sup>12</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Ἀγιολόγιον...*, p. 267; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Ἐντυπες ἀκολουθίες ἁγίων*, Αθήνα 2007, p. 208–209.

<sup>13</sup> H. OMONT, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. II, Hildesheim–Zurich–New York 2000, p. 35; *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae...*, col. 697–700.

<sup>14</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 155; Ε. ΠΑΠΑΝΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 202, num. 612.

the monastery of Panagia Archangeliotissa in Xanthi (Greece). The canon is attributed to John the Monk<sup>15</sup>.

- In an 18<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript of the Athonian monastery of Vatopedi (Vatopediou 1667, ff. 180r–183r)<sup>16</sup>, paper Menaion of May. The canon appears as anonymous.
3. A canon in the Fourth Mode beginning with “Σοὶ τῷ βασιλεύοντι τῶν αἰώνων”, and with “Ἄισομαί σοι, Κύριε, ὁ Θεός μου” as the heirmos of the first ode. The heirmoi belong to Germanus, Kosmas and John. The canon is found in five (5) manuscripts and in some of them it is attributed to John<sup>17</sup>. S. Gassisi was the first to publish it from codex Vaticanus Reginensis gr. 65<sup>18</sup>. The remaining four (4) manuscripts in which it is encountered are the following:
- A manuscript of the Patriarchate of Alexandria (Alex. Patr. 93, 75v–77v), parchment Menaion of the months May–June<sup>19</sup>. The vesperal office is also included. The canon is attributed to John.
  - A 14<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript of the library of Paris (Par. gr. 1566, ff. 64r–67v), parchment Menaion of May–June<sup>20</sup>. The Vespers is also included in the whole service.
  - An 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> century manuscript of the monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai (Sin. gr. 637, ff. 62v–66r), parchment Menaion of March–July<sup>21</sup>. The Vespers is included in the service.

<sup>15</sup> D. ΓΕΤΟΒ, *Incipitarius for the Apparently Unedited Liturgical Canons, as Contained in the Greek Manuscripts Kept in Bulgarian Libraries*, BBGG III, ser. 1, 2004, p. 98; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οἱ ἄγιοι Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ Ἑλένη...*, p. 49; D. ΓΕΤΟΒ, *A Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts at the Ecclesiastical Historical and Archival Institute of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria*, vol. II, Turnhout 2014, p. 89.

<sup>16</sup> Σ.Ν. ΚΑΔΑΣ, *Τὰ σημειώματα τῶν χειρογράφων τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μεγίστης Μονῆς Βατοπαιδίου*, Ἅγιον Ὅρος 2000, p. 297.

<sup>17</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il dies...*, p. 604–605, where a hypothesis about the author is made.

<sup>18</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca...*, p. 80–84. A. LUZZI relied on this edition for his commentary on the troparia.

<sup>19</sup> Τ.Δ. ΜΟΣΧΟΝΑΣ, *Πατριαρχεῖον Ἀλεξανδρείας. Κατάλογοι τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης*, vol. I, *Χειρόγραφα*, Ἀλεξάνδρεια 1945, p. 91–92 (where no dating for the manuscript is given); Ε. ΠΑΠΑΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 202, num. 613. There is no reference to this particular manuscript in the study of Ν.Π. ΤΖΟΥΜΕΡΚΑΣ, *Τὰ βυζαντινά χειρόγραφα τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης Ἀλεξανδρείας*, ΕΦ 85–86, 2014–2015, p. 297–332.

<sup>20</sup> Η. ΟΜΟΝΤ, *Inventaire...*, vol. II, p. 97; Ε. ΠΑΠΑΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 202, num. 613.

<sup>21</sup> K. W. CLARK, *Checklist of Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai*, Washington 1952, p. 9; V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Catalogus Codicum Graecorum Sinaiticorum*, Oxonii 1886, p. 147; Ε. ΠΑΠΑΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 202, num. 613.

- A 13<sup>th</sup> century manuscript of the monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai (Sin. gr. 670, ff. 190v–210v), parchment codex containing services for feasts of saints<sup>22</sup>. The canon is attributed to John the Monk.

In the codex Sin. gr. 637, the text for the third and eighth odes is completely different from the text found in the rest of the manuscripts, while in the fourth and fifth odes only the last troparion differs. Finally, in the seventh and in the ninth ode half of the troparia are different.

4. A canon in the Plagal Second Mode, beginning with “Ἐξ ἀναξίων χειλέων καὶ ῥυπαρῶν δεήσεων”, and with “Ὡς ἐν ἡπίρῳ πεζεύσας” as the heirmos of the first ode. All the heirmoi belong to John. The canon forms the acrostichis “Ἐκτιν δέησιν προσδέχου, Κωνσταντίνε”. This anonymous canon, which apparently is part of an octaechon, is handed down in a 16<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript of the Athonian Monastery of Great Lavra (Lavrae Θ 32, ff. 321r–315r), a paper Anthology containing services for all 12 months<sup>23</sup>. The service also includes Vespers. We do not know whether this canon is a text of the Byzantine period surviving in a later manuscript or a product of post-Byzantine hymnography. In this particular codex, the text has been copied rather clumsily, as it contains many noticeable errors, omissions of verses and metrical deviations.

As regards the canons composed in the post-Byzantine period, the following information is available:

5. A canon in the Second Mode, beginning with “Παντοκράτορ ὕψιστε, Χριστέ, βασιλεῦ αἰώνιε”, and with “Ἐν βυθῷ κατέστρωσε ποτέ” as the heirmos of the first ode. The heirmoi belong to John the Monk and Kosmas. The canon forms the acrostichis “Πιστῶν ἀνάκτων τὴν ἀπαρχὴν αἰνέσω· ὁ Μαλαξός”<sup>24</sup>. A. Luzzi published that canon from a Marcian codex<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> K. W. CLARK, *Checklist...*, p. 9; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οἱ ἅγιοι Κωνσταντίνος καὶ Ἑλένη...*, p. 49.

<sup>23</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ – ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝ (ΛΑΥΡΕΩΤΗΣ), *Κατάλογος τῶν κωδίκων τῆς Μεγίστης Λαύρας τῆς ἐν Ἁγίῳ Ὁρει, Ἐν Κανταβρυγίᾳ 1925* (= “Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη” 2–3), p. 138; Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Ἀγιολόγιον...*, p. 267; *ΙΔΕΜ*, *Ταμείον...*, p. 155; Ε. ΠΑΠΑΝΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 202, num. 615; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οἱ ἅγιοι Κωνσταντίνος καὶ Ἑλένη...*, p. 50.

<sup>24</sup> On the author Nikolaos Malaxos, who lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, cf. Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Ὁ Νικόλαος Μαλαξός, Πρωτοπαπᾶς Ναυπλίου καὶ το συγγραφικὸ τοῦ ἔργου*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2008 [= ΒΚΜ, 47], p. 98–125. The style of this specific canon is quite vivid and contains many references to the Old Testament.

<sup>25</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 274–291; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Ὁ Νικόλαος Μαλαξός...*, p. 198; *ΙΔΕΜ*, *Οἱ ἅγιοι Κωνσταντίνος καὶ Ἑλένη...*, p. 50.

6. A canon in the Plagal First Mode beginning with “Ὁ προγνώστης Θεός, ὁ ἐκ μὴ ὄντων τὸ πᾶν”, and with “Τῷ Σωτῆρι Θεῷ” as the heirmos of the first ode. All the heirmoi belong to John the Monk, while the composer of the canon is Cyril Lavriotes<sup>26</sup>. The canon is found:

- In a paper manuscript of the Monastery of Great Lavra, Mount Athos (Lavrae Ω 111) dating from 1789. The initial information about it is provided by S. Eustratiades<sup>27</sup>. The manuscript comprises the autograph codex of Cyril Lavriotes and contains prose and poetic works of the author. In this codex, the canon is presented without theotokia. The canon in the form in which it is included in Lavrae Ω 111 was published in 1938 in the journal “Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη” (“Agioreitikhē Bibliothēkē”) with no mention of the publisher’s name<sup>28</sup>.
- In a paper manuscript of the Skete of the Holy Trinity of Kafsokalyvia, Mount Athos (Kafsokalyvion 171, ff. 446–450) dating from the year 1892, an Anthology of services<sup>29</sup>. The beginning of this canon and the manuscript of Kafsokalyvia, without its number, are mentioned in the catalogue of E. Papailiopoulos-Photopoulos<sup>30</sup>. The later catalogue of manuscripts compiled by the monk Patapius helped to detect the number of the manuscript, although this catalogue does not mention the name of the poet. In the manuscript of Kafsokalyvia, the order of the troparia up until the seventh ode is different from the order found in the autographic codex Ω 111 of Great Lavra. The theotokia in all the odes encountered in this manuscript are the same as the ones in the canon of the Ascension.

7. A canon in the Plagal Second Mode beginning with “Ἀναξ ἀνάκτων, ὦ Λόγε Υἱὲ Θεοῦ”, and with “Ὡς ἐν ἠπείρῳ πεζεύσας” as the heirmos of the first ode. The heirmoi belong to John the Monk. In the canon there is an alphabetic

<sup>26</sup> On Cyril Lavriotes, the Athonian learned hieromonk of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, who came from Messenia and produced rich hymnographic work, cf. ΠΑΤΑΠΙΟΥ ΚΑΥΣΟΚΑΛΥΒΙΤΟΥ, Ὁ ἀγιορεΐτης λόγιος Κύριλλος Λαυριώτης καὶ τὰ ἀνέκδοτα Συναξάρια τοῦ Τριωδίου καὶ τοῦ Πεντηκοσταρίου. Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν μελέτη τοῦ ἔργου του, ΓΠ 844, 2012, p. 27–72; Π. ΠΑΣΧΟΣ, Ὑμνογραφία καὶ ὑμνογράφοι στοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους, [in:] Ἁγιον Ὄρος, Φύση-Λατρεία-Τέχνη, Πρακτικὰ Συνεδρίων εἰς τὸ πλαίσιον τῶν παράλληλων ἐκδηλώσεων «Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους», vol. I, Θεσσαλονίκη 2001, p. 212; Ν. ΛΙΒΑΝΟΣ, Ἀθωνικὲς ἐρευνες καὶ ἀθωνίτες λόγιοι στοῦ β' μισοῦ τοῦ 19<sup>ου</sup> καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ 20<sup>ου</sup> αἰῶνα, [in:] Τὸ Ἁγιον Ὄρος στὰ χρόνια τῆς Ἀπελευθέρωσης, Θεσσαλονίκη 2012, p. 214.

<sup>27</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ – ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝ (ΛΑΥΡΕΩΤΗΣ), Κατάλογος..., p. 353; Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, Ἀγιολόγιον..., p. 267.

<sup>28</sup> “Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη” 23–24, 1937–1938, p. 176–178.

<sup>29</sup> ΠΑΤΑΠΙΟΥ ΚΑΥΣΟΚΑΛΥΒΙΤΟΥ, Κατάλογος τῶν χειρόγραφων κωδίκων τοῦ κυριακοῦ τῆς Σκήτης Ἁγίας Τριάδος Κανσκαλυβίων, Θεσσαλονίκη 2005, p. 264, num. 25.

<sup>30</sup> Ε. ΠΑΠΑΝΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, Ταμείον..., p. 202, num. 614. No mention of the manuscript number is made in Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, Οἱ ἅγιοι Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ Ἑλένη..., p. 50.

acrostichis, while the initial letters of the theotokia form the name of Cyril Lavriotes. The text is included in the autographic codex of the poet of the Athonian monastery of Great Lavra (Lavrae Ω 111). The canon has been published in the journal “Ἀγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη”<sup>31</sup>.

8. A canon in the First Mode beginning with “Ἀναστάσεως ἡμέρα λαμπρῶν Χριστοῦ”, and with “Ἀναστάσεως ἡμέρα” as the heirmos of the first ode. This canon has been published in the “Ἀγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη”, where it is attributed to Theodore the Studite, without any reference to manuscripts<sup>32</sup>. A reference to the same canon is found in the catalogue of manuscripts of the Skete of Holy Trinity in Kafsokalyvia (Mount Athos), where the hieromonk Theodoritus from Ioannina is mentioned as the poet<sup>33</sup>. Commentary on the manuscripts and the canon may also be found in the work of monk Patapius on Theodoritus<sup>34</sup>.

### Historical events and hymnographic texts<sup>35</sup>

In all the existing hymnographic texts in honor of Saints Constantine and Helena, historical events from their lives are commemorated. What follows is an indicative reference to the most important ones, mainly from the texts that have not yet been published:

- From the life of Constantine the Great

The vision of the sign of the Cross in the sky is quite frequently mentioned. According to Eusebius of Caesarea<sup>36</sup>, this event was reported to him by Constantine the Great himself<sup>37</sup>. To provide an indicative sample, we cite the following troparia:

<sup>31</sup> “Ἀγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη” 23–24, 1937–1938, p. 178–182 (the publisher’s name is not specified).

<sup>32</sup> “Ἀγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη” 23–24, 1937–1938, p. 411–413.

<sup>33</sup> ΠΑΤΑΠΙΟΥ ΚΑΥΣΟΚΑΛΥΒΙΤΟΥ, *Κατάλογος...*, p. 218, num. 13.

<sup>34</sup> ΙΔΕΜ, *Ἀθωνικά Ὑμναγιολογικά Μελετήματα*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2014, p. 140–141, without any reference to the work published in “Ἀγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη”.

<sup>35</sup> The use of asterisk (\*) in the chapters III–IV indicates a change of verse and the use of *v* indicates the addition of a syllable.

<sup>36</sup> For the life and work of Eusebius of Caesarea, cf. ODB, s.v. Eusebios of Caesarea, p. 751–752; Α. ΚΑΡΠΟΖΗΛΟΣ, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι*, vol. I, Αθήνα 1997, p. 57–66.

<sup>37</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, *Über das Leben des Kaiser Konstantins*, ed. F. WINKELMANN, Berlin 1975 (revised ed. 1992) [= GCS, I.1] (cetera: EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS), p. 30 “Ἀμφὶ μεσημβρινὰς ἡλίου ὥρας, ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας ἀποκλινοῦσης, αὐτοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰδεῖν ἔφη ἐν αὐτῷ οὐρανῷ ὑπερκείμενον τοῦ ἡλίου σταυροῦ τρόπιον ἐκ φωτὸς συνιστάμενον, γραφὴν τε αὐτῷ συνῆφθαι λέγουσαν· τούτῳ νίκα”. This vision has raised many questions in historical research: Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, vol. I, Αθήνα 2002, p. 322–326; J.N. BREMMER, *The Vision of Constantine*, [in:] *Land of Dreams. Greek and Latin Studies in Honour of A.H.M. Kessels*, ed. A.H.M.H. LARDINOIS, M.G.M. VAN DER POEL,



Σὺ, βασιλεῦ, θεία ἐλλάμψει πεφώτισαι·\* ὁ γὰρ Σταυρὸς ὁ τίμιος\* ἀστροδεικτούμενος\* ἐπεφάνη σοι λέγων·\* Ἐν τούτῳ, Κωνσταντίνε,\* νικά τῷ ὄπλῳ ἐχθρούς<sup>38</sup>.

Similar content is also encountered in the exapostilarion:

Σταυρὸν τετραστερόφωτον\* ἐν οὐρανοῖς τεθέασαι,\* θεόστεπτε Κωνσταντίνε,\* φωνῆς δὲ θείας ἀκούσας\* ἐν τούτῳ νικά ἅπασας\* τὰς τῶν βαρβάρων φάλαγγας<sup>39</sup>.

This vision, according to Eusebius, was the point of Constantine's conversion to Christianity<sup>40</sup>. The same view is reflected in the kathisma below:

Τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἐκτείνας πρὸς οὐρανὸν\* καὶ τῶν ἄστρον μανθάνων τὴν καλλονὴν\* ἐκ τούτων μεμύησαι\* τῶν ἀπάντων τὸν Κύριον·\* τοῦ Σταυροῦ δὲ τὸ ὄπλον\* ἐν μέσῳ ἀνέλαμψε\* διαγράφων «ἐν τούτῳ\* νικᾶν καὶ κρατύνεσθαι»·\* ὅθεν τῆς ψυχῆς σου\* ἐπανοίξας τὸ ὄμμα\* τὸ γράμμα ἀνέγγνωκας\* καὶ τὸν τρόπον μεμάθηκας,\* Κωνσταντίνε πανσέβαστε<sup>41</sup>.

The defeat of his opponent, Maxentius, at the Tiber bridge in October 312 is illustrated in the troparion:

Ἡ μόνη γέφυρα\* Θεὸς καὶ Κύριος\* ὀπηνίκα σὲ εἶδεν\* ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς,\* τῆς γεφύρας ἔσωσε,\* τὸν δ' ἐχθρὸν σου τῷ βυθῷ,\* παραδίδωσι, θεσπέσιε<sup>42</sup>.

The founding of Constantinople in 324 is reminisced in the apolytikion for the two saints and in many troparia of the canons<sup>43</sup>. For example:

V.J.C. HUNINK, Brill–Leiden–Boston 2006, p. 57–59; J.W. DRIJVERS, *The Power of the Cross. Celestial Cross Appearances in the Fourth century*, [in:] *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. CAIN, N. LENSKI, Farnham 2009, p. 239–243; ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Βίος*, p. 522–526, where older literature is cited.

<sup>38</sup> Par. gr. 344, ff. 72v–73r; EHAL gr. 384, f. 326; Vatopediou 1667, f. 180r (βασιλεύς in cd.).

<sup>39</sup> Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΟΥ, *Ταμείον...*, p. 155.

<sup>40</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 81 “εἰκότως ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸς ξένον τι χρῆμα προστησάμενος τὰ μὴτ’ ἀκοῆ γνωσθέντα μὴτ’ ὄψει παραδοθέντα δι’ αὐτοῦ κατειργάζετο”. On his conversion, cf. J.N. BREMMER, *The Vision...*, p. 67–74; J.W. DRIJVERS, *The Power...*, p. 240.

<sup>41</sup> MR, V, 141.

<sup>42</sup> “Ἄγιορειτική Βιβλιοθήκη” 23–24, 1937–1938, p. 179; EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 35; on the association of Constantine the Great with Moses, cf. C. RAPP, *Imperial ideology in the making: Eusebius of Caesarea on Constantine as ‘Bishop’*, JTS 49.2, 1998, p. 685–695; EADEM, *Old Testament Models for Emperors in Early Byzantium*, [in:] *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. P. MAGDALINO, R. NELSON, Washington 2010, p. 182–183.

<sup>43</sup> A. CAMERON, *Ἡ Ὑστερὴ Ρωμαϊκὴ Αυτοκρατορία (284 AD–430 AD)*, Αθήνα 2000, p. 108–109; Ι. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Τὸ Βυζαντινὸ Κράτος*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2001, p. 68–70; Ε. ΓΛΥΚΑΤΖΗ-ΑΡΒΕΛΕΡ, *Ἡ πολιτικὴ ἰδεολογία τῆς βυζαντινῆς αυτοκρατορίας*, Αθήνα 2007, p. 17–22; G. DAGRON, *Ἡ γέννηση μιᾶς πρωτεύουσας. Ἡ Κωνσταντινούπολη καὶ οἱ θεσμοὶ τῆς (330–451)*, Αθήνα 2009, p. 22–53.

Πόλιν τερπνὴν σὺ ἐκ τερμάτων συνέστησας\* τὴν ἀληθῶς ἐπτάλοφον\* καὶ θεοπύργωτον,\*  
ἔνθα οἱ τῶν Ῥωμαίων\* σκηπτροῦχοι κραταιοῦνται\* καὶ μεγαλύνονται<sup>44</sup>.

Constantine the Great is credited with the initiative to convene the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea in 325, during which the Arian doctrine was condemned<sup>45</sup>. These events are noted in the following troparion:

Ἐκ τῶν τῆς γῆς τεσσάρων περάτων, ἔνδοξε,\* ἡ ἐν Νικαίᾳ σύνοδος\* τῷ σῶ προστάγματι\*  
συνηθοίσθη, παμμάκαρ,\* Ἀρείου καθελοῦσα\* δόγμα τὸ ἄθεον<sup>46</sup>.

and in the sticheron of the Lauds:

Μέγας φωστήρ ἐξανέτειλας τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Χριστοῦ, Κωνσταντίνε μακάριε\* διὰ σοῦ γὰρ  
Ἄρειος ὁ παμμίαρος πέπτωκε\* καὶ ἀπεδείχθη ὀρθοδοξίας ἐχθρός\* συνοδικῶς γὰρ τοῦτον  
κατέβαλες\* ὅθεν αἰτουμέν σε\* τῷ Σωτῆρι πρέσβευε\* ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν\* πίστει τῶν τελούντων  
σου\* τὴν μνήμην σήμερον<sup>47</sup>.

The contribution of Constantine the Great to the formation of the Creed has also been decisive<sup>48</sup>. This fact is depicted in the troparion:

Σοῦ μακαρία ἡ μνήμη,\* ὑπερένδοξε ἀναξ,\* ἐν πάσῃ γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ\* σὺ γὰρ φυτὸν κατε-  
φύτευσας\* ἐπὶ γῆς καρποφόρον\* ἐκτρέφων τοῦ Κυρίου τὸν λαὸν\* τὴν ὀρθόδοξον πίστιν, τὸ  
τῆς Τριάδος σύμβολον<sup>49</sup>.

Hymnographic texts often refer to the demolition of pagan temples and altars<sup>50</sup> and the construction of Christian churches<sup>51</sup>. As an example, we cite the following troparion:

Ναοὺς καὶ βωμοὺς\* τῶν εἰδώλων καταστρέψας, παμμάκαριστε,\* ναοὺς Κυρίῳ ᾠκοδόμησας\*  
καὶ τῶν ἁγίων τὰ λείψανα\* τούτοις εὐσεβῶς ἐναπέθου\* καὶ πανσόφως ἀνέκραξες\* εὐλογη-  
τὸς εἶ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 73r; EHA I gr. 384, f. 326; Vatopediou 1667, f. 180r.

<sup>45</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 83–85; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστική Ἱστορία*..., p. 413–469.

<sup>46</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 73r; EHA I gr. 384, f. 326 (τῶν τεσσάρων τῆς γῆς in cd); Vatopediou 1667, f. 180r (σκηπτροῦχοι in cd.).

<sup>47</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca*..., p. 71.

<sup>48</sup> Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστική Ἱστορία*..., p. 464.

<sup>49</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 79v; EHA I gr. 384, f. 332; Vatopediou 1667, f. 182r.

<sup>50</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 96, 106–110, 111.

<sup>51</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 66–67, 101–102, 104–105; G. DAGRON, *Ἡ γέννηση*..., p. 442–457.

<sup>52</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 78v; EHA I gr. 384, f. 330; Vatopediou 1667, f. 182r.

In a canon, it is mentioned that Saint Constantine had placed one of the nails used to crucify Christ in the bridle of his horse:

Σὺ χαλινὸν προφητικῶς\* τὸν τοῦ ἵππου κατεσκεύασας, παμμάκαρ,\* ἐκ τῶν τιμίῳν ἡλῶν\* τῶν ἐμπαρέντων χερσίν\* ἀγίας Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν\* καὶ τοῦτο ὄπλον εὐρες\* κατ' ἐχθρῶν ἐν πολέμοις<sup>53</sup>.

This event is mentioned by historians Socrates Scholasticus, Theodoret of Cyrus and Sozomen and is correlated with prophet Zechariah of the Old Testament<sup>54</sup>.

There are many references to the baptism of Saint Constantine<sup>55</sup>. However, in the hymnographic texts the name of the person who baptized him, Sylvester, is mentioned only in two instances<sup>56</sup>. A canon reads:

Ναὸς γενόμενος Θεοῦ\* τῇ θεογενεσίᾳ\* <υῦῦῦῦ>\* τοῦ Σιλβέστρου βαπτισμῶ\* καὶ τῶν εἰδώλων βωμοῦς\* καταστρέψας,\* ἄναξ Κωνσταντίνε σοφέ<sup>57</sup>.

- From the life of Saint Helena

Saint Helena<sup>58</sup>, the Equal-to-apostles<sup>59</sup>, “ἡ πανάγαστος ὄντως βασίλισσα” and “εὐεργέτις πιστῶν”<sup>60</sup>, led a virtuous life. In the hymnographic texts, her name is

<sup>53</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 79r.

<sup>54</sup> SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I, 17, ed. P. MARAVAL, P. PÉRICHON, Paris 2004–2007 [= SC, 67]; THEODORET, *Kirchengeschichte*, 64, 21, ed. L. PARMENTIER, F. SCHEIDWEILER, Berlin 1954 [= GCS, 44]; SOZOMENUS, *Kirchengeschichte*, II, 1, 9, ed. J. BIDEZ, G.C. HANSEN, Berlin 1960 [= GCS, 50]; Zach 14: 20 – *Septuaginta*, ed. A. RAHLFS, R. HANHART, Stuttgart 2006; J.W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta...*, p. 152. This information is also mentioned in the synaxarion of the 14<sup>th</sup> September, cf. *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae...*, col. 45. On the hypothesis that the nails were added to the crown of the statue of Constantine the Great standing on the red Porphyry column of Constantinople, cf. ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Bίος*, p. 600.

<sup>55</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 278.

<sup>56</sup> S.N.C. LIEU, D. MONTSERRAT, *From Constantine to Julian. Pagan and Byzantine Views*, London–New York 1996, p. 26–28; A. KAZHDAN, *A History of Byzantine History (650–850)*, vol. I, Athens 1999, p. 131.

<sup>57</sup> Lavrae Θ 32, f. 313r. A reference to Sylvester is also found in a sticheron of the Vespers, cf. MR, V, 135.

<sup>58</sup> Quite comprehensive information about the life, activity and personal characteristics of the saint is contained in E. ΑΜΟΙΡΙΔΟΥ, *Φλαβία Ιουλία Ελένη και Μ. Κωνσταντίνος: το πορτραίτο μιας Μητέρας, Χριστιανής και Ρωμαίας Αυγούστας*, [in:] *Ο Μέγας Κωνσταντίνος και η εποχή του. 1700 χρόνια από το διάταγμα των Μεδιολάνων*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2020 (forthcoming).

<sup>59</sup> Kafsokalyvion 171, f. 447.

<sup>60</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 282.

primarily associated with the discovery of the Holy Cross, the spear and the nails<sup>61</sup>. A troparion reads:

Σὺ ἀνεδείχθης ἐν κόσμῳ\* καρποφόρος ἐλαία,\* Ἑλένη, ἐκβλαστήσασα ἡμῖν\* πᾶσιν τὸ φῶς καὶ τὸ ἔλεος,\* τὸν Σταυρὸν τοῦ Κυρίου,\* τὴν λόγχην καὶ τοὺς ἦλους, καὶ τὴν σὴν\* ὑπερβαύμα- στον μνήμην\* τελοῦντες ἐορτάζομεν<sup>62</sup>.

According to Eusebius, she rebuilt ruined churches in the Holy Land<sup>63</sup>. In the Menaion of May, we find the troparion:

Ὡς θαυμαστὸς ὁ πόθος σου\* καὶ ὁ τρόπος σου ἔνθεος,\* ἔνδοξε Ἑλένη,\* γυναικῶν τὸ καύχημα\* τὸς τόπους γὰρ φθάσασα,\* τοὺς τὰ σεπτὰ παθήματα\* ὑποδεξαμένους τοῦ Δεσπότη τῶν ὅλων,\* ναοὶς περικαλλέσι\* κατεκόσμηες βοῶσα\* Λαὸς ὑπερψῶστε Χριστὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας<sup>64</sup>.

Eusebius mentions that Constantine the Great converted his mother to Christianity, but in a troparion of the canon of Cyril Lavriotes the reverse idea is expressed:

Τρωθείσα τῇ ἀγάπῃ τοῦ Κτίστου σου\* ταύτη καὶ τὸν υἱὸν μετερρῦθμισας,\* Ἑλένη θεία, κοσμοπόθητε<sup>65</sup>.

### Political ideology and hymnographic texts

Although no Byzantine texts containing systematized views on the characteristics of the emperor have been handed down to us, we can locate and derive relevant information from other genres, such as the mirrors for princes, ceremonial speeches, preambles to laws, hagiological and historical texts<sup>66</sup>. In the same

<sup>61</sup> On the depiction of the discovery of the Holy Cross by Saint Helena in modern literature, cf. J.W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta...*, p. 149–150, 167.

<sup>62</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 80r; EHAI gr. 384, f. 332; Vatopediou 1667, f. 183r.

<sup>63</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 101.

<sup>64</sup> MR, V, 143; A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 284.

<sup>65</sup> Lavrae Θ 32, f. 447; EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 103 “οὕτω μὲν αὐτὴν θεοσεβῆ καταστήσαντα οὐκ οὔσαν πρότερον”; J.N. BREMMER, *The Vision...*, p. 69; J.W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta...*, p. 135.

<sup>66</sup> The literature on the hagiological texts referring to Saints Constantine and Helena is quite extensive. Particularly important are the biographies composed in the Byzantine period. The division of these biographies into five groups is very informative and useful to the researcher, cf. S.N.C. LIEU, D. MONTSERRAT, *From Constantine...*, p. 97–105; N. LENSKI, *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, Cambridge 2012, p. 306–307. Cf. also (indicatively) A. KAZHDAN, “Constantin Imaginaire”. *Byzantine Legends of the Ninth century about Constantine the Great*, B 57, 1987, p. 196–250; IDEM, *Literature...*, p. 127–136; Σ. ΠΑΣΧΑΛΙΑΔΗΣ, Ὁ ιδεώδης ἀυτοκράτορας. Ὁ Μέγας Κωνσταντῖνος στη μεσοβυζαντινὴ ἀγιολογικὴ γραμματεία καὶ πολιτικὴ ιδεολογία, [in:] *Niš and Byzantium. Fifth...*

perspective we might also consider hymnographic production, which has been a popular research subject in recent years<sup>67</sup>.

These characterizations do not appear for the first time in hymnographic texts. Many of those virtues were attributed to the two saints as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century, mainly by Eusebius, while others relate to the political ideology of Byzantium<sup>68</sup>. Eusebius, principally through his two works *Life of Constantine* and *Tricennial Oration*, was the founder of the political theology of the Church, adding the Christian teachings to the concepts that had existed since the ancient classical and Hellenistic times<sup>69</sup>.

By studying the contents of the relevant hymnographic texts, one can clearly identify the images, traits and qualities of the two saints.

God crowned Saint Constantine as emperor and granted him the imperial authority. These views are present in many hymns. As an example, we cite the following troparion:

Ἐπέγνωσ τὸν ἄφθαρτον βασιλέα\* τὸν τὰ ἐπίγεια σκήπτρα\* τῆ σῆ δεδωκότα χειρὶ\* καὶ γέγονας ὑπήκοος\* θεράπων, Κωνσταντίνε, Χριστοῦ<sup>70</sup>.

p. 39–49; E. ΚΟΥΝΤΟΥΡΑ-ΓΑΛΑΚΗ, *Ο Μέγας Κωνσταντίνος στο αγιολογικό έργο του Κωνσταντίνου Ακροπολίτη: Ιδεολογικές επαναλήψεις και νέες προσεγγίσεις*, [in:] *Aureus. Αφιερωματικός τόμος στον καθηγητή Ευάγγ. Χρυσό*, ed. T. ΚΟΛΛΙΑΣ, Κ. ΠΙΤΣΑΚΗΣ, Κ. ΣΥΝΕΛΛΗ, Αθήνα 2014, p. 679–704; T. PRATSCH, *Constantin der Große in der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, [in:] *Prosopon Rhomaikon. Erzählende Studien zur Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, ed. A. BEIHAMMER, B. KRÖNUNG, C. LUDWIG, Berlin–Boston 2017, p. 65–83. More information about the field of historiography cf. (indicatively) A. ΜΑΡΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Constantine the Great in Macedonian Historiography: Models and Approaches*, [in:] *New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries*, ed. P. MAGDALINO, Aldershot 1994, p. 159–179. On the issue of the preambles to laws, cf. G. ΠΑΠΑΓΙΑΝΝΙΣ, Μ. ΤΖΙΑΤΖΙ-ΠΑΠΑΓΙΑΝΝΙ, V.-A. ΚΟΛΛΙΑΣ, Α. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Observations on the Portrayal of the Ruler in the Novels of Leo VI*, SCer 11, 2021, p. 348–349.

<sup>67</sup> I. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Το βυζαντινό...*, p. 287, 289; A. SPANOS, *Political Approaches to Byzantine Liturgical Texts*, [in:] *Approaches to the Text. From Pre-Gospel to Post-Baroque*, ed. R. ERIKSEN, P. GOUNG, Pisa–Rome 2014, p. 64, 79–81; A. LUZZI, *Il dies...*, p. 629–634; Δ. ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οί ἅγιοι Κωνσταντίνος καὶ Ἐλένη...*, p. 47–49.

<sup>68</sup> H.G. BECK, *Η βυζαντινή χλιετία*, Αθήνα 2000, p. 105; E. ΓΛΥΚΑΤΖΗ-ΑΡΒΕΛΕΡ, *Η πολιτική ιδεολογία...*, p. 21–22.

<sup>69</sup> T.D. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1981, p. 261–271; H. HUNGER, *Βυζαντινή Λογοτεχνία. Η λόγια κοσμική γραμματεία τῶν Βυζαντινῶν*, vol. I, Ἀθήνα 1991, p. 134; S.N.C. LIEU, D. MONTERRAT, *From Constantine...*, p. 97–99; C. RAPP, *Imperial Ideology...*, p. 685–695; ΕΑΔΕΜ, *Old Testament Models...*, p. 182; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστική Ιστορία...*, p. 326; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Η θεματική των βυζαντινῶν «Κατόπτρων ηγεμόνος» της πρώιμης και μέσης περιόδου (398–1085)*, Αθήνα 2017, p. 298; for a different perspective, cf. A. KALDELLIS, *The Byzantine Republic. People and Power in New Rome*, Cambridge, Massachusetts–London 2015, p. 167–168; Π. ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑΔΗ, *Η άνοδος της μονοδοξίας στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα*, Αθήνα 2018, p. 115–122.

<sup>70</sup> Alex. Patr. 93, f. 75v (θεράπον in cod.); Par. gr. 1566, f. 64r (Ἀπέγνωσ in cd); Sin. gr. 637, f. 62v (πιστώτατε (sic) θεράπον Χριστοῦ in cod.); Sin. gr. 670, f. 190v (θεράπον in cd.).

and the exapostilarion:

Οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων εἴληφε τὸ βασιλεῖον κράτος\* ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς θείας χάριτος Κωνσταντίνος  
ὁ μέγας\* σὺν τῇ μητρὶ οὐρανόθεν...<sup>71</sup>

His reign is characterized by the principles of justice, gentleness and sympathy:

Τὴν βασιλείαν σου ἐνδόξως κατεκόσμησε\* δικαιοσύνη καὶ πραότης καὶ συμπάθεια\* ὀρθοδο-  
ξία λάμπουσαν,\* ὅθεν αἰωνίζει ἡ μνήμη σου<sup>72</sup>.

and

Ὁ πορφυρίδα ἐνθέως\* τὴν συμπάθειαν <υ> στολισθεῖς\* καὶ ὁ χλαμύδα {τὴν} καλλίστην\* τὴν  
πραότητα <κατα>κοσμηθεῖς,\* βασιλεὺς ὁ θεῖος,\* ὕμνεϊ ὁ Κωνσταντίνος\* {τὸν} Χριστὸν εἰς  
τοὺς αἰῶνας<sup>73</sup>.

He is full of sympathy, love and compassion, traits that are also mentioned  
in the troparion:

Ὡς πορφυρίδα, ἔνδοξε,\* στολισθεῖς τὴν εὐμένειαν\* καὶ ὡσπερ χλαμύδα\* τὴν καλὴν συμπά-  
θειαν\* στεφάνῳ κεκόσμησαι\* τῶν ἀρετῶν τελείῳ νοῖ\* καὶ μετατεθεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς εἰς τὰ ἄνω\*  
βασιλεία κραυγάζεις\* Ἱερεῖς εὐλογεῖτε, λαὸς ὑπερυψοῦτε\* Χριστὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας<sup>74</sup>.

Saint Constantine abandoned the patriarchal fallacy, a fact that is mentioned  
numerous times in hymnography. Quite typical is the troparion cited below:

Τῷ φωτὶ ἐλλαμφθεῖς\* τοῦ ζωφόρου Σταυροῦ\* εἰδώλων πλάνην πᾶσαν <κατ>έλιπες\* καὶ  
τὸν Χριστὸν πάντων Θεὸν ὄντα προέκρινας <υ>\* διὸ καὶ δεδόξασαι\* ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πάνσοφε<sup>75</sup>.

He was a victor and conqueror with the help of faith and the Cross. Hymnog-  
rapher Nikolaos Malaxos writes:

Νικήσας ἐχθρῶν\* παρατάξεις, μάκαρ, διὰ πίστεως\* συνεστήσω τρόπαια\* κατὰ αἰσθητῶν καὶ  
νοουμένων τε\* δυσμενῶν ἐσπερίοις\* δι' ἀμφοῖν θαυμαζόμενος<sup>76</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> MR, V, 144.

<sup>72</sup> Alex. Patr. 93 f. 76; Par. gr. 1566, f. 66r; Sin. gr. 637, f. 64r; Sin. gr. 670, f. 197v–198r.

<sup>73</sup> Lavrae Ω 111, f. 184r.

<sup>74</sup> MR, V, 143.

<sup>75</sup> Lavrae Ω 111, f. 183r; on the same issue, cf. also MR, V, 144 “Ὁ βασιλεύων τῆς κτίσεως...”; EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 29 “τὸν δὲ πατρῶον τιμᾶν μόνον ψετο δεῖν Θεόν”; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία...*, p. 321.

<sup>76</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 280.

In another canon we read:

Ὁ πάλαι τὴν νίκην διὰ Σταυροῦ σου\* κατὰ βαρβάρων παρασχῶν\* τῷ σῶ Κωνσταντίνῳ\* αὐτὸς τῷ βασιλεῖ ἡμῶν\* καὶ τὰ νῦν ἐπικούρησον<sup>77</sup>.

He subdued his passions and had pious thoughts<sup>78</sup>. These qualities are also displayed in the troparion:

Θεόστεπτε,\* εὐσεβεῖ λογισμῶ κυβερνώμενος\* καὶ ἀνδρείως\* τῶν παθῶν αὐτοκράτωρ γενόμενος\* ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ\* τὸν λαὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκυβέρνησας<sup>79</sup>.

Both he and his mother, Saint Helena, despised the pleasures of the world:

Κοσμίους πάσας τὰς ἡδονάς,\* καίπερ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς,\* ὅλως ἐλογίσασθε ἅγιοι,\* Κωνσταντίνε μάκαρ σοφέ,\* Ἐλένη σεπτῆ,\* διὸ ἐπαξίως αἰεὶ ἀγάλλεσθε<sup>80</sup>.

He was admitted to the heavenly kingdom because he reigned in piety, based on the laws of the State, and was subject to God<sup>81</sup>. He acquired the confidence (*parrhesia*) to intercede to God, while his tomb works miracles<sup>82</sup>. These attributes are expressed in the troparia cited below:

Εὐσεβῶς βασιλεύσας\* καὶ ἐννόμως ἰθύννας\* λαὸν τὸν ὑπήκοον\* ὡς Θεῶ ὑπήκοος,\* βασιλείας οὐρανῶν\* κατηξιώθης, βασιλεῦ θεόστεπτε<sup>83</sup>.

and

Ἡ ἐκκλησία τὰ σά\* ἀνδραγαθήματα βοᾷ, ἔνδοξε \* ἡ ὑπὸ σοῦ\* καινισθεῖσα πόλις\* θαυμάτων τὰ τερπνά,\* ἡ λάρναξ σου βρῦει\* πηγὴν τῶν ἰάσεων<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>77</sup> Alex. Patr. 93, f. 75v; Par. gr. 1566, f. 65r; Sin. gr. 637, f. 63v; on the same issue, cf. MR, V, 134; on the characterization of the enemies as “barbarians”, cf. A. SPANOS, *Political Approaches...*, p. 67–68; on the connection of the Cross with hymnography, especially that of 14 September, cf. *ibidem*, p. 69–72.

<sup>78</sup> ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Εἰς Κωνσταντίνον τὸν Βασιλέα Τριακονταετηρικός*, ed. I. ΗΕΙΚΕΛ, Leipzig 1902 (cetera: *Tricennial Oration*), p. 204 “νικητῆς ἐτύμως ὁ τὴν νίκην τῶν καταπαλαιόντων θνητῶν γένος παθῶν ἀράμενος” and *passim*; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Η θεματική...*, p. 183–184.

<sup>79</sup> Alex. Patr. 93, f. 76v; Par. gr. 1566, f. 66r; Sin. gr. 637, f. 64v; Sin. gr. 670, f. 199v.

<sup>80</sup> “Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη” 23–24, 1937–1938, p. 179.

<sup>81</sup> MR, V, 139.

<sup>82</sup> On the fact that Saint Constantine constructed his tomb in advance in the church of the Holy Apostles, cf. EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 144–145. On the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, cf. G. DAGRON, *Η γέννηση...*, p. 457–466; I.A. ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Οἰκοδομώντας τὴ νέα μοναρχία*, [in:] *The Church in the Age of the Holy Emperor Constantine the Great. Πρακτικὰ Διεθνούς Ἐπιστημονικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, Βελιγράδι 2013, p. 106–108.

<sup>83</sup> Sin. gr. 637, f. 66r.

<sup>84</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 74v; EHA I gr. 384, f. 328.

St. Constantine is often compared to figures of the Old Testament. In a troparion from the canon of Nikolaos Malaxos we read:

Ἀπάντων κεκλήρωσαι\* δικαίων τὰ χαρίσματα\* Μωϋσέως τὸ πρᾶον\* τὰς ἀριστείας τε\* Ἰησοῦ Ναυῆ, τοῦ Δαυὶδ δὲ\* τὸ κραταῖόν,\* Ἥλιου τὸν ζῆλον\* τῶν λοιπῶν ἀγίων τε\* τὸν θερμὸν πρὸς Χριστὸν ἔρωτα<sup>85</sup>.

The parallelism to Moses is particularly emphasized in the reference to the appearance of the Cross. A sticheron of the Vespers reads:

Κύριε,\* ὡσπερ τῷ Μωσῆ φανερωθεὶς ὁ Σταυρός σου\* προετύπου δὲ τὴν ἀλήθειαν\* τροπούμενα τὰ ἔθνη\*...<sup>86</sup>

The strong and gentle spirit of David and the wisdom and prudence of Solomon also constitute characteristics of Saint Constantine. At Vespers there is again a relevant troparion:

Ἐδωκας, φιλάνθρωπε,\* τῷ εὐσεβεῖ σου θεράποντι\* Σολομώντος τὴν φρόνησιν,\* Δαυὶδ τὴν πραότητα\* καὶ τῶν Ἀποστόλων τὴν ὀρθοδοξίαν...<sup>87</sup>

Among the figures of the New Testament, a parallelism between Saint Constantine and Paul the Apostle is drawn<sup>88</sup>. Several times the saint is called Equal-to-apostles and successor of the Apostles<sup>89</sup>. The vision of the Cross was seen as a direct divine call, following Paul's case, and this is directly mentioned in the apolytikion:

Τοῦ Σταυροῦ σου τὸν τύπον\* ἐν οὐρανῷ θεασάμενος\* καὶ ὡς ὁ Παῦλος τὴν κλῆσιν\* οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δεξάμενος\* ὁ ἐν βασιλεῦσιν Ἀπόστολός σου, Κύριε,\* Βασιλεῦσαν πόλιν τῆ χειρὶ σου παρέθετο...<sup>90</sup>

<sup>85</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 288, where the saint is also compared to Abraham.

<sup>86</sup> Τ.Π. ΘΕΜΕΛΗΣ, *Τὰ μηναῖα ἀπὸ τοῦ 11<sup>ου</sup> μέχρι τοῦ 13<sup>ου</sup> αἰῶνος*, ΕΦ 30, 1931, p. 533; C. RAPP, *Imperial Ideology...*, p. 694–695; ΕΑΔΕΜ, *Old Testament Models...*, p. 182–183.

<sup>87</sup> MR, V, 134; G. DAGRON, *Emperor and Priest. The Imperial Office in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2003 [= PPP], p. 48–50.

<sup>88</sup> MR, V, 141 “Οὐρανόθεν ὡς Παῦλον σε\* πάλαι σαγηνεῦει Χριστὸς ὁ Κύριος...”

<sup>89</sup> Kafsokalyvion 171, f. 447; Par. gr. 344, f. 78v; EHAI gr. 384, f. 330; Alex. Patr. 93, f. 76v; Par. gr. 1566, f. 66v; ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, *Bíos*, p. 646; G. DAGRON, *Emperor...*, p. 135–143; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία...*, p. 327; O. GORDON, *Constantine the Great – Ὁ Ἰσαπόστολος*, ΙϚ 10, 2013, p. 60–61; H. DRAKE, *The Emperor as a “Man of God”: the Impact of Constantine the Great’s. Conversion on Roman Ideas of Kingship*, Hi (Sao Paolo) 35, 2016, p. 5–8; A. LUZZI, *Da ἐν βασιλεῦσι ἀπόστολος α ἰσαπόστολος tout court. Note sull’ epiteto isapostolos e sulla sua originaria associazione al nome dell’ imperatore Costantino il Grande*, [in:] “Ἀνατολή καὶ δύσις”. *Studi in Memoria di Filippo Burgarella*, ed. G. STRANO, C. TORRE, Roma 2020 [= TSB-N, 21], p. 255, 267–275.

<sup>90</sup> MR, V, 139; A. LUZZI, *Da ἐν βασιλεῦσι ἀπόστολος...*, p. 272.



and in a troparion of the canon composed by Nikolaos Malaxos:

Ἀρίστως διαπρέποντα\* σὲ ὁρῶν ὁ ὕψιστος\* ἐν θεαρέστοις πράξεσιν,\* οὐρανόθεν ὡς Παῦλον  
κέκληκε\* δι' ἀστέρων σταυρόν σοι προδεικνύμενος<sup>91</sup>.

Furthermore, in a sticheron of the Vespers, St. Constantine is characterized as priest and king:

...ἱερεύς τε χρισθεὶς καὶ βασιλεὺς\* ἔλαιψ ἐστήριξας τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ...<sup>92</sup>

He is an earthly angel and at the same time a heavenly man, a temple of the Holy Spirit. In the third ode of the canon contained in the manuscript Θ 32 of Great Lavra monastery, we read:

Ναὸς γεγένησαι\* τοῦ θείου Πνεύματος,\* Κωνσταντῖνε παμμάκαρ,\* ὡς ἀληθῶς...<sup>93</sup>

and in the sixth ode:

Ἐπίγειος ἄγγελος\* ἀνεδείχθης ἀληθῶς\* καὶ οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος,\* παμμάκαρ Κωνσταντῖνε,  
μύστα Χριστοῦ...<sup>94</sup>

Quite often the expression of these characteristics includes the concept of *light*: he shone the light of righteousness in the world<sup>95</sup>, he was “λαμπρὸς κομήτης ἐσπερώτατος”<sup>96</sup>, “φωστήρ τῶν ἐσκοτισμένων”<sup>97</sup>, “μέγας φωστήρ”<sup>98</sup>, “σέλας φαινότατον”<sup>99</sup>. In a kathisma we read:

<sup>91</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 276; and in a sticheron of the Vespers “Κύριε, ὡσπερ κατὰ Παῦλον τῷ σῶ Κωνσταντῖνῳ ἄνωθεν ὤφθης...”; Τ.Π. ΘΕΜΕΛΗΣ, *Τὰ μηναιῖα...*, p. 533.

<sup>92</sup> MR, V, 139; Π. ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ, *Ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ ὁ ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον*, Κλη 3, 1971, p. 13; G. DAGRON, *Emperor...*, p. 126–135; E. ΓΛΥΚΑΤΖΗ-ΑΡΒΕΛΕΡ, *Γιατὶ το Βυζάντιο*, Αθήνα 2009, p. 153–162.

<sup>93</sup> Lavrae Θ 32, f. 313r.

<sup>94</sup> Lavrae Θ 32, f. 313v.

<sup>95</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 274; cf. EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 55–56 “μᾶ τε τοῦ παντός ἀρχῆ ὡσπερ τινὶ κεφαλῇ τὸ πᾶν κατεκοσμεῖτο σῶμα μοναρχικῆς ἐξουσίας διὰ πάντων ἡκούσης, λαμπραὶ τε φωτὸς εὐσεβείας μαρμαρυγαί”. He is also compared to the sun by Eusebius: cf. EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 38 “Ὡσπερ δ’ ἀνίσχων ὑπὲρ γῆς ἥλιος ἀφθόνως τοῖς πᾶσι τῶν τοῦ φωτὸς μεταδίδωσι μαρμαρυγῶν, κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ δὴ καὶ Κωνσταντῖνος ἅμα ἡλίῳ ἀνίσχοντι τῶν βασιλικῶν οἴκων προφαινόμενος, ὡσαυτὲρ συνανατέλλων τῷ κατ’ οὐρανὸν φωστῆρι, τοῖς εἰς πρόσωπον αὐτῶ παριοῦσιν ἅπασιν φωτὸς αὐγὰς τῆς οἰκείας ἐξέλαμπε καλοκαγαθίας”. On the connection of the symbol of the sun with the imperial idea, cf. H. HUNGER, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, Wien 1964 [= WBS, 1], p. 75–80.

<sup>96</sup> A. LUZZI, *Il canone...*, p. 280.

<sup>97</sup> MR, V, 141.

<sup>98</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca...*, p. 71.

<sup>99</sup> MR, V, 139.

Θείαν ἔλλαμψιν καταπλουτίσας\* ὄρθρος ἔλαμψας θεογνωσίας\* καταφωτίζων εὐσεβεία τὰ πέρατα...<sup>100</sup>

In addition, this image of *light* is also conveyed to us by Eusebius in his narrative. While describing the first time he saw emperor Constantine as the latter was entering the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, he mentions:

αὐτὸς δὴ λοιπὸν διέβαινε μέσος οἷα θεοῦ τις οὐράνιος ἄγγελος, λαμπρὰν μὲν ὡσπερ φωτὸς μαρμαρυγαῖς ἐξαστράπτων περιβολήν, ἀλουργίδος δὲ πυρωποῖς καταλαμπόμενος ἀκτίσι, χρυσοῦ τε καὶ λίθων πολυτελῶν διαυγέσι φέγγεσι κοσμούμενος<sup>101</sup>.

This event is recorded in the third book of his work *Life of Constantine*. But even in the first book of the same work it is emphasized that the bearer of the royal power must be the chosen of God and reign over the entire world according to God's will<sup>102</sup>. In the *Tricennial Oration* the reinforcing element of the vision is also mentioned as an indication of God's favor<sup>103</sup>. The emperor must rule with loyalty to the law and paternal stewardship, and he must lead his subjects to the knowledge of God<sup>104</sup>. The peace, security and salvation of the subjects, which all constitute primary goals of the sovereign, are also reflected in hymnography. We read in a troparion:

Στερέωμα ἡμῖν καὶ τεῖχος ἄρρηκτον\* καὶ ὄπλον ἐγένου καὶ σωτηρία\* τοῖς ἐν κόσμῳ, θεοπρόβλητε\* βασιλεῦ, Κωνσταντίνε, παμμακάριστε<sup>105</sup>.

The convening of the Council of Nicaea and the fight against heresies are also placed in the context of the political pacification of the state<sup>106</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> S. GASSISI, *Innologia Graeca...*, p. 63.

<sup>101</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 86.

<sup>102</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 27 “Οὕτω δὴ Κωνσταντῖνον, τοιοῦτου φύντα πατρός, ἄρχοντα καὶ καθηγεμόνα τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς ὁ τοῦ σύμπαντος κόσμου πρῦτανις δι’ ἑαυτοῦ προεχειρίζετο”; *Tricennial Oration*, p. 199 “παρ’ οὗ καὶ δι’ οὗ τῆς ἀνωτάτω βασιλείας τὴν εἰκόνα φέρων ὁ τῷ Θεῷ φίλος βασιλεὺς κατὰ μίμησιν τοῦ κρείττονος τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς ἀπάντων τοῦς οἵακας διακυβερνῶν ἰθύνει”; H. HUNGER, *Prooimion...*, p. 49–50; Π. ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ, *Ὁ βασιλεὺς...*, p. 12; A. CAMERON, *Ἡ Ὑστερη...*, p. 115–116; I. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Το βυζαντινό...*, p. 294–295; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία...*, p. 326; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Ἡ θεματικὴ...*, p. 32–33.

<sup>103</sup> *Tricennial Oration*, p. 212 “ὅ καὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ σωτήριον ἀνέδειξε σημεῖον”.

<sup>104</sup> I. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Το βυζαντινό...*, p. 291–292; on the analogy to the image of the shepherd, cf. *Tricennial Oration*, p. 214–215 “ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ποιμὴν ἀγαθὸς τῆς αὐτοῦ ποιμνῆς τὸ πεπλανημένον ἀπαθῶς παρίδοι ἂν θρέμμα, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν εὖ ἔχοντα αὐτῷ ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ κείμενα καταλείψει, τῆς δὲ τοῦ πεπλανημένου χάριν σωτηρίας πᾶν ὅτιοῦν ἂν πάθοι, εἰ καὶ πρὸς θήρας ἀγρίου συμπλακῆναι δέοι”.

<sup>105</sup> Par. gr. 344, ff. 73r–73v; EHA1 gr. 384, f. 327; Vatopediou 1667, f. 180v.

<sup>106</sup> On the Synod of Nicaea, cf. EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 74–79, where Constantine's letter to bishop Alexander and presbyter Arius is quoted; I. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Το βυζαντινό...*, p. 307–310;

Eusebius was the first to associate Constantine the Great with the highest piety, a virtue ascribed to him almost simultaneously with the vision of the Cross and the victory against Maxentius<sup>107</sup>. The defense of the true faith<sup>108</sup>, beneficence<sup>109</sup>, charity<sup>110</sup>, gentleness and calmness<sup>111</sup> are qualities that have been attributed to Saint Constantine since the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the goals of the empire is to spread Christianity to the Gentiles and create one flock under one shepherd<sup>112</sup>. Hence, in a troparion we read:

Βασιλέων ἐγένετο ὑπέρλαμπρος\* καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ποιμὴν καὶ διδάσκαλος\* καὶ ἱερέων καύχημα\* ὀρθοδόξων τε πάντων καλλώπισμα<sup>113</sup>.

Constantine the Great was posthumously canonized in the East and many of his successors tried to imitate him or link their dynasty to him. This was also the case with some empresses who sought to associate their reign with Saint Helena<sup>114</sup>.

Through this emperor the work of Divine Providence was accomplished, as *imperium Romanum* was transformed into *imperium Christianum*<sup>115</sup>.

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on the battle against heresies, cf. EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 117; Β. ΦΕΙΔΑΣ, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία...*, p. 333.

<sup>107</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 36 “Ὁ δ’ ἔμφυτον τὴν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν εὐσέβειαν κεκτημένος [...] τῆς δ’ ἐκ θεοῦ συνησημένος βοήθειας, εὐχαριστήριον ἀπεδίδου παραρρήμα εὐχὴν τῷ τῆς νίκης αἰτίῳ”; EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 17 “μόνον γοῦν αὐτὸν τῶν ἐξ αἰῶνος ἀκοῆ βοηθέντων αὐτοκρατόρων οἷόν τινα μέγιστον φωστῆρα καὶ κήρυκα μεγαλοφρονότατον τῆς ἀπλανοῦς θεοσεβείας προσησάμενος, μόνῳ τὰ ἐχέγγυα τῆς αὐτοῦ θεοσεβείας διὰ παντοίων τῶν εἰς αὐτὸν κεχορηγημένων ἀγαθῶν ἐνεδειξάτο”; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Ἡ θεματικὴ...*, p. 38 (with many references to the two works of Eusebius).

<sup>108</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 34, 72–79, 82–88; *Tricennial Oration*, p. 199, 217; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Ἡ θεματικὴ...*, p. 48.

<sup>109</sup> H. HUNGER, *Prooimion...*, p. 137–143; Κ.Δ.Σ. ΠΑΪΔΑΣ, *Ἡ θεματικὴ...*, p. 155–166.

<sup>110</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 54; H. HUNGER, *Prooimion...*, p. 143–153.

<sup>111</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 40 “οὐκ ὄντα τὴν φύσιν τοιοῦτον ἡμερώτατον δὲ καὶ πραότατον καὶ φιλανθρωπότατον εἶ τις πώποτε καὶ ἄλλος”.

<sup>112</sup> EUSEBIUS CAESARIENSIS, p. 56 “Ὁ δ’ ἀρετῇ θεοσεβείας πάσῃ ἐμπρέπων νικητῆς βασιλεὺς [...] τὴν ἐφάν ἀπελάμβανε, καὶ μίαν συνημμένην κατὰ τὸ παλαιὸν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴν ὑφ’ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίητο, μοναρχίας μὲν ἐξάρχων θεοῦ κηρύγματος τοῖς πάσι, μοναρχία δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦ Ῥωμαίων κράτους τὸν σύμπαντα πηδαλιουχῶν βίον”; H. HUNGER, *Prooimion...*, p. 100–102; Ι. ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Τὸ βυζαντινὸν...*, p. 282.

<sup>113</sup> Par. gr. 344, f. 75r; EHAI gr. 384, f. 329; Vatopediou 1667, f. 181v.

<sup>114</sup> J.W. DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta...*, p. 145–146; A. SPANOS, *Political Approaches...*, p. 74–75.

<sup>115</sup> Σ. ΠΑΣΧΑΛΙΔΗΣ, *Ὁ ιδεώδης αὐτοκράτορας...*, p. 40.

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	Sin. gr. 670	13 <sup>th</sup> century
Sofia	EHAI gr. 384	14 <sup>th</sup> century

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